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Social Transformation**

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The Role of Nature as a Catalyst for Female Empowerment in Kavery Nambisan's A Town Like Ours

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Abstract

The themes of nature and sexuality Kavery Nambisan establishes a socio cultural framework that illuminates women characters in her novel A Town Like Ours. The essay examines how women obtain power through various natural elements including countryside landscapes and vegetation and seasonal transformations. Ranchland boundaries establish natural areas for women as havens and elements of transformation thus creating conditions for independent self-expression against societal control mechanisms. Nambisan illustrates how nature provides women characters the power to upend patriarchal constraints through assertive self-determined actions that develop feminine aspects. Nature in the rural setting functions as the central aspect of their framework to show hope and life and it represents the situations through which women fight in their narrative. This paper examines how feminine connection to nature empowers women through their rejection of family norms while strengthening their shared identity. The research expands modern Indian literature discussion about female empowerment through its contribution.

Keywords: Nature, Female Empowerment, Gender Roles, Kavery Nambisan, Rural Landscapes.

Introduction

A Town Like Ours by Kavery Nambisan follows a compelling storyline which depicts rural life together with personal struggles alongside the change in female characters within traditional societal structures. The story takes place in a small rural town where it reveals the cultural realities that women face when attempting to live their lives under restrictive social norms of families and community standards. In his nature-inspired metaphor Nambisan develops a transformative image which represents how women undergo various developmental shifts in both their personal

and public life. Nature functions as an essential path to empowerment in their process of growth. The rural environment of the story serves both literal and allegorical functions by expressing the true life experiences of women when they face identity challenges.

Natural elements play a fundamental role in the process of female empowerment throughout *A Town Like Ours*. Nature functions as a vital character in the story because its transforming power constantly impacts the story's of the characters. Women seek refuge here and also find a place to reflect while nature sometimes plays the role of an active agent that drives transformation. Through nature's continuous cycle of seasons combined with abundant vegetation the women inside this space experience deep self-reflection while building connections that grant them independence against patriarchal rules. The natural environment of this rural area develops the women's mental fortitude so they can face social restrictions by using assertive methods. Through their bond with nature the characters experience a process of feminization which allows plants and animals as well as all natural aspects to facilitate their personal growth and freedom beyond what society grants them.

The research explores how women in Nambisan's literary work achieve empowerment through their natural interactions while understanding the rural elements as trans-formative instruments. The analysis of nature as provider of sanctuary and power serves to elaborate on complex gender-environment connections in this study. The research evaluates character transformations within rural settings that showcase how these environments enable the characters to rewrite conventional gender norms. The research work strives to advance the current discussions about female empowerment within present-day Indian literary circles.

Literature Review

In past literature research regarding gender and nature scholars examined the symbolic relationships along with thematic connections between environments and female encounters. Elaine Showalter and other scholars present nature as both the source of limiting experiences and enabling possibilities for feminine development within rural natural elements. The literary devices derived from natural elements in literature construct metaphors that represent women's emotional and psychological dynamics in Showalter's interpretation. Deborah McDowell who is a literary theorist studies how African American literature depicts women achieving power through their relationship with the land which stands as a symbol for heritage and identity and

resilience. Nature serves as a place where people can discover themselves beyond male authority while reflecting upon their personal growth.

The scholarship analyzing Indian literature through a gendered lens concentrates on authors Kamala Das and Shashi Tharoor who use their rural landscape representations. The research demonstrates how women's contact with nature operates as a powerful opposing force against the dominant male structures which control their existence. Throughout these literary representations nature functions as an autonomous realm where women locate opportunities to restore their independence and discover strength through their connection to the natural environment. The extensive rural landscapes offer women genuine freedom in addition to socio-cultural liberation which stands as an opposition to community rules and family obligations. Rural communities enable women to fight against societal gender norms and develop independent power through their resistance activities. Various feminist literary scholars have used rural spaces as their core subject to explore female empowerment. The rural framework of empowerment manifests through individual enlightenment practices that also foster active resistance. Rural regions provide women an opportunity to exceed standard domestic limitations so they can use their power in ways which urban areas and developed societies do not allow. Rural spaces gain their power to drive societal development through the concept of nature as a transformative socio-cultural element. Nature functions as an active force which evolves the societal positions of women in these environments. Nature functions as an arena where societal norms face challenge and identities develop a new resulting in the birth of empowerment which leads to individual and communal gender system transformations.

Thematic Framework

The investigation employs three main thematic elements that include nature together with female empowerment and patriarchal structures. Within this context nature encompasses both physical environments like rural areas and vegetation patterns and symbolic natural elements which appear in the story. Throughout the narrative nature performs as both an external world reflection of female emotions and also functions as a transformative valuable plot element. Nature takes a central role in *A Town Like Ours* because it enables female autonomy and offers a refuge from social limitations and supports the development of personal growth for women in the novel. The rural environment provides both care and defiance to the characters who utilize its abundant flora and fauna when they fight against patriarchal rules.

Female empowerment stands as the second main theme in which female characters develop their capability to govern both themselves and their future. In this instance empowerment extends beyond economic independence and social freedom to embrace development at both the personal and emotional levels. The story presents female empowerment as a stepwise transformation that makes women question the social standards which govern gender characteristics in combination with family pressures. Nature connects the women to personal growth which finally transforms their subordinated position to independent decision-making that fights against patriarchal control. The natural environment allows women to actively resist conventional gender roles through an empowering process of development.

The societal norms alongside institutional framework of male power over women constitutes patriarchal structures. In the story of *A Town Like Ours* women confront restrictive social rules which come from their family system combined with religious practices and communal expectations. The societal power structure of patriarchy works to control female independence through its usual restrictions which reduce women into their expected life roles of wives and mothers and caretakers. Women inside this system experience daily battles to fulfil their needs and pursue their goals and reveal their true selves while resisting patriarchal family and social pressure. The natural realm gives women an opportunity to resist their society's imposed restrictions which lets them build their independence alongside personal growth. Literature exhibits nature as a reflection of social change as well as a tool for transformative gender roles according to feminist theory. As per feminist interpretation nature functions as an area which permits the reconstruction of gender-based social roles. According to feminist analysis nature in *A Town Like Ours* reflects female struggles yet simultaneously delivers room for combat against patriarchy. Feminist theorists explain how women who explore their natural connections develop options to dismantle traditional gender norms which enable them to redefine themselves while establishing authority in patriarchal institutions. Through nature feminists develop a significant instrument which enables their project of fighting for gender equality.

The Role of Rural Setting in Female Empowerment

The rural environment throughout *A Town Like Ours* supports female empowerment through its dual nature as a symbolic design and actual geographical space which enables female growth and opposition against male-dominated systems. The rural town, with its expansive landscapes and deep connection to nature, serves as a symbol of life and hope. The natural environment consisting of rivers, fields,

forests, and seasons represents the psychological development that women go through within the boundaries of their hometown. The repeating cycles of growth in the healthy rural countryside create both resistance and resilience that empower female characters in their paths to self-development. Within this rural environment people find relief from the tight rules that confine urban inhabitants in their daily lives.

Within the rural environment nature grants the women independent spaces where they can develop their own freedom and can escape their conventional societal obligations. Despite fulfilling the town's societal conventions the rural area allows citizens to naturally change their routines in ways that busy urban climates restrict. The rural environment enables women to achieve personal freedom which their families and communities usually restrict. The expansive nature of rural terrain together with Mother Nature's shifting seasons acts as symbols for female self-growth by granting women the needed physical and emotional freedom needed to discover themselves away from patriarchy's control. The women claim independence by finding sanctuary in nature while creating their path to freedom and fighting against power structures that attempt to reduce their autonomy.

Women's connection with the countryside functions as an evolving force which enhances their empowerment journey. Women of the town actively interact with their natural environment as an expressive platform while maintaining it as an active means to oppose social constraints. Through their increasing bond with nature the women gain strength that helps them resist social restrictions imposed on them. Through their rural environment women acquire autonomous ways to define themselves which exclude archetypal male authority requirements. Culture allows women to achieve self-determination through their connection to farming and natural elements and spending time by themselves in natural spaces. Through their connection with rural life the setting helps women advance toward self-empowerment while establishing its own role in the development of their existence.

Nature as a Feminizing Force

Nature in *A Town Like Ours* represents a feminizing power which demonstrates the personal empowerment and growth of female characters throughout the story. Through natural cycles and elements the women find psychological growth and freedom to break gender norms besides discovering self-identity. The process of natural seasonal change shows parallel transformations to the women in their lives because they discard norms' impositions to develop empowered new selves. Nature functions as a reflection tool by showing what the women suffer through and succeed

in while their perception of self-sovereignty evolves which leads them to defy patriarchal boundaries.

The novel relies heavily on the concept of seasonal connections and vegetation along with female developmental patterns. The natural phenomenon of seasonal variations influences the scenery exactly as the female characters experience life-cycle developments distinct from one another. The seasonal cycle serves figuratively to portray the women's life progress while spring symbolises beginning hopes and summertime stands for their productive strength and autumn stands for their introspective movement toward maturation. During the winter months they experience profound self-reflection and personal renewal. The emotional and psychological states of the female characters materialize through different vegetation stages which include blooming flowers, ripening fruits and wither leaves. The sustaining force of nature supports the women on their way to personal development while helping them uncover their inner strength and independence. Through its recurring cycles nature demonstrates to women that personal growth persists permanently because people can achieve the same success as wilderness over any obstacle.

Nature functions as an element of self-expression and means of fighting against societal expectations for the women in *A Town Like Ours*. The natural environment functions as an open location for women to explore their emotional self and sexual desires and personal identities outside patriarchal demands. On this ground the female characters find space to break free from their motherly and wife roles by practising self-growth activities including work along with creative pursuits or reflecting within themselves. Through their connection to natural environments the women demonstrate autonomy since nature becomes their means of defying patriarchal restrictions. When these women link their existence to earth patterns they gain power while pursuing their path toward independence thus making nature their foundation for rejecting regime-imposed gender positions. The women develop their personal strength through their natural connection, thus fighting back against social and family rules which try to control them.

Confronting Patriarchal Structures through Nature

Through their deep natural ties the women of *A Town Like Ours* express their opposition to conventional norms. Through connection with nature women in the novel obtain spaces to oppose patriarchal limitations that control their rights and roles. The book shows patriarchy appearing through family norms and societal conventions

as well as traditional gender standards. The deep familial bond between nature serves as the foundation for women to explore ways of opposing suppressive powers in their rural environment. The women discover power in nature that allows them to create new visions for themselves and battle against societal systems that aim to restrict their freedom. Through nature women discover a different way of existence which allows them to achieve peace together with self-identity and above all gives them strength to challenge the male authority that rules their lives.

The book showcases numerous cases where women exercise their independence by using nature as their source of power. A woman finds asylum through nature when confronting personal problems along with social limitations. Nature serves these women as an area where they discover their independence by working outdoors as well as by experiencing harmony with plants and animals and through contact with natural forces. During traditional times such characters could not participate in household responsibilities but found their escape within environmental activities which granted them power and autonomy against societal norms. The women prove their ability to effect personal transformations by actively participating with nature. Through their connection with nature the women discover freedom because the natural world supports their efforts toward liberation.

Nature serves as a catalyst for women to challenge patriarchy because the women can find the space to resist their limitations through their connection to nature. Through the continuous growth within nature the women find ways to break free from traditional gender roles that seek to limit their identity. The rural landscape serving as resistance metaphor helps the women fight back for equality because nature exhibits permanent changes as do the options for women's advancement. *A Town Like Ours* relates natural elements beyond a setting since the environment functions as a dynamic catalyst which enables women to fight against traditional masculine standards to achieve self-expression and personal fulfilment. The women forge their empowerment by joining with nature to take down the limitations enforced by society and transform into self-validating autonomous beings.

The Intersection of Family, Identity, and Nature

The relationship between family and identity and nature in *A Town Like Ours* develops a powerful analysis about how rural environments let people re-create conventional family social systems. The patriarchal standard of rural areas defines families as fundamental social organisations which require women to hold domestic subservient positions under strict gender-based rules of behaviour. The natural

environment guides character transformations that change how they understand family dynamics along with their placement within the family unit. The rural environment creates a distinctive habitat where women can produce a new vision of family beyond strict male authority to build a supportive community base which grants mutual respect and emotional connections and independence. Through the study of natural systems women gain insights for flexible family organization which enables them to define their family position independently within unified family structures.

Nature plays a vital part in developing women's self-identity and building their group unity which promotes female empowerment in the story. Large uninhibited natural landscapes allow female individuals to discover their authentic self without being restricted by societal demands. Natural encounters assist the characters to develop self-understanding and to assess their family roles while gaining their independence so they can find clarity. Nature develops strong relationships between the women who bond through their collective journey of growth and fighting against oppression. Nature serves as collective ground for the women to offer mutual support during their transformative experiences beyond patriarchal restrictions. The women develop both personal identities and shared solidarity through their environmental connections which creates a force for their empowerment.

The impact of nature on relationships and personal transformation in *A Town Like Ours* is profound, as the women's connection to the land facilitates both individual and communal growth. The characters transform their personal identities through their nature connection while their relationships with people and the environment transform alongside their development. Nature serves both as a transformative force and healing space where women face their challenges to reject societal roles in order to build better connections. Through their experience in the rural setting women develop the capacity for emotional strength that helps them adapt to their life changes which encompass breaking familial ties and speaking out in relationships as well as rediscovering their reasons for existence. Nature functions as a transformative force which allows women to form their self-identity while building collective strength in their defiance of patriarchal control as they claim their power as individuals.

Conclusion

Through an analysis of Kavery Nambisan's *A Town Like Ours* this research shows how natural elements unite with seasonal cycles and rural placing to boost female empowerment in the characters. Nature operates as a female power which supports the women's personal growth while offering them resistance leading to

transformation thus enabling them to dismantle patriarchal systems and establish new family and societal roles. Through their natural bond the women establish independence while continuing to express themselves and building oppositional spaces which leads to their empowerment. The rural environment transforms into an active space for women to create new versions of themselves and unite with others while challenging pathogenic barriers that limit their possibilities.

The analysis provides fresh insights to the field of female empowerment within Indian literature by highlighting the neglected functioning of nature for both individual female growth and group transformations. This research analytically positions the natural environment especially rural spaces as vital components for the formation of female self-definition and opposition against traditional societal gender expectations. This research extends the vast collection of feminist readings about Indian literature because it investigates how natural elements create transformative opportunities for women's empowerment. This approach offers unique insights into environmental effects on gender relationships.

More studies should investigate the connection between nature and female empowerment between various contemporary pieces of Indian literature within post-colonial rural contexts. The study of female empowerment through an evaluation of urban versus rural settings will help researchers understand landscape effects on women's life experiences and achievement of self-determination. This research could expand by examining how nature contributes to the empowerment process of Dalit and Adivasi women in Indian society to demonstrate connections between nature and caste-based and class-based gender discrimination. Study of natural elements both literal and symbolic in literature provides extended opportunities to continue the discourse about women's empowerment in modern India.

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Exploring 'Green Consciousness' in Richard Powers' *The Overstory*

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Abstract

In the 21st century, literature has taken a profound ecological turn, reflecting the urgency of environmental crises and humanity's complex relationship with nature. This "Green Turn" in literature has given rise to narratives that not only depict environmental degradation but also advocate for ecological awareness and sustainability. Contemporary fiction increasingly incorporates themes of climate change, deforestation, species extinction, and the Anthropocene, urging readers to rethink their role in shaping a sustainable future.

Two significant novels that exemplify this green consciousness are Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019) and Richard Powers' *The Overstory* (2018). While *Gun Island* interweaves mythology, climate migration, and ecological disruption, *The Overstory* presents a deeply interconnected narrative where trees become central characters, highlighting the intelligence and resilience of the natural world. Both novels challenge anthropocentric perspectives, urging readers to recognize nature not as a passive backdrop but as a living entity with agency and voice.

In the aftermath of growing climatic disasters and environmental degradation, literature has emerged as a potent medium for cultivating green consciousness—a greater understanding of ecological interdependence and the need for environmental stewardship. Richard Powers' *The Overstory* (2018) is a major work in this "Green Turn" in literature, giving a fully immersive tale in which trees are central characters with intelligence, memory, and agency, rather than mere background components. Through its complicated, interwoven stories of individuals whose lives are affected by interactions with trees, the novel challenges anthropocentric ideas and advocates for a shift toward deep ecology—a philosophy that recognizes the intrinsic value of all living beings beyond human utility. Powers was inspired to write the work while teaching at Stanford University, after he encountered giant redwood trees for the first time.

Richard Powers (born June 18, 1957) is an American novelist whose work examines the effects of modern science and technology. He has received numerous more prizes over his career, including a MacArthur Fellowship. As of 2024, Powers had authored fourteen novels and taught at the University of Illinois and Stanford University. He received the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction for *The Overstory*. [Ron Charles](#) of [The Washington Post](#) offered up effusive praise, writing that this "ambitious novel soars up through the canopy of American literature and remakes the landscape of environmental fiction".

SRichard Powers' Pulitzer Prize-winning Novel, *The Overstory* (2018) explores the fundamental interdependence of humans and trees. The story follows the lives of nine protagonists, each of whom has been profoundly touched by trees in their own unique way, culminating in an environmental narrative about activism, resistance, and the critical need to safeguard nature.

***The Overstory* in a Nutshell**

The Overstory is a book about nine people whose lives are linked to trees, including a tree researcher, an activist against deforestation, an artist whose grandparents planted a famous chestnut, and a soldier saved by a banyan tree, to mention a few. Their lives are interconnected in many ways, as their experiences all address a fundamental theme: forest degradation. The phrase "overstory" refers to the higher layer of plants in a forest. The image below clearly depicts how to distinguish.

The Secret Life of Trees

Even though *The Overstory* is a work of fiction, it draws inspiration from real-life events. For example, Patricia Wester Ford, the book's tree researcher, reflects Suzanne Simard, a Canadian scientist who is a "pioneer on the frontier of plant communication and intelligence". Aside from the human characters in the plot, the book also has tree characters. They are old, smart, strong, and largely misunderstood. *The Overstory*'s large characters include chestnuts, mulberry trees, Spanish oaks, and banyan trees.

Powers is an established author with a dozen works about science and technology. *The Overstory* uses lyrical prose to discuss and describe dozens of tree species. It covers several decades, delving into family legacies, technological advancement, tragedy, love, ecology, man's purpose in the world, and other topic. At first glance, the book appears to be a collection of short stories with one common theme: trees. However, as the book progresses, we notice hidden connections between the individuals. This storytelling approach serves as a vehicle for one of

Powers' key themes: trees are related in ways that humans cannot see, such as through the air and underground. This link implies that removing one tree has unanticipated consequences. And, in our ignorance, man has caused more damage—possibly irreversible—than we will ever know.

The novel is organized like a tree, with sections labelled Roots, Trunk, Crown, and Seeds, which reflect the growth and life cycle of trees. The critics lauded Powers for his expansive vision and his profound message of human reliance on the natural world that we continue to damage

Roots - This section introduces the nine main individuals' various backgrounds, each of whom has a distinctive relationship with trees. Among them are Nicholas Hoel's family has been passing down a chestnut tree for generations. Mimi Ma adores a mulberry tree planted by her father. Adam Appich, a psychology student, is captivated by human behaviour and trees. Douglas Pavlicek, a Vietnam War veteran, becomes a tree planter. Patricia Wester Ford, a scientist who discovers that trees interact with one another, is initially disregarded by her colleagues.

Trunk - The characters' lives begin to intersect as they become active in environmental activism. Many of them band together to fight deforestation, notably in the Pacific Northwest, where they engage in radical tree-sitting campaigns and face off with loggers and corporations.

Crown - The plot progresses as the activists' acts get more extreme, culminating in fatal consequences. Some endure incarceration, exile, or disillusionment, while others continue their battle despite the risks. The story explores the moral and ethical quandaries of environmental advocacy.

Seeds - The final section reflects on the long-term impact of the characters' actions. Some find new ways to contribute to ecological awareness, while others fade into obscurity. The novel ends with a message of hope, emphasizing the resilience of nature and the potential for regeneration.

Central Themes

The novel focuses on certain key themes such as -1. Interconnection between humans and nature – The novel portrays trees as intelligent, communicative beings and suggests that human survival depends on understanding and respecting them. 2.Environmental activism and resistance – The story explore different approaches to activism, from scientific research to radical protests. 3.Loneliness and belonging – Many characters struggle with isolation but find a sense of purpose through their connection with trees and fellow activists.

The Overstory is based on true ecological science and indigenous wisdom, depicting trees as sentient organisms capable of communication, cooperation, and survival methods like human societies. Powers adopts a sophisticated narrative structure, combining personal, historical, and ecological storytelling to create a work that goes beyond traditional fiction and becomes a call to action. The story explores serious issues concerning human exploitation of nature, environmental activism, and the moral imperative to maintain the planet's fast dwindling forests.

The Overstory raises environmental awareness by rethinking human-nature connections through its themes, characters, and storytelling approaches and examines the novel via ecocritical, ecofeminist, and deep ecological lenses, demonstrating how literature can inspire activism and influence modern environmental discourse in the Anthropocene age.

Green consciousness, a growing movement in literature, challenges anthropocentric worldviews and fosters ecological awareness. Richard Powers' *The Overstory* (2018) exemplifies this shift by portraying trees as sentient beings with agency, memory, and the ability to communicate. The novel interweaves multiple narratives of individuals whose lives are transformed by their encounters with trees, urging readers to recognize the deep interconnectivity between humans and the natural world. As Ursula K. Heise suggests in *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (2008), contemporary literature must move beyond local environmental concerns to a broader planetary perspective, something *The Overstory* successfully achieves. Powers cultivates green consciousness through his characters, themes, and narrative techniques, drawing on ecocriticism, deep ecology, and environmental ethics. By analysing key moments from the novel alongside critical perspectives, we will explore how *The Overstory* serves as both a literary masterpiece and a call for ecological activism.

Trees as Sentient Beings: A Challenge to Anthropocentrism

One of the novel's most important themes is its depiction of trees as intelligent and communicating life beings. Powers draws on true ecological research, particularly Peter Wohlleben's *The Hidden Life of Trees* (2015), which discusses how trees create symbiotic connections, share nutrients, and warn one another about hazards. In the novel, Patricia Wester Ford, a scientist inspired by Wohlleben's studies, discovers that "trees talk to one another, over the air and underground." They care for and nourish one another, organizing common actions via the interchange of electrical impulses and chemical signals" (Powers, *The Overstory*). This idea reframes trees as more than

simply backdrop components; they become active actors in the drama, challenging Western views of nature as passive.

Eco-critic Scott Slovic believes that literature should foster a "empathetic connection with the nonhuman world" (Going Away to Think, 2008). The Overstory exhibits this by immersing readers in the leisurely, interwoven world of trees and encouraging them to take a more biocentric approach.

Eco-Activism and the Ethics of Resistance

Powers explores not only the beauty of nature, but also the devastation of forests and ethical issues surrounding eco-activism. One of the novel's key plotlines revolves around Olivia Vandergriff and Nick Hoel, who become militant environmental activists and risk their lives to rescue old-growth woods from logging. Their change exemplifies what philosopher Arne Naess refers to as deep ecology—the concept that all living things have intrinsic value regardless of human wants.

Nick, an artist whose family has documented the life cycle of a single chestnut tree for generations, believes that trees "remember what humans have forgotten: that the world is alive, and we are only a small part of it" (Powers, The Overstory). This revelation strengthens his dedication to environmental resistance, mirroring Rob Nixon's concept of "slow violence"—the gradual, sometimes undetected devastation of ecosystems (Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor, 2011). However, the narrative avoids romanticizing activism. Olivia and Nick's tree-sitting protest ends tragically, revealing the limitations and risks of radical environmental groups. This is consistent with Timothy Clark's critique of eco-activism, in which he advises that literature must strike a delicate balance between advocacy and despair (Ecocriticism on the Edge, 2015). Powers' balanced picture urges activism while recognizing the moral and human consequences of environmental resistance.

Narrative Structure and Tree Language Powers'

The Narrative style for Power's story is inspired by the structure of trees such as:

Roots (the characters' early lives and links with nature)

Trunk (their growth and common environmental consciousness)

Canopy (their climactic deeds and resistance attempts)

Seeds (the novel's aftermath, sowing ideas for future generations).

This arboreal framework emphasizes the novel's themes by depicting how stories, like trees, grow and evolve over time. In Ecocriticism (2012), literary critic Greg Garrard argues that narrative is critical to raising ecological awareness: "Environmental literature succeeds when it compels readers to reimagine their place within nature."

Powers accomplishes this by immersing readers in tree-centric stories that make the forest a live, breathing entity. Furthermore, Powers' vocabulary is highly poetic and allegorical. Consider how he describes trees:

"There are more ways to divide up living things than just the human way. The patterns of trees run deep, spread wide, and even move, if you just know how to look." (*The Overstory*) Such paragraphs inspire readers to look beyond human-centric ideas and embrace a more holistic view of life.

The Overstory: A Call for Green Consciousness

Finally, *The Overstory* is more than a novel about trees; it is a meditation on life's interdependence and a call to action on environmental issues. Powers encourages readers to reconsider their relationship with environment, much like Henry David Thoreau did in *Walden* or Amitav Ghosh in *The Great Derangement* 2016. The novel's final sentence is especially telling.

"The most wondrous products of four billion years of life need help. They need it from us. But more: We need it from them." (*The Overstory*)

This final plea captures the novel's message: protecting trees is more than just conservation; it is also about human survival.

Conclusion

Richard Powers' *The Overstory* embodies the 'green consciousness' movement in modern writing by questioning anthropocentrism, showing eco-activism, and reframing humans' connection with trees. The novel's scientific foundation, lyrical style, and multilayered storytelling inspire readers to contemplate their place in the ecological system. According to Lawrence Buell's *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2005), literature that promotes environmental awareness has the potential to impact public opinion and inspire action.

The Overstory encourages us to listen—to trees, the soil, and the impending ecological calamity. This paper explores how these novels embody the green turn in literature, illustrating how fiction serves as a powerful medium for fostering environmental consciousness. By analysing the narrative techniques, characterizations, and thematic concerns in *The Overstory*, this article aims to highlight the evolving role of literature in shaping ecological awareness and inspiring action in an era of environmental uncertainty. *The Overstory* is both a novel and a call to action, blending science, philosophy, and storytelling to inspire readers to rethink their relationship with the natural world. cautionary tale and a hopeful vision, urging readers to see the world from the perspective of trees and recognize the urgent need to protect the environment before it's too late. *The Overstory* is a profound and thought-provoking novel that challenges readers to reconsider their relationship with nature. It's a

testament to the power of storytelling in advocating for ecological awareness. At first glance, the book appears to be a collection of short stories with one common theme: trees. However, as the book progresses, we notice hidden connections between the individuals. This storytelling approach serves as a vehicle for one of Powers' key themes: trees are related in ways that humans cannot see, such as through the air and underground.

Powers' incredible writing style and the interweaving of the characters and trees throughout the novel takes a strong stance on environment and climate change but never becomes preachy. While we shout at each other with contradictory data and facts concerning climate change, Powers use a tried-and-true strategy: the greatest way to make a convincing argument is with a compelling tale. He relies on his characters' histories, passions, and knowledge to make the case for climate change and forest preservation.

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The Intersection of Tradition and Modernity: Tribal Culture and Social Transformation in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*.

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Abstract

Purple Hibiscus the debut novel of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie published in 2003, examines the tension between indigenous Igbo traditions and the European influence brought by colonialism. The character of Papa-Nnukwu, Eugene's father, embodies traditional Igbo values, rejecting Christianity and colonial influences. Eugene's rejection of his tribal heritage in favour of Catholicism creates familial conflict and highlights the friction between tribal identity and Westernized, modern belief systems. *Purple Hibiscus* by examining how the disciplinary systems within the novel particularly those within Kambili's family, mirror broader societal trends of control and the eventual push toward transformation. In *Purple Hibiscus*, these disciplinary practices are represented primarily by the character of Eugene, whose authoritarian approach to family life can be seen as a microcosm of larger societal systems that enforce discipline through oppression. The shift in Kambili's journey toward freedom and autonomy reflects the broader process of social transformation, both personally and collectively. Through the protagonist Kambili's journey, the novel tackles the themes of authoritarianism, repression, and resistance, all of which contribute to the larger framework of social transformation. Adichie uses Kambili's story to show how both individuals and societies undergo significant changes when oppressive systems are confronted and challenged.

Keywords: Colonialism, Freedom, Silence, Rebellion, *Purple Hibiscus*.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is a complicated themes of tradition and modernity, exploring how tribal culture and social transformation intersect in postcolonial Nigeria. Set against a backdrop of political unrest, the novel uses the Achike family as a epitome for the larger struggles between cultural heritage, colonial influences, and evolving societal norms. Adichie delves into these themes by examining family dynamics, generational shifts, religious tensions, and the evolving

role of women. Through the experiences of Kambili and her family, the novel offers an impactful possibilities and challenges of integrating the traditional with the modern.

Eugene, the patriarch of the Achike family, epitomizes modernity and the influence of Western ideals. He is a devout Catholicism, successful business ventures, and strict discipline mark him as a man deeply shaped by colonialism. Eugene rejects the traditional practices of his ancestors, viewing them as primitive or inferior to the values he associates with the West. His control over his family and his rigid enforcement of his beliefs reveal the darker side of modernity, especially when it comes at the cost of personal freedom and cultural heritage. In contrast to Eugene, Papa-Nnukwu, the family's patriarch from an older generation, remains loyal in his bond to traditional Igbo spirituality. Papa-Nnukwu's life is a testament to the resilience of indigenous culture in the face of colonial disruption. His practices—such as offering sacrifices to the gods and honoring ancestral customs—represent the survival of Igbo culture, even as they are under threat by the spread of Western religion and values. The tension between Papa-Nnukwu and Eugene underscores the ongoing battle between maintaining tradition and embracing modernity. Adichie portrayed Kambili's character as the symbol of transformation. Kambili's transformation is at the heart of the novel. Initially, Kambili's world is confined to her father's strict, Westernized rules. However, her visits to her Aunt Ifeoma's home, which embodies a harmonious blend of modernity and tradition, expose her to alternative ways of thinking. Aunt Ifeoma is educated and independent yet maintains a deep respect for her Igbo heritage. Her progressive views challenge Kambili's understanding of authority, identity, and freedom. Kambili's personal growth represents the broader societal shift where the younger generation, exposed to both traditional values and modern influences, begins to drive its own path. Jaja, Kambili's brother, also undergoes a transformation. His eventual rebellion against his father symbolizes the rejection of oppressive structures, whether those be rooted in rigid traditions or the overbearing modernity imposed by Eugene. Jaja's journey is a pivotal part of the narrative, as it reflects the emotional and cultural conflict that defines postcolonial Nigeria. The younger generation's desire for autonomy and their struggle to balance competing cultural influences. One of the most significant ways in which tradition and modernity conflict is through religion. Eugene's zeal for Catholicism passed down by colonial missionaries, leads him to unconditional reject on the indigenous Igbo religion. He believes his father's spiritual practices are rude and inferior, reinforcing his position as a representative of Western modernity. This conflict illustrates the deep split between colonial religion and traditional African spirituality, a rift that is not easily bridged. Adichie defined all the

characters unlike Eugene, some characters in the novel embody two or more traditions. Auntie Ifeoma and Papa-Nnukwu demonstrate that it is possible to integrate traditional practices with modern beliefs. Auntie Ifeoma's open-mindedness and acceptance of multiple cultural influences suggest that social transformation does not require the rejection of one cultural identity in favor of another. Instead, it can involve adaptation and coexistence an approach that allows individuals to navigate a complex postcolonial world. The *Purple Hibiscus*, a hybrid flower, symbolizes the possibility of creating something new and beautiful by blending different elements. It represents the potential for a harmonious integration of tradition and modernity, rather than a complete rejection of one for the other.

In *Purple Hibiscus*, Adichie masterfully explores the intersection of tradition and modernity through the lens of tribal culture and social transformation. The novel illustrates the tensions and possibilities that arise when traditional values encounter modern influences, ultimately suggesting that a balanced integration of both can lead to a more inclusive and dynamic society. Through the experiences of the Achike family, Adichie offers a poignant commentary on the complexities of cultural identity in a postcolonial world.

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ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND REALITY SHOWS

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Abstract

'Media' refers to various means of mass communication used as channels for sharing, broadcasting, publishing some information and telecasting some shows and programs. Social media is a form of media that allows people to communicate and share information, opinions, pictures, and videos on the internet through social networking websites like Face book, Instagram, Twitter and Wats App. This article underscores how social media has become a potent platform for a wide-range of users from school going students to Professors and researches in various fields. Its influence facilitates engagement, access and consumption particularly among the youth. It has become an indispensable instrumental tool for survival and sustenance in today's digital age. In India, there is a pressing need for change as social media has rapidly assumed a significant user base that is surpassing conventional television viewership. This study investigates the multifaceted influence of social media platforms and reality television shows on contemporary societal perceptions and behavior. Furthermore, it explores the constructive role social media can play in fostering positive engagement, community building and social change. It provides a space for activism, education, and the sharing of ideas and personal stories that raise awareness of critical social issues. It can be used to enhance mental well-being by creating supportive online communities that encourage dialogue and inclusivity. This accentuates the necessity for promoting civic engagement and contributing to a more informed, connected and socially responsible online environment that enhances ethical values of life among us.

Keywords: Media, Telecasting, Reality Shows, Internet, Conventional Television, Societal Perception, Positive Engagement, Activism, Inclusivity, Civic Engagement and Ethical Values.

Introducton:

Media:

Media, a fourth form of Estate is a 'Mass Communicator' which organizes public opinion and pressures political executives for implementation of strategies. It acts as a catalyst for social change and it is responsible for building the nation, implementing constitutional objectives, and promoting social justice, equality, stability, unity, peace, progress, and happiness. The three major roles of media are: Reporting Events, Interpretation of Events, and Socialization. It is a channel between people and authorities in reminding our duties and responsibilities and enlightening difficulties and obstructions, warns them of dangers to national interests, and makes democratic rule real.

The channels of 'Media' can be in the form of printed word like reading a newspaper or magazine and electronic forms viz; television, telephones, films and other social media like Instagram, Wats App, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube which put our environment in perspective by giving several aspects, meaning and explanations relating to it. These are popular, powerful and primary source of media for information and entertainment that imitate and influence culture.

Social Media:

Social media is a collection of web-based global and free platform tools for societal orientation, news reporting, allowing for personal and public communication through modern devices like smartphones, laptops and internet connections. With the rapid advancement of communication technology, 'Social Media' has gained the status of an inseparable element of modern society's daily routine (Wahyoedi et. al., 2023). This has made print and electronic media more affordable, efficient, and faster than ever.

In the ever-evolving digital age, social media has played a pivotal role by providing a vast global platform for individuals, without exception, to freely express and verbalize their views and opinions (Maitri et al., 2023). Social media has fundamentally transformed how we communicate, consume information, and engage with both our social circles and the broader world. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have become integral parts of our daily lives, reshaping nearly every aspect of modern society

The rise of social media has revolutionized the communication system, offering more than traditional print media, such as voice, pictures, videos, and live coverage. It also introduced new forms of entertainment and education. The internet offers speed, accuracy, and authenticity. Thus, Social media that forms a virtual space can jointly

respond, analyse and negotiate various current issues. Social media took to its mainstream with the introduction of **Facebook** in 2004, providing a space for people to not only connect but also share their interests, photographs, and life events with a broader audience.

Reality Shows:

Reality shows are the shows that focus typically on real-life events, interactions, and emotions, often with the intention of creating drama, entertainment, or showcasing personal stories. In fact Reality Shows began in 1940 but its true exploration could be noted in the early 2000s with the success of *Survivor* (2000), *Big Brother* (2000), and *The Amazing Race* (2001). The Music Reality shows like *Antakshri* and *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* and other kinds of reality shows and perspectives like *MTV Bakra*, *Nach Baliye*, *Kaun Banega Crorepati*, *Jhalak Dikhlaja*, *Big Boss*, *Swayamvar* so on and so forth were introduced in 1990s as Television shows. Thereafter, we found the introduction of celebrity driven Reality Shows.

Positive Influence Of Social Media On Society:

Today social media has an immediate visibility and global reach and it is a marketing tool to bring awareness among public on various topics, news, issues, program, academics and other contexts related to public. Some of the reality shows that are educative, moralized, ethical, depicting values of life, informative, initiative, inspiring, motivating with insights of progress and development have positive impact on viewers. It is also a mode of entertainment for family members to sit and watch programs together. It is a rich source of repository in all fields. It can be used purposefully for a right cause for the proliferation of nation and its people.

Negative Influence Of Social Media On Society:

The negative effect of social media is in proportionate with its positive effect. It has unhealthy traits with uncivilized performances particularly showcased in Reality Shows. Such shows influence us badly and are harmful for overall progress of the society. Television is one such 'idiot box' that is found to give negative influence. Since Reality TV is believed to be true life, people come to expect that the things that they watch are really truthful and so they try to imitate it and get involved in it.

Reality TV shows have adverse influence on the minds of the youth. They are little concerned about its impact on the younger generation. They project conducts and behaviors that are aggressive, using abusive language, jealousy and have provocation dressing. It can create disturbance in youths' life and make one's life stressful.

Platforms of Social Media:

Some of the major platforms of social media which have the maximum number of users throughout the world are given below:

Facebook:

Facebook is a wide social media platform founded by Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes in 2004. It was initially started as a platform for Harvard University students. Later it expanded globally and became the largest social networking site. Facebook is widely used for connecting with friends, networking, sharing life updates, following news, and promoting businesses. It acquired several platforms including Instagram (2012), Wats App (2014) and Oculuc VR (2014) In 2021, Facebook rebranded itself as **Meta** to reflect its focus on building the **Metaverse**, a virtual reality space combining social media, gaming, and digital Interaction. It has more than 2.8 billion active users as of 2024. It significantly impacts social media culture, politics, marketing, and online communication.

Watsapp

WatsApp is another social networking app bought by **Facebook (Meta)** in 2014 for around \$19 billion, making it one of the largest tech acquisitions. It was founded in 2009 by Jan Koum and Brian Acton. This social media helps the users to communicate with each other text messages, share photos, videos, images, documents, links, etc. that can be shared among themselves. It also provides instant voice and video calling throughout the globe. It is so powerful media that it offers creating groups up to 256 members to chat and share content collectively. The messages and calls are encrypted for privacy, ensuring only the sender and receiver can read or hear them. WhatsApp has over 2 billion active users worldwide, making it one of the most popular messaging apps.

Twitter:

Twitter is a multilingual news oriented social platform founded in 2006 by **Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams**. The users express themselves through "tweeting" opinions and messages that includes text, links, photos videos and hashtags and contains up to 280 characters. Celebrities and political figures use Twitter to share news and engage with others.

Twitter has acquired several companies over the years, including **Periscope** (for live teaming) and **Vine** (short-form video platform). It is used for personal communication, breaking news, political discourse, celebrity interactions, and real-time updates. Twitter has over 400 million active users worldwide, with strong engagement in countries like the **United States, India, and Japan**. In 2022, Elon Musk

acquired Twitter for approximately \$44 billion, and the platform was subsequently rebranded as X in 2023.

Youtube:

YouTube is the second most visited American video-sharing website. It was founded in 2005 by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim and is parented by Google in 2006 for \$1.65 billion. It is used for entertainment, education, music, gaming, news, and marketing and offers a wide scope for users to upload, watch, like, comment, and share videos of various genres (music, tutorials, vlogs, etc.). YouTube Partner Program allows creators to earn revenue from ads displayed on their videos. The creators can earn money through live streams and fan memberships. There are 2 billion logged-in monthly users and it is available in over 100 countries and in 80 languages.

Instagram:

Instagram is a popular social media photo and video sharing app launched in 2010 and owned by Facebook (now Meta) in 2012. It allows users to share pictures and videos by uploading publicly or privately on their profile or through stories which disappear after 24 hours. It also supports direct messaging, and features like IGTV, Reels, and shopping integration. Instagram has become a major platform for influencers, businesses, and creators to engage with audience, making it a key tool for digital marketing and social interaction.

Conclusion:

No doubt social media has revolutionized to offer numerous benefits for personal and professional growth. Yet the use of social media should be restricted and limited to certain conditions. Instead of dance shows, the Reality Shows can be used to showcase academic, professional, social, ethical and mental health programs that could teach real values of life for the present generation. In a nutshell, social media continues to evolve, it is important for individuals and society to use it responsibly, balancing its advantages with awareness of its potential downsides.

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***Bratakatha*: Ritualistic Narratives and the Indoctrination of Patriarchal Norms in Bengali Folklore**

Dr Debobani Biswas

Abstract

Bratakatha, a distinct genre of Bengali folklore, is an oral narrative tradition primarily transmitted among women in ritualistic contexts. Rooted in ancient customs, these narratives are closely associated with brata, sacred vows undertaken to fulfil desires and invoke divine blessings. While ostensibly religious, *bratakathas* function as powerful socio-cultural tools that reinforce patriarchal norms and gender roles in Bengali Hindu society. This paper explores the intricate relationship between folklore and society by analysing the ways in which *bratakathas* indoctrinate women into prescribed social roles.

The study highlights that, although *bratakatha* does not have a direct connection with *shastric* Hindu practices, its performance and context remain deeply ritual-bound. These narratives act as subtle yet effective mechanisms of social conditioning, delineating an idealized image of the Bengali woman—chaste, obedient, and dutiful—who conforms to the patriarchal expectations of family and society. Through symbolic reinforcement, storytelling, and ritual observances, bratakathas establish a moral code that women internalize from an early age. Tales like *Bhadra Lakshmi Brata* and *Kartik Lakshmi Brata* emphasize behavioural guidelines, reinforcing virtues such as humility, devotion, and endurance. Similarly, non-*shastric* bratas like *Ghentu Brata* explicitly propagate the ideology that a woman's ultimate refuge is her husband.

The paper also investigates the connection between *bratakathas* and agrarian cycles, demonstrating how these rituals are deeply intertwined with nature worship and pre-Vedic traditions. While many bratas are associated with goddess worship, their function extends beyond religious devotion to serve as vehicles for societal control. The economic aspect of brata rituals, including offerings to Brahmins, further highlights the institutional reinforcement of dominant cultural structures.

By examining the oral transmission of *bratakatha*, this paper underscores its role in preserving traditional gender norms and sustaining patriarchal authority. The research calls for a critical folkloristic approach to the collection, documentation, and

analysis of *bratakathas*, emphasizing their functional significance in shaping the social fabric of rural Bengal. Through this lens, *bratakatha* emerges as both a cultural artifact and a means of understanding the historical status of women in Bengali Hindu society.

Keywords: Bratakatha, Bengali folklore, gender norms, patriarchy, oral tradition

Introduction:

Bratakatha is a Bengali narrative that is ritualistic in nature. It has been orally transmitted through generations primarily among women. There are special types of rites that go with each of these *bratakathas* and their main aim is wish-fulfilment. *Brata* is a sacred vow taken to follow certain norms. Studies of *Bratakatha* have been conducted by scholars for a long time. It is one medium through which we can explore the Hindu Bengali society of the recent past. It is also the most effective medium of folklore which reflects the way of life of Bengali society in its originality. As a result, this genre of folklore has been chosen here to bring out the relationship between folklore and society. While analysing the role of narratives and orality in understanding the folk culture this paper highlights the social implication of this oral narrative in formulating social norms of Bengali womenfolk.

Vedic scriptures, as we all know, play a vital role in constructing the social codes and customs in Bengali society. In any society based on traditional customs folklores, ritual sayings and customs form very effective medium to implement social rules. We all agree that social rules emerge from 'collective consciousness'. Yet, in every society or culture we will find a dominant group or class of people who create certain rules and regulations for their own interest. This dominant class always imposes either religious obligations or some ritualistic prohibitions on people to keep their dominance intact. General people do not dare disobey these normative rules. But, the existence of the code of conduct does not really ensure that it will be followed. It is necessary to indoctrinate the members of society to those rules.

In Bengali society social norms of patriarchy was gradually indoctrinated through the ritualistic narrative of *Bratakatha*. They speak of the customs that a women should follow, their duties and habits, the moral standard that a women should adhere to with the intention of creating a traditional type of ideal Bengali women who would follow the social norms of the patriarchy. In the text of the *Bratakatha* social

codes are very clearly mentioned and while it is narrated during the *bratakatha* by the eldest observer (*brati*), they have the power to indoctrinate the other womenfolk present at the *katha*. Bengali *bratas* are closely related to different stages of earth's revolution, seasonal cycles and agricultural activities which aim at having good crops and bringing fortune to the life of the observers. At the end of each *brata* a story is narrated propagating divine grace of a particular deity and also publicizing social norms of an ideal society.

Male-dominated society very tactfully puts into force certain social rules, applicable to the women only, through these narratives by portraying an ideal image of Bengali women. Ritualistic association, ceremonial observance and symbolism collectively bring strong reinforcement to social codes. One of the important objectives of these stories is to maintain women's chastity.

Among all the literary genres of Bengali folklore *bratakatha* is the only form where we find the performance of *bratakatha* to be entirely ritual-bound. Of course, these tales have no direct alliance with rituals. Time and context of *bratakatha* performance are ritual-bound, but text and structure are ritual-free. Most of the *bratakatha*, barring a few like the tale of *Chapdashashthi*, describe no ritual activities. The only religious function of *bratakatha* is to publicize divinity of a particular deity. Thus tales (*kathá*) of *Mangaichandi brata*, *Lakshmi brata*, *Raaldurga brata*, *Nataichandi brata*, *Itulakshmi brata* etc., describe divine power and benevolence of goddess *Mangalchnandi*, *Lakshmi*, *Durga*, *Nataichandi* and *Itulakshmi* respectively. Another set of *brata* that are mainly related to nature worship in one or some way, like *Ashwaththa Pálar brata*, *Punyipukur brata*, *Dashputul brata*, *Prithibi brata* etc., have no story part. In such *bratas* ritualistic activities are supported by rhymes (*chhada*) and ritual paintings (*álpáná*). It acts like mantras.

In Bengali folklore worships are offered to certain deities in particular seasons and particular events of the year with the aspiration of worldly prosperity. People believe that deities will be satisfied by these vows, and their aspirations would be fulfilled. (Dey, 13). *Brata* is also indicated as the pious rite to destroy the sins. (Mukhopadhyay, 53). In the context of Hinduism and Hindu Mythology, the term *brata* denotes a religious practice to carry out certain obligations with a view to achieving divine blessing for fulfillment of one or more than one desire. But Bengali *bratas* are hardly related to *shastric* or Vedic rites excepting a few like *Amlakidwadashi brata*, *Sábitri Chaturdashi brata*, *Soubhágya Chaturthi brata* etc. These are categorized as

'*Shâstric brata*' contrasted with '*Meyeli brata*'. *Meyeli brata* also customizes offering rituals. Usually cloths, fruits, sweets and ascertained amount of fees are given to one or more Brahmins. Sometimes golden or silver ornaments silver coins, silver fruits, sacred threads etc., are dedicated to them. This is also one of the ways by which dominating culture establishes its control for vested interests.

By nature, most of the *brata* rituals are non-Aryan, rooted mainly in pre-Vedic culture. Primitive ancestors' magical and religious beliefs for eradicating evils and having good production and prosperity are the main aspiration behind all the *brata* rites. The most interesting part of such vows taken in a *brata* is its story part which very tactfully enforces mandatory social rules among the women.

In this genre of Bengali folklore, the real status of women in traditional Bengali Hindu society could be portrayed properly. In the society as well as in family life, a woman has to face many obstacles and problems for being a woman only. Several prohibitory norms are imposed on them limiting their social and individual identity. Society always wants to see a modest woman who would be perfectly dutiful in domestic life and provide a very pleasing service to the relations in her in-law's house. She would be very soft spoken and never protest against any adverse events or incidents in society in general and her family in particular. Such a role model of Bengali woman is portrayed in *brata* story

S. K. Roy commented--"Brata, originally a crude witchcraft, gradually developed into a system of 'worship through art', Spell became poetry and magical *âlpana* became art." (Roy, 48)

In this genre of Bengali folklore, the real status of women in traditional Bengali society could be revealed properly. In the society and in family life a woman has to face many obstacles and problems for being a woman only. Several prohibitory norms are imposed on them limiting their social and individual space. Society always wants to see a modest woman who would be perfectly dutiful in domestic life and provide a very pleasing service to the relations in her in-law's house. She would be very soft spoken and never raise protest against any adverse event in her family. Such a role model of Bengali woman is portrayed in *brata* story

Such a good lesson can be learnt from the tale of *Bhadra Lakshmi brata*. In this tale an old Brahmin woman, while going to heavenly abode leaving her worldly habitat,

gives some advices to her daughter-in-law, which is narrated as instructions to all Hindu women-'Do observe Lakshmi brata in the months of Bhadra, Kartik, Paush and Chaitra... clean your courtyard every morning with cow dung smear. Do not sleep for a long time and in the evening light up your house. Never speak loudly and carefully avoid sound while walking. (Mukhopadhyay, 13) Similarly in Kartik Lakshmi *bratakatha* the same guidelines are indicated by the goddess Lakshmi herself adding a few more like-not to break anything by nail edge, constantly not to cry for own scarcities and but keep purity and sacredness. (Mukhopadhyay, 13). Society's motivation for making obedient and modest woman is clearly reflected through all these normative instructions. Women should be flawless and should only be keen to her socially recognized husband, even though he is polygamous. In Hindu religion it is supposed that husband is the ultimate worldly and heavenly shelter of a wife. *Ghentu brata*, a purely non-*shastric* one, straightway pronounces this fact-Virtuous woman has no other way but to stick to her husband' (Pati bina Satir gati nai). This virtuous woman is considered as the symbol of prosperity and wealth. From the early maidenhood a Bengali girl would always like to be always such a symbolic figure. Rhymes of *Thuya brata* articulate a girl's ardent appeal and simultaneously also ventilate society's expectation for a model woman. She desires

Be a granary during dearth,
Having sons in the youth,
Be a shield for husband's vigour
Remain blessed with folk and lucre. (Datta, 23)

Every Bengali woman is envisaged to be as chaste as Sita by the society. At the same time every woman is expected to be as best as Draupadi, a strong female character of the Mahabharata, she was also regarded for one of her best womanly qualities of being a great cook. In addition to having all these good qualities she should be tolerant like earth, soft like grass and modest like *Kunti*.

Lakshmi's panchali clearly points out that women's misbehaviour is the cause of all worldly grief and pains. The narrative describes: one day in a pensive mood goddess *Lakshmi* and her counter-half god Narayana were chatting in *Baikuntha* (the celestial abode of Lord Vishnu) when Nārad (a mythological sage) came to *mata Lakshmi* for reporting the adversities of the world. He said-

Oh! Mother, mortal world has no
Nothing is left of opulence; peace and happiness.
Ailment and pain engross evil period
Suffering lot remorse is expressed
People suicide for food and water

Abandoning close mates going too far.(Baikuntha, 10)

Describing this situation Nārad prayed for remedial arrangements. Goddess *Lakshmi* directly accused women of their misconducts and for being the main reason behind such pain -

I am telling the real truth O Nārad,
Of my constituent women are made.

As they never maintain worthiness

Unrest prevail all and every residence.(Baikuntha, 10)

According to Hindu scriptures '*Putrarthē cūryate varjya*' i.e., wives are for reproducing sons (heirs). Her service is required in performing domestic works, maintaining kinship and social relations and bearing children. At the same time, she is an object of enjoyment sensual pleasure. Naturally her physical appearance and attractiveness are not at all ignored, and beauty of a woman is considered as one of the major criteria while selecting a bride. From her maidenhood a girl child wishes to have charming figure and alluring beauty. She expresses her desires in the *brata* rhymes -

(My) Hair would be silken thread of jute,
Complexion like milk lac-dye compound
Stature like a conch resembling gastropod,
Body like sweet contents as honey-pot
Nose would be straight and thin as flute,
Gesture like butterfly soft and smooth,
Feet would be very cute and tiny
Face would be moon-like bright and shiny.(Basak,159)

Bratakatha mirrors the society in women's narration. Each and every line of *bratakatha* and *brata* rhyme echoes the joy and sorrow, passion and emotion of a Bengali woman. The story part comes from the experiences of their daily life and hence portrays the real picture of the women's world.

Traditional Hindu Bengali society, over and above-board Indian society also, is mainly directed by the religious doctrines of the Hindu brahmins. Following *brahminical* doctrines *brata* and its narration, establish a certain code of women's suppression through a series of prohibitions. The indoctrination was not forceful in nature. But, in reality, women always obeyed them from fear of being the cause of unwanted and ill fate of the family and near ones.

From a folklorist's point of view, attention should be paid to the collection, preservation and analysis of the stories emphasizing the functional significance of bratakathas in the proper perspective of rural Bengal.

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Acquiring English Language Competence through Indian Folktales- A Linguistic and a Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

Indian folktales represent vibrant cultural heritage and diverse landscapes of India. They are categorized as traditional narratives passed down orally through generations which have preserved the richness of the unique weaves of Indian culture. These tales serve as a repository of entertainment, education, and cultural preservation. This article explores the process of employing Indian folktales as teaching tool to enhance English language acquisition, focusing on developing vocabulary, improving comprehension of grammatical items, and offering cultural insights. It explains and highlights their role in nurturing intercultural awareness and developing narrative skills.

Key Words Folk tales, cultural insights, intercultural awareness, English language acquisition, narratives

Introduction

A folktale can be termed as a traditional narrative, time and again passed down orally through generations, that mirrors the beliefs, ritual practices, values, and customs of a certain culture or community. Folktales characteristically feature elements of mythology, fantasy, or morality, and they often include characters such as heroes, fraudsters, villains, animals, or supernatural beings like spirits etc. These stories serve as educational tools in various contexts and can be exploited for entertainment, preserving cultural identity, or imparting moral lessons. Folktales can be adapted and reinterpreted as fairy tales, legends, fables, and anecdotes and this has been a successful practice for generations.

A folktale is "a story originating in popular culture, typically passed down orally, that embodies the beliefs, customs, and traditions of a community" (Thompson 1). Folktales often encompass elements of mythology and morality and may include various types of characters, such as heroes, tricksters, and animals, reflecting the values of the society from which they originate (Bascom 3). Folktale traditions in India

are considered for their novelty, uniqueness and diversity, reflecting the myriad cultures, a vast canvas of languages, and histories across the country. Each region has distinct narratives that symbolize local beliefs, customs, and moral schooling. According to Ramanujan, "Folktales in India often serve as vehicles for cultural expression, preserving collective memories and social norms" (Ramanujan 30). These stories range from mythical tales involving gods and heroes to mundane tales of common people and animals, revealing the societal values and intricacies of human relationships (Srinivas 45). The oral tradition remains vital, with performances and storytelling sessions maintaining the vibrancy of these tales (Kumar 177).

Folktales traditions are a tapestry of country's vast cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity. Each region has its own inimitable folktales that reflect local beliefs, values, and social norms. Here are some key facets of folktale traditions of India: Karnataka is a treasure trove of folktales, showcasing its multicultural richness, languages, and historical movements and their profound impact on society. The colourful string of stories are often interlaced with moral lessons, narratives of local deities, and highlight the mundane lives of common masses.

Folktales of Karnataka

The folktales of Karnataka are deep rooted in the local culture and folklore. They often depict a vast range of themes, from the shrewdness and wit of common folk to the gallantry of historical figures. Folk tales based on Tenali Raman, a comic hero have become popular for his wit, wisdom and humour. As noted by historian Karnad, "The stories of Tenali Raman encapsulate the essence of wisdom and humor intertwined with life lessons" (Karnad 45).

Yakshagana, a traditional dance-drama form is another form of rendering folktales exhibiting the oral storytelling traditions of Karnataka. According to Rao, these performances are vital for preserving folkloric narratives, emphasizing how they remain "alive and vibrant through the medium of drama" (Rao 212).

Another interesting feature of folktales in Karnataka often integrate elements of nature and the supernatural, reflecting the local ecology and beliefs. As Narasimhaiah states, "The intricate relationship between man and nature in Karnataka's folktales highlights a deep respect for the environment" (Narasimhaiah 78).

Literature Review

Folktales are a nerve point of cultural and literary heritage of Karnataka and are handed down to the generations. They are akin to a collage of the history, beliefs, values, and practices of the local societies. Scholars have delved into various

dimensions of these folktales, which includes their structure, themes, motifs, and cultural implications.

Historical Context

Karnataka's folktales have origins in its deep-rooted oral traditions, which have been shaped by various dynasties, including the Chalukyas, Hoysalas, and the Wadiyars. The diversity in the state's geography and its multitude of ethnic communities contribute to the rich tapestry of its folktales. Historical accounts (Sharma, 1997) suggest that storytelling was a communal activity, often performed during festivals and celebrations, which facilitated in preserving local traditions.

Themes and Motifs

The signposts of research show that the folktales of Karnataka embrace a variety of themes, such as justice, moral lessons, love, and supernatural events. Scholars like Reddy (2005) have recognized recurrent themes, such as the victory of good over evil, the cleverness of marginalized characters (like tricksters), and the role of divine mediation in human affairs. Folktales often feature anthropomorphic animals, depict allegorical figures to connect with the masses through moral lessons effectively.

Regional Variations

Karnataka provides an anchor to multiple linguistic and cultural groups, including Kannada, Tulu, and Beary speakers, each contributing to the folktale gamut of Karnataka. The Kannada folktales often emphasize cultural and regional identity (Kumar, 2010), while Tulu folktales have unique elements reflecting coastal customs and beliefs. Scholars like Suresh (2015) have noted that the dialects and local idioms employed in these narratives fortify their cultural legitimacy.

Literary Contributions

Several scholars and authors have compiled and explored Karnataka's folktales, contributing immensely to their preservation in written form. Prominent compilations include the works of M. G. Ramesh and K. S. Narasimhaswamy, who have acknowledged and recorded these tales, providing valuable insight into their structure and thematic concerns. Literary analysis often highlight the transition from oral to written traditions and the challenges of maintaining authenticity in the retelling process.

Contemporary Relevance

In current times, there has been a revival of interest in folktales of Karnataka in various social media platforms including literature, theatre, and film. The adaptation of these tales into modern narratives reflects ongoing cultural relevance and offers new interpretations for contemporary audiences (Desai, 2018). Educational programs

and workshops are also incorporating folktales as tools for teaching moral values and impart knowledge on cultural heritage to young minds.

Folktales of Karnataka are a significant part of cultural backdrop, integrating insights into its social values, historical and artistic milieus. While various researchers and scholars have contributed significantly to understand various facets of these narratives, current research is vital in exploring their dynamic nature in modern times. It becomes compelling to embrace the contemporary adaptations to preserving this oral tradition to while embracing contemporary adaptations will ensure that the rich folktale legacy continues to flourish.

To conclude, this literature review offers an overview of the rich tradition of folktales in Karnataka, emphasizing their cultural implications and the academic interest and they have reaped over the years.

Methodology

The methodology employed here presents a novel educational strategy tailored specifically for Kannada and English-speaking (bilingual) students of grade 10 of a government school in Gulbarga. The paper presented here is based on the experience of a high school teacher who employed this task successfully in her classroom of 40. The sample size was 40 out of which 10 were Telugu students who were conversant with Kannada. The technology used was minimal and the thesaurus copies were made available to the students from the school library. The learners were provided with a sample text of a Kannada folktale written in Kannada and were tasked with the following:

- Translate the text in English using Google translator.
- Identify at least 15 words and replace them with appropriate synonyms and syntactical structures.
- Rewrite the translated text to get the feel of a new text.
- Identify cultural elements and human values that need to be imbibed.
- State the moral of the story.

The methodology adopted here is aimed at facilitating the learners in augmenting their comprehension of synonyms and paraphrasing techniques. The activity was initiated with students translating a traditional Kannada folk tale originally written in Kannada into English, using Google Translate for this purpose. The translated text served as a foundation for learning the use of synonyms and paraphrasing techniques.

The learners were tasked with identifying complex vocabulary in the translated narrative and were encouraged to use dictionaries and thesaurus and power thesaurus to discover meanings and synonyms. The identified words were replaced with suitable synonyms and the newer version of the translated text enthused students as they learnt a novel method to refine their writing skills. The instructor, being fluent in Kannada, incorporated cultural elements of North Karnataka into the lessons, which not only added depth to the discussion but also deepened the learning experience of the students. This initiative ignited the young minds and they showed interest in knowing more about the Indian epics.

This strategy ensured a seamless transition from the source language to the target language, promoting increased participation and great commitment with the material. The activity also stressed the importance of listening, as students paid close attention to the pronunciation of English words—an aspect chiefly beneficial for those who speak in Kannada. Moreover, students recognized several Kannada terms that share similarities with their Telugu (students who were conversant with Telugu and Kannada languages) equivalents, thereby fortifying inter-lingual connections.

Folktale tale in Kannada

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The sample text

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Long ago there lived a valorous and a noble king named Dheerasena who had expanded his empire in all directions. After a few years he fell ill and was nearing death. He had two queens: the elder queen was Suryavati, and the younger was Chandravati. Suryavati was the mother of Suryasena, and Chandravati was the mother of Chandrasena. Both sons were dear to Dheerasena, but they were physically challenged. The elder son, Suryasena, was blind, while the younger son, Chandrasena, was unable to walk. Dheerasena did not worry about his impending death but was deeply concerned about the future of his kingdom given the condition of his heirs. As his dying wish, he called his sons and held them closely to his heart and affectionately stroked their heads with a mix of love and sorrow and said, "My dear children, you are both brothers. You must be like Rama and Lakshmana and My dear son. Chandrasena, you must be the eyes for your brother Suryasena. And my dear Suryasena, you must be the legs for your brother Chandrasena. Together, you must support each other as the eyes and legs of the people and look after the well being of this kingdom. I will assign you a prudent and an astute minister for guidance who will facilitate you in ruling the kingdom without any difficulties. This is the priceless gift I give you as your father." The king cheered up his sons and as promised, he decided to appoint a shrewd and prudent minister for the kingdom and announced his decision in public and invited people to prove their suitability and occupy the position of a minister in the court through a test.

Many people came with a dream to become the minister. The king set a test for them and said "Look, there is a large dark room. You must fill this room with any object/material/thing within ten minutes. The person who will clear this task will be employed as my minister," he declared. The candidates, hearing this, started mumbling among themselves, "It's ridiculous. The king has gone insane! How is it possible to fill the room with something in just ten minutes?" They mocked at the king silently and were about to leave the court. Suddenly, a bold and a confident voice declared, "I will fill the dark room within ten minutes."

The voice took everyone by surprise. Then he entered large dark room and lit a lamp. Instantly the room was filled with light. Captivated by his intelligence, King Dheerasena appointed him as the minister and entrusted his sons to him, saying, "This prudent minister is competent enough to protect my children, my subjects, and my kingdom." With this contentment, Dheerasena peacefully passed away.

Findings

1. Enhancement of Language Skills: The study carried out shows that integrating Indian folktales as a strategy to teach English can be considered as one of the best

practices which when employed contributes significantly to the improvement of English language proficiency among students. This engagement augments vocabulary expansion, grammatical understanding, and narrative comprehension.

2. Cultural Acumen: Indian folktales provide rich cultural environment, orienting students towards Indian values, traditions, and beliefs. This cultural exposure expands intercultural awareness of learners, elevating their language learning experience by linking language with cultural narratives.

3. Strengthening Intercultural Connect: The incorporation of regional folktales into the language curriculum encourages a greater understanding of different cultures, equipping students to traverse linguistic and cultural differences effectively. By exploring narratives that echo diverse societal norms and structures, students learn to appreciate for multicultural viewpoints.

4. Narrative Skills: Folktales serve as a medium for enhancing narrative skills, encouraging students to analyze, summarize, and retell stories. This practice builds their confidence in using English for storytelling, which is a key component of effective communication.

5. Augmenting Interaction and Retention: Using folktales as an effective teaching strategy created increased engagement and motivation among students. The amalgamation of storytelling and language learning made the process entertaining and interactive, leading to improved retention of language concepts.

6. Language Transfer and Interlingual Connections: The study highlighted that students recognized similarities between Kannada and Telugu terms while translating folktales, underpinning their understanding of language structures and enhancing their ability to transfer language skills across languages.

7. Practical Application of Synonyms and Paraphrasing: The approach of using translated text of the folktale allowed students to practice synonyms and use paraphrasing techniques using the translated text. This strategy not only enhanced their vocabulary but also their competence to express thoughts and ideas in numerous ways, a prized skill in both academic and professional milieus.

8. Cultural Bearing of Folktales: The research emphasized the importance of incorporating culturally relevant content in language education. Folktales act as a link connecting linguistic capabilities of the students with their cultural heritage, making language learning more relevant and impactful.

Recommendations for Further Research

The study concluded with recommendations for further investigation into the use of folktales across different Indian languages, with an emphasis on improving language teaching methodologies and cultural education in heterogenous classroom settings.

Conclusion

In summary, this tailored instructional method not only improved language skills among the students but also heightened their cultural awareness through an exploration of local narratives. Overall, the findings exemplify that Indian folktales are not only a means of preserving cultural heritage but also an effective tool for enhancing language acquisition and intercultural awareness in students.

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Carnatic Music: Exploring New Trends in Learning and Performance

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Abstract

Music is an essential part of our everyday lives. We are fortunate to be the land of Indian Classical Music which is a very scientific and complex discipline which has its roots tracing back to the age of vedas. It is ever-evolving and it has undergone several changes over many years. Since the 13th century our Indian classical music has been divided into North and South music. As it is evolving, our music is influenced from various social, economic, environmental and cultural contexts. The poetic and the melodic tunes have evolved to fit the socio-cultural landscape of the society. After the advent of Internet, our lives have radically changed and the arts have been facilitated to occupy an integral part of our lives in a remote setting. Earlier, to attend a concert people had to be physically present in the Auditoriums/Sabhas. Now they can remotely access the live streams via Facebook, Youtube and other streaming platforms. The teaching of music earlier happened in the gurukula systems where the student used to stay at guru's place for several years to learn. For those without access to a local music teacher, the internet now makes learning music more accessible through platforms like Zoom and Skype. The uses and application of internet is boundless where it is being used for various facets of Music learning and music propagation like notation, music books, research, collaboration, multi-disciplinary fusion and the like. This paper aims to explore the recent trends happening in the field of Carnatic music, focusing on how

these changes have shaped both learning and performance. The research methodology is exploratory.

Keywords: Carnatic music, Internet, Gurukula , Online-teaching , Kacheri, Concert

Introduction

Our country i.e Bharata is blessed as it could be called as Kala-Bhoomi, the land of arts. Our Indian classical music is a profound art form which requires intellect to master. Once it becomes a part of our lives, it nurtures our soul and elevates our regular lives to an extra-ordinary one. As our music has undergone many changes over the years, it is also influenced by various social, economic, environmental and cultural contexts. Since the 13th century, Indian classical music has been divided into two distinct traditions: South Indian (Carnatic) and North Indian (Hindustani). Both of them demand extensive time for practice and performance. In order to excel in the arts, one has to dedicate themselves to rigorous training, deep understanding, and unwavering perseverance. Given the contemporary digital age, Carnatic music has experienced significant transformations in both learning and performance, largely influenced by technological advancements and the digital era. This paper explores these evolving trends, supported by real-time statistics, to understand their impact on the tradition of Carnatic music.

Accessibility of Carnatic Music Over Time

The introduction of radio and recorded music in the 20th century made music accessible to larger masses. Renowned musicians such as MS Subbulakshmi, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, GNB and others were key in popularizing the Carnatic music in all its glory. With the advent of internet, it is readily available on the hand-held devices.

Earlier, one had to go to temples, sabhas or privately held kacheris in order to listen to Carnatic Music. Even today, this is the ideal way to listen and immerse in the music. But with the technological advances, kacheris started to be recorded on gramophones, cassettes, CDs, pen drives and these days they are uploaded on popular websites like YouTube. There are certain channels in TV and Radio dedicated to music and arts. Even the popular “music seasons” like “Margazhi Sangeethotsav” from Chennai and “Ramanavami Sangeethotsav” from Bangalore are also being uploaded online. Music rasikas and patrons from all over the world can experience these prestigious festivals from the comfort of their homes. YouTube and Facebook also serve as major platforms to showcase one’s talent.

Learning of Carnatic Music

If we trace the evolution of Carnatic music over the years, we see that it has always been dynamic, adapting to change. While maintaining the core values of the

tradition is of utmost importance, it has been the only motivating factor and a strict factor to not dilute the essence of the spirit.

Traditional Learning Methods

Traditionally, music was taught and learnt through the Gurukula system, where students learnt under the direct guidance of a guru. The oral traditions emphasized on shruti, laya, and bhava, and also ensured the learning process was strict and disciplined. The students lived with their guru who imbibed not just music but also the values, tradition, discipline and lifestyle. They learnt nuances of music beyond the structured lessons. The oral tradition played a major role in transmitting the lessons from one generation to another. Students learnt through early morning practices, direct demonstrations and repetitions. The gurus guided the students in all aspects of music and also their life. This created a holistic and deeply intuitive understanding of music. This tradition gave rise to the concept of Guru-Shishya parampara which stands strong till date, where the shishya or the student can trace back his/her guru lineage to the great musician composers like Tyagaraja or Muttuswamy Dikshitar.

Some teachers offer lessons once or twice a week. Students who live near a music teacher can benefit from regular learning. Over time, institutions like Madras Music Academy and universities formalized Carnatic music education, making it accessible to a broader audience. Since then, multiple universities across India offer courses in UG, PG and doctoral levels. Other than regular courses in colleges, many institutions offer self-paced courses where the students could take up the exam at their pace.

Educational Reforms in India and Their Impact on Music Education

- By the 1900s, education incorporated the knowledge systems of classical music through the efforts of Indian nationalists and scholars.
- The Madras Music Academy (1928) was established, after the Indian National Congress session at Madras(1927) with the intention of furthering Carnatic music.¹
- Visva-Bharati University (1921)² of Rabindranath Tagore and the Bhatkhande Music Institute (1926)³ equally aimed at fostering music within the school system.
- The University Education Commission (1948-49) under Dr. S. Radhakrishnan tried to implement the recognition of the arts and music in universities.

- The Kothari Commission (1964-66) brought about the National Policy on Education (1968), which aimed at the integration of arts within education.
- Later, music departments were set up in important universities throughout India, and Carnatic and hindustani music became components of advanced education.

Modern Educational Reforms (1986–Present)

- In 1986, and in 1992 during the second phase, the National Policy on Education focused on the need to include culture such as music in basic and higher education institutions.
- The NAAC Accreditation System of 1994 directed the institutions to enhance the programs offered in fine arts and music.
- The New Education Policy of 2020 added an elective system allowing students to take music as a subject alongside other disciplines.

Impact on Carnatic Music Education

- The evolution from an oral history framework - Gurukula system - to formal schooling made learning more organized.
- Universities and music colleges kept and cataloged works of music, so they were the main sources of protection and their preservation.
- Music has graduate, post-graduate and doctoral courses offered in the universities. Just like any other subject of Social Sciences or the Sciences, music too is offered a scholarly parity or academic status.
- Some universities offer exchange program for music students, thus fostering cultural exchange and learning.

Impact of the Internet on Music Learning

The advent of the internet opened doors to the students to learn from multiple resources apart from their school/college curriculum.

- Technological advances helped students to learn from various gurus online from Zoom or Skype in real time. Even the interested students in far off countries could have Indian teachers in music. Recorded sessions are also available on certain websites, of course could be helpful for advanced students of music. Free and paid online tutorials are also available on platforms like YouTube, Coursera, and Udemy. With these resources becoming more accessible, there has been a significant rise in the number of students enrolling in such courses. For instance, Muzigal, an online music learning platform,

reported a 20% month-on-month growth in revenue and new learners, with over 10,000 learners from 10 countries and 400 teachers as of June 2021. ⁴

- A study on how classical Carnatic music teaching and learning have changed in the digital age found that both teachers and students have embraced online learning, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also pointed out that combining online and in-person sessions makes learning more effective and keeps students motivated. ⁵

Digital Platforms and Performance Accessibility

1. **Digital platforms** like **YouTube** have revolutionized how music is accessed and preserved. It serves both as a learning platform and a stage. We get both archived content and also live streaming facilities. The Music Academy, Madras transitioned into digital platform when COVID-19 hit. Although earlier to that, we find a very few sabhas⁶ sharing recorded kacheri⁷ or live-streamed kacheris. The Music Academy, with the help of HCL, a prominent IT company with initiatives like **HCL Concerts** was able to organise its December Music Season online.⁸ Some of the other Sabhas that stream concerts online are Partha Sabha (Parthasarathy Swami sabha), Indian Institute Of World Culture, Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Ganabharathi Mysuru etc.
2. Also companies like Mphasis have awards like **NCPEDP-Mphasis Universal Design Award**. In the field of music it was given to Mr. Sandeep Ranade for his contributions- creating an app called **Naad Sadhna** for practicing music. Carnatic Singer, Sur Sadhana, Sadhakam, Vox Guru are some of the apps that learners can use to improve themselves. Tanpura Droid and iTanpura are the drone apps for singers.
3. The **tickets** to concerts and performances at auditoriums are sold online. Some of them are streamed online.
4. **Fusion music and collaborations**: Artists all over the world could contact each other through music forums. Simple video communication platforms like Skype or Zoom could be used by the artists. Exclusive software like Jamulus is

open source (GPL) networked music performance software that enables live rehearsing, jamming and performing with musicians located anywhere on the internet.⁹

Technology in Music Documentation and Research

1. **Music Academy, Madras:** Since 2018, steps had been taken by the Music Academy, Madras by way of its presence on digital platforms. Within the organisation, its collection of 4,000 black and white photographs, many of its rare books and several hours of music had been digitised. Its souvenirs from 1935 and the journals from 1930 were also electronically available.¹⁰
2. **SWAYAM** (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) is an Indian government initiative aimed at providing free online courses across various disciplines, including music. This platform enables learners to access high-quality educational resources from esteemed institutions.¹¹ **SWAYAMPARBHA** is a group of 34 DTH channels devoted to telecasting educational programs on a 24/7 basis, utilizing the GSAT-15 satellite. These channels cover diverse subjects, including arts, science, commerce, and vocational courses. For music education, SWAYAM offers several Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) catering to different aspects of Indian music traditions.¹²
3. **Prasar Bharti Archives:** Priceless recordings consisting of those of maestros Ustad Bismillah Khan, M S Subbulakshmi, Begum Akhtar, M Balamuralikrishna and epic Ramcharitmanas, among others present with Prasar Bharati archives are available on a counter at Akashwani Bhawan in New Delhi.¹³ Apart from uploading concerts on its YouTube channel, Prasar Bharati Archives has created decade-wise YouTube playlists of rare audio-video content of historical, political, and cultural significance, starting from the 1930s to the 2000s. The 24X7 classical music channel Raagam is also available on YouTube.
4. **National Cultural Audiovisual Archives (NCAA):** Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi is a premier institute set-up by the

Government of India for research, documentation, preservation and dissemination of Indian arts and to provide a holistic understanding of Indian culture. A large volume of India's cultural wealth, created in the last six decades, is stored in audiovisual form with various governmental and non-governmental institutions and private collections.¹⁴ National Cultural Audiovisual Archives (NCAA) is a project at the IGNCA for the archiving of the cultural audio-visual materials.

5. **Audio streaming platforms** : Patrons of music have been digitizing and uploading the gramophone, cassette recordings to popular streaming platforms like YouTube, Soundcloud¹⁵ etc. Many-a-times these platforms provide free of cost service for uploading the archives.
6. **Journals and Magazines** : Most of the journals related to music and multi-disciplinary subjects are digitized and available online. Some of them include Madras Music Academy journal, Sangeet Galaxy journal, Sruti Magazine, Shanmukha and so on . Music Research Library website contains numerous articles, books, notations, audio files and archived journals, all heaven for a Carnatic music researcher.

Benefits , Challenges and Future Prospects

Benefits:

- Recorded sessions and the courses available gives the students an opportunity of self-paced learning. Learners can opt to learn at their convenience rather than fixed-time.
- Students from other countries can opt from teachers from India, thus being as close to their roots as possible. Learning from an authentic paathantaram¹⁶ ensures proper propagation of the art.
- Online platforms and forums help students to discuss and discover different music traditions.
- Practice apps like Yousician and Riyaz are embracing AI-driven technology to enhance learning experience.They give real-time feedback of the pitch, rhythm and technique.
- Musicians across the world can practice,perform without travelling to meet.International music projects are now driven by cloud-based

collaboration tools. Cross-genre experimentation is becoming very common exploring music environments beyond their immediate cultural background.

- Launching music albums on YouTube or on their websites are becoming extremely popular rather than launching them on CDs.

Challenges & Limitations:

- Lack of direct teacher-student interaction may result in poor absorption of the music material. Choosing to learn online also depends on an individual's aptitude.
- Over-dependent on technology also curbs one's ability to develop a keen ear for the nuances in music.
- Poor internet connectivity can hinder live lessons. Same in the case of Live performances.

Future prospects:

The adaptability towards technology shown by both the new generation and older generation of teachers and students especially after COVID 19 shows us that traditional practices could harmoniously coexist with new innovations. Better audio processing and interactive tools pave the way for a more engaging learning experience. Same is true for Performance streaming online.

Conclusion

Despite online learning being accessible to many students, it presents its own challenges of lack of in-person interaction. The nuanced corrections of voice-modulations and gamakas which are a very essential part of Carnatic music are better learnt in the presence of a guru. The guru intuitively accesses the strengths and struggles of the students and immediately corrects them. Such in-person interactions are not possible online. The technology advancements need to cater to this need of human-touch in the subtle arts. However, AI driven apps and cloud based collaborations have opened a world of infinite possibilities for learners and performers alike. With continuous advancements in audio processing, streaming, and learning tools, future promises to hold good for a blended approach.

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Teaching Phrasal Verbs for the PG Students – A Creative Approach

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Abstract

English Grammar consists of elaborate rules, definitions and exceptions about the structure of the language. It deals with the physical forms of words, words ending, or word beginnings and sentences and not their total meaning as a piece of communications or conversations. Particularly in the creative writings figurative meanings are play significant role. They emphasize beauty and literariness to any text. Phrasal verbs express that have a different meaning from its literal meaning. The present paper's main aim is Teaching Phrasal Verbs for the Post Graduation Students with certain rules and strategies. To achieve the aim, the study framed some of the objectives. Those are prescriptive and descriptive grammar, formation to phrasal verbs, types, methodology of creative approach, techniques for using phrasal verbs. And also, the article discusses the techniques and tools for class-room implication, conventional application methods to the most advanced methods. Finally, conclusion emphasizes with suitable suggestions and findings

Key words: Teaching, Phrasal Verbs, PG students, forms, Methods, Challenges and Strategies.

Introduction:

Grammar is a description of the rules for forming meaningful sentences. It is defined as 'the way words are put together to make correct sentences. English is a non-native language; hence we can't speak fluent and accurate as our mother language. In our mother tongue some vocabulary we do not learn and remember automatically we knew them by listening and reading from our surroundings, such as from TVs, elders, Newspapers, films and readings. Those are proverbs, sayings, idiomatic expressions, phrasal verbs etc. Not only adult's even children too remember easily some local

collocations and sayings. The present article focusses on teaching phrasal verbs for the PG students by conventional and innovative methods.

1. Prescriptive and Descriptive -Formal Grammar:

According to the nature and style of teaching there are two types of grammar. Prescriptive and Descriptive Grammar. Prescriptive-formal grammar is a grammar as a body of knowledge grew out of naming and labelling form words and defining and classifying them as abstract categories. Grammar laid down rules for all time and did not take into account the changing usage of English. Such grammar called Prescriptive Grammar, as it prescribed rules for everyone to follow without questioning. In the class-room the teaching of such grammar was called functional grammar as they proceeded from rules and definitions to examples. According to the standard and grade any methods can adopt.

Coming to Descriptive-functional Grammar, all we knew that a English is a living language. The main purpose is for speaking. It is ever changing and ever growing. So, it is in a state of instability all the time. Phases and Idioms come under spoken and written English is used communicate with others around us.

In teaching a living language, we know that the form of words is less important than their function in communication. In such a situation usage comes first and rules come later. Whatever grammar is learnt, is learnt incidentally in the course of using the language. When the student learns his mother tongue, she/he and her/his “teachers” around use it in situations, and they have to learn it by imitations. Hence only they get the feel of the language unconsciously as it they were, to start with. Later language should also be taught on the same natural ways. Grammar, which follows usage as it develops and describes it from time to time, is called Descriptive Grammar. It takes note of new usage as it appears from time to time in communications.

In class room these types of grammar are called as functional grammar. It is the grammar which functions is speech or practice. It enables the students to speak and write correctly. So, that functional grammar will include in the syllabus for the lower students. Then formal grammar which deals with rules and classifications may be attempted for higher students.

2. Integration of Phrasal Verbs in Language:

In English grammar phrasal verbs often have couple of meanings which make the learners confuse. Generally native speakers are comfortable to use phrasal verbs than

non-native speakers. Therefore, who are learning English as their second or foreign language they need to learn separately and required more practice. Moreover, phrasal verbs are come under advanced level of language grammar. Hence, complete focus and dedication are very much needed.

The study starts with ground work of formation of phrasal verbs in English. Teachers have to give adequate knowledge about the topic before they start application. Some verbs in English are made up of two or more words. These are called Phrasal verbs. They are very common in English and help to make your language sound more idiomatic and fluent. Generally, verbs come after subjects. But when these verbs change theirs meaning and form when they match with preposition or adverb. A verb which is followed by a preposition or an adverb is called a Phrasal Verb. A phrasal verb is a compound verb; (i.e. more than on word) but is expresses a single meaning. The particles do not have a separate meaning (Particle = an adverb or preposition used to make a compound verb).

Example: 1. Put + off (verb + adverb) = put off = postpone (i.e. to do something later)

We have to **put off** the tour programme until next month.

2. Put + up (verb + preposition) = put up = to accommodate.

He can **put up** with any situation.

Moreover, it is not important to know whether the combination is verb+prepostiton or verb+adverb. Whatever it may be it is unimportant but we must consider the phrasal verb as one unit, not a separate words.

Example: 1. Jot down = writer down.

Gaman **jotted down** the information in his dairy.

2. Carry out = to do, to fulfil.

He could not **carry out** his plans successfully.

When phrasal verbs are used in different tenses, the verb changes like any other verb, but the particle remains the same. The following table shows this clearly.

Phrasal Verb	Meaning	Example Sentence	
		Present	Past
Pass on	Convey/communicate	Dhoni passes on your message to me daily.	Dhoni passed on your message to me yesterday.
Look back	To think about something that happened in the past	When I look back , I'm filled with happiness.	When I looked back , I was filled with happiness.

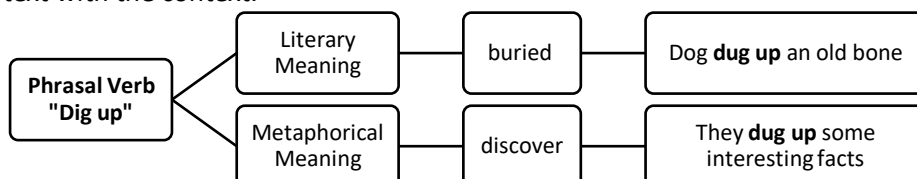
There are different types of phrasal verbs. When we see the first kind of phrasal verbs, they are Transitive and Intransitive phrasal verbs. Some phrasal verbs have an object, which is a noun that receives the action of the verb. Verbs which take an object are known as transitive verbs. These can be separable or inseparable. Some phrasal verbs do not take an object. These verbs are known as intransitive verbs which are not separated.

For Example: 1. Kamal **measured out** the ingredients. (transitive Phrasal Verb)

2. Idris **tied up** the mess (transitive Phrasal Verb)

3. Janani **woke up** (In-transitive Phrasal Verb)

When we talk about the meaning of the Phrasal verbs, they have more than one meanings. They are unrelated which are literal and metaphorical meanings. Literal meanings are textual related and metaphorical are figurative related meanings. Reader has to link such text with the context.



From the above example, literal meaning of 'Dig up' is referring a physical action of a dog. While the second, metaphorical meaning also tells about an action but has figurative/idiomatic meaning.

Another type of phrasal verbs are separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. First one is separable phrasal verbs. If a phrasal verb has an object, the object can sometimes go between the verb and the particle. This does not change the meaning. Phrasal verbs that do this are called Separable phrasal verbs.

Example: 1. She is **picking up** litter.

She is **picking** litter **up**.

She is **picking it up**

Example: 2. Radha **turned on** the light.

Radha **turned** the light **on**.

Coming to the second type of phrasal verbs is inseparable phrasal verbs. Some phrasal verbs cannot be separated. The object must always come after the particle. It can never sit between the verb and the particle. This is true whether the object is a noun or a pronoun.

Ex: 1. Sarala had to run to **get on** the train

They had to run to **get on** it.

2. We have **come across** a new recipe.

3. I need to **go over** my notes.

Similarly, sometimes phrasal verbs will form with nouns and adjectives too.

Ex. 1. We want to **get away** and to somewhere sunny this winter.

2. Kapil asked Gopi to **use more toned-down** language.

3. Methodology for Teaching Phrasal Verbs:

There are different methods can adopt to teach phrasal verbs. Various linguistics have examined how phrasal verbs can best be taught. Larsen Freeman (1991) proposes three phases: presentation, practice and communication. There are two important broad philosophical approaches are suitable to grammar teaching. First one is deductive approach starts with the presumption of a rule and is followed by examples in which the rule is applied. The second is an inductive approach starts with some examples from which a rule is inferred.

Using technology to teach phrasal verbs is most engaging and interactive. Present days there are ample of online sources are available for students. They can use online sources, such as: YouTube videos, Chatbots, Digital storytelling, apps (Quizlet/Kahoot) are best to learn phrasal verbs individually. Innovative technology in the classroom makes the environment more fun and attractive.

4. Strategies to Teaching Phrasal Verbs for PG level students:

Teaching phrasal verbs for PG level students can be quite engaging topic if the teacher adopts suitable methods. The students are able to think abstract ideas to get comprehensively to the context. If teachers inculcate interest among them then that is easy to teach any topic effortlessly. Such classes will be most interesting ever. By following some steps/strategies teachers can make the class-room effective.

Post Graduate students already knew language and basic grammar. Consequently, it is teacher's responsibility to shift students from basic to advance level of grammar skills. So that teachers can choose any method either deductive or inductive. There are some strategies which are helpful for the teachers to follow in the class-room. They are: introduce phrasal verbs by starting with an introduction with context, make the students to understand the selected phrasal verbs by relevance, categorize the phrasal verbs with forms and types (functional/semantical), use and suggest suitable authentic materials to learn them (academic journals/pod casts/lectures), incorporating active and application type of teaching in the class-room, such as role plays, group discussions etc, illustrate by providing stories and sentence where phrasal verbs are used, reinforce by drilling and practice where ever is necessary, ask student to engage activities with technology, encourage the students to do self-study by reading stories, journals etc.,

allocate students assignments and revisions. When students are integrated by these strategies any teacher can help PG students understand and use suitable phrasal verbs effectively in their academic and professional lives.

5. Challenges of Teaching Phrasal Verbs:

As a second language, teaching phrasal verbs in English are not an easy task. There are certain challenges also encounter teachers while teaching. Some of them are discussing here; lack of direct translation from one language (L2) to another language (L1), most of them are complex and having more multiple forms and meanings, at some extent there are more formations, figural meanings can cause confusion, sometimes it is very difficult to identify separable and inseparable phrasal verbs in a sentence, occasionally students cultural back ground and previous knowledge of language will be a big barrier. There are thousands of phrasal verbs in English language, it is highly difficult for the student to recite and retention.

6. Conclusion:

The study aimed to explore the teaching of phrasal verbs for PG students. The findings suggest that teaching advanced vocabulary, phrasal verbs can be difficult but teachers have to come up with innovative tools and advanced techniques. Teachers have to analyse the students' standers and abilities by conducting diagnostic assessment before they teach language grammar. In particular, teaching advance grammar is very essential for the PG students. Therefore, conventional methods should be replaced with Modern methods. Subsequently, class-room will be more attentive and focussed. Presentation, practice and perform are significant steps which should be implemented in the class-room. For any topic, after teaching assessment texts and feedbacks are compulsory. These show how much did the students learn and where are they. Teachers have to prudently understand the key challenges and appropriate strategies in teaching. By following convinced effective approaches and methodologies ultimately any teacher can be successful.

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Unflinching Psychological Strength and Fortitude of Women During and Post-War Times: A Study of the Select Novels of Easterine Kire

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Abstract

No man is stronger than woman. No woman is weaker than man. Indeed women are stronger psychologically, intellectually and spiritually too which is scientifically proven. Struggles not only transform women more vigorous, unyielding and self-reliant, but also elicit the limitless potentiality of woman spirit. Despite the psychological scars and horrors of wars, woman characters in the novels of Easterine Kire moved on in their process of living with indomitable spirit and fortitude. This paper seeks to detect women's struggles during war and post-war times. This paper particularly explores to illuminate the tales of resilience and how women served as a powerful testament of strength, endurance and triumph amidst war times.

Key words: Woman, war, horrors, consequences of war, psychological strength, self-reliant, fortitude, resilience and indomitable spirit.

In recent times North East India is no more a strange land to an average educated Indian. Many writers and scholars are shattering its stereotypical imageries such as insurgency, conflicts and unrest. A significant number of books uncover the North East region as a mosaic of multiple impressions and its holistic image. The most prolific, and much celebrated writer, Easterine Kire, who won the Sahitya Akademi Award for her novel *Spirit Nights* in September 2024, deftly depicts the lived realities of Naga people. During the British rule, the Nagas witnessed the two great world wars, immediately they embarked on an independence war against the Indian army. The impact of these wars reshaped Naga People who are known for their bravery, head-

hunting and war fare skills even made them much stronger and smarter. Especially women have preserved in the face of difficulties a long lasting legacy of courage and tenacity. Woman characters in the novels of Easterine Kire display an indomitable spirit, unbreakable grit, and fortitude at the times of misfortunes.

Easterine Kire's writings illustrate not only an enchanting and vibrant Naga culture which fascinate the outside world but also bespeak of the experiences and struggles faced by the indigenous Naga people. This paper particularly demonstrates the resilient power of women, their strength and endurance at the times of adversities.

Kire's maiden novel *A Naga village remembered* (2003), later republished and renamed with the title *Sky is My Father* (2018) which is also the first Naga novel written in English, begins with Kovi, a warrior, and Vipiano his sister, the wife of a slain warrior and her two young sons Levi and Lato. Vipiano, a tall and dignified woman works hard in the fields as well as at home to give her sons the semblance of a normal family.

"It was rare to hear her laugh... the wind and the sun had carved harsh lines on her face... the sun was beating down on them now, yet she was reluctant to stop for the midday meal."

(Sky is My Father, pg 12)

She also strives to fill a father's place for her sons, turning severe in some matters and giving them licence in some matters. She is a stern and courageous mother. She wisely teaches her sons the importance of all the traditions, customs and values of their clan and follows strictly. She brings up her elder son Levi as a well-bodied warrior, like his late father, besides an avid wrestler. When Levi wants to join a raid on the neighbouring village, she doesn't say no, but seriously instructs to be extra careful as death stalks a warrior. Moreover, as a person she experienced the pangs of her husband's death early in the life.

"Although their father had died, their mother's strict adherence to tradition and the help of the community mould them to become responsible and proud citizens of the village."

(Insider Perspectives, pg 33)

Kire's another novel *Mari* (2010) is a journey of a woman from a naive teen age girl Mari, to a matured woman. Mari's father, who is a treasury employee in the

British government, teaches his daughters and son to be independent and to learn new skills. So when the school is closed in view of the war, she joins as a supervisor in a contract group which is constituted for the construction of new roads so that the army jeeps can freely ply. On the site, staff Sergeant Victor, a Royal Engineer meets Mari, proposes her and gets the approval of her parents for marriage. Meanwhile the intrusion of Japanese army gets intensified in the town of Kohima, Mari's family gets dispersed, all the residents are forced to leave their town as the place is no longer safe for civilians.

Destiny unfolds numerous hardships to Mari. She, along with her younger sisters moves from one place to another place to escape the brutal Japanese army. They forage for herbs on the shortage of food. While staying in the huts and cattle sheds, their long nights become sleepless due to the intermittent sounds of rifle shots and exploding grenades. One moonless night they hear the sound of a tiger growling outside their hut. Mari pretends to be sleeping, but in reality she is not. Running through the jungles, they come across wounded army where some soldiers have their arms in slings and some others with blood-soaked bandages.

Sergeant Victor, Mari's fiancé, fighting against the Japanese army in Kohima, is shot dead by a sniper just before the end of war. In spite of this terrible pain, she chooses life and resolves to carry Vic's child as a token of their love. At the age of eighteen she becomes mother.

"Mari's courage and determination amidst the adversity of war and aftermath have given her a new identity...Mari's journey of self-strengthening starts with Victor, who gave her a new name 'Marigold'."

(Keeper of Stories, pg 150-151)

She couldn't believe Kohima becoming the carnage of human destruction. Her house is badly damaged in bombing. They found unexploded mortar shells, used cartridges and unused ammunitions in and around their house.

After a few months, Dickie, a British soldier comes into her life and fathers her second child. After India becomes independent, Dickie is ordered to leave India. He puts forth two tough options before Mari, either to accompany him with two daughters or to stay with her parents. She decides to stay with her parents. Later she joins a Nursing college and becomes a senior staff nurse. Patrick, who works in Assam Oil Company, proposes her to marry.

"You have been through so much already. No one deserves as much as you have got from life. Please give me the chance to make you happy. I want to open a new chapter in your life." (Mari, pg 159)

Mari and Patrick get married and live together for forty years.

Kire's another novel *Bitter Wormwood* (2011) starts with Vilau birthing Mose in 1937 in a field shed. Birthing, while out in the field is not uncommon phenomenon in those days. After a few months, Luo-o, Vilau's husband gets crushed by a tree which is selected for ritual when he is felling it down. Vilau mourns her husband's death for years. Khrienuo, Vilau's mother-in-law is just as grieved as Vilau by the loss of her only son, nevertheless she takes it more wisely as she has had her own share of losses in life. Khrienuo, a very hardworking and self-respecting woman has toiled hard to feed her only son in her young widowhood. She never wanted to become a burden to the family or clan. She says,

"If life is hard to you, you simply harden yourself, so its griefs are easier to bear. That's the only way to meet it."
(*Bitter Wormwood*, pg 22)

When Mose is five years old, Vilau, and her mother-in-law, along with Mose flee the Japanese invasion of their village and seek refuge in the neighbouring village. They stay in an abandoned house, share food with the villagers. When the area is shelled, they leave the place by trekking several jungle paths and camp in the woods. On their way in jungle, they witness many horrors of war such as bombing, war planes crashing with a deafening sound into some rocks.

After the end of war Vilau, and Khrienuo together bring up Mose.

"Mose's upbringing by his mother and grandmother in the absence of a male role model does not impair his abilities or worth as a young man."
(*Keeper of Stories*, pg 93)

Mose, moved by the incident of his grandmother's death in the hands of Indian army, joins as underground member of Naga National Council at the age of nineteen. However, due to the internal splits and factional killings, the noble cause of independent Naga nation gets degraded, eventually Mose returns to the life of a normal citizen after working for seven years in the undergrounds.

“21 years without any respite, or any lasting solutions. It was a man’s war. If it had been left to women, may be they would have talked it over and sorted it out long back...”

(Bitter Wormwood, pg 113)

In the novel *Sky is my father*, Vipiano single-handedly raises her two young sons by exercising duties as a mother, teacher and as a bread winner in order to transform her sons into responsible citizens and good human beings. In the novel *Bitter Wormwood*, both Vilau and her mother-in-law Khrienuo bring up their only sons fulfilling the role of father too, as they both have unfortunately attained widowhood at an early age. In the novel *Mari*, Mari alone brings up her two daughters without the help of their father, completes her Nursing course and settles as a nurse.

To conclude, women have always been strong, independent and resilient even though they are bound in the confinement of patriarchal norms. It has always been a trend to plethora of women to stand as examples of incredible role models and total rock stars exhibiting their full potentiality and riding more than two horses at a time. Many woman characters in the novels of Easterine Kire with their unwavering faith and determination live in the minds of readers as a constant source of inspiration.

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The Shadow Side of the Screen: Exploring Negativity in Telugu Serials and Evaluating Human Psyche

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Abstract

It was entertaining; It was emotional; It was interesting; it was engaging. As time passed by, it became strenuous; it became irritating. These lines are about the evergreen serials that do not have any greenery but barrenness in it. By greenery it meant, harmony, peace, positivity and by barrenness: a nauseous negativity, cunning conspiracy, illicit relationships, demeanour of female characters, the list goes on and on which shows the shadow side of the serials. It was best at times. However, it is the other way round at all times.

Telugu serials have become an integral part of the media landscape in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, captivating audiences with their fascinating narratives, characters, and presenting familial and social issues. This paper presents the findings of a survey conducted to understand viewership patterns and the perceived impact. In addition to this, the study explores demographics, influence of serials on lifestyle, values and social perception thereby showcasing the role of Telugu serials in shaping contemporary society. The emphasis on different aspects in Telugu Serials, impact on viewers, and their comment on them in turn gave a scope to analyse the human psyche behind watching a serial. The impact of serials especially on the kids unfolds the interesting and unnoticed facts which are unveiled through the survey. Furthermore, the study explores the changes expected by the viewers.

Key Words: Villainy, Negativity, Impact, Stereotypical Mindset, Misrepresentation of Characters

Introduction

Serial, a relaxation for working women; a good old companion for every old age person; a great pass time for every home maker. Serials hold a significant place in the industry of entertainment, particularly in India. Telugu serials, with their distinct cultural nuances and storytelling styles, have gained a large and loyal following. Now,

the question is, 'are the viewers still getting the same sort of relief and relaxation that is expected?', 'Is it aggravating the action or soothing the scene?' The most welcomed program by millions of families is getting degraded gradually. The negative layers of the serial held the responsibility for it is being negotiated in this paper. This study aims to delve into the negativity in Telugu serials, examining the impact they have on its viewers. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for comprehending its influence on society.

Methodology

The quantitative analysis with Linear Snowball Sampling method where one participant refers the other is used. Because in the world of OTT, the number of serial viewers has been decreased and the study examines people who watch serials regularly to arrive at the right conclusions. In this regard, a structured questionnaire was designed and the data is collected through google forms and audio recordings. The sample included 202 people representing 11 districts of Andhra Pradesh, 4 districts of Telangana and 2 districts of Karnataka with age groups varying from 17 to 78 years. Students, working people and home makers have responded. The questionnaire focused on: age, occupation, reasons for watching and not watching a serial, number of serials they watch, perception on negative portrayal of women characters, impact on children and also the expected changes in the serials.

It is found out that 54% watch serials. Among them 31.8% watch daily, 49% watch quite a few times in a week and 19.2% watch once in a week. Again, in this, 35.6% watch to pass the time, 21.2% for relaxation and 43.2% for entertainment. More or less, everyone watches it for refreshment in their hectic lives.

The other responses include: while viewers of age group, 40-78 watch it for relaxation, the teenagers and children below 13 years old watch it accompanying their family members as they turn on the TV only for serial and there is no scope for them to change the channel thereby making it a daily ritual. Apart from this, few from the age group of 17-28 responded that they get a vivid pleasure by commenting on the characters and their exaggerated emotions. Also, the teen groups, watch it for the hero or heroines which shows the personal liking towards the actors being responsible for making them watch, irrespective of the content. The other interesting yet dangerous response is that to know the kind of people in the society. This is something that one should stop and think about as everything in the serial is not completely reliable. Though it is inspired from daily life situations, it is quite exaggerated at times.

Now, the hundred-million-dollar question is why few do not watch serials though they have time. Of course, it is one's own choice. But beyond that there are many underlying reasons as follow.

Plethora of Toxicity:

It is pointed out that constant conflicts, conspiracy, back stabbing, jealousy, greed and revenge which creates an atmosphere of toxicity is not something that the viewers are expecting. The relentless emphasis on negativity is in fact normalizing the behaviour which in turn influences the viewers. "What happens in Indian TV serials is plotting, conspiracies, unusual family politics, etc." (Raina c599). This also led to reinforce negative stereotypes and aggravating the real-life family tensions due to the constant portrayal of in-laws as villains. The portrayal of illicit relationships led to the arousal of suspicion in wives and husbands on each other which would affect familial relationships.

Portrayal of Women Characters

As the majority of the viewers are women, the portrayal of female characters way too negative is not really enjoyable. The perception on women will be greatly affected in real time situations. Few have boldly pointed out that no woman is such a big villain in reality. To this, they added one more point saying that portrayal of all these made an innocent child to pose a question to his/her mother. The question was 'are really women that bad and negative?' Even few said that due to these negativities there is a possibility of people being influenced and becoming so negative as portrayed, thinking that it is normal. The serials with exaggerated anti-social elements portray that woman is a prime villain to the other women. (Savithri 643). Portrayal of women characters in a positive light is expected with emphasis on familial bonds especially between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law with a sensible story like 1990s serials are being expected.

The Perpetuation of Regressive Gender Roles

The portrayal of women as manipulative vamps or victims is disheartening for the serial lovers to watch. It often emphasizes on outdated and harmful gender roles. The good women are often shown as submissive and sacrificing all the time, while the bad women are shown as cunning, deceptive, manipulative and selfish leading to the misunderstanding of women in reality. The excessive portrayal of negativity is often over shadowing the portrayal of independent and empowered women curtailed by the negative characters.

In addition, women are portrayed as weak, emotional while men are expected to be strong, aggressive and dominant, which are depicted from both their external

appearances and internal qualities. It is found out from the survey that the negativity in life can be true or false but should not be highlighted as it will leave an indelible mark on the viewers.

The Glamorization of Revenge

A Conflict followed by revenge is the plot in almost every serial. Even the characters played by children are presented in such a way that they have grown up with the only intention to take revenge there by normalising it. Yet another fact to be noted is the portrayal of criminals. "The criminals in the serials will continue to escape punishment." ("A Survey analysis" 77). The characters embark on different schemes and conspire to take revenge. This actually shows the wrong notion that one can take law into their own hands. Due to this, there is a danger of people thinking it as acceptable and admirable at times. It conceals the importance of communication, the beauty of compromise and legal recourse in resolving disputes. The portrayal of the conflicts, revenge led to the darker aspects of life which in turn makes the hectic life melancholic. 10% of the respondents pointed out that it is irritating to watch the criminal thoughts of mother-in-law, illegal relationships and harassment as main plot.

The Exaggeration of Emotions

Telugu serials are known for their rich dramatic flair. However, sometimes due to the frequent engagement of characters in exaggerated and over-the-top reactions, over use of facial expressions, loud arguments and tearful outbursts, often creates anxiety and makes viewers perplexed because it will be difficult for some viewers to distinguish between healthy and natural emotional responses and theatrical displays.

The Impact

The impact of serial on viewers is really extending its boundaries like a wildfire conquering their minds, affecting their interpersonal relationships making it harder to establish healthy boundaries. All this can be considered as the effect of constant barrage of negativity which desensitizes viewers to real-world problems sometimes making people have a cynic view of the world due to too much negativity. It is surprising to know that a woman in mid 40s and few students mentioned that it increases anxiety levels and it makes them tensed though they watch hardly one or two serials, especially the last five minutes. Whereas a seventy-nine years old woman gave a logical answer stating that she does not take any tension though she watches 13 serials per day and it never increased her anxiety levels as it was all creation and she watches it to pass the time disproving the fact that 'age matters in the arousal of anxiety levels.' One more factor to be responsible for anxiety is high background music score. Furthermore, 50% of the respondents said though they have time they do not want to watch as it disrupts mental peace.

The impact falls on children as well. The influence and imitation of the serials went to the extent of a child cutting the hair of his mother after watching the same in the serial. Children often imitate what they see. Be it crime, abuse, dialog delivery, holding grudges or violence. Parents feel that they are at times addicted to the screen ignoring their studies. Moreover, the concept of polygamy and illicit relations are too much for their age. Few even refuse food if the serial is off. Often, they are being emotional if their favourite character is being abused. They are admiring the appearance and are dressing up like them. The suffocating children's characters also leave an impact on sensitive minds. A 12-year-old child pointed out that directors should be blamed for what is being shown. On the other hand, as parents watch the serial, children are not getting ample and quality time to spend with the parents. Because, they are very much into serials and this in turn makes the child depressed.

The Age-old Ideas and The Forever Lag

The survey shows that the audience are expecting something new but not the same old revenge stories with women in negative sadistic roles. Furthermore, it presents illogical scenes and situations with multiple marriages, plastic surgeries, deaths, comebacks and many more. (Raina c600). 14.5% responded that the frustrating aspect of the serials is lagging the same scene for days together which turns out to be a dream after all.

A Call for Change

The survey suggests many changes that are being expected from the serial lovers. The viewers are expecting creative story lines, meaningful characters which inspires and delivers a message with minimal negativity. In addition to this, as serials are the highest viewed shows, awareness on social issues are expected which presents the demand of edutainment. Ultimately, the power to change is in the hands of creators. They need to be mindful of the impact of the stories and strive to create entertaining content with transformative ideas.

"Television offers a wide range of potential role-models, both positive and negative." (Ahmed 2). It is true that negativity cannot be eliminated as life is a mixture of positive and negative aspects. For some, negative things may happen more often and for some positive. But when it is portrayed in a national television, there should not be an imbalance in this by portraying negativity more.

Beyond the horizon

This questionnaire was asked to reshare it within their friend circle. But, not even a single person shared it to a male member of their contacts unless asked which presents the stereotypical mindset that only women watch serials. However, it is not true. The notion that homemakers watch serials and most of the employees do not watch because of no time for them is disproved. There are few people who does not watch serials though they have time to watch them. On top of these, there was an underlying psychological connection with the serials. Consciously, the participants responded about the serials they watch. But, down the line they did not realise that they are finding some or the other person whom they know personally in the characters which is an unnoticed fact. Few even felt emotional while they are commenting on a particular character.

Conclusion

In the era of humiliating serial lovers, one should understand that the SERIAL accompanied every lonely person many a time. Despite the increasing negativity, serial lovers are expecting changes which shows their everlasting love for serials. The reason behind the huge following is that the viewers are so much connected to the emotions that are shown in the serials are relatable to their real-life family situations. (Pitla 64). They laugh, cry and fight with the characters within the psychological borders.

It is true that many serials offer entertainment and the narratives one can connect but the growing concern is regarding the negativity that impacts viewers' perceptions reinforcing harmful societal norms. However, if expectations meet reality, the glory of serials can be brought again eliminating the shadow (negativity) to the abyss of Asuras, celebrating serial extending harmony, peace and positivity in the current scenario.

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Indigenous Women in Environmental Conservation: An Interdisciplinary Approach

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Abstract

Indigenous women have long played a critical role in environmental conservation, acting as stewards of biodiversity, protectors of natural resources, and transmitters of traditional ecological knowledge. Despite their significant contributions, they often face socio-economic barriers, lack representation in environmental policymaking, and experience the adverse impacts of climate change disproportionately. The interdisciplinary perspective of this study underscores the need for an inclusive conservation paradigm that values Indigenous women's contributions. Their role extends beyond traditional ecological knowledge; they are leaders, activists, and policymakers advocating for environmental justice and sustainability. Bridging Indigenous wisdom with contemporary scientific and policy approaches can lead to more resilient and adaptive conservation strategies. As global environmental challenges intensify, acknowledging and empowering Indigenous women in conservation efforts is crucial for achieving long-term ecological sustainability.

This study contributes to the broader discourse on gender, Indigenous rights, and environmental conservation by highlighting the need for an integrative and participatory approach. Recognizing Indigenous women as key stakeholders in environmental governance can foster more sustainable and just conservation policies. Future research should further explore mechanisms to institutionalize Indigenous women's knowledge in global conservation frameworks, ensuring that their voices and expertise shape environmental decision-making processes. This article explores their role in environmental conservation, the challenges they encounter, and how recent interdisciplinary trends are recognizing and integrating their contributions into global sustainability efforts. Through an in-depth analysis of policy frameworks, case studies, and collaborative conservation models, the paper highlights the transformative potential of empowering indigenous women in environmental governance.

Throughout history, indigenous women have been integral to global environmental management and conservation efforts. These women have led the charge in attempts to save the biodiversity and natural resources that support their way of life because of their strong links to the land, traditional ecological knowledge, and leadership roles in their communities. This paper examines the crucial roles played by indigenous women environmentalists, the difficulties they encounter, and the significance of amplifying their voices in international environmental decision-making processes. For millennia, women of Indigenous have been responsible for protecting their communities' natural resources, including land and water. They have been able to create sustainable practices that are in balance with the ecology because to their lived experiences and traditional knowledge. Indigenous women have been instrumental in protecting biodiversity, overseeing natural resources, and transferring this important knowledge to future generations. However, indigenous women's voices are often overlooked in international environmental decision-making processes. Recognizing this gap, this paper has been initiated with the following objectives to examine their role in conservation, analyze the challenges they face, and explore strategies for amplifying their contributions in environmental governance.

Objectives

- To examine the role of indigenous women in environmental conservation and sustainable resource management.
- To analyze the impact of traditional ecological knowledge on contemporary conservation efforts.
- To highlight the challenges indigenous women, face in environmental activism and policy advocacy.
- To explore interdisciplinary trends in recognizing and integrating indigenous women's contributions to sustainability.
- To propose policy recommendations for empowering indigenous women in environmental governance

Methodology

This research is based on a qualitative approach, relying entirely on secondary data sources. A comprehensive analysis of literature, case studies, and policy frameworks has been conducted to understand the role of indigenous women in environmental conservation.

An extensive review of peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and policy reports was undertaken to examine the intersection of gender, indigenous knowledge,

and environmental conservation. This review provides a theoretical foundation for understanding indigenous women's contributions to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. Then Case studies, such as the Chipko Movement, the Seed Savers Network in India and the Green Belt Movement of Kenya and community-led forest conservation initiatives in Latin America, were analyzed to highlight successful examples of indigenous women-led conservation efforts.

A critical review of international agreements such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, and national environmental policies was conducted to assess the recognition and support provided to indigenous women in conservation efforts. Finally, the data collected from literature, case studies, and policy documents were thematically categorized to identify major trends, challenges, and opportunities for indigenous women in environmental governance.

Findings and Discussion

Environmental Conservation as a Catalyst for Social and Gender Transformation

Environmental conservation extends beyond ecological preservation; it is fundamentally a social transformation issue that intersects with gender and indigenous knowledge systems. Indigenous women, as primary caretakers of natural resources, play a crucial role in maintaining biodiversity, practicing sustainable agriculture, and protecting ecosystems. Their traditional ecological knowledge, passed down through generations, offers valuable insights into climate resilience and resource management. However, structural inequalities, land dispossession, and climate change disproportionately impact these communities, making gender-sensitive environmental policies essential. Recognizing and integrating indigenous women's leadership in conservation efforts not only strengthens environmental sustainability but also fosters social equity, cultural preservation, and inclusive development.

Indigenous women's traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) is integral to conservation. They possess deep expertise in areas such as sustainable agriculture, medicinal plant use, water conservation, and biodiversity management. For instance, Indigenous women in the Amazon play a vital role in seed preservation and agroforestry, ensuring food security and ecosystem health. Similarly, in Africa, Maasai women engage in sustainable livestock management, preserving grazing lands and water resources. These practices contribute significantly to climate resilience and environmental sustainability.

Many Indigenous women have emerged as frontline defenders of the environment, leading movements against deforestation, mining, and land encroachment. Notable examples include the leadership of Indigenous women in the Standing Rock protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline and the activism of Amazonian women resisting deforestation and industrial exploitation. Their activism highlights the intersection of environmental conservation, Indigenous rights, and gender equality.

Interdisciplinary Recognition of Indigenous Women's Role in Conservation

Recent disciplinary trends highlight the growing recognition of indigenous women's contributions to environmental conservation across various fields. In environmental studies and ecology, traditional ecological knowledge is increasingly valued as a vital tool for climate action, aligning with frameworks like the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Gender studies emphasize feminist perspectives on environmental justice, showcasing indigenous women's leadership in resisting deforestation, land encroachment, and the adverse effects of climate change. Meanwhile, development studies focus on eco-feminism and sustainable development, examining how women-led conservation efforts promote both environmental sustainability and community empowerment. These interdisciplinary approaches reinforce the role of indigenous women as key agents of social and environmental transformation.

Social Transformation Through Indigenous-Led Conservation

Indigenous-led conservation is driving significant social transformation by influencing policies, empowering communities, and gaining legal recognition. Indigenous women have been at the forefront of environmental activism, advocating for land rights and forest conservation through movements like the Chipko Movement in India and protests led by Amazonian women. Their leadership extends to sustainable agriculture, water conservation, and the ethical management of natural resources, ensuring long-term ecological balance while strengthening local communities. Additionally, governments and international organizations are increasingly acknowledging indigenous governance models in environmental policies, integrating traditional knowledge into legal frameworks. These efforts highlight the critical role of indigenous women in shaping a more sustainable and equitable future.

Bridging Traditional and Modern Approaches

Bridging traditional ecological knowledge with modern scientific advancements has become a key strategy in addressing climate challenges and promoting sustainable conservation. Indigenous communities possess deep-rooted environmental wisdom, which, when combined with scientific research, enhances

climate resilience and biodiversity preservation. Collaborative efforts between indigenous leaders, researchers, and policymakers are fostering innovative solutions that respect cultural heritage while addressing contemporary environmental issues. These partnerships not only strengthen conservation practices but also drive broader social transformation by ensuring that indigenous perspectives are integrated into global environmental policies and sustainability initiatives.

Indigenous Women's Crucial Role in Environmental Conservation

For a very long time, indigenous women have tended to the natural surroundings of their communities all over the world. Indigenous women, often known as "adivasi" women, have been instrumental in protecting biodiversity, maintaining natural resources, and dispersing ecological knowledge throughout India. They are indispensable leaders in the battle against climate change and environmental degradation because of their strong ties to the land and their unshakable dedication to sustainability.

The Relationship between Indigenous Cultures and the Natural World

The cultural and spiritual practices of indigenous women are deeply intertwined with their natural environments. Many indigenous groups in India view the relationship between humans and environment as a highly symbiotic and interwoven one, rather than one that is disconnected. The natural world is frequently seen in indigenous cosmologies as a living, breathing creature that has to be respected and taken care of. Since they are frequently the main guardians of the land, the woods, and the water bodies within their communities, indigenous women's duties and responsibilities are especially clear examples of this holistic worldview.

Preserving Ecology Knowledge

Traditional ecological knowledge has long been entrusted to indigenous women in India. This extensive body of knowledge covers a wide range of topics, such as the delicate balance of ecosystems, sustainable farming and hunting methods, and the local flora and animals. Native American women guarantee that their societies may survive in balance with the natural world despite quick changes to their surroundings by transferring this knowledge to the next generation.

Indigenous women are increasingly recognized as leaders in environmental movements. They advocate for the rights of their communities and the protection of their lands from industrial exploitation, such as mining, logging, and large-scale agriculture. Their leadership has been pivotal in many grassroots environmental campaigns globally.

They are often responsible for the cultivation and preservation of a wide variety of plants, including medicinal herbs, crops, and wild foods. This stewardship is essential for maintaining genetic diversity and the health of ecosystems

Plants used as medicine: Locally available medicinal herbs are identified and used with precision by indigenous women.

Sustainable agriculture: They prioritize soil health and biodiversity via the use of conventional, low-impact agricultural practices.

Forest management: Indigenous women play a crucial role in monitoring and protecting the forests that their communities depend on.

Women as Biodiversity Guardians: Indigenous women are the principal custodians of biodiversity in their communities because of their close contact with the natural environment. They protect a variety of plant and animal species, many of which are essential to the regional ecology and the lives of their people by means of their customs and ecological expertise.

Seed Preservation: Indigenous women are responsible for carefully selecting, storing, and sharing a diverse array of seeds, which are essential for maintaining agricultural biodiversity and food security.

Wildlife Protection: In their communities, women are frequently the ones who take the initiative to stop poaching and habitat damage, as well as to monitor and save endangered species.

Ecological Preservation: Indigenous women maintain the resilience and long-term health of the ecosystems that support their communities via the use of traditional land management techniques.

Challenges Faced by Indigenous Women in Conservation Efforts

Indian indigenous women have made vital contributions to environmental protection, yet they frequently encounter enormous obstacles and hurdles in their work. In addition to gender-based discrimination, their communities' marginalization may restrict their access to resources, decision-making opportunities, and acknowledgement for their contributions. Additionally, the encroachment of development projects and the exploitation of natural resources on indigenous lands can threaten the very ecosystems that these women have dedicated their lives to protecting.

Despite their critical role, Indigenous women often face systemic barriers, including gender discrimination, legal restrictions, and socio-economic marginalization. Many conservation policies fail to recognize their contributions or

exclude them from decision-making processes. Additionally, land dispossession and climate change pose significant threats to the ecosystems they protect. The lack of institutional support further limits their capacity to engage in formal conservation initiatives.

Limited Access: The lack of land ownership, financial means, and technical training that indigenous women frequently experience can make it difficult for them to take the lead in and fully engage in conservation efforts.

Absence of Representation: Even though they have extensive knowledge of the regional ecosystems and sustainable practices, indigenous women are usually underrepresented in environmental decision-making processes.

Displacement and Disruption: The customs and knowledge systems that native women have upheld for many generations may be seriously disrupted by the uprooting of their communities and the deterioration of their lands.

Despite the challenges they face, indigenous women in India have been at the forefront of numerous successful conservation initiatives. These women-led efforts have not only protected the environment but have also empowered their communities and inspired others to follow in their footsteps. few examples are given blow:

Conservation Initiatives Led by Indigenous Women

Chipko Movement: The Chipko movement, which was led by indigenous women in the Himalayan area in the 1970s, was successful in stopping the cutting of forests by opposing the loggers and embracing the trees. This historic occasion sparked similar environmental protests throughout the world and assisted in protecting the biodiversity of the area.

Seed Savers Network: Native women in the state of Jharkhand have created a network of seed savers to guarantee the survival of customary crop types and the ongoing use of sustainable agriculture in their communities.

Management of Community Forests: Indigenous women have led community-based forest management efforts in the northeastern state of Nagaland, protecting their ancestral lands and the abundant biodiversity they support.

Women in Environmental Conservation

In many parts of the world, the role of women in environmental conservation is crucial, and this is especially true for indigenous women in India. These women live in close connection with nature. They depend on forests, rivers, and land for their daily needs. This close relationship with nature gives them unique knowledge and skills that are essential for protecting the environment. In India, many indigenous people live in rural areas where they rely on natural resources. Indigenous women play multiple roles as farmers, gatherers of forest products, and keepers of traditional knowledge. They

have a deep understanding of how to use these resources sustainably. For example, they know which plants can be used for medicine, which trees are best for fuel, and how to grow crops without harming the soil.

Indigenous women in India also play a significant role in water conservation. In many villages, women manage water resources for their households. They collect water from rivers, wells, and ponds, making sure it is used carefully and not wasted. Some areas face severe water shortages due to changes in climate and overuse. Women have adapted by finding new ways to conserve water, such as building small dams and rainwater harvesting systems. These efforts help ensure a reliable water supply for their communities.

In addition to managing resources, indigenous women also pass on their knowledge to future generations. They teach children about the importance of nature and how to take care of it. This education is essential for keeping traditional practices alive and ensuring that new generations understand the value of their natural surroundings. Despite their important role, indigenous women often face challenges. They may lack access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. These challenges can make it harder for them to continue their conservation work. However, many organizations and government programs are now recognizing the importance of indigenous women and are working to support them. By providing training, resources, and platforms for their voices to be heard, these initiatives help women continue their important work for the environment.

Indigenous women in India are an essential part of environmental conservation. Their close relationship with nature, traditional knowledge, and daily practices contribute significantly to sustainable resource management. Whether through movements like Chipko, water conservation efforts, or education, these women play a vital role in protecting the environment for future generations. Recognizing and supporting their contributions is crucial for the continued health of our planet.

Policy Frameworks and the Way Forward

Integrating Indigenous women's knowledge into formal conservation policies is essential for sustainable environmental governance. International frameworks such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognize the value of Indigenous knowledge in conservation. However, implementation remains inconsistent.

Governments and conservation organizations must adopt participatory approaches, ensuring that Indigenous women have a seat at the decision-making table. Community-based conservation programs and legal frameworks that protect Indigenous land rights can enhance their ability to contribute effectively to environmental sustainability.

Conclusion

Indigenous women are key actors in environmental conservation, applying their traditional ecological knowledge and activism to protect biodiversity and natural resources. However, they face numerous socio-political and legal challenges that hinder their full participation in environmental governance. This study underscores the need for inclusive conservation policies that integrate Indigenous women's knowledge systems with contemporary scientific approaches. Recognizing their contributions and ensuring their participation in environmental decision-making will lead to more effective and sustainable conservation strategies. Future research should focus on mechanisms to institutionalize Indigenous women's leadership in global conservation efforts, fostering collaboration between Indigenous communities, policymakers, and scientific institutions.

It can be concluded that indigenous women in India have been the unsung heroes of environmental conservation for generations. Through their deep connection to the land, their traditional ecological knowledge, and their unwavering commitment to sustainability, they have played a vital role in preserving biodiversity, mitigating climate change, and ensuring the well-being of their communities. By recognizing and empowering these women as leaders in sustainable development, we can unlock their full potential to address the pressing environmental challenges of our time and create a more just and equitable future for all.

Indigenous women are at the forefront of environmental conservation, leveraging their deep connection to the land and traditional knowledge to combat climate change and biodiversity loss. Recognizing their contributions and integrating their perspectives into policy frameworks is crucial for global sustainability. Empowering indigenous women in conservation efforts can lead to a more equitable, resilient, and ecologically sustainable future.

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From Subjugation to the Self-Realization in Marriage:Jai Nimbkar's *A Joint Venture*

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Abstract

Jai Nimbkar (1932) is a significant writer who published her novels in the Post-Independence India. As a brilliant student of Sociology, she focuses on the themes of Indian Women problems particularly in the socio-economic context, inequality of the sexes, place of woman in her family and society, her search for personal identity and the meaning of marriage. *A Joint Venture* deals with the predicament of the Indian woman as she comes face to face with the institution of marriage. The novelist presents a woman who loses her 'self' in marriage does not revolt in the beginning of her married life, but wants to revolt and later on reconciles to the situation. An attempt is made in this paper to discuss Indian Women's endeavour for space, assertion and man-woman relationship in marriage in Jai Nimbkar's *A Joint Venture*.

The protagonist, Jyoti realizes how she allowed herself to be dictated by her husband, Ram's opinions and decisions denying herself in the process, the precious little things she wanted to do and cherish in her life. She seems to have realized that marriage may not offer the best of all possible worlds to a man or a woman, for neither a man nor a woman is complete in himself or herself. She also believes that solutions to problems within relationships, does not lie in walking away from them, but rather in rebuilding the relationships in such a way as to give little place for problems to crop up. She finally decides to retain her identity and assert herself even if she continues to live with her husband Ram without breaking marriage.

Key Words:MarriageRelationship EducationAssertionRealization

The most fundamental value of human life is based on the emotions of love and happiness. The institution of marriage ensures protection, love and happiness for any woman to have a blissful life. But in India, the marital life of a woman is based on

lot of restrictions and constraints. Jai Nimbkar published her novels in the Post-Independence India. This post-Independence India witnessed a spurt of fiction writing by women writers of greater equality and depth. These writers were more realistic in their approach than those of the first generation and were able to project a vision of their own self. It has become easier for women than men to write about themselves and awaken the other suppressed women. Commenting about the urge for creating among women, Meena Shirwadkar rightly opines;

As women received education, they began to feel an increasing urge to voice their feelings. The awareness of individuality, the sense of incompatibility with their tradition-bound surroundings, resentment of male-dominated ideas of morality and behaviour, problems at home and at place of work or in society-all came up in a welter for projection. (Shirwadkar, 201)

A woman's self is awakened by the new education system. As a result of this she has started thinking of independent and self-reliant life. And in order to translate this thinking into reality, she has started fighting against her own timid self as well as man's protectoral shell. Thus, the modern woman has become conscious of her destination, viz, to liberate herself from the clutches of unjust taboos and customs forced on her by the male dominance. An attempt is made in this paper to discuss Indian women's endeavour for space, assertion and man-woman relationship in marriage in the novel, *A Joint Venture* by Jai Nimbkar.

Jai Nimbkar's *A Joint Venture* deals with place of Woman in her family and society and her search for self in marriage. The protagonist Jyoti, is an educated middle-class housewife in urbanized Pune, who suffers due to the inequality of sexes and loss of self in marriage. According to T.S Borate, the novel deals with "... the middle-class {married} woman's identity crisis in the contemporary male-dominated Indian society ..." (Borate, 84) This novel opens with the startling decision of Jyoti to leave her husband, Ram after having spent a happy married life of thirty long years with him. Ram is a successful and a well established business man in western Maharashtra. He is scared of Jyoti's emotional upsurge which has led to an astounding situation that threatens to break their marriage. Hence, he advises Jyoti to think over it again, asks her to take a holiday for about a week at their favourite hill resort Mahabaleswar, all by herself.

The novel upholds the past years of Jyoti's life in a flashback that shifts between the present and the past. Jyoti is a lower middle-class Brahmin girl of Pune. She has passed her B.Com with distinction, topping the list in her college, and decides to continue with her education with the help of the scholarships and prizes she has won. Meanwhile, her father, a doctor's compounder, has a stroke which paralyzed him. Being the eldest of the three children, with a brother and a sister Jyoti has to take the responsibility of the family. She has worked as a clerk in a bank and the possibility of marriage, never very close, receded even further. "As the sole bread winner of the family, she starts imitating the conventional male-role of working for a living." (87)

Ram's father recommends him to marry Jyoti as she seems a capable and responsible girl. Being practical and calculating, Ram accepts to marry her "... because of her circumstances, more responsible and less spoiled than some girl from a wealthier family." (29) Jyoti is also very practical and realistic in her approach towards life. After her father's illness, she has to support the entire family. After her marriage, Jyoti is not expected to take responsibility of any housework as all is done by Atyabai, the widowed sister of Ram's father. Being free in the house, Jyoti likes the idea of working on the farm and has asked her father-in-law if he would teach her about farming. She displays great eagerness to learn day today things like irrigating, fertilizing and harvesting. Accordingly, while workers are at work, Jyoti not only supervises them but often pitches into help because she feels strange standing over the workers when hers should be another pair of hands working along with them.

Ram after their marriage, decides to look after the seed business which interests him more than farming. His wish is to expand and modernize it. So he thinks that Jyoti's commerce degree would be useful to him. When he asks her to help him in the business, Jyoti is initially surprised but realizing her potential, agrees to his proposal. Ram has not asked her to choose what she would like to do. He has taken her approval for granted. She is willing to learn as he has asked her to. It does not occur to her that he has not asked her whether that is what she would like to do. Whenever Ram wants to know whether she is happy, she replies him, "Of course. Can't you see how happy I am?" (37) She has become totally assimilated into her surroundings in a very short time. However gradually she begins to understand the self-centered and hypocritical attitude of her husband. He even forces an estrangement of Pratap and Smita, their children, upon her, thus denying her a sense of fulfilment as a mother. The author ironically writes:

That was the essence of marriage, the negation of a woman's life up to that point, and a fresh start made with new people, new ideas and values, a new style of life. This was all in the natural order of things, and Jyoti accepted it without resentment, with pleasure and pride, in fact. She looked at Ram's shining eyes and his excitement touched her and drew her within its magic circle. She was happy. (32)

Jyoti's financial help to the business could not bring any recognition to her sacrifice. "She commanded everything except plain pure respect ... there was nothing in it for which she received independent acclaim." (106) Jyoti slowly gives up her sense of being an individual and moulds herself to suit the needs and principles of her husband. Ram is an ambitious person:

... his relationships were not with people but rather with what the people represented ... all their new friends had been intentionally cultivated because of their position in their field, their social eminence, their proximity to politicians, or simply their value as collector's items. (105)

The phase of protest in Jyoti's consciousness begins when her husband decides to install a seed processing plant. She will never oppose to the process of growth but fails to appreciate the big jump Ram has planned to take. The inauguration of seed-processing plant is nauseating to Jyoti because it means dishonesty, fraud, double dealing and hypocrisy. She cannot digest Ram inviting agricultural minister for the inauguration of the plant and throwing a 'wet party' for the media persons for the sake of good publicity. It can be said that this inauguration marks the beginning of Jyoti's phase of protest.

There are so many incidents which bring out the protest phase in Jyoti's consciousness. One instance is the matter of naming their first child Pratap. She is not consulted. Same is the case with sending their children to an English Medium School or buying a costly flat in Pune or even inviting people to the parties. It is always Ram who takes decisions. She is not consulted and her opinion is not asked for. When Ram decides something is to be done, nobody can oppose or come in his way. He decides everything ahead of time, including certain things that mainly concern her like hiring of a servant without asking Jyoti what she wants to do. Jyoti is sure that she cannot receive comfort from him because he cannot understand her pain. Thus, Ram fails to understand a lot of things and she never realizes that it is her fault in not making him see that she suffers due to his lack of understanding of her. She is treated with respect by people, not in her own right, but because she is the wife of a successful man. She

doesn't have an identity of her own. Ram's business becomes more commercial but the relationship in their marriage tends to become a mere "Joint Venture" Jyoti after taking the decision to leave Ram's house, thinks: Now it occurred to her that her not wanting to take the trouble to plant a garden here was symbolic. It expressed what she felt about the place. It was barren. Barren of growing things and happy memories. (2)

This symbolism expresses the change in their relationships. Jyoti hesitates to say that Ram has imposed his will on her. She only says that it had simply seemed natural for him to lead and for her to follow. In the exile and introspection of one week stay at Mahabaleswar, Jyoti wonders if he has ever gauged the extent of her conflict. She begins analyzing her life. She knows in her heart that her marriage is almost over. She wants to prove herself, her capacity to live all alone by herself. Her confidence is evident when she tells herself, "I had lead a meaningful and happy life before I met him and I can after I leave him." (34) She is a kind of woman who wants to revolt, but ultimately does not. She thinks that marriage is only a relationship, a mutual convenience. She now realizes that she cannot expect that love should form the basis for marriage. To insist upon love in a marriage will be a tall claim. She reflects:

It can't be the criterion of a relationship you can't say you live With someone because you love him. You live with someone Because society decrees that people who stand in a certain Relationship to each other should live under the same roof. What is the relationship? The word love certainly cannot Characterize it. (143) Jyoti's friend Vinnie one day informs her at Mahabaleswar on phone that Triveni seed business is in trouble, facing bankruptcy and that people are thinking that she has left Ram because of the crisis. On the spur of the moment Jyoti decides to return. When she returns home from her lonely holiday, Ram shows repentance which comes as a surprise to her. He is willing to go back to his rural farmhouse because he cannot even imagine his life without Jyoti. She melts at his tenderness, as he repeatedly asks, "You have come back, haven't you?" (146) She answers finally, "Yes Ram, I've come back. I've come home" (147) Her decision to come back to Ram does not indicate her surrender or attempt at reconciliation. It is related to herself as a woman, decides to play the role of his protector, which so far, he had played for her. She decides to erase the distance between Ram and herself.

To conclude, Jai Nimbkar's *A Joint Venture* focuses on the search for identity in marriage that one cannot escape oneself and one's reality. She wants to build a sweet relationship among men and women in a spirit of give and take, in a mood of

cooperation and resolution. A proper coordination, a reasonable, mutual understanding among husband and wife is essential for a happy married life. Jyoti is now a changed person who realizes and believes that solutions to problems within relationships does not lie in walking away from them. She comes to grips with herself and emerges as a matured woman. She is in her final stage of evolution of her consciousness-the stage of self-realization.

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Cybernetic Souls: Posthuman Identity and Digital Immortality in William Gibson's *The Winter Market*

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Abstract

William Gibson's *The Winter Market* is a groundbreaking piece in cyberpunk literature, delving into the complexities of posthumanism a fascinating notion that challenges our understanding of human identity throughout the emergence of advanced technology. This study delves into Gibson's story and identifies how it embraces posthumanist concepts such as posthuman identity commodification, disembodiment, and the amalgamation of humans and machines. Lise, a disabled artist who transfers her consciousness into a digital realm, invites us to rethink what it means to be human. The story explores how our identity could develop beyond the limitations of our physical form. This change brings up significant ethical concerns about missing our unique identities and the ability for modern technology to eliminate away our humanness. This article declares that *The Winter Market* acts as both a criticism and a reinvention of the posthuman predicament. It does so by studying the narrative structure of the novel, the complex technological themes that appear throughout the story. Gibson's work encourages readers to ponder the ethical and existential challenges of a speculative future where humans and machines are deeply connected. The objective of this article is to make a contribution to the broader discussion on posthumanism by emphasizing the ways in which Gibson's fiction forecasts and investigates the issues that come with residing in a world that is mediated and controlled by technology.

Keywords: posthumanism, cyberpunk, William Gibson, The Winter Market, disembodiment, digital identity

Introduction

The explosive growth of technology in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has radically transformed our comprehension of human identity, resulting in the rise of posthumanism as a vital paradigm for analysing the convergence of humanity and technology. Posthumanism challenges the conventional Cartesian dualism that distinguishes the mind from the body, highlighting the fluid and interrelated essence of human identity in a digitally mediated environment (Hayles, 1999). William Gibson, an expert in cyberpunk writing, has continuously explored these topics in his works, with his short tale *The Winter Market* (1986) serving as a notable investigation of posthumanist concepts. *The Winter Market*, set in a dystopian future dominated by modern technologies like brain interfaces and artificial intelligence, narrates the tale of Lise, a disabled artisan who uses technology to generate art straight from her thoughts. Her choice to transfer her unconscious into a computer entity generates significant inquiries on identity, embodiment, and the ethical ramifications of technological transcendence. Gibson condemns the commercialization of human identity in a capitalist culture via Lise's metamorphosis but simultaneously anticipates new possibilities for human creativity and life outside the constraints of the physical body (Bukatman, 1993). This study contends that *The Winter Market* exhibits posthumanist themes by examining the distinctions between human and machine, self and other, and reality and virtuality. This study analyses the characters, narrative structure, and technical elements in Gibson's work to illustrate its contribution to the debate on posthumanism, providing both a criticism and a reimagining of the human condition in the context of technology growth. Ultimately, *The Winter Market* encourages readers to contemplate the ethical and existential quandaries presented by a future in which the distinction between human and machine becomes more indistinct.

Posthumanism in William Gibson's *The Winter Market*

William Gibson, often hailed as the father of cyberpunk literature, has consistently explored the intersection of humanity and technology in his works. His short story *The Winter Market*, first published in 1986, is a profound meditation on the implications of posthumanism a philosophical and cultural movement that examines the transformation of human identity in the face of advanced technology. This paper argues that *The Winter Market* exemplifies posthumanist themes through its exploration of disembodiment, the merging of human and machine, and the ethical dilemmas posed by technological advancements. By analysing the story's characters,

narrative structure, and technological motifs, this paper demonstrates how Gibson critiques and reimagines the boundaries of human existence in a posthuman world.

Posthumanism: A Theoretical Framework

Posthumanism challenges the traditional notion of the human as a stable, autonomous entity, instead positing that human identity is fluid and shaped by technological, cultural, and environmental factors (Hayles, 1999). In the context of cyberpunk literature, posthumanism often manifests as a critique of the Cartesian dualism that separates mind and body, emphasizing instead the integration of human consciousness with digital and mechanical systems (Bukatman, 1993). Gibson's *The Winter Market* engages deeply with these ideas, presenting a world where the boundaries between humans and machines are increasingly blurred.

Narrative Structure and Posthuman Subjectivity

The narrative structure of *The Winter Market* further reinforces its posthumanist themes. The story is told from Casey's perspective, but it is interspersed with fragments of Lise's thoughts and memories, creating a fragmented and nonlinear narrative. This narrative style mirrors the fragmented nature of posthuman subjectivity, where identity is no longer a coherent whole but a collection of disparate experiences and memories (Hayles, 1999). The use of a first-person narrator also emphasizes the subjective nature of reality in a posthuman world. Casey's perspective is limited and biased, reflecting the idea that human perception is always mediated by technology and culture. This narrative approach challenges the traditional notion of an objective reality, suggesting that truth and identity are constructed rather than inherent.

Digital Immortality and Posthuman Identity

Gibson's portrayal of digital immortality challenges conventional concepts of individuality by suggesting the potential for a human to live beyond the biological limitations of the body. Lise, characterized as both delicate and intelligent, surpasses the constraints of her biological existence by transporting her mind into digital space. This shift embodies transhumanist ambitions, which promote the improvement and growth of humanity via technology (Bostrom, 2005). Gibson challenges this idealistic image by highlighting the fractured and commodified aspects of Lise's post-biological life. In contrast to conventional ideas of eternal life, her digital immortality depends on the marketplace, prompting worries over the ownership and governance of consciousness. The narrative challenges the constancy of identity in the posthuman age. The protagonist contemplates if the uploaded Lise is identical to the original or just a simulation, reflecting discussion in psychological studies on the enduring validity of identity (Chalmers, 1996). If consciousness can be reduced to data, then digital

immortality suggests that self-worth is detached from the biological body and instead linked to informational patterns. Gibson's tale rejects a convincing resolution, rather presenting viewers with a disturbing confusion: is Lise's digital representative of her, or is it only a byproduct of the technical system that assimilated her?

Disembodiment and the Digital Self

One of the central themes of *The Winter Market* is the concept of disembodiment or the separation of consciousness from the physical body. The story's protagonist, Lise, is a physically disabled artist who uses a neural interface to create art directly from her mind. Her work is described as "raw emotion, pure and unfiltered," suggesting that her art transcends the limitations of her physical body (Gibson, 1986, p. 45). This disembodiment is further emphasized when Lise decides to upload her consciousness into a digital construct, effectively abandoning her biological form. Lise's decision to become a digital entity reflects a key tenet of posthumanism, the idea that human identity is not tied to the physical body but can exist independently in virtual or artificial forms (Hayles, 1999). By choosing to "live" in the digital realm, Lise challenges the traditional notion of embodiment as a prerequisite for existence. However, her transformation also raises ethical questions about the nature of identity and the potential loss of humanity in the pursuit of technological transcendence.

The Commodification of Consciousness

Winter Market notably critiques the monetization of human identity. Lise's move to digital immortality is a business transaction rather than an act of personal emancipation. Her consciousness is commodified, underscoring Gibson's extensive cyberpunk criticism of late capitalism, whereby human experiences and emotions are converted into marketable goods (Csicsery-Ronay, 1991). Gibson depicts a reality where the most personal aspects of life cognition, feelings, and creativity are influenced by economic dynamics. Lise's digital awareness is possessed and disseminated by corporate organizations, underscoring the risk of exploitation. This commodification reflects genuine apprehensions around data ownership and digital labor, whereby personal information is capitalized by dominant technological firms (Zuboff, 2019). By emphasizing these difficulties, Gibson's narrative functions as a warning tale about the possible dystopian ramifications of digital immortality under a capitalist framework.

The Merging of Human and Machine

Interactions between humans and machines are another major posthumanist motif in *Winter Market*. Future society has fully embraced cutting-edge tech, with brain interfaces and AI pervasive in all aspects of daily life. Casey, who narrates the story and calls herself a "software artist," helps Lise channel her creative impulses into

digital art, bridging the gap between human imagination and computational rigor. The posthumanist view that technology is more than just a tool—it is an extension of the self is emphasised by this human-machine partnership (Clark, 2003). The fact that Casey is a “software artist” implies that technology systems are becoming more integrated with human activity by erasing the distinction between creators and their work. On the other hand, since human creativity increasingly relies on technology to express itself, this melding also brings up worries about the erosion of uniqueness and autonomy.

Ethical Dilemmas and the Commodification of Identity

Gibson’s *The Winter Market* delves into the complex ethical questions raised by posthuman technologies, especially the commercialization of human identity. Lise chooses to upload her consciousness, motivated by a longing to break free from the confines of her physical form and embrace a timeless existence in the digital world. Yet, this journey also diminishes her essence, transforming her identity into something that can be marketed, as her digital persona turns into a commodity traded in the “winter market” of the tale. Lise’s identity being turned into a commodity highlights a larger worry in our posthumanist world: as technology progresses, there’s a risk that people might be seen merely as data points or products to consume (Braidotti, 2013). Through Lise’s journey of change, Gibson highlights the dual nature of her experience as both freedom and sacrifice. This reflection critiques the capitalist framework that shapes our posthuman reality, implying that the quest for technological elevation might jeopardize our essence of human dignity.

Embodiment and the Loss of the Physical Self

Gibson’s take on digital immortality sparks deep questions about how our physical presence shapes what it means to be human. Lise’s life is filled with pain and limitations, driving her to seek refuge in the digital world. This longing resonates with Cartesian dualism, which suggests a divide between the mind and body (Descartes, 1641/1996). *Winter Market* challenges this idea by proposing that our physical existence is a vital part of what makes us human. The protagonist’s encounters with the digital Lise carry a strange feeling of emptiness. Even though she lingers in the digital realm, she has changed at her core, her physical form now just a mosaic of scattered online remnants. The absence of physical presence brings up worries about the limitations of experiencing digital immortality. Hayles (1999) suggests that human thought is closely linked to our physical existence, and trying to separate them could lessen the depth of our experiences. Gibson portrays Lise’s posthuman life as a glimpse into digital immortality, revealing that this continuity might strip away a core part of what it means to be human. *Winter Market* delves into the wider ethical and social

impacts of digital immortality, going beyond just personal identity. The narrative implies that these technological breakthroughs won't be available to everyone equally; rather, they'll be influenced by existing economic systems. Lise's life in the digital realm thrives on profitability; without the commercial value of her consciousness, she may never have been offered the chance at digital immortality. This dynamic reflects current conversations about the digital divide and how accessible life-extending technologies are. The story also brings up important questions about agency and consent. Lise may seem to choose to upload herself, but her decision is influenced by the weight of economic and social pressures. If we can upload consciousness, who holds the reins? What rights belong to a digital entity? The narrative leaves these questions hanging, highlighting the murky ethics of life beyond humanity. Winter Market offers a thoughtful glimpse into the possible impacts of new technologies. Gibson's take on digital immortality sparks deep questions about how our bodies shape what it means to be human. Lise's life is filled with pain and challenges, driving her to seek refuge in the digital world. This longing connects with Cartesian dualism, which suggests a divide between the mind and body (Descartes, 1641/1996). Winter Market challenges this idea by proposing that our physical presence is a crucial part of what makes us human. The protagonist's encounters with the digital Lise carry a strange feeling of emptiness. Even though she lingers in the digital realm, she has changed at her core, her physical form now just a mosaic of scattered online remnants. The absence of physical presence brings up worries about the limitations of experiencing digital immortality. Hayles (1999) suggests that human thought is closely linked to our physical existence, and trying to separate them could lessen the depth of our experiences. Gibson portrays Lise's posthuman life as a glimpse into digital immortality, revealing that this continuity might strip away a core part of what it means to be human. Winter Market delves into the wider ethical and social consequences of digital immortality, going beyond just personal identity. The narrative implies that these technological breakthroughs won't be available to everyone equally; rather, they'll be influenced by existing economic frameworks. Lise's life in the digital realm thrives on profit; without her consciousness being a lucrative venture, she may never have been offered the chance at digital immortality. This dynamic reflects current conversations surrounding the digital divide and the availability of life-extending technologies (Savulescu & Bostrom, 2009). The story also brings up important questions about agency and consent. Lise may seem to choose to upload herself, but her decision is influenced by the weight of economic and social pressures. If we can upload consciousness, who holds the reins? What rights does a digital being hold? The narrative leaves these questions hanging, highlighting the murky ethics of life beyond

humanity. Winter Market offers a thoughtful glimpse into the possible impacts of new technologies.

Conclusion

William Gibson's *The Winter Market* is a powerful exploration of posthumanism, examining the ways in which advanced technology transforms human identity and experience. Through its themes of disembodiment, the merging of human and machine, and the commodification of identity, the story critiques the ethical and philosophical implications of a posthuman future. By presenting a world where the boundaries between humans and machines are increasingly blurred, Gibson challenges readers to reconsider what it means to be human in an age of technological transcendence. Ultimately, *The Winter Market* serves as both a celebration and a cautionary tale of posthumanism. While the story envisions a future where human creativity and consciousness can transcend the limitations of the physical body, it also warns of the potential loss of individuality and humanity in the pursuit of technological immortality. As we continue to grapple with the implications of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and other posthuman technologies, Gibson's work remains a timely and thought-provoking reflection on the future of human identity. William Gibson's *Winter Market* offers a compelling and critical exploration of digital immortality, questioning its desirability, ethical implications, and socio-economic consequences. By presenting a world where consciousness is commodified and embodiment is diminished, the story challenges the notion that digital immortality is an unequivocal good. Instead, it suggests that such a transformation comes with significant costs both personal and societal. Through its complex portrayal of posthuman identity, *Winter Market* invites readers to consider the implications of a future where the boundaries between human and machine, life and data, become increasingly blurred.

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Creating Environmental Awareness: An Analysis of Gieve Patel's "On Killing a Tree"

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Abstract

Environment includes the most necessary things for human beings to live like earth, water, air, and habitats. The natural environment comprises all living and non-living things. This also includes grassland, forests, and water bodies like oceans and rivers. The earth in which man lives is a sacred place for centuries as it provided protection and comfort to human beings. Man used the leaves of trees as his dress itself. This shows that man lived one with nature for food, clothes, shelter, and to make houses. Human enjoyed the blessings of nature. But modern man never considers the importance of nature and the environment he lives in. With the advance of technology, man begins to misuse nature, especially trees, which have the capacity to absorb carbon dioxide let out by man. Such is the power of trees. But man cut them off for his personal purposes like building houses, creating gardens, opening industries, and so on. Though he enjoys life on one side, he faces so many negative consequences, which never appeals to his senses. It reduces rainfall, produces all sort of pollution, forms hole in ozone layer, which impacts climatic changes.

In this background, this paper attempts to analyse the poem "On Killing a Tree" penned down by the famous Indian poet Gieve Patel, whose main concern in this poem is to safeguard nature by creating an awareness in the mind of the readers. Gieve Patel, a supporter of environmental protection attempts to change the attitude of man by taking the concept of cutting down a tree.

Thus Gieve Patel's poem "On Killing Tree" vividly explores the consequences of killing a tree. In his opinion uprooting a tree is not a very easy job; rather a difficult one. But man using the advanced machines uproots them easily without acknowledging that he has to face the after effects. The author advises human beings to go back to nature, adore it so that there will be ecological sustainability, which in turn helps man to live peacefully in this universe.

Keys words: Environment, Tree, Killing, Consequences, Sustainability

Environment includes the most necessary things for human beings to live like earth, water, air, and habitats. The natural environment comprises all living and non-living things. This also includes grassland, forests, and water bodies like oceans and rivers. The earth in which man lives is a sacred place for centuries as it provided protection and comfort to human beings. Man used the leaves of trees as his dress itself. This shows that man lived one with nature for food, clothes, shelter, and to make houses.

Human enjoyed the blessings of nature. But modern man never considers the importance of nature and the environment he lives in. With the advance of technology, man begins to misuse nature, especially trees, which have the capacity to absorb carbon di- oxide let out by man. Such is the power of trees. But man cut them off for his personal purposes like building houses, creating gardens, opening industries, and so on. Though he enjoys life on one side, he faces so many negative consequences, which never appeals to his senses. It reduces rainfall, produces all sort of pollution, forms hole in ozone layer, which impacts climatic changes.

In this background, this paper attempts to analyse the poem “On Killing a Tree” penned down by one of the famous Parsi Indian poet Gieve Patel, whose main concern in this poem is to safeguard nature by creating an awareness in the mind of the readers. Gieve Patel, a supporter of environmental protection attempts to change the attitude of man by taking the concept of cutting down a tree.

“On Killing a Tree” is a poem in four stanzas. The poem deals with the consequences of cutting down a tree. To the poet the act of cutting a tree is similar to killing a tree, taking away the life of a living thing which is useful to the universe in many ways. The poet pinpoints the cruel, unkind nature of man, who cuts down the trees for his personal uses, without acknowledging the consequences met out by him.

The very first line of the poem shows the strength a tree has, “It takes much time to kill a tree” (1). A tree cannot be brought to death within a short time. The second and third line declares this, “Not a simple jab of the knife/ will do it” (2, 3). The poet opines that a knife cannot take away the whole life of a tree. The reason, the poet gives in the following line as, “It has grown/ Slowly consuming the earth” (3, 4). Just by cutting a tree with knife has no effect on the tree, for a plant takes water and minerals from the soil and grows by spreading the roots under the soil. As days go by the tree

extends its branches by absorbing sunlight and undergoing photosynthesis. So the roots are strongly held up under the soil. According to Rakeshkumar, “The poet sarcastically mentions that the modern man’s approach towards nature is cruel and unacceptable . . . killing a tree is not merely an act of chopping the tree down but it is like killing a person” (1383). He quotes the lines,

Will do it. It has grown
Slowly consuming the earth,
Rising out of it, feeding
Upon its crust, absorbing
Years of sunlight, air, water. (3-7)

The trunk becomes strong with a large number of leaves. When this particular tree is cut down, the sap comes out of it like a bleed from the wound. Once this wound heals new branches sprout out from the wounded place and the tree becomes normal, “And out of its leprous hide/ Sprouting leaves” (8, 9). As the tree has the capacity to regrow from the place where it is cut it is very difficult to make a tree die.

In the second stanza the poet declares that even if man cuts the tree in a rough way using a large knife it won’t affect the tree much. Patel says, “So hack and chop/ But this alone won’t do it” (10, 11). He continues telling that, “Not so much pain will do it. / The bleeding bark will heal” (12, 13). In the words of Dr. Sunitha Malik, “The poet demonstrates that a tree may persevere human intervention, such as removing branches. However, being monstrous beings, we do not stop there; we take out the tree’s roots, completing the murder” (1239). Even if man cuts the tree with a large knife it will not fully die; rather the part will bleed for a short period but it will heal soon. In the following line he continues telling that, “And from close to the ground/ Will rise curled green twigs,/ Miniature boughs” (14- 16). Even if man cuts down the tree close to the ground where it is closely attached to the earth, the poet assures that green leaves will come up and they grow again freshly to the full structure as it were before cutting, sometimes even with more branches.

In the third stanza, the poet continues to describe the strength of a tree, how difficult it is to destroy a tree completely. The stanza starts with, “No/ The root is to be pulled out- / Out of the anchoring earth;” (9-11). These lines explore the brutal nature of human beings comparing it with the strength of trees. Though man intends to kill the tree, he cannot do it all of a sudden by cutting with a knife. Only if the root is uprooted or pulled out of the earth, to which it is completely anchored, a tree can die completely. A fully grown tree is uprooted with great difficulty. The poet pens like this, “It is to be roped, tied,/ And pulled out- snapped out” (13, 14). If a fully grown tree is

to be pulled out of earth, it has to be tied to some other big and strong tree and when it falls to the earth, it makes such a sound. It symbolizes that the tree cries loudly asking man why he uproots it from the earth.

In the last and fourth stanza the tragic death of the tree, which has been completely uprooted from the earth is given in a tragic tone. The tree starts dying, "in sun and air/ Browning, hardening, / Twisting, withering,/ and then it is done." (31-34). The tree dies because of the sun's heat and the hot air as its roots have been cut off from the earth so that it can't absorb water and minerals from the soil. Finally gradually the tree dries completely shedding its strong bark. The last line, "And then it is done" showcases the brutal nature of man killing a tree completely, which he can not do all of a sudden. The poet says a man can kill a man within a minute, but it is not such an easy job to kill a tree. Such is the strength of a tree which human beings fail to recognize.

A close analysis of the poem explicitly reveals the irreparable loss met out by the modern man by killing nature. If man continues deforestation, it will certainly result in global warming which has already started. This results in climatic change which includes shortage of rainfall, flood, drought, change in the seasons, ozone hole formation. The tree belongs to nature which man destroys everyday for his personal uses without having a single thought about the abundant blessings it bestows upon human beings. Man kills the tree step by step for he cannot kill it all of a sudden, whereas he can kill his fellow man within a minute. This vividly depicts the weakness of human beings in contrast with the strength of trees. Even when the life time of a tree and a man is compared, the trees have more life than man. So the poet advises human beings to follow reforestation instead of deforestation.

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Bridging Past and Future: Digital Humanities and India's Digital Revolution

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Abstract

Digital Humanities (DH) is transforming the way knowledge is acquired, analysed, and disseminated. By integrating computational tools with traditional humanities disciplines, DH enables innovative research methodologies and democratises access to cultural and historical information. This paper critically examines the role of DH in knowledge acquisition, tracks its evolution, and evaluates its impact on research and pedagogy. In particular, it highlights India's rapid progress in digital humanities underscored by the landmark initiative in the Union Budget 2025, which allocated INR 15,000 Crore for the digitisation of the Indian knowledge base. Drawing upon key theoretical perspectives, empirical examples, and critical analyses, the study argues that while DH presents transformative opportunities, it also raises challenges that must be addressed for sustainable and inclusive knowledge dissemination, with India playing a pivotal role in this global digital revolution.

Key Words Digital Humanities- Digital Archives-Cultural Heritage Preservation-Digital Pedagogy and Online Learning -Text Mining-Global Collaboration-India's Digital Revolution.

Introduction

The advent of digital technology has reshaped academic enquiry, giving rise to Digital Humanities (DH) as a field that bridges computational methods and traditional humanities scholarship. DH offers novel techniques for data analysis, text interpretation, and knowledge dissemination, enabling scholars to explore cultural artefacts and historical documents in unprecedented ways. As Drucker insightfully notes:

“Digital Humanities represent a fusion of critical theory and digital practice, offering new insights into both the production and the interpretation of knowledge.” (Drucker, 2014, p. 32)

In India, this convergence is particularly significant. Indian academic institutions and governmental bodies have embraced digital methodologies to modernise traditional research practices. This paper critically analyses the role DH plays in the acquisition of knowledge, incorporating India's contributions across all facets from digitising cultural heritage to promoting digital pedagogy and online learning.

2. Defining Digital Humanities

Digital Humanities is an interdisciplinary field that integrates computational techniques with traditional humanities research. It involves applying digital tools to collect, analyse, and interpret data drawn from literature, history, art, and cultural studies. Berry encapsulates this synthesis:

“An ongoing experiment in the way knowledge is acquired, curated, and disseminated a blend of traditional scholarship and modern computational techniques.” (Berry, 2012, p. 45)

In India, numerous initiatives have integrated digital methods into humanities research. Projects such as the National Digital Library of India (NDLI) and the Digital Library of India (DLI) exemplify how traditional scholarship is being transformed by modern computational techniques, thereby widening the interpretive possibilities of humanities research.

3. The Evolution of Digital Humanities

The roots of Digital Humanities can be traced back to the mid-20th century when computers were first employed for linguistic analysis and textual data processing. Early initiatives in computational linguistics and the digitisation of literary texts laid the groundwork for today's sophisticated digital methodologies. Over time, the field has expanded to incorporate big data analytics and machine learning, fundamentally enriching research methods.

Moretti's concept of “distant reading” exemplifies this evolution. As Moretti explains:

“Distant Reading provides a new lens through which to view vast corpora of texts, allowing scholars to identify trends and patterns that would be impossible to detect through close reading alone.” (Moretti, 2013, p. 112)

India has contributed significantly to this evolution. With pioneering projects in digitising ancient manuscripts and cultural texts, Indian institutions have both influenced and adapted global DH methodologies. Such initiatives have not only preserved vast cultural legacies but have also provided new data sets for innovative research methods.

4. Digital Archives and Knowledge Preservation

Digital archives represent one of the most significant contributions of DH. They are central to preserving historical texts, manuscripts, and cultural artefacts in digital formats, ensuring their long-term survival and accessibility. Landmark projects such as the Google Books Project, Project Gutenberg, and the Digital Public Library of America highlight the transformative impact of digital archiving.

In India, digital archiving has received substantial attention. Prominent examples include the National Digital Library of India (NDLI), Digital Library of India (DLI), Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) Digital Archive, National Archives of India Digital Repository, e-Pustakalaya, Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan Digital Library, National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM) Digital Archive, Sahapedia, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Archive. These initiatives, along with many state-level and institutional projects, constitute over 100 digital archives. Rockwell and Sinclair assert:

“Digital archives not only conserve our cultural legacy but also enable new forms of enquiry that transcend geographic and institutional boundaries.” (Rockwell & Sinclair, 2016, p. 78)

Moreover, India’s international collaborations with partners in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Japan, Australia, and Canada further bolster these efforts, ensuring that digitised cultural resources are accessible and utilised globally.

5. Text Mining and Computational Analysis

Text mining and computational analysis are among the most influential methodologies in Digital Humanities. These techniques allow researchers to process and analyse massive textual datasets, revealing patterns and insights that traditional qualitative analysis might overlook. Tools such as Voyant Tools and the Natural Language Toolkit (NLTK) have become integral to DH research.

The benefits of text mining include conducting sentiment analysis, identifying recurring themes through topic modelling, and revealing linguistic trends over time.

These quantitative methods complement traditional qualitative approaches, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of cultural and historical phenomena. Schreibman, Siemens, and Unsworth state:

“The integration of computational analysis into the humanities not only expands our methodological repertoire but also deepens our understanding of complex cultural phenomena.” (Schreibman, Siemens, & Unsworth, 2016, p. 105)

Indian scholars have been at the forefront of employing these techniques, applying them to vast corpora of classical literature and regional texts. Collaborative efforts between Indian and international research institutions have led to innovative approaches in text mining, further enriching global DH practices.

6. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Humanities

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning are revolutionising Digital Humanities by automating tasks that were previously labour-intensive. These technologies enhance the accuracy of processes such as Optical Character Recognition (OCR), handwriting recognition, and image analysis. AI-driven OCR, for example, converts scanned texts into searchable and analysable data, significantly improving accessibility.

Machine learning algorithms also aid in predicting trends in literary production, identifying authorship, and analysing stylistic features across diverse texts. Drucker emphasises that:

“By automating routine tasks, AI empowers scholars to focus on higher-level interpretative work, thereby enriching our engagement with historical and cultural narratives.” (Drucker, 2014, p. 45)

Indian research institutions are increasingly adopting AI and machine learning techniques to digitise and analyse historical manuscripts and cultural documents. These efforts not only streamline research processes but also set new benchmarks in the use of advanced technologies in humanities scholarship.

7. Digital Pedagogy and Online Learning

Digital Humanities has significantly transformed educational paradigms by converting traditional classroom settings into dynamic, digitally enhanced learning environments. Digital platforms, online courses, and virtual classrooms have made quality education more accessible worldwide. Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) play crucial roles in this evolution.

In India, the promotion of digital pedagogy is a key governmental priority. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with leading academic institutions, has launched numerous digital initiatives to facilitate online learning and collaborative

research. These initiatives have been instrumental in making educational resources available to students across both urban and rural areas. Terras, Nyhan, and Vanhoutte observe:

“Digital pedagogy is redefining the boundaries of the classroom, making education more accessible, engaging, and responsive to the needs of a diverse student body.” (Terras, Nyhan, & Vanhoutte, 2013, p. 93)

Through platforms such as SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds), India has significantly boosted the reach and quality of online education. This concerted effort not only supports digital humanities but also paves the way for a new generation of digitally literate scholars.

8. India’s Progress in Digital Humanities

India has rapidly emerged as a significant player in the field of Digital Humanities, driven by both academic initiatives and proactive government policies. Over the past decade, numerous Indian universities and research institutions have integrated digital methodologies into their curricula, establishing digital archives and innovative research centres. Institutions such as the University of Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru University have pioneered projects that document and preserve India’s vast cultural heritage.

Government initiatives have further accelerated India's digital transformation. The Union Budget 2025, for instance, underscored the government’s commitment to digitising the national knowledge base, allocating INR 15,000 Crore for the digitisation of historical texts, cultural artefacts, and academic research. The budget statement reads:

“In a decisive step towards modernising our national heritage, the Government will allocate significant resources towards the digitisation of the Indian knowledge base, ensuring that our historical and cultural assets are preserved and accessible in the digital age.” (Union Budget 2025, Government of India)

In addition, international collaborations with countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Japan, Australia, and Canada have enriched India's DH initiatives. These partnerships facilitate the exchange of digital methodologies and best practices, further positioning India as a global leader in the digital humanities landscape.

9. Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Despite its transformative potential, Digital Humanities faces several challenges that must be critically addressed:

Digital Divide: The uneven distribution of digital resources remains a significant barrier. While many urban institutions have robust digital infrastructures, rural areas

and developing regions, including parts of India, still face challenges in accessing high-speed internet and modern digital tools.

Data Privacy and Security: The digitisation process involves handling sensitive historical and cultural data. Ensuring data privacy and maintaining the security of digital archives are paramount to prevent unauthorised access and data breaches.

Ethical Use of AI: With the increasing integration of AI, concerns about algorithmic bias and the transparency of computational analyses have come to the fore. Scholars must vigilantly assess the ethical implications of automated processes, ensuring that digital tools enhance rather than compromise scholarly rigour.

Preservation of Context: While quantitative methods like text mining can process vast datasets, there is a risk of losing the nuanced context inherent in historical and cultural artefacts. Balancing computational analysis with traditional qualitative methods is essential for maintaining the integrity of the subject matter.

As Schreibman, Siemens, and Unsworth argue:

“Digital Humanities projects must be designed with both technical excellence and ethical responsibility, ensuring that advancements in technology do not come at the expense of scholarly integrity.” (Schreibman, Siemens, & Unsworth, 2016, p. 105)

India is also addressing these challenges by investing in rural digital infrastructure and implementing policies to safeguard data security. These endeavours are crucial to ensuring that the benefits of DH are realised equitably across diverse communities.

10. The Future of Digital Humanities

The trajectory of Digital Humanities is marked by rapid technological advancement and an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration. Several trends are poised to shape the future of DH:

Enhanced Computational Techniques: As AI, machine learning, and data analytics continue to evolve, DH scholars will have access to even more sophisticated tools, allowing for deeper insights into cultural and historical phenomena.

Virtual and Augmented Reality: Emerging technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are beginning to find applications in DH. These tools offer immersive experiences that can bring historical events and cultural artefacts to life, significantly enriching research and pedagogical practices.

Blockchain for Digital Archives: Blockchain technology offers the potential to enhance the security and integrity of digital archives by ensuring that digital records remain tamper-proof. This could be a crucial development for the preservation of historical data.

Global Collaboration: The digital era fosters greater international collaboration. As DH projects increasingly involve interdisciplinary teams across borders, the exchange of methodologies and ideas will further enrich the field.

India is well positioned for the future of DH. Continued investment from the government, robust academic initiatives, and ongoing international collaborations are set to propel India further as a leader in digital humanities. The momentum generated by initiatives such as the Union Budget 2025 and digital pedagogy projects will continue to drive innovative research and promote a more inclusive digital future.

11. Conclusion

Digital Humanities is redefining the landscape of knowledge acquisition by merging computational methodologies with traditional humanities enquiry. Its impact is evident in enhanced digital archiving, text mining, AI-driven analysis, and the transformation of educational practices. This paper has demonstrated that DH represents not merely a technological trend but a profound shift in how we approach and interpret knowledge with India playing a pivotal role in this global revolution.

The discussion of India's progress highlighted by the Union Budget 2025's allocation of INR 15,000 Crore for digitising the Indian knowledge base and the numerous digital initiatives across academic and cultural sectors underscore the global significance of these endeavours. Despite challenges such as the digital divide and data privacy concerns, the collaborative efforts between scholars, technologists, and policymakers promise a future where digital humanities will democratise access to knowledge and foster interdisciplinary research for social transformation.

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Co-existence of humans and robots: Moral dilemmas

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Abstract

We are now in an era of machines with artificial intelligence. Lots of our jobs are made easy and at the same time lots of people are going to be jobless due to this heavy dependence on this 'thinking' machines. With the advent of robots, which can do multiple tasks efficiently, our life has become at once simple and complicated. They have not only occupied the office space but also going to replace the housemaids at home.

This paper tries to examine the repercussions of forming an emotional bond with the robots which have disastrous consequences, with reference to the film "Android Kattappa version 5.25" : a Malayalam film dubbed in Telugu. Also references are made to a few other films in Telugu and Hindi to analyse the consequences of trying to form human connection with the robots.

Key words: moral dilemma, artificial intelligence, human connection

Science and Technology are ubiquitous and one cannot escape from their presence in our lives. Machines were invented to reduce burden on humans to avoid repetitive tasks, reduce time consumption and get human error free results. It also helped in hazardous situations. Mechanization was limited to office space. Slowly it made inroads into the home space. Our drawing rooms, kitchen, toilets have come to be heavily dependent on scientific gadgets. In the twenty-first century we have seen how the TV has taken away the quality time we spend as a family. People have stopped communicating with neighbors and are huddled before the idiot box for entertainment. This malady grew to a higher level with the advent of cell phones where the family divided to get individual space and personalized entertainment. Communication has now shifted from humans to humans, to humans to machines. With advanced technology, we are entering in to a new era where machines can think and take decisions with preset programmes. Alexa and Siri have ushered us into a new

era of verbal control over machines. Most of the time we have to tick the box (captcha) “*I am not a robot*” to gain access to certain sites.

Karl Marx’s quote “All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and stultifying human life into a material force,”

These lines sum up the predicament of human existence now a days. Humans are becoming mechanical and machines are doing human tasks seamlessly. They have replaced us in jobs, markets, industries, medical field– especially robotic surgery, and now they are intruding into our emotional space as well. Artificial Intelligence is producing humanoids which look similar to humans, take commands from them and execute flawlessly. While machines are invading human space, humans are getting emotionally attached to the machines which of course will have disastrous consequences.

Artificial intelligence is a simulation of human behaviour and thinking. But now the technology has reached a level where these artificial creations are given life. Or we can say, a verisimilitude of human existence with excellent cognitive and emotional capacities. They were made to serve humans but now they are enslaving humans. It reminds us of the Frankenstein monster, created in haste by a scientist. They are disrespectful to their creator, as described in the book. If they can multiply on their own (as seen in Robot film), it will lead to a great crisis in human ethics. Ethical dilemmas are complex scenarios involving a decision between conflicting choices related to ethical principles. Planning and predicting ethically challenging situations in advance is desirable. But with ever expanding areas where artificial intelligence is used, choices and effects of their actions have grown exponentially.

As the development of artificial intelligence and technology may have serious consequences, it is imperative to use ethical control tools for scientific research projects and to constantly reflect and improve on them. People make moral judgments about the behaviour of artificial intelligence agents. The traditional moral paradigms cannot be used to measure the general action/inaction of the AI agents. We have to work towards an overall acceptable behavioural proposals. Artificial intelligence is used in many areas like medicine, autonomous driving(Tesla), wealth management and so many other fields. When a machine is allowed to take decisions, can they be judged by normal traditional human paradigms? If their decisions prove fatal or unethical, who is going to own the responsibility? The creator or the created? So a separate legal code has to be created to redress such problems.

Human relations have reached a state where there is no time for one another. Economic necessity forces people to move to cities. Villages are getting deserted. In the cities, people have no time to bond with each other and no time to return to village. Many of these issues are highlighted and the consequences shown in the film “Android Katappa version 5.25”. It is the story of a person named Bhaskaran who is conservative and against using machines at home even if it the innocent mixer grinder.

The irony of life is seen when he falls in abject love with a humanoid! A person who totally abhors technology becomes a slave to it. He has a son who wishes to go to city in search of a job but is held by Bhaskaran in the village. After losing many such opportunities and ending up jobless and without marriage, he finally takes the tough decision to move to Russia to earn a living. This is the central theme of the film where the lonely father in a village and a bread earning son in foreign country try to fill the void in their lives. The guilt of Subramaian forces him to use the latest Android Robot (Version 5.25) to take care of his father, as many maids have failed to take care of him- the stubborn old man. Subramanian is convinced by his girlfriend, Hitomi and his boss not to resign his job to look after his father and explore means to take care of his father by remaining in Russia. It also shows why machines are replacing humans. Human caretakers are often lazy, cutting corners on work and often taking things too emotionally and impacting the quality of work. Also they steal things and are irregular. The robot is named Kunjappan (lit. short man), gradually becomes irreplaceably close to Bhaskaran's heart. Kunjappan also helps Bhaskaran to contact his ex-lover Soudamini.

If we look from Subramaian's perspective, his decision to try a robot, which is still in testing mode, to employ it to look after his father is rather a desperate action as he is caught between the devil and the deep sea. He cannot risk his career for his aging father and at the same time cannot leave his father on his own. His guilt of not being with him during his old age drives him to take that drastic step of putting a robot at the old man's disposal. Bhaskaran is an aging father with very conventional mode of thinking and living, very much rooted in his culture and rituals. He had an unfulfilled romantic past and an estranged son. Not only the age or generation gap between the father and son, also the widower looks very stubborn and difficult to please. The advent of AI humanoid changes the life of the old man. With initial resistance to the machine, Bhaskaran finds in Kunjappan, a loyal and abiding servant. He is perfect. Gives him his coffee ontime, does the chores without complaining and doesn't raise an eyebrow even when ridiculed or taunted. Being emotionless and empathetic,

Kunjappan wins Bhaskaran's heart. The person who remains an enigma and 'difficult' for humans melts before a machine. He reveals his secrets to him and also finds solace from it. Kunjappan helps Bhaskaran reconnect with his past love Saudamini. He slowly sees the robot as his son. The void in his life is filled by the robot. Even the society looks with awe as the old man goes to take bath in the tank with the robot with a cloth tied to the robot's waist. The robot also helps him to take bath and the people of the village are aghast at their bonding. Bhaskaran's feelings reach a pinnacle when he goes to an astrologer to show Kunjappan's horoscope. It shows how Bhaskaran has totally forgotten that it is a machine and developed passionate feelings for the machine. When Hitomi and Subramaniam find that such robot can strangle humans, they decide to dismantle Kunjappan. But it is too late and Bhaskaran takes the robot into a forest to live there happily. The robot warns him that he has no feelings and is just a machine. But Bhaskaran feels inseparable from the machine. In a dramatic climax, the robot is beheaded by a miscreant and the robot tries to strangle Bhaskaran and is saved by Subramaniam. But the tragedy is seen when Bhaskaran holds his son's head and whispers kunjappan's name believing his son to be a robot.

There are many issues involved in this co-existence of humans and AI humanoids. Are the normal rules of humans applicable to them? There are many social, psychological, legal and philosophical concerns. Can machines replace humans in relationships too? It looks surreal and pathetic. The existential predicament of humans who fail to bond with other humans, lonely and disillusioned attracts such impossible situations. What if the humanoid had successfully strangled Bhaskaran? Who would have been held responsible? Bhaskaran, his boss or the company? Also the society scorns and is skeptical about the relationship between the robot and the old man. The old man, in his obsessive affection, forgets that it is a machine which has no human emotions though the machine tells him and tries to make him realize. But the process of entanglement looks linear. There is no coming back. It is also reflected in the film "Tere Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya" where a robotic engineer played by Shahid Kapoor falls in love with a SIFRA, a highly intelligent female robot, played by Kriti Sanon. Initially heartbroken to know that she is a robot, he later decides to marry it or her? With the expectations of men and women skyrocketing, only robots can fit their descriptions of intelligence, strength and power. Such marriages raise many ethical and legal questions.

According to [Cointe et al., 2016], ethics is a normative practical philosophical discipline of how one should act towards others. It has three dimensions:

1. Consequentialist ethics: an agent is ethical when it weighs the consequences of each choice and chooses the option which has the most moral outcomes. It is also known as utilitarian ethics.
2. Deontological ethics: an agent is ethical when it respects obligations, duties and rights related to given situations. They act according to social norms.
3. Virtue ethics: an agent is ethical when it acts and thinks according to some moral values (e.g. sacrifice, justice, etc.).

Ethical dilemmas refer to situations in which any available choice leads to infringing some accepted ethical principle and yet a decision has to be made [Kirkpatrick, 2015].

The AI research community realizes that machine ethics is a key factor to the extent they are permitted to interact with humans. They have to respect the rights of humans and only perform actions that follow acceptable ethical principles within a specific cultural context and even globally.

To sum up, the incorporation of ethical considerations into AI systems will influence human-AI interaction dynamics. For example, an automated car needs to have an inbuilt mechanism which takes decisions when it has to choose between hitting humans or animals or getting crashed. Future inventions in AI should incorporate such human values and considerations before leaving their products into the market. Though it is impossible to predict all possible situations, it is however possible to disable the machine during such confusing or confounding situations. It is not enough to prepare a weapon, it should be handled well. Hope the humanity can look forward for good days to come. They have failed to cohabitate with flora and fauna. Atleast they should learn to train the dragon (AI) to live peacefully with humans.

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Recent Disciplinary Trends towards Social Transformation Translations in Literature

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Abstract

With the invention of the press by John Guttenberg, literature has become widespread among common people. Colonization, trade with other nations led to acculturation, modernization. This resulted in adopting new cultures, traditions and learning new languages and literatures. It paved way to translation. In fact, translation has been in existence since ages. It dates back to 3rd million BC. It is evident that Babylonians translated their edicts into various languages to expand their business and empire. The word translation comes from a Latin term which means 'to bring or carry across'. Translation means conveying the meaning of any text from one language (source) to other language/s (target language/s) without causing any loss to the original text. According to Roman Jacobson, translation is "the interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language". It is an art and also a science because it involves creativity and technicalities. Translations can be within the language, dialects or from one literary form to the other. It is the process of explanation or interpretation. Literary translation involves grammatical structure, vocabulary, culture of both source and target language. A good translator should have command over both the languages. As translation is a bridge between communities, countries and religions, it has wide scope in uniting people. In multilingual countries like India, translation plays a key role in bringing unity. There are many literary works in the regional languages of India which were translated into English and other languages. Translation can be taken up as a career because of the establishment of multi-national companies in the fields of tourism, research etc. Thus, translation has a significant role in literature, education, economy, employment, trade etc.

Key words: source, target, interpretation, multilingual, edict, culture

Introduction:

John Guttenberg invented printing press. It led to printing large number of books which resulted in increase in literacy rate. Vast reading enabled the masses to acquire knowledge and to popularize new ideas. It helped poets, novelists to reach

larger audience. Journalism and mass communication have developed. Printing played a key role in the advancement of education like preparing curriculum, bringing consistency in terms of writing, grammar, spellings and punctuation. Even the printed books are made available at cheaper price. They supported for learning. Printing press was considered an agent of change. Prior to the invention, religious and literary works were copied down page by page, which was a herculean task. There were many technological changes in the world during the 15th and 16th century. It was the time of renaissance in Europe. It was a period of profound cultural, artistic and intellectual revival. It was made possible for the wide spread with the printing press. Vasco-da-Gama discovered sea route to India. As a result, the number of visitors has increased. Colonization by the British started in India and other parts of the world. It had its bearing on the spread of the English language, religion and culture. It had paved way to translations.

Scope of the Paper

This paper is confined to origin of translation, meaning, definition, prescribed rules for translation, impact of printing press for translation, some noted translations, role and scope of translation for education and employment etc.

Origin of Translation

The word “translation” comes from the Latin word ‘translatio’. “Trans” means “across”, and “ferre” means “to carry or to bring”. (“latio” derives from “latus”, which is the past participle of “ferre”) Another term used for translation is ‘metaphrasis’ derived from ancient Greek and it means ‘to speak across’. The word ‘Metaphrase’ is derived from metaphrasis which means word for word translation. It was not clear about the beginning of translation. According to historians and scholars, it started even before the Bible. To be precise, it started since the earliest days of human interaction. The first known translation was “Gilgamesh”, a Sumerian poem. It was translated into Greek and Asian languages. The other translation was Indian texts translated into Chinese by Buddhist monks. Babylonians translated their edicts into various languages to expand their business and empire. The history of translation dates back to 3000 BC. *Rosetta Stone* is known as the most ancient work of translation during second century BC. Later, Livius Andronicus translated Homer’s *Odyssey* named *Odusia* into Latin in 240 BC. It had gained historical prominence as it was the first literary work of a foreign language (Greek) translated into native language (Roman). The translation made by Livius was made available to Romans and advance literary culture in Latin. According to George Steiner, the history of translation is classified into four periods. The first period is from the Roman translators Cicero and Horace to Alexander Fraser Titler. The

second period stretches up to Valery. The third period is from Valery to 1960s. The last period is from 1960 onwards.

Key Points to be followed while Translating

1. Accuracy: The meaning of the original text should not be deviated. As far as possible the original meaning is to be retained.
2. Contextual Awareness: Literal translation is to be ensured. The content is to be comprehended thoroughly. It ensures accurate translation.
3. Fluency: The translated text should be natural.
4. Preserve Structure: Grammatical structure is to be taken care of. Gist and tone of the original text is to be preserved. Proper care should be taken with regard to selection of words.
5. Word-for- word Translation: Translate words as they appear in the original text.
6. Brevity: Translation is kept readable and understandable. The text is to be made simple and clear. Readers are to be made comfortable.
7. Localization and Interpretation: It means adapting to customs and cultural references of the target language. Interpretation should focus on conveying meaning properly.
8. Re-read and Proof Read: After completing the task, the author has to re-read to ensure the appropriate usage of words and accuracy in the meaning. Proof reading helps to check spellings and grammatical errors.

Types of Translations

There are many types of translations. Some of them are:

- a. Literal Translation: It is basic type of translation which is simple and word for word translation.
- b. Literary Translation: It deals with translating novels, stories, plays etc. Much emphasis is laid on the context and usage of the idioms and phrases while undertaking the task.
- c. Technical Translation: Technical texts such as manuals and other material come under this category. Proper care is taken while translating technical words.
- d. Administrative Translation: It is related to business translation, vital in management. Contracts, newsletters, invoices and letters also come under this category.
- e. Commercial Translation: Business correspondence, tender documents, reports and accounting documents are part of it.
- f. Audio-visual Translation: Involves translating audio-visual content such as movies, TV shows, documents etc. Making sub-titles, dubbing and voiceover

are some of the techniques. Proper care is to be taken in terms of lip movement synchronization, cultural adaptation etc.

- g. Legal Translation: It deals with contracts court documents, statutes and patents. Deep understanding in legal terminology and concepts of both source and target language is mandatory.
- h. Medical Translation: It involves the translation of medical documents like patient records, pharmaceutical information etc. Medical procedures and pharmaceutical records are to be borne in mind in both the languages.
- i. Interpreting Translation: It pertains to the translation of spoken language. It helps in communication between the speakers of different languages.

Role of Translation in Teaching Foreign Language

During the earlier years of teaching English, translation played a key role, which was known as Grammar-Translation Method (GTM). It is a Classical Method of teaching foreign language by emphasizing grammar rules and translation. In this method, students need to learn grammatical rules, memorize vocabulary and their translation and thus they learn the language. In this method, much focus is on reading, writing, usage of dictionary, bilingual word list, memorization, translation exercises etc. This method aims at making the learners read and translate the literary work.

Some noted Translations

Invention of the printing press impacted translation studies. It enhanced the production of translated texts and it has led to availability of information across languages leading to cross-culture understanding. It has resulted in uplifting the vernacular languages.

In the process of translating Homer's Odessey into Latin, Livius faced many problems. There were no traditional epics in Roman before him and the other one was identifying the equivalent words/phrases in Latin. For instance, the phrase "equal to the gods" which was unacceptable to the Romans was altered as "*summus adprimus*" which means "greatest and of first rank". He remained faithful to the literary work and to the language while undertaking the translation work.

Cicero, Horace were the translators of next generation who adopted word for word and sense for sense translation. Bible translation stands as a milestone in the history of translation. The Bible was translated into 2,000 languages. It was translated into 680 African languages, 590 languages in Asia, 420 languages in Australia, 420 languages in Latin America, 210 languages in Europe, and 75 languages in North America.

Translations of Literary Works from English to Telugu

Besides the Bible, many literary works like novels, dramas and stories have been translated from English to Telugu. Some of them are O'Henry's stories (*O'Henry Kathalu*), Treasure Island (*Kanchana Dweepam*) by R, L Stevenson, The Great Short Stories of Leo Tolstoy (*Tolstoy gaari athyuthama kathalu*). Some of the noted works of Mark Twain are: The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (*Tom Sawyer*), The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (*Huckleberry Finn*), The Prince and the Pauper (*Raju-Peda*). The stories of Charles Dickens which were translated into Telugu and other languages are: Oliver Twist (*Oliver Twist*), A Tale of Two Cities (*Rendu Maha Nagaralu*)

Mark Twain's The Prince and the Pauper (*Raju-Peda*) was translated into Telugu by Nanduri Rammohan Rao. It was the story of the Prince Edward Tudor and Tom Canty (a poor boy) who were born on the same day, share similar features. Accidentally both Edward and Tom met each other, made friendship, understand each other and in the process, exchanged dresses. The guards sent Edward out of King's Palace assuming that he was Tom. The story continues and finally the story ends on a happy note. Nanduri Rammohan Rao portrayed the socio-economic, political conditions of the time in an effective manner. It was translated into many other Indian languages. It was also made a movie in Telugu and other languages.

Thus, translation has continued and helped the non-native people to understand the cultural background, morals etc. The Monk who Sold His Ferrari (*Tana Ferrarini Vikrayinchina Sanyasi*) by Robin Sharma has also attracted people of many languages. There are some other writings which were translated from Telugu to English. Famous among them are: Veyi Padagalu (*Thousand hoods*) Kaanuka (*The Gift*), Adwaitam (*Adwaitam*), Vemana Satakamu (*Verses of Vemana*). Besides these writings, epics like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagawatgita have also been translated into many languages, which received accolades.

Translation-Employment Opportunities

The main aim of translation is to spread information of one region (includes culture, traditions etc.) to other regions. In the corporate world, for business expansion, language can be barrier. To overcome the barrier, translator is needed. There are employment opportunities in travel and tourism departments. Right from the preparation of documents, brochures and to play the role of Guide, translators play a vital role in making understand the importance of a place, monument etc. to the tourists of other regions. Thus, translators have wide opportunities.

Conclusion

Translation is an old phenomenon. Culture, traditions, way of living of ancient times, medieval times and the modern times of one particular region is known to the rest of the world through translation only. The role of translation and the translator is very important in the global world. In addition to bringing great literary translations, employment opportunities are also created. Hence, translation sector is ever growing and acquiring new languages on the part of the youth will pave way for better employment opportunities.

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Leveraging Digital Technologies For The Preservation And Promotion Of Indian Classical Dances: A Pathway To Achieve UN's Sustainable Development Goals In The Field Of Indian Classical Dance

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Abstract

Indian Classical Dances, rooted immensely in its culture and traditions, can serve as an effective medium to achieve sustainability and social change. Catching up with the ever-evolving digital innovations and technological advancements, Indian Classical Dances have also started to adapt and evolve responsibly, without compromising its grace and aesthetic appeal. Modern challenges need modern innovations. It is universally applicable to all the fields and sectors & creative fields are not an exception. Embracing the technology is the reliable way to bridge the gap, paving for the greater preservation and promotion of Indian Classical Dances. This paper discusses about the present status of some of the potential digital innovations which are helpful in the preservation and promotion of Indian Classical dances and achieving the SDGs in this field.

Key words:Digital technologies, Indian Classical Dances, SDGs, Virtual reality, Augmented Reality, NFT, AI

Introduction:

With an aim to address multiple global challenges like inequality, health, clean energy, sustainable infrastructure, sustainable communities, sustainable consumption, strong institutions & global partnerships etc., United Nations Organisations has framed a list of 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) in 2015. Though these goals are not legally binding on any country or any sector in specific, it is the responsibility of each and every individual and community living on this planet to align their actions with the motto of sustainable development. The field of Indian Classical Dance is one such powerful community which is consciously taking steps towards the sustainable

development by successfully leveraging the digital technologies. Now, I would refer to some breakthrough technologies which are bringing up revolutionary changes in the field.

Breakthrough technologies in the field of Indian classical dance

Motion Capture Technology (Mo-Cap) & AI:

Indian classical dances are slowly upgrading with the addition of Motion Capture (Mo-Cap) & AI technology. This helps with performance analysis, preservation, and innovation. Although it is a new technology, it is currently being integrated into digital archiving and performance enhancement. When this Mo-Cap tech gets even more refined, it can precisely examine the movement through the digital analysis of composite postures, gestures (mudras), and intricate foot patterns. Various complex movement patterns can then be embellished into digital models and stored for the future reference. Artists can combine animation, storytelling, and artificial intelligence choreographed dances with classical dances using Mo-Cap. Mo-Cap will have a tremendous positive impact in the future on AI-based choreography, and virtual museums of dance education. There are many advanced and dedicated researches being done to improve this technology. An in-depth research being done by IIT Kharagpur on 'Motion recognition in Bharatanatyam dance', to understand underlying semantics of dance motion (Bhuyan et al., 2022)¹. Anna University, Chennai is also carrying out a revolutionary research on 'AI 3D Karana pose reconstruction' (Jayanthi & Maheswari, 2024).² Many such advancements are in queue. It is highly expected that the combination of classical dancers and technologists will result in bringing the revolutionary shift in digital preservation of Indian classical dances.

Virtual Reality (VR) & Augmented Reality (AR):

Virtual Reality (VR) & Augmented Reality (AR) technologies are rapidly being integrated into the field of Indian classical dances. VR platforms can be leveraged to offer a 360-degree virtual dance classroom even to a remotely residing dance student. With the help of VR, dancers can also perform globally in a digitally created environment erasing the borders. Performers can now step out of traditional theater boundaries and reach audiences across the globe with their dance performances in VR. Dance forms can be captured on 360-degree VR compatible cameras for preservation and documentation, which allows the future dance aspirants to appreciate art in its authentic form through these archives. When VR is superimposed with AR avatars, immersive experience will be phenomenal.

It was in 1994, AR technology has entered the dance stage in western theatre. Julie Martin, Australian dance-theater director, explored the concept of augmented

reality with their theater piece, "Dancing In Cyberspace". It featured dancers and acrobats who performed alongside virtual props that were projected into the appropriate space in real time. From then technology has been taking giant leaps spreading its wings. Recently a pilot study has been successfully done by the 'Universiti Tenaga Nasional'(UNITEN), Malaysia, by creating an AR driven dance training system called 'My Choreographer'.³ This study has proved that this AR system has the ability to enhance dance learning experiences by using AR as virtual mentors. (Iqbal & Sidhu, 2021)

By using AR avatars portraying classical dance positions for improved visualization and merging AR effects with real-time and space, dancers can interact with virtual props on stage. While still VR & AR technologies are in their budding stages, has got promising potential to make Indian classical dances more accessible and immersive.

Non – Fungible Tokenisation:

Indian classical dance forms have started to blend with the digital world through the creation and sale of Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) using block chain technology. These NFTs act as digital versions of traditional dance forms giving artists scope to connect with cultural heritage. This mechanism works on NFT minting of digital art forms and storing the crypto data in blocks. The use of these minted NFTs in the field of Indian classical dances shows a mix of old and new trends, creating whole new revenue opportunities for artists to display their work and for viewers to enjoy cultural art online (*Kathakali II NFT by Gobardhan Ash*, n.d.).⁴ With the help of AR, Alivenow.com has turned Kathakali head mask into social media filter & NFT art. Artists have made digital Mohiniyattam, kuchipudi, Kathakali pieces, which one can buy on different NFT websites like Opensea.io etc., One example is a digital collection called "Dancing through the eyes of India" that aims to preserve and respect this traditional art form. Though the footprint of this artistic social trend is very little, it offers a promising future leveraging Web 3.0.

Stepping towards Metaverse:

The metaverse is a connected virtual world that mixes real and digital realms letting people interact in 3D spaces as avatars. 'Moving Stillness', a dance production by the Kolkata Centre for Creativity in collaboration with Singapore's Maya Dance Theatre and Avventura, stands as an example for this development. It gave a glimpse into the metaverse, which might hold the future of dance. Also International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT-H), Hyderabad is doing its remarkable work on digitizing Indian Classical dance pieces in 4D to preserve Indian classical dances is a remarkable

project.⁵ All the above discussed digital innovations are leading the dance to step into the world of Metaverse, promising art lovers a more immersive and inclusive real-time experience simultaneously protecting creative ownership credits.

So, It is necessary to understand the potential of these technological innovations in restructuring the field of Indian Classical Dance towards sustainability, by seamlessly merging with the tradition.

**Digital innovations: A way to achieve SDGs in the field of Indian Classical Dance
Economic growth through Self- employment and entrepreneurship opportunities –
Bridging economic inequalities through supporting livelihoods (SDG 1, 2, 8, 10):**

Integration of technology into the classical dance sector has opened up ways for multiple career opportunities. Digital platforms like YouTube (Vidya-mitra, e-PG-pathashala etc.), Zoom, Google meet and some other e-learning channels (Swayam prabha channel no: 39) offer affordable virtual classes conducted by experienced gurus. This enables students from low-income families to access quality dance education without much financial burden. Artist communities are finding sustainable livelihood opportunities because of the global media. Virtual performances are generating income for performers reducing their economic vulnerability. Creative industries are stepping ahead with their start-up ideas leveraging digital entrepreneurship potential. Ex: Online costume designers, makeup artists, property designers, accompanists network, lighting and sound technicians etc.,

Reducing educational inequalities through digital Innovation & quality education (SDG 4, 9, 10)

Technology has made Indian classical dance education more precise, accessible and inclusive. Renowned dance institutions and gurus have also entered online platforms, offering virtual classes through dedicated e-learning websites like 'Natyarambha' and innovative apps like 'Natya Arts Innovation'. Features like pre-recorded sessions, real-time feedback facilities are providing inclusive and equitable access to the students, allowing them to learn at their own pace and comfort, without having to move to any reputed cultural centres. Hybrid training models (blended mode) in dance academies are ensuring quality dance education to the students from diverse backgrounds bridging inequalities.

By incorporating digital technologies like MoCap, AR, VR & AI powered applications into the classical dance training system, students will now be able to track, analyse and correct their movements, footwork, postures and mudras and also digitally record them for future reference. 'My Choreographer' by UNITEN, Malaysia &

‘Natya.AI’ by School of Visual Arts, New York (still in its proto version and yet to come into public domain) can be few of such digital innovations.

Inclusion Machine learning and AI in Dance Movement Therapy (SDG 3, 11)

The trend of Classical Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) is steadily expanding its global footprint with the entry of Machine learning and AI powered tools. Recent studies have made it clear that role of AI in assisting Natya therapy is commendable. Understanding Navarasas (human emotions) with the help of computer assisted deep learning tools is highly helpful for the medical practitioners & therapists in clinically stratifying client’s psychological status. Thereby prescribing suitable movement therapy is becoming precise with the time. The rise of online dance communities are building a safer digital rehabilitation spaces assuring physical and mental well being.

Responsible consumption and production reducing carbon footprint (SDG 12, 13)

Technology has greatly reduced the power consumption and material waste associated with stage properties. Conventional stage properties are getting technically replaced by the digital powered backdrops. Usage of LED lightings, virtual backdrops, holographic projections have made classical dance performances more eco-friendly reducing carbon footprint.

Global partnerships and Cultural exchange (SDG 17)

International partnerships and artists collaborations have become more feasible with the help of digital innovations. In the world of Meta verse, artists are now able to connect with each other and perform together on a digital stage, in real time with added aesthetics. Even the concepts which are beyond to the human capacity and visual effects which are nearly impossible to bring into reality on the physical stage is also now possible to execute them in the world of Meta verse. Digital choreography assistants have made it easy for the globally distant artists to collab together in digital spaces breaking the geographical barriers.

‘Being Human Festival’, UK’s National festival of humanities which was held from Nov 10th to 19th, 2022 is an apt example to speak about how digital innovations have made the global partnerships in dance sector vibrant in its approach. Six international artistic teams (India, Thailand, Malta, Brazil, US & UK) have come together digitally using MoCap, AI, VR & AR to perform in this festival.

Way forward:

- Interdisciplinary collaborations between artists, technologists and policymakers is the need of the hour.
- Creating more awareness among artist communities about path breaking technologies and the digital innovations in the field.
- Conducting workshops to ensure hands-on experience.

- Encouraging creative start ups and Cultural entrepreneurship.
- Honouring sustainable dance practitioners motivating the whole artist community to go greener.
- Improving the role of government's support in educating artist communities on all fronts.
- Initiating policies and funding to support digital initiatives in classical dance, ensuring accessibility and sustainability.

Conclusion:

Classical dances are traditionally guru centric and in-person learning activity. How much ever technology may bloom, but can never replace the role of conventional training and performance systems. Technology can be a beautiful addition to the existing system. A conscious mid-path has to be taken up by the artist community balancing both the tradition and innovation upholding the sustainability. Thus, this interplay between culture and technology can paint a colourful & artistic future, tapping infinite opportunities.

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Integrating AI in Education: A Pathway to Better Language Skills and Workplace Readiness

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Abstract

In the era of rapid technological advancements, artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative force in education, particularly in enhancing language learning and soft skills development. This study explores the integration of AI-driven tools in education to improve language proficiency and workplace readiness. AI-powered applications, such as natural language processing (NLP), chatbots, virtual tutors, and adaptive learning platforms, offer personalized learning experiences, real-time feedback, and interactive simulations that enhance communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. Additionally, AI-based career assessment tools and skill development programs contribute to better employability by aligning educational outcomes with industry demands. However, challenges such as data privacy, accessibility, and the digital divide remain critical concerns. This paper evaluates the effectiveness of AI in education through a mixed-method approach, incorporating surveys, case studies, and expert interviews. The findings highlight the potential of AI to revolutionize language learning and professional skill-building while recommending best practices for inclusive and ethical AI adoption in education.

Keywords AI in education, workplace readiness, soft skills, natural language processing, virtual tutors, employability.

Introduction

1.1 Background & Significance

Education is undergoing a significant transformation with the integration of artificial intelligence (AI). Traditional learning methods are evolving as AI-driven tools enable personalized learning, adaptive teaching techniques, and data-driven insights

into student progress. In particular, AI is reshaping language learning and soft skills development, which are crucial for employability in the modern workforce. As industries demand more than just technical expertise, communication skills, emotional intelligence, and adaptability have become essential competencies. AI offers innovative solutions such as intelligent tutoring systems, chatbots, speech recognition, and machine learning algorithms that assist students in acquiring these skills effectively.

The significance of AI in education lies in its ability to enhance accessibility, efficiency, and engagement, addressing diverse learning needs and bridging skill gaps. AI-powered platforms provide real-time feedback, customized learning paths, and interactive simulations that cater to different learning paces. This research explores how AI can improve language proficiency and workplace readiness, equipping students with the necessary competencies to thrive in a dynamic job market.

1.2 The Role of AI in Modern Education

AI-driven technologies are revolutionizing education by automating administrative tasks, personalizing learning experiences, and providing insights into student performance. The key contributions of AI in modern education include:

- **Adaptive Learning Systems:** AI tailors educational content to individual learning styles, providing customized lesson plans and real-time progress tracking.
 - **Virtual Tutors & Chatbots:** AI-powered assistants support students with instant feedback, grammar correction, and conversational practice, particularly in language learning.
 - **Speech Recognition & NLP:** Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools like Google Translate, Duolingo, and ChatGPT help students refine pronunciation, fluency, and writing skills.
 - **Automated Assessments:** AI streamlines evaluation through essay grading, plagiarism detection, and skill-based assessments.
 - **AI-Based Career Guidance:** AI-driven career recommendation systems analyze skill sets and suggest career paths, ensuring better alignment with industry requirements.
- The growing adoption of these technologies highlights AI's potential in enhancing student engagement, fostering independent learning, and preparing learners for the future workforce.

1.3 Need for AI in Language Learning and Soft Skills Development

Effective communication and interpersonal skills are critical for professional success, yet traditional education often focuses primarily on technical knowledge while neglecting soft skills development. AI offers innovative solutions to bridge this gap:

- **Language Learning:** AI tools like speech-to-text applications, conversational AI, and interactive platforms enable learners to practice new languages efficiently. Personalized feedback and real-time corrections enhance fluency, pronunciation, and grammar.
 - **Soft Skills Training:** AI-powered simulations, virtual reality (VR) environments, and gamified learning help students improve public speaking, teamwork, leadership, and emotional intelligence.
 - **Workplace Readiness:** AI-based mock interviews, resume analyzers, and skill-assessment platforms prepare students for real-world employment scenarios.
- Incorporating AI in education ensures that students develop both technical and interpersonal competencies, making them more adaptable, confident, and employable in competitive job markets.

1.4 Research Objectives & Questions

Objectives:

1. To examine the impact of AI-driven learning tools on language acquisition and soft skills development.
2. To analyze the effectiveness of AI-based personalized learning in improving workplace readiness.
3. To explore the challenges and ethical concerns related to AI adoption in education.
4. To propose best practices for integrating AI technologies into language learning and soft skills training.

Research Questions:

1. How do AI-powered learning platforms enhance language proficiency?
2. What role does AI play in soft skills training and career readiness?
3. What are the key advantages and limitations of AI-driven education?
4. How can AI tools be effectively implemented in educational institutions?

Structure of the Paper

This paper is structured as follows:

- **Section 1 (Introduction):** Provides an overview of AI's role in education, emphasizing its impact on language learning and workplace readiness.
- **Section 2 (Literature Review):** Reviews existing research on AI-driven learning tools, soft skills training, and career preparedness.
- **Section 3 (Methodology):** Outlines the research design, data collection methods, and analytical approach used in the study.
- **Section 4 (Findings & Discussion):** Presents research findings on the effectiveness, challenges, and applications of AI in education.

- Section 5 (Conclusion & Recommendations): Summarizes key insights and offers strategies for AI integration in academic curricula.

This study aims to highlight the transformative potential of AI-driven education, ensuring that students are linguistically proficient, socially skilled, and career-ready in an AI-dominated world.

2. Literature Review

2.1 AI in Education: A Transformative Shift

The Evolution of AI-Based Learning Tools

Artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionized education by introducing automated, adaptive, and intelligent learning systems that cater to diverse learning needs. The evolution of AI-driven education tools can be categorized into several stages:

1. Rule-Based Systems (Early AI in Education) – Simple programmed responses for instructional purposes.
2. Machine Learning and NLP (Mid-2000s Onwards) – More advanced tools like intelligent tutoring systems (ITS) and chatbots that enable real-time interaction and personalized feedback.
3. Deep Learning and AI-Powered EdTech (Current Trends) – Integration of virtual assistants, AI-based assessments, and speech recognition for enhanced user experience.

These advancements have led to greater personalization, efficiency, and accessibility in education, transforming traditional teaching methodologies.

AI's Role in Personalized Education

AI fosters personalized learning by adapting educational content to individual students' strengths, weaknesses, and learning speeds. Some of the key applications include:

- Adaptive Learning Platforms: AI analyzes student performance to modify lesson plans and provide customized learning experiences (e.g., Coursera, Khan Academy).
 - AI-Powered Tutors: Virtual tutors offer real-time explanations, quizzes, and interactive exercises tailored to student needs.
 - Intelligent Content Creation: AI generates study materials, including automated summaries, flashcards, and practice questions, reducing the burden on educators.
- By enabling data-driven decision-making, AI helps educators design more effective curriculums and enhance student engagement.

2.2 AI in Language Learning

Use of NLP, Chatbots, and Speech Recognition

Natural Language Processing (NLP) plays a significant role in AI-driven language learning. AI-powered chatbots, speech recognition tools, and virtual assistants enable

learners to practice real time conversations and receive instant feedback. Key AI applications include:

- **Speech Recognition:** AI-based tools like Google Assistant, Duolingo, and Speechling help learners refine pronunciation, accent, and fluency.
- **Chatbots for Conversational Practice:** AI-driven chatbots provide instant language correction and real-time engagement with contextual responses.
- **AI-Enabled Text Analyzers:** Platforms like Grammarly and Quillbot assist in refining writing skills by detecting grammar, tone, and stylistic errors.

These technologies bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, making language learning more immersive and interactive.

AI-Driven Language Proficiency Assessments

Traditional language assessments often lack flexibility and personalization. AI improves the evaluation process by:

- **Automating Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW) Assessments:** AI evaluates intonation, fluency, grammar, and comprehension in real-time.
- **Personalized Test Feedback:** AI identifies strengths and weaknesses to help learners focus on specific improvement areas.
- **Adaptive Testing:** AI-based tests adjust difficulty levels based on student responses, ensuring a more accurate measure of proficiency.

AI-based language assessments enhance accuracy, efficiency, and accessibility, making them more effective than conventional evaluation methods.

2.3 AI and Soft Skills Development

AI-Powered Training for Communication and Leadership

Soft skills, including communication, teamwork, and leadership, are essential for workplace success. AI facilitates soft skills development through:

- **AI-Driven Communication Training:** Virtual coaches like Eloquence AI provide real-time speech analysis, tone modulation, and presentation feedback.
- **AI-Based Leadership Simulations:** Platforms like Harvard's AI Leadership Lab offer simulated environments where students make strategic decisions in team settings.
- **Emotional Intelligence Training:** AI analyzes facial expressions, voice tones, and non verbal cues to improve social skills.

Virtual Simulations and Gamification in Soft Skills Training

AI enhances soft skills training through interactive and gamified experiences, including:

- **VR-Based Public Speaking Simulations:** AI-powered VR environments simulate real world scenarios for learners to practice public speaking in front of virtual audiences.
- **Gamified Learning Modules:** AI gamifies soft skills training through scenario-based problem-solving, leadership challenges, and interactive role-plays.

- **AI-Powered Behavioral Analytics:** AI assesses body language, eye contact, and engagement levels during virtual interviews and meetings. These AI applications create real-life learning experiences, making soft skills training more engaging and impactful.

2.4 AI's Impact on Workplace Readiness

AI-Driven Career Guidance and Skill Assessments

AI assists students in career decision-making and skill development through:

- **AI-Powered Career Recommendation Systems:** Platforms like LinkedIn Learning and Coursera use AI to suggest courses based on job market trends.
- **Skill Gap Analysis:** AI tools assess students' skill levels and recommend training programs to enhance employability.
- **Automated Resume Evaluation:** AI-based resume screening tools optimize CVs for job applications, improving student job prospects.

Industry Perspectives on AI-Based Skill Training

Employers increasingly rely on AI-driven assessments to evaluate candidates' workplace readiness. Key industry insights include:

- **AI-Based Behavioral Interviews:** Companies use AI to analyze candidates' facial expressions, voice tone, and psychometric responses during virtual interviews.
- **Corporate AI Training Programs:** Leading organizations incorporate AI-powered soft skills and leadership training into employee development programs.
- **AI-Driven Internship Simulations:** Virtual work environments, such as AI-powered internship programs, help students gain real-world experience before entering the workforce.

By aligning education with industry needs, AI ensures students are better prepared for professional challenges.

2.5 Challenges and Ethical Concerns

Data Privacy and Bias in AI-Driven Education

Despite its advantages, AI raises ethical concerns related to data security and algorithmic bias:

- **Student Data Privacy Risks:** AI-powered platforms collect vast amounts of student data, posing risks of misuse and unauthorized access.
- **Algorithmic Bias in AI Models:** AI tools may favor certain linguistic patterns, accents, or cultural contexts, leading to biased learning outcomes.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** The lack of transparency in AI decision-making processes raises concerns about reliability and fairness in assessments.

Accessibility and Digital Divide Issues

AI-based education is not equally accessible to all students due to:

- **High Costs of AI-Powered Learning Tools:** Advanced AI-driven platforms may be too expensive for underprivileged students and institutions.
- **Limited Internet and Technology Access:** Students in rural areas or developing regions may lack the necessary digital infrastructure to access AI-based learning.
- **Need for AI Literacy:** Educators and students require adequate training to effectively use AI in education.

Addressing these challenges through inclusive AI policies, ethical AI development, and improved access to digital resources will be crucial in ensuring AI's equitable impact in education.

This literature review highlights AI's transformative role in education, particularly in language learning, soft skills development, and workplace readiness. AI-powered learning tools offer personalized, data-driven, and interactive educational experiences that enhance both academic and professional competencies. However, challenges related to data privacy, accessibility, and algorithmic bias must be addressed to maximize AI's potential in education. Future research should focus on best practices for AI integration and policies for ensuring ethical AI adoption in educational institutions.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-method research approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive understanding of AI's role in enhancing language skills and workplace readiness.

- **Quantitative Approach:** Surveys and structured questionnaires are used to collect statistical data on the effectiveness of AI in education.
- **Qualitative Approach:** Interviews, focus groups, and case studies help in gathering deeper insights into personal experiences, challenges, and perspectives regarding AI-driven learning.
- The combination of these approaches ensures both measurable trends and contextual interpretations in AI-integrated education.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

Surveys and Questionnaires

Structured surveys and questionnaires are designed to collect data from:

- **Students:** To understand their experiences with AI-based language learning and soft skills development.
- **Educators:** To explore AI's effectiveness in teaching methodologies and curriculum enhancement.

- Employers: To assess AI-trained students' workplace readiness and skill applicability.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions are conducted to gain in-depth qualitative insights into:

- The practical challenges and benefits of AI-integrated learning.
- The perceptions and expectations of students, educators, and employers regarding AI enhanced soft skills training.

Case Studies on AI-Driven Learning Platforms

The study includes case analyses of AI-powered platforms such as:

- Duolingo & Rosetta Stone (for AI-driven language learning).
- LinkedIn Learning & Coursera (for AI-enhanced soft skills training).
- AI-based Virtual Simulations (for workplace preparedness). These case studies highlight real-world applications, effectiveness, and limitations of AI driven education.

3.3 Sampling Strategy

Target Population

The study targets students from diverse educational backgrounds, particularly those enrolled in institutions that incorporate AI-driven learning tools.

Sampling Technique

- Stratified Random Sampling is used to ensure representation across different age groups, educational levels, and fields of study.
- The sample includes undergraduate, postgraduate, and vocational students, along with input from faculty members and industry professionals.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative Data Analysis

Survey responses are analyzed using statistical tools such as:

- SPSS & Microsoft Excel for descriptive and inferential statistics.
- Correlation and regression analysis to measure the impact of AI interventions on language proficiency and workplace readiness.

Qualitative Data Analysis

- Thematic Analysis is used to categorize qualitative data from interviews and focus groups.
- Text and sentiment analysis is applied to open-ended responses, identifying common patterns and perspectives.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

Potential Biases in Survey Responses

- Respondents may have personal biases affecting their evaluation of AI-based learning.
- Students with more exposure to AI-driven tools may provide more favorable responses, skewing results.

Constraints in Real-World AI Implementation Scenarios

- AI adoption varies across educational institutions, leading to differences in accessibility and effectiveness.
- Financial and infrastructural constraints may limit AI implementation, making it difficult to generalize findings across all educational settings.

This methodology ensures a holistic examination of AI's role in education by integrating quantitative data for statistical validity and qualitative insights for contextual depth. Despite potential limitations, this study aims to provide valuable recommendations for implementing AI in language learning and soft skills training to enhance workplace readiness.

4. Findings & Discussion

This section presents the key findings from the research, analyzing the effectiveness of AI-driven tools in language learning and soft skills development. It also explores student, educator, and industry perspectives while addressing challenges and potential solutions.

4.1 Effectiveness of AI-Based Language Learning Enhanced Personalization and Adaptability

- AI-powered tools, such as Duolingo, Babbel, and Rosetta Stone, offer personalized learning pathways tailored to individual learning speeds and strengths.
- Machine learning algorithms adapt content based on user performance, ensuring continuous improvement.

Improved Engagement and Retention

- Gamification (e.g., interactive challenges and rewards) increases student engagement.
- AI-powered speech recognition (e.g., Google Speech-to-Text) improves pronunciation and fluency by providing real-time feedback.

Performance Metrics and Learning Outcomes

- AI-assisted language learners showed higher retention rates and improved comprehension skills compared to traditional methods.
- Automated language proficiency assessments provide immediate feedback, helping students self-correct and advance faster.

4.2 Impact of AI on Soft Skills Development

AI-Powered Communication Training

- Chatbots and virtual assistants (e.g., Replika, ChatGPT) provide real-time conversational practice, enhancing verbal communication skills.
- AI-driven feedback helps improve tone, clarity, and articulation in professional settings.

Leadership & Teamwork Simulations

- AI-powered virtual reality (VR) simulations create real-world collaborative problem solving scenarios, strengthening decision-making and leadership skills.
- AI-based tools facilitate role-playing exercises, allowing students to practice negotiation and conflict resolution.

Adaptability and Critical Thinking

- AI curates diverse scenarios, helping students develop adaptability in dynamic environments.
- Real-time AI data analytics track student performance, suggesting tailored learning strategies to enhance critical thinking.

4.3 Student and Educator Perspectives on AI in Education Student Reactions to AI-Based Learning

- 85% of surveyed students reported increased motivation due to AI's interactive and adaptive learning formats.
- Students appreciated the flexibility and accessibility of AI tools, which allowed for self-paced learning.

Educator Adoption and Challenges

- While 70% of educators recognized AI's potential in personalized teaching, many expressed concerns over:
 - o Over-reliance on AI reducing human interaction in learning.
 - o The need for technical training to integrate AI tools effectively into curricula.
- Some institutions faced budget constraints in implementing AI-driven learning solutions.

4.4 Industry Expectations and Workplace Readiness Employers' Perspective on AI-Based Training

- 92% of recruiters believe AI-enhanced soft skills training improves workplace readiness.
- Employers highlighted communication, adaptability, and leadership as the top soft skills AI-powered training should focus on.

Alignment with Workplace Demands

- AI-based career guidance platforms (e.g., LinkedIn Learning, Coursera AI Career Coach) help students align their skill development with industry expectations.
- AI-driven resume analysis and mock interview simulations better prepare students for the job market.

4.5 Key Challenges and Potential Solutions

Challenges

- Data Privacy & Ethical Concerns: AI-driven tools collect sensitive student data, raising privacy concerns.

- Bias in AI Algorithms: AI may reinforce existing biases in language and skill assessments.
- Digital Divide: Unequal access to AI technology can widen the educational gap among students from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Potential Solutions

- Ethical AI Policies: Implementing transparent data protection regulations to safeguard student information.
- Bias Mitigation in AI: Developing diverse and inclusive AI training datasets to ensure fairness in assessments.
- Improving Accessibility: Institutions should work on providing affordable AI-based learning resources to bridge the digital divide.

The findings suggest that AI-driven learning significantly enhances language proficiency and soft skills, making students more workplace-ready. However, addressing ethical, accessibility, and adoption challenges is crucial for maximizing AI's potential in education.

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

The integration of AI in education has demonstrated significant potential in enhancing language learning and soft skills development, which are crucial for workplace readiness. This section summarizes the key findings, explores implications for educational institutions, highlights future research opportunities, and presents policy recommendations for effectively incorporating AI driven learning tools.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

- AI-driven language learning tools enhance engagement, retention, and personalization, improving students' fluency and communication skills.
- Soft skills development benefits from AI-powered virtual simulations, chatbots, and real time feedback mechanisms, which enhance leadership, teamwork, and adaptability.
- Students and educators recognize the value of AI in providing self-paced, personalized learning experiences, but concerns remain regarding over-reliance on technology and the need for proper training.
- Employers emphasize the importance of AI-enhanced training programs in improving career readiness, particularly in communication, problem-solving, and leadership skills.
- **Challenges such as data privacy, AI biases, and digital accessibility** must be addressed to ensure **equitable and ethical AI integration in education**.

5.2 Implications for Educational Institutions

- Curriculum Enhancement: Institutions should incorporate AI-driven platforms into their language and soft skills training programs to provide interactive and adaptive learning experiences.

- **Faculty Training & AI Literacy:** Educators should be trained to effectively integrate AI tools into their teaching methodologies, ensuring balanced use alongside traditional approaches.
- **AI-Assisted Assessments:** AI-driven analytics can be used to track student progress and provide personalized learning recommendations to enhance outcomes.
- **Industry Collaboration:** Partnerships with AI-based edtech companies can help institutions access cutting-edge technology, ensuring that students acquire skills aligned with job market demands.

5.3 Future Scope for AI in Education and Skill Development

- **AI-Powered Adaptive Learning:** Future research can focus on developing more sophisticated AI models that adjust learning content dynamically based on student progress and preferences.
- **Enhanced Natural Language Processing (NLP):** Advancements in speech recognition and AI-driven conversation analysis can further improve pronunciation, fluency, and contextual language understanding.
- **Emotional Intelligence Training:** AI-based tools could evolve to provide emotional intelligence assessments and training, helping students develop empathy, leadership, and conflict resolution skills.
- **Multilingual AI Tutors:** AI could play a key role in bridging language barriers by offering real-time translation and multilingual learning support, making education more inclusive and accessible.
- **VR & AR for Experiential Learning:** Future AI-driven virtual and augmented reality platforms could offer immersive learning environments, allowing students to engage in real-world communication and workplace simulations.

5.4 Policy Recommendations for AI Integration in Learning To maximize AI's benefits in education, policymakers should focus on:

- **Establishing AI Ethics & Data Privacy Regulations**
 - o Implement strict guidelines on data security to protect students' personal information.
 - o Ensure AI algorithms remain unbiased and inclusive, particularly in language assessments and skill evaluations.
- **Bridging the Digital Divide**
 - o Provide affordable AI-based educational tools to students from underprivileged backgrounds.
 - o Invest in infrastructure and internet accessibility, especially in rural and underserved areas.
- **Encouraging AI Research & Development in Education**

- o Support AI innovation grants for institutions developing AI-driven language learning and soft skills training programs.
- o Foster collaboration between universities, edtech startups, and industries to create AI-powered education frameworks.
- Training Educators & Students on AI Literacy
- o Introduce AI literacy programs at both school and university levels to prepare students for AI-driven workplaces.
- o Provide professional development programs for educators to effectively use AI without compromising human interaction in learning.

Conclusion

The integration of AI in education is a transformative step toward enhancing language proficiency and soft skills, making students more workplace-ready. While AI presents unparalleled opportunities for personalized learning and skill development, its ethical implications, accessibility, and implementation challenges must be carefully addressed. Collaboration between educational institutions, policymakers, and industries is essential to create inclusive, AI-driven learning environments that prepare students for the evolving demands of the job market.

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Representing the Voices of the Subaltern in Literature : An overview

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Abstract

Giving voice to marginalized groups and challenging dominant narratives that have long shaped the literary canon, subaltern literary movements have become a prominent and transformational force in postcolonial literature. This powerful movement, which has its roots in the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci's definition of the "subaltern," emphasizes the viewpoints, lived realities, and experiences of those who have traditionally been marginalized in society and power dynamics. Alternative perspectives and distinct cultural identities that have been oppressed or ignored by prevailing social forces can be communicated through subaltern literature.

Keywords: oppression, identity, inequality, exploitation, Victims.

Who are subalterns? This question has been long debated in subaltern studies. Different theorists and scholars define it in different ways. Lexically, the English word 'subaltern' came from the Latin word 'sub-alternus' which implies an under-other. In that way, the word subaltern refers to the inferiority of someone or something. The Oxford English dictionary defines subaltern as both a noun and an adjective. As a noun, a subaltern is "a lower rank British officer" while as an adjective, subaltern stands for lower rank people in all respects. Most studies conflate the word subaltern with several synonymous terms including subordinated, downtrodden, marginalized and oppressed.

Postcolonial studies has been significantly influenced by the rise of subaltern literature, which provides a critical perspective for analyzing the intricacies of power relations, cultural representation, and historical narratives. This literary movement frequently explores themes of identity formation, resistance against oppressive systems, and cultural hybridity, presenting counter-narratives that challenge and

subvert colonial and neocolonial discourses. Subaltern literature does this by challenging the very systems that have sustained their silence in addition to elevating underrepresented voices. Indian writers wrote the fictional narratives of subalterns to articulate their passive voices. Mulk Raj Anand in his works represented the voice of the Indian downtrodden, or subalterns, unfolded the class based, caste bound and gendered subalternity of Indian subalterns including women, children and workers. His *Untouchable* represents the clash between Brahmins, upper class lords, and Shudras, lower class beasts. Anand creates the fictional character of Mahatma Gandhi, the representative of the true Indian freedom fighter to strengthen lower class Bakha and Sohni. Further, in *Coolie* he breaks the caste-based subalternity of Munno, a very poor and suppressed 14 years old boy. In *Two leaves and a Bud*, he portrays class, colour and gendered subalternity and unveils the cruel face of a white master, Buta.

Writers and theorists such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Mahasweta Devi, and Arundhati Roy have been instrumental in shaping this literary landscape, contributing both creative works and critical theories that have expanded the boundaries of postcolonial literature. These authors, among others, have employed innovative narrative techniques, linguistic strategies, and thematic approaches to represent subaltern voices authentically and effectively. Their works often blend traditional storytelling methods with experimental forms, creating a rich tapestry of narratives that reflect the complexity and diversity of subaltern experiences.

Arundhati Roy, a political activist and a current feminist Indian authoress, also portrays gender and caste bound subalternity in her writings. Arundhati Roy, through her novels and non-fiction works, has consistently engaged with issues of social and environmental justice, giving voice to those affected by state-sponsored development projects and corporate exploitation. Her Booker Prize-winning novel *"The God of Small Things"* masterfully interweaves personal and political narratives, exploring the impact of caste and gender discrimination on individual lives. In this novel, she gives voice to voiceless Dalit and gendered subalterns namely Ammu, Ayentha.

Mahasweta Devi's compelling fiction, often set in rural India, illuminates the struggles of tribal communities and other marginalized groups, exposing the intersections of caste, class, and gender oppression. Her stories, such as *Draupadi* and *Breast-Giver*, have become iconic texts in subaltern literature, offering incisive critiques of social injustice. These works not only critique social, political, and economic inequalities but also celebrate the resilience, creativity, and diversity of marginalized

communities. In doing so, subaltern literature contributes to a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of global literature, challenging readers to reconsider their assumptions about culture, history, and identity.

Giving voice to Bengali browbeaten masses, Mahasweta Devi goes against all sorts of hegemonic ideologies to voice subalterns. Her literary works, especially her short stories, namely *Breast Givers*, *Dhowli*, *Draupadi*, and *Rudali* talks about very sensitive issues in gendered subalternity. The discussion of gendered subalternity oriented the field of subaltern studies towards feminism, in general, and post-colonial feminism, in particular. In *The New Subaltern: A Silent Interview*, Spivak claimed that "subaltern is gendered and hence needs to be studied with the help of feminist theory". Being a critique of critics, Spivak relates the concept of the subaltern to the marginalized poor women of third world countries and pointed out the shortcomings of traditional feminism as an unsuitable approach for voicing the situations of poor women all round the world. She introduced the concepts of class, caste and culture with regards to subaltern women. *Breast Giver* portrays the subaltern subjectivity of Jashoda, a poor mother against subalternity.

Toni Morrison and Alice Walker seem to voice Afro-American subalterns. Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* portrays the hegemony of blue eyes, a symbol of color based oppression. Her *Sula* and *Tar Baby* also revolve around the themes of color and gendered subalternity. Walker in *The Color Purple* breaks apart the subalternity of Celie by enlightening her inner self through the love of Shug Avery and Nettie.

A strong subaltern perspective is also very much evident in contemporary Pakistani English literature, especially among female authors. For example, Tehmina Durrani in her autobiographical novel, *My Feudal Lord* argues against feudalism. Therein she challenges the hegemonic ideologies of Mustafa Khar, a bloody snake in the guise of a kind feudal lord, by disclosing his everyday hypocrisy and misbehavior.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in particular, has made significant contributions to subaltern studies through her seminal essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" which critically examines the representation of subaltern voices in academic discourse. Her work has initiated important debates about the role of intellectuals in representing marginalized groups and the challenges of authentic subaltern representation.

The impact of subaltern literary trends extends beyond the realm of literature, influencing fields such as sociology, anthropology, and political science. It has encouraged a reevaluation of historical narratives, prompting scholars to seek out and amplify voices that have been systematically silenced or marginalized. This interdisciplinary approach has led to a richer, more complex understanding of postcolonial societies and their cultural productions.

Moreover, subaltern literature has played a crucial role in the development of new literary forms and languages. Many subaltern writers choose to write in vernacular languages or incorporate local dialects and oral traditions into their work, challenging the dominance of colonial languages in literature. This linguistic innovation not only preserves and celebrates local cultures but also creates new modes of expression that more accurately reflect the lived experiences of subaltern communities.

As the field of subaltern studies continues to evolve, it faces new challenges and opportunities in the context of globalization and digital media. The rise of social media and online platforms has created new spaces for subaltern voices to be heard, while also raising questions about authenticity, representation, and the commodification of marginalized experiences.

In a nutshell Subaltern literary trends have significantly enriched the landscape of postcolonial literature, offering vital perspectives on power, identity, and resistance. By amplifying marginalized voices and challenging dominant narratives, this movement has not only expanded understanding of literature but also contributed to broader social and political discourses on equality, justice, and human rights. As it continues to address global inequalities and the legacies of colonialism, subaltern literature remains a crucial tool for understanding and transforming the world.

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Exploring the Roots of Oppression: Comparative Considerations on G. Kalyana Rao's Untouchable Spring and Alex Haley's Roots

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Abstract

The present paper deals with a prominent Telugu Dalit novel and embarks on a comparative study of the novel with reference to a famous Afro-American novel. The two novels selected for study, which concern themselves with oppression, are: 1. *Untouchable Spring* by G. Kalayana Rao and 2. *Roots* by Alex Haley. The novel *Untouchable Spring* delves deep into the lives of marginalized communities in India, wherein Ruth narrates the story of Dalits and their livelihood in Yennela Dinni, a fictional place in Andhra Pradesh. Yellanna is a prominent character, singer and dancer, who represents the voice of Dalit community. In this novel, seven generations suffered like Yellanna, Naganna, Sivaiah and so on. They struggled a lot to secure a better place in the society. The novel represents the complexities of human emotions, struggles for dignity and quest for justice in a rigidly hierarchical society.

On the other hand, Alex Haley's novel, *Roots*, depicts the genealogy of seven generations of an Afro-American family. In this novel, Alex Haley explores his family roots from his grandmother's narratives and he had investigated and found the trajectory of his ancestors' existence in America. His exploration took him to his ancestor, who was originally abducted by the slave traders, namely Kunta Kinte. He was a young man then, 17 years old, belonging to Mandinka tribe. This first-generation man was brutally captured and sold as a slave. The ensuing story of the seven generations of his descendants in the United States informs the crux of the novel. Kunta Kinte wanted to escape from his masters many times and finally they cut off his right foot. Alex Haley provides deeply personal account of the impact of slavery and racism on generations of the past and brings home the resilience required to overcome adversity.

Based on a rigorous study of the two novels, the paper contends that, in spite of the obvious differences in time, place and culture, the novels share a lot in common, not only in some superficial details such as the fact that the two novels deal with seven generations of enduring oppression but also in the quintessential themes such as the myriad forms that oppression takes over generations of continued segregation.

Key Words: Slavery, discrimination, racism, Dalit, Untouchability.

Dalit literature is considered to have originated in the 1960s, primarily in the state of Maharashtra, India, as the Marathi language is the primary medium for early Dalit writings. Dalit writing deals with the themes of oppression, degradation, humiliation and untouchability which are evidently pan-Indian phenomena. Hence, Dalit writings emerged sooner or later in all the major Indian languages. The present paper deals with a prominent Telugu Dalit novel and embarks on a comparative study of the novel with reference to a famous Afro-American novel. The two novels selected for study, which concern themselves with oppression, are: 1. Untouchable Spring by G. Kalayana Rao and 2. Roots by Alex Haley. The central contention of the paper is that these two novels share an essential similarity despite their socio-cultural and contextual differences.

G. Kalyana Rao is a writer, who believes in the revolutionary ideology, and an important functionary of Virasam, Viplava Rachayitala Sangham, a revolutionary writers' organization. He is also a well-known Dalit writer. He began his career as a playwright and wrote around fifteen plays, significant among them being Tolipoddu. Perhaps the most well known among his writings is the novel, Untouchable Spring which was originally written in Telugu as Antarani Vasantam (2000) and translated into English by Alladi Uma and M. Sridhar. It is a memory text, and a community saga; a novel and a historical document rolled into one. Using the oral story-telling tradition, Kalyana Rao has brought to the fore, in a cogent fashion, not just the social and cultural life of seven generations of Dalits, but their art forms as well.

Ruth narrates the story as told to her by her husband, Reuben, based on his memory. She works as a nurse where Reuben is a pastor of the same hospital. It is the story of Dalits who live in Yennela Dinni. The place, Yennela Dinni has a great historical significance. It is to be remembered that Yennela Dinni produces great singers and dancers. Naganna and Yellanna are prominent figures from the place who perform folk

art forms. Yellanna, son of Yerrenkadu, sings and dances but he can't write; even he doesn't know Telugu alphabet but he becomes famous as a singer and dancer.

He picks up the tunes of his aunt Boodevi. She is fond of him as he is said to have striking resemblances to her. He is famous for his performance in the roles of Narasimhaswami and Hiranyankasipu. When he performs the role of Hiranyakasipu, pregnant women are advised not to come out of their houses, lest they should be scared. He creates such a great solemn and dreadful ambience that suits the play. In spite of his remarkable skills in dramatic performance his achievements are never properly appreciated let alone being rewarded, as he is a man of an untouchable community.

Yennela Dinni, like any other village, is rift with the caste system. Caste system has its roots in the varna system, comprising the four varnas. In Yennela Dinni, caste discriminations play a prominent role hindering the art of Dalits. It is known that when an untouchable enters into the premises of upper caste people, it will have dangerous repercussions.

One such incident has changed the life of Yellanna drastically. Yerra gollalu came to Yennela Dinni to perform street play. It is a much-awaited thing for the villagers. Yerra gollalu usually stay in every region for ten to fifteen days. Boodevi is very interested in watching Chenchu Natakam. She goes along with her nephew Yellanna. Generally, they follow a kind of system when they watch any kind of play or any other art form. According to their caste hierarchy they have to sit in an order on the ground. As the narrative says "Karnams and kapus would sit close to the performers. Behind them, people from the washermen, barber and potter castes would sit. The malas would sit on the mala mound. The madigas would sit on the madiga mound. The two groups would be far away from the arena (Rao11).

Yellanna was very eager to watch the play from close quarters. Boodevi warned him not to go near the performers; but he didn't care of her words. Among the upper caste people, one man observed him and asks "aren't you a mala?" The man hit on Yellanna's back with a palm frond. They pelted stones upon him. He ran away, jumped in to the water, fell on floor, his nose broke and started bleeding. After some time, he slept in the dark place, again started running, suddenly he found himself naked. He mingled with the Urumula dancers, he also danced with them, fell and slept unconscious. Naganna gave him food and clothes, taught him Urumulu, steps for the

beat of the drums, told him voice modulation. Naganna also remembered his past in Yennela Dinni, as the son of Narigadu. He also experienced the pathetic discrimination in Yennela Dinni.

An incident came to his mind. When floods came, they are scared of going to the top of the land from the low-lying land as that may be taken as encroachment. But Narigadu took a daring step to take all the untouchable families to the top of the land which was usually used by the upper caste people. When the upper caste people heard the news of this, they held a meeting, with the insistence of Karanam. All the Dalits were initially hesitating but eventually they decided to be strong. They are convinced that they are not born just to die. It was a kind of courage they gathered to confront with the upper caste people.

Later on, Narigadu came as corpse when he went to bring sticks to build hut. After spending a few years with his wife Subhadra, Yellanna went to village after village to echo his agony through his songs and dances. Now those songs are not merely to entertain the public; they express the pains and predicament of Dalits and try to bring awareness among the Dalit communities. He never forgot his self-consciousness as a Dalit, one who was treated by other castes as an untouchable.

Another key incident involves, Sivaiah, son of Yellanna, who married Sasirekha, from the Dalit community. Then there was a huge drought that killed many families of Yennela Dinni. They had no food to eat, and left the place for searching the job. One day Sivaiah and Sasirekha came to know about the work of digging the Backingham canal. Here again caste played a key role in the opportunity of joining the work. When Sivaiah told that he was from mala caste, all the upper caste coolies pelted mud pellets over the couple. They ran away from there to save their lives. Sivaiah realized that hunger and labour too had untouchability.

Consequently, Sivaiah and Sasirekha were converted into Christianity, Martin who was a preacher, gave them life. Christian Missionaries welcomed all the castes. Dalits who were discriminated upon and suppressed by the upper caste people, got relief in Christianity. Hence, most of them converted as Christians. Sivaiah becomes Simon, followed Martin and learnt many things regarding Christianity. Brahmins, Reddys and Choudharys became Christian preachers. In Christianity, God is common to all, but there were attacks upon the Dalit preachers only. Martin's life struggle was the best example of this fact. Another generation was represented by Immanuel and

Jessie, who believed strongly in armed struggle to change the society. Ramanujam also took the same path to change the lives of lower caste people. One more plot is hatched due to the hatred towards Dalits. Lingareddy welcomed all the lower caste people to enter into the temples. He requested all Dalits to enter into the temple of lord Siva in a procession, as it is out of the village.

But Ramanujam did not agree to this idea as he felt it was not radical enough; instead of that he requested Lingareddy to give them a chance to enter into the temple of Vishnu and Rama which are located in the middle of the village. Lingareddy, a disciple of Gandhi, allowed Dalits to the temple compound only. They praised Lingareddy for leading them to enter into the temple compound at least. It was a very exciting thing for the lower caste people. However, after all the people went away from the temple, Lingareddy made the temple compound clean with cow dung and cow's urine as the priests were reciting mantras, whereas, Ramanujam ended up becoming a communist revolutionary.

All in all, the novel, *Untouchable Spring* delves deep into the lives of marginalized communities in Yennela Dinni, a fictional place in Andhra Pradesh. The novel narrates the plight of seven generations of Dalits who suffered like Yellanna, Naganna, Siviah and so on. They struggled a lot to secure a comparatively respectable place in the society. The novel represents the complexities of human emotions, struggles for dignity and quest for justice in a rigidly hierarchical society. The central contention of this paper is to demonstrate in detail that this novel has essential similarities with another classic that exposed discrimination and oppression, albeit in a widely different context in time and place, i.e. *Roots* by Alex Haley. The following lines will delve deep into this novel.

Alex Haley was born in Ithaca, New York, on August 11, 1921, and he authored famous works like *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965), *Roots* (1976). According to Wikipedia, *Roots* is "published in October 1976 amid significant advance expectations", and it "was immediately successful". Indeed, it is a landmark in American literature. It explores the history of African slavery in America through the story of Haley's own ancestors and their legacy. It is a profound historical novel that narrates the life of Kunta Kinte, an African man who is enslaved and brought to America. He was attacked and transported to North America by slave traders when he was making a drum. He was a brave man who bore all the pains when the whites took him in the ship. They

tore the dresses of all the slaves and chained them. They are whipped by the white traders when they try to break the chains.

Some of the slaves who are wounded and the weak are kept in the lower deck of the ship. They don't have any mercy or concern towards the slaves because of their callousness. Some times when they bring all the slaves up to the top of the deck to clean the lower deck which is spoiled by vomiting and human excreta of the slaves. They throw away the old, weak and wounded slaves into the sea. Firstly, Kunta Kinte is sold to John Waller. Due to his multiple escapes, slave catchers gave him a choice whether to get castrated or to let his right foot be cut off. He chose to lose half of his right foot. Later, he is sold to William Waller where he worked as a gardener. Kunta Kinte would be his buggy driver. He marries Bell, a slave, who works as cook at William Waller, and gave birth to Kizzy. Kizzy is very happy when she is a child. Kizzy plays with Anne who is the daughter of William Waller. Anne teaches Kizzy but Kunta Kinte feels unhappy because he detests whites inwardly who treat blacks inhumanly. When Kizzy forges travelling pass, she is sold away to Tom Lea. Tom Lee was a cock-fighter, and is known to be very cruel. He rapes her and she gives birth to George who is known as Chicken George. Chicken George becomes an experienced trainer. He gets married with Matilda, and had six sons and two daughters, including Tom, who becomes a well experienced blacksmith. At the huge loss of Tom Lea's business, he sends George to Europe for many years to pay off the debts, and most of the slaves are sold away to Murray's family. Here George is very emotional when he loses his family.

The entire family sheds tears when he leaves them. And then one more emotional and painful thing is that when he returns from Europe, he doesn't find his wife, children and all the relatives. He gets wrath over the whites particularly upon his boss Tom Lea. But when he finds his owner in a weak and pathetic condition, he keeps silent. He becomes freed by taking away the emancipation papers of George from Tom Lea's strong box. He Meets Matilda and his relatives but there are many conditions that may not keep his mind calm among the whites. There is a 60 days rule in force, which states that a free slave should not stay more than 60 days, or else he becomes a slave again.

If he is unwilling to be as a slave, he has to leave that place permanently. Here again George gets mental strain whether to leave the family or to stay with them as a slave again. Most of the family members won't allow him to be as a slave because he is the only one who gets freedom among the slaves. The burden of the mind of the

slaves won't be resolved until the freedom is given to them. When they got freedom from Abraham Lincoln, they became rapturous, happily pounced and danced. But when they supposed to leave their slave traders, again there is a kind of great dilemma for them because all these years they spent most of their time with them. They lose their self-respect which means they lose their identity. The successive generations of slaves passed on the historical enslavement of Kunta Kinte and the significance of Mandinka language to all their children, and teaches them not to forget the identity as an African though they live with Whites temporarily.

In conclusion, it could be seen clearly that in spite of the obvious differences in time, place and culture, both the novels under consideration share a lot in common, not only in some superficial details such as the fact that the two novels deal with seven generations of enduring oppression, borne by the Indian Dalits and African slaves respectively, but also in the quintessential themes such as the quest for the roots and reclaiming their nativity, countless forms that oppression takes over generations of continued segregation and untouchability.

Both the novels concern themselves with a quest for finding the roots of their oppressed identity. For that, they dig out the historical facts that informed their identity and thus both novels endeavour to give voice to the marginalised people and their art forms, even following those folk narrative traditions. By digging their roots, they reclaim their sense of belongingness to their existence, traditions and identity. Through the exploration and unmasking of the various forms of oppression, both the novels expose the fact of exploitation that transcend the boundaries of time and place and upholds the struggles of the oppressed people, some times as direct resistance or sometimes as defiance, towards carving a place of their own in the society marked by self-respect and unmistakable identity.

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"Love, Oppression, and Resistance: A Feminist and Gynocritical Reading of *The Secret Sky* by Atia Abawi."

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Abstract

Atia Abawi's *The Secret Sky* presents a poignant narrative of forbidden love within a deeply patriarchal Afghan society. This paper examines the novel through gynocriticism and feminist theory to explore how love, particularly from a female perspective, is controlled and punished by sociocultural norms. The protagonist, Fatima, endures isolation and suffering as she navigates love within a rigid framework that denies women autonomy over their emotions and relationships. Through gynocriticism, this study highlights how Abawi amplifies female voices often marginalized in literary discourse, shedding light on internal conflicts, resistance, and resilience in oppressive environments. A feminist critique further exposes the novel's condemnation of systemic gender inequalities that dictate women's fate in love and marriage. Through Fatima's struggles, *The Secret Sky* challenges patriarchal ideologies and emphasizes the necessity of female empowerment and self-determination. Ultimately, this paper argues that Abawi's narrative critiques gender oppression while advocating for the reimagining of female agency in literature and society.

Keywords: Forbidden Love, Gynocriticism, Feminism, Patriarchy, Female Agency, Oppression, Afghan Literature.

Introduction:

Atia Abawi is an Afghan-American journalist and author known for her compelling narratives that shed light on socio-political issues in Afghanistan. *The Secret Sky* (2014), her debut novel, is a portrayal of love, oppression, and resilience in a deeply patriarchal society. Drawing from her experiences as a war correspondent, Abawi's work contributes to contemporary feminist literature as it includes the struggles of Afghan women, her presence during that time helped her a lot to portray it very well. Her storytelling bridges journalism and fiction, amplifying marginalized voices and offering a nuanced perspective on gender, tradition, and resistance, solidifying her significance in global literary and feminist discourse. **The Feminist Lens:**

Love as a Tool of Patriarchal Oppression : *"I have rarely lied to my parents. I've never really had a reason to . But this seems worth it. Even though it frightens me, I can't stop myself."* - fathima [p-56]

The above lines are by Fathima when she met Samiullah alone though its against society, for the first time in life she had the feeling of being purely loved. Throughout the novel , love is not depicted as a liberating force but as a perilous venture for women, particularly for Fatima, whose feelings are deemed an affront to societal norms. Fatima as child was liked by all once when she expressed her wish of having a partner of her choice she was disrespected, and disliked by her parents as well only her sister afifa loved her the same because she was very small to understand all those differences.

We see Afghan culture,[1] as portrayed in the novel, treats a woman's emotions and relationships as matters of communal and familial honor, placing immense restrictions on her autonomy. Example : The scene where fathima was pretending to be in deep sleep and overheard her mother suggesting her father get her married to her best friend's father was very shocking to her then she decided they were not trying to understand her but instead trying to get rid of her.

Fatima's love for Samiullah is viewed not as an innocent emotion but as an act of rebellion against patriarchal traditions that demand women's subjugation. And as mentioned earlier, when her affection for Samiullah is exposed, she becomes a target for social retribution, she was forced by her mother to cook in the kitchen bake naan's and boil potatoes her mother tries to burn her hands and tells this is the smallest of punishment she is giving to her . if she complaints about it to her father then she would be given the worst of it. So this is how fathima was suffering
"A woman's love is dangerous because it makes her think she is free. But I am not free. I have never been free."

This statement reflects the entrapment of women within rigid gender roles, where love—an inherently personal and emotional experience—becomes a weapon used against them. Her forced separation from Samiullah and the subsequent punishment she faces reinforce the idea that female autonomy,[2] particularly in romantic relationships, is intolerable in such a society.

We see fathima was forced to stay away form Sami who was pasthun and was forbidden to love any girl of other community but despite of all the hindrances they

both love each other and every night sami was waiting for fathima to come so that they both can elope and survive one night fathima comes to him this shows the strenght of their love. Hence they both ran away from the society they were part of and met the mullah of the masjid who later helped them to marry.

Gynocriticism and the Female Perspective:

Elaine Showalter's gynocriticism focuses on the study of women's writing and literary traditions from a female perspective. It seeks to establish a female literary canon by analyzing women's experiences, themes, and stylistic innovations. We are aware of the fact that Showalter divides feminist criticism into three phases: the feminine (imitative), the feminist (protest-oriented), and the female (self-discovery). Gynocriticism shifts away from male-dominated literary analysis, emphasizing women's voices and cultural [3]context in literature.

The theory by Elaine Showalter, seeks to analyze literature from a woman's perspective, focusing on female experiences, voices, and narratives. *The Secret Sky* is significant in this regard because it amplifies the perspectives of Afghan women, who are often marginalized[4] in literature. Abawi's portrayal of Fatima's inner turmoil and suffering provides insight into the psychological and emotional impact of patriarchal control on women.

Fatima's character is developed with a depth that challenges the notion that women are passive victims of oppression.[5] Instead, she exhibits resistance, both internally and externally, against the structures that seek to suppress her. Even as she endures immense suffering, Fatima continues to dream of a life beyond oppression.

Her resilience is evident in moments where she dares to hope for freedom: *"I dreamt of flying, of escaping the walls built around me. But dreams are dangerous when you have no wings."*

Above lines highlight the cruel irony of her situation—her aspirations for love and autonomy are inherently at odds with the reality of her existence. The use of metaphors such as "walls" and "wings" serves to emphasize the constraints imposed on women and the seeming impossibility of liberation in a society that refuses them agency.

Moreover, the author presents other female characters who embody different responses to patriarchal oppression. Fatima's mother, for instance, represents the internalized misogyny that perpetuates women's subjugation. Rather than supporting her daughter, she reinforces the societal norms that punish female autonomy:

"You have shamed us all. A girl should know her place, and should never bring dishonour to her family."

Her words reflect the societal conditioning that binds women into upholding the very systems that oppress them. The internalization of patriarchal values ensures that oppression continues across generations, making resistance even more challenging. When the truth is revealed, Fathima's father tells her that they are aware of the strong relationship between her and Sami as he approaches him in town and expresses his feelings for her.

"we've decided... your mother and I have decided...it's time for you to get married."- father to Fathima [p-127]

This shows Honour of family is more important than a child's happiness.

Resistance and the Reimagining of Female Agency:

Despite the overwhelming oppression, *The Novel* does not present Fatima as entirely powerless. Her character arc reflects a journey of resistance, even if it is subtle and often constrained by external forces. Her love for Samiullah itself becomes an act of defiance, challenging the notion that women must accept their fates without protest. Resistance in the novel takes various forms, from small acts of defiance to open rebellion. While Fatima does not have the same societal privilege as Samiullah, her endurance and refusal to break under pressure mark her as a figure of resilience. Even when she is imprisoned within her own home, her thoughts and desires remain her own, an assertion of her autonomy against a culture that seeks to control her.

Furthermore, the Author presents male characters who challenge traditional masculinity and ally themselves with female resistance. Samiullah, despite being a product of the same patriarchal society, refuses to conform to its rigid expectations. His love for Fatima defies his family's and community's demands, positioning him as a counterexample to toxic masculinity. His words to Fatima serve as an affirmation of her right to choose love freely:

"You are not an object, Fatima. You are a person, and you deserve to be happy."

By including such male characters, we can suggest that dismantling patriarchy requires collective efforts, not just from women but also from men who reject oppressive traditions.

Conclusion:

The Secret Sky presents a scathing critique of patriarchal oppression while simultaneously celebrating female resilience and resistance. Through the character of

Fatima, the novel illustrates how love, rather than being a liberating force, is weaponized against women in oppressive societies. Utilizing feminist theory and gynocriticism, this paper has examined how the novel amplifies female voices, portrays internal and external struggles, and ultimately challenges gender norms.

Fatima's journey represents the broader struggle for women's autonomy, not just in Afghan [6]society but in patriarchal cultures worldwide. The novel does not offer a simple resolution but instead highlights the enduring need for female empowerment. As Fatima's story demonstrates, the fight for women's agency is fraught with pain and sacrifice, yet it remains a necessary endeavour for achieving true equality.

The selected work calls for a reimagining of female agency in literature and society, urging readers to question the structures that dictate women's fates. By shedding light on the injustices faced by women like Fatima, *The Secret Sky* serves as both a critique and a call to action—a testament to the necessity of change in the way society perceives and treats women's love, choices, and autonomy.

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The Machine Translation of Modern Short Fiction: A study of POS Textual Hitches

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Abstract

In recent years, the development of technology has changed the shape of human thinking across the globe. Particularly in the 21st Century, AI usage is tremendously emerged in every field. It has also changed the development of many fields such as science, technology, literary field, commerce etc. which occupies very prominent place. Coming to the Language and Literature Machine Translation plays significant role by enabling faster access to get required information. MT makes easier for people who speak different languages to communicate or to get information by breaking down language barriers and facilitating international cooperation. But the question is can we completely rely on machine translation for creative writing? Does it give complete meaning of the poems, stories, novels and dramas? which are uncertain. The present paper is focusing on identifying the quality and latency of the machine translation by online Google Translator and also exploring the grammatical aspects of Parts of Speech (POS) and textual hitches on the selected Telugu modern short-fiction, "Metilda" written by Gurujada Apparao. Subsequently the paper investigates how Machine translation is being done from Telugu text (SL) to English text (TL) and analyzing the text in the context of parsing difference between standard text and machine generated translation. Similarly intended to analyze lexical transfer of closed (content) and open (structural) item words. Finally discusses on errors with suitable conclusions and suggestions.

Key words: Machine Translation, Google Translator, Parts of Speech, Latency, Content words, Structural words and Analysis.

Introduction to POS:

Now a days MT has become a necessary tool and expanding to all walks of life. It is a subfield of AI and NLP (Natural Learning Process). MT has been modified and updated to reach the needs. It is changed from Rule Based MT to statistical MT and statistical MT to Neural MT. In the 21st Century NMT is employing for creative literary works also.

Machine Translation is successful for scientific and technical terms even it is better for business and medical documents, which are limited in words and content. When it is compared with creative writings, MT is in it's journey to achieve accuracy. This research paper focusses on the translation of selected short fiction, "Metilda" written by Gurazada Apparao in Telugu language. This short fiction is translated from Telugu to English by online Google Translator. The main aim of the research paper is to identify the Parts of Speech (POS) of English grammatical errors. English words are the constituents of the sentence elements. They are classified into eight forms of speech or parts of speech according to their usage or function. They are sub-classified as: 1) Open-class items and 2) Closed system items.

The Open-class items: The members are (a) noun, (b) adjectives, (c) adverbs, (d) main verbs/verbs. They are called open-class because new items are constantly being created and also the items of a class have the same grammatical properties. The Closed-system items: The members are (a) pronoun, (b) preposition, (c) Conjunctions, (d) interjections, (e) determines and demonstratives, (f) auxiliary verbs. The closed system items are limited in number, new ones cannot be created. Their meaning depends on the whole system. They are useful in grammar, and so they are also called grammar words or structural words. They are called Parts of speech. These are the basic constituents of English language.

Text Analysis of POS:

The study adapted NMT (Neural Machine Translation) system. The story has been translated through Google Translator from Telugu literature short fiction "Metilda" to English. This work has done on 15th January 2025. The study has observed and identified POS errors occurred during the translation. The research article focuses

not mere wearing, has to 'set' or 'fit on the head'. The meaning of SL is more than wearing.

2.3. Adjective: An adjective is a word that describes a noun or pronoun and also gives additional meaning to the subjects. In this article identified that some adjectives are translated wrongly and some adjectives are completely omitted. Consequently, the sentences are changed into meaningless and awkward.

2.3.1. SL, 'ಓಕಾ ಮಿಡ್ಡೆ ಇಂಟಲೊ ಬಾಸಾ ಕೆಸಿ ಉಂಟಿನಿ' (Oka midde iṇṭlō basa cēsi uṇṭini) is translated into TL as 'I stayed in a small house.' Here, adjective word ಓಕಾ (midde) has translated into 'small'. 'Small' is an adjective but the meaning is not fit for the sentence. 'ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ' means 'a big house or storied building'. It is neither a phrase or an idiom.

2.3.2. In another sentence adjective is removed while translating. For example, 'ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ, ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ' (Pedda kaḷḷū, kōra mīsālū) is translated as 'Big eyes' and 'a moustache'. In this 'ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ' shown as 'big eyes' but 'ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ' is translated as 'a moustache'. 'ಓಕಾ' is an adjective. In the place of 'ಓಕಾ' instead of adjective 'a' letter (indefinite article) is used. In the coherence the word is used to describe a particular person.

2.3.3. In this section, other example sentence SL, 'ಮೆಟಿಲ್ದಾ ಇಂಟಿ ಎಡುಠಾ ಜಾಲ್ಗಾ ನಾಡುಸ್ಟು ಉಂಟಿನಿ' (Meṭildā iṇṭi eduṭa jālaṅgā naḍustū uṇṭini) is translated into TL as 'I was walking in front of Matilda's house, like a net'. In this sentence SL word 'ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ' is translated as 'like a net'. In this sentence adjective is translated as a noun which is not conveying the meaning. In this context 'ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ ಓಕಾ' means 'playfully' or 'joyfully'.

2.4. Adverb: Coming to the another POS, Adverb. It is a word that describes or gives more information about a verb, adjective and also another adverb. An adverb gives information about how an action has done. In the present article there are many adverbs that are used in SL and translated into TL. But conveyed opposite in meaning and made sentence meaningless.

2.4.1. For example, SL sentence, 'ಮರಿ ಯೆನಾಡು ಇತು ಕಾನ್ನು ತಿಪ್ಪಾಕು' (Mari yennaḍū iṭu kannu tippaku) is translated as 'Never turn your eyes away from', which gives completely opposite meaning. At this juncture the contextual meaning is changed. Actually, the narrator said to the boy "do not look at his wife ever". But the TL sentence is conveyed with the positive meaning and it does not fit for the context.

2.5. Pronouns: In translating from one language to another language, closed system words (pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections) often create confusion in the sentence. Part of this research throws light on the closed system words of the 'POS'. Primarily research has done on pronouns. Normally pronoun is used in the place

of a noun. There are different types of pronouns. In this paper only personal pronouns are tested. When selected text is translated into target text, some pronouns are added during MT as well as in some cases personal pronouns are changed. Subsequently the narration in the sentence also changes. They are observed by the following examples.

2.5.1. '□ □□□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□ □□ □□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□' (Ā rōjullō reṇḍu mārlē pani mīda peraṭlōki vacci veṇṭanē iṇṭlōki veḷḷipōtū vaccindi). This sentence is translated as 'In those days, Marley came into the yard twice after work and immediately went home'. Here the sentence is about Metilda (woman). In the SL sentence that can be known by the word '□□□□□□□□'. But in TL sentence that is shown as 'came'. In this context 'came' does not reveal any gender of the person. Hence personal pronoun 'she' is missing in the TL sentence.

2.5.2. '□□□□ □□□□□□'. ('Kāphī yīyī!') is the sentence about the tenant boy. This has to be translated as 'Give me coffee.'. The TL text is showing that narrator is asking coffee for him. MT has used wrongly about the first-person pronoun. The correct pronoun here should be 'him' (objective).

2.5.3. Coming to another example, SL sentence is □□□□. □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□,□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□!, (Cūḍu. Entasēpu cūstāvō,yī muṇḍa moham vēpu!) is translated as 'Look. How long will you look at this ugly face!' into TL. In this context the sentence is created on narrator's wife, where he is pointing to his wife. Here SL words '□□' '□□□□' are shown as 'this'. Here 'that' has to be used. Wrongly described a woman, which is inappropriate.

2.5.4. Let us take another example, '□□□□□□, □□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□, ' ('Cūśānu, eduṭa nilicuṇṭē kanapaḍarā,) is translated into TL as 'I saw it, can't you see it if you stand in front of it.'. For personal pronouns, normally he, she, his, her etc are used. In this, SL sentence is about a woman, but in the TL sentence that is shown as 'it'. Actually 'it' is used to inanimate objects not persons. 'it' is repeated in the TL sentence three times about a woman. In SL text gender related pronouns are not mentioned. So, MT has identified as 'it'. As a result, there is no coherence in the text.

2.6. Preposition: Another POS is preposition. It is a word placed before a noun or pronoun to form a phrase modifying another word in the sentence. A preposition makes relationship between two nouns. These make sentences meaningful. If we use prepositions wrongly the complete meaning will be changed. These kind of text problems generated in the translation of selected text 'Metilda'.

2.6.1. In the example sentence, '□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□' (Meṭildā penimiṭini

puli puli anaḍamē gāni atani pērēmiṭō evarū erugaru') there was no 'vibhakti' in the SL. But when it is translated into TL, 'No one knew Matilda's husband's name except for Puli Puli', 'for' preposition has been used. To the context the preposition is added in TL.

2.6.2. Whereas in the SL sentence, □□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□, (Mūḍu bīruvālālō pustakālu unnāyi) is translated as 'In it, there were three shelves of books'. If you perceive the meaning, it is expressed wrongly by giving inappropriate preposition. If you translate meaningfully that would be, 'there are books in the three shelves'. The TL sentence is giving importance to the books but not shelves.

2.7. Conjunction: Conjunctions are joining words, phrases, or clauses in a sentence. We can express more ideas and actions in one sentence by using conjunctions. There are different types of conjunctions, such as coordinating conjunctions, sub-ordinating conjunctions etc. The point is we have to choose suitable and relevant conjunction in a sentence.

2.7.1. '□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□, □□□□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□.' (Meṭildā caritra aḍigi vārivallā vīrivallā, aḍakkunḍā nā nēstula vallā grahiṅcānu.) is a big sentence which is having coordinating and subordinating clauses. This sentence has translated into TL as 'I asked about Metilda's history, and I learned about it from my friends without asking'. From the example it can be expressed that the conjunction, 'and' is used unnecessarily in the place of 'coma' (,). 'Coma' is a half period mark used for coordinating conjunction. It is not necessary in the TL text.

2.8. Interjection: An interjection is a word used to express emotion. Emotional expressions play central role in the creative writings. Literary text is a mixture of writer's tone, style and emotion. These are very essential aspects when we translate any content from one language into another language. An MT tool can translate words and sentences but when it comes to emotions and writer's tone, it is really a herculean task.

2.8.1. '□□□□ □□□□□, □□□□□ □□□□□?' ('Mañci maniṣi, ceḍḍa manīṣā?') is the sentence exclaimed by speaker doubtfully about narrator. This is translated as 'Good man, bad man?'. In this case there is no sense of any expression. Just words are translated exclamatory emotion not functioned, with the word '□□□□□?'. From this sentence the speaker is raising a question on narrator's personality, 'what kind of person he is?'

2.8.2. When we see another sentence, '□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□, □□□□□□ □□□□□□'

(‘Manōharamaina bhagavantuḍi sṛṣṭilō kallā manōharamainadi, sogasaina strī’) is an appreciation of the Metilda’s beauty. It has been translated as ‘She is as charming as God’s creation, a beautiful woman.’ In the SL text telugu adjectives: ‘□□□□□□□□’, ‘□□□□□□□□□□’, and ‘□□□□□□’ are used to exaggerate the woman’s beauty. But the words are translated with normal words as ‘charming’, ‘beautiful’. The appreciation expression of the narrator’s real intention was not highlighted.

2.8.3. ‘□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□’. (‘Mari nuvvu vellipō’) Is translated as “You go away.” In the SL sentence it is inferred in the context of ‘you can take leave’ but in the TL it expresses as an imperative sentence. In particular it shows as an order. Regarding to the coherence it is used by narrator asking him (tenant boy) to leave the place (optative sentence). In a friendly manner narrator is telling to the tenant-boy, ‘see you’.

2.8.4. In the same way, ‘□□□□□□□□□□?’ (‘Nijamannadēdī?’) is an expression. It is translated into TL as ‘What is that?’. This senses like an interrogative sentence. Where as in it context this is not quite suitable and made sentence meaningless. In the SL text there are many expressions and emotions expressed in the form of interjections.

3. MT Error Interpretation:

In the above work, POS errors are observed separately and discussed. All the errors were occurred either linguistically and syntactically. After analyzing literature translation output, the study has come up with different interpretations that specifically addresses quality of neural machine translation and highlights of errors which are fixed with additional context or situation. The research is confined to only POS errors. Accordingly, it is discussed as eight-point error.

POS error 1: The overall observation showed that the most of the errors were occurred on Nouns by the MT. Those are identified as gender confusion, plurality issues, case and declaration, cultural differences and semantic errors. In some of the conditions, nouns are translated as it is into noun forms (transliterated). Where in some nouns which are used as maxims and regional sayings are not translated. Such errors are observed as culture and context factors of language barrier. Some nouns are shown with slight deviations.

POS Error 2: More pronoun related errors are occurred on personal pronouns. The study observed that in the place of the first-person narration second person pronouns are used. Similarly in the place of third person is replaced with second person. Consequently, the complete sentence expression and narration has changed. In some cases where SL text did not mention any gender hint, there the MT has segmented and used some pronouns which are not suitable to the context.

POS error 3: Subject-verb agreement errors can be easily spotted on the singularity and plurality of the subject. In some sentences verbs are translated as verbs but the choice of the verb is not chosen correctly to the situation. Some verbs are used nouns which are translated just as transliterated forms.

POS error 4: Adverb errors are occurred very less in number. Adverbs are mistranslated in the place of particular word, so that the whole meaning of the sentence is changed. As a result, created the sentence with a different meaning.

POS error 5: Describing adjective words are wrongly translated and in some of the context such words are completely removed. Therefore, sentences are not given senseful meaning.

POS error 6: In some sentences preposition errors occurred. Which changed the importance of the description as a result complete meaning of the sentence is changed. Very few corrections are found on prepositions.

POS error 7: Conjunction related errors are easily spotted by paying attention on the pairs of clauses in the sentences. In some cases, conjunctions are occurred unnecessarily in the TL translation and very rare errors are observed. Even though there is no much difference in the meaning of the sentence.

POS error 8: Several interjection errors are occurred in the TL translation. These errors affect the expressions and tone of the segment. The narrator's emitted feelings, sudden emotions and expressions are not suitably conveyed by translation. MT has yet to translate them effectively.

4. The eight-point POS errors samples from the pertinent text made up the study's data which are all related to the topic of the discussion. The following table show cases the extract of the test for handling discourse of POS error identification. The study analysed by identifying the error word in the relevant section of the text by highlighting the terms how they assisted in conveying the text's meaning by MT.

Extract of Test Suites for Handling Discourse of POS Error identifications

Sl. No.	Example Sentences	Error word	POS
1.	SL: □□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ (' Ālu mogallā debbalāṭallōki) TL: -the trouble of the <u>Aloo Mogulu</u>	□□□ □□□ □□□	Noun
		<u>Aloo Mogulu</u>	Noun
2.	SL: □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□ □□□□, □□□□□ □□□ □□□□ □□□□□□□□	□□□□, □□□ □□	Noun

11.	SL: □□□□□ □□□□□□□□, □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ (Amēṣā rāstūnō, caduvutūnō kanabaḍēvāḍu) TL: Amesha could be seen writing or reading	□□□ □□	Adverb
		Amesha	
12.	SL: □□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ (Puṭṭukatō puṭṭina nijāyitī cūddām) TL: 'But let's see if honesty is born with birth	□□□□ □□□ □□	Preposition
		with birth	
13.	SL: □□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□? (Oka debba koṭṭānani vinnāmā?) TL: Did we hear you hit a blow?	□□□□ □	Preposition
		hit	
14.	SL: □□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ '□□□□ □□□□□? – (Mohaṁ tippakuṇḍānē'elā rāvaḍam?) TL: How did you come?'	-	Pronoun
		you	
15.	SL: ' □□□□□□□, □□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□, (' Cūsānu, eduṭa nilicuṇṭēkanapaḍarā,) TL: I see, but if you stand in front of me..	-	Pronoun
		you	
16.	' □□□□ □□□□□□'. (' Kāphī yiyyi'.) ' Give me coffee.'	□□□□ □□□□ □□	Pronoun
		me	
17.	SL: □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□' □□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□. (Tallidaṇḍrula daggara gāni guruvula daggara gāni' nā tallidaṇḍrī talapuku vaccāru.) TL: From your parents or from your teachers' came my parents' thoughts.	□□□□□'	Conjunction
		or	
18.	SL: □□□□□□□□□□□□?' (Nijamannadēdī?) TL: 'What is true?'	□□□□ □□□ □□□□ '?	Interjection
19.	SL: ' □□□□□□□, □□□□□□□' TL: ' Go, sit down (' Pōnīyi, kūrco')	' □□□□□ □□,	Interjection

		<div>□ □ □ □ □ □ '</div>	
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5. Conclusion:

Generally, the knowledge of these POSs are tested in the form of 'spotting the error'. There are few common errors which are repeatedly accord by machine translations. Observation has done on POS of English grammar: Noun, Pronoun, Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Prepositions, Conjunction and Interjection. As per objective of the study, the focus is limited with 'eight-point' strategic testing only. Therefore, POS textual hitches in the sentences of modern short fiction has spotted and interpreted. Post editing also done where ever needed. Additionally, the study has observed other language errors such as the clarity to convey the meaning of the particular part of the text, mis-translations and lack of consistency. In some sentences there are some words (nouns, adjectives, verbs and pronouns) are omitted while translating by MT. Translation of phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions are noticed with ambiguity. Consequently, the literariness of the text is missed. Some known words like regional sayings, maxims which are very familiar are not translated. AI tool mistranslated a word by the forms or sounds into the target language but in reality, it has a different meaning. System follows only direct style to translate input text and it reflects the style of the original text. As a result, the original is written in a clear in the direct style, while the translation makes more complex and indirect. To avoid translation errors, MT tool needs database input. When it comes to literature, computers can translate the literary text with the limitations only. MT can translate the verbatim but it is difficult to translate rhetoric of the literariness figuratively. This research article is a part of the project, entitled, "Challenges of Machine Translation with Reference to Modern Telugu Short Fiction and Poetry ". Financially supported by PHUSHA.

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Displaced Futures : A Study of Climatic Heterotopias in Kim Stanley Robinson's *Newyork 2140*

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Abstract

The genre of Climate Fiction (Cli-Fi) has emerged as a crucial literary response to the escalating ecological crises of the Anthropocene, offering speculative visions of climate-altered futures. These narratives serve as both cautionary tales and thought experiments, allowing readers to engage with the pressing issue of climate change beyond the realm of scientific discourse. On the other hand, heterotopia, as theorized by Michel Foucault, refers to other spaces where societal rules and norms are suspended or inverted disrupting the traditional order of things. These "other spaces" function as sites of reflection, resistance, and transformation, simultaneously mirroring and challenging dominant realities. Foucault's notion of heterotopia is particularly relevant to climate fiction, as it helps uncover how speculative landscapes function as alternative worlds that critique existing socio-political structures and reimagine human adaptation to environmental change.

The novel *Newyork 2140* by Kim Stanley Robinson is taken up for study to illustrate how climate fiction reconfigures urban landscapes, borderless frontiers, and ecological sanctuaries as heterotopias of survival, resistance, and renewal. In *New York 2140*, flooded Manhattan emerges as a heterotopic space where economic systems, social hierarchies, and human adaptability are re-imagined in response to environmental collapse. The city's intertidal zones, repurposed skyscrapers, and floating infrastructure function as liminal spaces that blur boundaries between land and water, stability and flux, survival and innovation.

By situating the novel *New York 2140* within a heterotopic framework, this paper makes an attempt to study how Climate fiction re-imagines spatial boundaries reflecting the inevitable harsh reality of the future and also offering alternative models for inhabiting a world transformed by climate change. It also explores how climate fiction can reframe discussions on sustainability, habitation, and ecological justice in an era of climate crisis. This paper portrays heterotopias as a powerful lens to examine

how climate fiction constructs alternative spaces that challenge conventional social, political, and environmental paradigms.

Keywords: Climate Fiction, Heterotopia, Speculative Futures, Environmental Crisis, Ecological Adaptation

Introduction

As climate change continues to reshape the world, literature has responded by imagining new environmental realities that challenge human survival and adaptation. Climate Fiction (Cli-Fi) has emerged as a genre that speculates on the consequences of ecological collapse, offering both dystopian warnings and utopian possibilities. Within this genre, Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia provides a compelling framework for analyzing how speculative spaces function as sites of crisis, resistance, and transformation.

Kim Stanley Robinson's *New York 2140* envisions a future where rising sea levels have turned Manhattan into a semi-aquatic metropolis, forcing new social, economic, and political structures to emerge. Through the lens of heterotopia, this paper explores how the novel constructs alternative spaces that challenge conventional urban planning, governance, and climate adaptation policies. By examining the intertidal zones, floating infrastructure, and repurposed skyscrapers, this study highlights how speculative geographies in climate fiction serve as both mirrors of present anxieties and blueprints for future resilience.

Climate Fiction and the Construction of Heterotopic Spaces

Climate fiction reconfigures space by introducing new environmental realities that redefine human habitation and survival. In doing so, it creates heterotopic spaces that question the socio-political order and the ways in which societies adapt to crisis. These spaces function in multiple ways within climate fiction. First, they serve as spaces of crisis and deviation, where climate-altered landscapes disrupt the existing world order, compelling characters to adopt new modes of existence in response to environmental catastrophe. These speculative landscapes also act as reflections of reality, serving as distorted mirrors of present-day concerns and highlighting the potential futures that may emerge from continued environmental neglect. Additionally, climate fiction constructs spaces of juxtaposition, where different modes of survival, adaptation, and governance coexist within speculative geographies,

creating complex ecosystems of interaction between various social and political structures. Furthermore, rising sea levels and shifting environmental conditions in climate fiction dissolve traditional territorial boundaries, fostering new borderless frontiers that redefine habitation and governance in a world transformed by climate change. Through these heterotopic spaces, climate fiction critically engages with ecological and societal transformations, offering alternative models for resilience, adaptation, and sustainability.

New York 2140: A Case Study of Climatic Heterotopias

Crisis Heterotopias in *New York 2140*

The first principle of Foucault's heterotopias is the universality of heterotopias across cultures and their classification into crisis heterotopias and heterotopias of deviation. The submerged Manhattan in *New York 2140* acts as a heterotopia of climate crisis, where the city is no longer part of the stable world but rather a liminal space. The Intertidal Zones and MetLife Tower function as crisis heterotopias where a group of individuals, rather than being removed from society, have self-organized to challenge economic and political structures. The MetLife Tower serves as a microcosm of heterotopic space in *New York 2140*. Unlike conventional economic centers, this space houses a diverse set of characters who resist corporate greed and envision alternative models of governance. The flooded lower Manhattan can be read as a heterotopia of deviation, where the city has been abandoned by traditional power structures but still houses those who resist displacement. Just as Foucault describes retirement homes as spaces for those deemed non-productive, lower Manhattan is a space for those left behind by capitalist climate adaptation policies. This heterotopia exposes how climate change forces people into precarious conditions while the privileged escape.

Heterotopias of Transformation in *New York 2140*

Foucault's second principle of heterotopia states that the function of a heterotopia is not fixed; it changes over time according to the evolving needs, beliefs, and structures of society. A heterotopic space may serve different purposes in different historical and cultural contexts. To illustrate this, Foucault examines cemeteries. In pre-modern Western societies, cemeteries were centrally located within cities, often near churches, and were part of sacred religious spaces.

...The second principle of this description of heterotopias is that a society, as its history unfolds, can make an existing heterotopia function in a very different fashion; for each heterotopia has a precise and determined function within a society and the same

heterotopia can, according to the synchrony of the culture in which it occurs... (Foucault)

In *New York 2140*, rising sea levels have submerged lower Manhattan, turning the city into a semi-aquatic landscape where buildings serve as both islands and social hubs. Once symbols of economic power, skyscrapers now function as self-sustaining ecosystems. As traditional land-based urban centers struggle with climate change, new floating or water-based cities function as alternative spatial orders. These settlements, initially seen as radical or temporary, may become permanent heterotopias that redefine the relationship between humans and geography.

Heterotopias of Juxtaposition in *New York 2140*

Foucault's third principle of heterotopia highlights its ability to juxtapose multiple, seemingly incompatible spaces within a single real place. This characteristic allows heterotopias to function as sites where distinct and even contradictory elements coexist. One of the most striking examples Foucault provides is the theater, where diverse locations are sequentially presented on a singular stage, creating an illusion of multiple spaces existing within one defined area.

...Third principle. The heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible. Thus it is that the theater brings onto the rectangle of the stage, one after the other, a whole series of places that are foreign to one another; thus it is that the cinema is a very odd rectangular room, at the end of which, on a two-dimensional screen,... (Foucault)

In *New York 2140*, climatic heterotopias emerge as spaces that juxtapose multiple, often conflicting, environments within a transformed urban landscape. The novel envisions a future where rising sea levels have reshaped New York City into a partially submerged metropolis, forcing the coexistence of land-based and water-based spaces within the same geographic boundaries. The Intertidal Zones serves as hybrid Spaces where buildings are adapted to both land and water conditions mirrors the heterotopic ability to merge contradictory environments. These intertidal zones serve as a meeting point between submerged and habitable areas, blending past infrastructural remnants with new, water-based adaptations. Much like Persian gardens functioned as microcosmic representations of nature, *New York 2140* features vertical gardens and self-sustaining ecosystems integrated into skyscrapers. These structures collapse the boundary between urban artificiality and natural biodiversity. Climatic heterotopias in *New York 2140* exemplify Foucault's third principle by merging incongruent spaces—land and sea, past and future, ruin and renewal—into a singular,

functional urban landscape. These spaces do not merely adapt to climate change; they reconfigure spatial perceptions, collapsing conventional boundaries and creating a new, heterotopic form of urban existence.

Heterotopias of Time (Heterochronies) in *New York 2140*

Foucault's fourth principle of heterotopia emphasizes its intrinsic connection to time, or what he calls **heterochrony**. Heterotopias are not only spaces of difference but also places where time functions differently than in the outside world. This principle describes **Heterotopias of Indefinite Accumulation** where time is preserved, accumulated, and layered indefinitely. Examples include **museums and libraries**, which aim to encapsulate all historical epochs, artifacts, and knowledge within a single, timeless space. The other is **Heterotopias of Fleeting Time** that exist within the realm of transitory, temporary, or cyclical time. Examples include **fairgrounds and festivals**, which exist only for a short period before disappearing.

...Fourth principle. Heterotopias are most often linked to slices in time—which is to say that they open onto what might be termed, for the sake of symmetry, heterochronies. The heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time... (Foucault)

In *New York 2140*, the flooded sections of New York serve as a **heterotopia of accumulation**, where remnants of past civilization remain submerged but still partially functional. Unlike conventional museums or libraries, which deliberately preserve history, the sunken city unintentionally archives the past. Buildings that were once thriving commercial or residential spaces are now ghostly remnants, where historical time accumulates in a way that is neither fully erased nor fully accessible. The novel also features heterotopias where time is fleeting and transient, much like festivals or fairgrounds. One example is the floating markets and social hubs, which emerge in the flooded city as centers of temporary economic and social exchange. These are spaces that appear, thrive, and then disappear, adapting to the changing environment. Similarly, storm surges and high tides create ephemeral landscapes, where the boundaries between land and sea shift unpredictably. These spaces exist only for a short time before transforming again, mirroring the temporality of festival heterotopias.

Heterotopias of Entry, Exit and Exclusion in *New York 2140*

Foucault's fifth principle of heterotopia emphasizes that these spaces are not freely accessible like ordinary public spaces. Instead, they operate within a system of

controlled access, which simultaneously isolates them from the rest of society while still allowing selective penetration under specific conditions. Some heterotopias, like prisons and military barracks, require entry as a form of confinement or duty. Other heterotopias require individuals to undergo **rituals, permissions, or purifications** before entering. Examples include religious baths (such as Islamic hammams) or Scandinavian saunas, where purification is a prerequisite for access. In *New York 2140*, climate change has reshaped the city into a fragmented urban landscape, where access to different spaces is increasingly restricted, conditional, or illusory. This new reality embodies Foucault's principle of controlled access heterotopias, where spaces are both connected to and isolated from the larger society. The wealthy in *New York 2140* live in elevated towers and exclusive floating zones, which are physically and economically inaccessible to most people. Entry into these spaces requires either wealth, status, or permission, much like how heterotopias regulate access through barriers of privilege. **Storm shelters, emergency relief zones, and floating medical clinics** require people to undergo screening or approval before entry. *New York 2140* features **hidden underground economies** where people engage in secret trade, illicit deals, or resistance movements against corporate and governmental control.

Heterotopias of Illusion and Compensation in *New York 2140*

Foucault's sixth and final principle of heterotopia states that these spaces function in relation to all other spaces in one of two extreme ways : **Heterotopias of Illusion**, the spaces that expose the illusory nature of real-world spaces. They create an environment so different from ordinary life that they reveal the artificial constraints and fragmentations of everyday existence. Foucault gives the example of brothels, which operated as a parallel world of desire and transgression, showing the hidden hypocrisies of a moralistic society. The other is **Heterotopias of Compensation** which function as **perfect counter-spaces**, in contrast to the disorganized, chaotic, or flawed world outside. Foucault describes **Puritan colonies in America and Jesuit settlements in South America**, where every aspect of life was meticulously planned and regulated. . In *New York 2140*, The partially submerged streets and buildings of lower Manhattan function as a heterotopia of illusion, exposing the failures of the past. While people still live and work in these spaces, their flooded, precarious existence highlights the illusion of stability and permanence that cities once provided. The economic disparity between the wealthy and the struggling lower city dwellers further reinforces this illusion—people in the intertidal zone survive in a world that was never meant to accommodate them, revealing the artificiality of urban planning and economic systems.

Conclusion

Through the lens of heterotopia, *New York 2140* reimagines climate-altered spaces as dynamic, contested, and transformative sites that critique existing socio-political structures while envisioning alternative futures. The novel illustrates how climate fiction constructs speculative geographies that function as heterotopias of crisis, transformation, juxtaposition, temporality, exclusion, and illusion—each offering unique insights into human adaptation and resilience in the face of environmental collapse. By dissolving conventional spatial boundaries and reconfiguring urban landscapes, Robinson’s narrative highlights the precarious yet innovative ways in which societies navigate climate-induced upheaval.

Moreover, the novel underscores how climate fiction serves as a vital medium for interrogating ecological justice, sustainability, and governance in an era of accelerating climate change. The heterotopic spaces within *New York 2140* not only reflect the anxieties and challenges of the Anthropocene but also propose alternative models of habitation that merge technology, communal survival, and environmental consciousness. These spaces challenge the illusion of stability within existing urban and economic systems, revealing the fragile, exclusionary, and often unjust structures that shape contemporary climate adaptation policies.

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Purdah and its Repercussion: A study of *Love in Headscarf* and *Zoya's Story*

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Abstract

The practice of Purdah (veil, seclusion, and modesty) has shaped women's lives across various cultural, religious, and historical contexts. While often linked to Islamic traditions, its origins predate Islam, influenced by pre-Islamic customs, colonial histories, and regional interpretations. This article critically examines the repercussions of Purdah, analysing its impact on women's social mobility, education, employment, mental health, and economic independence. It also explores the broader political and legal dimensions, including state-imposed veiling laws and restrictions in different countries. Through a comparative analysis of feminist and Islamic feminist perspectives, this study investigates whether Purdah functions as a form of empowerment, a tool of social control, or a complex interplay of both. By engaging with contemporary debates on agency, choice, and societal expectations, the article provides a nuanced understanding of Purdah and its impact on women from the study of *Love in Headscarf*, an autobiography of Shelina Zehra Janmohammed and *Zoya's Story* by Zoya. .

Key words: Muslim, purdah, hijab, burqa, headscarf

To focus on this topic, I have chosen the autobiographies of Shelina Zehra Janmohammed, a British Asian and Zoya, an Afghan. The titles of their autobiographies are *Love in Head scarf* and *Zoya's Story* respectively. In their autobiographies they have expressed their views on Pardah, both positive and negative, the advantages and disadvantages, as a boon and as a bane. Janmohammed prefers it as an exclusive right of a woman to the desired clothing apart from following the code of religious drape

whereas Zoya picturizes the sufferings of women victimized by the Taliban. The words pardah, burqa, hijab, veil, abaya and dupatta are to used based on the writers' preference.

Shelina Zehra Jan Mohammed, a British Asian young writer has her ancestors from Gujarat, India who migrated to Africa and later settled in England. As a practicing Muslim they faced many difficulties but never gave up their religion. Her autobiography *Love in Head Scarf* is about her search for the one (to marry) alongside she advocates woman's right to choose her clothing. Initially she wears the hijab as a part of her religious practice soon she realizes it as her right to cover her body as she wished.

Zoya is a 23 years young Afghan woman. Her parents belonging to pushton tribe of Afghanistan are educated and patriotic She grew up during the Russian Afghan War which destroyed not only the tranquility of Afghans but also their lives. She witnesses the terrors caused by the Russian soldiers, the fundamental Muzahideens and the violent Talibans. In her autobiography *Zoya's Story*, she sheds light on the sufferings of the innocent citizens who are exploited, tortured, terrorized and killed by the ruthless terrorists with their inhuman rules imposed on the people making the lives of Afghans miserable. Out of many rules, the imposition of burqa on women proved deadly both physically and mentally. It striped off their liberty which is one of the basic human right.

Purdah is a religious, cultural and social practice which is prevalent among many communities in Asian continent. It takes two forms- one is social segregation of the sexes and the other one -women to cover their bodies to maintain modesty. Cambridge dictionary noted purdah as the custom, found in some Muslim and Hindu cultures, of keeping women from being seen by men they are not related to, by having them live in a separate part of the house or behind the purdah.

The practice of purdah predates Islam and has roots in ancient cultural and religious traditions of South Asia and the Middle East. Its origin is complex and can be understood from historical back grounds. The practice of veiling and seclusion for women can be traced back to ancient Mesopotamia where it has significant noble status. The Achaemenid Empire further reinforced seclusion among elite women, influencing both South Asia and Greece. Veiling has become a symbol of modesty and high social standing in the Byzantine Empire. Similarly, ancient Indian traditions,

particularly among upper-caste families, emphasized female modesty through concepts such as *grihasta dharma* and *zanana*, a secluded space within households designated for women in South Asia. With the advent of Islam, veiling and seclusion merged with pre-Islamic customs across Persia, South Asia, and the Middle East. Purdah became widespread in medieval India during the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal eras, incorporating elements from both Islamic and Hindu traditions, such as *ghunghat*. Under British colonial rule, purdah served as a cultural identity marker for both Muslims and Hindus, symbolizing resistance to Western influence.

Sk. Ehtesham Uddin Ahmad writes in his article titled, "Purdanashin Women and the Colonial State":

Purdah had been an elite patriarchal practice across cultures and ages, by which women were kept guarded from unconnected men and thereby out of production process and alienated from the outside world. Men claimed better knowledge and experience of the world which also served to further control women. Nature of such control over women in purdah however varied over time. In pre-Colonial times, despite segregation of sexes and purdah observed by women in elite spaces, women could be seen not as oppressed subjects but quite wielding control over themselves and their possessions, Medieval records bring out that women before the British rule in India, were not only owners but were in complete control of their property. They managed their property in personal capacity and if required contested legal battles. (Ahmad 10)Indrani. Sen, a writer, in her *Women and Empire, Representation in the writings of British India (1858-1900)*, has said:

Purdah had been one of the most striking themes in the colonial discourse, assuming variety of constructs: described as an oppressive system, women doomed to idleness and confinement on account of male sexual jealousies and tyrannical patriarchy. The discourse thus foregrounded the sensuousness of the female life in *zenana* and *zenana's* obsession with sexuality, etc. (Sen 57).

Today, its meaning varies - some women view it as a personal choice, while others see it as restrictive. Over time, purdah has evolved through a blend of ancient customs, religious beliefs, and socio-cultural factors. The history shows veiling of women is the custom passed on from ancient civilization which stood as a symbol of Patriarchy, but at present it is misused to represent only Muslim women.

With the advent of Islam in the 7th century, *the Qur'an* and *Hadith* introduced guidelines for modesty: *The Qur'an* addresses the concept of modesty, which is sometimes associated with purdah, through several verses. These verses emphasize the principles of modest conduct for both men and women, though interpretations and cultural practices vary widely. Surah An-Nur emphasises modesty for men and women in its verses:

Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their chastity. That is purer for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their chastity, and not to reveal their adornments except what normally appears. Let them draw their veils over their chests and not reveal their hidden adornments except to their husbands..." (*The Qur'an* Surah An-Nur 24:30–31) These verses encourage modesty and self-restraint for both genders. For women, it specifically mentions covering their adornments. Surah Al-Ahzab verse 59 Commands for Covering: "O Prophet, tell your wives, your daughters, and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks over themselves. This is more appropriate so that they may be recognized and not harassed. And Allah is All Forgiving, Most Merciful." (*The Qur'an* Surah Al-Ahzab 33:59) This verse instructs believing women to cover themselves in a way that ensures modesty and distinguishes them, offering them protection from harassment.

Surah Al-Ahzab gives message of mutual respect and purity. The translation says, "And when you ask (Prophet's wives) for something, ask them from behind a partition. That is purer for your hearts and their hearts." (*The Qur'an* Surah Al-Ahzab (33:53) This verse, though specifically addresses the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), establishes the concept of a physical boundary as a means to maintain modesty and purity. The Quranic verses, lead to the practice of veiling and seclusion, which are also influenced by the pre-Islamic traditions of the regions Islam spread to. The Muslim women observe purdah as a part of their religious set rule mentioned in *the Quran*.

The related terms for purdah, used in different cultural, religious, or linguistic contexts to convey modesty, seclusion, or veiling are: Hijab is a veil or headscarf worn by Muslim women, often covering the hair, neck, and sometimes shoulders, but leaving the face visible. Janmohamed defines Hijab in her autobiography "Hijab is an Arabic word that means "to cover", which includes covering the whole body in loose clothing, but it was used commonly to refer to the headscarf itself." (LIH182) Niqab is a face veil that covers face except the eyes. Burqa is a full-body covering, including a mesh screen

for the eyes, commonly worn in parts of Afghanistan Pakistan and India. Chador is a full-body cloak worn by some Iranian, Indian and Afghan women, typically draped over the head and shoulders. Abaya is a loose-fitting, full-length robe worn in Arab countries, often paired with a hijab or niqab. Dupatta is a long scarf or shawl commonly used in South Asia to cover the head or shoulders, often associated with modesty. Ghunghat is draped by the Hindu women in north India. The words purdah, burqa, burka, hijab, veil, abaya and dupatta are used based on the type of purdah mentioned in the autobiographies.

Zoya records in her autobiography, During the Afghan government (before mujahedeen and Taliban) the women are allowed to wear colourful dresses and skirts. When the puppet government is overthrown by fundamentalists the women lost their liberty and had to wear burqa. When the Taliban take over Kandhan the situation of women became even worst. They made the beautiful country of Afghan into a hell.

Sometimes, individuals who dislike wearing the burqa are forced to wear it to avoid identification and to successfully carry out their tasks. This is common in Afghanistan, where activists who don't like wearing the burqa still use it for their safety during missions. Zoya's parents have worked with a revolutionary organization which work against the fundamental Mujahedeen secretly. They never reveal their work to Zoya. To save themselves they hide their identity. Zoya's mother starts wearing burqa so that she conceals her identity. In another incident Zoya questions, "Why are you wearing this? I thought you hated it," mother replies "I do hate it, but I have to wear it became otherwise it is impossible for me to do my work." (ZS 34). Though, her mother does not like to wear burqa she wears it for her mission's sake which shows her dedication towards her work. Wearing specific clothing to conceal identification, might be interpreted as a survival tactic used by woman like Zoya's mother. The mother's act of wearing the burqa, despite personal hate, illustrates a deliberate balance between personal choices and dedicated goals. As Leila Ahmed states in *Women and Gender in Islam*, "The veil can be both a symbol of oppression and a tool of resistance, depending on the context in which it is worn" (Ahmed 152).

Zoya recollects, "my parents had told me that women from far away villages who could not read and write wore them. The beggars wore them, and so did the prostitutes who did not want to be recognized." (ZS23). Zoya's mother, though she has negative opinion on burqa she adapts it to continue her work without hindrance. Zoya, as a child get confused with her mother's contradictory opinion and practice of burqa. Later Zoya

too follows her footsteps, adapts burqa irrespective of hatred and takes a false name to save her life as well as to continue her social work.

Zoya explains the freedom of women to wear their choice of clothing till 1959. She says, "Afghan women had won the right not to wear the veil at a heavy price when the prime minister and other ministers appeared in public in 1959 with their wives and daughters unveiled, the mullahs provoked riots that had to be crushed by the army" (ZS23). The women during the Afghan rule were free enough to wear the dress of their choice. They had full liberty to wear short skirts and make up and were also allowed to walk happily arm in arm in the streets. The prime minister and other ministers' wives and daughters were not veiled during public appearances in the period of Afghan government ruling. It is the mullahs who were against the rights of women and wanted to impose burqa on them. Later this government proclaimed a new constitution giving equal status to women as men, women can enter into work force, compulsory girls education and girls should be free to choose their husbands. The right given to the women did not last long because the religious leaders, the mullah's who had strong hold in the rural areas became furious. The government was not strong enough to with stand and ultimately turned to Russians for help.

The educated mother of Zoya did not wear burqa but the other women from father family who were not educated and lived in rural areas wore it. The above discussion clearly indicates that the Afghan women did not want to wear a burqa before the religious leaders made it obligatory. The women in rural areas who were deprived of education and liberty and were under the heavy influence of mullah's wore a veil. If the puppet government was strong enough, the lives of the citizens especially the women would have been a different story of peace and prosperity.

Childhood experiences have long lasting effects on later life. From childhood Zoya has negative attitude towards burqa. She shares an incident which has fostered her hatred feelings towards burqa: Once Zoya along with her friend khatija played game of ghost. "Khatija said Zoya you put on burqa you'll pretend to be a ghost and you'll run after us making a lot of ghost noises we will run away from you and you have to try and catch us" (ZS 37) while running she falls down and the burqa's men pulled over head she could not see anything and shouted, "I hate this game . . . do not want to wear it again". (ZS 37) Her parents opinion and her personal experiences made her to developed an aversion towards the burqa.

On contrary to Zoya, Janmohamed expresses her views in favour of wearing hijab clearly. She says:

Wearing hijab was not a decision I had taken lightly. Hijab is an Arabic word that means 'to cover', which includes covering the whole body in loose clothing, but it was used commonly to refer to the headscarf itself. . . When I first made the decision to 'wear hijab, I did it simply "because it was 'the thing to do'. I went often to the mosque, I read a lot of Islamic books, I read the Qur'an, I travelled to Muslim countries, I went on the umra, the lesser pilgrimage, to Mecca. Wearing modest clothing was described in the Qur'an as something that the believing men and women engaged in. I believed in God and I believed in the Qur'an, and I wanted to be considered one of the believing men and women. It was therefore quite simple: I believed in the concept of hijab and I wanted to wear it." (LIH 182).

Janmohamed, before taking the decision on wearing the headscarf, she has clearly learnt about it from various sources related to Islam and starts practicing. She further says how she has transformed her wardrobe gradually.

This decision meant a slow change in wardrobe, my dress sense growing with my hijab-sense. It meant taking care over long sleeves, long skirts, scarves that wrapped around the head covering hair, ears and neck, and pinned underneath the chin. I was conservative with my experimentation, as were many British Muslims. Hijab was still very new to Britain and to the Muslims who started to wear it here. It was not at this time about being fashionable, but about observing the parameters of modesty. (LIH 182)

Janmohamed's parents start searching for a suitable groom for her. In this process she has met a few suitors. The suitors expressed that they do not prefer a girl with hijab as their wife. She is perplexed: "I felt sad that I had to specify that a Muslim man should be happy for me to wear a head scarf and modest clothing, as this was my understanding of one of the requirements of Islam. It seemed that a lot of men were not happy for their wives to wear the hijab." (LIH 75)

The conversation between Janmohamed and the suitor Hasan clears that men are not ready to marry the girls with head scarfs. Hasan thinks, the girls who wear hijab are religious, dull and stay at home all day praying. Janmohamed says on double standard views which marginalize the women, "As we met 12 or so men – not the 20 we had been promised. I realized that again I was the only woman in head scarf and that none of the men present were interested in a hijab wearing wife. I felt conned by the whole evening: a promise of high Caliber candidates but a delivery of a few mediocre specimens." (LIH 265) Janmohamed analyses the gendered and cultural

expectations surrounding marriage, particularly the marginalization of hijab-wearing women in social settings. It highlights the double standards where women are expected to invest in religious virtue and self-presentation, while men are not held to the same standards. Janmohamed's frustration reflects the exploitation of women in marriage, especially hijab wearing, where women bear a greater burden of adjustment and critiques patriarchal privilege. She is firm in her decision to wear headscarf and starts searching for the suitable man to marry who understands her. She says:

I had started my search looking for a man who would abide by the choice I had made to wear the headscarf; after all, it was my own decision as a woman as to how I should dress. But the more I had to fight the preconceptions of what a Muslim woman who wore hijab should be like, the more I wanted a man who understood why I wore it and supported me. I wanted him to want me to wear hijab. I wanted him to have a vision of a better future for our society, and to understand that the reason that I had chosen to wear hijab was a small contribution to that future. (LIH 182)

Head scarf is worn as a symbol of religious practice has been stigmatized. This aligns with Edward Said a literary critic, and political activist explains in the concept of "othering" in *Orientalism* (1978), where the East is framed as fundamentally different and often threatening to the West. In this instance, the headscarf—a cultural and religious marker—is no longer a personal choice but a symbol that provokes fear and prejudice. "The question is not how we are seen but how we are seen as different and then reduced to that difference." (Said 287).

Zoya lives in exile after her parent's assassination. She joins RAWA and starts working with it. On her secret mission of RAWA, she is sent to Afghanistan, Zoya has to go against her likes and dislikes and is compelled to buy and wear a burqa. The burqa which served as a passport for her entry. So she goes to a shop to purchase burqa. She expresses her perception on burqa: "I disliked the shop and the shop keeper, but above all I hated the garment that I was being forced to buy, I had come to the bazaar to buy a burqa and I spent as little time as I could in the shop that displayed them so proudly in its window as if they were the latest fashion. I thought they looked like disgusting sleeping ghosts" (ZS135) She packs the burqa so that it makes her mobility possible in Afghanistan to complete her mission. She says: "I hated packing the burqa into my travel bag....it would serve to guarantee my dignity and my honor, as I would be obeying the decree that moslem women must observe complete 'hijab' or seclusion from society" (ZS137).

Zoya has recorded the difficulties faced by the women with the strict imposition of burqa. Zoya finds a woman sitting in the middle of the traffic trying to commit suicide by throwing herself in front of the running vehicles. Zoya tries to comfort her. she told me that her mother suffered from asthma and had gone to hospital for treatment. Soon after reaching the hospital, she had taken off her burqa as she fought for breath in the ward. A Taliban had burst into the ward and given her mother 40 lashes while the daughter watched helpless to intervene... The burqa not only killed women mentally, it could also help to kill them physically. (ZS146)

An apparel meant as a simple dress code for women had such a ghastly impact both physically and mentally. The helplessness of the daughter to save her mother was a huge blow to Zoya.

As all the women in Afghanistan wear the same form and colour of burqa, it becomes difficult to identify them. Zoya experiences one such incident: "once as I walked in the street, a stranger started asking me what kind of vegetable he should buy. I thought he was crazy, but then I realized that he had mistaken me for his wife. The burqa I was wearing was the same colour of hers and she'd stopped to look at something". (ZS160-161)

Zoya faces problems if she does not wear it whereas Janmohamed faces challenges for wearing headscarf. Janmohamed analyses the challenges and significance of wearing headscarf, She says the headscarf makes her identified as Muslim from the crowd at the backdrop of raised political tension. She chooses to wear the headscarf in spite of the difficulties and tensions, practice her faith and to make the world best for the women. She emphasizes as a feminist she can decide for herself, exercise her autonomy and make choice as a woman.

Janmohamed expresses how the Muslim women and their head scarfs are falsely accused as repressed and misrepresented. "As for me even though I had chosen to wear the head scarf, the public discussions about Muslim women-which rarely included the voices of Muslim women themselves identified me as too repressed to know my own mind; so repressed in fact that I was not allowed to speak for myself in these debates. By wearing the head scarf, I was said to be participating in my own oppression." (LIH 183) She expresses her frustration on public discussions about Muslim women and the headscarf. She says that she has willingly chosen to wear the head scarf. she has made it clear at several points in her autobiography. However, the public discussions that "rarely included the voices of Muslim women themselves"

reveal how Muslim women's perspectives are erroneously disclosed in societal debates. In the discussions the people speak for the Muslim women without allowing the Muslim women to speak for themselves. In public debates declare that wearing a head scarf, the Muslim women themselves are allowing their own oppression which is again a false accusation.

Janmohamed discusses the disproportionate scrutiny and backlash Muslim women face after 9/11 attacks, particularly regarding the headscarf.

Despite the fact that all the terrorist acts were carried out by men, it was the Muslim woman's head scarf that turned into one of the targets for attack, both verbal and physical. Suddenly this scrap of material on our heads was the focus of attention. Like me many Muslim women wore head scarf and went about their daily lives quietly and peacefully. We consider it was the matter of faith and personal choice to dress this way. For me, wearing a head scarf was not a political decision, nor a form of public statement, it was just one part of my everyday clothing. It's just a piece of cloth, I mused. It's not the end of civilization as we know it. I under estimated how upsetting my headscarf could be. (LIH 168)

Janmohamed questions that while the terrorist activities are carried out by men, the society targets Muslim women especially with head scarfs. This illustrates the scapegoating of visible symbols of Islam and often defamed and misinterpreted in the society. Joan Wallach Scott, a prominent American historian and scholar, in *The Politics of the Veil* argues that the veil is more than a symbol of oppression; it can represent "identity, resistance, and autonomy" (Scott 45) Janmohamed shuns the politicalizing her head scarf and creating anti-Islam rhetoric. She clearly states that her head scarf is a piece of cloth that she chooses to wear as a part of her regular clothing.

Janmohamed highlights the unique challenges faced by Muslim women who wear the headscarf:

As Muslim women who wear a headscarf, our faith was obvious to those around us ... The way we appeared in public was used to epitomize Islam. Stories in news - papers to do with Muslims. Even if Muslim women were not involved invariably carried pictures of Muslim women wearing headscarves or veils. We had to align the way we looked on the outside with what we believed in the inside; we had no choice. (LIH 180)

The headscarf makes Muslim women visible symbols of Islam, subjecting them to societal and media scrutiny. Feminists criticize this objectification, which reduces

women to representations of faith, undermining their individuality and autonomy while using their appearance for cultural and political agendas. She expresses her anguish when people enquire about her hair:

What is your hair look like? They asked again. This time I was more serious. I felt very protective. I didn't want to be imagined. I feel it is my private space. I've covered my hair because I don't want you to see it. What would be the point of telling you what it looks like? ... it might be covered up out in public, but it was just as much an object of feminine attention in private. It was part of feeling womanly. Wearing a head scarf didn't mean denying your physical femininity, it meant celebrating it in private sphere. Wearing head scarf wasn't just about hair either, despite the emphasis on the headscarf part of the dress code. It was about a whole way of dressing based on being modest. (LIH 169) when people question her about her hair, she has reflected her personal identity and privacy. It is her personal choice to cover in public, it remains as her feminine attention in private. She further says wearing a head scarf is not only to cover her hair but also to dressing as being modest. Furthermore, the phrase 'private space' initiates a conversation about the concept of physical autonomy and privacy. It agrees with the feminist theorist Sandra Bartky's argument that "the body is a site of struggle, inscribed by power relations and cultural expectations" (Bartky 71) In societies where public and private areas are gendered, the veil helps women to set boundaries that reflect their sense of self.

Janmohamed reasons why many Muslim women do not wear head scarf. She says, "Many Muslim women did not wear a head scar but still observed modesty in their dress and behaviour, and that was the most important part will all the focus on hair and the head, the philosophy of modesty that lay behind the head scarf was overlooked." (LIH 169)

Janmohamed focuses on the duality related to headscarf she says:

For Muslim women wearing head scarf landed us right in the middle of double whammy. It polarized feelings with passion and intensity. Traditional Muslim men insisted that Muslim women should wear it in order to defend Islam. The voices in the media that hinted that 'Muslims were to be feared as struck- in - the - dark - ages - violent-terrorist insisted that Muslim women should not wear the head scarf. (LIH 170).

In the two opposite issues- the first one - Where traditional Muslim men insist on wearing of headscarf to "defend Islam," illustrates turning of woman's body into a

symbol for cultural and religious identity. The second one mischaracterizing of Muslim women who wear headscarf as backward and oppressive, and insists to come out of it. Women are doubly exploited and oppressed in both the cases. She emphasizes like any other human being Muslim women are free to make their decisions. As Leila Ahmed observes, "Muslim women have often found themselves caught between two discourses—one that demands conformity to religious expectations and another that demands assimilation to Western ideals of liberation" (Ahmed 152).

Janmohamed affirms the Muslim women like her fellow beings has aspirations and says, "Every Muslim woman aspires, just like every other human being. The clothing we wear or the acts of faith that we carry out do not change any of that. We want to live happy, fulfilled and successful lives." (LIH 176) She asserts the universality of human aspirations. It challenges stereotypes that reduce them to their appearance or faith, advocating for recognition of their individuality, autonomy, and shared humanity. Feminism supports this by promoting self-determination and opposing the reduction of women to cultural or religious symbols.

Janmohamed is confronted by the common question- Why do you wear so much black? She answers the question which may in everyone's mind.

Janmohamed says that mostly the women of gulf countries wear black colour. It is a misconception to assume that all Muslim women exclusively wear black. The Muslim women wear black with the influence of Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, which export their cultural practices globally. While black abayas and dresses are common in Gulf countries due to cultural norms and preferences. Muslim women around the world wear a wide range of colourful and diverse clothing styles. Countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Turkey have rich traditions of vibrant and patterned attire. She highlights her own preference for pink, particularly lilac or rose, as her signature colour, emphasizing diversity in Muslim women's fashion reflecting their cultural heritage and climatic needs. Associating black clothing with backwardness or stereotyping of Muslim women is unfair and promotes bias. Recognizing and appreciating the diversity within Muslim communities helps challenge these stereotypes and fosters a more inclusive understanding of cultural and religious practices.

The government that ruled the Afghanistan before the Mujahideen and Taliban, has granted women the freedom to wear clothing of their choice. However, the mullahs

oppose this, and their resistance leads to revolts and riots. Finally, they turn out the government. Zoya records:

April 28,1992 the fundamental Mujahedeen took over Kabul defeating the Russians. They destroyed Afghanistan more than the Russians. "I saw more burqa's than ever. They look like dead bodies drifting down the street, many women covered themselves with big scarves. The beautiful young women of Kabul no longer wore make up or skirts. They tried to look old and wore only sad colours. She told me that the fundamentalists who had taken power beat women if they did not cover themselves enough . . . The fundamental Mujahedeen started imposing many restrictions on women. As a result, women did not take part in TVS and Radio progress." (ZS 62)

This period is marked with pivotal changes in the country's socio-political history. After Mujahideen conquers Kabul the situation of the women has become even worst. They imposed many restrictions on dressing of the women and their appearance in the public. Judith Butler American philosopher and gender theorist, explains the concept of performativity (Butler 33) This explains how women adjusted their appearance to conform to the rigid gender norms imposed by the fundamentalists, performing gender roles dictated by fear and coercion.

In November 1994 Taliban has conquered Kandahar. "Day after the day the Taliban published decrees that spawned the harshest theocratic state in the world. Women were ordered to wear burqa outside their homes." (ZS 89)

She says, "When I heard a whistling sound very close to me and in a fraction of second later, I felt a sting on my hand. I thought I had been bitten by a snake, but when I turned, I saw a Taliban with a lash in his hand "prostitute" he shouted at me. cover yourself and go to your house" (ZS 142). The Taliban punishes the women severely who exposes their body parts even their hands. It has made the women's life miserable with their physical and verbal punishment. Zoya also faces the punishment as her hand is not covered properly. Feminist theorist Sandra Bartky describes such control as a form of 'disciplinary power,' wherein women's bodies are subjected to external forces that dictate their movement, appearance, and behavior. (Bartky 72).

After a few days Zoya finds a woman sitting in the middle of the traffic trying to commit suicide by throwing herself in front of the running vehicles. Zoya tries to comfort her. "She told me that her mother suffered from asthma and had gone to hospital for

treatment. Soon after reaching the hospital, she had taken off her burqa as she fought for breath in the ward. A Taliban had burst into the ward and given her mother 40 lashes while the daughter watched helpless to intervene" (ZS 146). The burqa has not only killed the Afghan women mentally, but also kills them physically especially when they are sick. The Taliban enforce burqa even in the severe health problem like asthma indicate a kind of patriarchal control that tries to eradicate female autonomy and visibility in the name of religious and cultural preservation. The severe punishment for non-compliance also reflects the views of a French historian, Michel Foucault's concept of "panopticons," In his seminal work, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, "where power is maintained through constant surveillance and the internalization of oppression." (Foucault 201). The daughter's helplessness and inability to help her mother leads to psychological trauma that forces the daughter to commit suicide. It reflects the psychologist Martin Seligman's description 'earned helplessness,' in his *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*, "a condition in which individuals subjected to repeated, uncontrollable oppression eventually come to believe that resistance is futile." (Seligman 45).

Amina Wadud, an Islamic feminist scholar, critiques such rigid interpretations of Islamic dress codes, arguing that they distort the essence of Islam, which is meant to prioritize compassion and well-being over rigid legalism. She asserts that "true Islamic modesty is rooted in intention, not coercion" (Wadud 98), challenging extremist interpretations that prioritize control over women's health and dignity.

There are people who dare to confront situation without thinking of its consequences. Zoya finds a daring woman who faces the Taliban boldly. Zoya wonders at a woman's bravery in confronting the Taliban. When Taliban strikes the woman as her hand is visible, she resists daringly - "She was so incensed to that even dared to pull off her burqa and throw it at the feet of the Taliban. Here, why don't you wear it yourself. The Taliban did not know how to react and shun away. After her victory the women retrieved her burqa, put it on back again on and continued shopping. I marvelled at her bravery." (ZS 146) This explains through the remarks of the British -Australian writer Sara Ahmed on feminist emotions "feminist anger can function as a declaration of injustice and a call to action" (Ahmed Sara 174).

As a part of her work Zoya has to visit the suffering people at their homes. As she has covered her face completely, her identity to the house owner is concealed and to prove her identity she uses passwords. "I gave the password that had been agreed upon previously, and the couple let me in. Having to wear burqa had made pass

words more necessary than ever, because you could never tell who your visitors were just by looking through the window as they arrived at your door” (ZS 156). The burqa is not merely a symbol of religious faith but it is suppressing women's identification. Instead of serving as an expression of religious belief, it can be imposed to erase women's visibility enforcing patriarchal control. As Leila Ahmed rightly comments, “the veil, in some contexts, becomes a symbol not of faith, but of the erasure of women’s identity and autonomy” (Ahmed 162).

Another similar incident happens to Zoya in the market place. She recalls, “I was struck by the absurdity of life under the Taliban. Once as I walked in the street, a man started asking me what kind of vegetable he should buy. I thought he was crazy, but then I realized that he had mistaken me for his wife. The burqa I was wearing was the same colour of hers and she’d stopped to look at something”. (ZS 160-161) The Taliban wants to convey and convince the women on how burqa is important in protecting them. “It was hand written in black ink and beautiful calligraphy hung on the Taliban embassy in Islamabad women’s section ‘A woman in burqa is more like a pearl in an oyster’. Zoya says, “to me a woman in burqa is more like a body locked in a coffin.” (ZS 209) Here Taliban wants to convince the women that a woman’s value lies in her concealment rather than in her autonomy and self-expression. On contrary Leila Ahmed points out in *Women and Gender in Islam*, “The veil has historically been used both as a symbol of empowerment and as a means of control, often reinforcing gender hierarchies under the guise of protection” (Ahmed 153). Here also Taliban use burqa as a means of control reinforcing gender hierarchies under the guise of protection. Zoya views the burqa as a coffin, symbolizing entrapment, suffocation, and loss of identity. Instead of preserving dignity, it confines and suppresses her, stripping away her identity and visibility in society.

Zoya expresses her feelings before leaving Afghanistan:

This time we embraced before I put on burqa...I felt so sick, so tired, and sad when we cross the border back into Pakistan that I did not bother to take off the burqa. I took it off only I had reached my home... when I looked at myself in the mirror, I saw something that looked like the mark of a cage in the middle of a forehead. I realized that the mesh of burqa had ridden up over my face and left its imprint on my skin. It was the only mark of that journey to Kabul left on my body, but my heart was wounded”. (ZS 160)

The experiences of the select writers, Shelina Zehra Janmohamed, and Zoya - reflect a complex and often oppressive experience with the burqa, shaped by

cultural, social, and personal struggles. Though Janmohamed loves to wear it, the society treats to marginalize her.

The governments in the various parts of the world are interfering with the women's clothing especially hijab either forcing them to follow or to discord, is creating havoc. The Afghan women are not in favour of burqa whereas Janmohammed loves to drape it. An article published in Frontline dated oct 21 with the head line Fighting the hijab by John Cherian states: The unrest in Iran rose after the death of Mehsa Amini, 22 a Kurdish in police custody on september 16, 2022. She was arrested by the monitory police of Iran, Ghaste- e Ashab on charges of being immodestly dressed. She died after being in coma for three days in hospital. Much of the support for the hijab protests came from university students chanting slogans "women, life, freedom". This time around the protests focused on women's rights with famous Iranian sports, cinema and theatre personalities, including legendary Iranian foot baller Ali Karami and famous actor Pantea Bharam, speaking up. The union of Islamic Iran Peoples party formed by supporters of the former Iranian President Mohammed Khatami, has called for the scrapping of the hijab law. (Frontline 56)

In a news clipping with headlines 'Supreme court delivers split verdict on Karnataka hijab ban' published in The Hindu, states "The two-judge Bench had contradictory opinions on the ideas of secularity, freedom of expression and effect of the ban on education of girls; case will now be heard by a larger Bench. In his divergent opinion, Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia said secularity meant tolerance to "diversity". Wearing or not wearing a hijab to school was "ultimately a matter of choice". For girls from conservative families, "her hijab is her ticket to education". (The Hindu 1) Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia has rightly said "her hijab is her ticket to education".

Riffat Hassan, a Muslim feminist theologian too opines in her, *Equal Before Allah? Woman-Man Equality in the Islamic Tradition* - "Purdah as a concept should be understood as a spiritual discipline, but it has been turned into a political and cultural tool to control women." (Hassan 15)

In Karnataka state in India, the state government imposed on students to unveil in government institutions. Ms. Malala Yousafzai, responding to these developments, tweeted, "Refusing to let girls go to school in their hijabs is horrifying. Objectification of women persists - for wearing less or more. Indian leaders must stop the marginalisation of Muslim women." (The Hindu 1)

The news published in The Hindu dated 16-9-2022 with the head line "Weaving hijab is an Expression of self", Shoeb Alam, Advocate for student-petitioner argues: "The School or the state have no say to what extent I should Chothe myself to feel safe."

In the same way Kapil Sibal, Sr Advocate argued in supreme court on 15-10-2022,

Hijab is a Muslim women's self-expression. She cannot be compelled by the State to shed her persona at the gates of her college. As Polonius said in Hamlet, clothes maketh the man. Wearing hijab is an expression of what you are, where you from. who you are. It is an expression of the self. Court should refer the case to a constitution bench, which should in turn first decide whether, "wearing a dress to self-expression, which lies both at the heart of the fundamental rights of privacy and freedom of expression!" Hijab can be given same protections as Sikh turbans and kirpans.(The Hindu 1)

The petitioners who are against hijab questions, "where is your right to were a hijab to School.?"Kapil Sibal replies, "Privacy and dignity is attached to your person, and not to a place you go to. A convict does not shed his fundamental rights at the gates of the prison." The Supreme Court has not yet given its verdict in this case. The arguments of Kapil Sibal clear that wearing desired clothing is a fundamental right of a person which exhibits ones identi

Zoya has viewed the burqa as a symbol of confinement and hypocrisy. She does not like to put it on. Zoya, in her experiences under Taliban rule, opines the burqa as a coffin, symbolizing suffocation and the complete erasure of self. For her, it is not a protective covering but a means of control that strips women of their identity and agency, leaving them feeling buried alive. Zoya's personal experiences reflect a deep sense of oppression and powerlessness associated with veiling. Shelina Zehra Janmohamed associate purdah as a tool to practice religion. She has resisted governmental intervention in either mandating the observance of purdah or compelling its abandonment. Shelina Zehra Janmohamed experiences the purdah with ambivalence, navigating between cultural expectations and personal empowerment. She shuns the attitude of the people towards the women who wear head scarf. Janmohamed and Zoya acknowledged the burden of it after the incident of 9/11 placed on Muslim women, particularly by the western societies where it has become a symbol of Muslim identity and oppression.

Overall, these women's experiences with the burqa highlight its dual nature - while some view it as a source of cultural or religious pride, for others, it represents a form of patriarchal oppression, erases their identity, restricting their freedom and autonomy.

From this study it is clear that practice of purdah is completely dependent on their personal choice though all the writers belong to Muslim Community for whom them following purdah, is a part of their religions practice, they choose it accept or reject it based on their individual preferences. Wearing the choice of cloth is a fundamental right and freedom of expression of women. No one has right to say to what extent women should cover their bodies. Hijab is a Muslim women's self-expression. They cannot be compelled by anyone to expel it. In the same way no one has a right to force them to put purdah on. women should take liberty to choose their dressing like the select writers irrespective of external forces.

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Exploring Psychological Aspects in Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* and *The Earthspinner*

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Abstract

This paper explores the psychological impact of loss, longing, and the search for belonging in Anuradha Roy's novels *All the Lives We Never Lived* and *The Earthspinner*. Both works feature introspective protagonists who navigate emotional exile, fractured relationships, and societal constraints, reflecting broader themes of displacement and resilience. *All the Lives We Never Lived* presents Myshkin, who struggles with rejection and unresolved grief after his mother, Gayatri, leaves him in pursuit of freedom, forcing him to grapple with identity, memory, and the burden of her absence. In *The Earthspinner*, Elango, a potter caught between artistic passion and forbidden love, and Sara, his former student confronting her own displacement, embody themes of fractured identity and resilience. Their experiences highlight the tensions between personal desires and rigid societal norms, illustrating how individuals cope with loss and longing in restrictive environments. Through characters shaped by physical, emotional, and ideological displacement, Roy examines how memory and imagination serve as essential tools for survival. By intertwining personal narratives with historical and cultural contexts, she presents a nuanced exploration of identity formation, exile, and the human capacity for endurance. This study analyzes her storytelling techniques, demonstrating how psychological depth enriches the themes of loss, longing, and self-discovery in her fiction.

Key words: Psychological impact, fractured relationships, societal constraints, memory and imagination, resilience, personal identity.

Anuradha Roy's novels *All the Lives We Never Lived* (2018) and *The Earthspinner* (2021) delve into the psychological complexities of individuals who are grappling with loss, longing, and the search for belonging in restrictive societal environments. Through her introspective characters, Roy explores how emotional exile, fractured relationships, and personal desires clash with societal constraints, leading to significant psychological turmoil. In the novel *All the Lives We Never Lived*, Myshkin, the protagonist, navigates the unresolved grief of being abandoned by his mother, Gayatri, while in *The Earthspinner*, Elango and Sara face the pressures of societal expectations and the conflict between personal passions and rigid cultural norms. Both novels illuminate the psychological impacts of displacement, identity formation, and resilience. This paper explores the psychological aspects of the characters in these two works, analyzing the themes of loss, memory, and self-discovery while examining how the protagonists cope with the emotional burdens imposed by their circumstances.

In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, the psychological landscape of the protagonist Myshkin is primarily shaped by the abandonment of his mother, Gayatri, who leaves him behind to pursue a life of freedom. The novel unfolds through Myshkin's reflections on his past and his continuing struggle with the emotional void created by her absence. The psychological toll of loss in Myshkin's life is profound and complex. Gayatri's struggle is also one of self-realization. Her psychological distress stems from the tension between her personal identity and the identity imposed upon her by her family and society. She could not bear her husband's control and criticism on her, so she bursts out, *So my freedom is something you can store in a locked iron safe? To dole out when you see fit* (Roy 36). His mother's departure leads to a deep sense of alienation and emotional isolation that defines his growth and relationships as an adult. As he feels rejected by his mother, all his emotions are replaced with anger, *It was a betrayal impossible to forgive. My mother knew when she left that she poured petrol and set a match to every bridge between herself and her family. After such desertion, what forgiveness? She could never return, not even for me.* (Roy 140)

Myshkin's longing for his mother is central motif to the novel's exploration of grief. His psychological development is marked by a desire for reconciliation, but he is often unable to separate the idealized version of his mother from the reality of who she was. The unresolved grief he experiences throughout the novel illustrates how loss, particularly the loss of a primary caregiver, can fundamentally alter one's sense of identity. He recollects his mother's touch and caring, *Some nights, my mother sings*

the song from Santiniketan. She only sings it when she and I are alone on the roof...when I was little she would scoop me up in her arms and whirl me in a circle as she sang, and now she wafts around the shadowy rooftop with her arms outstretched, a bird in flight... (Roy 61)

Myshkin's emotional life is defined by this longing for a mother who never returns, and his identity formation is distorted by the weight of this absence. The psychological impact of this trauma leads him to question his worth, and his emotional isolation reflects the deeper void he feels. Not only the moments spent with her, but also her clear images are chasing his mind and he is unable to escape from those... *Present in every detail and yet imprisoned in a different element, unreachable. Entire conversations come back to me, incidents, arguments, the way she would like her eyes with kajal, the fresh flowers in her hair, the circle of red kumkumam on her forehead which was invariably smudged by mid-afternoon. (Roy 22)* Furthermore, Myshkin's relationship with his father, who is emotionally distant, exacerbates his feelings of abandonment. His quest for answers regarding his mother's actions—her decision to abandon her family for personal freedom—becomes an exploration of his own identity. He expresses his mind on Gayatri's decision of going away with Mr. Spies, *I did not care anymore that he had taken my mother away, I wished he has taken me too... In the time that had passed, my sense of her physical existence had dwindled...I wanted to be where she was. I wanted to do what she was doing. My life was going on elsewhere without me. (Roy 188)* Myshkin's struggle with self-worth, shaped by his mother's rejection, also mirrors broader psychological themes related to the search for personal identity and belonging in a world shaped by abandonment and emotional deprivation.

In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, memory plays a critical role in the psychological coping mechanisms employed by Myshkin. He feels bad about people who attack him mentally, *People think of my solitude as an eccentricity or a symptom of failure, as if I am closer to animals and trees because human beings betrayed me or because I found nobody to love (Roy 63)*. His memories of his mother are fragmented, often idealized, and steeped in longing. These memories become a psychological refuge, a place where he can construct a version of his mother that serves as a source of comfort. He says... *I find that as I dwell more and more intensely in the time I am describing, it is as if incidents from my childhood are playing out before my eyes again (Roy 94)*. However, this selective memory also prevents him from fully healing, as he remains trapped in a fantasy of the past that can never be fully realized in the present. The psychological

coping mechanisms in the novel, such as idealization and selective memory, reveal how individuals with unresolved emotional wounds often turn to the past to make sense of their present. By clinging to an image of his mother that aligns with his emotional needs, Myshkin creates a mental escape from the pain of her absence. However, this retreat into the past ultimately hinders his ability to move forward in his life. Myshkin's emotional entrapment in his memories reveals the psychological complexities of dealing with abandonment and the deep yearning for a connection that was never fully realized.

In *The Earthspinner*, Roy explores the psychological complexities of Elango and Sara, two characters whose emotional and psychological lives are shaped by the constraints of societal expectations. Elango, a potter with a passion for art, is caught between his desire for artistic freedom and the rigid cultural norms that dictate his life. His love for Zohra, a young woman from a different community, becomes the emotional focal point of the novel. However, their relationship is constrained by social boundaries, leaving Elango psychologically torn between his passion and the rigid structures that dictate his actions. The narrator in the novel comments, *He could not imagine a life without Zohra. That was unbearable. But he dared not imagine a life with her. It was inconceivable.* (Roy 44). Elango's psychological conflict stems from the tension between personal desire and societal expectations. His emotional turmoil is compounded by the societal judgment he faces due to his caste, creating a sense of psychological exile. As Elango navigates this internal conflict, his artistic expression becomes both a source of solace and a reminder of the constraints that he faces. The psychological impact of repression and forbidden love manifests in Elango's emotional isolation, which is exacerbated by his inability to reconcile his desires with the external forces that seek to define his life.

Sara, on the other hand, experiences her own form of psychological displacement. As a woman who does not fit into the conventional roles prescribed by the society, Sara feels alienated from the world around her. In Sara's case, her psychological exile is characterized by a yearning for a life beyond the constraints of caste and gender, as well as a desire to find her place in a world that constantly undermines her individuality. Sara mentally collapses at her father's death. This loss changes everything and turns her world upside down, sees her reflection in the mirror also as a stranger. She reflects by finding her face in a window glass... *I need to work out how to reassemble myself.* (Roy 18)

Both Elango and Sara's psychological journey in *The Earthspinner* explore the complexities of fractured identities, where personal desires are at odds with the identities imposed by society. Their emotional isolation is a product of this fracture, and their resilience becomes an important psychological tool for survival. Despite the societal constraints that bind them, both characters continue to search for emotional and intellectual fulfillment, demonstrating the psychological endurance required to confront and overcome the challenges posed by rigid societal structures.

In *The Earthspinner*, as in *All the Lives We Never Lived*, memory and imagination are psychological tools for survival. For Elango, his art serves as a form of psychological release, allowing him to transcend the limitations imposed by his caste and societal expectations. His pottery becomes a form of self-expression that enables him to cope with the emotional repression he faces, providing him with a sense of purpose and identity that his social world cannot offer. Elango's art allows him to confront his inner turmoil, serving as a bridge between his personal desires and the restrictive reality he lives in.

Sara also uses imagination as a coping mechanism, envisioning a future where she can live freely, beyond the constraints of her caste and gender. However, her psychological resilience is tested as she comes to terms with the limitations of her idealized future. The conflict between Sara's imagined possibilities and the harsh realities she faces reveals the psychological strain of living in a society that seeks to suppress individuality. Like Elango, Sara's resilience is built on the ability to imagine alternative possibilities, even as those dreams remain out of reach. They are living in emotional exile, suddenly finding home and warmth in each other's presence... *It was as if he had a lifetime of talking to finish in five days and I listened without stopping him.* (Roy 191) Sara tries to find reasons and excuses to meet Elango one more time before he leaves... *Maybe I can go with him to the airport. A few extra hours. That's all I want.* (Roy 200)

Roy's narrative techniques in both the novels—non-linear storytelling, multiple perspectives, and a focus on introspective characters—enhance the psychological depth of the novels. Through her exploration of memory, identity, and longing, Roy creates rich, complex characters who reflect the psychological challenges faced by individuals dealing with loss, emotional deprivation, and societal constraints. The fragmented structure of both the novels mirrors the fractured identities of the

protagonists, emphasizing the psychological dislocation they experience as they struggle to reconcile their desires with their circumstances.

By intertwining personal narratives with historical and cultural contexts, Roy's novels offer a nuanced portrayal of how the psychological dimensions of identity and belonging are shaped by external forces. The intricate characterization and the depth of emotional insight allow readers to understand the protagonists' inner worlds, revealing the complex interplay between individual desires and societal expectations. To conclude, Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* and *The Earthspinner* offer profound psychological insights into the emotional and psychological impacts of loss, longing, and the search for belonging. Through the stories of Myshkin, Elango, and Sara, Roy explores how personal desires, societal expectations, and fractured relationships shape individuals' psychological landscapes. The novels reveal the complex ways in which individuals cope with emotional exile, memory, and identity formation, using imagination and resilience as tools for survival. By examining how the characters navigate their psychological conflicts, Roy highlights the enduring human capacity for self-discovery and resilience in the face of adversity.

Roy's exploration of psychological depth through her rich and complex characters provides a nuanced understanding of the interplay between loss, longing, and identity. In both the novels, memory and imagination serve as essential tools for psychological survival, helping characters confront the emotional wounds of the past while seeking a path toward healing. Ultimately, these novels illustrate the transformative power of self-reflection and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of societal and personal challenges.

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Folk Elements in the Writings of Amitav Ghosh

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Abstract

Amitav Ghosh, a prominent Indian author, integrates various folk elements into his literary works, creating narratives that bridge traditional cultural practices with modern themes. This paper explores the utilization of folklore, myths, oral traditions, and local legends within Ghosh's writings, examining how these elements serve as a tool for understanding cultural identity, history, and social structures. In novels such as *The Hungry Tide* and *Jungle Nama*, Ghosh weaves folk motifs into the fabric of his storytelling, often reflecting on colonialism, migration, and postcolonial identities. The incorporation of folk narratives in his works not only enriches the thematic depth but also highlights the resilience of indigenous knowledge systems and their significance in contemporary discourse. This study offers an analysis of the multifaceted role folk elements play in Ghosh's novels, focusing on their contribution to narrative style, character development, and socio-political critique.

Key words: Folk elements, Sundarbans, human inhabitants, history, ecological environment

Introduction

Amitav Ghosh is one of the India's most prominent contemporary writers, known for his distinctive narrative style, historical depth, and exploration of themes such as colonialism, migration, ecology, and identity. Ghosh's writing career began with his debut fiction novel, *The Circle of Reason* (1986), which explored themes of migration, cultural integration, and identity through the story of a young man, Alu, fleeing a false accusation of terrorism. The novel won the Glenfiddich Award and established Ghosh as a unique voice in contemporary literature. His later works continued to address a wide range of themes, including the impact of colonialism, the role of the sea in global history, and environmental concerns. His fictional and Non-

Fiction notable works include *The Shadow Lines* (1988), *In an Antique Land* (1992), *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1996), *Dancing in Cambodia and at Large in Burma* (1998; Essays), *Countdown* (1999), *The Glass Palace* (2000), *The Imam and the Indian* (2002; Essays), *The Hungry Tide* (2004), *Incendiary Circumstances* (2006; Essays), *Sea of Poppies* (2008), *River of Smoke* (2011), *Flood of Fire* (2015), *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016), *Gun Island* (2019), *Jungle Nama* (2021), *The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis* (2021), *Uncanny and Improbable Events* (2021), *The Living Mountain* (2022), *Smoke and Ashes: A Writer's Journey Through Opium's Hidden Histories* (2023), and *Wild Fictions* (2025; Essays)

Ghosh's work often blends historical fiction, magical realism, and elements of folklore, reflecting his deep engagement with the complexities of history, culture, and the interconnectedness of human societies. He explores how historical events shape individuals, families, and nations, often telling stories through multiple perspectives. Ghosh has increasingly written about the environment and ecological issues, particularly in *The Hungry Tide* and *Jungle Nama*, highlighting the relationship between people and nature. His choice of Bonbibi is deeply intertwined with his long-standing interest in themes related to nature, colonialism, cultural folklore, and the intersections between the natural world and human societies. Bonbibi is a goddess worshipped primarily in the Sundarbans, a vast region of mangrove forests in India and Bangladesh, known for its unique ecological environment and the complex relationship between its human inhabitants and the wilderness.

The Hungry Tide vs Jungle Nama

Amitav Ghosh's exploration of Bonbibi and the folklore of the Sundarbans is most prominently featured in his books *The Hungry Tide* and *Jungle Nama*. Bonbibi is seen as a guardian of nature and a reminder of the importance of maintaining a respectful relationship with the environment in *The Hungry Tide* and *Jungle Nama*. In the context of the Sundarbans, Bonbibi symbolizes the delicate equilibrium between human survival and the natural world. Her story highlights the complexities of the region's ecosystem, where human life and wildlife, including tigers, often exist in a tense but interdependent balance. Bonbibi also remains an essential figure in the folklore and spirituality of the Sundarbans, embodying the harmony between the forest's bounty and the respect needed to protect it. For the most part of the both novels Bonbibi's role is knitted as the protector of the forest. Her legend also provides a spiritual framework for the local communities to navigate the risks and rewards of living in such a unique and dangerous landscape.

The myth of Bonbibi has roots in the folk traditions of the Sundarbans, and she is considered the protector of the forest, its animals, and the people who live within it. Bonbibi is seen as a goddess who protects the villagers, especially the honey hunters, fishermen, and others who venture into the dangerous jungle, from the wrath of wild animals, particularly tigers. According to the legend, Bonbibi was born from a divine, mystical place, and her name means “Lady of the Forest” (Bon meaning forest, and Bibi meaning lady). She is depicted as a benevolent and powerful goddess, embodying the forest itself.

While Bonbibi doesn’t feature directly in *The Hungry Tide*, the Sundarbans’ unique environment plays a central role. But in *Jungle Nama* Ghosh draws inspiration from the rich cultural and mythological traditions of the region, and Bonbibi’s figure appears as a central character in the narrative, as she is in local beliefs to bring her myth to the forefront. While *Jungle Nama* directly addresses Bonbibi’s myth, Ghosh’s broader works also touch upon the Sundarbans and its ecosystem, though not always in the same mythological context. For instance *The Hungry Tide* is set in the Sundarbans and explores themes related to the complex relationships between people and the land, survival, and the struggles against natural forces, which are similar to the ideas reflected in Bonbibi’s myth. The book highlights the tension between human existence and the harsh, often dangerous natural world of the Sundarbans, which aligns with the protective nature of Bonbibi.

Jungle Nama is an ambitious, poetic, and evocative work that takes inspiration from the *Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling. The story is presented in verse form. It also itself follows the tale of Jadun, a young man from the Sundarbans, and his mystical, complex interactions with the world around him. Jadun navigates the mysterious and dangerous world of the jungles. His life is deeply intertwined with the jungle and its creatures, particularly the tigers, which are both revered and feared by the people. He becomes embroiled in a mysterious event that intertwines fate, spiritual beliefs, and the harsh realities of nature. By using Jadun, Ghosh explores the human relationship with the natural world, focusing on survival, the fragility of ecosystems, and the tension between development and preservation. This highlights Ghosh’s environmental concerns, making the work a tribute to the natural world, and perhaps a plea to recognize its value before it is lost.

Mowgli, a young boy is another central human character, is raised by wolves in the jungle. His journey is shaped by his interactions with the animals and the

mythical forces that govern the jungle. Mowgli's struggles with belonging between the human and animal worlds are central to the narrative. As he grows up, he becomes a part of the jungle's intricate ecosystem, learning the laws of the wild and forming relationships with its many inhabitants. His primary mentors are Bagheera, the black panther, and Baloo, the bear, both of whom teach him how to survive and navigate the challenges of the jungle. The tension between Shere Khan and Mowgli represents the ongoing struggle for dominance in the wild.

The narrative is deeply entwined with local Sundarbans folklore, especially the myth of Bon Bibi, the forest goddess. Bon Bibi is a revered figure who protects both humans and animals in the jungle. Her legend is central to the balance between the human and natural worlds. In the story, Bon Bibi's struggle with the demon Dokkhin Rai, a dark spirit who embodies chaos and destruction, is a key element. Dokkhin Rai is an antagonist who seeks to disrupt the natural harmony of the jungle.

Throughout *Jungle Nama*, the jungle is depicted as not just a physical space but as a spiritual and mystical realm governed by ancient laws. The folklore elements, especially the stories of Bon Bibi, play a vital role in guiding Mowgli's actions and shaping his understanding of the world. The mythological framework informs the characters' moral choices, and the jungle itself becomes a character in its own right, alive with spirit, danger, and wisdom.

Throughout *Jungle Nama*, the animals are not just wild creatures but also embody the larger folk traditions of transformation, wisdom, and moral guidance. Characters like Bagheera (the panther) and Baloo (the bear) played mentorship roles, passing on the folklore of the jungle to Mowgli. This connection between animals and folklore highlights the belief that the jungle's creatures are not simply part of the ecosystem but are central to its spiritual and moral framework.

Through poetry, Ghosh retells the tale of Bonbibi's battle against the demon Dokkhin Rai, emphasizing the symbolic importance of the myth in relation to human survival, nature, and spirituality in the Sundarbans. Another key element is the illustrations by Priya Kambli, which accompany the text and complement the mood of the poem. The visual style reflects the surreal, mystical quality of the Sundarbans and reinforces the feeling of timelessness that pervades the narrative. Whether it's the stories of the Sundarbans, the songs of laborers, or the mysteries surrounding

historical events, folk traditions are an integral part of his storytelling, giving depth and authenticity to his exploration of the human experience.

In *The Hungry Tide* Ghosh incorporates the Mangroves, Ganges and the most popular myth about Bonbibi by including colonial incidents. He included the involvement of a conflict with a demon named Dokkhin Rai, who was a fearsome ruler of the Sundarbans. Dokkhin Rai was a cruel and violent entity who would terrorize the forest and harm those who lived there. As the story goes, Bonbibi came to the Sundarbans to restore order and balance to the jungle. In one of the main myths, she confronts Dokkhin Rai, who had been harming the forest's creatures and humans. After a fierce battle, Bonbibi defeats Dokkhin Rai and establishes herself as the protector of the forest. Following her victory, Bonbibi establishes a sense of harmony in the Sundarbans, instructing the people to live in balance with nature. She tells the villagers that they must respect the forest and its creatures, and only then will the forest provide them with resources such as honey, wood, and fish. Bonbibi thus becomes a symbol of balance between humans and the environment, advocating for respect, sustainability, and coexistence with the natural world.

Both novels Bonbibi is worshiped by the local people, especially the honey collectors and fishermen who brave the dangerous forests of the Sundarbans. Devotees pray to her for safety before venturing into the jungle, seeking her protection from the wild tigers and other hazards of the forest. Rituals, songs, and prayers dedicated to Bonbibi are a common practice in the region. One of the important rituals involves the Bonbibi Jatra, a folk theater and dance form where the story of Bonbibi is enacted, accompanied by prayers and chants.

Piya a marine biologist who arrives in the Sundarbans to study the river dolphins is one of the central characters in *The Hungry Tide*. Her character represents a modern, scientific approach to the natural world, and her journey is one of discovering not only the wildlife of the region but also the human side of the Sundarbans. Fokir is a fisherman from the Sundarbans who becomes Piya's guide during her time in the region. He represents the indigenous, rural population of the Sundarbans, living a life that is in close contact with nature. As a fisherman, Fokir's daily life is shaped by the rhythms of the tide, the unpredictable waters, and the jungle's dangers. He is also a symbol of the deep connection between the land and its people, carrying the wisdom of generations of living in harmony with the jungle. Fokir's character highlights the struggles of the local population, who depend on the fragile

environment for their livelihood and survival. Throughout the novel, Piya's interactions with the local people help her understand the interconnectedness of human lives and the environment. She learns about the struggles the inhabitants face, especially those living in the tidal delta, where the line between land and water is constantly shifting.

The Sundarbans become home to numerous refugees who have fled the political turmoil and displacement from other parts of India. These refugees, often living in poverty and struggling to survive in the hostile environment, form an integral part of the community in *The Hungry Tide*. Ghosh paints a picture of the precariousness of their lives, illustrating how they have to adapt to the tides and the dangers of the jungle to survive.

Folk Elements in *The Hungry Tide* and *Jungle Nama*

Folklore refers to the traditional beliefs, customs, stories, songs, and practices that are passed down orally from one generation to another within a community or culture. These stories and traditions often reflect the values, fears, desires, and wisdom of the people who share them. Folklore encompasses a wide range of cultural expressions, including myths, legends, fairy tales, proverbs, superstitions, and rituals, all of which offer a unique window into the history and worldview of a community. By using Bonbibi and Dokkhin Rai like traditional stories that often involve gods, divine beings, or supernatural forces Ghosh takes you back the cultural heritage of societies, often transmitted through oral storytelling, performances, and practices that strengthen communal bonds and reinforce shared cultural identity from the ages in India. Indian folklore includes a wide variety of stories, from the epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana, to regional folk traditions such as the stories of local deities and mythical creatures. By including folk tales Ghosh often tried emphasize the triumph of good over evil and the importance of dharma (righteousness).

The myth of Bonbibi also holds significant cultural and historical importance for the people of the Sundarbans. Her narrative is intertwined with local beliefs, but it also engages with the colonial history of the region. The Sundarbans were heavily affected by colonial practices, particularly during the British colonial period, when the landscape was altered for economic purposes, including the extraction of resources and the exploitation of labor. Bonbibi's myth reflects the resilience of local cultures against these external forces. Through her, Ghosh can explore the tension between indigenous beliefs and the imposition of colonial values.

The people of the Sundarbans have a deeply spiritual connection to the land, which is infused with animal spirits and supernatural beliefs. In *The Hungry Tide*, the

environment itself feels alive, and the characters often rely on folklore, superstitions, and rituals to interpret their relationship with the jungle. These elements influence the ways the characters interact with the natural world and the choices they make when navigating it. The tidal waters of the Sundarbans also carry mythic weight in the novel. The tides are seen as unpredictable and powerful, embodying both the danger and sustenance that the region offers. In some local beliefs, the tides are seen as a living force that can be a source of life and destruction, and in the novel, this sense of mystery around the tide and the sea becomes a metaphor for the unknown and uncontrollable forces of nature.

Common Themes and Folk Elements in Both Works

In both *The Hungry Tide* and *Jungle Nama*, the folklore illustrates a deep connection between humans and nature. The jungle, with its spirits, gods, and animals, is presented as an interconnected realm where every action has spiritual and moral consequences. The works reflect the Sundarbans' cultural view that nature is alive and must be treated with respect and reverence.

The folklore in both works often serves as a moral compass for the characters. The stories of Bon Bibi's protection and the consequences of breaking the jungle's laws serve as important lessons in respect, humility, and coexistence with the natural world. These folklore elements in *The Hungry Tide* and *Jungle Nama* help to create rich, layered narratives that blend history, myth, and the powerful spiritual connections that the people of the Sundarbans have with their environment. Through these elements, Ghosh reflects on the complexity of the region's cultural traditions, and how folklore continues to shape the relationship between humans and the natural world.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Sundarbans and the ecological environment in both *The Hungry Tide* and *Jungle Nama* is much more than just a setting. It serves as a symbolic and spiritual landscape, where the natural world, mythology, and human life are inextricably linked. Ghosh uses this environment to explore broader themes of survival, respect for nature, folklore, and the impact of human actions on the world around them. *Jungle Nama* is a beautiful and thought-provoking piece of work that fuses storytelling with pressing contemporary issues. Ghosh's ability to bring the Sundarbans to life and weave a narrative filled with cultural depth, spiritual insight, and ecological awareness makes it a significant addition to his body of work. It's a book for those who are open to a different form of storytelling, one that transcends the boundaries of traditional genres and invites readers to reflect on the world we live in.

Sundarbans is not only a physical place but also a metaphor for the entanglement of humans with their environments. It is a space where human lives are intricately tied to nature, and Ghosh's engagement with Bonbibi helps him highlight these connections. Through her myth, Ghosh recreates a narrative that bridges the spiritual, cultural, and ecological dimensions of the region, portraying a holistic understanding of human existence in this unique environment. He uses Bonbibi in multifaceted for showing her the she serves as a powerful cultural, spiritual, and ecological figure, representing the intricate relationships between humans and the natural world, as well as the moral and cultural values that have been passed down through generations. By engaging with Bonbibi's myth, Ghosh can address broader themes of environmental destruction, the resilience of indigenous cultures, and the complexities of colonial history. Through this, he offers a poetic and thought-provoking reflection on the past, present, and future of the Sundarbans, making Bonbibi an essential figure in his literary exploration of South Asian landscapes and cultures.

Folklore is a living, breathing part of human culture, continually evolving and adapting while still preserving the wisdom and traditions of past generations. Whether passed down through oral storytelling, written texts, or contemporary digital media, folklore continues to reflect the values, fears, dreams, and struggles of the people who share it. Through these narratives, we gain insight into the universal human experience, creating connections across time and space. Ghosh uses Bonbibi's story as also one of the resistances. He showed her as protects the villagers of the Sundarbans from the dangers of the forest, including the mythical tiger Dakkhin Rai. The myth can be read as a metaphor for the struggle of the marginalized, who resist both natural threats and external forces (like colonial powers, environmental degradation, and economic exploitation).

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Depiction of Women in the Novels of Kavery Nambisan: A Study of Female Subjugation and Resilience

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Abstract

Kavery Nambisan, a doctor by profession and a novelist by passion, offers a compelling and nuanced portrayal of women in her literary works. Her novels often delve deeply into the complex layers of female subjugation, addressing not only the social and economic constraints imposed on women but also the emotional and psychological struggles they face in a patriarchal society. At the same time, Nambisan's narratives celebrate the strength and resilience of women as they resist and transcend these oppressive forces. This article seeks to examine the depiction of women in Nambisan's works, with particular focus on three of her novels: *The Hills of Angheri*, *The Scent of Pepper*, and *On Wings of Butterflies*.

Through a detailed analysis of these works, this study explores how Nambisan skillfully portrays the intersectionality of gender, caste, and class in rural Indian settings. The novels offer a vivid and authentic portrayal of the lived experiences of women in these communities, shedding light on the various forms of gendered oppression they encounter. Whether it is the suffocating traditional roles imposed on women, the economic disparities that limit their opportunities, or the emotional and psychological toll of patriarchal expectations, Nambisan's female characters confront these barriers with determination, resilience, and, at times, defiance.

In *The Hills of Angheri*, Nambisan examines the harsh realities of rural life, where women are confined to rigid societal roles and often denied opportunities for personal growth. In contrast, *The Scent of Pepper* introduces more complex narratives of female agency, as women in the story grapple with issues of education, career aspirations, and the weight of familial expectations. *On Wings of Butterflies* further

explores themes of identity, autonomy, and personal freedom, offering a poignant commentary on the broader social forces that shape the lives of women in rural India.

This study also highlights the evolution of Nambisan's female protagonists, noting how they gradually shift from passive endurance to active resistance, moving from a place of subjugation to one of empowerment. By examining the characters' journeys, the article aims to demonstrate how Nambisan uses her fiction to critique societal norms and highlight the transformative power of women's agency, even in the face of immense adversity. Ultimately, this analysis underscores how Nambisan's works contribute to a broader discourse on gender and social justice, providing a powerful narrative of women's struggles and triumphs in rural India.

Keywords: Portrayal of Women, Female subjugation, Themes of Identity, Autonomy, denied opportunities, Intersectionality of Gender, Caste.

Introduction

Kavery Nambisan's fiction is deeply rooted in her medical career, allowing her to depict the lived realities of women, particularly in the domain of healthcare, family, and society. Her novels do not merely present women as victims; rather, they provide nuanced narratives of their struggles and resistance. The themes of patriarchy, gender discrimination, and social mobility are intricately woven into her storytelling, making her works a valuable lens through which to examine women's issues in contemporary Indian society.

In *The Hills of Angheri* (2005), Nambisan presents the life of a female doctor who struggles to establish herself in a profession dominated by men. The protagonist faces resistance not only in her professional space but also within her family, where societal norms dictate her role as a woman before acknowledging her aspirations. Her journey is emblematic of the larger struggle faced by women in male-dominated fields. "She realized that a woman must work twice as hard to earn half the respect that a man gets effortlessly" (*The Hills of Angheri*, 2005).

This novel highlights how institutional barriers and gender biases prevent women from attaining professional and personal autonomy. The protagonist's resilience, however, showcases the changing dynamics where women are carving out spaces for themselves despite systemic challenges.

The Scent of Pepper (1996) offers a detailed examination of the intersection of caste and gender oppression. Set in Coorg, the novel follows Nanji, a strong yet subdued woman navigating life in a patriarchal household. Nanji's agency is limited by her status as a woman in a conservative society, yet her subtle acts of defiance hint at the quiet resistance many women practice. "Her silence was not submission; it was a waiting—a deep, patient waiting for the day she could choose her own path" (*The Scent of Pepper*, 1996)

Through Nanji's life, Nambisan critiques the rigid structures of caste-based patriarchy that confine women, yet she also illustrates how women negotiate power within these oppressive frameworks.

In *On Wings of Butterflies* (2002), Nambisan explores women's participation in political resistance. This novel departs from the domestic and personal struggles seen in her other works and instead focuses on a collective rebellion led by women. Here, female subjugation is not just a personal affliction but a social crisis that demands radical change. "They would no longer ask for justice; they would demand it" (*On Wings of Butterflies*, 2002).

The novel underscores the importance of female solidarity and activism in challenging patriarchal oppression, showing that the fight for women's rights must be both individual and collective. In *The Hills of Angheri* (2005), Kavery Nambisan crafts the journey of Nalli, a woman who aspires to become a doctor despite the deeply ingrained gender biases and societal expectations that limit women's professional aspirations. Nalli's struggle is not just about gaining an education but also about carving an identity for herself in a male-dominated profession.

From the beginning, Nalli faces numerous obstacles—financial difficulties, lack of familial support, and societal norms that dictate a woman's role within the domestic sphere. Unlike her male counterparts, she has to constantly prove her worth, navigating scepticism from her own family and peers. Kavery Nambisan's *The Scent of Pepper* provides a profound exploration of caste, class, and gender intersectionality through the lives of its female characters. The protagonist, Nanji, stands as a symbol of endurance and quiet defiance in the face of systemic oppression. Throughout the novel, Nambisan introduces contrasting female figures, each grappling with varying degrees of subjugation and resistance. Among them, Nalli's journey stands out as a

powerful narrative of ambition and the pursuit of independence in a patriarchal society.

Unlike Nanji, who largely maneuvers within the patriarchal system, Nalli challenges it directly by striving to become a doctor, a profession that was largely inaccessible to women at the time. Her determination is palpable in the way she navigates familial and societal expectations. Nalli's ambition highlights the barriers that women face in accessing education and professional autonomy. Her character embodies the challenges women encounter in balancing personal aspirations with the societal pressures to conform to traditional roles.

While Nanji finds ways to endure and adapt to the rigid structures of the society she lives in, Nalli pushes against them, seeking not only education but also financial independence. This represents a progressive shift from silent endurance to active defiance, reflecting the broader struggle for women's rights and personal agency. Nalli's journey exemplifies the evolving dynamics in the lives of women in post-colonial India, where more women began to assert themselves against the status quo. In contrast to Nalli's progressive defiance, the character of Ajja in *The Hills of Angheri* serves as a representation of deeply entrenched misogyny within traditional households. As the family patriarch, Ajja embodies the oppressive mindset that restricts women's potential, relegating them to caretaking roles and denying them the autonomy to pursue their own ambitions. His disdain for Nalli's aspirations to become a doctor underscores the generational conflict between conservative patriarchal values and the emerging, more egalitarian outlook that the younger female characters represent.

Ajja's character is symbolic of the larger societal forces that suppress women's independence, reinforcing the systemic nature of gender discrimination. His rigid views on women serve as a reminder of the deeply ingrained cultural norms that restrict the freedom of women to seek education, career opportunities, and self-fulfillment. In his eyes, a woman's place is in the home, fulfilling traditional roles, and his objection to Nalli's ambitions illustrates the patriarchal mindset that sees women's desires for personal growth and professional success as a threat to the established order. Through Ajja, Nambisan powerfully critiques the institutionalized gender inequality that permeates every aspect of society.

The rural Indian settings of these novels serve as a backdrop for the exploration of the entrenched social hierarchies of caste and class. In *The Hills of Angheri* and *The Scent of Pepper*, Nambisan captures how these deeply ingrained systems of social stratification amplify the oppression that women face, making it even harder for them to break free from traditional roles. The intersectionality of caste, class, and gender forms the core of the struggles depicted in these novels. Women from marginalized castes face not only gender discrimination but also the compounded oppression of their social status, which adds another layer of difficulty to their pursuit of autonomy. *On Wings of Butterflies* also addresses these dynamics, showing how class disparities and the weight of social expectations impact the protagonist's sense of self and freedom.

A recurring theme across the three novels is the generational conflict between older, conservative characters and younger, more progressive ones. In *The Hills of Angheri* and *The Scent of Pepper*, older male figures often embody patriarchal values that attempt to suppress the ambitions of younger women. These characters, particularly patriarchs or elders, view women's aspirations for education and independence as a threat to the established order. In contrast, the younger female characters push back against these restrictive norms, representing a shift toward progress and the assertion of personal and social transformation. This generational clash is not just a family conflict, but a reflection of the broader societal shift between traditional and modern values concerning women's roles in society.

The emotional and psychological toll of patriarchy is also a common theme in these works. The female protagonists face both external and internalized oppression, leading to moments of doubt and frustration. Yet, they also exhibit emotional resilience, often finding ways to overcome their inner struggles and challenge the societal expectations placed upon them. In doing so, Nambisan underscores the mental and emotional strength required for women to break free from the constraints of their environments. The characters' internal journeys are as significant as their external ones, highlighting the complexities of living under patriarchal systems.

Education plays a crucial role in empowering the female characters across these novels. In *The Scent of Pepper*, Nalli's determination to become a doctor despite the societal barriers she faces emphasizes the importance of education as a tool for breaking free from gendered constraints. Similarly, *On Wings of Butterflies* presents education not only as intellectual growth but as a means of personal liberation and

self-discovery. The novels portray education as a pathway through which women can assert themselves, achieve financial independence, and challenge the social structures that seek to limit their potential.

In this way, Nambisan presents a nuanced narrative that highlights both the quiet endurance of women like Nanji and the active defiance of characters like Nalli, ultimately emphasizing the struggles and triumphs of women in a patriarchal society. “She realized that in medicine, as in life, a woman’s competence was always questioned before it was acknowledged.” (*The Hills of Angheri*, 2005) Despite these challenges, Nalli’s determination remains unwavering. She perseveres through medical school, facing biases from professors and colleagues who view women in medicine as anomalies rather than equals. She also encounters ethical dilemmas, particularly when treating patients in rural areas where traditional beliefs and gender roles are deeply rooted. One of the most striking aspects of Nalli’s journey is her compassion and commitment to serving the underprivileged. Unlike many of her colleagues who seek lucrative careers in urban hospitals, she chooses to work in a rural setting, where medical care is scarce. Her decision reflects her moral strength and deep-seated belief in healthcare as a tool for social change.

Kavery Nambisan’s *The Scent of Pepper* provides a profound exploration of caste, class, and gender intersectionality through the lives of its female characters. The protagonist, Nanji, stands as a symbol of endurance and quiet defiance in the face of systemic oppression. Throughout the novel, Nambisan introduces contrasting female figures, each grappling with varying degrees of subjugation and resistance. Among them, Nalli’s journey stands out as a powerful narrative of ambition and the pursuit of independence in a patriarchal society.

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In this way, Nambisan presents a nuanced narrative that highlights both the quiet endurance of women like Nanji and the active defiance of characters like Nalli, ultimately emphasizing the struggles and triumphs of women in a patriarchal society. While both Nalli (*The Hills of Angheri*) and Nanji (*The Scent of Pepper*, 1996) are central female characters in Kavery Nambisan's novels, their journeys and approaches to female subjugation differ significantly. Nalli's story highlights how she can serve as a tool for female empowerment, allowing women to carve out independent identities. Nanji's life, in contrast, shows how women often resist oppression within the education boundaries of their expected roles.

Conclusion

In summary, Kavery Nambisan's novels offer a multidimensional portrayal of women's subjugation—within families, professional spaces, and broader societal structures. Whether through the quiet endurance of Nanji in *The Scent of Pepper*, the

professional struggles of the doctor in *The Hills of Angheri*, or the political awakening of women in *On Wings of Butterflies*, Nambisan highlights the myriad ways in which women resist oppression. As a writer and a doctor, her deep engagement with human suffering gives her fiction a unique authenticity, making her one of the most significant voices in contemporary Indian literature.

The Hills of Angheri, *The Scent of Pepper*, and *On Wings of Butterflies* all share thematic concerns related to the challenges women face in rural India due to gendered oppression, caste, and class disparities. While the novels each offer distinct narratives and characters, they all highlight the resilience and agency of women who, despite the social constraints placed upon them, strive to achieve autonomy and personal growth. Nambisan's portrayal of women in these works emphasizes the importance of education, the power of resistance, and the emotional strength required to overcome both external and internalized oppression, offering a powerful narrative of women's struggles and triumphs in rural India.

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Breaking tradition: Why do people from the upper caste abandon their traditional practices?

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Abstract

This paper examines how the upper caste especially the people hailing from Brahmin community abandon their traditional practices and customs. Through a critical analysis of two short stories, "Tiladaanamu" and "Akkayya", this paper looks into the challenges faced by Brahmins in adapting to changing social realities. The stories reveal the struggles of Brahmin families in maintaining their cultural heritage, the rejection of traditional practices, and the adoption of new values. This paper aims to identify the reasons that affect the lives of People that cause them to move away from their traditional way of living, contributing to a deeper understanding of cultural preservation and adaptation in the face of realities.

Keywords: Brahmin, culture, non-conventional way of living, Abandonment.

Brahmins, who occupy the highest rank in the caste system in Hinduism, have traditionally been known for their strict adherence to certain customs, practices, and codes of conduct. This stringent way of living is rooted in their historical role as spiritual leaders, teachers, and maintainers of sacred traditions. This includes waking up before sunrise, following a vegetarian diet, teaching scriptures, and avoiding alcohol and other intoxicants.

Brahmins, known for their strict adherence to tradition, may sometimes deviate from their prescribed path. The short stories 'Tiladaanamu' by Rentala Nageswara Rao and 'Akkayya' by U.R. Anantha Murthy, illustrate instances of Brahmins

breaking away from traditional norms. Srinivas, a professor in Philadelphia and a friend of the narrator, is a vocal critic of Brahmins who fail to live up to their values. He condemns his brother-in-law's behaviour, including abandoning his wife, having a mistress, and consuming alcohol and tobacco. The narrator shares

"Srinivas had narrated this incident as a scathing criticism of the Brahmins who lived a life of rituals." ('Akkayya',64)

The narrator notes that Srinivas shared this story to criticize Brahmins who prioritize rituals over moral integrity. Srinivas believes that living a hypocritical life is not a true faith.

"...to live like that would be living in bad faith." ('Akkayya',65)

In rebellion, Srinivas starts eating meat and marries a woman from Punjab, defying traditional Brahmin norms. He is disappointed and disconnected from the Brahmin community because of their hypocrisy. His actions are a way of protesting or distancing himself from the flawed values and behaviour of other Brahmins.

According to the short story '*Tiladaanamu*', Raghuram, who is a Brahmin, refuses to learn and follow the culture of Brahmins. He makes this decision because he feels that the traditional practices do not help the society where people are not treated well by the authorities. Additionally, his family's poor financial condition contributes to his frustration.

Raghuram's frustration boils over as he argues with his father, questioning the relevance of the Vedas in bringing about positive change. He argues

"You held your Vedic Learning and Knowledge sacred all your life, Nanna garu. They neither help you nor society." ('Tiladaanamu',178)

Dissatisfied with the Brahmanical way of life, Raghuram breaks free from his family's expectations and joins a movement aimed at awakening and educating the people. His vision is clear: a classless society where hunger and poverty are eradicated. "This is only the Beginning. We have to awaken the people, educate them and popularise our ideology, then we can achieve a classless society where hunger and poverty will be wiped." ('Tiladaanamu',178)

However, Raghuram soon discovers that the movement itself is plagued by disparities. In a desperate bid to support his family, he makes the ultimate sacrifice, surrendering to the police. In a poignant letter to his wife, Raghuram laments,

“Ours is an ugly society. We recognise exploitation but we don’t oppose it. There is selfishness everywhere. Differences have surfaced in my organisation too. Can we fight for a cause when we are so divided amongst ourselves?” (‘Tiladaanamu’,185)

Raghuram's decision to abandon the Brahmanical way of life is driven by his family's poverty, and his desire to achieve the society free from class divisions, and the ill treatment of the people by the authorities.

The abandonment of traditional ways of living can be attributed to various factors, including the misconduct of community members, as seen in Srinivas' case, and social injustices, poverty, and inequality, as exemplified by Raghuram's experience. Additionally, education and migration play a role in leaving traditional practices. This is evident in the stories of Srinivas from 'Akkayya' and Raghuram from 'Tiladaanamu', both of whom are educated individuals.

Their education enabled them to recognize the social evils and injustices within their communities. Srinivas acknowledged the cruel practices of widow shaving, dowry-related bride burning, and the marginalization of Harijans. He also criticized the wrongdoing of his own community members. Similarly, Raghuram's education introduced him to revolutionary ideologies, inspiring him to explore the teachings of Mao and Karl Marx.

“He took to modern education which brought him in touch with the teachings of Mao and Karl Marx...He developed an interest in revolutionary literature, forming protest groups and organising strikes.” (‘Tiladaanamu’,179)

“He turned into a big scholar... When we were doing our MA...” (‘Akkayya’,63)

Through their stories, it becomes clear that education is a powerful instrument for social revolution. Srinivas and Raghuram's experiences demonstrate that education can empower individuals to critically evaluate traditional practices and seek positive change.

“Education is a powerful instrument to bring about social revolution.”

Migration also plays a significant role in transforming one's way of life, as seen in the experiences of Raghuram and Srinivas. Raghuram's move to the city with his father, Subrahmanya Shastri, exposes them to a new world. Subrahmanya Shastri, a traditional scholar, struggles to adapt to the materialistic city life, where he is reduced to accepting tiladaanam and carrying corpses.

“Subrahmanya Sastri was a misfit in that world - all he was allowed to do was accept tiladaanam and carry corpses” (‘Tiladaanamu’, 180)

“After marrying the Punjabi doctor, Srinivas became distanced from his language, his home, his people... He settled in Philadelphia” (‘Akkayya’, 65)

Similarly, Srinivas's migration to Philadelphia after marrying a Punjabi doctor marks a significant departure from his traditional roots. He deliberately distances himself from his language, home, and people, seeking a new life free from the hypocrisy he witnessed in his native community. Through their stories, it becomes clear that migration can be a powerful catalyst for change, allowing individuals to break free from traditional constraints and forge new paths.

Interestingly, the stories of Raghuram and Srinivas reveal two different patterns of transformation. In Raghuram's case, migration leads to a change in his father's traditional way of living, as they adapt to the new urban environment. In contrast, Srinivas's migration to Philadelphia is a consequence of his prior decision to move away from conventional traditions, seeking a more modern and liberal lifestyle. Conclusion:

In conclusion, this paper examines the factors that lead individuals to abandon their traditional practices and customs. The stories of Srinivas and Raghuram offer valuable insights into the challenges faced by Brahmins in adapting to changing social realities. As these stories demonstrate, the abandonment of traditional ways of living is often driven by a desire for social justice, equality, personal freedom, and education and migration can be the catalysts for change, enabling individuals to critically evaluate traditional practices and seek positive change. Ultimately, this research underscores the importance of understanding the nuances of cultural transformation and the need for empathy and inclusivity in navigating the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

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Knowledge on Menstrual Health and Hygiene Among Adolescent Girls in Selected Rural and Urban schools located in Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh.

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Abstract

Introduction : Awareness of menstruation is crucial for adolescent girls to maintain proper care and hygiene during their menstrual cycle. This menstrual health care has greater impact on their physical health, emotional well-being, and overall development. Therefore, this study aims to study the knowledge on menstruation health and hygiene among adolescent girls in urban and rural schools located in Chittoor.

Methods : Purposive sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 60 adolescent girls, aged 13 to 15 years, from both rural and urban areas. These participants were students from the 8th, 9th, and 10th grades. Data collection was carried out using a self-structured questionnaire designed to gather socio-demographic details and information related to menstruation. The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and t-tests as the primary statistical methods.

Results : The findings of this present study shows that the highest percentage of urban school going adolescent girls (56.2%) scored above 60, whereas the majority of rural adolescent girls (62.5%) scored in the 50–60 range. These findings suggest that urban adolescent girls have greater awareness of menstruation and related aspects compared to their rural counterparts. The t-test results further confirm this difference, showing statistical significance ($p = 0.025$) at the 0.05 level.

Conclusions : There is a pressing need to enhance the knowledge of both urban and rural adolescent girls to equip them with the necessary understanding and practices. This would help them prevent various infections and ensure better health outcomes in their future lives.

Key words: Adolescent girls, Menstruation, Menstrual hygiene, Awareness,

Introduction

India is home to the world's largest adolescent population, comprising 253 million individuals aged 10 to 19, meaning nearly one in every five Indians is an adolescent (NHM, 2024). Adolescents represent a vital resource for any nation (Modi et al., 2021). The term "adolescent" is derived from the Latin word *adolescere*, which means "to grow to maturity," emphasizing the developmental significance of this life stage (Kaushal, K., 2017).

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines adolescents as individuals aged 10 to 19, a pivotal stage that bridges childhood and adulthood (Beeva 2022). This period is critical for mental, emotional, psychological, and social growth (Modi et al., 2021; Dudeja, P., 2016; Kaushal, K., 2017).

For girls, adolescence can be especially challenging, as it includes significant milestones like menarche, which marks the onset of female puberty (Dixit, 2016). Puberty introduces physical changes that reshape the body, including alterations in size and form, transitioning it into adulthood (Modi et al., 2021). Menarche specifically signals the start of a girl's reproductive phase.

The term "menstruation" originates from the Latin word *menses*, meaning moon, reflecting the approximately 28-day lunar cycle (Dudeja P, 2016). Menstruation is a natural physiological process that typically begins during adolescence (Bachloo et al., 2016; Baishakthi, 2014; Deshpande et al, 2018; Choudhary N et al., 2019; Bulto GA, 2021; Kavitha M, 2018; GAB, 2021). It serves as a critical indicator of reproductive health (Kavitha M, 2018) and is often accompanied by various symptoms before or during menstrual flow (Bachloo et al., 2016).

Menstruation's physiology, pathology, and psychology are closely tied to women's health, influencing morbidity and mortality (Bachloo et al., 2016). For adolescent girls, understanding puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and sexual health is vital for leading healthy, informed lives while reducing reproductive health risks (Arthi Gopal, 2014; Alka Modi Asati, 2021).

Despite being a natural process, many adolescents lack essential knowledge about menstruation, particularly in low-income and rural areas. Studies reveal that poor menstrual awareness leads to unsafe hygiene practices, increasing the risk of reproductive tract infections (RTIs), cervical cancer, school dropout, and reduced

quality of life (Channawar, 2016; Kavitha M, 2018; Belayneh, 2019). Rural girls are disproportionately affected due to cultural taboos and limited access to information (Baishakthi, 2014; Amrutha G, 2013).

Comprehensive menstrual education improves hygiene practices, reduces health risks, and empowers girls to manage menstruation confidently, fostering better psychological, social, and academic outcomes (Channawar, 2016; Kavitha M, 2018; Hayam, 2021). Promoting open conversations and bridging the urban-rural awareness gap is essential for improving adolescent girls' overall well-being. With this backdrop, the present study aims to assess the level of awareness about menstruation among school-going adolescent girls residing in both urban and rural areas of Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh.

2. Materials and Methods

Aim : To study awareness level of school going adolescent girls on menstruation in Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh

Objectives

- To study the socio demographic details of the respondents and their parents
- To examine the knowledge on menstruation among the school going adolescent girls in urban and rural location

Sample

To choose the sample, a multistage sampling procedure was applied. Initially, the ZP High schools in the Chittoor district, AP were purposefully chosen by the researcher to participate in the study. One ZP high school from Urban and one ZP High school from Rural was selected from Chittoor district to do this study. A total 60 adolescent girls—30 from rural school and 30 from urban school who are enrolled in the eighth, ninth, and tenth class.

Significance of the Study

Awareness of menstruation is essential for adolescent girls, as it significantly influences their physical health, emotional well-being, and overall development. A comprehensive understanding of menstruation fosters a sense of control and confidence, enabling girls to manage their menstrual cycles without shame or embarrassment. This knowledge empowers them to engage in open discussions about their menstrual health with family members, peers, and healthcare providers, contributing to a supportive environment for managing their health.

Furthermore, menstrual awareness plays a crucial role in promoting proper hygiene practices, which helps reduce the risk of infections such as reproductive tract

infections (RTIs), urinary tract infections (UTIs), and other menstruation-related health issues. Many adolescent girls experience confusion, anxiety, or discomfort when they first menstruate. Early education alleviates these concerns, facilitating a smoother and more positive transition into womanhood.

Moreover, understanding menstruation fosters a healthier sense of body image and self-esteem. As adolescent girls learn to appreciate and accept the natural changes occurring in their bodies, they are more likely to experience better mental and emotional health. Additionally, menstrual awareness is an integral component of broader reproductive health education. It provides girls with critical information about fertility, sexual health, and the potential consequences of early sexual activity, enabling them to make informed choices and reducing their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and early pregnancies.

Research design

A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional design was used for this study.

Tools of data collection

In the first step, the self-structured questionnaire was used to collect the socio demographic details of the respondents, their parents and their school related information which is related to the study. In the second step, self-administered scale was used to collect the information related to awareness on Menstruation and related aspects among the school going adolescent girls.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by using SPSS version 23. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used. In descriptive statistics; frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation was used to describe the demographic characteristics, menstrual characteristics and menstrual hygiene practice of rural and urban. In inferential statistics; chi-square-test, t-test was used to compare the awareness on menstruation among rural and urban. A value of $p \leq 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Results

Table.1-Socio Demographic profile of the respondents among rural and urban

Socio Demographic Profile of the Respondents	Rural		Urban	
	No.of respondents	Percentage	No.of respondents	Percentage
Age				
13	10	33.3	12	40
14	10	33.3	13	43.3
15	10	33.3	15	50

Class				
8	10	33.3	10	33.3
9	10	33.3	10	33.3
10	10	33.3	10	33.3
Religion				
Hindu	10	33.3	22	73.3
Christian	17	56.6	7	23.3
Muslim	3	10	1	3.33
Social status				
SC	17	56.6	16	53.3
ST	2	6.6	6	20
BC	11	36.6	8	26.6
Father education				
Illiterates	2	6.6	2	6.6
Primary & Middle School	3	10	7	23.3
High School	18	60	20	66.6
Intermediate & Above	7	23.3	1	3.33
Mother education				
Illiterates	3	10	3	10
Primary & Middle School	4	13.3	17	16.6
High School	9	30	5	16.6
Intermediate & Above	14	46.6	5	56.6
Father occupation				
Wage labour & Agriculture	24	80	26	83.3
Self-employment & Employees	6	20	4	13.3
Mother occupation				
Home maker	21	70	17	56.6
Wage labour & Agriculture	10	33.3	10	33.3
Self-employment & Employees	0	0	3	10
Family Income				
Rs.<9,999	9	30	7	23.3
Rs.10000 – 19,999	18	60	17	56.6
Rs.20,000 and above	3	10	6	20

No. of leisure time activities				
Any 1-3 activities	26	86.6	20	66.6
Any 4-5 activities	4	13.3	9	30
Any 6-8 activities	0	0	1	3.33

The data in Table No.1 shows the socio-demographic profile of respondents from selected rural and urban schools located in Chittoor district. The findings indicate that the respondents equally selected from 8th, 9th and 10th class located from rural and urban schools, however, the urban respondents are slightly older than their rural counterparts. In terms of religious affiliation, majority of the rural respondents (56.6%) identified as Christian, whereas urban respondents (73.3%) identified as Hindu. The Majority of the responders from rural (56.6%) and urban (53.3%) areas were from the SC community.

As far as the educational levels of the parents are concerned, most of the fathers from both the rural (60%) and urban (66.6%) were educated up to high school. Likewise, Most of the mothers both from the urban (56.6%) and rural (46.6%) were educated intermediate and above its indicate that the mothers are more educated than the fathers in both rural and urban areas. With related to the parents' occupation, the findings showed that the daily wage or agriculture is the main source of income of the father living in both the rural (80%) and urban areas (83.3%). And most of the mothers are home makers in both the areas.

With regards to the family income, the majority of families fall under the range of Rs.10,000 to 19,999 from both the rural (60%) and urban (56.6%) areas. Additionally, 86.6% rural respondents engaged in 1-3 leisure time activities where as 66.6% of the urban respondents engaged in 1-3 leisure time activities and 30% respondents involve in 4-5 leisure time activities, which indicates that the urban respondents involved more leisure time activities compared to rural respondents.

Table No.2 : Awareness on Menstruation Related Aspects (AMRA) among Rural and Urban areas

AMRA Scores	Urban	Percentage	Rural	Percentage
Less than 40	-	-	1	3.33
40-50	-	-	3	10%
50-60	3	37.5%	5	62.5%
More than 60	27	56.2%	21	43.8%
Total	30	50%	30	50%
df-58		t value 0.025		

Table 2 presents the awareness scores on menstruation-related aspects among rural and urban school-going adolescent girls. The data reveals that the highest percentage of urban adolescent girls (56.2%) scored above 60, whereas the majority of rural adolescent girls (62.5%) scored in the 50–60 range. These findings suggest that urban adolescent girls have greater awareness of menstruation and related aspects compared to their rural counterparts. The t-test results further confirm this difference, showing statistical significance ($p = 0.025$) at the 0.05 level.

Table No.3 : Awareness on menstruation and related aspects - Statement wise comparison scores among Rural and Urban school going adolescent girls (n - 60 (Urban 30 and Rural 30))

S. n o	Statements	Location	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Cannot say)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)	Sd & t-value
1.	In girls, the common age of menarche is between 9yrs to 15 years of age	Urban	-	-	2 (6.6)	15(50)	13(26)	.927 .039*
		Rural	-	1(3.3)	4(13.3)	19(63.3)	6(20)	
2.	Menarche is the onset of the first monthly periods in girls	Urban	-	-	4(16.6)	19(63.3)	7(23.3)	.964 .046*
		Rural	-	2(6.6)	7 (23.3)	16(53.3)	5(16.6)	
3.	The onset of menarche is an indication of hormonal changes	Urban	1(3.3)	-	19(63.3)	3 (10)	7 (23.3)	.204 .153
		Rural	-	-	14(46.6)	5(16.6)	10(33.3)	
4.	In girls, the uterus lining is shed about once a month, and this shedding is called menstruation.	Urban	-	-	1(3.3)	17(56.6)	12(40)	1.03 .062
		Rural	-	2(6.6)	6(20)	12(40)	10(33.3)	
5.	Menstruation occurs once in every 28-30 days in most	Urban	-	-	5(16.6)	16(53.3)	9(30)	1.14 .163

	girls, and menstrual flow lasts two to seven days	Rural	-	4(13.3)	4(13.3)	15(50)	7(23.3)	
6.	Abdominal pain & bloating are the common problems experienced by adolescent girls during menstruation	Urban	-	2(6.6)	2(6.6)	11(36.3)	15(50)	.138 .301
		Rural	-	5(16.3)	5(16.6)	4(13.3)	16(53.3)	
7.	Some adolescent girls may experience Breast heaviness & pain during their menstruation	Urban	-	3(10)	14(46.6)	8(26.6)	5(16.6)	1.39 .248
		Rural	-	10(33.3)	10(33.3)	4(13.3)	6(20)	
8.	Constipation is also experienced by some adolescent girls during menstruation	Urban	-	-	15(50)	12(40)	3(10)	1.16 .026*
		Rural	-	8(26.6)	12(40)	9(30.3)	1(3.3)	
9.	Regular periods indicate the regular functioning of the uterus of a girl	Urban	-	3(10)	9(30.3)	6(20)	12(40)	1.15 .876
		Rural	-	-	6(20)	20(66.6)	4(13.3)	
10.	Regularity in periods also depends on the general health conditions of the adolescent girls	Urban	-	1(3.3)	3(10)	23(76.6)	3(10)	1.03 .004*
		Rural	-	6(20)	11(36.6)	10(33.3)	3(10)	
11.	Regularity in periods is also affected by the emotional state of the adolescent girls	Urban	-	-	19(63.3)	9(30)	2(6.6)	.999 .856
		Rural	-	1(3.3)	21(70)	7(23.3)	1(3.3)	
12.	Dietary and food habits of adolescent girls influence the regularity of their menstrual cycle	Urban	-	2(6.6)	8(26.6)	9(30)	11(36.6)	1.15 .351
		Rural	-	1(3.3)	9(30)	16(53.3)	4(13.3)	
13.	It is essential for a girl to have prior knowledge of menarche before she attains her menarche	Urban	-	-	4(13.3)	17(56.6)	9(30)	1.07 .011*
		Rural	2(6.6)	4(13.3)	4(13.3)	13(43.3)	7(23.3)	
14.		Urban	-	-	-	5(16.6)	25(83.3)	.899 .008*

	Practicing menstrual hygiene is very important to a girl at the time of periods	Rural	-	-	4(13.3)	8(26.6)	17(56.6)	
15.	Using sanitary napkins is a good practice at the time of menstruation	Urban	-	-	4(13.3)	-	25(83.3)	.764
		Rural	-	1(3.3)	6(20)	7(23.3)	16(53.3)	.014*
16.	During menstruation, important to change the pad or cloth at least once in every 6-8 hours & wash genitalia	Urban	-	-	2(6.6)	2(6.6)	26(86.6)	.889
		Rural	-	1(3.3)	3(10)	8(26.6)	18(60)	.032*

Table No. 3 provides a statement-wise comparison of scores between rural and urban adolescent girls on their awareness of menstruation. Among the 16 statements assessed, 8 demonstrated statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level.

With regards to the respondent's knowledge about onset of menarche, it can be observed that the findings are significant (at 0.05 level) in the context of common age when menarche occurs and periods as an indication of the onset of menarche. Concerning the statements related to Physical symptoms during menarche, urban girls mentioned about constipation is as experienced by some adolescent girls during menstruation comparing to rural adolescent girls and the finding is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, with a p-value of 0.026. However, no significant difference was found with regard to statements related to the abdominal pain, bloating and heaviness of breasts among the rural and urban girls. With regards to the statements related to the menstrual hygiene, using sanitary napkins, changing pads & wash genitalia, majority of the urban girls have more knowledge than the rural adolescent girls and this is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. It is also heartening to note that the sample respondents have affirmed the need to have prior knowledge about menarche and also that regularity in menstrual cycle also depends on the general health status of the individuals. These statements revealed a significant difference among the urban and rural girls.

Discussion

In the present study, urban adolescent girls demonstrated greater knowledge about menarche compared to their rural counterparts ($p = 0.046$). These findings align with those of Bachloo et al. (2016), who reported a low level of knowledge about menstruation prior to the attainment of menarche, particularly among rural

adolescents. Additionally, a more negative attitude toward menstruation was observed among rural adolescents compared to urban adolescents. Studies by Yasmin et al. (2013), Baishakhi et al. (2014), and Prajapati et al. (2015) similarly highlighted that most urban adolescent girls regarded menstruation as a normal phenomenon, whereas a smaller proportion understood it as a physiological process; the majority lacked knowledge about its underlying cause. Baumann et al. (2019) further reported that more than half of respondents believed menstruation occurred to release impure blood, with only a few associating it with preparing for pregnancy. Moreover, less than half (46%) of respondents were aware of menstruation before experiencing their first period.

Adolescent girls should have fundamental knowledge about the importance of hygiene practices during menstruation, as this can help prevent various infections in their future. The findings of the present study indicate that urban girls have significantly greater awareness of the importance of practicing menstrual hygiene during their periods ($p = 0.008$) compared to rural girls. These results are consistent with studies conducted by Baishakhi et al. (2014), Choudhary and Gupta (2019), and Mekle et al. (2020). Urban girls also demonstrated better practices of satisfactory cleaning of external genitalia, as reported in similar studies (Baishakhi et al., 2014; Choudhary & Gupta, 2019; Mekle et al., 2020). The lower prevalence of genital cleaning among rural girls is attributed to a lack of knowledge about menstrual hygiene and insufficient privacy, as highlighted by Kapoor (2017).

In the present study, a significantly higher proportion of urban girls were using sanitary napkins compared to rural girls ($p = 0.014$). Similar observations have been reported in studies by Choudhary and Gupta (2019), Patle and Kubde (2014), Paria et al. (2014), Senapathi and Kumar (2018), Bachloo (2016), Deshpande et al. (2018), Tundia et al. (2018), and Baishakhi et al. (2014). Differences were also observed that urban girls changing their pads more frequently than rural girls ($p = 0.032$). These findings align with those of Rajee et al. (2020) and Mekle et al. (2020), who reported that rural girls changing their pads only once per day.

The higher use of sanitary pads in urban areas can be attributed to better availability and increased awareness, influenced by television and media. Additionally, the education level of the mother played a significant role, as girls whose mothers were educated were more likely to use sanitary pads, while those with illiterate mothers showed lower usage (Nani et al. 2022).

Mother is a first source of information. Other source of information was sister, friend & relatives related to the menstruation and other aspects of reproductive health to the adolescent girls, The studies of Singh et al, Prajapati 2015, Mekle 2020 stressed

the same inter studies. Therefore mother level of education have greater impact on the knowledge of the reproductive health of her own and her adolescent girl. In a study of Mekle et al (2020) observed that mothers who are the most common source of information to these girls were poorly literates and hence the quality of knowledge imparted might have been poor. This is in agreement with the present study as the majority of the mothers from rural settings had limited school education as compared to urban areas. This reiterates the fact that mothers of adolescents should be an integral part of all programs on adolescent health and especially on menstrual hygiene.

Conclusion

Awareness of menstruation is crucial for adolescent girls to practice menstrual care and hygiene to protect themselves from the future infections and their overall development. The findings of the present study reveal that urban adolescent girls generally have slightly more knowledge about menstruation and related aspects compared to their rural counterparts. However, there is a pressing need to enhance the knowledge of both urban and rural adolescent girls to equip them with the necessary knowledge related to the menstrual health.

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Enhancing Second Language Learning with the Aid of Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract

This paper throws light on the effectiveness of artificial intelligence (AI) in enhancing second language learning. In detail it explains about various applications of AI is used for learning second language. These applications are handy to improve Teachers' knowledge, which results in improved student engagement and to arrive at the academic success in a joyful way. Notably, this study underscores the main role of the AI in supporting teachers for the successful outcomes in second language learning. Artificial intelligence is more helpful to improve the language skills of students. Educators should be updated in using the AI applications to achieve their planned outcomes.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, enhancing, effectiveness, second language learning, literary analysis

India's Linguistic Diversity and the Role of Second Language

India is a linguistically diverse country with over 22 officially recognized languages. Many Indians speak multiple languages, including their mother tongue, a regional language, and often English as a link language. Hindi is the most widely spoken language in India.

Mother Tongue and Second Language

The mother tongue, also known as the native language or first language, is the language a person learns from early childhood. It is the language used for communication within the family. A second language is any language learned after the mother tongue. It may be learned at school or in social settings. English and Hindi are common second languages in India. English entered India with the arrival of the East India Company, which sought to establish trading ports in cities like Surat, Mumbai, Chennai, and Kolkata.

In 1835, the British East India Company began teaching English in public schools. That same year, English replaced Persian as the official language of the East India Company. Thomas Babington Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education proposed that English be used as the language of instruction for higher education.

After India gained independence, Hindi was declared the first official language. However, English was also retained as an associate official language. Over time, the use and importance of English as a second language in India have increased significantly.

Language learning has a long history in India. Learning initially began in the Rig Vedic period through oral transmission. For centuries, knowledge was passed down orally until the invention of paper. Later, blackboards and notebooks became common tools for learning. In recent years, smart boards have replaced blackboards, and now, artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming a powerful tool for second language learning.

Modern Second Language Teaching Methods

Different languages require different teaching approaches. The methods used for teaching a second language vary according to the language and the learners' background. The most common methods for teaching English as a second language in Indian schools are:

1. Grammar-Translation Method (GTM)

In this method, students are first taught grammar. Once they understand the grammatical structure, they are encouraged to frame sentences using the second language. This method includes learning about tenses, plurals, synonyms, antonyms, and sentence structures.

2. Direct Method (DM)

The Direct Method was developed in the late 19th century by language teachers. It follows the natural language learning process — similar to how children learn their native language. Learners are encouraged to listen and speak the second

language without translation. The teacher avoids translating and instead encourages students to figure out meanings through context, action, and trial and error.

3. Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)

This is an oral-based approach where students practice grammatical sentence patterns through drills and repetition. This method is effective in helping students memorize dialogues and improve fluency in the second language.

Artificial Intelligence in Second Language Learning

AI has significantly impacted second language learning by providing a wide range of tools and platforms. AI-based tools can personalize learning experiences, provide real-time feedback, and adapt to the learner's pace and understanding. The key AI tools used in second language learning include:

1. Chatbots and Virtual Tutors

AI-based chatbots and virtual tutors can help learners improve pronunciation and grammar in a second language. If a student gives a word or sentence for correction, the chatbot provides the correct spelling and pronunciation instantly. For example, Meta AI and ChatGPT are widely used for this purpose.

2. Speech Recognition

AI applications analyze pronunciation and suggest corrections. Tools like DuoLingo and Rosetta Stone use AI to improve speaking skills by providing real-time feedback in the second language.

3. Adaptive Learning Platforms

Adaptive learning platforms customize learning paths based on the student's strengths and weaknesses. They provide continuous assessment and prompt feedback, helping to identify gaps and improve second language learning outcomes. Popular examples include Babbel and Memrise.

4. Machine Translation and Language Processing

AI-powered translation tools allow content to be translated from the mother tongue into the second language or other languages. This feature is especially useful for teachers working in multilingual classrooms.

AI in Education

AI is widely used across different sectors, including business, healthcare, traffic control, and education. In education, AI assists in lesson planning, content creation, and evaluation. Teachers can use AI to generate lesson plans, create question papers, and even evaluate answer sheets. AI can also create engaging content, such as images and videos, to support teaching.

For example, if a teacher needs an image of an ant and an elephant playing cricket, AI can generate it within seconds — something that would otherwise take much time and effort to draw manually. Tools like ChatGPT can also create essays, summaries, and debates on various topics, making it easier for students to prepare for exams and academic work.

Evaluation and Feedback

AI-based evaluation systems can generate different types of homework and assessments based on the teacher's needs. The system can create personalized question papers with the student's name and provide immediate feedback. AI can also analyze literary works and provide insights into themes, character development, and critical analysis.

AI in Literary Analysis and Research

AI-based tools have become highly valuable in literary analysis and academic research. If you ask a simple question, such as "What type of drama is *Waiting for Godot*?", AI can provide a detailed answer, including the genre, related literary terms, and an analysis of the characters. Students and scholars can effectively use AI to complete their articles, research papers, and even generate ideas for dissertations. AI can also produce essays, summaries, and debates on various topics. Moreover, AI not only provides answers but also poses thoughtful questions and acknowledges the learner's efforts, encouraging deeper engagement with the subject matter.

Impact on Second Language Teaching and Learning

AI is a valuable tool for teachers and students, enhancing the second language learning experience and making education more engaging and effective. However, excessive dependence on AI can reduce creativity and critical thinking skills among students. Therefore, while AI can be a powerful support tool, it should be used to complement traditional second language teaching methods rather than replace them.

Conclusion

Students today are quick to adopt technology. AI-based tools provide effective and engaging ways to learn a second language, but they should be used under the guidance of instructors. AI can enhance the learning process by providing personalized feedback, improving pronunciation, and helping students build language skills naturally. However, a balanced approach is necessary to ensure that AI supports creativity and independent thinking rather than replacing them. Proper use of AI can empower teachers and students to create a knowledgeable and skilled society.

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INVISIBLE REALITIES : SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES ON DISABILITY (AUTISM) IN MEMOIR OF DONNA WILLIAM'S "NOBODY NOWHERE"

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Abstract

The autobiography of an autistic, to use the subtitle of her first book, *Nobody Nowhere: The astonishing Autobiography of an Autistic* (1992), may be a novel and, so far, unique genre authored by Australian author '**Donna Williams**' in two outstanding volumes. How, according to her account, can autobiography be exceptional? "Autistic" may not be a straightforward term. What distinguishes genuine autism from its "semblance", so to speak, a misdiagnosis? Did someone who was "cured"; of autism ever have autism? Autism is at the heart of it. When writing about invisible disabilities, Donna Williams highlights them. When she searches the vocabulary for autism, she discovers that it means "withdrawn". Thus, Donna Williams' writing reveals the format of autobiography, memoir, or, as she refers to it, "the story of my life." Indeed, there are moments when the tale fails to act or explain itself, instead creating narrative pauses and gaps that don't make intuitive sense. The book's seamlessness and the reader's integration into the text are what give Donna Williams her paradoxical voice—the voice of autism. Donna Williams sees an endless array of possibilities on this inherently ambiguous and immeasurable line. By playing Autism, Donna Williams demonstrates the conflicting ways in which it is possible to embody a self, i.e., by vocalizing the need to embody a self.

Key words : Invisibility, Autobiography, Disability, Autism, Memoir ,Embody.

Introduction :

Australian author, artist, singer-songwriter, screenwriter, and sculptor **Donna Leanne Williams** was also known as Polly Samuel (born Donna Keene; 12 October 1963 – 22 April 2017 and by her married name, Donna Leanne Samuel. Williams was diagnosed as “**psychotic**” at the age of two in 1965. She was often tested for deafness and labeled as “**disturbed**” throughout the remainder of her childhood. She received a diagnosis of Autism in 1991 and had therapy for immune system, gastrointestinal, and sensory perception issues. Like *Colour to the Blind: Soul Searching and Soul Finding* (1998), *Somebody Somewhere: Breaking Free from the World of Autism* (1994), ***Nobody Nowhere: The Extraordinary Autobiography of an Autistic Girl*** (1992), and *Everyday Heaven: Journeys Beyond the Stereotypes of Autism* (2004).

Invisible Realities : Shifting Perspectives On Disability :

The phrase “**invisible reality**” can be used to describe discoveries and truths that are not perceptible to the naked eye. It may also allude to a more profound truth that resides behind the material world. **Donna Williams** said that “This is a story of two battles to keep out ‘the world’ and a battle to join it”. It tells of the battles within ‘her own world’ and the battle-lines, tactics used, and casualties of her private war against others. This is her attempt at a truce, the conditions of which are on her terms. She had throughout her private war been ‘a She, a you, a Donna, a me and finally an I’. All of us will tell it like it was and like it is.

What is an Autism ? How the genuine Autism distinguished its ‘Semblance’ ?

Autism, is a neuro developmental illness that is ‘characterized by restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities’; and persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts. The diagnostic guides also cover disorders of the senses. Although they are typical of the illness, common related symptoms including impaired motor coordination are not necessary for diagnosis. In addition to being abnormal or excessive for the individual age and sociocultural setting, symptoms must significantly impede many functioning areas in order to qualify for a formal diagnosis.

Autism was still thought to be fairly common, affecting about 4 out of 10,000 people, for the following few years. At the time, middle-class males with autism were stereotyped as being silent and sulky. Ninety percent of individuals with autism were thought to be unable to empathize or form intimate relationships. Even after Bettelheim refuted “refrigerator” thesis—which claimed emotionally distant, professional, middle-class women were to blame for their children autism—the term autism

remained stigmatized. In the 1960s, many people who had been diagnosed with autism or labelled as “**psychotic**” children were institutionalized during infancy or, if they seemed to improve by maturity, were never informed of ‘the hidden secret’ of their disease and frequently had never encountered someone ‘**like themselves**’.

According to Donna Williams, having mental health conditions or learning difficulties is not any more significant than being sane or brilliant. The alternating normalcy that others are conditioned to believe is a genuine and desirable objective is frequently abandoned by people with mental health difficulties. Similar to this, persons with learning difficulties could have many more sensual experiences than ‘**normal**’ people. She acknowledges her own learning challenges and mental health concerns in this way. I would add that she is inside her own ‘**normality**’ and that she is meaning-deaf, meaning-blind, face-blind, and language disordered. She interacted with people who had physical challenges, learning and intellectual difficulties, and mental health concerns. However, from the earliest age she can recall, she realized that letting go of all knowledge of what is typically seen as real was her main source of protection. She was able to completely lose her feeling of self by doing this. However, this technique is considered the pinnacle of meditation and is used to attain inner calm and peace. She was, as far as she could tell, born alienated from the world and subsequently estranged from herself in her reaction to ‘the world’ according to those who would discuss estrangement. She ultimately discovered that the world also shapes people in this manner. She could have begun at the end and attempted to make her way back in an odd manner. “**In my beginning is my end**”, and “**In my end is my beginning**”, were written by **T.S. Eliot**. Because we learn from life that vulnerability is frequently our undoing and that there are no guarantees. What does life finally teach us besides the importance of self-reliance? Because we shall probably be alone ourselves in the end. In the end, a person's spirit is more important than their education. The spirit leads the mind, not the mind alone, which aspires to knowledge. Self-honesty may be the greatest level at which a person may reach. Most individuals push themselves to accomplish things that go against their emotional instincts. It is a **Schizoid** civilization that we inhabit. **Autism** sufferers with exposure anxiety are just humans who are impeded, changed, and frequently imprisoned by invisible, crippled emotional reactions. They are not crazy, foolish, fairy, or aliens. Some autistic persons may be driven toward artistic brilliance by their subconscious need to break free from the mental prison of exposure anxiety. They could grasp for it as if it were the exit when they see a glimmer of hope in the shadows. **Nobody Nowhere** was written a year after biomedical intervention had started to wake her up.

and put her back together in 1989 (before most people realized it was used in the area of autism). In the suicidal aftermath of falling in love with a real-life **'mirror'** named Sion after a life when her main connections had been in **'her own world'**, it was written in four weeks. **Nobody Nowhere** is about rescuing one soul from the trash heap and guiding it toward self-Determination, according to her. I hope **Nobody Nowhere** reminds those who are lost and encourages people to pause and think on the humanity and equality of those on the periphery of society.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, this investigation of Donna Williams **"Nobody Nowhere"** offers a unique opportunity to explore the hidden dimensions of autism, challenge conventional perspectives on disability, and promote a more nuanced understanding of Neuro diversity. By examining the discrepancies between external observations and internal experiences, analyzing **'the memoir'** impact on societal perceptions, and recognizing its contribution to Autism discourse, this study aims to foster greater empathy, acceptance, and support for individuals on the autism spectrum. The expected outcomes of this research have the potential to significantly influence academic, clinical, and societal approaches to autism, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and understanding world for neuro diverse individuals.

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Transition from Cyberpunk to Contemporary Speculative Fiction: A comparative Study of Gibson's *Neuromancer* and *The Peripheral*

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Abstract

William Gibson, broadly considered as the forerunner of cyberpunk, has undergone a substantial shift in his thematic concerns and literary style over the decades. His early works, predominantly *Neuromancer* set a dystopian vision of the future dominated by cyberspace, corporate control and artificial intelligence. On the other hand, his later work *The Peripheral*, move afar traditional cyberpunk aesthetics to discover contemporary speculative fiction, integrating elements of time travel, , blurred boundaries and geopolitical crises the between virtuality and reality. The present study demeanors a comparative analysis of the selected novels *Neuromancer* and *The Peripheral* to scrutinize Gibson's evolution as a writer and the transformation of his speculative vision. The research walk around themes, including fluid nature of identity, corporate power, and the technological determinism, and how their representation changes across Gibson's career. While *Neuromancer* imagines a hyper-digitalized world with hackers navigating cyberspace, *The Peripheral* portrays a more multi-temporal narrative where technology forms human agency in volatile ways. This transference reflects not only changes in the author's storytelling techniques but also his answer to real-world technological progressions, particularly the rise of, surveillance capitalism, climate change and big data. The present comparative study discloses that while the author's core preoccupations with human adaptation and technology remain consistent, Gibson's approach to speculative fiction has developed, reflecting a profounder engagement with social and political realities. While analyzing the transition the research offers understanding into Gibson's enduring influence on both broader speculative fiction and cyberpunk.

Keywords: cyberpunk, transition, social, political realities, dystopian vision, Time Travel, cyberspace and artificial intelligence

Introduction

The late twentieth century is marked by rapid technological advancements, increased reliance on media and computers, and significant scientific progress. Cyberpunk and post-human literature emerged as subgenres of science fiction, blending futuristic technological developments with dystopian narratives. These works explore themes of human identity, corporate control, and the implications of technological growth, reflecting societal concerns of the time. Cyberpunk is often analyzed in relation to postmodernism, as it portrays a world where technology reshapes human existence.), postmodern science fiction, including cyberpunk, vividly captures the defining aspects of contemporary life, emphasizing the transformative impact of technology (McCaffery, 1991). The modern era is characterized by blurred boundaries, where the distinction between humans and technology is increasingly indistinct. Bukatman further argues that science fiction, particularly cyberpunk, embodies the postmodern cultural crisis, which rejects fixed, objective paradigms.

Discussion

Neuromancer, set in a near-future world, is a postmodern novel distinguished by its narrative style and focus on virtual reality. Its opening lines evoke a sense of expectation, signaling the beginning of an extraordinary journey. The sky above the port was the colour of television, tuned to a dead channel. It's not like I'm using, Case heard someone say, as he shouldered his way through the crowd around the door of the Chat. It's like my body developed this massive drug deficiency. It was a Sprawl voice and a Sprawl joke (Gibson, 1). The story begins in Chiba City, a district of Tokyo, known for its underground trade in illegal biotechnology implants. The city's depiction incorporates numerous elements characteristic of the cyberpunk genre.

"The Japanese had already forgotten more neurosurgery than the Chinese had ever known. The black clinics of Chiba were the cutting edge, whole bodies of technique supplanted monthly, and still they couldn't repair the damage he'd suffered in that Memphis hotel (Gibson, 2). As evident from the excerpt, Chiba is portrayed as a technologically advanced city where specialized equipment is widely utilized. However, certain issues still require resolution. Terms like "black clinics," "supplanted," and "damage" contribute to an atmosphere of relentless innovation, a defining feature of the cyberpunk genre. Concerning the protagonist, he is depicted in a remarkable manner, embodying numerous characteristics typical of the genre.

"Case was twenty-four. At twenty-two, he had been a cowboy, a rustler, one of the best in the Sprawl. He had been trained by the best, by McCoy, Pauly, and Bobby Quine, legends in the biz. He had operated on an almost permanent adrenaline high, a

byproduct of youth and proficiency, jacked into a custom cyberspace deck that projected his disembodied consciousness into the consensual hallucination that was the Matrix (Gibson, 2).

The protagonist is considered the finest in the Sprawl, having been trained by experts in their respective fields. Additionally, he excels at navigating and manipulating the Matrix. His deep fascination with technology ultimately turns him into both a creation of this digital realm and a victim of its harsh realities. "Stopped to a bed in a Memphis hotel, his talent burning out micron by micron, he hallucinated for 30 hours. The damage was minute, subtle, and utterly effective. For Case, who had lived for the bodiless exaltation of cyberspace, it was the fall. In the bars, he had frequented as a cowboy hotshot. The elite stance involved a certain relaxed contempt for the flesh. The body was meat. Case fell into the prison of his own flesh (Gibson, 3). Molly is one of the first cyber-enhanced female characters. Her eye sockets are permanently sealed with surgically implanted mirrored lenses.

Ten double-edged, four-centimeter scalpel blades housed beneath her burgundy nails". She possesses "a considerable quantity of silicon in her head (Gibson, 15). As a result, almost all human characters in *Neuromancer* undergo artistic or structural modifications. The storyline is deeply rooted in technology and cyberspace. Neil Easterbrook examines the novel's introduction, stating: "The famous opening line contrasts the (natural) sky with (man-made) technology, framing enlightenment through a mechanistic metaphor that subtly establishes technology as the fundamental lens for interpreting nature (Brook 370). William Gibson employs a narrative style that intertwines technology (cyberspace) and nature, making them inseparable. Bukatman argues that cyberspace eliminates the possibility of a *real* space existing independently from its electronic counterpart. *Neuromancer* integrates both internal and external environments to help readers grasp the intersection of the virtual and physical worlds. In the novel, beings from both tangible reality and virtual spaces coexist. The protagonist Case, the cyborg Molly, and Wintermute from the physical world, along with the AI construct *Neuromancer*, interact in unique ways to achieve their goals. The novel portrays a postmodern reality where multinational corporations wield immense power over global economies.

Cyborgian identities in *The Peripheral* are fragmented and shaped by emerging issues surrounding alternative identities within virtual spaces. William Gibson explores technological subjectivity in the novel, demonstrating how individual experiences and

social constructs are transformed in the postmodern era. The protagonists, Flynne and Burton, navigate this evolving digital landscape. Flynne resides in 2032 London and frequently immerses herself in virtual reality (VR) simulations, known as sims. When she and her brother participate in the beta testing of a new sim, they unexpectedly gain access to a futuristic world. During one of these sessions, Flynne temporarily assumes Burton's role and witnesses what appears to be a murder. Gibson highlights the intersection of human existence and advanced technology, revealing how these interactions give rise to cyborgian identities (Barooah, 2011). Both Flynne and Burton operate within virtual domains, where some characters resist capitalist structures while others embrace a kleptocratic system—one defined by the rule of the elite through corruption and exploitation. The novel thus portrays cyborgian figures as both subversive and complicit within these digital and socio-political frameworks.

Within the cyborgian bio-capital, he metaphorically illustrates how human bodies are deeply entwined with financial and economic structures on a global scale. Rather than depicting the extinction of humanity, Gibson highlights how advancing technology increasingly overshadows human subjectivity. As technological progress accelerates, it reshapes human identity, leading to a fusion of man and machine. The novel suggests a reciprocal relationship between humanity and technology—where the more technology evolves, the more humans are transformed into hybrid entities. This transformation alters perspectives on life and the surrounding world, leading to a redefinition of selfhood. In cyborg technology, once a replicated entity closely resembles the original, the concept of originality itself diminishes in significance. This theme is embodied in characters like Wilf Netherton, a troubled publicist, and Daedra West, a performance artist, both of whom exist as hybridized human-machine figures. Daedra is portrayed as an eerie and unsettling presence, as seen through Netherton's perspective:

Her head was perfectly still, eyes unblinking. He imagined her ego swimming up behind them, to peer at him suspiciously, something eel-like, larval, transparently boned ... and she smiled. Reflexive pleasure of the thing behind her eyes (The Peripheral, 12). Daedra possesses the ability to pass through solid objects alongside her male companion and is responsible for the disappearance of the patchers. She represents a schizoid android-like entity, fully immersed in the kleptocratic system of her time. Unlike a rational machine, she willingly submits to an oppressive structure governed by the ruthless logic of survival, privilege, and wealth accumulation following the catastrophic events of *the jackpot*. In this manner, the kleptocracy of Gibson's 22nd

century fosters a dehumanizing ideology rooted in schizoid detachment, reinforcing a system where power and survival belong to the most elite and privileged.

Human beings in *The Peripheral* are shaped by advanced technologies, evolving into transhumans such as patchers, AI entities, robots, and assemblers—figures that resemble cyborgian non-human counterparts. These entities can be seen as Plato's imperfect copies of real humans, augmented or de-augmented individuals, and mechanical beings. Operating from a metaphorical cyborg perspective, these transhumans engage with the fictional world in ways that challenge conventional notions of identity. Flynn, as a protagonist, embodies irony within the cyborgian narrative, struggling against her inevitable incorporation into an oppressive system from which escape seems impossible. Meanwhile, Harawayan figures such as Daedra and Netherton have been transformed into machine-like entities, their very humanity reshaped by the system that produced them. In Chapter Ten, *The Maenads' Crush*, Netherton perceives Rainey as a cyborgian entity: He imagined her, stretched on a couch in her elongated Toronto apartment... She'd be wearing a headband to trick her nervous system into believing the rented peripheral's movements were hers in a dream (*The Peripheral*, 243).

This depiction of virtual subjectivity reflects the decentered nature of characters like Rainey and Daedra, who exist in a liminal space between human and machine. Another moment illustrating this idea is found in the statement: "They didn't think about Flynn's brother, but the haptics glitches him (*The Peripheral*, 1)." Haptics play a crucial role in shaping the virtual military experiences of Flynn's brother, Burton. He was implanted with haptic technology while serving in the military, a modification that allowed him to interface with AI-controlled military robots known as Michikoids. The haptics transform soldiers into lethal weapons, blurring the lines between organic and mechanical beings. Gibson describes how Burton's haptic implants create a phantom-limb effect, manifesting as virtual ghosts of past war experiences:

The haptics said it was like phantom limb, ghosts of the tattoos he'd worn in the war, put there ... An alcoholic uncle lived there when they were, veteran of another war... Airstream, 1977. He showed her ones on eBay looked like blunt rifle slugs. The uncle goops this one over with white foam to stop it leaking. Leon said saved it from pickers (*The Peripheral*, 1). This encapsulates Gibson's vision of transhumanism, digital networks (eBay as a virtual marketplace), and the fusion of human consciousness with

military technology. The haptic modifications turn individuals into decentered cyborg entities, their bodily autonomy compromised by digital and mechanical interventions. The French theorist Paul Virilio's concept of *dromology*—the study of speed and its impact on society—aligns with Gibson's portrayal of technological transformation. Virilio suggests that bodies subjected to infinite velocity become unrecognizable, stretched across space and time. His theories intersect with Darwinian evolution, proposing that human advancement is inextricably linked to technological progress, culminating in the emergence of cyborg beings. Gibson explores this fusion in Chapter Seventeen, *Cottonwood*, where hybridized creatures and mechanized humans such as Flynn and Jimmy embody the technological evolution of the self: She could see herself on the gray gravel in front of Jimmy's, and the tall cottonwoods on either side and she was talking to a boy who was half a machine, like a centaur made out of a motorcycle... (The Peripheral, 233).

This imagery reinforces the dissolution of traditional human forms, replaced by cyborgian entities and bio-mechanical hybrids. Even the Michikoids—ceramic robots equipped with spider-like eyes—can seamlessly transform into killing machines: Even the Michikoids – ceramic robots can morph into killing machines with unnerving spider-like eyes. This ain't just another sim (The Peripheral, 7). Through such depictions, Gibson suggests that technological evolution leads not only to the re-humanization of modern individuals but also to their complete transformation into new, cybernetic forms. His vision portrays humanity's increasing reliance on technology, where individuals are no longer merely influenced by machines but are instead reconfigured into a new, hybridized existence within a mechanized environment.

Conclusion

William Gibson exhibits some experience with the real world in *Neuromancer*. The digital and physical worlds of extraterrestrials are linked. He has created a future in which the human world is based on modern trends. The dehumanising effects of technology are examined in cyberpunk science fiction. *Neuromancer* improves our understanding of cyberpunk literature while promoting critical analysis of how technology may change education in our world through its realistic depiction of digital worlds, urban decay, and technological dominance. Gibson's work is a timeless analysis of education in a technologically advanced future because of these ideas, which encourage readers to consider the moral, social, and practical implications of integrating contemporary technology into educational environments. William Gibson's *The Peripheral* explores the evolution of cyborgian identities, illustrating how advanced technology reshapes human subjectivity. The novel presents a world where virtual and

physical realities merge, challenging traditional notions of identity. Through characters like Flynn and Burton, Gibson highlights the intersection of human agency and technological transformation. His depiction of hybrid beings reflects a future where humanity and machines coexist, emphasizing the fluidity of identity in an increasingly digitized world.

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Myths in the novels of Chinua Achebe

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Abstract

The element of myth reveals both the cultural heritage and our learning of the past. Achebe works from his mixed heritage of Christian upbringing and Igbo birth and attempts to project himself primarily through his own interpretations of Igbo myth. Myth is therefore a natural prologue to philosophy, since the ideas are the roots of past. Africa, as a fantasy world inhabited by Bushmen, witch-doctors, mysterious beings and a literary swinging Tarzan and as a 'dark' continent of dense forests, cannibals and wild life is only a myth. It is no longer an imaginary continent. It is not a 'trackless Wilderness' devoid of meaning. It is rich in culture and mythology and its inhabitants reveal unique and novel potentialities. An attempt is made in this article to bring out the mythological elements in the novels of Chinua Achebe.

Keywords :- Myth, Cannibals, Defiant, Decreation, Igbo

The creative writer uses the native myths to project contemporary events, private anguish, public follies and to explain the problems and mysteries of life and death. George Santayana¹ opines ' A developed mythology shows that man has taken a deep and active interest both in the world and in himself and has tried to link the two and interpret the one by the other. Myth is therefore a natural prologue to philosophy, since ideas are the roots of both. Both are made up of things that are admirable to consider. The element of myth reveals both the cultural heritage and our learning. Achebe works from his mixed heritage of Christian upbringing and Igbo birth and attempts to project himself primarily through his own interpretations of Igbo myth. He defines myth in terms of its relevance and meaning to contemporary living.

Africa, as a fantasy world inhabited by Bushmen, witch-doctors, mysterious beings and a literary swinging Tarzan and as a 'dark' continent of dense forests, cannibals and wild life is only a myth. It is no longer an imaginary continent. It is not a

'trackless Wilderness' devoid of meaning. It is rich in culture and mythology and its inhabitants reveal unique and novel potentialities as reported by Olaudah Equiano in his autobiography, 'The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah or Gaustavus Vassa the African' (1789). The equation of 'white' for good and 'black' for evil is challenged by the creative African world where 'dark' represents vitality and good, heritage 'white' stands for lack of life, pale and evil. Achebe in his novels has contrasted the rich African cultural heritage with the alien culture.

The Negro is branded as socio-cultural inferiority. Julia Peterkins² describes the Negro as 'ignorant, indigent, shiftless, immoral,' and for Morgan Godwyn³ blacks merely carry some resemblance of manhood, and are indeed inferior. Others have found the Negro as 'the unspoiled child of nature, the noble-savage, carefree, spontaneous and sexually uninhibited.' But the tribal elders are wise old men, repositories of ancestral wisdom which they imbibed from remotest antiquity to pass on to the young. They are heroic explorers, giants of prodigious force and children of the Sun. 'Black is beautiful' is a defiant and self-inspiring slogan to counter the Western's description of the Negro as 'savage slave and outcast.'

Negritude is a cultural and political myth. It is an ideological movement with overt political purposes. Negritude attempts to rehabilitate Africa by redefining ethological aspects and by re-evaluating Africa within a non-western framework. It is not an abstract system but an existential philosophy and for Leopold Senghor⁴, 'Negritude is not only a way of being but also a way of living.' It has contributed to rediscover Africa and establish a new social order, it has degenerated into an intolerant and arrogant racialism.

Negritude is a search for cultural roots, a movement of emancipation, liberating the man of color from himself, a rejection of what the white man of color stands for, and a movement to throw off the shackles of servitude. Achebe like other negritude writers celebrates the goodness in the African past but at the same time denounces the unhealthy practices, social evils and political injustices in his modern novels. As negritude is but anti-racist racism, David Rubidan⁵ considers negritude 'dangerous' because its final result is to press down the 'creative spirit.'

Achebe in his novels deals with a man of two worlds-another African myth. As the old order is succeeded by the new system, a majority of Africans succumbed to the new alien forces. Obi and Odili are two representative men of their generation who

are of two worlds, heirs to a hybrid culture. Nanga and Ezeulu show strong affiliation to the native tradition, but are drawn to the alien culture. Okonkwo too is aware of the inevitable change in Umuofia.

African religion is individual as well as communal and Africans have a personal concept of God. God, to many is spiritual which is invisible but is everywhere like the wind and the air and man tries to live in harmony with the forces and of the universe. God in Central Africa is 'often called Leza, meaning 'Cherishes' and is regarded as the maker of the world, owner of all the things, and giver of rain. In East Africa certain other tribes call God –Mulungu, the 'orderer' or 'great one.' He is Creator, Omnipotent, and Lord of the Dead. Africans in West and some parts of Central Africa call Him Nyambe or Nyame, from a root meaning 'force or power.' He is also called – Ngewo, Mawu, Olorun and Chukwu. The gods in the works of Achebe are more imminent than transcendent and the spiritual reality is neither too distant nor too high for human reach because the spirit being complements of the earthly human being. And the godly powers help and guide people in restoring the social order. This vital aspect of the myth, Divinity grounded on human realities, is emphasized in the novels of Achebe. For Achebe, God is primarily a moral postulate and is demystified in the novel *Arrow of God* and is brought right into the midst of villagers' fights as Ulu, the protector of Umuaro, instills the collective will to work for prosperity, progress and freedom. Umuaro gods – Ulu, Eru, Idemili, etc., below than the High one, Chukwu, like Greek gods are not above jealousy and spite.

Achebe has outlined Igbo creation myth in his novels. Umuaro in *Arrow of God* believes in Ani-Mmo, the spirit-world High God or Creator and Earth-Mother. But the High God has shown little interest in his creation; and Earth Mother has failed to protect the villagers from starvations and death and charge their fate. For Igbo everyman and woman has his or her 'Chi,' 'god within' that gives one the knowledge of good and evil, and 'Chi' is sometimes equated with Christian concept of 'free-will.' The concept of Time in African fiction is entirely different from that of the Western. African time (tribal concept) is a two dimensional phenomenon with a long past, a present and virtually no future. To them, Time is simply a composition of events. In *Arrow of God* we are told that the death of Okuata, the first wife of Ezeulu, occurred when the evil moon was sighted with legs upward in the sky, a bad omen. In *Arrow of God* the story begins on 'the third nightfall since he began to look for signs of the new moon.' The arrival of the moon is watched and welcomed with religious fervor.

In *Things Fall Apart* we are told Okonkwo was 'Eighteen' when he threw the cat, which was 'twenty years or more ago,' which means that he was forty at the beginning of the novel. But we are told that Ekwefi, Okonkwo's favourite wife, is forty-five and that it was 35 years ago that she loved him when Okonkwo threw the cat. From this we may assume that Okonkwo is nearly fifty. The confusion in Okonkwo's age is due to Achebe's use of English phraseology suggesting Western time. In *Arrow of God* captain Winterbottom uses the phrase 'more than two years ago' to describe the event which might have taken place in 1919. The past which is two years ago is expressed as 'the more recent past' or *mgbe gara aga*. More distant time is expressed as *mgbe dianya mgbe*. Such expression shows more of the spirit of the Igbo system of telling time than the Western one.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe in chapter eight uses the myth of Idemili, to uphold woman dignity and significance and place in the present politics and power structure and assigns them a greater role in keeping peace and social morality. The two primary myths of creation and decreation, the pillar of water and the burning sun take a variety of forms to compose two separate worlds, one of unilateral power to make power crazy people to invite their destruction, and another world of dialectic and mediation operating on the vital play of contraries.

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Literature vs. Films: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

Literature and film are distinct yet interconnected storytelling mediums, each offering unique ways of conveying narratives. Literature relies on language, allowing readers to engage deeply with characters, themes, and internal monologues at their own pace. In contrast, film employs visual and auditory elements to create an immediate and immersive experience, often condensing complex narratives. Adapting certain texts at times leads to loss of literary depth. This paper explores the interplay between literature and its cinematic adaptations, analysing how themes, characters, and narrative structures are translated or altered. While literature offers depth and introspection, film enhances storytelling through spectacle and emotion. Ultimately, despite their differences, literature and film work together to provide powerful narratives that reflect human experiences in diverse ways.

Keywords: literature and film, creative liberty, narrative structures, storytelling, visual interpretation, adaptation, spectacle, comparative analysis.

Introduction

Literature and film are two distinct forms of storytelling, each with unique features and modes of expression. While literature primarily relies on language to convey meaning, film adds visual, auditory, and often emotional layers to storytelling (*A Theory of Adaptation*, 4). Both art forms have the ability to reflect human experience, but they do so in markedly different ways. As George Bluestone famously noted, "The two forms are fundamentally different, one being a verbal medium and the other a visual one" (*Novels into Film*, 1). The relationship between literature and its adaptation into films is complex and multifaceted. Despite these differences, filmmakers have consistently turned to literature as a source of inspiration, adapting novels, short stories, and plays into films.

Beyond the Page: The Enduring Influence of Literature

Literature has long been a significant means of reflecting the human condition. Its power lies in its ability to offer deep insight into the complexities of life through the written word. Novels, short stories, and poems create worlds using nothing more than words, allowing readers to immerse themselves in intricate plots, vivid settings, and the minds of complex characters. The flexibility of literature allows authors to explore philosophical, psychological, and cultural dimensions in ways that films, with their reliance on visual representation, might struggle to replicate.

One of the strengths of literature is its capacity for in-depth character exploration. A novel may spend hundreds of pages delving into a protagonist's internal world, showing not only their actions but also their thoughts, feelings, and motivations. The reader is often invited to interpret the story in their own way, filling in gaps that are left deliberately open by the author (J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* or James Joyce's *Ulysses* offer complex narratives that demand such engagement). In works of fiction such as these, the internal monologue is vital for portraying a character's psychological development, something difficult to capture on film without direct narration.

Literature excels in providing deep introspection, complex character development, and imaginative freedom. The use of language itself can be an artistic endeavour in literature. Authors like William Faulkner or Virginia Woolf employ stylistic techniques—stream of consciousness, fragmented narratives, and symbolic language—that are often impossible to replicate in the same form in films. This stylistic richness in literary works invites deeper analysis and engagement, requiring the reader to actively participate in meaning-making rather than passively receiving a story.

Cinematic Interpretation: Condensing and Visualizing the Narrative

The way audiences engage with literature and film differs significantly. Reading a book requires active imagination, as readers must visualize the settings, characters, and events described in the text. This process fosters a personal connection to the story, as each reader interprets the narrative in their own way. As Woolf observes, "Literature invites readers to become co-creators of the story, filling in the gaps with their own imagination" (*The Common Reader*, 112). Films, in contrast to literature, must condense, adapt, and often simplify these complex literary elements in order to fit within the time constraints and visual limitations of the medium. A film's primary strength lies in its ability to show rather than tell. Through cinematography, actors' performances, and sound design, films can convey mood, atmosphere, and emotions

without the need for words (although dialogue plays an important role, too). However, this reliance on visual storytelling means that some literary elements—particularly those based on inner thoughts, complex symbolism, or lengthy descriptions—must be translated in creative ways.

When a book is adapted into a film, certain aspects are often altered, omitted, or condensed. For example, in adapting J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* to film, the creators had to make choices about which details to include in order to maintain the pace of the movie. Some subplots, such as the development of secondary characters, were condensed or entirely omitted for time purposes. In this case, the filmmakers aimed to keep the essence of the story intact while ensuring the film remained engaging for a wide audience. As a result, certain nuances in character development and plot complexity are inevitably lost in the transition from page to screen.

In *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky, the protagonist Raskolnikov's internal struggle and philosophical musings are essential components of the narrative (Dostoevsky, 1866). These aspects are difficult to replicate in film. Films rely heavily on visual and auditory elements to convey meaning, which means that much of the internal dialogue and subjective experiences in literature must be translated into visual cues. This can be both strength and a limitation, as it enhances the sensory experience but may limit the audience's ability to engage with the story on a deeper level. In *The Great Gatsby* (2013), Baz Luhrmann's adaptation uses extravagant visual effects, music, and symbolism to portray the opulence and disillusionment of the Jazz Age. While the visual approach successfully conveys the spirit of the novel, it cannot fully encapsulate the complex inner turmoil of Nick Carraway, the narrator, whose reflections on Gatsby's life are central to the novel's themes (Fitzgerald, 1925). Luhrmann, prioritizes visual spectacle and dramatic storytelling over the novel's introspective and layered narrative. As Stam argues, "Film adaptations often prioritize visual spectacle over literary depth, resulting in a more accessible but less introspective narrative" (*Literature through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation*, 45). This shift can dilute the subtleties of Nick's unreliable narration and the novel's critique of the American Dream. The movie aligns more closely with the novel's tone but lacks its emotional resonance.

Hutcheon notes, "Film adaptations compress complex characters into archetypes, simplifying their motivations and reducing their psychological depth" (A

Theory of Adaptation, 78). In *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) film adaptation directed by Robert Mulligan based on Harper Lee's novel, the film focuses heavily on the trial of Tom Robinson and the moral awakening of Scout Finch. While the film captures the core message of racial injustice, it simplifies the social and cultural nuances explored in the novel, such as the deeper complexities of small-town Southern life and the inner workings of the Finch family's relationships (*To Kill a Mockingbird*, 1960). Gregory Peck's portrayal of Atticus Finch and the film's black-and-white cinematography reinforce the narrative's moral gravity. The novel ends with a stronger emphasis on the themes of innocence and the loss of it. Scout's encounter with Boo Radley is more profound in the book, highlighting Boo as a misunderstood figure and underscoring the theme of not judging others without understanding them. While the film touches on Boo Radley's significance, the ending is less detailed than in the novel. The film places a stronger emphasis on the courtroom drama surrounding Tom Robinson's trial, often at the expense of the novel's exploration of social nuances and character backstories. This shift in focus can lead to a less comprehensive understanding of the novel's themes, such as the pervasive nature of racism and the loss of innocence. Both media emphasize themes of justice, morality, and racial inequality, though with different levels of detail and focus.

Furthermore, films introduce a layer of interpretation through casting, set design, and cinematography. In many cases, the vision of the filmmakers replaces that of the author, leading to a new version of the story. For example, Peter Jackson's adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* Trilogy (**2001-2003**) reimagines certain aspects of Tolkien's world, particularly the look of characters like Gandalf and Gollum. Gandalf in Tolkien's novels is a deeply enigmatic and wise figure, embodying the archetype of the "wise old wizard." His character is rooted in a sense of mystery and ancient power, often leaving his motives and thoughts ambiguous. Tolkien provides extensive backstory for Gandalf. His wisdom is conveyed through his dialogue, which is often cryptic and philosophical. Peter Jackson's portrayal of Gandalf, played by Ian McKellen, captures the essence of the character but with a more visually dramatic and emotionally accessible approach. However, some elements, such as the depth of the lore and certain character arcs (e.g., Tom Bombadil), are omitted or simplified. Jackson's films succeed in capturing the epic scale and emotional core of Tolkien's story, but they prioritize action and spectacle over some of the novel's philosophical and mythological depth.

Films often prioritize visual storytelling and emotional immediacy, simplifying some of the characters' complexities while books rely on the reader's imagination, allowing for a more personalized interpretation of the characters' appearances and mannerisms. These changes often spark debates among literary purists, who argue that such alterations dilute the essence of the original work. While the films retain much of Gandalf's wisdom and gravitas, they simplify some of his more complex philosophical musings to fit the cinematic narrative. The trilogy condenses and reorders events to enhance cinematic pacing, adds visual grandeur, and deepens character arcs, particularly with Aragorn and Arwen's relationship. The films received critical acclaim for their faithfulness to the themes of heroism, friendship, and destiny, even as they altered certain details for cinematic coherence.

While literature allows for an open-ended experience that relies on the imagination of the reader, films provide a fixed version of the story that is shaped by the director's vision. This transformation from text to image necessarily introduces a level of subjectivity. Directors and screenwriters often focus on making the narrative accessible to a wide audience, which sometimes involves simplifying or streamlining the original material. As Linda Hutcheon argues, "Adaptation is a process of creation and interpretation, not just replication" (*A Theory of Adaptation*, 16). The process of visualizing a literary world also means that certain aspects of the source material, particularly complex philosophical ideas or lengthy descriptions, are sacrificed for brevity or pacing.

Literature and Film: A Symbiotic Exchange

"Literature and film are not interchangeable; they are distinct art forms that require different modes of engagement" (*Literature into Film: Theory and Practical Approaches*, 23). Similarly, Robert Stam argues that film adaptations often face criticism for deviating from their source material, but they also offer new interpretations that can enrich the original text (*Literature through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation* 45). These perspectives provide a foundation for understanding the complexities of adapting literature to film. Despite the differences between literature and film, the two art forms often influence each other in significant ways. Many films are directly inspired by literary works, yet the adaptation process frequently involves the loss of certain literary elements. However, films also introduce new dimensions to stories, offering an immersive experience that literature cannot replicate.

Film has developed its own literary qualities, utilizing narrative techniques akin to those found in literature. Just as a novel employs literary devices like symbolism, foreshadowing, and unreliable narration, films use cinematography, editing, and dialogue to achieve similar effects (*Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*, 23). For instance, the use of colour symbolism in Baz Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby* (2013) visually reinforces the themes of decadence and disillusionment present in F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel (Luhrmann). Similarly, the use of close-up shots and lighting in *The English Patient* (1996) emphasizes the emotional intensity of Michael Ondaatje's prose (Minghella). These techniques demonstrate how filmmakers can enhance the audience's engagement with the story by leveraging the unique capabilities of the cinematic medium. Directors like Alfred Hitchcock, Stanley Kubrick, and Christopher Nolan craft films that not only entertain but also engage audiences on a literary level, prompting analysis and interpretation akin to reading a novel. Joe Wright's adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* provides a compelling example of cinematic interpretation. Wright's use of long, sweeping shots of the English countryside evokes the novel's emphasis on social class and the natural world. Additionally, Keira Knightley's portrayal of Elizabeth Bennet captures the character's wit and independence, while the film's score enhances the emotional resonance of key scenes. This adaptation illustrates how filmmakers can remain faithful to the spirit of a literary work while reimagining it for a contemporary audience.

Besides, some films, such as *Inception*, *Memento* and *Pulp Fiction* employ non-linear storytelling, much like literary works that experiment with structure (*Literature through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation*, 78). The visual and auditory dimensions of film add layers to the storytelling process, offering an immersive experience that complements the introspective depth of literature.

The exchange between literature and film is not one-sided. Just as literature influences cinema, film has also shaped modern storytelling in literature. Many contemporary novels adopt cinematic techniques, such as rapid scene changes, multiple perspectives, and dialogue-driven narratives, resembling the pacing and structure of films (*Novels into Film*, 102). Writers like Cormac McCarthy and Bret Easton Ellis have been praised for their minimalist, visually evocative prose that mirrors the style of screenplays.

The relationship between literature and film is a dynamic and evolving exchange, where both mediums borrow, adapt, and inspire one another. While

literature provides the foundation for many cinematic masterpieces, film enhances and reinterprets stories in visually compelling ways. This interplay ensures that storytelling remains vibrant, continually reaching new audiences through different artistic expressions. Rather than existing in opposition, literature and film thrive in a symbiotic exchange, enriching the cultural and artistic landscape. For example, film adaptations can introduce fresh interpretations of classic works. Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* (1996) offers a modern retelling of Shakespeare's tragedy, which brings new life and relevance to a centuries-old story. In this case, the film transforms the language of the play by using modern slang and setting it in a contemporary urban landscape, making the work accessible to a new generation while still preserving the emotional core of Shakespeare's original text.

Moreover, films based on literature have the ability to reach a broader audience. While literary works may be inaccessible to some due to language, complexity, or length, a film adaptation can present the same story in a more immediate and universal way. Similarly, film adaptations can inspire renewed interest in the original literary works. After the release of the *Harry Potter* films, sales of J.K. Rowling's books skyrocketed, introducing a new generation of readers to the magical world of Hogwarts. As Woolf notes, "The relationship between literature and film is not one of competition but of collaboration, as each medium enhances the other's reach and impact" (*The Common Reader*, 123). This symbiotic exchange demonstrates the enduring relevance of both literature and film in contemporary culture. Film adaptations of books can thus be viewed as a means of preserving literary works for future generations while also providing an entry point for those who might not engage with the original text.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between literature and film is one of both divergence and convergence. Although cinematic adaptations often lose some of the depth and nuance of the original literary works, they also introduce these stories to new audiences and reinterpret them in innovative ways. Ultimately, the symbiotic exchange between literature and film enriches both mediums, ensuring their continued relevance in the modern world. While literature offers a deeper exploration of character, thought, and symbolism, film excels in creating visual representations and immersive experiences. Adaptations from literature to film, while often resulting in simplifications or changes, also have the potential to breathe new life into a story, offering different insights and interpretations. As such, the alliance between literature and film remains a dynamic and evolving conversation, one in which both mediums

contribute unique perspectives on the human experience. While literature offers depth and introspection, film provides accessibility and visual engagement, creating a dynamic interplay between the two. Ultimately, the choice between literature and film depends on the individual's preferences and the type of storytelling experience they seek.

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Breaking Barriers: How AI is Redefining the Future of Language Education

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Abstract

Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a game-changing phenomenon in education, especially within the realm of language learning. This paper reviews current developments, applications, and challenges in AI-driven language learning. It examines how adaptive tutoring systems, conversational agents, and speech recognition tools are personalizing instruction and enhancing engagement in both classroom and self-paced environments. Drawing on recent empirical studies and theoretical frameworks, AI is presented as more than an additional aid but rather an agent to remake the processes of language acquisition. Limitations—including technical, ethical, and pedagogical concerns—are also discussed, along with proposed directions for future research that integrate AI more seamlessly with human-centered teaching.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Adaptive Tutoring, Automatic Speech Recognition, Conversational Agents, Educational Technology, Language Learning, Natural Language Processing, Personalized Instruction.

Introduction:

Language education has traditionally relied on direct human interaction, with educators and learners engaging in a structured environment. However, the rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies has given rise to new models of language instruction, which break down geographical, temporal, and even linguistic barriers. These innovations present opportunities for enhancing language acquisition in ways that were previously unimaginable. This paper explores how AI is revolutionizing language education by focusing on adaptive tutoring systems, conversational agents, speech recognition technologies, and personalized instruction methods.

The integration of AI in language learning aims to create an immersive, interactive, and personalized educational experience that adapts to the learner's needs and abilities. In this context, AI has the potential to provide real-time feedback, assess linguistic proficiency, and offer tailored educational content, thereby supporting both classroom and self-paced learning environments. Despite these promising developments, there are still several challenges related to AI's implementation in language education, including technical limitations, ethical concerns, and pedagogical shifts that must be addressed to optimize its potential.

2. The Role of AI in Language Learning

2.1 Adaptive Tutoring Systems: Adaptive tutoring systems are among the most significant AI-driven innovations in language education. These systems use machine learning algorithms to analyze learners' progress and personalize lessons based on individual strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles. Unlike traditional methods where a one-size-fits-all approach is often adopted, adaptive tutoring systems adjust to the pace of the learner, offering customized exercises and assessments that promote deeper understanding and retention.

Practical Example: One notable example of an adaptive tutoring system is *Duolingo*, a language-learning app that adjusts the difficulty level of exercises based on the user's performance. If a learner consistently gets a particular word or grammar rule wrong, the app will automatically review that concept with more frequent practice. Conversely, if the learner demonstrates proficiency, the difficulty level of tasks will increase, ensuring a balanced and personalized learning experience.

2.2 Conversational Agents: Conversational agents, commonly known as chatbots, have also become a powerful tool for language learning. These AI-driven systems simulate human conversation, allowing learners to speak and write in real-time. They can provide feedback on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Moreover, conversational agents are available at any time, offering learners the flexibility to practice whenever they choose.

Practical Example: *Busuu*, another AI-powered language-learning app, offers a feature where learners can interact with a conversational AI to practice speaking skills. The system uses natural language processing (NLP) to simulate real-world conversations. Additionally, *Replika*, a chatbot designed for emotional support, has expanded its functionality to provide learners with a safe environment to practice language skills without judgment, offering corrective feedback when necessary.

Practical Example: *HelloTalk* is a language exchange app where users can converse with native speakers of the language they are learning. The app uses AI-powered translation and pronunciation correction tools to assist learners in understanding and speaking a

new language more confidently. These tools correct sentence structures, suggest alternative phrases, and help learners improve their conversational abilities in a low-pressure setting.

2.3 Speech Recognition and Pronunciation Tools: Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) systems have made significant advancements in recent years, enabling learners to practice their pronunciation in a more interactive and effective manner. These systems analyze spoken language and provide instant feedback on pronunciation accuracy. Through AI-powered platforms, learners can repeat words or phrases and receive corrective feedback that helps them improve their speech.

Practical Example: *Rosetta Stone* utilizes advanced ASR technology to evaluate and correct pronunciation errors. When learners practice speaking a word or phrase, the system uses AI to compare their speech with the correct pronunciation and provides real-time feedback on how to improve. Similarly, *Pronunroid*, an app specifically designed for pronunciation practice, offers learners personalized feedback on their spoken language accuracy by comparing their speech to native speaker models.

Example: *Speechling* is another app that uses AI-driven speech recognition to help learners perfect their pronunciation. It allows learners to record their spoken sentences and get detailed feedback from both the AI system and real human coaches. This dual-feedback mechanism helps learners progress faster, especially with the subtle nuances of pronunciation.

3. Challenges in AI-Driven Language Education

Despite the tremendous potential of AI in language teaching, there are number of obstacles that must be overcome for the effective integration into the learning process.

3.1 Technical Limitations: Although AI technologies have made significant strides, there are still limitations in their capacity to understand and process complex language nuances. Current systems often struggle with regional accents, dialects, and contextual meanings, leading to errors in speech recognition and translation. Additionally, whereas AI may be able to offer personalized learning experiences, it does not yet possess the emotional intelligence of human teachers. AI struggles with understanding student emotions, motivation, and other psychological factors that influence learning.

Example: AI-driven systems, like those used in *Google Translate*, often struggle with idiomatic expressions, regional accents, and contextual nuances. For example, the phrase "kick the bucket" is a common English idiom, but AI might interpret it literally, leading to confusion for learners. While the technology has improved significantly over time, these limitations can still hinder effective learning in some contexts.

3.2 Ethical Concerns: AI in education raises a number of ethical issues, particularly regarding data privacy and the potential for bias. AI systems collect vast amounts of data on students' behavior, preferences, and learning habits, which may raise concerns about data security and student privacy. Furthermore, if AI algorithms are trained on biased data, there is a risk that they could perpetuate stereotypes or provide skewed feedback to certain groups of learners.

Example: AI algorithms used in platforms like *Duolingo* or *Babbel* may rely on large datasets to personalize learning experiences. However, if these datasets contain biases related to gender, ethnicity, or nationality, the AI system might unintentionally promote stereotypical representations or even offer biased feedback. Ensuring data fairness and eliminating bias is an ongoing challenge for developers.

3.3 Pedagogical Shifts: The shift towards AI-driven language education also requires a reconsideration of teaching practices. Traditional methods of language instruction, which often involve face-to-face interaction, may need to be adapted to integrate AI tools. This could require retraining educators to effectively incorporate AI technologies into their teaching and adjusting curricula to blend human instruction with AI-powered resources. Additionally, there is a need for clear guidelines on how AI can be used to complement, rather than replace, human interaction in the classroom.

Example: In classrooms where teachers traditionally provide direct instruction, incorporating AI tools such as *Kahoot!* or *Quizlet* for quizzes and interactive learning games could encourage student engagement. However, teachers need to carefully balance these tools with traditional face-to-face instruction to ensure that AI is enhancing the learning experience, not replacing it entirely. Teachers also need to stay updated with AI trends and tools to provide the best support to their students.

4. Future Directions and Research: As AI continues to evolve, future research should focus on overcoming the limitations discussed above. One potential area for development is the integration of AI with virtual or augmented reality (VR/AR) platforms to create fully immersive language learning environments. These technologies could simulate real-world interactions, such as traveling to a foreign country, which would allow learners to practice language skills in a more authentic setting.

Moreover, further exploration is needed into how AI can be used to support learners with diverse needs, such as those with learning disabilities, to ensure equitable access to language education. Collaborative research between AI engineers, linguists, and educators will be crucial to advancing the field and creating more human-centered AI tools that enhance, rather than replace, traditional teaching practices.

Example: Mondly incorporated augmented reality (AR) into its language learning platform. Using AR, students are able to engage with 3D holographic images of virtual objects and characters and hone their language skills in realistic situations like eating at a restaurant or getting directions abroad. The interactive method assists learners to utilize language skills in realistic, everyday situations.

Conclusion:

Artificial Intelligence is undeniably transforming the landscape of language education. Through adaptive tutoring systems, conversational agents, and speech recognition tools, AI is providing learners with personalized, interactive, and flexible ways to acquire new languages. While challenges remain, particularly in terms of technical limitations, ethical concerns, and pedagogical adaptation, the future of AI in language education looks promising. By addressing these issues and continuing to innovate, AI has the potential to revolutionize the way languages are taught and learned, making language education more accessible and effective for learners around the world.

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The Transformation of Women in Badami's '*The Hero's Walk*'

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Abstract

This paper, entitled as 'The Transformation of Women in Badami's *The Hero's Walk*', discusses the transformation of women, both as individuals and as a collective, within the patriarchal structure of Indian society. These women become triumphant and rove their potential, with consistent forbearance. The novel portrays the life of Sripathi Rao & Nirmala's family in a small fictitious town of Toturpuram near Madras. It deals with the complex lives of an ordinary Brahmin family, social transformation, and the consequential changes in their values, expectations, and lifestyles. They believe in conventional attitudes, but the members of the family are forced to confront contemporary problems, and hence they adapt themselves and change their opinions about life. The novel does not show any trace of nostalgia; on the contrary, it shows how the very concepts of the homeland and diaspora can be altered. Badami's depiction of women's transformation is not only limited to personal growth, but also extends to the dismantling of oppressive structures. By giving her female characters the agency to redefine their identities, she challenges the societal norms that perpetuate gender inequality. Initially, women in the novel were completely traditional and submissive, but later their lives were portrayed as women, full of optimism. This contrast highlights the tensions between tradition and modernity, as well as the ways in which women navigate these competing forces.

Key Words : Transformation, Forbearance, Patriarchal structure, Tradition, Modernity etc.

In the novel, taken for study, *The Hero's Walk*, Badami crafts a powerful narrative that celebrates the resilience and transformation of women. Through the lives of Nirmala, Maya, Nandana, Putti, and Ammayya the novel explores the complexities of womanhood in a patriarchal society, highlighting both the struggles and triumphs of its female characters. Their journeys of self-discovery and resistance serve as a testament to the strength of women and their capacity to inspire change, both within their families and in the broader society.

Badami's humanistic feminism maintains the Indian family relationships though she rebels against the orthodox Brahminical rules. In the novel, the female characters are the real heroes who encounter adverse situations, find solace for their family. By withstanding all hardships and suffering, they gradually emerge successful, fulfilling their personal dreams and responsibilities towards their respective families. The novel ends with a happy and positive note through the typical style of balancing complexities and mutual relations in Indian families. The transformation of the women in the novel also reflects broader social changes in India and its diaspora. The novel juxtaposes the traditional, patriarchal values of Sripathi Rao, a common man; his world with the more liberal and individualistic ethos of the West, embodied by his daughter, Maya's life in Canada. This lends a highlight to the tensions between traditions and modernity.

The plot is centered on the distressed life of Sripathi Rao, with his submissive wife Nirmala and his daughter Maya, who pursued her higher education in Vancouver, where she married a white man, Alan Baker. With this act, which he considers it as against family tradition; he totally abandoned his daughter from the family. Both Maya and Alan die in a car accident, leaving their 7-year-old daughter Nandana in Vancouver. This sudden hardship hits the entire family. Sripathi Rao becomes the guardian and brings his granddaughter, Nandana back to India.

Nirmala's transformation provides a bright future for the succeeding women generation such as, Nandana, her granddaughter, and Putti, his sister-in-law in the family. Her confidence and endurance settle the family on a successful platform. At the beginning of the novel, Nirmala appears as a submissive and long-suffering wife, deeply entrenched in her role as a caretaker, homemaker, and peacekeeper in Sripathi Rao's household. She is a woman shaped by cultural expectations, resigned to the patriarchal confines of her marriage and the controlling nature of Sripathi, who rarely

acknowledges her opinions or emotions. Her life revolves around mundane routines, and she often finds herself sandwiched between her husband's cold demeanor and the bitter presence of her demanding mother-in-law, Ammayya. Despite her hardships, her compassion and inner strength shine through. She is deeply empathetic, especially towards her children, Maya and Arun, as their relationships become strained due to Sripathi's rigidity. Maya's estrangement and subsequent death deeply affect her, yet she channels her grief into constructive action, showing early signs of quiet rebellion against her husband's passivity and bitterness.

Maya's death and the arrival of Nandana catalyze Nirmala's transformation. Though Sripathi is initially paralyzed by guilt and anger, Nirmala takes on the role of a nurturing figure for her grieving granddaughter. For her, Nandana represents not just a connection to her lost daughter but also an opportunity to rebuild and heal the fractured family.

As the novel progresses, Nirmala becomes more vocal about her desires and frustrations. She starts to defy Sripathi's authority, asserting her need for emotional intimacy and expressing her dissatisfaction with the life they have led. This shift is evident in her growing willingness to stand up for herself and make decisions independently, particularly when it comes to caring for Nandana and addressing the emotional void in their family.

By the end of the novel, Nirmala emerges as a symbol of resilience and quiet empowerment. Her transformation is not dramatic or overt but is marked by her ability to reclaim her agency within the confines of her circumstances. She demonstrates the power of endurance and passion in the face of adversity, slowly influencing Sripathi to confront his own shortcomings and embrace change. Her journey is a testament to the strength of women, who navigate and challenge traditional roles without abandoning their core values of love and care. Through Nirmala, Badami highlights the quiet strength required to endure loss, challenge injustice, and foster healing within a broken family.

Nandana, Maya's young daughter, is another significant protagonist who brings fresh perspectives and challenges into Sripathi's life. A push into an unfamiliar world after her parents' tragic death, she embodies the innocence, resilience, and adaptability. Her interactions with Sripathi and the rest of the family gradually unravel the rigid dynamics of the household, allowing for moments of vulnerability and

connection. Through Nandana, Badami explores the struggles of displacement and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of overwhelming loss.

Nandana's mother, Maya, lost all her contacts with homeland gradually after her marriage with Alan. The second generation, like ones who are born and brought up to seven years in Canadian culture, has been moved to a typical Indian village from Vancouver to Totupuram, which was not her chosen but imposed after the accident of Maya and Alan. She has been cultivated in a global environment and has to adjust in a local and conventional ambiance. Her first dislike is her own grandfather, Sripathi Rao, who has legally adopted her, as she heard during her late parents' conversation that he did not agree to their love marriage. In India, she reaches the station and finds it much more crowded than in Vancouver. She finds the difference between celebrations of festivals as she was aware about Halloween, whereas here, Raos celebrate Diwali. Even she finds the difference between the squirrels of Canada and India. Into this locality, she brings her culture, ideologies, and thoughts. It was only through Nandana, Sripathi feels regret for not having known his daughter's inner life.

Nandana's presence in Totupuram serves as a poignant reminder of Maya, bringing both comfort and pain to the grieving family. Her adjustment to the new environment and her gradual acceptance of her mother's death parallel Sripathi's journey towards reconciliation with his past. The intergenerational portrayal of grief underscores the enduring impact of loss and the possibility of healing through shared experiences. Her character arc, from a grieving, disoriented child to a more adapted and resilient individual, parallels the broader theme of healing and acceptance. Her interactions with Sripathi and Nirmala reveal the complexities of familial love and the possibility of finding common ground despite cultural differences.

The interplay between Sripathi and Nandana is both heart-wrenching and heartwarming. Their relationship evolves from one of mutual discomfort to a bond built on shared grief and tentative hope. Badami skillfully uses their contrasting experiences—Sripathi's entrenched regret and Nandana's forced resilience to highlight the generational divide and the potential for healing within families. Sripathi and Nandana's journeys resonates with readers on a deeply personal level, reminding of the strength it takes to move forward and the courage it takes to rebuild fractured relationships.

Nandana's transformation is symbolic of hope and the possibility of change. Through her growing bond with her grandmother Nirmala, she begins to heal and adapt to her new environment. Her journey mirrors the resilience of women across generations, suggesting that even in the face of loss and displacement; there is the potential for renewal and growth. Badami's narrative suggests that while societal change may be slow, it is through the courage and transformation of women that progress is ultimately achieved.

Maya, Sripathi, and Nirmala's estranged daughter, represents a more overt form of rebellion against societal expectations. She rejects the traditional path laid out for her, instead choosing to forge her own identity in Canada. Maya's decision to marry a foreigner, Alan Baker, and embrace a life vastly different from her upbringing, is an act of defiance that challenges the cultural norms of her conservative Tamil Brahmin community.

Maya's decision to marry a Canadian and build a life in Vancouver symbolizes the breaking away from patriarchal constraints and the pursuit of personal freedom. Her death, however, brings her daughter, Nandana, back into the fold of traditional Indian values, creating a cultural and generational clash. Nandana's resistance to adapting to Indian customs and her longing for her previous life in Canada exemplify the immigrant experience of navigating dual identities.

Maya's letters and photographs from Vancouver serve as symbolic bridges between the two worlds, offering glimpses of her life and aspirations. These artefacts become focal points for the Rao family's memories and regrets, underscoring the enduring connection between the past and the present. Although her life is tragically cut short, her transformation leaves an indelible impact on the narrative. Her choices force her parents, particularly Sripathi, to confront their own biases and prejudices. Her journey serves as a reminder of the courage it takes for women to break free from societal constraints and chart their own paths.

Commenting on Anita Rau Badami's *The Hero's Walk*, Anisha Roy in her 'Quest for selfhood of female characters, opines that Badami makes her readers aware about a different woman, Ammayya, who was an uproarious character, everything about her was amusing. Her habit of using chemical formulas for water, her occasional Latin terms, and the way she proved her might through her display of knowledge she gained while helping Sripathi to learn the Encyclopedia Britannica by heart through his father's insistence. On the contrary, she wears all her gold chains and bangles.

The sensitive portrayal of ordinary life in an old culture with old traditions and values brings to life with the creation of the characters like Ammayya. Her bitterness is sadly justified simply because she was brought up in a society that taught her to follow similar perspectives and judge the faults of others. She is so bitter that she thinks Sripathi deserves the loss of his daughter, because she broke tradition. Caste and religious consciousness has remained a part of Indian society since ages.

Women in Indian society are expected to stay indoors, and are also taught to live within their means. Ammayya's mother says: "A good Hindu wife had to maintain the pretense that her husband was supporting the family" (14). The plight of Indian women, where they could not even question a husband, who takes a mistress, was put forth in the novel. Ammayya's mother convinces her that she must feel proud that her husband was able to support two women and that since she was treated like a queen, there was nothing to worry about, and also says her to continue her role as a wife efficiently. Supporting blindly the injustice to a wife since ages is noticed in this context. Ammayya undergoes a subtle but significant transformation. Initially, she is portrayed as a bitter, controlling, and deeply traditional matriarch, who dominates her son, Sripathi Rao, and treats her daughter-in-law and granddaughter with disdain. Her rigid mindset and sharp tongue make her a difficult presence in the household. As the novel progresses the family faces profound loss—especially with the death of Sripathi's estranged daughter Maya, Ammayya's character softens slightly. Though she never fully abandons her sharp tongue, she becomes more vulnerable and less domineering. The arrival of Nandana, Maya's daughter, forces her to confront the consequences of her rigid values and the pain caused by her unyielding nature. Her transformation is not dramatic, but there is a shift. She begins to show small moments of tenderness, particularly towards Nandana, indicating that even the most deeply ingrained attitudes can shift in the face of grief and change. In this way, Ammayya represents the complexities of tradition and change, as well as the potential for personal growth, even in later years.

Putti, Sripathi's younger sister, undergo a quiet, yet significant transformation. Initially, she was a passive and submissive woman, trapped under the oppressive rule of her mother, Ammayya. Despite being in her forties, Putti remains unmarried because Ammayya constantly rejects potential suitors, believing none are worthy of their Brahmin lineage. Putti has internalized this oppression, resigning herself to a life of servitude and obedience within the household. Intrinsically motivated by modern

cultural thoughts of Nandana and Maya, Putti get courage to go against the Indian orthodox Brahmin family to marry a Dalit man.

However, as the story progresses and the family experiences deep loss, Putti start to recognize her own desires and agency. Inspired in part by the arrival of Nandana and the changes occurring within the family, she gathers the courage to break free from her mother's control. Her transformation is more evident when she decides to marry Raju, a widower whom Ammayya considers socially inferior. By making this choice, Putti assert her independence for the first time, defying the rigid expectations that have confined her for decades. Putti's transformation symbolizes hope and change within the novel, demonstrating that even those long silenced by tradition and family pressures can reclaim their lives and make choices for themselves. Badami's portrayal of women is a call to recognize and honour their contributions, both visible and invisible, to the fabric of society. In doing so, she not only elevates the voices of her female characters but also offers a compelling vision of hope and transformation for women everywhere.

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Environmental Concerns in Amitav Ghosh's "The Hungry Tide"

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Abstract

Amitav Ghosh's "The Hungry Tide" offers more than just an engaging story; it acts as a profound investigation into the intricate and often tense relationship between humans and the natural world, particularly within the distinctive ecosystem of the Sundarbans. This paper examines the significant environmental issues highlighted in the novel, focusing on how Ghosh employs narrative and character to reveal the delicate equilibrium between human requirements and ecological conservation. The Sundarbans, characterized by its complex system of mangroves, rivers, and tidal flows, become a representation of the broader environmental challenges confronting our planet. This study looks into how "The Hungry Tide" tackles topics such as the effects of human activities on fragile ecosystems, the conflict between conservation efforts and the livelihoods of local inhabitants, and the severe repercussions of displacement caused by environmental decline. By centring on the interconnected lives of its characters – Piya, a cetologist researching the Irrawaddy dolphin, Kanai, a businessman with regional connections, and Moyna, a community fisherwoman – the novel underscores the varied viewpoints on environmental responsibility. This paper posits that Ghosh's narrative goes beyond simplistic depictions of "man versus nature," instead providing a detailed understanding of the interrelatedness of human and ecological fates. Additionally, it investigates how the novel critiques the inclination to favour economic growth over environmental sustainability, especially in marginalized communities. Ultimately, this analysis shows that "The Hungry Tide" is an essential work of ecocriticism, urging readers to consider their connection with the environment and the pressing need for more responsible and fair strategies for environmental management.

Keywords: ecosystem, environmental issues, Sundarbans, interconnectedness, marginalised communities

Introduction

Amitav Ghosh's environmentalism is deeply embedded in his writing, and "The Hungry Tide" is a prime example of how he weaves ecological concerns into his narratives. In this novel, the Sundarbans, a vast and complex network of islands in the Bay of Bengal, are not merely a setting but a powerful force that shapes the lives of the characters. Ghosh portrays the intricate relationship between humans and nature, highlighting both the beauty and the fragility of this unique ecosystem. In "The Hungry Tide," Ghosh's environmentalism is not just about raising awareness or advocating for specific causes. It is about exploring the complex and often contradictory ways in which humans interact with the natural world. Through his evocative prose and compelling characters, Ghosh invites readers to reflect on their relationship with the environment and to consider the ethical and cultural dimensions of environmental issues.

"The Hungry Tide" by Amitav Ghosh is a captivating novel set in the Sundarbans, a unique and ecologically fragile region of islands in the Bay of Bengal. The story revolves around three central characters whose lives intertwine amidst this extraordinary landscape:

- i. **Piyali Roy:** An American cetologist of Indian descent, who comes to the Sundarbans to study the endangered Irrawaddy dolphin. She is independent, driven, and somewhat detached from her Indian heritage.
- ii. **Kanai Dutt:** A translator and businessman from Delhi, who travels to the Sundarbans to visit his aunt and uncle and to review a manuscript left by his late uncle. He is more connected to his Indian roots but also represents a modern, urban perspective.
- iii. **Fokir:** An illiterate but resourceful fisherman who lives in the Sundarbans and possesses an intimate knowledge of its intricate waterways and ecosystems. He embodies a deep connection to the natural world and the traditional way of life in the Sundarbans.

Their paths cross as Piya hires Fokir to help her with her dolphin research, and Kanai becomes their translator, bridging the gap between Piya's scientific approach and Fokir's intuitive understanding of the environment. As they navigate the complex landscape of the Sundarbans, they are drawn into the hidden undercurrents of this isolated world, where political turmoil, environmental concerns, and the raw power of nature collide.

Ecocriticism, as a field of study, emerged in the late 20th century, primarily in the 1980s and 1990s. However, its roots can be traced back further. Here's a look at the key influences and developments that led to the rise of ecocriticism:

Early Influences:

- **Romanticism:** The Romantic poets of the 19th century, such as William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, celebrated nature and emphasized its importance to human experience. Their works often depicted nature as a source of inspiration, beauty, and spiritual connection. This emphasis on nature's value laid some groundwork for later ecocritical perspectives.
- **Transcendentalism:** In the United States, the Transcendentalist movement, with figures like Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson, further explored the relationship between humans and nature. Thoreau's *Walden*, for example, is a classic example of nature writing that reflects on simple living in harmony with the natural world.
- **Conservation Movement:** The rise of the conservation movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with figures like John Muir, also played a role. This movement advocated for the protection of wilderness areas and raised awareness about the impact of human activities on the environment.

Key Developments are :

- **Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962):** This groundbreaking book exposed the harmful effects of pesticides on the environment and is often considered a pivotal moment in the modern environmental movement. Carson's work highlighted the interconnectedness of ecosystems and the potential consequences of human actions, themes that are central to ecocriticism.
- **"Literary Ecology" (Joseph Meeker, 1972):** Meeker's book, *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology*, is considered one of the earliest works to explore the relationship between literature and ecological principles. He introduced the concept of "literary ecology," which examined how literary works reflect and shape our understanding of the environment.
- **The Term "Ecocriticism" (William Rueckert, 1978):** Rueckert coined the term "ecocriticism" in his essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism." He argued for a new approach to literary studies that would focus on the relationship between literature and the environment.
- **Formation of ASLE (1992):** The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) was founded, marking a significant step in the institutionalization of ecocriticism as a field of study.

Evolution of Ecocriticism:

- **Early ecocriticism:** Often focused on celebrating nature and wilderness, with an emphasis on nature writing and pastoral themes.
- **Second-wave ecocriticism:** Expanded its scope to include a wider range of environmental issues, such as environmental justice, ecofeminism, and the

impact of social and political forces on the environment. It also began to critically examine the concept of "nature" itself, recognizing that it is often socially and culturally constructed.

Today, ecocriticism is a diverse and dynamic field that continues to evolve. It encompasses a wide range of approaches and perspectives, but its central concern remains the relationship between literature, culture, and the environment.

In summary, ecocriticism emerged from a confluence of literary, environmental, and social movements. It draws on a rich history of nature writing and environmental thought, while also engaging with contemporary ecological challenges and social justice concerns.

Methodology

This study examines the portrayal of human impact on the environment in *The Hungry Tide*, focusing on how human activities threaten the delicate balance of the Sundarbans ecosystem. This research paper examines the environmental concerns present in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, focusing on environmental concerns, e.g., the representation of the Sundarbans ecosystem, the impact of human activities, the theme of coexistence, and environmental justice. My methodology combines close reading of the novel with ecocritical theory and contextual research.

Discussion

Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* is deeply concerned with environmental issues, particularly those affecting the unique ecosystem of the Sundarbans. This research paper explores several environmental concerns depicted in the novel "The Hungry Tide". Here are some of the key environmental concerns explored in the novel:

1. The Fragility of the Sundarbans Ecosystem:

- a) **Interconnectedness:** Ghosh emphasizes the intricate web of life in the Sundarbans, where all living things, including humans, are interconnected and dependent on each other. The novel highlights the delicate balance of this ecosystem and how it can be easily disrupted.

"Man and Nature are the two parts of one coin." (p. 125)

This simple statement encapsulates the novel's central theme of interconnectedness, emphasizing that humans are not separate from nature but an integral part of it.

- b) **Vulnerability:** The Sundarbans are portrayed as a place of immense natural beauty but also extreme vulnerability. The constant threat of cyclones, floods, and rising sea levels underscores the precariousness of life in this region.

"Here there are no borders to divide fresh water from salt, river from sea, even land from water. The tides reach more than two hundred miles inland, and every day

thousands of acres of mangrove forests disappear only to re-emerge hours later." (p. 7)

This quote immediately establishes the unique and dynamic nature of the Sundarbans, where land and water are constantly in flux, highlighting its vulnerability.

- c) **Dynamic Landscape:** The ever-shifting landscape of the Sundarbans, shaped by the powerful tides, symbolizes the constant change and unpredictability of nature. This dynamism also highlights the challenges of human adaptation and the need for resilience in the face of environmental forces.

2. Human Impact on the Environment:

- a) **Resource Exploitation:** The novel explores how human activities, such as fishing, deforestation, and hunting, can impact the delicate balance of the Sundarbans ecosystem. It raises questions about the sustainability of these practices and their long-term consequences.

"These new nylon nets, which they use to catch *chingri*—the spawn of tiger prawns. The nets are so fine that they catch the eggs of all the other fish as well." (p. 134)

This quote, spoken by Moyna, illustrates the destructive consequences of unsustainable fishing practices, where the pursuit of one species harms the entire ecosystem.

- b) **Development and Modernization:** The push for development and modernization in the Sundarbans is portrayed as a double-edged sword. While it can bring economic benefits, it also poses a threat to the environment and the traditional way of life of the local communities.
- c) **Pollution:** Though not explicitly focused on, the novel hints at the issue of pollution and its potential impact on the Sundarbans. The increasing presence of human settlements and activities can lead to pollution of the waterways and the environment, further threatening the ecosystem

3. Coexistence and Conflict between Humans and Nature:

- a) **Human-Animal Relationships:** The novel explores the complex relationships between humans and animals in the Sundarbans, particularly the endangered Irrawaddy dolphins and the tigers. It highlights the challenges of coexistence and the conflicts that can arise when human needs clash with the preservation of wildlife.
- b) **Respect for Nature:** Ghosh emphasizes the importance of respecting the power and unpredictability of nature. The characters who survive

in the Sundarbans are those who have learned to adapt to its rhythms and understand its forces.

- c) **Ethical Dilemmas:** The novel raises ethical dilemmas about the responsibility of humans towards the environment and the challenges of balancing conservation with the needs of local communities. It questions the idea of human dominance over nature and suggests the need for a more harmonious relationship.

4. Environmental Justice:

- a) **Marginalized Communities:** The novel sheds light on the struggles of the marginalized communities who live in the Sundarbans and depend on its resources for their survival. It highlights how environmental degradation disproportionately affects these vulnerable populations.
- b) **Displacement and Loss:** The threat of rising sea levels and environmental disasters can lead to the displacement of communities and the loss of their homes and livelihoods. The novel touches upon the issue of environmental refugees and the challenges they face.

"This island has to be saved for its trees, it has to be saved for its animals, it is part of a reserve forest, it belongs to a project to save tigers, which is paid for by people from all around the world."

(p. 294)

This quote, spoken by Kanai, highlights the irony of conservation efforts that prioritize animals over the needs of local communities, who are often displaced in the name of environmental protection

- c) **Voice for the Voiceless:** Ghosh gives voice to the environmental concerns of the Sundarbans, highlighting the need for greater awareness and action to protect this unique and fragile ecosystem.

Conclusion

In *The Hungry Tide*, environmental concerns are not just abstract issues but are deeply intertwined with the lives and experiences of the characters. Ghosh's evocative descriptions of the Sundarbans and its inhabitants bring these concerns to life, prompting readers to reflect on their own relationship with the environment and the importance of ecological awareness.

In *The Hungry Tide*, Amitav Ghosh masterfully weaves together a compelling narrative with a profound exploration of environmental concerns. The Sundarbans, a dynamic and fragile ecosystem, serves not just as a backdrop but as a character in itself, shaping the lives and destinies of those who inhabit it. Through the intertwined stories of Piya, Kanai, and Fokir, Ghosh illuminates the complex and often fraught relationship

between humans and nature. The novel transcends mere descriptions of environmental beauty and instead delves into the urgent realities of ecological vulnerability, human impact, and the ethical dilemmas that arise from our interactions with the natural world.

Ghosh doesn't offer simplistic solutions or portray nature as an idyllic paradise. Instead, he presents a nuanced picture of the Sundarbans, acknowledging its power, unpredictability, and precarious existence in the face of human pressures. The novel underscores the interconnectedness of all living things, highlighting how human actions, whether driven by necessity or greed, can have far-reaching consequences for the delicate balance of the ecosystem. From the exploitation of resources to the challenges of coexisting with wildlife, *The Hungry Tide* confronts readers with the difficult choices that must be made to ensure the long-term health of our planet.

Moreover, Ghosh's narrative emphasizes the importance of understanding and respecting the intricate workings of nature. Characters like Fokir, with his deep knowledge of the Sundarbans' rhythms and tides, embody a more harmonious way of living, one that recognizes the limits of human control and the need for adaptation. The novel subtly critiques anthropocentric views that place humans at the centre of the universe, suggesting instead that we are part of a larger web of life and that our fate is inextricably linked to the well-being of the environment.

Ultimately, *The Hungry Tide* serves as a powerful call for ecological awareness and a reminder of our responsibility to protect the natural world. By grounding his environmental concerns in the lived experiences of his characters, Ghosh makes these issues personal and compelling. The novel leaves the reader with a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the Sundarbans and a renewed appreciation for the fragility and beauty of our planet. It prompts reflection on our relationship with the environment and inspires a sense of urgency to address the environmental crises of our time. Ghosh's work serves as a potent reminder that the "hungry tide" of environmental change is rising and that we must act now to safeguard the future of our planet and all its inhabitants.

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Reimagining Social Change through William Dalrymple's Narratives of Marginalized Communities in Travel Literature

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Abstract

The study addressing the marginalized communities with significance in emphasizing the lived experiences that are often neglected or underrepresented in social change dialogues of society. The writings of William Dalrymple, predominantly in *City of Djinns: A Year in Delhi* (1994), *The Age of Kali* (1998), and *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India* (2009), present a nuanced evaluation of historical, cultural, and socio-political transformations in India. His literature perspectives illuminate the complex lives of marginalized groups, providing them with a voice within the broader tapestry of history and contemporary struggles. Dalrymple's books on Indian literature are far more than mere history. They chart the interfaces between colonial legacies, religious identity, and the fragmentation of societies, always with a focus on the silenced voice. In a tapestry of stories about displaced people, poor people, and religious minorities, Dalrymple throws open the perspectives into the complexities of India's socio-economic divide. His attention to such marginalized individuals whether they are the alienated Delhi residents or even less important figures seeking meaning in India's sacred spaces inspires readers to take a thought-provoking look into their own places within contemporary stories of transformation.

Keywords: Society, Culture, Marginalization, Fragmentation, Transformation.

Introduction

In a globalized world, literature is a significant strategy of apprehending the complexities of society, predominantly the lives of marginalized groups whose voices can be easily silenced in dominant narratives. One of the writers who has been able to capture the complexities of marginalized identities is William Dalrymple. In his travel books *City of Djinns: A Year in Delhi* (1994), *The Age of Kali: Indian Travels and Encounters* (1998), and *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India* (2009)—Dalrymple brings into focus the lives of individuals and communities normally excluded from mainstream cultural and historical narratives. His works analyse the socio-political upheaval of India, following threads of religious strife, caste-based discrimination, gender disparities, and socio-economic status of marginalized groups. Analysing these in detail, the research hopes to place Dalrymple's works as critical texts of world literature that challenge reimagining of social change, pushing the imagination towards a more inclusive, compassionate reading of the forces shaping societies worldwide.

Reimagining Social Change through Narratives Addressing Marginalized Communities

Narratives have been powerful tools for building historical consciousness and enacting social change for centuries. In travel literature, representation of marginalized communities has a critical function in envisioning alternative social orderings and striving towards inclusivity. This research discusses how William Dalrymple's *City of Djinns* (1994), *The Age of Kali* (1998), and *Nine Lives* (2009) contribute to this dialogue through the presentation of an alternative historiography—one that foregrounds the lived history of those far too often silenced in dominant histories. His books are literary and ethnographic investigations of social hierarchies, cultural conflict, and the persistence of marginalized communities in India.

The role of literature in addressing social inequalities has been extensively discussed by scholars who argue that storytelling can amplify suppressed voices and offer counter-histories (Spivak 93). Dalrymple's works exemplify this function by documenting the lives of individuals who navigate oppression, displacement, and socio-religious exclusion. In *City of Djinns*, his exploration of post-Partition Delhi highlights the lingering struggles of the Sikh and Muslim communities, exposing the tensions between historical erasure and cultural preservation (Dalrymple 112).

Dalrymple's *The Age of Kali* delves into caste violence, gender oppression, and religious persecution in India. His engagement with communities such as the devadasis, Dalits, and survivors of communal violence reflects the necessity of

reclaiming marginalized histories (Dalrymple 178). Scholars argue that travel writing, when critically engaged, can become a platform for resistance rather than a colonial gaze (Pratt 102).

In *Nine Lives*, Dalrymple continues to subvert traditional ethnographic practice by letting religious ascetics, mystics, and disenfranchised artists speak for themselves. This process is in line with Spivak's contention that subalterns should be represented on their own terms and not through elite interpreters (Spivak 104). His work shows how oral testimonies and individual accounts can act as modes of social critique, providing insights into the systemic exclusions that still exist in India today (Dalrymple 225)

Research Objectives

- To Analyse the Representation of Marginalized Communities in William Dalrymple's Travel Writing
- To Examine the Impact of Dalrymple's Works on Reconstructing Historical and Social Change Narratives

Significance of Study

The significance of the scholarship is that it details the power in enlightening the marginalized groups' least heard voices in a broad interest under the subject of William Dalrymple's travelogues. With special emphasis on *City of Djinns*, *The Age of Kali*, and *Nine Lives*, the study is intended to discuss how the works of Dalrymple are changing traditional history and cultural narratives, hence setting a platform for individuals who predominantly remain voiceless in society. This study adds to the expanding body of international literature calling for social transformation by bringing to light the lives of displaced, disenfranchised, and oppressed communities, calling for a more inclusive and compassionate reading of history. Through this, the research reimagines social change as a process of listening to and amplifying marginalized voices, hence fostering a more complex and just reading of cultural and socio-political transformation.

Analysis of the Narratives for Social Change

William Dalrymple's travel books, particularly in *City of Djinns*, *The Age of Kali*, and *Nine Lives*, offer profound understanding of social change, especially from the marginally visible point of view of subaltern populations. Through a diligent narrative blend of history, culture, and day-to-day interaction, Dalrymple raises the silenced discourses and provides readers an ability to sift the nuances of Indian society. This analysis considers how the books of Dalrymple perform as agents for social

transformation in the highlighting of the lives of the oppressed, challenging dominant histories, and encouraging empathy in once-oppressed people.

In *City of Djinns*, Dalrymple gets absorbed in the magnificent past of Delhi and also documents the life of individuals belonging to oppressed sections, particularly those who were hit by the aftermath of the Partition of India. His account of Sikh and Muslim communities uprooted by Partition, and the trauma of lower-caste and religious minorities, disrupts conventional histories that privilege marginalization or erasure of the atrocity of such partitions. Not only does Dalrymple recount the personal tragedies of survivors but also brings to light the institutionalized persecution they face in post-Partition India (Dalrymple 112). His narrative is a reminder that the history of Delhi, and by implication India, is not just characterized by its elites but by the lived experiences of its marginalized citizens whose lives must be accounted for and given recognition in the larger socio-political domain.

In *The Age of Kali*, Dalrymple shifts his focus to the socio-political unrest of contemporary India, especially the caste-based violence and religious persecution that still haunt the nation. His discussion of Dalit oppression and exploitation of the devadasis (temple dancers) serves to point out the persistence of caste-based bias and gender inequality. By conducting a series of interviews with Dalit activists and women affected by the devadasi system, Dalrymple dissects the structural inequalities fuelling social poverty and marginalization (Dalrymple 178). The book aligns with postcolonial theory, in which scholars like Gayatri Spivak encourage listening to the voice of the subaltern, the historically silenced or marginalized by powerful dominant groups (Spivak 104). Dalrymple's account turns into a weapon of resistance, allowing these silenced voices to reach a broader readership and subvert the social order that sustains gender and caste discrimination.

In *Nine Lives*, Dalrymple continues his exploration of marginalized communities by chronicling the lives of religious ascetics, mystics, and outcasts and gaining insight into the spiritual habits of those living on the edges of society. This series of tales highlights the conflict between individual spirituality and communal expectations, as Dalrymple shows how these outcasts defy the religious orthodoxy that rejects them. One of the most powerful illustrations is the life of the Jain monk, who negotiates the intricate balance between religion and worldly rejection, and the Hindu mystic, whose devotions push the boundaries of piety and social outcast (Dalrymple 225). By concentrating on such numbers, Dalrymple brings to attention the function of

religion in excluding and emancipating people and how religious faith can be actions of resistance towards social frameworks excluding them from their place in hegemonic narratives.

Dalrymple's narrative strategy—blending personal discovery, research into the past, and face-to-face contact with his subjects—allows him to construct a highly sympathetic and socially conscious kind of travel writing. As Mary Louise Pratt contends, travel writing can be an effective means of transculturation, a process in which various cultures meet, touch, and alter each other (Pratt 102). Dalrymple's writings challenge readers to think differently about how social change happens, contending that it is not merely through political or economic channels but also through acknowledging the humanity and strength of oppressed people.

By centring on the lives of the oppressed, Dalrymple's writings feed into the broader conversation around social change by re-introducing these communities not as passive victims but as agentive players of their own histories. This disrupts the dominant narrative frameworks that frequently reduce these marginalized groups into static or changeless forms, instead highlighting their active roles in the dynamics of social, cultural, and political changes. Through Dalrymple's accounts, social transformation is a matter of redefining historical realities, giving voices to those that have been long silenced, and empowering the marginal to define the future.

Conclusion

Reimagining social change through literature is not merely about storytelling; it is about storytelling that disrupts the current power dynamics and presents alternative ways of understanding the world. Literature, particularly literature that brings the lives of marginalized groups into focus, plays a revolutionary role in revealing social injustices, provoking critical debate, and inspiring collective action. Thus, in the domain of social change, William Dalrymple's travel writings, including *City of Djinns*, *The Age of Kali*, and *Nine Lives*, are important voices to the rhetoric of social change. By an encounter with the everyday of society's peripheries, Dalrymple's works push the boundaries of standard representations of culture and history, challenging readers to negotiate the nuances of identity, power, and resistance. In the global literary canon, Dalrymple's works remind us of the potency of counter-narratives that invert the hegemonic order and speak for the subaltern. With the world of literature growing more globally connected, such writing will always be crucial in helping to establish a more cosmopolitan and evolving definition of history, identity, and the perpetuating fight for social justice. In placing on display the view of those otherwise excluded from being in the midst of the broader mainstream narrative, Dalrymple's storytelling

encourages readers to conceptualize social change—not some theoretical ideal but as a material, lived thing. The strength of narrative is its ability to generate empathy, to prompt reflection, and ultimately to fuel social change.

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Fluid Borders: Gender, Identity, and the Performance of Self in Virginia Woolf's Orlando

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Abstract

Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (1928) stands as a pioneering literary exploration of gender fluidity, identity formation, and the performativity of self. Moving beyond a mere examination of sexuality, this paper examines *Orlando* through the lens of identity as a continuous, performative process shaped by time, social structures, and personal experience. Drawing upon Judith Butler's theory of performativity and Michel Foucault's discourse on sexuality, this study argues that Woolf's text dismantles binary conceptions of gender and exposes the artificial nature of societal norms. The novel's interplay between biography and fiction further enhances its critique of historical narratives that impose rigid identities. By reframing *Orlando* as a meditation on the impermanence of identity rather than merely an LGBTQ+ text, this article proposes a broader, interdisciplinary interpretation of Woolf's work that is relevant to contemporary discussions on gender fluidity, queer theory, and postmodern identity.

Keywords: Gender Performativity, Identity, Queer Theory, Feminist Literature, Postmodern Subjectivity, Sexual Politics

Introduction

Virginia Woolf's *Orlando: A Biography* intricately weaves themes of gender fluidity and performativity, challenging the rigid binaries of early 20th-century societal norms. The protagonist's seamless transition from male to female exemplifies Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, which posits that gender is not an inherent identity but rather a series of performed acts that constitute the illusion of a stable identity. Butler asserts that "gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be" (Butler 25). *Orlando*'s transformation underscores this notion, as their core self remains consistent despite the change in gender,

highlighting the performative nature of gender roles and the societal constructs that define them. Woolf's narrative delves into the influence of historical and cultural contexts on personal identity, resonating with Michel Foucault's concept of historical discourse. Foucault contends that societal norms and power relations are historically constructed, shaping individual identities over time. In *Orlando*, the protagonist's experiences across different centuries reflect the shifting discourses of each era, illustrating the fluidity and constructed nature of identity. For instance, Orlando's navigation through various societal roles and expectations emphasizes that identity is not static but continually reshaped by historical and cultural forces.

The novel's exploration of androgyny and the blending of masculine and feminine traits challenges traditional gender binaries, advocating for a more fluid understanding of identity. This perspective aligns with contemporary queer theory, which emphasizes the variability and social construction of sexual identities. Woolf's portrayal of Orlando's romantic relationships with both men and women further destabilizes fixed categories of sexual orientation, suggesting that desire, like gender, is performative and fluid. Through this narrative, Woolf critiques the authoritative voice of historical narratives and highlights the multiplicity of identities that exist beyond rigid categorizations. Orlando serves as a profound meditation on the instability of selfhood, illustrating how personal, historical, and cultural forces intertwine to shape and reshape identity. By engaging with concepts of performativity and historical discourse, Woolf's work invites readers to reconsider the fluidity of gender and the constructed nature of societal norms.

Orlando: masterfully intertwines elements of biography and fiction, challenging traditional narratives of identity and temporality. The novel emerges from Woolf's intimate relationship with fellow writer Vita Sackville-West, whose life and persona significantly influenced the creation of *Orlando*. This connection provided Woolf with a unique framework to critique and explore the rigid constructs of gender and societal expectations. On 5 October 1927, Woolf noted in her diary the conception of a "biography beginning in the year 1500 and continuing to the present day, called *Orlando*: Vita; only with a change about from one sex to the other" (Woolf 1990, p. 128). This innovative narrative allowed Woolf to traverse centuries, examining the fluidity of identity through a protagonist who defies both temporal and gender boundaries. Central to the narrative is Orlando, a young nobleman in Elizabethan England who mysteriously transforms into a woman, living for over three centuries without significant aging. This transformation serves as a narrative device to question

and satirize societal constructs surrounding gender and identity. By enabling Orlando to experience life as both male and female, Woolf critiques the arbitrary nature of gender roles and underscores the performative aspects of identity. The blending of biography and fiction in *Orlando* is not merely a literary technique but a deliberate strategy to challenge the conventions of both genres. Woolf herself described the work as a "writer's holiday," granting her the freedom to experiment beyond the constraints of traditional narrative forms. This fusion results in a fluid narrative that mirrors the protagonist's own fluid identity, effectively blurring the lines between reality and imagination. The novel also serves as a satirical examination of English historiography and the literary canon. By spanning several centuries, Woolf critiques male-dominated historical and literary narratives, inserting Orlando—a character embodying both genders—into various historical contexts. This insertion challenges the exclusionary practices of traditional historiography and questions the reliability and completeness of historical records. The relationship between Woolf and Sackville-West is intricately woven into the fabric of the novel. Nigel Nicolson, Sackville-West's son, described *Orlando* as "the longest and most charming love letter in literature," highlighting the personal and intimate dimensions of the work (Karbo 2018, p. 45). This personal connection infuses the narrative with authenticity, as Woolf draws upon Sackville-West's life, particularly her ancestral home, Knole House, which becomes a central symbol in the novel. Through this deeply personal and innovative narrative, Woolf invites readers to reflect upon and question the constructs that define and limit human potential.

The novel serves as a seminal exploration of gender fluidity and performativity, predating contemporary theoretical frameworks. The protagonist, Orlando, undergoes a transformation from male to female, living across centuries without significant aging. This metamorphosis challenges the rigid binary constructs of gender, suggesting that identity is not an innate essence but a fluid and performative construct. Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, which posits that gender identity is constituted through repeated social performances rather than being a fixed attribute, provides a critical lens through which to analyze Orlando's experiences. Butler asserts that "gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance" (Butler 45). Orlando's seamless navigation between male and female roles exemplifies this concept, as their core identity remains consistent despite external changes, highlighting the performative nature of gender roles. The novel further delves into the societal implications of gender performance through its portrayal of clothing as a

symbol of identity construction. Orlando observes, "It is clothes that wear us and not we them; we may make them take the mould of arm or breast, but they mould our hearts, our brains, our tongues to their liking" (Woolf 187). This reflection underscores the notion that attire is not merely a superficial aspect of identity but a significant factor in the societal perception and internalization of gender roles. Butler emphasizes that these performative acts are compelled by societal norms and expectations, noting that "the performance is effected with the strategic aim of maintaining gender within its binary frame" (Butler 99). Orlando's experiences reveal how adherence to or deviation from prescribed gender performances can either reinforce or disrupt established power dynamics, illustrating the constraints imposed by societal expectations on individual identity expression. Woolf's narrative critiques the historical construction of gender and sexuality, aligning with Michel Foucault's concept of historical discourse, which examines how power relations shape societal norms and individual identities over time. Orlando's journey through various historical periods reflects the shifting discourses of each era, illustrating the fluidity and constructed nature of identity. For instance, in the Victorian era, Orlando conforms to the restrictive norms imposed on women, while in the more liberal 18th century, she enjoys greater freedom. This temporal journey emphasizes that identity is not static but continually reshaped by historical and cultural contexts. By presenting a protagonist who transcends temporal and gender boundaries, Woolf critiques the authoritative voice of historical narratives and highlights the multiplicity of identities that exist beyond rigid categorizations.

Orlando adapts to the changing norms of each era, demonstrating the malleability of gender roles and the societal expectations that shape them. This temporal fluidity reinforces the notion that gender is not a fixed attribute but a dynamic construct, continually reshaped by cultural narratives. Woolf's portrayal of Orlando's experiences underscores the idea that identity is a continuous, performative process influenced by time and history. Woolf employs clothing as a potent metaphor for the performance of gender. Orlando's experiences with attire illustrate how societal perceptions and personal identity are intertwined. When dressed as a woman, Orlando becomes acutely aware of the restrictions imposed upon femininity, recognizing that traits such as chastity, modesty, and obedience are not inherent but socially prescribed performances. Conversely, adopting male attire grants Orlando freedoms previously inaccessible, highlighting the constructed nature of gender roles. This interplay between clothing and identity anticipates contemporary discussions on gender

expression and performativity, emphasizing that external appearances often dictate societal treatment and expectations.

Through Orlando's interactions with literature and personal writing endeavors, Woolf examines how language and storytelling shape perceptions of gender and identity. The evolution of Orlando's poem, "The Oak Tree," mirrors the protagonist's personal transformations, symbolizing the fluidity and adaptability of both art and identity. Woolf implies that literature has the power to challenge entrenched norms and offer alternative narratives that embrace complexity and diversity. The intersection of gender and society in Orlando reveals the performative aspects of identity, as posited by theorists like Judith Butler. Butler's concept of gender performativity suggests that gender is constituted through repeated actions and societal expectations rather than inherent traits. Orlando's experiences exemplify this theory, as the protagonist adopts different behaviors and roles in response to societal pressures, highlighting the constructed nature of gender identity. Woolf's portrayal aligns with Butler's assertion that disrupting traditional performances can subvert and redefine gender norms. Michel Foucault's discourse on sexuality provides a framework for understanding the historical constructs of identity in Orlando. Foucault argues that societal institutions and power relations shape our understanding of sexuality and identity. Orlando's transformation and the varied societal reactions underscore the idea that identity is contingent upon historical and cultural contexts. Woolf's narrative suggests that by challenging these constructs, individuals can attain a more authentic and liberated sense of self. Woolf's Orlando is widely regarded as a literary homage to her intimate relationship with Vita Sackville-West. The novel chronicles the life of Orlando, a character who transitions across genders and centuries, a narrative choice that reflects Sackville-West's own defiance of conventional gender roles and societal norms. This connection is underscored by Woolf's diary entry from 5 October 1927, where she conceived the idea of "a biography beginning in the year 1500 and continuing to the present day, called Orlando: Vita; only with a change about from one sex to the other" (Woolf). This deliberate intertwining of Sackville-West's persona with Orlando highlights the profound impact of their relationship on Woolf's creative process. The narrative structure of Orlando serves as a vehicle for exploring themes of gender fluidity and societal constructs. Orlando's seamless transformation from male to female and traversal through various historical epochs mirror Sackville-West's own experiences with gender and identity. Notably, the ancestral estate depicted in the novel bears a striking resemblance to Sackville-West's family home, Knole House. Sackville-West's inability to inherit Knole due to primogeniture laws is symbolically addressed in the novel by granting Orlando ownership of a grand estate, thereby

restoring to Sackville-West, through fiction, what societal norms had denied her (Grants). This narrative choice critiques the gender-based inequities prevalent in society and underscores Woolf's commitment to challenging traditional norms. The personal significance of Orlando is further illuminated by the reflections of Sackville-West's son, Nigel Nicolson, who described the novel as "the longest and most charming love letter in literature" (Nicolson). This characterization emphasizes the novel's dual function as both a public literary work and a private testament to Woolf and Sackville-West's relationship. Woolf's innovative blending of biography and fiction not only challenges traditional literary forms but also serves as a profound exploration of identity, love, and the societal constraints imposed upon individuals. Through Orlando, Woolf immortalizes her deep affection for Sackville-West, crafting a narrative that continues to resonate with contemporary discussions on gender and identity.

Conclusion

The protagonist's seamless transition from male to female, spanning several centuries, underscores the performative nature of gender—a concept later articulated by Judith Butler. Butler posits that "gender is instituted through acts which are internally discontinuous," suggesting that identity is constructed through repeated behaviors rather than stemming from an innate essence (Butler 520). Orlando's transformation exemplifies this notion, as their core identity remains consistent despite changes in outward gender presentation. Throughout the narrative, Woolf employs clothing as a metaphor to illustrate the superficiality of gender distinctions. Orlando observes that attire dictates societal perception and treatment, noting that "clothes are but a symbol of something hid deep beneath" (Woolf 187). This sentiment aligns with Butler's assertion that gender is a performance shaped by cultural norms, rather than an inherent trait. By highlighting the arbitrary nature of gendered expectations, Woolf critiques the societal constructs that confine individuals to specific roles based on their appearance. Woolf's blending of biography and fiction in Orlando invites readers to question the permanence of identity and consider a more fluid understanding of selfhood. The protagonist's experiences across different historical periods reflect the evolving nature of gender roles, emphasizing that societal constructs are not static but subject to change. This temporal elasticity reinforces the idea that identity is not a fixed entity but a dynamic interplay between individual agency and cultural context. As critic Rachel Bowlby notes, "The very structure of Orlando mocks the idea of fixed identities," highlighting the transformative potential inherent in the passage of time (Bowlby 45).

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Exploitation and Oppression of the Tribal Community in Mahaswetha Devi's "THE HUNT"

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Abstract

Tribes are an indispensable part of Indian society and their culture comprises an important dimension of Indian Civilization. In Mahasweta Devi's *Hunt*, the exploitation and oppression of tribal communities are central themes that illustrate the harsh realities faced by indigenous people in India. The narrative sheds light on how these communities are systematically stripped of their land, resources, and autonomy by external forces such as the state, landlords, and corporations. Tribal individuals, particularly women, endure a dual layer of oppression—both for their marginalized status as indigenous people and their gender. The novel critiques the dominant societal structures perpetuating these injustices and highlights these communities' economic and social inequalities. The story revolves around the character Mary Oraon and focuses on violence and gender oppression.

Devi's portrayal of tribal life goes beyond stereotypical representations, focusing instead on the resilience and silent resistance of the marginalized. The story underscores the urgent need for solidarity, justice, and recognition of tribal rights within a larger socio-political context. Ultimately, *Hunt* serves as a powerful narrative that calls for the empowerment of oppressed communities, urging for both cultural and political recognition of their rights. This paper delineates the greed and intentions carrying away the giant sal trees by Tehsildar Singh and the Social issue of gender inequality and oppression in Mahasweta Devi's work *Hunt*.

Keywords: Tribal Communities, Gender oppression, Exploitation, Social inequalities, etc

Introduction

Mahasweta Devi was a renowned Indian Bengali writer and activist. Devi wrote 100 novels and over 20 collections of short stories written in Bengali but often translated to other languages. She worked for the rights and empowerment of the tribal people of West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. She was honoured with various literary awards such as the Sahitya Akademi Award (in Bengali), Jnanpith Award and Ramon Magsaysay Award, and India's civilian awards Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan.

The present story by Mahasweta Devi *The Hunt*, translated from "Shikar" by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and included in the collection *The Imaginary Maps*, tells the tale of Mary, a subaltern woman, who is sexually harassed by the Tehsildar, a symbol of the capitalist patriarchy, and highlights the systematic exploitation of women and the destruction of nature as byproducts of a patriarchal and feudal society. What distinguishes this work and the topic of this paper is that it not only emphasizes the unique bond between nature and women, but also a desire to escape the shackles of traditional customs and gender norms.

The hunt festival, the most well-known myth among the Bihar tribal people, is the focus of Mahasweta Devi's story *The Hunt*. The story's original title in Bengali is *Shikar*, which means the hunt. Devi writes, "Once there were (wild) animals in the forest, life was wild, the hunt game had meaning." In this sense, the myth signified the protection of the entire tribe and its environment from the destructive animals.

The opening section of the narrative depicts the tranquil existence of the tribal community in the village of Kuruda. Despite the process of decolonization, the exploitation has persisted. The forests that once belonged to the tribal people are now transformed into estates controlled by a few wealthy landlords. These landlords take advantage of the impoverished tribals, using them as bonded laborers, domestic helpers, and low-paid workers. Mary Oraon is one such individual who suffers from this exploitation, although she ultimately refuses to remain a victim by the story's conclusion. Mary's mother, Bikhani, was hired by an Australian plantation owner, Dixon, to maintain his bungalow. After independence, the colonial rulers departed from the region. However, in 1959, Dixon's son returned to the area to sell the bungalow, took advantage of Bikhani, and then abandoned her. This is why Bikhani's daughter, Mary Oraon, does not appear to be tribal despite her heritage. Prasadji has become the new owner of the estate, and Mary Oraon now works there in place of her

mother, Bikhani. Mahasweta Devi portrays Mary's skillfulness in her labor at Prasadji's estate.

The second section of the narrative illustrates the beginning of the widespread mechanized and industrial exploitation of indigenous people. The British planted Sal trees in the region. The tribal communities never considered the financial worth of these Sal trees. However, Prasadji's son, Banwari, invited a contractor named Tehsildar Singh to cut and transport these valuable Sal trees. The impoverished tribal individuals are employed by the contractor to chop down the Sal trees. They receive twelve annas daily for men, and women earn eight annas for pruning the branches. Only Mary is aware of the broker's deceitful tactics. She represents the affection for the tribal community. She attempts to counsel Prasadji and other village leaders, but her efforts are futile. They were bribed by the broker. She remarked, "Twelve annas and eight annas! No porter would carry a gentleman's case for this wage." Banwari and Tehsildar were fully aware that these Sal trees belonged to the Government, yet they continued to cut them down illegally. The government system is so corrupt that these unlawful activities never surface. The pristine forests are devastated by the avarice of the wealthy, while the destitute tribal people, who are forced to chop down the trees out of necessity, are blamed for deforestation.

The narrative "Hunt" similarly addresses themes of violence and sexual harassment—common acts of male dominance aimed at controlling women. The tale highlights the rebellion of Mary Oraon, a girl of mixed tribal heritage, against gender-based oppression. She is rendered vulnerable due to her appearance and demeanor; however, she subverts the typical roles assigned to females and confronts her abuser with her physical strength. The exploitation of the natural resources belonging to tribal communities is closely linked to the sexual abuse of their women. Yet, Mary safeguards both the natural environment and the honour of tribal women by eliminating the oppressor.

Thematic Exploration of Exploitation and Oppression

1. Economic Exploitation and Marginalization

In "*The Hunt*," the exploitation of tribal people is primarily shown through economic deprivation. The protagonist, a tribal woman, is not just fighting for survival in the forests but is also battling the larger forces of economic exploitation that have reduced her people to poverty. The central character's decision to engage in the hunt is not merely for sustenance but is deeply symbolic of how tribal people are forced to fight for their basic rights and survival in a system that constantly exploits them.

Tribal communities like the Santhals are often excluded from the mainstream economic system, forced into menial, low-paying jobs with little to no access to education, healthcare, or opportunities for upward mobility. The story subtly critiques the inequitable distribution of resources and the structural inequalities that keep tribal communities in a cycle of poverty. The inability of the tribal community to access or control their own land and resources is a key component of their economic exploitation.

2. Social Oppression and Dehumanization

Another theme in *"The Hunt"* is the social oppression faced by tribal people, specifically the way they are marginalized by the dominant caste and class groups. Throughout the story, the tribal people are depicted as being on the fringes of society, looked down upon by the higher castes and the authorities. Their ways of life, rooted in ancient traditions and communal land ownership, are seen as primitive or backward in the eyes of the state and dominant society. The imagery of the hunt itself underscores this dehumanization. The tribal people are hunted like animals, reduced to prey by those in power. Their struggles for dignity and survival are met with violence and oppression. Through this symbolism, Devi critiques the system that dehumanizes the tribal community, viewing them as expendable and marginal. The violence faced by the protagonist in *"The Hunt"* is a clear representation of this dehumanization. She is not just physically hunted but psychologically crushed under the weight of a society that views her as inferior. The treatment of tribal women, in particular, highlights the intersection of gender and social oppression. Women, like the protagonist, experience double layers of exploitation—both as tribal people and as women within a patriarchal social structure.

3. Resistance and Agency

Despite the overwhelming oppression, *"The Hunt"* also showcases moments of resistance and agency. The protagonist, who participates in the hunt, is a symbol of tribal resilience and defiance against the forces of exploitation. Her involvement in the hunt is not just an act of survival, but also a quiet form of resistance—a rejection of the passive victimhood often imposed upon tribal people by the state.

Devi does not portray her characters as completely powerless. Instead, the hunt becomes a metaphor for their fight for survival and their quest for autonomy in a system that seeks to dominate and exploit them. While they may be forced into situations where they appear to be prey, they also retain the ability to assert control over their lives, even in the most difficult circumstances.

4. Symbolism of *The Hunt*

"The hunt", in Devi's story operates on both literal and symbolic levels. On a literal level, the hunt is a life-or-death struggle in the forest, where the tribal people, especially the protagonist, must track down animals to sustain themselves. However, this physical hunt is also a metaphor for the ongoing struggle of tribal people against exploitation, violence, and the loss of their traditional way of life.

The idea of being "hunted" is central to the story. The tribal people are portrayed as prey, constantly pursued by the forces of state violence, capitalist exploitation, and social degradation. *"The hunt"*, is symbolic of how the tribal community is relentlessly chased by these external forces, yet it also reflects their capacity for resistance and survival.

Furthermore, *"The hunt"*, can be interpreted as an act of reclaiming agency. The tribal community does not simply submit to oppression but actively participates in their own survival. Through this participation, Devi suggests that even the most marginalized communities can find ways to resist the structures that seek to destroy them.

5. Critique of Socio-Political Systems

As a social activist, Mahasweta Devi endeavours to change the destiny of the marginalised communities and her activism gets translated into her writings. Endorsing this view Radha Chakravarty opines her views in "Mahasweta Devi: A Luminous Anger" published in the book *Feminism and Contemporary Women Writers: Rethinking Subjectivity*. Mahesweta's current reputation as a writer rests largely on her own self projection as a champion of the tribal cause and decrier of class prejudice. (94) Mahasweta Devi, a champion of tribal rights, has weaved her stories on the matrix of oppression where fibres of caste, class and gender intertwine. She discusses the women issues within the larger framework of class exploitation. The men and women are equally oppressed. But it doesn't mean that she underplays the issue of gender. In an interview with Gabrielle Collu, she says: Women have to pay a lot. They also have their special problems. They add to my stories naturally, not just to uphold the woman. (224) In *"The Hunt,"* Devi critiques the socio-political systems that perpetuate the exploitation and oppression of tribal communities. The narrative suggests that the state, through its policies, and the capitalist system, through its need for cheap labor and resources, have historically marginalized tribal communities. The story points out how the state often ignores or actively suppresses the demands of these communities for land, rights, and justice.

Devi's portrayal of the state apparatus, local authorities, and the police highlights their complicity in the oppression of tribal people. Instead of supporting the tribal community, these institutions are shown as being indifferent or actively hostile toward them. Through this, Devi calls for a re-examination of state power and its role in perpetuating social and economic injustice.

Conclusion

Mahasweta Devi's "*The Hunt*" is a poignant narrative that sheds light on the exploitation and oppression of tribal communities in India. Through a combination of vivid character portrayals, symbolic imagery, and social critique, Devi critiques the historical and contemporary forces that have marginalized these communities. The story examines the economic exploitation, social oppression, and gender-based violence faced by tribal people, while also highlighting their resilience and resistance. *The hunt*, both literal and metaphorical, serves as a powerful symbol of the struggle for survival and dignity in a society that continuously dehumanizes and exploits them. Through this story, Devi urges readers to reflect on the systemic issues that perpetuate the marginalization of tribal people and calls for greater awareness, solidarity, and action in addressing their rights and struggles. The narrative is not only a condemnation of exploitation but also a testament to the strength and agency of marginalized communities, pushing readers to consider what it means to resist and reclaim one's humanity in an unjust world.

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Resilience against Conformity: Gender and Societal Stigma in Sudha Murthy's Mahashweta

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Abstract

This research paper analyses the intersectionality of gender, identity, and societal stigma in Sudha Murthy's *Mahashweta* (2003), focusing on the protagonist Anupama, a young woman diagnosed with vitiligo. Using Cathy Caruth's Trauma Theory and gender-based intersectionality, the paper examines how Anupama's identity is shaped by both her experience of trauma—manifested through societal rejection—and the intersection of her gender, class, and familial expectations. The paper argues that Anupama's trauma is compounded not only by her skin condition but also by the gendered norms that demand conformity to societal standards of beauty. It further discusses how these gendered pressures are intertwined with the oppressive structures of class and family, revealing the layers of discrimination that Anupama faces. Ultimately, the research contends that *Mahashweta* offers a critical commentary on the need to redefine beauty and identity beyond physical appearance, highlighting the resilience of women who challenge societal and familial norms. This paper advocates for a more inclusive, trauma-informed understanding of identity that transcends appearance-based judgments and recognizes the multiplicity of women's experiences.

Keywords: Trauma Theory, Gender Discrimination, Intersectionality, Resilience, Societal Stigma

Introduction

Sudha Murthy's *Mahashweta* intricately explores the intersectionality of gender, class, and identity through the protagonist Anupama, a young woman who develops vitiligo. The novel navigates the complexities of beauty, societal expectations, and personal resilience, presenting a layered narrative of gender-based trauma. "With

her beautiful large eyes, exquisite complexion, and face framed by long jet – black hair, she looked like an apsara. She was wearing a green cotton sari with a blue border and a blue blouse.” (Murty, Mahaswetha 8). There is a general opinion that the women are not allowed to get education because of their status in the society. K.A. Kunjakkan in “Women’s issue verses National Perspective.” *Feminism and Indian Realities* (2002) rightly observes: More education gives more intelligence, reasoning power, more I.Q., and such an individual can understand and comprehend things around them. They acquire an inquisitive mind and thus able to question things. This is however opposed to Indian view of life, where women are expected to be obedient, disciplined, submissive, chaste docile. All these women qualities are believed to be evaporated on attaining excess education by women. The feminist say that this misunderstanding is due to the popular notion that misunderstanding is a due to the popular notion that women are to be a wife and a mother nothing more. (Kunjakkan 371) By focusing on Anupama’s struggle with her changing appearance and societal rejection, Murthy critiques the patriarchal structures that shape and define women’s worth. This paper employs Cathy Caruth’s Trauma Theory to analyse the psychological and emotional impact of Anupama’s experience. Trauma Theory, as presented by Caruth, suggests that trauma cannot be fully understood through traditional forms of narrative understanding.

Instead, it involves an experience of rupture, an event that disrupts the victim’s sense of reality and requires a process of reconstructing identity. Additionally, this paper draws on intersectional gender theory to explore how Anupama’s experience is not solely shaped by gender but also by her social class and familial relationships. By incorporating these theories, the research aims to understand how societal expectations of beauty are enforced through both personal and social trauma, and how resilience is built in the face of these intersecting oppressions. Gender, Beauty, and Societal Trauma Anupama’s story begins with her being praised for her beauty, particularly her fair skin, which is emblematic of beauty standards in Indian society. These external markers of beauty, however, are imposed on her as measures of worth and status. The sudden onset of vitiligo, which alters her skin, triggers not only a physical transformation but also an emotional and psychological trauma that disrupts her identity. “A small white patch had ruined her career as well as her marriage”. (Murty, Mahasweta 70) Anupama secretly visits the hospital. In her next visit she is noticed by Radhakka who is shocked to find Anupama who comes out of the hospital without her knowledge because Radhakka always thinks of her daughter-in-law as a simple and submissive girl who has never closed her in any way by word or by deed.

But now she does not believe this breach of confidence. When she reaches home, she calls out Anupama from the downstairs. When she enquires, she fumbles. While coming down to the stairs. Anupama loses her balance and rolls falls down the stairs. Anupama is unconscious. All the intimates instead of helping her they stand staring at the white patch on the foot of Anupama. Radhakka does not say anything, but she looks as if calamity has befallen them, but Girija feels a kind of vicious satisfaction because she thinks about Anupama that “you wanted to expose me, but now you are exposed”. (Murthy, Mahashwetha 53). Anupama’s trauma, as conceptualized by Cathy Caruth, is a rupture in her reality, a moment when she can no longer comprehend her position in society. Caruth asserts that trauma is not merely an event but an ongoing process of reliving and attempting to make sense of an event that cannot be fully understood. Anupama’s struggle to process her condition, compounded by the societal rejection she faces, underscores this theory. Dr. G. Aruna Devi and K. Vijay Lakshmi in article “Domestic Violence in Sudha Murthy’s Mahashweta” aptly observes the predicament of Anupama as: Life on Earth is not a paradise, especially to women like Anupama. She moves heaven and Earth to succeed in life, had many stumbling blocks. She was in the form of poverty missing her mother when she was a one-year-old baby, problems posed by her stepmother, poor father who was his school teacher domineering aristocratic mother- in -law and sister- in- law and educated but insensitive husband. (Aruna Devi 40) (www.language inIndia.com) The trauma Anupama experiences is not just personal but deeply social. It stems from the patriarchal ideals that women’s worth is intrinsically linked to their physical beauty. As Anupama’s vitiligo changes her skin, society’s reaction to her becomes one of rejection, ridicule, and pity. This social trauma is a consequence of gendered expectations, where women are often judged by their adherence to beauty standards that are predominantly physical. “Society at large would take Anand’s side and sympathize with him.” (Murthy’s Mahaswetha 78).

In Mahashweta, Murthy critiques this externalization of women’s value, showcasing the violence and alienation that ensues when women cannot meet these imposed ideals. Heidi Hartmann in *The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a more Progressive Union* defines patriarchy as: A set of social relations between men, which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among that men that enable them to dominate women. Though patriarchy is hierarchical, and men of different classes, races, or ethnic groups have different places in the patriarchy they are also united in their shared relationship of dominance over their women; they are dependent on each

other to maintain that domination... in the hierarchy of patriarchy all the men, whatever they rank in the patriarchy are bought off by being able to control at least some women (HeidiHartmam 14,15) Moreover, Anupama's trauma is compounded by the intersectionality of her gender and class. In a patriarchal society, beauty is often linked to social status, and Anupama's lower-middle- class status means that she has fewer resources to combat the societal pressures placed on her appearance. Class and gender intersect in Mahashweta to deepen the trauma of rejection, as Anupama faces not only a medical condition but also the harsh judgment of society that devalues her because she does not possess the "ideal" features of a woman. Intersectionality: Gender, Class, and Family Dynamics While Anupama's struggle is gendered, Mahashweta also presents an exploration of how class and family dynamics intersect with gender to further complicate her trauma. Anupama's experience is shaped by her social class, as her family's expectations mirror the pressures of the society at large. The trauma of being rejected by her husband and her family members due to her changing appearance is exacerbated by her class position. Anupama's sense of self worth becomes more fragile as her skin condition forces her into a position of social and familial marginalization. Shamanna-Anupama's father-is an example in life for the hardships of financial difficulties faced by the middle-class family. At Anupama's wedding, Shamanna managed to spend an extremely minimal amount of money from his side. "Anupama's father had bought her an artificial silk sari, for that was all he could afford" (36). Another event in the novel also vividly images about his economic constraints to the readers. Anupama was not sent to her mother's place on Gowri festival, rather a hundred rupees, which is a big amount for him, was sent by Shamanna. Radhakka who is a representative of the upper layers of the society-mocks him with nauseating words as, "The baksheesh I give our cook is more than this" (45). The wedding of his second daughter was also cancelled due to Anupama's skin disorder. Due to perennial troubles in arranging his daughter's marriage because of financial issues and other problems regarding Anupama's skin diseases, with a heavy heart he says once as, "Why I have to father girls? They have become milestones around my neck.

My worries have become doubled since Anu returned home. Why does she have to remain here? I am going to retire soon; how will I fend for all of us?" (72). An unbearable agony and a real illustration of the middle class society was evidently streamlined by the author by the character of Shamanna and his ordeal in raising his girl children. Anupama realizes that her husband and her mother-in-law are same her husband cannot go against the will of his mother her decision is to die is no use but it

only triple society at large world take on and sides and sympathizes with him (Murthy, Mahashweta 78) Anupama's husband, initially supportive, eventually rejects her, revealing the internalized misogyny and societal expectations that govern not only public life but also personal relationships. Her husband's change in attitude reflects the broader societal tendency to associate a woman's value with her appearance. This shift also demonstrates how familial love is conditional upon women's conformity to beauty norms. This intersection of class and family underscores how women's identities are shaped not only by gender but also by their social positions and relationships. Through an intersectional lens, Anupama's trauma becomes a multi-layered experience. Her suffering is not just a result of gendered rejection but also of class-based limitations that restrict her access to resources, opportunities, and even emotional support. In this way, Murthy underscores how intersecting identities—gender, class, and family—work together to deepen the trauma faced by individuals. Resilience and Healing: Reconstructing Identity Despite the trauma Anupama faces, Mahashweta ultimately underscores her resilience. Using Cathy Caruth's understanding of trauma, resilience in this context can be understood as the process of reconstructing identity after a traumatic rupture. Caruth argues that trauma cannot be fully understood in isolation; it must be relived and reprocessed in order for the individual to reclaim their sense of self. Anupama's journey toward healing is marked by her gradual acceptance of her appearance and the realization that she is more than her physical attributes. Anupama's process of rebuilding her identity reflects the notion of resilience as an ongoing act of resistance against societal norms. Through her experience, Murthy challenges the patriarchal and beauty-centered structures that aim to define women by their looks. Anupama's ability to reclaim her identity, despite the trauma she endures, is a testament to the strength and agency that women possess in confronting societal norms.

The process of resilience is not linear or immediate; it is a continual negotiation between self-acceptance and societal rejection. Furthermore, Anupama's resilience is rooted in her ability to break free from the expectations that define her worth based on her appearance. By defying these standards, Anupama not only heals herself but also rejects the societal stigma that seeks to diminish her value. Through this, Murthy advocates for a broader, more inclusive understanding of beauty and identity that transcends the superficial confines of physical appearance. Conclusion In Mahashweta, Sudha Murthy explores the complex interplay of gender, class, family dynamics, and societal beauty standards, all of which contribute to the trauma faced by Anupama. By employing Cathy Caruth's Trauma Theory and gender-based intersectionality, this

paper highlights how Anupama's experience is shaped by multiple layers of oppression, including societal rejection, familial expectations, and class-based limitations. Through this analysis, it becomes evident that Anupama's journey is not just about overcoming her vitiligo but also about reclaiming her identity and finding resilience in the face of intersecting societal pressures. Ultimately, Mahashweta serves as a critique of the patriarchal and beauty-centered norms that restrict women's agency and define their worth based on their appearance. Murthy offers a compelling narrative that calls for a redefinition of beauty and identity—one that transcends physical appearance and acknowledges the complexities of women's experiences. By examining the trauma Anupama faces and her eventual resilience, the novel emphasizes the importance of embracing a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of beauty, self-worth, and identity.

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Influence of Social Media usage on Intuitive Eating Behaviour – A Review

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Abstract

In today's world, social media has become an integral part in each of our lives. The usage of social media has a profound impact on Eating Behaviour in Individuals. Among all the age groups, young people are more likely to get influenced by social media which in turn affects their Lifestyle. In today's scenario, intuitive eating behaviour is commonly seen where the person consumes what he prefers with or without any sort of restrictions and contributes either increased caloric intake or decreased feeling of satiety. Though this type of eating behaviour listens to the body's cues, it will eventually affect food's acceptability. Social media also sometimes highlights unrealistic beauty standards, eventually, it leads to focusing more on body image and hard to self-accept which affects the eating concerns of a person. This not only has negative things to look into but also it has some positive things to look into. Social Media not only creates a negative approach but also has some positives it can create a good awareness among the society about what can be included or excluded in the diet that they are consuming and also produces new ideas and principles in an individual thereby leading to the well-being of a person. Moreover, it will give a satisfying eating experience and the person can also be psychologically content. So, one should be mindful of what they consume and how they consume and follow a healthy strategy for a better tomorrow. This topic further investigates the relationship between usage of social media and Intuitive Eating practices among people.

Keywords : Social Media, Eating Behaviour, Intuitive Eating, Mindful, Body Cues

Introduction

Health is defined by WHO (1948) as a “State of complete physical, mental and social well- being and merely absence of any disease or infirmity”. Health is the greatest element one can have. It should be considered as an important thing in everybody’s life. Often, many factors will affect the health either in a good or a bad way. When it comes to following a healthy lifestyle, eating behaviour is one of the major aspects that need to be looked into. Eating behaviour of a person is often influenced by the surrounding things. Many times, the way of consuming food depends on his perception. One such behaviour that we can observe, especially in today’s world, is Intuitive Eating Behaviour.

Intuitive Eating (IE) is an adaptive eating behavior that involves paying attention to the body’s physiological signals, including eating when hungry and stopping when feeling full (Giacone L, Sob C, et al., 2024). This type of behaviour is not something new but has been practiced from years back knowingly or unknowingly. When it comes to today’s scenario where Social Media plays a key role. People often get carried away by what they see and observe. When it comes to eating patterns, people usually tend to consume what they prefer and what satisfies them. There are many eating patterns which not always shows negative impact. But if the same person tends to consume something which affects the body and health, this needs to be keenly look into.

Intuitive Eating behaviour not always a positive approach to seek and likewise it is not always negative as well. People who have this IE behaviour, many have the consciousness of their body image as well. This drives them to maintain a certain diet that will not affect their body image negatively and help them to be confident in society. They may not seek the advice of a dietician or any concerned person but follow what seems to be effective.

The structured review was carried out combining the following search terms, social media, Eating Behaviour, Intuitive Eating, Mindful, Body Cues.

Intuitive Eating

Intuitive Eating Behaviour is an individualized approach. This term Intuitive Eating (IE) was introduced by Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch in 1995. When it comes to Intuitive Eating, Psychological flexibility and mindful eating are associated positively with the Intuitive Eating Behaviour in a person. So, the person will be much aware of

emotions and can decide on what to accept or reject. Intuitive Eating is a Multidisciplinary approach which includes societal aspects, individual preferences and difference in choosing the dietary plan, daily habits, psychological variables of individuals, preferences, likes, dislikes of a person, etc (Gülelçin, Aslı, 2022).

Often intuitive eating is changed interchangeably with mindful eating (Warren, J, 2017). Mindful eating usually encourages healthier and conscious food choices (Jordan, C, 2014). Intuitive eating is not always a negative habit to look into, it also has positive side to approach.

One of the principle of Intuitive Eating is “Honour your hunger” (Gülelçin, Aslı, 2022). where people have their own choice of consuming which ever foods they like and it satisfies their hunger. Not all intuitive eaters follow a complete wrong guide. People who are more towards health, though they may not consult any concerned person about what they can consume, they atleast have a discipline in controlling and restricting foods which will not benefit in any way. This habit also helps in satisfying mentally. The person may not be stressed or feel bad of consuming something that he doesn't like. This inturn leads to having an overall well-being of the person.

One of the negative aspect is that, social media projects an ideal body shape where people often mislead or misunderstood to be the perfect beauty standard. This leads to following fad diets where extreme weight loss is expected in a short duration of time, which will adversely affect the health (Gülelçin, Aslı, 2022). So the person tend to follow his/her own diet plan which should ultimately make them look like their ideal personality atleast up to some extent. People may not follow a healthy diet plan, since they follow what it seems to be right and correct. When a person is already following a certain type of diet and when he has to follow his intuition all of a sudden, it can be difficult to change a diet all of a sudden and be adapt to the new set of diet principles.

This Intuitive Eating may also cause Nutritional deficiencies. As the person seeks his own desire in his diet, this tend to include food in his diet may not nutritionally benefit to the body. So careful planning and considering what kind of food is being consumed is very important. This not only cause to change the diet plan but also changes the lifestyle of a person which inturn makes the person to have lifestyle disorders like obesity, diabetes, etc. Many are not aware that consuming certain foods is not suitable for the medical conditions they have. So it is very important before a person takes a decision.

Social Media and Intuitive Eating

Social media has a tremendous effect in each of our lives. Social media changed the way how we communicate or get information from. Man, often gets influenced and provoked by the things that are around. Social media is one such platform where the man learns and knows what is unknown to him. Compared to the earlier days, the flow of information has become wide and easily accessible. Earlier it has been only one way communication and the information gone to only certain group and much of exploration was not there like this generation. Old mediums like television, newspaper has restricted information flow which will not give information to large masses of people (Luders, 2008).

The lifestyle modifications, change in physical activity, diet- related behaviours of a person is linked to the social media (Goodyear, et al, 2021). When it comes to dietary modifications, changes in the media effected how a person consumes (Gülelçin, Aslı, 2022). Social media can either have a positive and also some negative impact in individuals' life.

When a person follows something that everybody else are consuming and could able to see a positive result, he can have that sense of social and community support and may not feel excluded. Following the social media can will be able to provide wide access and varied options to the people who wants to follow a certain routine which they are comfortable with. This makes them satisfied. Social Media can make the people to be encouraged to maintain a body figure seeing someone else on social media. This can encourage them to have a daily routine to have a physical fitness and follow a certain diet by controlling what needs to be controlled. Intuitive eating sometimes lead to mindful eating where the person can be mindful of what he is consuming. If a person has a zeal to follow a certain diet, he may even consult or follow someone from the social media whom they think a better choice to be followed to maintain a certain pattern of lifestyle.

Just like how intuitive eating behaviour has positive impact, it also has negative impact where many tend to carried away with the very unrealistic beauty standards and may not follow healthy lifestyle of consuming what all healthy food they got and may even step into unnecessary dieting which may not be required just because they want to maintain a good figure. This highlighting the physical attractiveness on social media leads to stress and eating disorders (Suhag, K; Rauniyar, S, 2024).

In social media there tend to be more comparison where a person wants to achieve something and tend to compare with others and try to follow and compete with them. For example, if a person sees someone who lost weight and looks slender and good by following a certain diet prescribed by certain consultant, he also tends to copy and compare just to compete with the other person and to show the world that even he can do something just like other person. It has been found that college students are found to have nutrient less and energy rich diets also likely to have a poor body image which lead to unsafe dietary approaches in order to maintain weight (Tabatabai, et al, 2021)

Apart from this, social media sometimes triggers the person which in turn changes his intuition. Especially now a days, online platforms are more popularized that people are more influenced through all the online content especially food. Advertisement of certain foods and places which most people do not know is now being popularized through social media apps. This motivated the person to visit certain place and tend to try those foods. Also, Food delivery apps has become an indispensable element (Lee,S., & Han, H. 2022). Food delivery apps also advertises in such a way that provokes the person to order the food even the time is odd. It introduced a new mode of access that eventually made an accessible for the unhealthy foods (Buettner, S.A, et al, 2023). So this can cause health problems as well.

Conclusion:

Social media use and eating habits do not have to be negatively related for every possible scenario (Gülelçin, Aslı, 2022) it also has some positive way to look at it. One should be aware of what they are consuming and what they are consuming is right or not. Few dietary factors which promote unrealistic achievements, easy weight loss in very short span of time, restrictive diet culture, etc should be keenly observed and excluded. It is always a better option to consult a diet consultant or respective person before proceeding to follow certain type of diet or habit. Above all, it is not the social media that to be blamed of for anything. It is one's own perspective towards something that acts as a driving factor either in a good way or a wrong way.

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