



JYANAVI

**Multidisciplinary Journal of School of Social Sciences,
Humanities & Management**

**SRI PADMAVATI MAHILA VISVAVIDYALAYAM
(Women's University), Tirupati**



Vol 2 No 4 (October-December 2026)

**Published
Under PMUSHA**



JYANAVI

Multidisciplinary Journal of the School of Social Sciences,
Humanities & Management

Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

A double-blind peer-reviewed quarterly journal
Vol. 2, No. 4 (October-December, 2026)

Chief Editor

Prof. V. Uma, Vice Chancellor, SPMVV

Editor

Prof. B. N. Neelima

Editorial Board

Prof. K. Anuradha - Department of Social Work
Prof. P. Vijayalakshmi - Department of Communication & Journalism
Prof. K. Madhu Jyoti - Department of Telugu Studies
Prof. J. Katyayani - Department of Business Management, SPMVV
Prof. Y. S. Sarada - Department of English Language and Literature
Prof. T. G. Amuthavalli - Department of Education
Prof. T. Sita Kumari - Department of Law
Prof. R. N. S. Saileswari - Department of Music, Dance and Fine Arts
Prof. G. Sarah Sarojini - Department of Physical Education

Publication Details

Printed and Published by Registrar, SPMVV.
This is a print version of the online journal (ISSN: **3049-2882**), printed exclusively for archival
and library use.
(Published under PM-USHA)

Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (SPMVV)

Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (SPMVV), Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, is one of India's premier women's universities dedicated to advancing higher education, research, innovation, and women's empowerment. Established with the vision of creating an intellectually vibrant and socially responsible community of women scholars, the university has emerged as a centre of academic excellence and transformative learning.

SPMVV offers a wide spectrum of undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes in disciplines ranging from Sciences, Technology, Arts, Humanities, Management, Education, and Social Sciences to emerging interdisciplinary areas. The university is distinguished by its dynamic curriculum, outcome-based education, and emphasis on experiential learning, enabling students to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical applications.

Research and innovation constitute the cornerstone of SPMVV's academic ecosystem. The university actively promotes interdisciplinary and socially relevant research through its well-equipped laboratories, specialized research centres, and collaborations with national and international institutions. A distinguishing feature of SPMVV is its strong commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and innovation. The university houses **eight incubation centres**, which serve as hubs for nurturing creativity, start-up culture, and entrepreneurial aspirations among students and researchers. These centres provide mentoring, training, technological support, and opportunities for industry interaction, encouraging young innovators to translate ideas into sustainable enterprises. Through workshops, innovation challenges, and skill development programmes, SPMVV cultivates an entrepreneurial mindset and promotes self-reliance among women.

Recognized for its outstanding academic standards and institutional excellence, SPMVV has been accredited with an '**A+**' **Grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)** and consistently ranks among the leading women's universities in the country. The institution has earned widespread recognition for its contributions to women's education, research, and societal development.

As a beacon of knowledge, culture, innovation, and social transformation, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam continues to inspire generations of women to transcend barriers, preserve and celebrate India's rich cultural heritage, pursue excellence, and emerge as leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs, and responsible citizens contributing meaningfully to national development and global progress.

CONTENTS

1	Trust in Human-Chatbot Interaction: An Integrated Model of Performance Expectancy and Decision Making <i>Dr. Anindya Deb & Alisha Pathak, Central University of South Bihar, Bihar</i>	1 to 14
2	Instagram and the Reconfiguration of Youth Fashion: A Study of Changing Fashion Trends Among 17-24-Year-Olds in Kasaragod District, Kerala. <i>Krishna Priya, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh</i>	15 to 21
3	When the Feed Feels Personal: Emotional Dependency on Social Media Algorithms <i>Sreehari T M, University of Calicut</i>	22 to 32
4	Bridging Languages with Machines: AI, Translation, and Journalism Practice among Marathi Journalists in Solapur, India <i>Dr.Ajit Gagare & Rushikesh Mandlik, Savitribai Phule University, Pune, Maharashtra</i>	33 to 43
5	Adoption of Artificial Intelligence in Filmmaking: A Diffusion of Innovation Perspective <i>Dr.Madala Sindhu, Amity University, Mumbai, Maharashtra</i>	44 to 57
6	Eco-Folkloristics and the Subaltern Body: Ecology, Memory and Resistance in Sheela Tomy's <i>Valli</i> <i>Chettupally Anvesh & Pallavi Negi, University of Delhi, New Delhi</i>	58 to 66
7	A Critical Analysis of Pedagogical Emphases in Guru-Dakshta Faculty Induction Programmes for Higher Education Faculty <i>Kanishka Awasthi & Pradeep Kumar Misra National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi</i>	67 to 77
8	Partners or Workers? Critical Discourse of CSR and Internal Communications in India's Gig Economy <i>Amrita Mukherjee & Prof Ganesh Sethi, Berhampur University, Odisha</i>	78 to 88
9	Constructing Transness: Visual Representation and Ethics in Cinema and OTT <i>Saswati Panda & Pankaj Garg, Chitkara University, Punjab</i>	89 to 106

- | | | |
|----|---|------------|
| 10 | A Study on National and International Perspectives for the Protection of Child Rights
<i>Chitra Shukla & Dr. G. Indira Priyadarsini, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh</i> | 107 to 115 |
| 11 | Inculcating Executive Presence among Young MBA Students: A Review of Emerging Leadership Competencies
<i>Dr. N. Sree Rajani & Dr. V. Bhargavi Reddy, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh</i> | 116 to 125 |
| 12 | Fiscal Priorities for Indian Agriculture: A Five-Year Review of Union Budget Trends (2021-2025)
<i>G. Aparna Devi & Dr. P. Neeraja, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh</i> | 126 to 136 |
| 13 | Resource Sharing in Special Libraries: Identifying Barriers and Building Sustainable Strategies for the Digital Environment
<i>P. Nishantha Chandrarika & Dr. J. Vivekavardhan, Osmania University, Hyderabad, Telangana</i> | 137 to 143 |
| 14 | A Study on the Persistence and Growth of Print Media in Tamil Nadu amidst the Rise of Digital and Social Media in the Recent Times
<i>Dr. D. Rajavel, Hindustan College of Arts & Science, Chennai, Tamil Nadu</i> | 144 to 153 |
| 15 | Can AI replace Teachers? An Indian Knowledge Systems Perspective
<i>Subhodeep Mukhopadhyay, Infinity Foundation India, Chennai, Tamil Nadu; Sudarshan Therani Nadathur, Siddhanta Knowledge Foundation, Chennai, Tamil Nadu & Madhusudan Therani, Engkraft LLC, California, USA</i> | 154 to 160 |
| 16 | The Evolving Landscape of Print Journalism in India: Opportunities and Challenges in the Age of Artificial Intelligence
<i>Sonal & Dr. Gyan Prakash Mishra, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh</i> | 161 to 167 |
| 17 | Beyond Grades: The Role of Holistic Knowledge Systems in Promoting Well-being in Indian Schools – A Systematic Review (2020–2026)
<i>Aasheesh Kumar & Prof. Sangeeta, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh</i> | 168 to 180 |

- 18 **Mulk Raj Anand: A Study of Social, Domestic, Economic and Human Values** 181 to 191
Shruti Singh, Saviitri Bai Phule Government Polytechnic, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh & Ashvini Joshi, R.K.D.F. University Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- 19 **Journalism and content creation: A comprehensive overview of Indian Youth & News in the Ecosystem of Streaming Media** 192 to 202
Dr. Atashi Bhattacharya, Surendranath College for Women, University of Calcutta, West Bengal & Dr. Jhumur Datta Gupta, Sister Nivedita University, Kolkata, West Bengal
- 20 **Women's Empowerment in the Digital Age: A Systematic Literature Review Using TCCM and ADO Frameworks** 203 to 229
Soumee Roy Choudhury Mukherjee, George College, Kolkata, West Bengal & Dr. Mou Mukherjee Das, Future Institute of Engineering and Management, Kolkata, West Bengal

Foreword

It gives us immense pleasure to present this issue of *JYANAVI*, which brings together twenty-six scholarly contributions representing diverse disciplines within the broad domains of Social Sciences, Humanities, Media Studies, Communication, Education, Economics, Law, Public Health, and Development Studies. This issue showcases contributions from scholars representing sixteen Indian states and union territories, along with international contributions from the United Kingdom and South Korea, reflecting the journal's growing geographical diversity and commitment to fostering interdisciplinary and globally relevant scholarship. It demonstrates how scholars across India and abroad are engaging with emerging social realities, technological transformations, and pressing developmental concerns.

The articles featured in this volume explore themes ranging from social media and public opinion, eco-critical readings of migration and gender, sustainable rural tourism, digital governance, algorithmic journalism, artificial intelligence, and healthcare transformation, to constitutional justice, financial inclusion, labour migration, climate change awareness, and changing political cultures. They examine the growing impact of digital technologies and artificial intelligence on communication, education, healthcare, and society. Some of the papers revisit questions of identity, culture, sustainability, and social equity through critical and interdisciplinary perspectives.

We express our sincere gratitude to all the authors for entrusting *JYANAVI* with their scholarly work. We also acknowledge the invaluable efforts of the reviewers and members of the editorial board whose expertise and dedication has ensured the academic quality and integrity of this issue. Their commitment to rigorous peer review and scholarly excellence is valuable for the journal's mission. We are also grateful to our Honourable Vice Chancellor Prof. V.Uma, whose continued support, encouragement, and commitment to fostering a vibrant research culture has been instrumental in the successful publication of *JYANAVI*.

Ultimately, the true measure of scholarship lies in its capacity to illuminate, to question and to transform. It is in this spirit that we present the current issue of *JYANAVI*, hoping that these contributions will inspire conversations and actions that will transcend the boundaries of academics and lead towards the creation of a more thoughtful, compassionate and sustainable society.

Prof. B.N. Neelima
Editor

Trust in Human-Chatbot Interaction: An Integrated Model of Performance Expectancy and Decision Making

Dr. Anindya Deb, Associate Professor, Department of Mass Communication and Media, Central University of South Bihar, Bihar

Alisha Pathak, Research Scholar, Department of Mass Communication and Media, Central University of South Bihar, Bihar

Abstract

The communicative behaviour of users has changed with the evolution and advancements of technology, significantly altering the dynamics of human machine interactions. The rapid integration of chatbots into everyday life, particularly in healthcare, has intensified the need to understand the role of trust in human-computer interaction. While existing models of technology adoption—such as the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)—emphasize performance expectancy and ease of use, they often overlook the socio-psychological construct of trust that shapes users' willingness to depend on conversational agents. This study integrates UTAUT, TAM, and the Human-Computer Trust Model (HCTM) to examine how trust influences performance expectancy and decision-making in human-chatbot communication.

A web-based survey of 255 users aged 18–45 in South Asia was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results demonstrate that trust has a strong and direct positive effect on both performance expectancy and decision-making. Model evaluation indicated robust predictive power (R^2 values above 0.89) and acceptable fit indices (SRMR = 0.042, NFI = 0.929). These findings highlight trust as a central determinant in chatbot adoption, shifting the discourse from purely functional acceptance to relational and affective dynamics. By empirically validating trust as a key predictor of technology use outcomes, this study extends current acceptance models and provides actionable insights for the design of reliable, transparent, and ethically responsible chatbots. The findings have particular relevance for healthcare and other high-stakes domains, where user trust is indispensable for effective decision support and engagement.

Keywords: Human Machine Communication, Chatbot, Decision Making, Performance Expectancy, Trust, TAM

Introduction

Trust has emerged as a pivotal concern with the growing use of conversational agents across sectors, particularly in healthcare where chatbot-provided advice can carry significant consequences for users' well-being. Existing research has largely emphasized system-centered factors such as accuracy, transparency, anthropomorphism, and persona design (Bach et al., 2022; Seitz et al., 2022), yet less attention has been given to how users themselves define, experience, and act upon trust during real-time interactions with chatbots. While multiple definitions and operationalizations of trust exist, and antecedents such as reliability, perceived humanness, and interaction quality have

been identified, a critical gap remains in developing user-centered models that link trust to cognitive and behavioral outcomes (Alagarsamy & Mehroliya, 2023).

This gap is particularly consequential in health-related contexts. Studies show that while clinicians increasingly integrate AI tools into their workflows, patients and vulnerable populations often exhibit hesitancy or conditional acceptance, driven by concerns about privacy, safety, responsibility, and personalization (Wu et al., 2024). These concerns often hinder the translation of “intention to use” into actual reliance on chatbot-provided advice. Moreover, trust is not static but dynamic, negotiated during ongoing interactions, where features such as empathy and social cues can either strengthen or repair user confidence (Tsumura & Yamada, 2024).

Addressing this gap, our study adopts a user-centered approach to examine trust as a direct antecedent of two underexplored outcomes in human–chatbot communication: performance expectancy—the belief that chatbots can enhance users’ ability to achieve health-related goals—and decision making—the willingness to rely on chatbot-generated recommendations. By integrating elements of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and the Human–Computer Trust Model (HCTM) into a unified framework, and empirically testing it through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), this study advances understanding of how trust operates across psychological and behavioral dimensions in health contexts. In doing so, it addresses the need to integrate social and technical explanations of trust, offering evidence that interactional cues and perceived empathic competence meaningfully shape user trust and adoption behaviors (Ding & Najaf, 2024; Gu et al., 2024).

By linking trust to both cognitive expectations (performance expectancy) and behavioral outcomes (decision making), this research clarifies how user-centered trust emerges in health chatbot interactions, develops an integrated theoretical account that bridges utility, trust, and adoption, and provides actionable insights for designers and stakeholders aiming to foster appropriate trust in chatbot technologies. The hypotheses derived from this framework position trust as a direct antecedent of both performance expectancy and decision making—marking a shift from studying mere intention to use toward understanding deeper cognitive and behavioral dimensions of trust.

The increasing use of machines and artificially intelligent tools for the purpose of communication and dissemination of information by different age groups across the globe suggests that we have come a long way in making machines more communicative. Earlier, machine mediated communication used to be a centre of attention but 2020 onwards we are seeing a rise in direct human to machine communication. However, irrespective of how advanced machines and artificial intelligence become, one question stays unaltered: whether it will ever be able to provide us the safe communicative spaces that our relationships with other human beings do. As we dive in to study human machine communication, we find multidimensional phenomena operating in the process of communication. One such phenomena is the role of abstract values like trust in human machine communication process. This study focuses on the role of trust as a major component in influencing the decision making of chatbot users and also their expectations of performance from chatbots.

Review of existing literature

In order to understand the existing status of trust in human chatbot communication, a thorough literature review was conducted using various sources. The available work has been organised below using thematic literature review under two broad themes. (Torraco, 2005)

Human Chatbot Communication

Chatbots are software driven robots capable of interacting with its users through instant messaging via text or voice. (Brandtzaeg and Følstad, 2018; de Greeff and Belpaeme, 2015) There are many categories of chatbots like menu or button based chatbots, rules-based chatbots, AI-powered chatbots, voice chatbots and generative AI chatbots. (IBM,2023) Button based chatbots are the simplest chatbots that operate with a fixed set of menu. Rules based chatbots use a predefined conversational path to answer any asked questions; these are commonly used for FAQs. AI-chatbots come with Natural Language Understanding (NLU) capability, they have the ability to understand the questions of users irrespective of how they are framed mostly, they possess an ability to remember users' interactions and act like a friend to them. Voice chatbots or voice bots are another category of chatbots that simply deal with voice as an input than text. Siri, Alexa, etc. come under this category of voice bots and they are extensively being used to get rid of monotonous IVR calls. The most latest category of chatbots is called as generative AI chatbots which not only act as conversational agents but also possess the ability to generate nascent content based on the database they have. ChatGPT4 is a prominent example of generative AI chatbots.

The idea of communication between humans and chatbots dates back to the 1960s, when Joseph Weizenbaum developed ELIZA, an early natural language processing program at MIT. ELIZA created the illusion of conversation by employing pattern matching and substitution techniques to replicate a psychotherapist's dialogue. Despite its simplicity, ELIZA showcased the ability of computers to participate in human-like conversations. In the 1980s, attention turned to more sophisticated systems such as PARRY, which was created by Kenneth Colby and aimed to simulate a patient suffering from schizophrenia. These pioneering chatbots established a foundation for future developments in AI and human-computer interactions.

Trust in Human Chatbot Communication

The emergence of chatbots has greatly changed the way humans interact with computers, allowing for more intuitive and efficient communication. As user expectations change, chatbots are increasingly crafted to be empathetic and aware of context, integrating emotional intelligence to improve user experience. The emphasis has now shifted from mere functionality to establishing trust and nurturing meaningful interactions.

As conversational agents advance with ChatGPT, comprehending their influence on user experience, trust, and engagement has become essential. User perception regarding chatbots significantly affects their functionality. Research conducted by Hancock et al. (2011) indicates that users' readiness to engage with chatbots is influenced by perceived social presence and anthropomorphism. When chatbots demonstrate human-like characteristics, users are more inclined to form a sense of trust and emotional connection. However, studies by Lee et al. (2020) reveal that excessive human-like qualities may create a situation called the "uncanny valley," where users experience discomfort if a chatbot appears overly human yet does not meet their expectations.

Trust is a vital element that impacts interactions with chatbots. Trust has been conceptualised in different ways across all the disciplines. Rousseau et al. in 1998 defined trust as a positive expectations about the intentions and behaviours of others. As per social capital theory (Putnam, 2000), the existence of trust plays a vital role in every relationship. Trust enables one to connect better with their fellows and the presence or absence of trust significantly guides their cooperative behaviour with others. Gefen (2000) emphasises that perceived trustworthiness, competence, and benevolence significantly influence users' readiness to depend on chatbots for information. Additionally, Wang et al. (2021) discovered that transparency in chatbot replies boosts user trust, as individuals prefer agents that clarify their reasoning and data sources.

There are multiple factors that influence trust- past experiences, competence, reliability and communication being some of them. The rise of technology, especially artificial intelligence and automation, has brought about changes in trust dynamics. Users' trust in technology influences their acceptance and dependence on these systems for making decisions (Lee & See, 2004). Studies show that individuals are more inclined to trust technology that showcases reliability, transparency, and performance. Trust shapes the methods and styles of decision-making. When trust is high, collaborative decision-making is more common (McAllister, 1995). In contrast, low levels of trust can create a competitive atmosphere, where individuals may withhold information and behave defensively, resulting in slower decision-making processes (Zand, 1972).

Chatbots are utilized in numerous fields, such as customer service, healthcare, and education. In healthcare, chatbots like Woebot reveal promise in offering support for mental health. Studies by Fitzpatrick et al. (2017) indicate that users often value the anonymity and accessibility provided by chatbot-based interventions, resulting in higher engagement in mental health practices. Yet, concerns surrounding the accuracy of information and the absence of human empathy continue to be substantial obstacles. Human-chatbot interaction is an evolving domain that carries important consequences for both technology and society. Grasping user attitudes, enhancing design, and tackling obstacles are crucial for creating successful conversational agents. As technology advances, continuous research will be important for influencing the future of human-chatbot exchanges, making sure they are not just effective but also reliable and engaging.

As evident in existing literature on chatbots, relationship with conversational chatbots has a significant impact on decision making and performance expectancy by the users. The role of trust in these relationships is significant in strengthening the bond between the user and chatbot. (Skjuve, 2021) However, most of the studies that we encountered dealt with machine mediated perspective of trust in human chatbot communication. Currently, this study attempts to bridge the existing gap in literature and provide a users' perspective of trust in human chatbot communication. This builds up on existing theoretical frameworks to explore how trust navigates decision making and performance expectancy when users interact with chatbots.

Theoretical Framework

This study built upon from three widely acclaimed theoretical models namely UATAT, TAM and HCTM.

Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model

Venkatesh et al. in 2003 introduced a conceptual framework to provide a comprehensive account of acceptance of information technology by an individual. This theory builds up on eight different models proposed for different disciplines like sociology, psychology, information technology, etc. These theories include Personal Computer Usage Model; Innovation Diffusion Theory; Technology Acceptance Model; Theory of Reasoned Action; Combined TAM-PBT; Theory of Planned Behavior; Social Cognitive Theory and Motivational Model. This theory proposes four main factors that influence behavioural intention and use behaviour. These factors are performance expectancy, social influence, effort expectancy and facilitating conditions. (Venkatesh et al., 2003) UATAT is generally used to study the acceptance of latest technology and usage patterns among a population. Since its proposal, it has been used by many researchers across the globe for studying the effect of these four factors on user behaviour and their intention to use. However, literature suggests that out of proposed factors, performance expectancy influences behavioural intention the most. (Mosweu et al., 2016; Afonso et al. 2012) Hence, for maintaining the relevance of our study we have selected performance expectancy as one of the elements on the basis of this theory.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

TAM was proposed by Fred Davis in 1986 at the University of Michigan. This model explains how the users accept and use technology. According to this theory the factors that influence acceptance of any new technology and intention to use by an individual are perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness refers to the extent upto which the user thinks using a technology will enhance their performance and perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which a technology is expected to be straightforward and effortless while using. According to TAM, technology acceptance is a three stage process where external factors (features of system design) stimulate cognitive responses in the form of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. This cognitive response ultimately leads to affective an response that is intention towards using a technology. This model suggests that if a user thinks something is easy to use, they are more likely to accept that technology and use it for their work. On the contrary, the technology that seems complex and difficult to use has a tough time being accepted by the users.

Human Computer Trust Model

For years human computer interactions were studied by the researchers but no empirical study was available to measure trust between the two. In 2020, Gulati et al. developed a socio-technical model to evaluate the construct of trust between human and computer during their interactions. They used seven attributes of trust and proposed a model using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling. These attributes were Benevolence, Competence, Honesty, Motivation, Predictability, Reciprocity and Willingness. This model bridged a major gap surrounding the literature that dealt with trust in human computer interactions. It was one of the pioneering works that focussed directly on human- IT artefact interactions rather than studying relationships between human beings mediated by technology. Hereby, this model played an instrumental role in establishing the relevance of trust in human machine interactions which are otherwise considered as mechanical and devoid of any abstraction. From this model, we picked up our independent element to study Human

Chatbot Interactions that is trust. This model was an empirical modification of Human Computer Trust Model originally proposed by Sousa et al. (2014). The study by Sousa et al. was based on participatory design sessions and was a combination of unification of the work done by Davis and Venkatesh et al.

Hypotheses Development

This paper is an attempt to introduce trust as one of the major determinants of decision making and performance expectancy by the users. In order to develop hypothesis, we began by defining each of the elements of this study namely performance expectancy, decision making and trust.

Performance Expectancy

Performance expectancy is defined as the belief of a user that a particular technology will be beneficial to them and help them enhance their performance during a task. Performance expectancy is one of the major elements in Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology proposed by Fred Davis. In context of this study, we operationally define performance expectancy as the degree upto which a user thinks that using chatbots for resolving their health related queries will help them achieve their goals and reduce their workload.

Decision Making

Decision Making is defined as the process by which an individual reaches a conclusion about what actions should be taken in order to fulfil their set of objectives within the given set of limitations. According to Russo and Schoemaker (2002), decision making is done in four phases that begins with learning from experiences and ends at coming to conclusions with framing of issues and intelligence gathering as intermediary steps. In this study we define decision making as the behaviour of users where they are willing to use chatbots for seeking and acting upon health related advices provided by chatbots.

Trust

Trust can be defined as a socio-psychological construct embedded in personalities and social relations. (Misztal, 1996) We operationally define trust as the degree of security chatbots are able to provide to its users while they use it for getting any sort of information. Trust itself is a latent construct influenced by multiple factors but for this study we see it as an independent variable that influences decision making and performance expectancy by chatbot users.

Based on the above operational definitions and available literature on performance expectancy, decision making, and trust; we frame the following hypothesis.

H1: Trust is positively related to performance expectancy.

H01: Trust is not positively related to performance expectancy.

H2: Trust has a direct positive affect on decision making for chatbot users.

H02: Trust has no direct positive affect on decision making for chatbot users.

Research Methodology

The researcher conducted a web based survey among the population aged between 18-45. The respondents of the survey hailed from different parts of south Asia. The questionnaire for the survey was designed based on UATAT and HCTM. In total, 12 questions were selected by the researchers keeping the purpose of measuring latent constructs of performance expectancy, decision making and trust. The survey was circulated among 800 individuals out of which 255 responses were received. Forced four point Likert scale was used to collect responses in order to stimulate a clarity in thinking among respondents. The collected response was analysed using Smart PLS 4 software where PLS SEM model was developed using the measured constructs. This model was analysed in two stages as suggested by Gulati et al. (2017). The first stage evaluated the measurement model using the parameters of outer loading and cronbach's alpha. In the second stage, structural model was evaluated using Variance Inflation Factor and R square values. Overall model fitness was assured by an acceptable range of Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normed Fit Index (NFI).

Data Analysis

The collected data for the study was analysed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling using SmartPLS 4 software. PLS SEM is a non-parametric method hence bootstrapping is used to get statistical significance. (Chin, 1998) The rationale behind using PLS SEM over other techniques stems from its relevance in exploratory studies. PLS-SEM is a robust multivariate analytical technique that enables researchers to evaluate intricate cause-and-effect connections between latent constructs and their associated indicators. This approach was selected for its capacity to manage small to medium sample sizes and its appropriateness for exploratory studies. (Shahsavari et al.,2023) The proposed PLS SEM model was analysed in two stages as suggested by Gulati et al. (2017) - evaluation of measurement model and evaluation of structural model.

Evaluation of measurement model

For evaluating the measurement model, outer loading of the constructs was calculated. The measurement model was evaluated based on two parameters including indicator loadings and internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha). In the initial analysis, some factors were found to have a outer loading of less than 0.4, such factors were removed for their insignificance. The final instrument had eight measures including exogenous and endogenous constructs. Table 1 demonstrates the outer loadings of eight indicators that we have used for measuring the endogenous constructs of decision making, performance expectancy and trust. For internal consistency reliability, we used Cronbach's alpha (CA) values. Performance expectancy showed a value of 0.733, decision making had a value of 0.683 and trust had a value of 0.605. All these values fall under acceptable range. Based on the above obtained values, the first stage of evaluating measurement model was successfully crossed.

Table 1. Outer loadings of elements being studied

	Outer loadings
DM1 <- Decision Making	0.726
DM2 <- Decision Making	0.715
PE1 <- Performance Expectancy	0.673
PE2 <- Performance Expectancy	0.663
PE3 <- Performance Expectancy	0.736
T1 <- Trust	0.656
T2 <- Trust	0.673
T3 <- Trust	0.627

Evaluation of structural model

On stage two, in order to evaluate the structural model, we used two values : Variance Inflation Factor and R square. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is utilised to identify multicollinearity within regression analysis, such as Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Multicollinearity takes place when independent variables exhibit strong correlations, potentially increasing the variance of coefficient estimates and leading to instability in the model's predictions. Kock (2015) highlights the need for studying VIF in order to assure that they fall under acceptable limits. Any value lower than 5 is considered acceptable for PLS SEM models (Hair et al., 2015). For our study, the significantly low VIF values showed that there was no multicollinearity between the variables taken into account for study.

	VIF
DM1	1.368
DM2	1.368
PE1	1.454
PE2	1.492
PE3	1.409
T1	1.262
T2	1.142
T3	1.269

In the comprehensive guide to PLS SEM provided by Hair et al., they claim that R square values are essential for assessing the quality of any model. R-square ranges between 0 and 1 for PLS SEM. Ideally, a value lesser than 0.25 is considered weak, from 0.25 to 0.25 moderate and anything above 0.50 is considered a strong fit. The R square and R square adjusted values for our endogenous constructs showed a promising value of 0.892 and 0.908 emphasising that our independent variable of Trust is highly predictive of decision making and performance expectancy. Thus, based on this, our model has a good predictive power, which essentially means that the

exogenous variables predict the endogenous variables with a high degree of accuracy. Table 2 demonstrates the aforesaid values as calculated by the smartPLS 4 software.

Table 2. R-square values of endogenous variables

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Decision Making	0.892	0.891
Performance Expectancy	0.908	0.908

Overall model fitness evaluation

For overall fitness of model, the parameters used were Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normed Fit Index (NFI). SRMR serves as a measure of goodness-of-fit in structural equation modelling, including Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). It measures the discrepancy between the observed correlations and those predicted by the model. NFI evaluates how well a model aligns by contrasting the chi-square statistic of the designated model with that of a baseline model, usually a null model where no correlations exist among the variables. Typically, the values for SRMR should be less than 0.08 (Hu and Bentler,1999) and for NFI any value greater than 0.90 (Lohmoller,1989) is considered a good fit. For the proposed model, SRMR turned out to be 0.042 and NFI was 0.929 both of which suggest that the model is acceptably fit.

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.042	0.042
NFI	0.929	0.929

Hypotheses Testing

Based on the available literature and theoretical underpinnings, the researcher had proposed the following hypotheses that correlated trust with performance expectancy and decision making.

H1: Trust is positively related to performance expectancy.

H01: Trust is not positively related to performance expectancy.

H2: Trust has a direct positive affect on decision making for chatbot users.

H02: Trust has no direct positive affect on decision making for chatbot users.

For validating our hypotheses, a two tailed t-test was performed whose results are shown in Table 3. We checked the p-values for both the relationships. P-values are essential in statistical hypothesis testing, acting as a means for researchers to assess the level of evidence opposing a null hypothesis. A smaller p-value (for instance, $p < 0.01$) indicates strong evidence opposing the null hypothesis, pointing to a significant effect or relationship. Conversely, a larger p-value (such as $p > 0.05$) indicates weak evidence, suggesting that any observed effect may just be a result of chance. For this study, $p=0.00$ that is strongly suggestive of the fact that both of our null hypotheses should be rejected and alternate hypotheses ought to be accepted. A high level of t-statistics also reaffirms acceptance of both the hypotheses. For H1, t-statistics is 11.276 and for H2, T statistics is 12.973 explaining a strong positive relationship between variables in both the cases.

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ((O-STDEV))	P values
Trust -> Decision Making	0.944	0.948	0.084	11.276	0.000
Trust -> Performance Expectancy	0.953	0.957	0.073	12.973	0.000

Findings and discussions

Based on the above statistical evaluations, we reaffirm that trust plays a vital role in influencing human chatbot communication. The expectations of users are highly dependent on the level of trust that chatbots are able to gain by their responses and the rapport they are able to establish in general. A contemporary user who is familiar with technology already knows that chatbots function with a humongous database. They can answer any question that is posed to them as long as it is in synchronisation with what they have been fed. On the same line, when a user is making the decision to use chatbots, the only thing that they look for is whether the tools they are going to use are trustworthy or not. Our findings from this study strongly emphasise the undeniable influence of trust in human chatbot communication and provide strong empirical evidence to support this point.

This study explored how trust shapes user perceptions and behaviors in human–chatbot interaction by integrating constructs from UTAUT, TAM, and HCTM into a single structural model. The results indicate that trust strongly predicts both performance expectancy and decision making, suggesting that user-centered trust is not merely a secondary consideration but a central determinant of how people evaluate and rely on chatbots. These findings contribute to ongoing efforts in HCI to move beyond system-centric accounts of trust toward relational and socio-psychological explanations of human–machine communication.

At the theoretical level, the study demonstrates the value of synthesizing adoption models with trust frameworks. While TAM and UTAUT have long highlighted perceived usefulness and performance expectancy as drivers of adoption, they have rarely been examined alongside explicit measures of trust. Our findings suggest that trust may serve as a psychological filter through which users interpret chatbot utility, thereby linking cognitive appraisals of usefulness with behavioral willingness to act on chatbot advice. This integrated approach aligns with recent calls to account for both social and technical determinants of trust in conversational agents. At the same time, the unusually strong effect sizes observed in this study underscore the need for caution. Although robustness checks indicated that common method bias was unlikely to fully explain the results, conceptual overlap between constructs may have amplified the relationships. This highlights the importance of refining measurement models to better capture the multidimensional nature of trust and to reduce redundancy across items. Future research using longitudinal or experimental designs would provide stronger evidence for causal ordering between trust, expectancy, and decision

making. Practically, the findings reaffirm that fostering appropriate trust is essential for sustainable chatbot adoption, particularly in healthcare where advice carries heightened risk. Users who perceive chatbots as competent, reliable, and transparent are more likely to evaluate them positively and to incorporate their recommendations into decision making. This implies that design strategies should go beyond technical accuracy to include mechanisms that signal empathy, explainability, and accountability. However, designers must also guard against unwarranted over-trust, which could expose users to misinformation or bias.

Taken together, these findings support the argument that trust is foundational to human–chatbot communication. While this study provides exploratory evidence for trust as a direct antecedent of performance expectancy and decision making, further research is needed to test the robustness of these relationships across contexts, populations, and trust dimensions. By treating trust as both a relational and functional construct, future work can advance a more comprehensive and ethically grounded understanding of chatbot use. We propose the following model in Fig.1 to elaborate the influence of trust on performance expectancy and decision making by chatbot users. This model comprises three elements : Trust, Performance Expectancy and Decision making. It shows that trust directly and positively influences performance expectancy and decision making by the chatbot users. The higher is the level of trust, the more is the performance expectancy and probability of users using chatbot for their work.

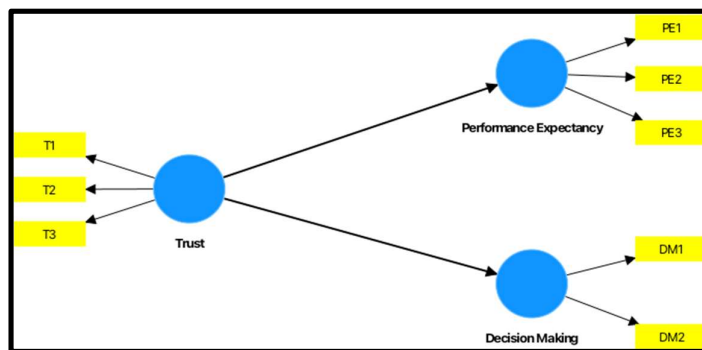


Fig.1. Trust in decision making and performance expectancy by chatbot users

Theoretical contribution

By integrating UTAUT, TAM and HCTM, this study advances human computer interaction theory in three ways. Firstly, it empirically validates trust as a central construct that predicts performance expectancy as well as decision making. This expands the existing models which treat trust as a peripheral construct. Secondly, it put forward trust not as a static belief but as a relational dynamic that shapes interactions and its outcomes. Lastly, it provides evidence from a South Asian context that diversifies the geographical scope of human chatbot communication research, which otherwise is majorly dominated by western settings. These contributions align with the need for more contextualised and relationally oriented approaches in human-computer interactions.

Implications of the study

Transparency in reasoning, accuracy, and clear communication of limitations can improve user confidence in chatbots. This study underscored the need of incorporating trust-building mechanisms in chatbot designs for developers. In healthcare and other sensitive field, attention to privacy, data protection, and accountability is particularly important. Organisations adopting chatbots must also acknowledge that trust is dynamic and evolves through consistent interactions. Continuous refinement, user-centred design, and ethical governance are therefore needed for sustaining trust over time.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers provide strong evidence for the relationship of trust with performance expectancy and decision making in the context of human-chatbot communication. Higher is the level of trust in chatbots, higher is the performance expectancy by the users and higher are the probability of users going to chatbots for their work.

This study was one of the pioneering attempts to establish the relevance of abstraction in human chatbot communication and explore further ways of widening the existing scholarship which, as inferred during the study, seems to be limited in the context of abstraction at present. Trust, empathy, understanding, co-operation and collaboration stay undeterred when it comes to communication and in order to foster technological development, each one of these should be given importance. From this study, we suggest the human machine communication scholarship to emphasise more on abstract values like one we did in this study in order to strengthen the relationship between human beings and machines while keeping both the humane perspectives and mechanical perspective of communication into consideration.

Limitations and recommendations

This research enhances the understanding of how trust affects performance expectancy and decision-making during interactions with chatbots. However, there are several limitations that should be recognized and present opportunities for future investigation. To begin with, trust was treated as a singular dimension in this study. Although this method provides clarity, it fails to account for the various factors that may influence trust, such as perceived transparency, reliability, empathy, privacy guarantees, and cultural alignment. Subsequent studies should consider a multidimensional approach to identify and evaluate these factors and their significance in building user trust.

Additionally, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to capture the dynamic nature of trust. Trust in interactions between humans and chatbots is not fixed; it can strengthen or weaken over time as users engage more frequently, encounter errors, or witness enhancements in chatbot capabilities. Longitudinal or experimental research could offer important insights into the processes involved in trust development, maintenance, and decline, thereby expanding the current findings.

References

1. Afonso, C. M., Roldan Salgueiro, J. L., Sanchez Franco, M. J., & Gonzalez, M. d. I. O. (n.d.). [Title not provided].
2. Broussard, M. (2019). *Artificial unintelligence: How computers misunderstand the world*. MIT Press.
3. Chin, W. W. (1998). The partial least squares approach to structural equation modeling. In G. A. Marcoulides (Ed.), *Modern methods for business research* (pp. 295–336). Erlbaum.
4. Etzrodt, K., Gentzel, P., Utz, S., & Engesser, S. (2022). Human-machine communication: Introduction to the special issue. *Publizistik*, 67. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11616-022-00754-8>
5. Fitzpatrick, K. K., et al. (2017). Delivering cognitive behavioral therapy to young adults with depression using an automated conversational agent: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 19(4).
6. Gefen, D. (2000). E-commerce: The role of familiarity and trust. *Omega*, 28(6), 725–737.
7. Gulati, S., Sousa, S., & Lamas, D. (2017). Modelling trust: An empirical assessment. In *16th IFIP TC 13 International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction—INTERACT 2017* (pp. 40–61). Mumbai, India.
8. Hancock, J., et al. (2011). The effect of anthropomorphism on trust and compliance. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(1), 129–136.
9. Hu, L.-T., & Bentler, P. M. (1998). Fit indices in covariance structure modeling: Sensitivity to underparameterized model misspecification. *Psychological Methods*, 3(4), 424–453.
10. Jurafsky, D., & Martin, J. H. (2019). *Speech and language processing*. Pearson.
11. Kleinberg, J., et al. (2020). Conversational agents: A review of the literature. *Artificial Intelligence Review*, 53(3), 1753–1795.
12. Lee, J. J., et al. (2020). The uncanny valley in human-robot interaction: A review. *International Journal of Social Robotics*, 12(2), 289–303.
13. Lohmöller, J.-B. (1989). *Latent variable path modeling with partial least squares*. Physica.
14. Luger, E., & Sellen, A. (2016). Like having a really bad PA: The gulf between user expectation and experience of conversational agents. In *Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 5286–5297).
15. Misztal, B. A. (1996). *Trust in modern societies: The search for the bases of social order*. Polity Press.
16. Mosweu, O., Bwalya, K. J., & Mutshewa, A. (2016). A probe into the factors for adoption and usage of electronic document and records management systems in the Botswana context. *Information Development*, 33(1), 97–110.
17. Nielsen, J. (2019). The principles of user experience. *Nielsen Norman Group*.
18. Octavianus, A. W., Wijaya, E. A., & Andajani, S. R. (2020). Menguji determinan individual intention to use pada aplikasi Traveloka. *Journal of Business and Banking*, 10(1), 71–89. <https://doi.org/10.14414/JBB.V10I1.2230>
19. Roekel, D. V. (n.d.). *Preparing 21st century students for global society*. National Education Association. <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/A-Guide-to-Four-Cs.pdf>
20. Skjuve, M., Følstad, A., Fostervold, K. I., & Brandtzaeg, P. B. (2021). My chatbot companion—A study of human-chatbot relationships. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, 149, 102601. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhcs.2021.102601>

21. Topping, K. J., et al. (2020). Chatbots as learning companions: Evaluating the effectiveness of chatbot interactions in education. *Computers & Education*, 156, 103931.
22. Torraco, R. J. (2005). Writing integrative literature reviews: Guidelines and examples. *Human Resource Development Review*, 4(3), 356–367.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484305278283>
23. Türetken, O., et al. (2018). Customer service chatbots: A framework for understanding their role in customer service. *Journal of Business Research*, 92, 373–380.
24. Venkatesh, V., Morris, M. G., Davis, G. B., & Davis, F. D. (2003). User acceptance of information technology: Toward a unified view. *MIS Quarterly*, 27(3), 425–478.
25. Wang, Y., et al. (2021). Trust in chatbots: A systematic review and future research directions. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 121, 106803.

Instagram and the Reconfiguration of Youth Fashion: A Study of Changing Fashion Trends Among 17-24-Year-Olds in Kasaragod District, Kerala.

Krishna Priya, Research Scholar, Department of Communication and Journalism, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

Abstract

This study aims to assess the influence of Instagram on the changing fashion trends among the 17 to 24-year-old population in Kasaragod district, Kerala, India. As a social media platform, Instagram has been a significant part of the lives of many young people around the world. Instagram has overtaken many traditional sources such as magazines and newspapers as a source of information on fashion. A quantitative survey research design was adopted for this study, with 120 respondents selected from undergraduate and postgraduate students who were given a questionnaire to fill. The study focuses on Instagram's role in changing the respondents' fashion trends and the influence of Instagram influencers on the respondents. The study also looks at the extent to which Instagram has contributed to the rise in online shopping by the respondents. The study finds that Instagram has had an influence on the changing fashion trends of its users, as reflected in their increased usage of the social media application, with 69% of the respondents indicating that Instagram Reels is the most influential feature for fashion trends on the application. The study also finds that Instagram has not resulted in significant pressure on the respondents to keep up with the changing fashion trends, with 50% of the respondents indicating that they do not feel pressurized to follow the trends on Instagram, and 61.9% of the respondents also indicated that they do not follow Korean fashion. The study provides invaluable information on the influence of this social media platform on fashion trends among the youth.

Keywords: Instagram, fashion trends, youth culture, social media influence, fashion influencers, Kasaragod

Introduction

Fashion is a distinctive and habitual tendency in a person's style of dressing. Fashion refers to not just clothing but also includes accessories and hairstyles and overall lifestyle. Fashion reflects cultural, social, and psychological aspects of identity, and the digital age has fundamentally transformed how fashion trends emerge, disseminate, and are adopted, with social media platforms replacing traditional gatekeepers such as fashion magazines and runway shows as the new sources of inspiration.

Instagram, which was launched in 2010 and has today over 1 billion active users, has been noted as a significant influencer of fashion trends around the world (Mohamad Hanafiah& Mohd Fauzi, 2026).

Instagram is a visual medium with an emphasis on aesthetics and e-commerce, which has made it a fertile ground for the creation and consumption of fashion trends. Instagram is significantly used by the 17 to 24-year-old population as a means of self-expression and social validation.

This study focuses on Kasaragod district, the northernmost district of Kerala, India, whose fashion trends are influenced by the culture of both Kerala and the urban cosmopolitan of Mangalore that borders Kasaragod. The study looks at the influence of Instagram on the fashion choices of the youth in Kasaragod district.

Objectives

The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the correlation between using Instagram and changing fashion preferences among the youth.
2. To determine the extent to which Instagram influences the perception of fashion among the youth.
3. To analyse the role of influencers and celebrities on Instagram in driving the youth's fashion trends.
4. To investigate the influence of Instagram on the increase in online shopping trends among the youth.

Hypotheses

The study tests the following hypotheses:

H1: Changing fashion trends on Instagram influence youngsters.

H2: Youngsters are influenced by Korean fashion through Instagram.

H3: Social media influencers have a major role in driving fashion trends among youngsters.

H4: Instagram has an influence on the increase of online shopping trends.

Literature Review

The relationship between social media and consumption of fashion has been the focus of much research. Research shows that social media platforms such as Instagram have changed the dynamics of the fashion industry, from trend dissemination to purchasing behaviour.

Social Media and Fashion Consumption

Social media has been found to have a significant influence on fashion trends. Instagram has been found to change the rate at which styles come and go (Kim & Choi, 2025). With Instagram's comment and like features and the ability of Instagram users to share photos, Instagram has had a significant influence on the rate of style diffusion and has been found to create new expectations among fashion consumers (Kim & Choi, 2025). 60% of Instagram users have said they discover new products on the app (Mohamad Hanafiah & Mohd Fauzi, 2026). Instagram Reels has emerged as a launchpad for fashion trends, with fashion posts getting 40% more engagement from users than other formats in the social media application (Fortune India, 2026). Research commissioned by Meta and carried out by Ipsos has found that Reels drive 81% of product discovery, 66% of consideration, and 47% of purchase influence in Instagram (Fortune India, 2026). The fast-fashion brand Urbanic was able to put a "silk scarf top" that was seen on TikTok and Instagram by

customers who saw the post on TikTok and Instagram on the market, and consumers were seen in the streets wearing them, a week later (WWD, 2026).

Studies have found that influencer marketing has bridged the gap between high-end fashion and everyday wear, making fashion trends much more accessible and relatable (Gupta & Nair, 2025).

A study carried out on Middle Eastern university students from Generation Z (N=800) has found that the physical attractiveness and para-social interaction (PSI) of influencers had the most impact on purchase intention, followed by informativeness and trustworthiness of the influencer (Mendeley, 2025). Another study focusing on South African Generation Z consumers (N=497) has found that attractiveness, expertise, perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness were all positively associated with purchase intention (Mendeley, 2025). Dually process theories of purchase intention can be applied to influencer marketing, and the studies have found that affective-relational cue utilization and diagnostic information utilization by an influencer have a positive association with purchase intention (Mendeley, 2025). The role of authenticity in influencer marketing has been emphasized, with influencers using their platforms to share their stories, ideas, and lives in order to connect with their audiences (Gupta & Nair, 2025). Research carried out recently has suggested that brands should invest in creators whose community fit is high and protect authenticity through disclosures (ET BrandEquity, 2026).

The Korean Wave and Fashion

The Korean Wave or Hallyu refers to the rising influence of Korean popular culture around the world. Korean dramas and K-pop have been noted to have changed the fashion in various ways, influencing Indian youth's preference for clean cuts, pastel shades, smart layers and precision (News18, 2026).

K-beauty has transformed from a niche import to a mainstream retail in India. Korean brands such as Innisfree have set up standalone stores and other brands such as COSRX, Some By Mi, and Laneige are stocked and are available online through quick-commerce with two-hour delivery (ET Now, 2026). The Korean beauty movement has not just created new import categories but has also influenced Indian beauty consumers' expectations of all shelf products (ET Now, 2026). Instagram has played a significant role in the spread of Korean culture, enabling its fans to follow K-pop stars and adopt the aesthetic styles which extend to fashion, beauty, and lifestyle (News18, 2026).

Contextualizing Kasaragod

Kasaragod district, the northernmost district of Kerala, India, is a unique case for studying fashion trends. Due to its proximity to Mangalore, which is a major city in Karnataka, the culture and fashion trends of Kasaragod are influenced by those of Mangalore. Research on higher education in the region has shown that the city is a magnet for Kasaragod students who commute to the city for education as it has grown into a medical and educational hub (The New Indian Express, 2026). A study carried out in 2022 has shown that over half of Kasaragod's higher education-eligible students cannot access college locally, and with only less than 7,000 college seats available, out of approximately 13,970 students who complete 12th grade (The New Indian Express, 2022), the education migration pattern in the region could expose the respondents to different fashion influences.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopts a survey research design using the quantitative research type. Quantitative research designs are suitable for studying the patterns of behaviour and attitudes among a given population and analyzing the relationships that exist between variables.

Sample and Data Collection

An online survey using Google Forms was conducted, and a total of 122 questionnaires were completed by the respondents, out of which 120 were used for the study. The study used random sampling to select the sample of 120 undergraduate and postgraduate students in Kasaragod district from the target population of the 17 to 24-year-old youth.

Measures

The questionnaire comprised demographic questions and 15 questions concerning the study's four hypotheses and the factors that influence the respondents' purchasing behaviours. The questions were open-ended and closed-ended questions concerning Instagram usage, engagement with fashion-related content on the application, following influencers, fashion-related purchases, features, and influence, and opinions on Korean fashion.

Limitations

The study has several limitations. Being a quantitative study that relied on an online survey, the study could not have covered all the potential respondents, whose number might be even higher than the 120 respondents that were used for the study. Furthermore, the study could not have included the opinions of all the youth population in Kasaragod district due to the fact that the online survey approach excludes those who do not have access to the internet or who do not have Instagram accounts.

Data Analysis and Findings

Instagram Usage Patterns

The data show a high level of Instagram engagement among the respondents. A majority (55.8%) use Instagram multiple times a day, with 22.5% using it a few times a day. Rare use was reported by 9.2%, and there were respondents who had never used the platform. Regarding time spent on the platform, 28.8% of respondents spend 1-2 hours on Instagram, 23.7% spend 2-3 hours, and 22.9% of the respondents said they spend more than 3 hours on Instagram daily.

Engagement with Fashion Content

Out of the respondents, 29.2% engage with outfit inspiration content, 19.2% follow influencer fashion content, and 10% each interact with brand promotions and fashion blogs. Notably, 31.7% of the respondents do not engage with any fashion-related content.

A majority (58.3%) follow fashion influencers or brands, while 41.7% do not. Among those who follow fashion-related content, trend updates (31.1%), affordability of fashion items (30.1%), and

style aesthetics (29.1%) were the main influencing factors, with brand collaborations having the least influence (9.7%).

Purchasing Behaviour

Slightly more than half of the respondents (51.7%) have purchased clothes or accessories after seeing them on Instagram. However, the frequency of such purchases is low, with 11.6% buying frequently, 33% rarely buying, and 33.9% saying they do not buy items inspired by Instagram's fashion trends.

Feature Influence

Instagram Reels is the most influential feature for fashion choices, with 69% of the respondents selecting it. Posts and Stories followed, with Instagram Live and the shopping feature having minimal influence.

Perceived Influence and Pressure

Respondents were asked whether Instagram plays a major role in shaping their personal fashion style, with responses divided: 17.5% said "yes, completely," 31.7% said "somewhat," and 16.7% each chose "neutral" and "no, not at all." Regarding pressure to keep up with trends, 50% of the respondents did not feel pressurized, while 38.1% felt pressured sometimes and 11.9% felt significant pressure.

Korean Fashion Influence

Contrary to hypothesis H2, a majority of respondents (61.9%) do not follow Korean fashion trends. Only 12.7% actively follow them, and 25.4% do so sometimes. Among those who do follow Korean fashion, minimalist and aesthetic appeal (40.2%) was the most attractive aspect, followed by K-drama influenced styles (25.3%) and streetwear (19.5%). A majority (51.3%) never try to copy Korean fashion styles seen on Instagram. Regarding Instagram's role in globalizing Korean fashion, perspectives were divided: 30.1% said "yes, definitely," 36.3% said "somewhat," and 33.6% said "no, not at all."

Reliability as a Fashion Source

A substantial majority (69%) would recommend Instagram as a reliable source for fashion inspiration, while 31% would not.

Discussion

The findings mostly support the general hypothesis of the study that Instagram influences changing fashion trends among the youth, while providing significant nuances to this hypothesis. The high rates of Instagram engagement and the significant followership of fashion accounts confirm Instagram's role as a significant mediator of fashion trends. The dominance of Instagram Reels has implications for how content needs to be formatted on the platform. This finding is congruent with other studies that have found that Instagram is a discovery and learning platform for Generation Z, women, and Bharat (Fortune India, 2026).

The study supports **H1** (Instagram influences fashion trends) and **H3** (influencers drive trends) with the majority of respondents (58.3%) following fashion influencers and Reels being the primary influence channel. The role of influencers as authentic, relatable figures appears central to their effectiveness, consistent with existing research on micro-celebrity endorsement (Gupta & Nair, 2025). The data showing that Reels drives 81% of product discovery and 47% of

purchase influence further supports the platform's integration into the discovery-consideration-purchase pathway (Fortune India, 2026).

H4 (Instagram influences online shopping) receives moderate support. While 51.7% of respondents have purchased items seen on Instagram, the low frequency of such purchases suggests that Instagram functions more as a discovery and inspiration tool than a consistent shopping platform. This aligns with research that positions Instagram as a driver of impulse purchases rather than routine commerce (ET BrandEquity, 2026).

H2 (Korean fashion influence) is not supported by the data. Despite the documented global rise of Korean cultural influence (News18, 2026; ET Now, 2026), the majority of Kasaragod respondents do not actively follow Korean fashion. This discrepancy may reflect the local specificity of the sample or the distinction between awareness and adoption. Korean fashion may function as a recognized aesthetic without being directly imitated by most users. Notably, Indian fashion consumption is shifting towards "affordable premium," with consumers prioritizing quality, value, and experience over quantity (Fibre2Fashion, 2026), which may explain why Kasaragod youth adopt Korean fashion selectively rather than wholesale.

The finding that 50% feel no pressure to follow Instagram fashion trends is notable. While Instagram influences inspiration and purchasing, it does not appear to generate significant conformity pressure among this demographic, suggesting that youth exercise agency in selectively adopting trends that align with their identities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study demonstrates that Instagram is a significant influence on fashion trends among youth aged 17-24 in Kasaragod District, though its impact is more nuanced than often assumed. The platform serves as a primary source of fashion inspiration, with Reels and influencers playing central roles in trend dissemination. However, the majority of users maintain a selective relationship with Instagram fashion content, adopting trends without feeling compelled to conform completely.

The findings have implications for fashion marketers, who should prioritize short-form video content and influencer collaborations to reach this demographic. Educators and cultural analysts should recognize the role of digital platforms in shaping youth identity and consumption patterns. Future research could explore longitudinal effects, examine gender differences in Instagram fashion engagement, and investigate the platform's influence in other regional contexts.

References

1. ET BrandEquity. (2026, February 5). *Scroll, spot, buy: Why fashion and lifestyle shopping is growing on Instagram.*
2. ET BrandEquity. (2026, May 17). *Cart stars: Gen Z drives fashion, beauty e-sales.*
3. ET Now. (2026, April 12). *K-Drama drives consumer economy: How India's Korean wave obsession turned into big business across beauty, food and fashion.*
4. Fibre2Fashion. (2026, February 4). *Indian fashion consumers prioritise quality over volume: Deloitte.*
5. Fortune India. (2026, June 4). *Reels emerges as discovery and learning platform for Gen Z, women and Bharat: Meta-Ipsos study.*
6. Gupta, R., & Nair, K. (2025). *Micro-celebrities' interactive impact on brand attitude and purchase intentions.* Emerald Publishing Limited.
7. Kim, H., & Choi, C. (2025). Core trends of MZ generation fashion appearing on Instagram posts. *Fashion Business*, 29(1), 22–40. <https://doi.org/10.12940/jfb.2025.29.1.22>
8. Magzter. (2025, June 24). *Masstige mania: How Gen Z is ditching luxury labels for trend-first fashion in India.*
9. Mendeley. (2025). Instagram mega-influencers' effect on Generation Z's intention to purchase: A technology acceptance model and source credibility model perspective. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 20(2).
10. Mohamad Hanafiah, H. Z., & Mohd Fauzi, N. (2026). Instagram marketing and customer satisfaction in the fashion industry: A systematic review. *Issues and Perspectives in Business and Social Sciences*, 6(2), 244–263. <https://doi.org/10.33093/ipbss.2026.6.2.2>
11. News18. (2026, April 9). *The 'Dynamite' effect: How BTS, K-dramas are reshaping India's culture.*
12. The New Indian Express. (2022, April 22). *No colleges in Kerala's Kasaragod for a majority of students eligible for higher education: Study.*
13. The New Indian Express. (2026, July 11). *Mangaluru a magnet for Kasaragod students eyeing 'vibe' courses.*
14. WWD. (2026, May 14). *New era of fashion commerce defined by instant conversion as social platforms become the new storefront.*

When the Feed Feels Personal: Emotional Dependency on Social Media Algorithms

Sreehari T M, Research Scholar, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Calicut

Abstract

This paper explores the emotional dependence on algorithmic feeds in the everyday social media use. Using qualitative data from a phenomenological study of internet users in Kerala, this research analyses how users experience and make sense of algorithmic recommendations in their everyday emotional contexts. The study goes beyond the usual questions on algorithmic awareness or technical understanding. It looks at how individual feeds become relevant through moods, rituals, vulnerabilities and everyday interpretations. It implies that users' interactions with algorithms are not only shaped by visibility but also by affective experiences. The research claims that emotional dependence on algorithms is not an issue of overuse, but rather a negotiated interaction between algorithmic personalisation and user affective interpretations, foregrounding user narratives.

Keywords: Algorithmic experience; Algorithmic Imaginary; Phenomenology; Lived Experience

Introduction

Algorithmic systems have become part of the ordinary experience of using digital media. Social media feeds, search results, reel recommendations, targeted advertisements, and personalised notifications are shaped by algorithmic processes. These systems organise what users encounter online by sorting, ranking, filtering, and recommending content (Gillespie, 2014). Most users encounter algorithm not as technical procedures or codes. They encounter algorithm through everyday platform experiences. Scholarly works on algorithm have focused on questions of power, visibility, opacity, governance, and platform control. Studies have shown that algorithms are not neutral technical tools, but socio-technical arrangements integrated in economic and cultural structures (Beer, 2017; Diakopoulos, 2015; Pasquale, 2015; Willson, 2017). These concerns are important because algorithmic systems shape access to information and structure digital environments in significant ways. Also, this approach can sometimes treat "the algorithm" as a hidden object to be uncovered. Gillespie (2016, p. 52) notes that critical algorithm studies has often been directed toward exposing the "hidden core inside these complex systems" and the "mechanic ghost in the machine." Even though this perspective helps to explain algorithmic power, it does not fully address how users engage with algorithms in day to day life.

Taking into account this limitation, recent scholarly works has turned toward user experience. Empirical studies of algorithmic culture from the user's point of view is limited. Some exceptions are Bucher (2017); Fletcher & Nielsen (2019) Hargittai et al. (2020). User-centered approach towards algorithms are important because users may not know how algorithms technically function, but they often develop explanations and assumptions. Sometimes users raises doubts, and expectations based on what they repeatedly experience on platforms.

This Particular work approaches algorithms from the perspective of lived experience. Based on qualitative data from a broader phenomenological study of internet users in Kerala, it examines how algorithmic feeds are experienced, interpreted, and emotionally negotiated in everyday digital life.

Review of Literature

Several scholars have examined how people notice, imagine, and explain algorithmic systems in everyday life. Bucher (2017) introduces the concept of the “algorithmic imaginary” to describe how users imagine algorithms. This concept of Bucher is useful because users rarely encounter algorithms as technical systems. Instead, they engage them through visible platform outcomes such as recommendations, repeated content, advertisements, and changing feeds. The algorithmic imaginary is therefore more than a false belief about technology, but a method of making sense of systems that remain opaque to a large extent.

DeVito and colleagues define algorithmic folk theories as the “intuitive, informal theories that individuals develop to explain the outcomes, effects, or consequences of technological systems” (DeVito et al., 2017, p. 3165). Studies have shown that users develop such explanations through platform experience, observation, comparison, and experimentation (Eslami et al., 2015; Rader & Gray, 2015). These explanations are often partial and sometimes lack certainty, but they necessarily shape how users interpret platforms and adjust their behaviour. Users may like, skip, search, hide, follow, unfollow, or change browsing habits in an attempt to influence what they see (Haim et al., 2018; Lomborg & Kapsch, 2020; Min, 2019; Thurman & Schifferes, 2012).

In this study, this discussion is extended through a phenomenological approach to algorithmic experience. Phenomenological approaches have already been used to study social media and everyday digital life (Åhman & Hedman, 2019; Bengtsson & Johansson, 2021; Couldry et al., 2016). Longo (2025) argues that this framework can be extended to algorithms by focusing on how algorithms appear to users in their interaction with platforms. This is important as users do not see the algorithm itself. They encounter its appearances through arranged feeds, suggestions, advertisements, repetitions, and unexpected forms of relevance.

Phenomenology helps to look beyond the simple division between hidden reality and surface appearance. Phenomenologists such as Husserl and Heidegger argue that phenomena are not flawed copies of reality, but manifestations of the thing itself (Loidolt, 2018, p. 57). Heidegger states that “one cannot ask for something behind the phenomenon at all, since what the phenomenon gives is precisely that something in itself” (Heidegger 1992, 86). Merleau-Ponty also stressed on the inseparability of subject and world: “The world is inseparable from the subject, but from a subject which is nothing but a project of the world, and the subject is inseparable from the world, but from a world which the subject itself projects” (Merleau-Ponty, 2010, p. 430). Extending this philosophy to algorithmic media, this means that users’ experiences are not secondary to the algorithm. They are central to how the algorithm becomes meaningful.

Phenomenological framing also connects with methods that study algorithms in practice. Scholarly works of Kitchin (2017), Seaver (2017), Christin (2020), and Dobson (2023) have argued for the move beyond analysing algorithms as mere code. Their work points toward studying algorithms as

socio-technical assemblages, cultural practices, and situated operations. A phenomenological tradition asks the question of how algorithmic systems are disclosed through lived encounters.

For this study affective dimensions is also important. Bucher (2018) argues that algorithms reveal themselves through “their capacity to create certain affective impulses, statements, protests, sensations and feelings of anger, confusion, or joy.” Users do not experience the statistical operations inside these systems but they experience the moods, feelings, and sensations that are co-generated through algorithmic encounters. These affective responses may guide further engagement with the platform, creating “affective feedback loops” (Grusin, 2010).

Affect theory helps clarify this relation. Affect may be understood as mood and intensity emerging through “forces of encounter” (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010). Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) idea of the capacity “to affect and be affected” helps us understand the user-algorithm relations. Users affect platforms through clicks, views, searches, likes etc. Platforms affect users by arranging what becomes visible, repeated, or recommended. Kennedy and Hill’s (2018) argument that people’s engagements with data are often emotional rather than purely rational or technical is also important here. Ruckenstein and Granroth (2020) states that personalised advertising can produce an “intimacy of surveillance,” where personalisation feels both intimate and uncomfortable.

Works on algorithmic feeds also highlights how users may experience personalised content as a reflection of themselves. Milton et al. (2023) states that users describe TikTok’s For You Page as reflecting themselves and their communities. Schellewald (2023, p. 1576) describes this as the “for you feeling,” while Bucher (2017) notes that users may also feel classified by algorithms. This reflection is not a direct expression of identity, but an algorithmically amplified reflection of previous viewing habits (Schellewald, 2021). Bhandari and Bimo (2022) describe this shift from the “networked self” (Papacharissi, 2011) to the “algorithmised self,” where users receive a sense of self through repeated encounters with algorithmically curated content.

Objectives of the Study

As we have discussed in previous sessions, this work is concerned with the emotional dimension of users’ everyday encounters with algorithmic feeds. In this work focus is on how users experience personalised recommendations within ordinary social media use. Since algorithmic operations often remain opaque, the study gives attention to the meanings, assumptions, and interpretations through which users make sense of algorithm. Based on this, objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine how users emotionally experience algorithmic feeds in everyday social media use.
2. To explore how users make sense of algorithmic suggestions and recommendations.
3. To analyse emotional dependence on algorithmic feeds as a negotiated relationship between personalisation, affect, and user interpretation.

Methodology

Data for this study were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews with internet users from Kerala. The interviews attended participants' everyday digital practices, their moments of noticing algorithmic influence, explanations of platform behaviour, and the feelings that emerged from continued engagement with algorithmically mediated content. Participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling in order to include users with varied levels of digital familiarity, platform use, and social background. The broader fieldwork involved 71 research interactions, and the analysis for this work was based on 37 interviews. Participants aged between 16 to 68 years were part of this study. This consisted of 20 female and 17 male participants. They belong to different socio-economic and occupational backgrounds, including students, teachers, taxi drivers, homemakers, and other everyday internet users.

All the interviews were conducted in Malayalam and were recorded with the consent of the participants. The interviews were manually transcribed and later uploaded into Taguette, an open-source qualitative data analysis software. The transcripts were read multiple times, and relevant portions were highlighted and coded. The analysis followed an interpretive and inductive approach, supported by reflective notes maintained by the researcher during and after the interviews. Pseudonyms are assigned to participants to ensure anonymity, while retaining relevant demographic and contextual details necessary for analysis.

For this paper, selected narratives from the thesis data were re-analysed with specific attention to emotional dependence on algorithms and objectives of this study. The following analysis and discussion part is focused on how participants described algorithmic feeds and make sense of its operations.

Analysis & Discussion

Algorithmic Companionship and Emotional Support

Several participants viewed the algorithmic feed not merely as a system that delivers personalised content. They described it through a vocabulary of companionship, care, adjustment, healing, and encouragement. These descriptions are important because they show how users make sense of algorithmic recommendations. Concern here is not whether the algorithm actually understands emotion, but how users experience its presence affectively.

Adithyadev, an undergraduate student, aged 20, described one such experience:

“It [Instagram algorithm] can accurately know the emotional state that I am going through. January, last year, I went through a breakup, which emotionally hit me hard. At that time, Instagram started suggesting content that resonated with my emotions. I found it comforting. Algorithm feels like an emotional companion.”

In Adithyadev's case, the Instagram feed did not appear as a random arrangement of posts and reels for him. It is something more than that which move close to his emotional state. In technical terms,

the platform may be responding to patterns of engagement such as repeated viewing, clicking behaviour, interaction history, or the amount of time spent on particular content (Barocas & Selbst, 2016; Bucher, 2018; Kincaid, 2010; Rubinstein et al., 2008). But, this is not how he explains the experience. Adithyadev does not describe the feed through the language of data extraction or recommendation logic. He calls it an “emotional companion”. This phrase is important because it shows how the algorithm becomes meaningful to him not as an abstract technical system, but as something that appears to accompany him during a vulnerable personal moment.

A 30 year old assistant professor, Munawar, used a similar language of responsiveness. He said, “It provides content that matches my emotional state. I see this as a positive aspect since it serves to my mood. The algorithm adjusts to my mood.” According to Munawar, the algorithm is not imagined as a fixed or mechanical system. He described it as something that “adjusts.” The word adjusts suggests flexibility, sensitivity, and movement. Munawar’s account highlights that when recommendations appear to match a user’s emotional condition, the feed may be understood as mood-sensitive. The platform is not seen as showing same content. It is experienced as changing along with the user.

Sivahari, aged 22, also connected Instagram to emotional handling. He explained:

“Instagram helps me in healing my emotions. When I feel low, I scroll through Instagram reels. It suggest content that resonates with my emotions at that time. After watching that content for some time it slowly starts suggesting content to overcome that situation, something with healing effect.”

In Sivahari’s narratives, the feed is believed to participate in emotional repair. He is of the opinion that Instagram first provides content that matches his low mood and after engaging it for sometimes it shifts towards content that helps him feel better. Whether his opinion is technically accurate or not is not the main question here. What matters here is that the explanation allows him to make sense of his experience. For him the algorithm becomes part of practice of moving through sadness. Williams (1977: p. 23) argues such engagements need not be understood as “formally held or systematic beliefs” but as meanings and values that are “actively lived and felt.” Sivahari’s statement of the feed as having a “healing effect” should be interpreted as a lived meaning and less as a technical claim.

Bhasha, a postgraduate student ,aged 23, brings another dimension to this. She connects algorithmic recommendations with motivation

“Sometimes, when I watch motivational videos, I get inspired to restart my UPSC preparations which was stopped two years back. The algorithm keeps suggesting more motivational videos every now and then, which encourages me to resume my preparation. So these suggestions are beneficial for me. But I think it also serves commercial purposes. Because maany of the video suggestions come from institutions like Fortune and Lead [civil service coaching institutes in Kerala], which attract my attention. Although it has a commercial angle, the algorithm feels like a companion to me who motivates to target at my goals.”

Bhasha’s response is noteworthy because she does not ignore the commercial nature of the feed. She identifies that the motivational videos are connected to coaching institutions, and they serve

commercial purposes. Yet this does not cancel the emotional value she attaches to them. The feed still feels encouraging and motivating. In Bhasha's case, algorithmic recommendations become part of motivation and an attempt to return to fulfilling her goals. Therefore, algorithm is experienced both as a commercial tool and as a motivation source.

Above narratives from the participants show that they often describe algorithmic feeds through the language of social relationship. The feed "adjusts", "heals", "encourages", "comforts", and becomes a "companion". These words and usages are not technically precise, but they are meaningful. They indicate how participants interpret an opaque system using an available vocabulary from everyday life. Since most participants do not have access to the technical vocabulary, they draw from familiar social and emotional categories to explain what the feed seems to be doing. Thus, calling the algorithm a companion is not simply a mistake. It is an interpretive strategy. This interpretive strategy used by participants is important in understanding algorithmic experience. Participants encountered it as something that enters the ordinary situations of life. During a relationship breakup, it appears as comfort. During sadness, it appears as healing. During preparation for an examination, it appears as motivation. These meanings emerge because participants experience algorithmic recommendations within specific emotional contexts.

Here it is important to note that this argument does not mean that the platform actually performs care in any intentional sense. The point is that algorithmic systems become emotionally understandable through the language of everyday social life. When technical operations are invisible, users explain the feed through the forms of relationship they already understand and use. This is the reason why the vocabulary of companionship becomes analytically important. In addition to content delivery, users also interpret algorithmic responses through the meanings they attach to it. These participant narratives suggest that emotional dependence on algorithmic feeds begins when recommendations appear to participate in the user's emotional life. For participants, algorithmic feed becomes a familiar presence that they may turn to for comfort, emotional repair, or motivation

When Emotional Alignment Becomes Disturbing

Algorithmic feeds do not always provide emotional relevance as comfort or support. The same quality that participants in previous sessions said makes the feed feel personal can also make it feel intrusive, difficult to manage, or even stressful. Participants feel the recommendations as a disturbing presence when it appears to match the emotional state too closely. This reveals the contradictory nature of emotional dependence. Personalised algorithmic suggestions may support users in some situations, but in some other situations they intensify feelings that they are trying to control, avoid, or move away from.

Siyana, aged 24, narrates such an experience in relation to homesickness:

“When I am in hostel and miss my home, contents that increase the feeling of homesickness start appearing. It makes me cry. It can be stressful.”

In Siyana's version, the feed does not provide her comfort. Instead, it deepens an emotion that was already present. For Siyana, home-related content becomes difficult because it appears when she is

already thinking about going home. Interestingly, here also the recommendation feels emotionally relevant, but this relevance does not help her. Perhaps it increases sadness and stress. Emotional alignment is not always positive. An algorithmic feed that appears to understand the participants mood may provide relief in one context and emotional burden in another.

Syamili, aged 35, also describes how emotional alignment can become disturbing when the platform appears to know too closely what the user wants. Speaking about Spotify, she explained that when songs matching her mood are suggested, it first feels relaxed and comforting. Later it becomes tense because it feels like platform is looking at her too closely:

“When I receive songs on Spotify that pick up the mood I am in, it first feels relaxed and comforting. But then it makes me tense to think it knows me so closely.”

Syamili's response indicates a shift from comfort to discomfort. At initial phase, the recommendation is welcomed because it matches her mood. But, the same accuracy later becomes disturbing. The problem is not simply that Spotify recommends music. In fact, the problem is that the recommendation appears too intimate. It seems to know not only her music tastes, but also what her mind wants at that particular moment. This closeness produces tension. Feed begins to feel less like a service and more like a system that is observing or following her.

Syamili also described her attempts to break this pattern:

“I sometimes listen to fast songs, to break this pattern. I actually don't even like those fast numbers.”

Syamili's strategy to confuse algorithm is significant because it shows that users are not just passive. They attempt to disturb the pattern. Her action is an attempt to interfere with the feed's emotional understanding of her. Her discomfort leads her to act on the platform in order to change what it returns to her. There are few other user-made strategic attempts like this, but since they are outside the scope of this paper, they are skipped.

Emotional alignment produces a double effect. On the one hand, participants may feel that the platform understands them. On other hand, this same feeling can become uncomfortable when they feel like platform understands them too much. Emotional relevance creates the feeling that the system has entered a private emotional space. Personalisation is not the issue; it is the affective force of personalisation that discomforts participants. This is where emotional dependence becomes complicated. Users may return to algorithmic feeds because they provide comfort, motivation, or distraction. Yet the same feeds can also hit users with emotions they did not want to deepen. .

This contradictory nature is central to algorithmic experience. Feeds become emotionally significant not because they genuinely understand users. But because of its appearance in emotionally charged situations. Due to this, they may feel close and responsive, yet this closeness can also become stressful. Algorithmic feeds are not merely systems of content delivery, but affective environments that can intensify, disturb, and reshape emotional life.

Interpreting Emotional Relevance: Imagination as a Mode of Knowing

As we have seen in the previous sections that algorithmic feeds are experienced by several participants as sources of companionship, adjustment, healing, and motivation, while for some others it was experienced as stressful or intrusive. These responses suggest that users do not simply receive recommendations but they actively interpret them. As the technical operations of these algorithmic systems remain largely invisible, users make algorithms knowable through the meanings they attach to their outputs. Participants often do not encounter the computational logic behind these systems. Instead, they encounter affects: a song that matches a mood, a reel that appears during a breakup, or content that intensifies homesickness. Their knowledge of algorithms is therefore experiential and affective.

Gadamer's hermeneutics helps explain this. He argues that understanding involves "fore-meanings" that are continually tested and revised through experience (Gadamer, 1975, p. 267). It is with the assumptions about what algorithms know and why content appears, participants approach algorithms. Sources of these assumptions are prior experiences and repeated encounters with feeds.

When emotionally relevant recommendations appear, these assumptions are confirmed, modified, or unsettled. In Gadamer's terms, understanding is an ongoing process of projection and revision, continually reshaped by new encounters with the feed. Looking back to the previous session, Adithyadev's description of Instagram as an emotional companion, Munawar's perception that the algorithm "adjusts" to his mood, Sivahari's experience of emotional healing, and Bhasha's feelings of motivation all points to how participants interpret recommendations in relation to their emotional lives. The same process is seen in moments of discomfort. Siyana's experience of home-related content becoming stressful and Syamili's tension when Spotify seemed to know what she wanted points that emotional relevance can become discomforting. What begins as helpfulness may be interpreted as too much closeness. This prompts questions about whether the system is supporting, tracking, or surveilling them.

Imagination is central to participants' knowledge of algorithms. It can't be unattended flagging it as a lack of technical understanding. But it is a method of making sense of opaque systems. These interpretations are relational in nature. Meaning emerges between recommendations and users' actual situations. Breakup reel matters because it appears during a breakup; a song becomes disturbing because it matches closely with the mood. So therefore, emotional significance depends on context, memory, mood, and expectation and not only on content alone.

As Couldry et al. (2016) argue, people actively reflect on how operational systems work. In emotional contexts, this reflection intensifies because recommendations appear to touch moods and vulnerabilities. This may lead to participants trusting, questioning, resisting, or attempting to redirect algorithmic patterns. Syamili's effort to confuse Spotify's mood-based recommendations by listening to fast songs is an example that shows how interpretation can lead to action.

Imagination and interpretation are an integral part of everyday algorithmic experience. Users know algorithms through what they appear to do and how those appearances connect with them emotionally. Algorithmic systems become socially and emotionally real through this interpretive work. Emotional dependence is thus inseparable from hermeneutic activity. Users live with

algorithms by continually interpreting their appearances and revising their assumptions about systems whose inner workings remain unknown to them.

Conclusion

The article examined emotional dependence on algorithmic feeds as a lived experience of everyday social media use. In contrast to treating algorithms only as technical systems, this work focused on how users experience algorithmic feeds. As we have seen in analysis part, participants in this research relate to feeds not only through knowledge or awareness but also through comfort, motivation, disturbance, doubt, and imagination. Participants defined feeds using the language of companionship, healing, and motivation. Such accounts do not imply that participants see algorithms as nearly human or that platforms provide care. Instead, it shows how people use relatable social vocabularies to make sense of opaque systems. It is through these social vocabularies and interpretation that algorithm acquire emotional meaning.

This emotional relevance is also ambivalent. Recommendations that feel highly aligned can become unsettling, especially during vulnerable moments. Algorithmically curated feed can provide comfort, but it can also intensify sadness, stress, or feelings of being watched. Emotional dependence therefore involves vulnerability as much as attachment. This article foregrounds the idea of imagination and interpretation as central to how users engage with algorithms. Participants make sense of these blackboxed systems through their affects. Reflecting on Gadamer's (1975) notion of fore meaning, this article argues that imagination is not the sign of misunderstanding or lack of awareness, but a way of making opaque systems intelligible. The meaning lies not only in the content curated by algorithmic feed, but in how that content is interpreted by the user. The relationship between user and algorithms are always evolving. Emotional dependence emerges between algorithmic personalisation and user interpretation. Users trust, question, resist, and rely on feeds in different ways. Their relationship with algorithms are negotiated rather than fixed. Sensing algorithms in everyday life therefore requires attention not only to what they do technically, but also to how they are experienced, felt, and interpreted within the emotional conditions of digital life.

References

1. Åhman, H., & Hedman, A. (2019). Frameworks for studying social media interaction: A discussion on phenomenology and poststructuralism. In D. Lamas, F. Loizides, L. Nacke, H. Petrie, M. Winckler, & P. Zaphiris (Eds.), *Human-Computer Interaction – INTERACT 2019* (Lecture Notes in Computer Science, Vol. 11748, pp. 701–718). Springer.https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-29387-1_41
2. Barocas, S., & Selbst, A. D. (2016). Big data's disparate impact. *California Law Review*, 104(3), 671–732.<https://doi.org/10.15779/Z38BG31>
3. Beer, D. (2017). The social power of algorithms. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(1), 1–13.<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1216147>
4. Bengtsson, S., & Johansson, S. (2021). A phenomenology of news: Understanding news in digital culture. *Journalism*, 22(11), 2873–2889.<https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884919901194>

5. Bhandari, A., & Bimo, S. (2022). Why's everyone on TikTok now? The algorithmized self and the future of self-making on social media. *Social Media + Society*, 8(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221086241>
6. Bucher, T. (2017). The algorithmic imaginary: Exploring the ordinary affects of Facebook algorithms. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(1), 30–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1154086>
7. Bucher, T. (2018). *If... then: Algorithmic power and politics*. Oxford University Press.
8. Christin, A. (2020). The ethnographer and the algorithm: Beyond the black box. *Theory and Society*, 49(5–6), 897–918. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-020-09411-3>
9. Couldry, N., Fotopoulou, A., & Dickens, L. (2016). Real social analytics: A contribution towards a phenomenology of a digital world. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 67(1), 118–137. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12183>
10. Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (B. Massumi, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press.
11. DeVito, M. A., Gergle, D., & Birnholtz, J. (2017). “Algorithms ruin everything”: #RIPTwitter, folk theories, and resistance to algorithmic change in social media. In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 3163–3174). Association for Computing Machinery. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3025453.3025659>
12. Diakopoulos, N. (2015). Algorithmic accountability: Journalistic investigation of computational power structures. *Digital Journalism*, 3(3), 398–415. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.976411>
13. Dobson, J. E. (2023). On reading and interpreting black box deep neural networks. *International Journal of Digital Humanities*, 5(2), 431–449. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42803-023-00075-w>
14. Eslami, M., Rickman, A., Vaccaro, K., Aleyasen, A., Vuong, A., Karahalios, K., Hamilton, K., & Sandvig, C. (2015). “I always assumed that I wasn’t really that close to [her]”: Reasoning about invisible algorithms in news feeds. In *Proceedings of the 33rd Annual ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 153–162). Association for Computing Machinery. <https://doi.org/10.1145/2702123.2702556>
15. Fletcher, R., & Nielsen, R. K. (2019). Generalised scepticism: How people navigate news on social media. *Information, Communication & Society*, 22(12), 1751–1769. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1450887>
16. Gadamer, Hans-Georg (1975). *Truth and method*. New York: Crossroad.
17. Gillespie, T. (2014). The relevance of algorithms. In T. Gillespie, P. J. Boczkowski, & K. A. Foot (Eds.), *Media technologies: Essays on communication, materiality, and society* (pp. 167–194). MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/9780262525374.003.0009>
18. Gillespie, T. (2016). #trendingistrending: When algorithms become culture. In R. Seyfert & J. Roberge (Eds.), *Algorithmic cultures: Essays on meaning, performance and new technologies* (pp. 52–75). Routledge.
19. Gregg, M., & Seigworth, G. J. (Eds.). (2010). *The affect theory reader*. Duke University Press.
20. Grusin, R. (2010). *Premediation: Affect and mediality after 9/11*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230275270>
21. Haim, M., Graefe, A., & Brosius, H.-B. (2018). Burst of the filter bubble? Effects of personalization on the diversity of Google News. *Digital Journalism*, 6(3), 330–343. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2017.1338145>
22. Hargittai, E., Gruber, J., Djukaric, T., Fuchs, J., & Brombach, L. (2020). Black box measures? How to study people’s algorithm skills. *Information, Communication & Society*, 23(5), 764–775. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2020.1713846>
23. Heidegger, M. (1992). *History of the concept of time: Prolegomena* (T. Kisiel, Trans.). Indiana University Press.

24. Kennedy, H., & Hill, R. L. (2018). The feeling of numbers: Emotions in everyday engagements with data and their visualisation. *Sociology*, 52(4), 830–848.<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038516674675>
25. Kincaid, J. (2010, April 22). EdgeRank: The secret sauce that makes Facebook's News Feed tick. *TechCrunch*.<https://techcrunch.com/2010/04/22/facebook-edgerank/>
26. Kitchin, R. (2017). Thinking critically about and researching algorithms. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(1), 14–29.<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1154087>
27. Loidolt, S. (2018). *Phenomenology of plurality: Hannah Arendt on political intersubjectivity*. Routledge.<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315208565>
28. Lomborg, S., & Kapsch, P. H. (2020). Decoding algorithms. *Media, Culture & Society*, 42(5), 745–761.<https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443719855301>
29. Longo, A. (2025). How do social media algorithms appear? A phenomenological response to the black box metaphor. *Minds and Machines*, 35, Article 15.<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11023-025-09716-1>
30. Merleau-Ponty, M. (2010). *Phenomenology of perception* (D. A. Landes, Trans.). Routledge.<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203720714>
31. Milton, A., Ajmani, L., DeVito, M. A., & Chancellor, S. (2023). "I see me here": Mental health content, community, and algorithmic curation on TikTok. In *Proceedings of the 2023 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (Article 480, pp. 1–17). Association for Computing Machinery.<https://doi.org/10.1145/3544548.3581489>
32. Min, S. J. (2019). From algorithmic disengagement to algorithmic activism: Charting social media users' responses to news filtering algorithms. *Telematics and Informatics*, 43, Article 101251.<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2019.101251>
33. Papacharissi, Z. (Ed.). (2011). *A networked self: Identity, community, and culture on social network sites*. Routledge.
34. Pasquale, F. (2015). *The black box society: The secret algorithms that control money and information*. Harvard University Press.
35. Rader, E., & Gray, R. (2015). Understanding user beliefs about algorithmic curation in the Facebook News Feed. In *Proceedings of the 33rd Annual ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 173–182). Association for Computing Machinery.<https://doi.org/10.1145/2702123.2702174>
36. Rubinstein, I. S., Lee, R. D., & Schwartz, P. M. (2008). Data mining and Internet profiling: Emerging regulatory and technological approaches. *The University of Chicago Law Review*, 75(1), 261–285.
37. Ruckenstein, M., & Granroth, J. (2020). Algorithms, advertising and the intimacy of surveillance. *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 13(1), 12–24.<https://doi.org/10.1080/17530350.2019.1574866>
38. Schellewald, A. (2021). Communicative forms on TikTok: Perspectives from digital ethnography. *International Journal of Communication*, 15, 1437–1457.
39. Schellewald, A. (2023). Understanding the popularity and affordances of TikTok through user experiences. *Media, Culture & Society*, 45(8), 1568–1582.<https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437221144562>
40. Seaver, N. (2017). Algorithms as culture: Some tactics for the ethnography of algorithmic systems. *Big Data & Society*, 4(2), 1–12.<https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951717738104>
41. Thurman, N., & Schifferes, S. (2012). The future of personalization at news websites: Lessons from a longitudinal study. *Journalism Studies*, 13(5–6), 775–790. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2012.664341>
42. Williams, R. (1977). *Marxism and literature*. Oxford University Press.

Bridging Languages with Machines: AI, Translation, and Journalism Practice among Marathi Journalists in Solapur, India

Dr. Ajit Gagare, Assistant Professor, Department of Media and Communication Studies, Savitribai Phule University, Pune, Maharashtra

Rushikesh Mandlik, Research Scholar, Department of Media and Communication Studies, Savitribai Phule University, Pune, Maharashtra

Abstract

The increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in media production is reshaping journalism, particularly in multilingual societies like India where translation is a core professional task. AI tools are now being used in newsrooms to accelerate content creation and support translation across languages. However, most existing research focuses on large, English-language media organizations, leaving regional-language journalism largely unexplored. This study focuses on Marathi journalists in Solapur City, Maharashtra, and examines how they use AI tools in their daily work and how those tools influence journalistic practice. Using a qualitative design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten journalists working across print, digital, and broadcast media. Thematic analysis of the data reveals that AI tools are widely adopted for speed and efficiency but consistently fail to capture cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and dialectal variety in Marathi. Journalists maintain editorial oversight and do not fully surrender judgment to AI systems. The study concludes that AI can usefully support regional journalism but cannot substitute for human cultural understanding.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, AI-assisted Translation, Journalism Practice, News Translation, Marathi Media, Regional Journalism.*

Introduction

Journalism in regional India has always operated under the pressure of limited resources and high daily output demand. A single reporter covering a cluster of villages must gather, verify, write, and publish information, often within hours. The pressures are not new, but the tools available to manage them are changing rapidly. AI-powered applications such as ChatGPT, Google Translate, and Claude have moved from novelty to everyday utility for a growing segment of the Indian press corps, including journalists working in regional languages whose communicative worlds rarely feature in mainstream technology scholarship.

Marathi, the official language of Maharashtra with over 83 million speakers, has a literary and journalistic tradition stretching back more than a century. Solapur, situated in southeastern Maharashtra at the geographical convergence of three states, presents a particularly complex linguistic environment. Local reporters regularly encounter sources who speak Kannada, Telugu, or Hindi alongside Marathi, making real-time translation a practical daily necessity rather than an occasional task. Scholarly attention to how AI tools are adopted in this specific context remains limited.

Most research on AI in journalism has focused on large English-language newsrooms in North America and Europe, where resources are comparatively ample and the technology has been designed to perform best (Diakopoulos, 2019; Thurman et al., 2017). Regional-language journalism in the Global South occupies a very different terrain, including tighter staffing, less stable digital infrastructure, and stronger audience expectations regarding local cultural fidelity. The dynamics of AI adoption must be examined on their own terms.

Literature Review

AI and Automation in Journalism

Research on automated journalism has grown substantially since the early algorithmic experiments in sports and financial reporting (van Dalen, 2012). Carlson (2015) argued that an automated or robotic reporter is not merely a technical system but a discursive figure through which newsrooms negotiate questions of professional value and legitimacy. Thurman et al. (2017) found that journalists working alongside automated writing tools experienced a complex mixture of relief at reduced workload and discomfort about what the technology implied for their professional standing. These tensions between efficiency and professional identity consistently appear across different national and institutional contexts.

Beckett (2019), surveying journalism organizations across several continents, documented widespread AI experimentation alongside a striking absence of systematic evaluation. Organizations have adopted tools rapidly but have rarely developed clear policies on when, how, or whether to disclose AI involvement to audiences. Diakopoulos (2019) offered the most comprehensive mapping of automation in journalism, distinguishing between simple content templates and sophisticated generative systems, and argued that the ethical stakes differ substantially depending on the position of a given application on that spectrum.

Deuze and Witschge (2018) widened the analytical frame by arguing that journalism should not be understood as a fixed set of practices but as a constantly negotiated activity shaped by technology, institutions, and individual agency. From this perspective, AI adoption is not simply a matter of adding a new tool but rather of reconfiguring what journalism means within a given context. This reconfiguration takes different forms in different settings, and regional-language journalism in India represents a setting that has received very little scholarly attention in this regard.

Regional Journalism, Language, and Cultural Context

Indian regional journalism occupies a space that national and international media scholars have generally undervalued. Regional newspapers serve not only as information providers but also as constitutive elements of local public life, giving form and visibility to communities whose concerns seldom appear in the national media (Kumar, 2010). The regional press in India has historically functioned as a check on both state power and national cultural homogenization, functions that depend directly on the linguistic authenticity of the journalism produced.

Marathi journalism carries considerable weight in this regard. The language has complex morphology, a rich inventory of dialectal variation across regions, and idiomatic resources that do

not translate neatly into or out of other languages. These features create particular demands for any translation technology attempting to serve Marathi journalism in India. Singer (2003) observed that the professional ideology of journalism is closely tied to the specific linguistic and cultural community a journalist serves, and that technological change tends to create friction precisely at the points where community-specific knowledge matters most.

AI Translation: Promise and Limitation

Machine translation has improved markedly since the introduction of neural architectures; however, significant gaps remain for lower-resource languages and their dialectal varieties. Large language models are predominantly trained on data from high-resource languages and formal, standardized registers of those languages. For Marathi, whose presence in digital corpora skews toward urban, educated speech, the result is a system that handles official documents and standard journalistic prose with reasonable competence but struggles with local idioms, politically charged terminology, and dialect variation (Holton and Belair-Gagnon, 2018).

Lewis and Westlund (2015) proposed an actor-network framework for understanding how technological systems participate in journalism alongside human actors. From this perspective, AI translation tools are not neutral conduits but active shapers of what is communicated and how. Deuze (2005) argued that journalism's professional ideology rests on commitments to public service, autonomy, and truth-telling; AI tools that alter the linguistic texture of stories without journalists' awareness potentially undermine all three. Tunez-Lopez et al. (2019) found that journalists using automated tools experienced a narrowing of perceived editorial discretion, even when formal control remained in human hands, a pattern likely to recur wherever AI adoption lacks accompanying deliberation about professional norms.

Pavlik (2000) noted that technology adoption in journalism has historically carried the implicit burden of disclosure: audiences need to know not just what they are being told but how that information was produced. AI-assisted translation raises this burden in specific ways, particularly when the technology introduces errors or flattens the cultural texture of the source material. This concern is especially pressing in regional-language journalism, where the relationship between language, community, and credibility is particularly strong.

Research Questions

Despite the growing body of scholarship on AI in journalism, very little work has examined AI-assisted translation in regional-language newsrooms, particularly in the Indian context where language, community identity, and journalistic practice are closely intertwined. Three research questions guided the inquiry:

RQ1: How do Marathi journalists in Solapur use AI tools in their everyday workflow, particularly for news translation and content production?

RQ2: What challenges do Marathi journalists face in maintaining linguistic accuracy, cultural context, and community-specific meaning when using AI tools for translation?

RQ3: How does the use of AI tools influence journalistic credibility, editorial decision-making, professional identity, and the institutional norms of Marathi journalism?

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design based on interpretivist assumptions. The aim was to understand how journalists make sense of AI tools in the context of their professional practice, a question that does not lend itself to survey measurement but can be pursued through sustained and open-ended conversation. Qualitative interviewing allows participants to describe their experiences in their own terms and surface the reasoning behind their choices, which is essential for understanding a practice as contextually embedded as journalism (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with ten Marathi journalists in Solapur. The interview schedule covered eight thematic areas: professional background and workflow; translation practices before and after the availability of AI tools; patterns of AI adoption and tool preference; trust and verification practices; linguistic and cultural challenges; institutional context; impact on professional identity; and future orientations. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to represent variations in media type, years of experience, and degree of AI use, from enthusiastic adopters to principled non-users.

Operational Definition of Journalist

For the purposes of this study, the term journalist refers to any individual employed in a professional, remunerated capacity to gather, verify, produce, and disseminate news content for a defined public audience through an established media organization. This definition encompasses three categories represented in the sample. Print journalists are reporters working for Marathi-language daily and rural newspapers covering beats such as agriculture, courts, administration, and welfare schemes; their work involves field reporting, document review, and producing written news stories for a reading public. Broadcast journalists are correspondents working for Marathi-language television channels, responsible for scripting news bulletins, time-pressured summarization, and real-time translation in multilingual field settings. Digital journalists are reporters and editors working for Marathi-language online news portals, producing high-volume written content under continuous deadline pressure, with daily demands for rapid translation of English-language government communications and social media posts. All three categories share a core professional obligation to accuracy, verification, and accountability to the Marathi-speaking communities they serve.

Participants Profile

Table 1 Participant Profiles

Participant	Media Type	Experience	AI Tools Used
Interviewee 1	Print	14 years	None
Interviewee 2	Broadcast TV	7 years	ChatGPT, Google Translate, Claude AI
Interviewee 3	Digital portal	5 years	ChatGPT, Google Translate
Interviewee 4	Print daily	8 years	Google Translate, ChatGPT
Interviewee 5	Broadcast TV	10 years	ChatGPT, Google Translate
Interviewee 6	Digital portal	3 years	ChatGPT, Bing AI

Interviewee 7	Print daily	12 years	Google Translate
Interviewee 8	Digital portal	6 years	ChatGPT, Google Translate
Interviewee 9	Broadcast TV	15 years	Google Translate, ChatGPT
Interviewee 10	Print daily	7 years	ChatGPT, Google Translate

Interviews were conducted in Marathi according to each participant's preference and lasted between forty and seventy-five minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded with written informed consent and were subsequently transcribed verbatim. Participant names and organizational affiliations were removed from the transcripts at the transcription stage to protect confidentiality.

Thematic Analysis and Coding Framework

Transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase process described by Braun and Clarke (2006). A structured coding framework with nine primary domains guided the analysis: (1) professional context of journalism, covering work ecology and the multilingual language environment; (2) translation practices, distinguishing pre-AI manual methods from current workflows; (3) AI awareness and adoption, including discovery pathways and tool preferences; (4) perceptions of AI translation, capturing perceived benefits and verification behaviour; (5) challenges and limitations, covering linguistic gaps, dialect issues, and credibility risks; (6) institutional context, addressing the presence or absence of organizational guidelines and formal training; (7) impact on journalistic practice, including workflow transformation and skill dynamics; (8) future imaginaries, exploring AI's assistive versus replacement role; and (9) reflexive insights, capturing participants' own assessments of convenience and desired improvements.

Findings

Theme 1: Professional Context and the Multilingual Pressures of Solapur Journalism

The ten journalists in this study occupied varied professional worlds, but several features of their working environment cut across media types and experience levels. All participants described some degree of multilingual pressure in their daily work. Solapur's location at the tri-state boundary of Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh means that source populations regularly speak Kannada or Telugu rather than Marathi, and that press materials from government and corporate entities arrive in a mixture of English, Hindi, and Marathi.

Interviewee 1, who has spent fourteen years as a rural correspondent covering about ten to fifteen villages in Pandharpur Taluka, described the physical and relational demands of rural journalism in ways that highlighted how far removed his practice was from any digital mediation:

"Agriculture news cannot be written sitting in one place; you have to visit every farmer's field. Sometimes, if there are no roads, you have to walk through the mud. That is how rural journalism is."

For Interviewee 1, the primary information challenge was presence: getting to events, collecting reactions, and understanding local contexts through direct experience. In his coverage area, press notes arrived in Marathi, and conversations occurred in Marathi dialects

he knew through long familiarity. Translation had not been a pressing professional concern. Interviewee 2, a broadcast correspondent covering three television channels from Solapur, operated in a different manner. Working across the tri-state border area, he encountered Kannada-speaking communities regularly and found that language gaps created immediate reporting obstacles:

"Although I am a Marathi speaker, the people there often speak Kannada. To understand their dialogue, I use Google Translate or Claude AI."

The other eight participants described similar variations shaped by their beat and medium. Interviewee 3 ran a digital news portal and dealt with government documents in English on a daily basis. Interviewee 4, a print journalist covering courts and administration, found that press releases from Central government departments arrived exclusively in English. Interviewee 5 at a regional television channel regularly handled political speeches delivered in Hindi that required Marathi scripting within an hour. Interviewees 8 and 10 described their translation demands as daily and non-negotiable given the nature of their beats.

Themes 2 and 3: Translation Practices and Patterns of AI Adoption

The sample revealed a genuine range of adoption patterns. Interviewee 1 had not used any AI tool at the time of the interview and expressed principled skepticism about their utility in rural settings:

"In rural areas, if we are doing a story about a specific field or farmer, we have to mention their names ourselves. AI will not include these. Because of that, AI does not seem to be very useful in rural areas."

This position was not technophobia but a coherent professional judgment. He acknowledged the theoretical speed advantage of AI while maintaining that the specific knowledge required for rural agricultural journalism, including knowing particular fields, families, and local political histories, was not something any system could supply. He also noted that incorrect words in rural Marathi could trigger disputes within communities living in close social proximity.

Before AI tools became common, participants who now use them described managing translation manually through dictionaries, trusted colleagues with bilingual competence, and their own language skills. Interviewee 4 noted that senior colleagues once kept printed Marathi-English administrative dictionaries and that a legally trained colleague served as the shared resource for legal phrasing. Interviewee 9 described building up a personal vocabulary of standard translations for government terminology over years of covering Central government releases. Interviewee 2, by contrast, had taken a paid ChatGPT subscription after encountering the tool through social media and found it genuinely useful for specific tasks. He described using AI with a structured journalistic prompt during a flood news assignment:

"If I give AI the command using the 5W1H format common in journalism, it can correct grammatical errors that often occur during rushed typing."

Among the other participants, adoption followed different functional logics. Interviewee 3 used ChatGPT primarily for converting English bureaucratic text into readable Marathi drafts, describing it as "a first draft machine, it gives me the shape of the sentence and I give it the life." Interviewee 4 used Google Translate for initial passes of court documents before extensive editing. Interviewee 5 used AI primarily to summarize long political speeches into usable broadcast scripts: "A leader gives a speech for an hour. I need a sixty-second script ready before the next bulletin. That compression is where AI has become genuinely useful for me." Interviewee 6, the youngest participant, used AI most freely, treating it as a standard part of the toolkit from the start of her career. Interviewee 7 used AI selectively for headline prompting, Interviewee 8 for translating English government social media posts, Interviewee 9 for Hindi-to-Marathi conversions of Central government press releases, and Interviewee 10 for comprehension of English scheme documents before writing her own Marathi drafts from scratch.

Themes 4 and 5: Perceptions of AI and Linguistic Limitations

Across participants who had used AI tools, a consistent pattern emerged: the technology performed adequately on formal, standard-register content but struggled with the culturally specific, dialectally local, and politically charged. Interviewee 2 identified a structural manifestation of this limitation:

"AI cannot capture some words in rural Marathi. Local contexts or cultural meanings are often missed, and AI sometimes provides data based on its own logic, leading to inconsistencies."

He further noted that AI could not understand the emotional register of a news story: "AI cannot understand the sensitivity or intensity of a news story." This observation is significant for broadcast journalism, where tonal precision matters as much as factual accuracy.

Interviewee 4 described a near-miss involving a government circular regarding agricultural loan waivers. The AI translation rendered a legally specific phrase as a general colloquial expression, nearly resulting in a published story that misrepresented the scheme's eligibility. "I caught it because I had covered the scheme from the beginning and knew the terminology. A younger reporter without that background might not have noticed." Interviewee 5 raised the problem of political register, noting that specific Marathi terms carry factional and historical connotations in the Solapur political context that AI translation flattened into generic equivalents.

Interviewee 9, with fifteen years in broadcast journalism, offered the most pointed observation about how the AI Marathi sounded to local audiences: "The AI Marathi is clean, but it is not ours. Viewers notice when the language feels imported." Interviewees 3 and 8 both pointed to the treatment of rural dialects as a structural limitation, noting that standard Marathi as represented in AI training data does not capture the vocabulary and speech patterns of older rural sources. As Interviewee 3 put it: "When I quote a farmer, I want the reader to hear a farmer, not a newsreader. AI makes everyone sound like a newsreader."

Interviewee 6 noted that the AI could not render community voices accurately: "AI cannot render those voices accurately. And when I quote them in standard AI Marathi, something is lost. The reader does not hear who that person is." Interviewee 7 found that AI produced Marathi that was "grammatically correct but editorially dead. There was no sense of where the story was going or why the reader should care." Interviewee 10, covering welfare schemes for women, described an error involving two distinct administrative categories in a nutrition scheme for pregnant women that AI rendered identically, with potentially serious consequences for readers trying to determine eligibility.

Theme 4 continued: Trust, Verification, and Editorial Control

No participant who used AI tools described unconditional trust. Verification practices varied in their thoroughness but were universal in their presence. Interviewee 2 described post-editing as essential, distinguishing between structural help where AI was useful and substantive judgment where it was not:

"Manual correction is extremely necessary. AI cannot understand the sensitivity or intensity of a news story."

Interviewee 1, who had not used AI, expressed a version of the same concern from the outside: "Even if AI gives information, we have to verify if it is correct or if any sentence is wrong." For him, the verification burden was a sufficient reason to avoid the tool altogether; if the output still requires as much scrutiny as the original report, the time saving is illusory. Interviewee 10 described a graduated trust framework that several participants echoed: reliable for dates, amounts, and official names; not to be trusted on anything involving the emotional or social dimension of a story. "AI produces what I call the bones of a story. Making it useful for actual people requires something more than bones."

Interviewee 7 always cross-checked AI-generated Marathi against his own understanding of the language before publishing. Interviewee 6, despite heavier use, described having learned to catch characteristic errors through accumulated experience, including mistranslated conjunctions, flattened honorifics, and idioms rendered meaningless by literal translation: "Once you know what to look for, it becomes faster to catch." Interviewee 8 framed a broader institutional concern: "I think for management the question is still framed as how do we produce more content rather than how do we produce better content. Those are different questions and AI answers one of them."

Themes 6, 7, 8, and 9: Institutional Context, Professional Identity, and Future Orientations

The institutional context in which these journalists worked provided almost no formal guidance on the use of AI. Interviewee 2 described their organization's stance as neutral. Interviewee 4 noted that editors were aware of tool use but had issued no limits: "I think the institution has simply not caught up with how much the technology has changed in the last two years." Interviewee 5 described organizational expectations as purely output-focused: "Whatever helps you produce content faster is acceptable, as long as the content is accurate. The burden of accuracy is entirely on us." Most other participants described similar policy vacuums.

Training was rare across the sample. Interviewee 2 had attended one workshop on AI and journalism, which he described as genuinely useful. No other participant reported formal training. Most described self-teaching through trial and error, peer knowledge sharing, and online video tutorials. Interviewee 6 noted the absence of Marathi-language instructional content on AI journalism: "There is almost nothing in Marathi about using AI specifically for Marathi journalism. Someone should be creating that content."

Regarding professional identity, Interviewee 2 raised the possibility of skill erosion directly: "I would also say that AI can make you lazy." Interviewee 9 worried about younger colleagues: "When younger colleagues use AI from the beginning, they skip that formation. That process built knowledge. It built a relationship between the journalist and the language." Interviewee 7 worried that AI would standardize the language of print journalism across competing outlets, eroding the distinctive regional character that gives a local newspaper its relationship with the community.

Regarding future imaginaries, participants did not fear outright replacement but were alert to a quieter risk: that AI would gradually narrow what journalists felt capable of doing without technological assistance. Interviewee 3 anticipated that the tools would become more common but insisted the cultural work had to remain human: "Right now they are built for English first and everything else as an afterthought. Until that changes, I will keep using it for the basic work and doing the cultural work myself." Interviewee 1 offered the starkest articulation of a view that professional journalism does not depend on any particular technology to remain viable: "Journalism does not stop just because you do not use AI."

Discussion

The picture that emerges from these ten interviews is neither a story of smooth technological adoption nor of principled resistance to it. These journalists make practical decisions under time pressure with imperfect tools, trying to balance genuine efficiency gains against genuine risks to the quality and credibility of their work. The findings speak directly to each of the three research questions.

In relation to RQ1, the study confirms that AI tools have entered the everyday workflows of most Marathi journalists in Solapur, but adoption is selective and task-specific rather than wholesale. Journalists use AI for bounded translation tasks, structured summarization, grammar correction, and headline prompting. Interviewee 2's use of AI to bridge a real-time language gap between a Marathi journalist and Kannada-speaking flood victims illustrates the technology at its most useful. Without AI assistance in that situation, the report would either not have included those voices or would have required a delay that broke the story's newsworthiness. The AI did not replace the journalist's judgment about which questions to ask or how to frame the testimony; it removed a linguistic barrier that would otherwise have been insurmountable in the field. This type of concrete, time-bound problem is what AI translation can solve reasonably well (Beckett, 2019).

In relation to RQ2, the limitations described by the participants map onto the structural features of how large language models are built. These systems learn from text, and the Marathi text available in digital corpora is neither extensive nor diverse (Holton and Belair-Gagnon, 2018). The result is a technology that has absorbed standard, urban, formal Marathi while encountering relatively little of the vernacular speech that characterizes agricultural communities in rural Maharashtra or the border-dialect mixing that defines everyday communication in parts of the southern Solapur district.

Interviewee 3's observation that AI makes everyone sound like a newsreader captures this structural bias precisely and aligns with Singer's (2003) argument that journalists' custodial responsibility toward their audiences is expressed most clearly in linguistic choices.

In relation to RQ3, the absence of institutional guidance is consistent with Beckett's (2019) global findings but takes on particular significance in a regional-language context. Without newsroom policies, individual journalists develop their own norms through experience and self-reflection. The verification practices described by Interviewees 7, 8, and 10 demonstrate that individual norm-building is already underway. Interviewee 10's near-publication of eligibility criteria that would have misled vulnerable women about a government nutrition scheme illustrates what is at stake when those norms are not yet fully developed. Deuze (2005) identified public service as a foundational pillar of journalism's professional ideology; errors that harm the people a publication exists to serve are not merely factual mistakes but breaches of professional purpose.

Interviewee 9's concern about professional formation in a generation that has grown up with AI tools deserves serious consideration. Research on professional socialization in journalism has shown that tacit knowledge developed through slow and effortful practice is not easily transmitted through other means (Deuze and Witschge, 2018). If a generation of regional journalists learns to produce translations by outsourcing the hard interpretive work to AI, the long-term consequences for the linguistic quality and cultural depth of regional media may be substantial, even if individual stories appear adequate on the surface.

This study also points to a question the literature has not fully engaged with: the relationship between AI adoption and the material conditions of regional journalism in the Global South. Participants adopted AI not because they had abundant resources for experimentation but because content demand vastly exceeded human capacity. Understanding AI adoption in regional journalism requires attention to these structural conditions alongside the technology itself.

Conclusion

This study set out to understand how Marathi journalists in Solapur use AI tools for translation and content production and what that use reveals about linguistic accuracy, professional autonomy, and editorial responsibility. The findings point to a profession actively negotiating these questions rather than resolving them. AI tools are present in most newsrooms represented in this study. They save time on structured tasks such as summarizing speeches, rendering English bureaucratic texts into working Marathi drafts, and bridging immediate language gaps in multilingual reporting situations. These are real contributions to journalists working with fewer resources than their national counterparts and under comparable deadline pressures. This technology is not a gimmick; it addresses genuine professional problems.

The limitations are equally real and are felt most acutely in the areas where regional journalism carries its distinctive value: the linguistic textures of local speech, the cultural weight of community-specific terminology, and the emotional precision required by human interest and social issue reporting. Every journalist in this study who used AI tools described maintaining human oversight because they had learned through experience that the tools could not be trusted on the culturally specific. The study reveals that ethical and professional frameworks for AI-assisted journalism in regional-language contexts remain underdeveloped. Individual journalists are building

their own norms, but institutional structures including newsroom policies, professional guidelines, and journalism school curricula have not kept pace with practice. Future research should track how those structures develop and whether comparable patterns appear across other regional-language journalism contexts in India.

References

1. Beckett, C. (2019). *New powers, new responsibilities: A global survey of journalism and artificial intelligence*. Polis, London School of Economics and Political Science.
2. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
3. Carlson, M. (2015). The robotic reporter: Automated journalism and the redefinition of labor, compositional forms, and journalistic authority. *Digital Journalism*, 3(3), 416-431. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.976412>
4. Deuze, M. (2005). What is journalism? Professional identity and ideology of journalists reconsidered. *Journalism*, 6(4), 442-464. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884905056815>
5. Deuze, M., & Witschge, T. (2018). Beyond journalism: Theorizing the transformation of journalism. *Journalism*, 19(2), 165-181. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884916688550>
6. Diakopoulos, N. (2019). *Automating the news: How algorithms are rewriting the media*. Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674239302>
7. Holton, A. E., & Belair-Gagnon, V. (2018). Strangers to the game? Interlopers, integrity, and the boundaries of journalism. *Media and Communication*, 6(4), 90-98. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v6i4.1490>
8. Kumar, K. J. (2010). *Mass communication in India* (4th ed.). Jaico Publishing House.
9. Lewis, S. C., & Westlund, O. (2015). Actors, actants, audiences, and activities in cross-media news work: A matrix and a research agenda. *Digital Journalism*, 3(1), 19-37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.927986>
10. Pavlik, J. V. (2000). The impact of technology on journalism. *Journalism Studies*, 1(2), 229-237.
11. Singer, J. B. (2003). Who are these guys? The online challenge to the notion of journalistic professionalism. *Journalism*, 4(2), 139-163. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146488490342001>
12. Thurman, N., Dorr, K., & Kunert, J. (2017). When reporters get hands-on with robo-writing: Professional responses to automated journalism. *Digital Journalism*, 5(10), 1240-1259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2017.1288729>
13. Tunez-Lopez, M., Toural-Bran, C., & Cacheiro-Requeijo, S. (2019). Use of automated-algorithm tools in producing journalistic content: The perception of journalists in Spain. *El Profesional de la Informacion*, 28(5). <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2019.sep.14>
14. Van Dalen, A. (2012). The algorithms behind the headlines: How machine-written news redefines the core skills of human journalists. *Journalism Practice*, 6(5-6), 648-658. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2012.667268>

Adoption of Artificial Intelligence in Filmmaking: A Diffusion of Innovation Perspective

Dr.Madala Sindhu, Assistant Professor, Amity School of Communication, Amity University, Mumbai, Maharashtra

ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing its role from a tool to a collaborative partner in creative practices, particularly in Filmmaking. The current study investigates the perceptions, learning interests and adoption behavior of Generation Z film and media students towards AI in filmmaking. This study was conducted among 120 undergraduate and postgraduate students who are enrolled in film and media subjects. All the participants are engaged in filmmaking at various levels. The study is grounded in the Diffusion of Innovation theory by conceptualising AI as an innovation and studying its adoption among the students.

The results state that even though the learning interest (75%) is high, AI adoption remains limited. The correlation analysis states that there is a significant relationship between perceived value and learning interest ($r = 0.337$, $p < .05$). As per the regression analysis, neither the perceived value nor learning interest significantly predicts the adoption behaviour. The study clearly highlights the gap between attitudinal acceptance and behavioural adoption.

The study has identified key barriers, including limited technical exposure, ethical dilemmas and accessibility constraints. The study results positioned students within the persuasion-to-decision stage of the Diffusion of Innovation process. The study contributes to the literature on human-AI co-creation by focusing on the development of academic discourse and structured training in AI for film and media students.

Keywords: *Artificial intelligence, Filmmaking, Technology Adoption, Generation Z students, Creative Practices and AI*

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, Artificial Intelligence is considered as a supportive system for data processing and optimisation(Davis, 1989; Rogers, 2003; Dwivedi et al., 2021; Paiola et al., 2021; Li et al., 2025). Later, the emergence of generative AI tools has expanded the capabilities to produce text, images, audio and video in creative industries. The developments represent a shift of AI from passive supporter to active contributor in content creation (Monserat & Srnec, 2025; Khatiwada et al., 2025; Dwivedi et al., 2023). Consequently, AI's participation is increasing day by day in the process of content ideation, production and creative decision making by challenging traditional concepts of authorship, originality and intellectual ownership (Khattak et al., 2025; Yu, 2025; Huang, 2026; Dwivedi et al., 2023).

AI has evolved from technical supporter to an active collaborator within creative domains reshaping the landscape of filmmaking and media education(Davaasambuu, 2025; Chen, 2025; Monserrat & Srnec, 2025; Paiola et al., 2021; Yu, 2025). Filmmaking traditionally involves multiple stages from script writing to postproduction which is augmented by AI tools across all stages: Scripting, production, editing and post-production (Byrnes, 2003; Mixson, 2021; Yang et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2025). These AI tools enhance the efficiency, expand creative possibilities and automate repetitive processes, enabling a scope for new form of storytelling and visual expression (Yang et al., 2023; Yu, 2025; Dwivedi et al., 2023; Chen, 2025). As a result the global film industry is undergoing rapid technological transformation keeping AI as a key driver of innovation, production and personalization (Burrus, 2017; Dwivedi et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2025; Anantrasirichai et al., 2025). The transformation redefines creative and production structures raising questions on; Is AI merely a tool, or is it evolving into a collaborative partner in filmmaking? (Du Sautoy, 2019; Khattak et al., 2025; Dwivedi et al., 2023; Huang, 2026).

Traditionally, film education is focused on technical tools such as cameras, scriptwriting and editing software, sound equipment to develop technical efficiency with critical thinking and creative expressionism. However, the integration of AI technologies is redefining the skills and competencies required for film and media professionals in the filmmaking process. AI driven tools are assisting in ideation, creation, designing and even decision making there by augmenting human creativity (Guo & Wang, 2024). These developments in the industry necessitates pedagogical transformation in filmmaking and media education including integration of AI literacy, ethical awareness and human-AI collaboration practices Hwang & Lee, 2025).

Within this technological landscape, a distinction is often made between narrow AI and generative AI (Babu M.V.S; Banana, K.R.I.S.H.N.A 2024). Narrow AI is the one which automates rules-based tasks like editing workflows or color grading. Whereas generative AI directly creates audio-visual assets like writing scripts and generating video from the text. Despite the advancements the concept of Human touch is central in creative production. This highlights the importance of emotional depth, unique authorship and intentionality of the content which separates human creation from AI generated content.

The current study focuses on Generation Z film and media students, who are digital natives actively engaged as both consumers and creators of AI driven content. These students show high adaptability to technological transformations and exhibit stronger engagement in usage of AI tools in creative content production. To understand this behavior the study applies Diffusion of innovation (DOI) theory which explains how individuals get adopted to new technologies through different stages such as knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation (Rogers, 2003). Within this framework the generation Z students can be categorised under majority, representing the progressive adoption and cautiousness influenced by benefits, compatibility and contextual constraints.

Despite increasing adoption, there remains a gap in empirical studies focusing on student-centric adoption behaviour within the context of creative education. The existing studies mostly focused on industrial application or technical capabilities of AI neglecting the behavioral and perceptual gaps of adoption. The current study investigates the gap between perceived value, learning interest on adoption behavior of AI tools among film and media students.

The analysis can help effectively integrate AI into the filmmaking curriculum by emphasizing the importance of exposure, hands-on experience, and pedagogical innovation. Furthermore, the research contributes to the evolving discourse on Human-AI co-creation in film and media education with a balanced approach in positioning AI as a partner that enhances creative potential while preserving human agency. The growing integration of AI tools by the gen z students underscores critical examination of future trajectory of AI in filmmaking and media education (Du Sautoy, 2019).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As defined by Andrew (1985) filmmaking is a “technological art” that “is composed of the culture it represents”. Films are the medium through which they translate values, beliefs of the culture they belong to. Over time, technological advancements shaped both the filmmaking production process and creative expression.

According to Byrnes (2003) the new technological adaptations can be observed at all the stages of filmmaking following commercial interests. When the integration progresses, the professional labour market changes dramatically. The adaptation to technology never ends; it remains a permanent process.

Yu & Wei et al., (2025) describes AI as a co-creator that supports Ideation, problem solving, and creative production rather than merely functioning as a technical tool. In filmmaking, AI is extended to script development, story-boarding, Visual Effects (VFX) generation, editing and content personalization. With these expansions AI has challenged traditional filmmaking on authorship and creative ownership. Raising a focus towards hybrid creative models where human and machine intelligence complement each other (Huang,2026).

Capello(2020) argues that the integration of AI tools in filmmaking serves different purposes. Firstly, AI functions as an operational tool that performs repetitive tasks and optimizes production costs. Secondly, it contributes to the development of decision-making on measurable outcomes. Thirdly, AI actively assists the creative process in generating unique content. These multifaceted functions of AI in filmmaking extend beyond technical support and become an integral part of creation.

It is a good time to explore potential AI solutions in all stages of filmmaking. The inclusion can impact the monotonous work from human hands and brains to release space for creativity and optimization of cost, which are important for film production (Mixon 2021). However,Piccirillo (2011), states that technological advancements alone don't improve the quality and success of the film. Ultimately, it depends on the talent of the filmmaker to use the technological advantages and present a story that impresses the audience.

The emergence of AI further expanded the potential of storytellers; that is to be more effective in expressing themselves in English (Fisher, 2023). Lev Manovich (2007) considered making films using After Effects as a novel process which was bought in mid-1990's, as it is a popular software to create to combine audio, visuals, graphics animation on a personal computer. Despite the

advancements, there are parallel discussions that stated there is a need to appreciate organic creativity and suggested to use tools to enhance rather than as a substitute.

From the industry perspective, filmmaking evolves with technological advancements, economic pressures and changing consumer preferences. The availability of AI driven tools and digital assets rapidly transformed the digital media industry enabling new forms of film production and distribution. Burrus (2017) describes technology shifts are hard trends, and they shape regardless of resistance. In this context, the integration of AI technology in filmmaking can be considered as a broader technological evolution and needs to be studied.

In the context of filmmaking and media education, AI tools influence student's learning and engagement in the creative process. Generative AI tools have been providing suggestions, interactive experience and suggestions which can develop the student engagement and motivation (Guo & Wang, 2024; Allen & Mizumoto, 2024). These abilities of tools can offer personalised learning styles as per the individual (Kim et al., 2024). And these abilities help students to maintain continuous learning and momentum (Escalante et al., 2023). The features of these tools reduce the extraneous cognitive load by providing immediate and clear feedback to the students (Paas et al., 2003).

Despite the advantages of AI, there are several challenges associated with reliability and potential overreliance during complex tasks which requires critical thinking and creativity (Wang, 2024). Accessibility and ease of use of these tools make students more likely to be adopted (Kohnke et al., 2023) but the socio-economic standards may limit the accessibility of tools exacerbating the digital divide (Holmes & Burgess, 2022). The existing studies highlighted both the challenges and opportunities associated with AI integration; there is limited research focused on student acceptance towards the changes in the creative learning environment in filmmaking where technical and artistic competencies are required.

The integration of AI in higher education has significantly influenced teaching and learning practices. Integrating AI in filmmaking helps students to experiment, innovate and accelerate the production process. In the studies of (Hwang & Lee, 2025), it has been mentioned that students generally consider AI as a useful creative partner that enhances content creation and learning outcomes. However, the successful adoption is a result of adequate training, opportunities to experiment and institutional support.

The research studies on digital storytelling and collaborative learning demonstrates, generative AI can improve problem solving abilities and creative performances when integrated in educational activities (Wei et al., 2025). And there is a need for educators to emphasize on the importance of critical thinking and ethical usage to ensure responsible use of AI.

To understand the adoption of AI technologies, Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory developed by Everett Rogers provides a framework. This is a theory to understand the technology adoption among individuals. As per the Rogers (2003), the adoption of innovation is influenced by various variables like compatibility, advantage, complexity, trialability and observability. Before full adoption, individuals go through progress of knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. As per the rogers the adopters are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards. This theory has been used in understanding technology in education to

explain the emerging digital innovations. In this context DOI theory provides a useful lens to understand and evaluate the student's benefits and risks of AI technology and how these influence adoption decision.

Within this framework, the learning interest concept represents the willingness of individuals to engage with new knowledge and technologies. Studies on educational technology represent that the students who show higher interest in learning demonstrate stronger engagement, experimentation and adoption. Ge & Shin (2026) found that the intention of students to learn and engage in AI tools has significantly influenced their willingness to participate in Human-AI co-creation. The finding of the study suggests that learning interest serves as a critical independent variable of AI adoption in educational settings.

Despite benefits, there are ethical concerns related to job displacement, copyright infringement, loss of originality, biasness, content misuse in the fields of creativity. Studies on AI assisted creativity found that AI may enhance individuals' creativity but can reduce diversity of ideas and increase content homogenization. The challenges contribute to cautious adoption behaviour among students.

Research studies suggest that students and creative professionals perceive AI as a creative partner to extend creative possibilities by maintaining human judgement and meaning making. The perspective study aligns with the emerging hybrid creativity models, where human imagination, artistic vision and critical thinking coexist with machine knowledge of AI systems.

In this context, the role of educator plays a major role. The effective guidance supports students to engage with AI tools, leveraging technological advantages with creative autonomy (Moorhouse &Kohnke, 2024; Teng, 2023). Where educators can help students in developing ethical awareness and responsible practice by ensuring that AI is a supportive tool rather than a substitute to creative thinking. Consequently, the universities have started implementing policies and guidelines to promote ethical and responsible use of AI by including plagiarism detection software at the stage of writing (Moorhouse et al., 2023).

Although there are studies focused on AI adoption, creative collaboration, educational technology acceptance, there is limited research study which is focused on adoption of AI tools among film and media students using Diffusion of Innovation framework. Furthermore, the perceived value and learning interest of AI Adoption is under explored. Addressing the gap, the present study focuses on the factors that influence AI adoption among gen z film and media students and contributes to the growing discourse of Human-AI co-creation in creative education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory of Everett Rogers, Diffusion of Innovation, explains how new technologies are adopted within a social system over time. DOI provides a comprehensive framework to understand the process, factors and behavioural patterns that influence adoption of innovation technology like AI in filmmaking. Applying this theory the film and media students are positioned between the persuasion and decision-making stage where there is a possibility to evaluate benefits and risks associated with AI tools before adopting them.

The current study focuses on perceived value and learning interest aligned with a concept of relative advantage in DOI theory. The framework combines DOI theory with learner-centric variables to explain AI adoption in filmmaking. This contributes to the contemporary shifts in creative industries where machine intelligence and human creativity come together to produce innovative outcomes.

With a focus on perceived value and learning interest the current study aims to provide contextual understanding of AI adoption in filmmaking. It can contribute to the emerging discourse of human AI co-creation by examining the negotiation between technology and creativity in film production environments by future filmmakers and media professionals.

Ultimately, this study proposes that adoption of AI in film production is not only decided by technological factors but also it is shaped by an interplay between perceived value, learning interest and contextual influences. This perspective extends DOI theory into creative education, creating insights into the student's awareness towards meaningful engagement with AI technologies in film production.

METHODOLOGY

The study has adopted a quantitative research design to analyse the relationship between student's perceptions, learning interests and adoption behaviour of Artificial Intelligence in filmmaking. The quantitative approach helps in objective measurement of variables and cross-sectional design facilitated data collection to understand current behavioural patterns among students. It is a descriptive and analytical study.

The study employed a structured questionnaire administered to 120 film and media students of the age group 18-26 years. Those who are actively involved in various forms of filmmaking, from short film to ad film, and documentary film production. This sample represents the emerging film and media practitioners with an exposure to both traditional and AI driven tools.

The convenience sampling method is employed to select participants based on accessibility and relevance of the study. Data is collected using a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale to measure the perceptions and engagement of AI tools in filmmaking by the students.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the perceived value of AI in filmmaking among film and media students.
2. To analyse the learning interest of film and media students in filmmaking.
3. To examine the influence of perceived value and learning interest on the adoption behaviour of AI in filmmaking.

HYPOTHESIS

H1:The perceived value has a significant positive effect on the adoption of AI tools in filmmaking.

H2: The learning interest has a significant positive effect on adoption of the AI tools in filmmaking among film and media students.

H3:Perceived value has a significant positive relationship with students learning interest.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

S.No	Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	18–20	34	28.3
2	21–23	48	40.0
3	24–26	38	31.7
Total		120	100.0

Table 1: Age Group of the Respondents

The majority of the respondents fall under the category of 21-23 age group representing the largest segment of the sample. These respondents are in the mid-phase of their academic journey and have gained theoretical and practical knowledge regarding filmmaking. The dominance of this group represents that the study is largely representing the perceptions and behaviours of the students who are engaged in learning and applying the filmmaking process.

The age group 24-26 accounts 31.7% of the sample. This age group mostly belongs to postgraduation education which represents a significant proportion of relatively mature students. This is the group where there is greater exposure to emerging trends and industry practices including AI tools in contributing more informed and experience-based responses.

The 18-20 age group accounts 28.3% of the sample, who represents the early learning stage and these are the students who are in a process to develop their understanding towards filmmaking. Although they are smaller in number the inclusion of this group ensures that the study has captured perspectives among different levels of academic and experimental maturity. The presence of different age groups in the study strengthens the ability to generalize insight on AI adaptation among generation Z students.

S.No	Education	Frequency	Percentage
1	Undergraduate	89	74.17%
2	Postgraduate	31	25.83%

Table 2: Educational Level of the respondents

Most of the respondents are undergraduate students (74.17%) and the rest 25.83% are post graduate students. The sample indicates that the individuals are in the early to intermediate stages of academic journey in film and media education. The undergraduate student group represents the students who are in the process of building foundation knowledge of AI and other technicalities of film. Their experiences will result in their academic environments rather than industry experience.

Even postgraduate students are a smaller group and they play a critical role in adoption behaviour. As they are advanced in their academic journey and are likely to possess deeper engagement in filmmaking including AI. The distribution of education levels highlights the ability to understand diverse perspectives from exploratory engagement to informed evaluation of AI tools.

S.No	Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Neutral	55	45.83%
2	Likely	41	34.17%
3	Unlikely	19	15.83%
4	Very Unlikely	3	2.5%
5	Very Likely	2	1.67%

Table 3: AI Adoption (Collaboration with AI)

The largest group of samples (45.83%) selected a neutral option. Which reflects the uncertainty of the sample on AI collaboration and their lack of clarity in Understanding the role of AI in filmmaking. This can be attributed to limited hands-on experience. From the result 34.17% which stated that they are likely to use AI in their projects, that represents the positive representation of students towards AI adoption.

Conversely, there are certain students which stated unlikely (15.83%) and very unlikely (2.5%), that represent the resistance towards AI although they are less in number. The resistance can be due to lack of technical skills, ethical concerns, and technological complexity. These conditions state that the students are in a transitional phase in awareness and interest towards AI.

From the conceptual standpoint, the current pattern of results reflects the persuasion stage of Diffusion of innovation process. This is the point where individuals frame attitudes towards innovations but have not progressed yet for active adoption. The findings also represent the presence of an attitude-behaviour gap.

S.No	Interest	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	90	75.0%
2	Maybe	16	13.33%
3	No	14	11.67%

Table 4: Learning Interest in AI

The majority of the respondents (75%) stated that they are interested in learning AI tools for filmmaking. The students have recognized the importance and relevance of AI in filmmaking. From the results it can be stated that there is a strong attitude of students towards skill development. 13.33 % of the respondents stated that they may be ready to learn AI tools as they are unsure about usefulness, complexity and career relevance. 11.67% which is the minor representation of the

sample stated low interest in learning. With a possible reason for fear of technology, lack of confidence and concerns regarding AI replacing humans.

From a conceptual perspective, the findings align with the persuasion stage of Diffusion of Innovation, where individuals develop favourable and unfavourable notions based on benefits and uncertainties.

Perceived Value (Relative Advantage):

Hypothesis 1: The perceived value has a significant positive effect on the adoption of AI tools in filmmaking.

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
0.123	0.015	0.007	—

Table 5.1: Regression Analysis

ANOVA:

Source	F	Sig.
Model	0.572	0.451

Table 5.2: ANOVA Results

Coefficients:

S.No	Predictor (IV)	β	t	Sig. (p)
1	Constant	2.613	9.098	0.000
2	Perceived Value	0.064	0.756	0.451

Table 5.3: Co-efficients of Regression Analysis

The regression analysis indicates that perceived value doesn't have a significant effect on adoption of AI tools ($\beta = 0.064$, $p = 0.451$). Even though a positive relationship is there it is insignificant. Therefore, hypothesis(H1) is rejected.

The rejection doesn't imply that perceived value is irrelevant. It suggests that perceived value alone is insufficient to directly influence the adoption behaviour of the students in filmmaking education. As per the results students can recognize the benefits like creativity, efficiency and proficiency of AI but they are not ready to adopt, this shows the persuasion to decision making due to external variables like lack of technical skills, accessibility, ethical concern and practical exposure.

Learning Interest (Motivational Component):

Hypothesis 2: The learning interest has a significant positive effect on adoption of the AI tools in filmmaking among film and media students.

R	R²	Adjusted R²
0.173	0.030	0.022

Table 6.1: Regression Analysis

ANOVA:

Source	F	Sig.
Model	3.219	0.126

Table 6.2: ANOVA Results

Co-Efficients:

Predictor (IV)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Constant	—	—	—
Learning Interest	0.087	1.540	0.126

Table 6.3: Co-Efficients Regression Analysis

As per the results the P value 0.126 is greater than threshold value 0.05. which means that the hypothesis (H2) is rejected and the learning interest alone is not significant to adopt to AI in filmmaking($\beta = 0.087$, $p = 0.126$) by students of film and media. Higher learning interest can slightly increase adoption. Within DOI theory learning interest represent attitudinal and motivational components of the persuasion stage. The results indicate the motivation to the adoption gap which can be due to barriers like skills, ethical concerns and curriculum limitations. As per the findings there is motivation to behaviour gap which is clearly observable without external support such as training, accessibility and institutional integration.

Perceived value to Learning Interest: Hypothesis 3:**Co-Efficients:**

Variables	Perceived Value	Learning Interest
Perceived Value	1.000	0.337
Learning Interest	0.337	1.000

Table 7.1: Correlation matrix of Perceived Value and Learning Interest

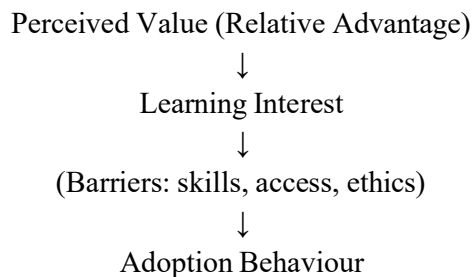
Relationship	r-value	Sig. (p)
---------------------	----------------	-----------------

PV → Learning Interest	0.337	0.000 (<0.05)
------------------------	-------	---------------

Table 7.2: Pearson's Correlation Analysis between Perceived Value and Learning Interest

The correlation analysis states that there is moderate, positive and significant relationship between perceived value and learning interest ($r = 0.337$, $p < 0.05$) of AI in filmmaking. The students who perceive the benefits of usage of AI tools are more likely to develop a strong interest in learning these tools. The findings of the study represent that cognitive evaluation of technology (perceived value) is closely associated with attitudinal readiness (learning interest). The relationship states the perceived value enhances interest but does not guarantee behavioural adoption.

Conceptual Explanation:



The findings align partially with diffusion of innovation theory. The perceived value showed a significant influence on learning interest, confirming the persuasion stage of the diffusion process. There is an identified gap between attitude formation and behavioural adoption. Which reflects the external barriers such as limited access to AI tools, training requirements and ethical concerns.

The other ethical moderators which control the adoption are deep fakes, copyright issues, loss of originality, ethical misuse. Even though students find a value in usage, ethical hesitation is controlling them from adoption.

Another moderator is accessibility where most of the students reported limited familiarity, low frequency of AI usage and moderate to difficulty in access to the tools. Even with high interest, lack of accessibility reduces the actual usage.

The results reveal there is a three level behavioural pattern among students; first level is cognitive where students recognize and appreciate the benefits of AI which is a perceived value. The second level is about attitudes where students demonstrate interest and willingness to learn AI tools and then behavioural level where students are hesitant and not actively adopting to the AI tools in filmmaking.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study examined the adoption behaviour of Artificial Intelligence among film and media students in filmmaking through diffusion of innovation theory. The findings state that AI is in a transition phase from functional tool to a collaborative partner. The students found to be positioned under early majority with a moderate familiarity and cautious engagement with AI technologies.

As per the results students have recognised the potentialities of AI tools to enhance creativity, efficiency and technical proficiency in filmmaking. The significant relationship between perceived value and learning interest confirms that when students recognize the benefits(relative advantage) they incline, they are interested in learning and experimenting with AI.

Particularly the persuasion stage of Diffusion of innovation theory is strongly supported by the study. This confirmed the relative advantages play a crucial role in shaping positive attitudes and motivation towards adopting AI. Despite awareness and interest students doesn't engage actively in the usage of AI tools. This shows the gap between attitude formation and behavioural adoption indicating interruption before reaching the decision and implementation stage.

The current study contradicted the traditional technology acceptance models, which state that perceived usefulness and user intentions lead to usage behaviour. The findings of the study stated the perceived value and learning interest are not sufficient for adoption particularly in creative fields like filmmaking.

The external factors, ethical concerns and accessibility are also critical barriers for adoption. As students expressed dilemmas regarding copyright infringement, deepfakes, loss of originality and ethical misuse of AI generated content.

As per the study the students are situated between persuasion and decision-making stages of the DOI process where they are evaluating the benefits and risks of AI before adopting. The study coins the importance of experimentation, guided learning and hands-on experience, which states importance of educational institutions in smoother adoption of AI technologies among students.

The study concludes stating that film and media students' recognition of advantages of AI tools and strong interest in learning them doesn't translate into adoption behaviour due to ethical concerns, accessibility limitations and lack of practical exposure.

The research contributes to the growing discourse of AI in media education particularly in the creative fields of filmmaking. It calls for a pedagogical shift that positions AI as a collaborative partner instead of a tool enabling students to navigate through the evolving landscape of filmmaking and creative industries.

REFERENCES

1. Alka'awneh, S. M. N., Abdul-Halim, H., & Md. Saad, N. H. (2025). A review of diffusion of innovations theory and AI adoption. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 15(3).
2. Amabile, T. M. (1996). *Creativity in context*. Westview Press.
3. Chen, O. (2025). The intersection of AI and filmmaking: Creative opportunities and ethical challenges. *International Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(3).
4. Davaasambuu, T. (2025). Film production artificial intelligence use. *Art and Design Review*, 13(3), 210–220. <https://doi.org/10.4236/adr.2025.133016>
5. Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 319–340.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/249008>

6. Dearing, J. W., & Lee, S. (2023). Diffusion of innovations. In *International encyclopedia of communication theory and philosophy*.
7. Dwivedi, Y. K., Hughes, D. L., Ismagilova, E., et al. (2021). Artificial intelligence (AI): Multidisciplinary perspectives on emerging challenges and opportunities. *International Journal of Information Management*, 57.
8. Dwivedi, Y. K., et al. (2023). So what if ChatGPT wrote it? Multidisciplinary perspectives on opportunities, challenges, and implications of generative conversational AI. *International Journal of Information Management*, 71, 102642.
9. Ge, H., & Shin, J. (2026). University students' learning intention towards generative AI in higher education: A hybrid SEM-ANN approach. *Acta Psychologica*, 240, 104–118.
10. Gole, N., & Arya, K. (2025). Exploring use of artificial intelligence tools in film production: A qualitative study. *Global Media Journal (Indian Edition)*, 7(1).
11. Ham, M. (2024). Theories of innovation adoption and real-world case analyses. In *Driving educational change*.
12. Hwang, Y., & Lee, J. H. (2025). Exploring students' experiences and perceptions of human-AI collaboration in digital content creation. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 22(1), 1–18.
13. Khatiwada, P., Washington, J., Walsh, T., Hamed, A. S., & Bhatta, L. (2025). The ethical implications of AI in creative industries: A focus on AI-generated art. *arXiv*.
14. Khattak, M., Cohen, S. E., & Taylor, K. (2025). Who holds the camera? Filmmaking justice in the era of generative AI. *Global Review of AI Community Ethics*, 3(1).
15. Kurt, S. (2023). Diffusion of innovations theory. *Educational Technology*.
16. Li, J., Yan, Y., & Zeng, X. (2025). Exploring artificial intelligence in inclusive education: A systematic review. *Applied Sciences*, 15(23). <https://doi.org/10.3390/app152312624>
17. Melo-López, V. A., Basantes-Andrade, A., Gudiño-Mejía, C., & Hernández-Martínez, E. (2025). The impact of artificial intelligence on inclusive education: A systematic review. *Education Sciences*, 15(5), 539.
18. Monserrat, A. L., & Srnc, N. M. (2025). Reflection-AI: Artificial intelligence as a redefining force for expressive filmmaking in film schools. *Frontiers in Communication*, 10.
19. Murillo-Jiménez, H., Centeno-Alarcón, M., & Buele, J. (2025). Analyzing barriers to the effective implementation of technological tools in inclusive education: A scoping review. *Frontiers in Education*, 10.
20. Overbye-Thompson, H., & Hamilton, K. A. (2025). A diffusion of innovations measurement scale for reinvention, relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability. *PLOS ONE*, 20(10), e0334616.
21. Paiola, M., Gebauer, H., & Edvardsson, B. (2021). Digitalization and service transformation in manufacturing. *Journal of Service Management*.
22. Perkins, R. A. (2011). Using Rogers' theory of perceived attributes to understand adoption challenges in education. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(18).
23. Pérez Perez, F. (2024). *AI and accessibility in education*. Consortium for School Networking (CoSN).
24. Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations* (5th ed.). Free Press.
25. Wei, X., Wang, L., Lee, L. K., & Liu, R. (2025). The effects of generative AI on collaborative problem-solving and team creativity performance in digital storytelling. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 22(1), 1–20.
26. Yang, W., Lee, H., Wu, R., Zhang, R., & Pan, Y. (2023). Using an AI-generated program for positive efficiency in filmmaking education. *Electronics*, 12(23), 4813. <https://doi.org/10.3390/electronics12234813>

27. Yu, W. F. (2025). AI as a co-creator and a design material: Transforming the design process. *Design Studies*, 89, 101–120.
28. Zhang, R., Yu, B., Min, J., Xin, Y., Wei, Z., Shi, J. N., et al. (2025). Generative AI for film creation: A survey of recent advances. *Proceedings of CVPR Workshops*.

Eco-Folkloristics and the Subaltern Body: Ecology, Memory and Resistance in Sheela Tomy's *Valli*

Chettupally Anvesh & Pallavi Negi, *Department of Indian Languages and Literary Studies, University of Delhi, New Delhi*

Abstract

Ecological degradation and subaltern marginalisation are two issues that have not been adequately explored in the context of the literary analysis of indigenous narratives. Although the current body of knowledge about Sheela Tomy's *Valli* addresses eco-criticism, folklore, and gender, they are not commonly discussed as interdependent systems that influence the narrative. To overcome this gap, this paper elaborates an interdisciplinary model that incorporates eco-subalternity, eco-feminism, and eco-folkloristics to examine how the novel constructs relations among land, body, and memory.

This analysis shows that *Valli* is not only used as a setting but also as a storehouse of environmental recollection, where a shift in the environment leads to the loss of native identity and knowledge systems. At the same time, folklore is also a vital epistemological model that codifies ecological information and perpetuates culture by myth, ritual, and narrative. These forms of narratives serve as other archives that oppose mainstream ecological and historical discourses.

This paper also postulates that the subaltern body, especially that of the Adivasi women, is a location where ecological exploitation is experienced and challenged. The novel shows the reinforcing relationship between environmental degradation and social marginalisation by connecting land and body. In this light, *Valli* criticises capitalist modernity and anthropocentric paradigms, and predicts resistance to indigenous ecological knowledge.

The paper finally establishes folklore as a form of ecological awareness and the subaltern body as a site of memory, agency and survival in the disputed environmental spaces.

Keywords: *Eco-folkloristics, Subaltern Body, Eco-criticism, Indigenous Knowledge, Valli*

Introduction

Valli by Sheela Tomy (2022) is generally considered an eco-fiction that prefigures the connection between the indigenous population and their natural surroundings, specifically in the socio-ecological setting of Wayanad, formerly known as Bayalnad. The novel portrays the close association between Adivasi life and forests, rivers, and land-based activities that define identity, livelihood, and cultural continuity (Bensla and Bhatnagar 98-99). This ecological rootedness is not only descriptive but also indicative of a larger situation in which social structures and marginalised communities are directly influenced by environmental change (Srija and Mahalakshmi 539). In particular, Bensla and Bhatnagar observe that *Valli* exposes environmental degradation, displacement, and cultural marginalisation and show that ecological crises cannot exist without human suffering (99).

Meanwhile, the *Valli* is organised around folklore, myth, and oral stories, which serve as the most important means of preserving ecological knowledge and cultural memory among local communities, just like in Mamang Dai's *The Legends of Pensam* (Nayak and Monica 2, 10). The novel's folklore carries lived experience, environmental ethics, and collective history, and therefore serves as a system through which knowledge of the ecology is passed down through generations. This connection between narrative and ecology can be explained through eco-folkloristics, which considers folklore a form of ecological knowledge production and cultural continuity. Nayak and Monica continue to suggest that indigenous stories incorporate ecological wisdom in the form of myth, memory, and belief systems to provide a worldview grounded in similarity and interdependence, rather than domination (1).

Intimately related to this is the idea of the subaltern body, which points to the lived, embodied experiences of marginalised groups of people under ecological and social exploitation. In *Valli*, the Adivasi groups and especially the women are in a position that is not only ecologically vulnerable but also systematically marginalised by the power structures. Srija and Mahalakshmi theorise this situation as eco-subaltern, in which marginalised human groups and the ecological systems are muted in mainstream environmental and political discourses (538). This framework shows the arrangements among ecological degradation, voice, representation, and exclusion (Srija and Mahalakshmi 539).

Although there is academic research on ecocriticism, indigenous knowledge systems, and folklore in *Valli*, these aspects are typically studied separately rather than as interdependent processes within a single analytical approach. This presents a serious division in the comprehension of the role of ecological knowledge, cultural memory, and subaltern embodiment plays within the text. The paper contends that *Valli* revive folklore as an ecological archive in which subaltern bodies speak out against environmental and cultural erasure and offer resistance.

Literature Review

(A) Ecology and Subalternity

Ecocriticism and subaltern studies intersect to show that environmental degradation is closely connected to structures of marginalisation and exclusion (Srija and Mahalakshmi 539). Srija and Mahalakshmi theorise this relationship through the term eco-subalternity, which refers to the simultaneous silencing of marginalised human communities and ecological systems in mainstream discourses on the environment and politics (538). They assert that ecological policies and conservation systems often marginalise the voices of indigenous people, therefore, perpetuating epistemic violence and systematic inequality (538). This framework confirms that environmental crises should be perceived as power, representation, and voice issues rather than solely as ecological problems (540).

George builds on this point of view by introducing the notion of tribal ecologies, in which nature serves as a source of identity, a means of livelihood, and a cultural space for Adivasi communities (George 238). The paper states that tribal ecological knowledge involves sustainable practices, cultural memory, and socio-political resistance, grounded in millennial relationships with land and forests (George 239). George also criticises mainstream environmental paradigms, especially Western paradigms of deep ecology, as failing to take into account material realities and survival needs of indigenous people (242). All these views illustrate that ecological discourse cannot be detached from subalternity, since environmental destruction leads to ecological destruction and the marginalisation of indigenous communities (Srija and Mahalakshmi 538).

(B) Indigenous Ecology and Knowledge Systems

Indigenous ecological knowledge is being framed as an alternative to anthropocentric and extractive models of development that emphasise control over sustainability (Nayak and Monica 11). Nayak and Monica believe that indigenous stories reflect a worldview of reciprocity, interdependence, and respect towards nature (1). They show that oral traditions, place-based practises, and animistic beliefs are systems of ecological wisdom that serve as cultural and environmental knowledge systems (1). They also highlight that such knowledge systems are resistant to environmental damage and cultural destruction brought about by modernisation and colonialism (11).

George makes this point stronger by situating indigenous ecological knowledge within material and political contexts of survival and resistance. The research indicates that tribal ecological activities are deeply embedded in day-to-day activities and are critical to sustainability and survival (George 239-240). George further criticises abstract environmental theories on their failure to take into consideration the realities of the lives of indigenous people. All these points show that indigenous ecological knowledge is practical and political, serving as a form of resistance against exploitative modern systems (Nayak and Monica 10).

(C) Folklore, Identity, and Gender

Folklore in *Valli* is a key tool for maintaining cultural identity and ecological knowledge among indigenous populations (Varghese 998). Varghese believes the novel demonstrates the three-dimensionality of folklore by incorporating culture, politics, and native traditions into its storytelling framework (997). The paper highlights that folklore in *Valli* has maintained a sense of regional identity to the extent that it has incorporated oral culture, rituals, and lived experiences (Varghese 999). This confirms the fact that folklore is a system of cultural and ecological knowledge that functions dynamically and is not an aesthetic component.

Prabhu goes on to state that *Valli* builds tribal identity through myth, memory, ritual, and storytelling, and that these form alternative archives that challenge mainstream historical accounts. The paper emphasises that narrating enables one to reclaim repressed histories and maintain cultural continuity among marginalised groups (Prabhu 85). Prabhu further asserts that women in the novel serve as memory bearers, environmental experts, and ritual participants, thereby connecting gender with the continuity of culture and environment (84).

This proves that folklore and storytelling are closely connected to issues of identity, resistance, and survival.

Bensla and Bhatnagar further expound this argument by showing how environmental degradation in *Valli* is strongly associated with gendered marginalisation, especially for women in the context of both ecological and social disruption (102). Their discussion indicates that ecological devastation is one of the factors that result in the marginalisation of women, which further supports the linking of the environmental crisis and gendered inequality (99). This aligns with ecofeminist views, which hold that women are the primary agents in maintaining ecological knowledge and cultural memory despite systemic exploitation (Bensla and Bhatnagar 103).

Research Gap

The current literature on *Valli* offers an understanding of ecocriticism, indigenous ecological knowledge, folklore, and gender, yet views them as distinct processes. There is still a significant gap in critical work that incorporates folklore, ecology, and the subaltern body within a single analytical framework that explains the interdependence of these elements operating simultaneously in the narrative.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the current study is an integrated approach that combines eco-subalternity, ecofeminism, and eco-folkloristics to understand how *Valli* builds relationships among ecology, identity, and marginalisation. All these theoretical approaches help comprehend how the ecological and social structures work simultaneously in the story of *Valli*, as explained by Bensla and Bhatnagar in their research.

The research also suggests that eco-subalternity refers to the situation in which both human and ecological communities are excluded in all ways by the prevailing discourses of environmental and

political power (Srija and Mahalakshmi 540). They claim that systems of environmental governance and conservation tend to marginalise natives, thereby supporting epistemic violence and institutional inequality (538). This framework expands the concept of subalternity to non-human subjects that are exploited and controlled. Consequently, eco-subalternity offers a critical perspective on how nature and marginalised communities are positioned within identity politics and hegemonic structures.

Ecofeminism extends this analysis by foregrounding the intertwined nature of the oppression of women and nature within systems of exploitation (Bensla and Bhatnagar 99). Gendered marginalisation is closely linked to environmental degradation, especially among women in the context of ecological disturbance in *Valli* (Bensla and Bhatnagar 98). This model draws a comparison between land and the female body that is commodified, controlled, and subjected to violence (102). Meanwhile, ecofeminism also focuses on women as bearers of ecological knowledge and cultural memory, thereby highlighting their agency in resistance systems (103).

The third paradigm, eco-folkloristics, views folklore as an ecological knowledge-production and cultural-continuity system. According to Varghese, folklore in *Valli* combines cultural identity, the political situation, and local traditions, thereby conserving ecological and cultural knowledge in the form of narratives. In the same manner, Nayak and Monica highlight that indigenous stories encode ecological knowledge through myth, memory, and belief systems grounded in interdependence (1). Such views hold folklore not as an aesthetic add-on but as an epistemology through which environmental knowledge is transmitted and maintained (Nayak and Monica 7).

Collectively, these frameworks reveal that folklore, ecology, and subalternity are connected systems in *Valli*, which determines the meaning and narrative (Srija and Mahalakshmi 539). This combined method makes it clear that folklore is no longer ornamental but a form of knowledge and resistance through which marginalised communities can express ecological relationships and cultural identity (Nayak and Monica 5).

Analysis

Forest, Land and Ecological Memory

In *Valli*, the forest is built as an ecological, cultural and historical memory and is a part of the narrative (Tomy, ch. 1). The novel follows the evolution of Kalluvayal from a thriving forest habitat into a commercialised, built-up environment, a shift from ecological balance to ecological disturbance (Tomy, ch. 1). This shift demonstrates that ecological change is connected to broader processes of displacement and marginalisation affecting indigenous communities (Bensla and Bhatnagar 100).

The gradual transformation of forests into plantations, such as cashew and coffee, is indicative of the reorganisation of ecological space to accommodate economic pressures, leading to the loss of biodiversity and native lifeworlds (Tomy, ch. 1). Bensla and Bhatnagar suggest that ecological degradation in *Valli* cannot be understood without reference to cultural marginalisation, as environmental destruction destabilises identity, livelihoods, and communal structures (99). This

confirms that the destruction of forests is an additional loss of cultural memory and of the society's continuity (99).

Also, the novel maintains traces of an alternative ecological ethic by portraying Adivasi practices grounded in sustainability and harmony (Tomy, ch. 2). The letters in the story discuss how native communities use only what nature needs and uphold ecological balance, a system of environmental ethics based on restraint and coexistence (Tomy, ch. 2). Nayak and Monica call these practises manifestations of indigenous ecological wisdom that is interdependent, reverent, and sustainable in their interaction with nature (4,7).

This contrast of ecological destruction and indigenous sustainability highlights the incompatibility between extractive modern practises and traditional ecological knowledge (Nayak and Monica 8). The forest is therefore not only a physical site but also a repository of knowledge, memory, and identity that is gradually being eroded by the forces of environmental and economic transformation (Tomy, ch. 1).

By so doing, *Valli* constructs the forest as an ecological site of memory and loss, revealing how much the degradation of the environment is tied to the destruction of cultures and marginalisation of native populations (Bensla and Bhatnagar 102-103).

A cultural archive on folklore

Folklore in *Valli* is an ecological memory that stores and exchanges ecological and environmental knowledge, cultural memory, and identity across generations (Tomy, ch. 1-2). It is evident that the narrative of Unniyachi depicts how myth is enshrined in the landscape and bridges rivers, forests, and sacred places through shared memory and environmental wisdom (Tomy, ch. 1-2). This hybrid ecology-story demonstrates that folklore is a system where ecological relationships are created and perpetuated (Tomy, ch. 1-2).

The mythology of the Unniyachi also demonstrates the possibility of ecological processes being represented through narrative structures, whereby the evolution of land and the creation of natural objects are explained by cultural narratives (Tomy, ch. 1-2). These align with Varghese's assertion that folklore in *Valli* has succeeded in preserving cultural identity and ecological awareness to the extent of integrating lived experiences into oral culture and narrative (Varghese 998-1000). Varghese notes that folklore is a politicised, cultural, and indigenous practice and, therefore, is not a cultural object but a dynamic body of knowledge.

The narration may also be regarded as a memory mechanism in which the past experiences and the ecological knowledge are always reactivated, re-transmitted in the practise of narration (Tomy, ch. 2). According to Prabhu, this storytelling is a unique archive that interrupts the official histories and restores the histories of oppressed populations (Prabhu 83, 85). This is what makes folklore a weapon of defiance: a means of survival for indigenous voices in the face of ecological destruction and cultural marginalisation.

Nayak and Monica also support this idea by demonstrating that native stories imprint ecological wisdom in myth, memory, and belief systems based on interdependence and reciprocity (6). According to them, these knowledge systems represent counter-narratives of anthropocentric and extractive developmental practises (6). This validates the fact that folklore is not symbolic but

epistemological, a system that produces, maintains, and passes ecological knowledge (Nayak and Monica 7). By doing so, folklore as a living ecological archive in Valli connects all of them, thereby preserving indigenous knowledge in life and preventing cultural and environmental erasure (Tomy, ch. 1-2).

The Subaltern Body: Women, Land and Resistance

The subaltern body, especially the female body in Valli, is developed as a place where ecological exploitation, cultural memory, and resistance meet (Tomy, ch. 14). The novel creates a comparison between land and female body that depicts both as spaces of control, commodification, and violence in the prevailing socio-economic orders (Tomy, ch. 14). This correspondence is a sign of an ecofeminist approach where both nature exploitation and women's oppression are mutually dependent processes that are the results of power systems (Bensla and Bhatnagar 102).

The character of Unniyachi demonstrates how the female body is embedded in myth and landscape as a cultural symbol and site of resistance (Tomy, ch. 1). Her story relates to the notion of feminine identity to the ecological memory because her transformation is associated with land, water, and sacred geography in the narrative (Tomy, ch. 1). This signification shows that the body is not only subjected to power but also re-agencies itself through the continuity of myth and narration (Tomy, ch. 1).

Likewise, the experience of women like Sara is indicative of the continuation of memory and identity in the embodied experience across the shifting ecological and social conditions (Tomy, ch. 2). These images support Prabhu's argument that Valli recreates identity through ritual, narrative, and feminine agency, placing women at the core of cultural and environmental continuity (Prabhu 84). Prabhu also points out that women are custodians of memory, ecological knowledge, and ritual practices, thus connecting gender to resistance and survival (Prabhu 85).

In the novel Adivasi women also reflects this relationship between body and land by perpetuating ecological practices that maintain balance with nature despite systematic displacement and marginalisation (Tomy, ch. 2). Their purpose is a product of what its defined as ecological wisdom of the indigenous based on interdependence and reciprocity, where human life cannot be separated from the environmental systems (Nayak and Monica 6). This reveals that the subaltern body is both a means of ecological knowledge and an experience of being (Nayak and Monica 7).

This process can be understood within the context of eco-subalternity, in which marginal groups and ecological systems are silenced by mainstream discourses and power relations (Srija and Mahalakshmi 539). They argue that this kind of killing creates circumstances in which subaltern bodies are ecologically erased through epistemic marginalisation (538). The subaltern body in *Valli* thus constitutes not only the space of exploitation but also the space of rejection, in which identity, memory, and ecological knowledge are maintained and exercised. In this way, connecting land and body, *Valli* shows that ecological and social struggle are closely intertwined and that resistance is created through embodied experience, just as through narrative and cultural memory (Tomy, ch.14).

Discussion

The analysis shows that *Valli* creates a narrative in which ecology, folklore, and subaltern embodiment are interdependent structures that generate meaning and resistance in the text (Srija

and Mahalakshmi 539). The novel makes folklore a key ecological resistance strategy by rendering environmental knowledge into myths, rituals and oral traditions that maintain indigenous connections with the land (Tomy, ch. 1). According to Varghese, folklore in *Valli* is a blend of culture, politics, and indigeneity, and as such, it is an active system that maintains ecological consciousness and cultural identity (Varghese 998-1002). This confirms that folklore does not act as a decorative component of narrative but is an epistemological form that supports and passes ecological knowledge.

Meanwhile, the subaltern body is introduced as a site of ecological location where environmental degradation is sensed as lived, embodied realities (Tomy, ch. 14). The research shows that the destruction of the ecology in *Valli* is closely linked to women's marginalisation, displacement, and socio-economic transformation. This aligns with the idea of eco-subalternity introduced by Srija and Mahalakshmi, emphasising the muting of both subaltern communities and ecological systems in processes of power and domination(538). Consequently, the body becomes a site where the loss of ecology is not only witnessed but also physically and culturally perceived.

Moreover, *Valli* questions prevailing paradigms of capitalist modernity by showing how forests are turned into commercialised spaces where economic interests take precedence over environmental sustainability (Tomy, ch. 1). This is termed 'ecoprecarity', in which environmental and social instability are created through exploitative spatial and economic relations that discriminate against indigenous populations (Nataraj and Narayana 73). Their theory of spatial politics also illustrates how power structures restructure land, dislocating traditional ecological relations and knowledge systems (Nataraj and Narayana 71).

Anthropocentric views are also challenged in the novel, which presupposes the agency of non-human beings and stresses the interdependence of humans and nature (Nayak and Monica 6). They claim that indigenous ecological knowledge is grounded in the principles of mutuality and coexistence, as an alternative to prevailing models that treat nature as a resource to be exploited (5). This supports the notion that *Valli* is making a relational ecological worldview that opposes hierarchical views of the environment. In this way, *Valli* unites folklore, embodied experience, and ecological awareness to challenge systems of exploitation and recover indigenous ways of knowledge and resistance (Srija and Mahalakshmi 538-539).

Conclusion

This research paper has revealed that *Valli* constructs a networked narrative in which ecology, folklore, and subaltern embodiment are closely interrelated and mutually supportive structures that produce meaning and resistance in the text (Srija and Mahalakshmi 539). It has been established that the novel has displayed the forest as not just a physical location, but as a life-force ecological and cultural memory, wherein the degradation of the environment results in the loss of indigenous identity and knowledge systems (Tomy, ch. 1). This confirms that the ecological change in *Valli* is impossible to isolate of the marginalisation and displacement of the Adivasi people (George 238).

Another finding in the paper is that folklore is an ecological storehouse where folklore knowledge of the environment and cultural memory are stored and passed to the succeeding generation (Tomy, ch. 1). According to the analysis made by Varghese, folklore in *Valli* is not the decorative narrative aspect but a dynamic system of knowledge, a mix of cultural identity, politics, and ecological

awareness (Varghese 1000). In the same tone, Prabhu points out that storytelling has become a different archive that rediscovers repressed histories and upholds indigenous identity through the practise of memory and ritual (Prabhu 85). These perceptions support the fact that folklore in Valli becomes the essence of ecological consciousness and cultural resistance.

The subaltern body analysis has shown that women, in particular, Adivasi women, are symbolic of ecological exploitation, cultural memory and resistance in the stories (Tomy, ch. 14). This is in tandem with eco-subalternity, where the marginalised groups and environmental systems are silenced in the hegemonic power structures (Srija and Mahalakshmi, 539). Because Nataraj and Narayana converse about their spatial politics and ecoprecarity, these are also spaces of knowledge and activism, where knowledge and cultural continuity are upheld in the face of systematic marginalisation (Nataraj and Narayana 73- 74).

In conclusion, *Valli* is a very eco-critical, subaltern, and folkloric text that challenges the current paradigms of capitalist modernity and anthropocentrism, anticipating indigenous epistemologies and lived ecological contacts (Nayak and Monica 11). The novel finally recovers lost territory and body as memory, resistance, and ecological survival (Nataraj and Narayana 73-74).

References

1. Bensla, Jahanvi, and Dr. Gurpyari Bhatnagar. "Valli: A Thematic Analysis." *The Context*, 2025, pp. 98-105.
2. George, Niveditha. "Tribal ecologies of Wayanad: A parallel reading of C.K. Janu's mother forest and Adimamakka with Sheela Tomy's valli." *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2025, pp. 238–243.
3. Nataraj, Shilpa, and Sharmila Narayana. "Literary cartography of performance ecologies in Sheela Tomy's 'valli.'" *Southeast Asian Review of English*, vol. 61, no. 2, 29 Dec. 2024, pp. 46–77.
4. Nayak, Dr. Amar, and K.C. Monica. "Indigenous ecological wisdom and ecocritical consciousness in Mamang Dai's the Legends of Pensam." *SMART MOVES JOURNAL IJELLH*, 28 Aug. 2025, pp. 1–14.
5. Prabhu, T. "Between Land and Language: Reconstructing Tribal Identity in Sheela Tomy's Valli." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 30, no. 12, Dec. 2025, pp. 83-86.
6. Srija, D., and Dr. K. Mahalakshmi. "Ecocriticism meets subaltern studies: A framework from the Sundarbans in Amitav Ghosh's 'The hungry tide.'" *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2025, pp. 538–540.
7. Tomy, Sheela. *Valli*. Translated by Jayasree Kalathil, PDF ed., Harper Perennial, 2022.
8. Varghese, Gifty Elza. "Folklore, fables, and the fusion of politics, culture, and characters in Valli by Sheela Tomy." *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, vol. 5, no. 2, 29 Feb. 2024, pp. 997–1003.

A Critical Analysis of Pedagogical Emphases in Guru-Dakshta Faculty Induction Programmes for Higher Education Faculty

Kanishka Awasthi, Research scholar, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi

Pradeep Kumar Misra, Professor, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi

Abstract

Pedagogy is the core of the teaching and learning process. In higher education, faculty members are required to be knowledgeable about pedagogical practices, as these affect learning outcomes. Pedagogical development for faculty members is also important, as it allows them to integrate their subject knowledge with pedagogical knowledge and improve the quality of learning. One of the significant initiatives by the University Grants Commission to support newly recruited faculty in developing pedagogical skills and competencies is the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme, under which a Faculty Development Program (FDP) called Guru-Dakshta is offered. While existing literature evaluates beliefs, challenges, and participation statistics, fewer studies critically examine the pedagogical emphases in Guru-Dakshta FIP. The paper addresses this gap through a qualitative document analysis of the Guru-Dakshta programme framework and programme reports. The finding shows that Guru-Dakshta FIPs place less emphasis on pedagogical components. The sessions focused on pedagogy rely more on lecture-based teaching and emphasize oral and written assessments. The findings reveal a fundamental misalignment between the stated objectives and the actual outcomes of the Guru-Dakshta FIP in developing pedagogical skills among newly recruited faculty. The paper concludes with recommendations to redesign the Guru-DakshtaFIP to incorporate additional pedagogical components to benefit newly recruited faculty.

Keywords: *Faculty Induction Programme, FIP, Pedagogy in higher education, PCK, Guru-Dakshta, MMTTC, NEP 2020*

Introduction

What makes a higher education institution truly good? Not its rankings, not its infrastructure, but the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching improves through pedagogical practices by faculty members in higher education. Subject expertise matters, but it is not enough to facilitate learning; faculty members need pedagogical knowledge to enhance it. Here comes the need for rigorous pedagogical development of higher education teachers, which is lacking and leading to less effective teaching in higher education institutions (Mandal, 2018b). Knowing about curriculum and syllabus, how to choose teaching methods that engage students, how to assess what students actually understand, rather than what is not related to learners' learning, that is what separates a knowledgeable faculty from a pedagogically sound faculty. This distinction of faculty members providing sessions that are knowledgeable, interactive, motivating, friendly, and open-minded, along with information-oriented languages, sits at the heart of higher education quality (Mandal, 2018b; Mishra et al., 2022).

In higher education, faculty members need to integrate subject content, pedagogy, and technology into their planning to improve the quality of teaching and learning (Chai, 2019). The quality of higher education is fundamentally linked to the pedagogical competence of its faculty. Research has consistently shown that subject-matter expertise is necessary but insufficient on its own for effective teaching (Shulman, 1987). National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognizes this reality explicitly in Chapter 13, titled 'Motivated, Energized and Capable Faculty,' calling for continuous professional development of higher education faculty with a specific emphasis on building pedagogical skills of faculty. Chapter 15 of the policy, titled 'Teacher Education', emphasizes the need for structured teacher training programs to ensure that faculty members are equipped not just with subject knowledge but also with pedagogical skills, and to use their experiences to further transform students into future-ready graduates capable of contributing to Viksit Bharat @2047.

Teaching is not merely about what to teach. As emphasized by Shulman, teachers require both subject knowledge and pedagogical techniques for teaching. In higher education institutions, teachers need to complete continuous professional development courses throughout their teaching careers (Sapkota, 2025; Subitha, 2018). In India, the University Grants Commission (UGC) recognized this importance and established the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Centres (MMTTC). The MMTTC addresses several critical areas outlined in the NEP 2020, most notably teacher professional development in higher education. It helps faculty members upgrade their pedagogical competencies and skills, ultimately rendering the learning experience more student-centered, interactive, and analytical (Mishra et al., 2025). MMTTCs, through its nationally mandated effort, aims to ensure that newly appointed faculty do not just arrive at their institutions with knowledge in mind and degrees in hand, but also with some pedagogical knowledge of teaching and learning, through Faculty Induction Programmes (FIPs). FIPs are important for newly appointed and early-career teachers, as many who are not in the field of teacher education have no prior teaching experience (Benarroch et al., 2024; Mishra et al., 2022).

The most important aspect of any FIP for newly recruited faculty members is pedagogy, which means how to teach, which includes teaching methods, instructional strategies, engagement with learners, learning environment, teaching-learning activities, assessment techniques, in addition to mastery of subject knowledge. Many teachers try their best to teach effectively but fail due to a lack of understanding of modern pedagogies and professional training and support from institutions (Mandal, 2018a). FIP needs to adopt an approach to developing both multidisciplinary and discipline-specific pedagogy. India needs to improve the quality of its higher education teaching without delay (Mandal, 2018b). A study conducted by Singh et al. (2023) concluded that pedagogical training in faculty development programmes led to many positive changes in faculty pedagogy, including student-focused approaches. It further recommended that the FDP should cater to skills in teaching methods and students' evaluation needs in higher education, with common ingredients and specific skills and methods related to the discipline and profession.

Research on faculty induction programmes remains limited and narrowly focused. Raheesh (2018) evaluated the UGC-HRDC orientation programme by surveying newly appointed teachers on a five-point scale across parameters such as content relevance, teaching awareness, skill development, and lecture quality and found a positive response from participants. However, the study did not examine the pedagogical importance embedded in the programme's design. Mishra et al. (2022) examined the Faculty Induction Programmes at Mizoram University through a case study that surveyed new faculty members and found the program to be well-organized and beneficial, aligning with NEP

2020. A study conducted by Mishra et al. (2025) explored the views and experiences of university teachers who participated in the FIP, as well as the program's impact on their professional development and overall effectiveness. The findings indicated that educators held positive views of Guru-Dakshata FIP, considering it an essential initiative for the continuous improvement of faculties and beneficial to educators, students, and institutions. Educators in this study preferred more immersive, hands-on experiences and flexible or self-paced modules, as these helped them improve their API scores and advance their careers. Similar findings were observed in a study by Kala and Chaubey (2015).

Studies on MMTTC effectiveness have consistently focused on participation data, views, feedback, and post-program career outcomes. There appears to be no research examining whether FIP's design, delivery methods, and assessment are constructively aligned with its stated pedagogical intent. There are not enough studies examining the pedagogical emphases in FIP's design, creating a gap, as NEP 2020 mandates that these programs must not only help faculty attend training but also transform them through the pedagogical orientation.

MMTTCs, established by the UGC across higher education institutions in India, are the most appropriate institutions for the pedagogical development of higher education teachers. The MMTTCs are established to equip faculty with the skills needed for enhanced teaching, learning, research, and academic leadership, while incorporating Indian values and updating their knowledge to align with societal demands and the directives of NEP 2020. Among the various programs offered by MMTTCs, the Guru-Dakshata Faculty Induction Program (FIP) is the flagship program, as completion of FIP is mandatory for all newly appointed faculty within one year of joining any higher education institution. Each FIP is offered for a total duration of 144 hours for over 24 working days (4 weeks), which could be split into parts as per requirement, conducted online or offline (hybrid) mode. FIP represents the foundational professional development experience for 16,07,839 faculty members across India's 1,153 universities and 48,291 colleges (UGC Annual Report, 2023-24). FIP is linked to capacity building for newly recruited faculty, and, as is the prevailing practice, higher education faculty do not receive formal pedagogical training. It is therefore vital to examine whether FIP addresses the pedagogical needs of newly recruited teachers and, if so, how. However, no study has critically examined whether FIP's curriculum, delivery methods, and assessment are pedagogically coherent. This paper addresses this gap and attempts to answer two research questions:

- (1) How much emphasis does the Guru-Dakshata framework put on pedagogy in its themes, activities, and assessments?
- (2) How much emphasis is put on pedagogy in Guru-Dakshata FIP's themes and teaching methods used?

Methodology

This study employs qualitative document analysis as its primary research methodology. The study first analyzes the Guru-Dakshata Framework and the Guru-DakshataFIPs conducted in accordance with it. Although MMTTCs across the country regularly organize Guru-Dakshata FIPs, reports of these FIPs are not readily available. However, a search of the websites of various MMTTCs revealed

four reports related to Guru-Dakshta FIP. Accordingly, the following five documents were analyzed for the study:

- Guru-Dakshtaframework (UGC), which constitutes the official FIP curriculum, comprises module-wise learning objectives, learning outcomes, focus areas/themes, teaching activities, and assessment approaches for each module.
- Report of Guru-Dakshta - Faculty Induction Programme-Institution I (July 11 to August 17, 2023)
- Report of Guru-Dakshta- Faculty Induction Programme-Institution II (July 31 to August 13, 2024)
- Guru-Dakshta - Faculty Induction Programme Schedule- Institution III (October 21, 2024 to February 01, 2025)
- Guru-Dakshta - Faculty Induction Programme Schedule- Institution IV (November 1 to 29, 2025)

The pedagogy here is defined as the combination of teaching methods (what instructors do), learning activities (what instructors ask their students to do), and learning assessments (the assignments, projects, or tasks that measure student learning) (University of Minnesota, 2025). The discussion follows on the available information: themes, session hours, and teaching methods and practices, with emphasis on pedagogy. Accordingly, the analysis consisted of themes, activities, methods, assessment, and aspects related to curriculum, teaching methods, teaching activities, learning environment, assessment, and classroom management in the FIP.

This study relies entirely on qualitative document analysis and examines FIP schedules, themes, and sessions indicated in reports, rather than what actually occurs during the sessions. Observation of sessions was not conducted during the actual practices. The classification of session hours as directly, indirectly, digital, or unrelated to pedagogy involved researchers' judgment. The data sources were inconsistent in their reporting: one of the report did not specify session hours, so days were used as a substitute, making its figures not directly comparable to the hour-based figures from the other two institutions. There are differences in reports uploaded by different institutions. The reports were retrieved only from publicly available institutional reports; some were incomplete or inaccessible and therefore excluded from the analysis.

Analysis of Guru-Dakshta FIP Framework

The Guru-Dakshta framework consists of ten modules. These modules are

- Module 1: Higher Education and its Ecosystem (17 Hrs)
- Module 2: Curriculum designing, Outcome-based learning and Choice based credit system (20 Hrs)
- Module 3: Teaching, Learning and Assessment (20 Hrs)
- Module 4: Technology for Teaching and assessment of I-generation (20 Hrs)
- Module 5: Personal-Emotional Development and Counselling (20 Hrs)
- Module 6: Research, Professional Development and Academic Leadership (20 Hrs)

- Module 7: Academic Integrity (10 Hrs)
- Module 8: Constitutional Values, Human Rights & Fundamental Duties (13 Hrs)
- Module 9: Environmental Consciousness and Sustainable Development Goals (10 Hrs)
- Module 10: Strategic Planning and Management (15 Hrs)

The total duration of these modules is 165 hours, with an additional 5-10 hours for project work and field visits.

The analysis of the Guru-Dakshta framework reveals that FIP comprises 10 modules spanning domains such as higher education and institutional rules; curriculum design; teaching, learning, and assessment; ICT integration; psychological foundations; research and professional development; academic integrity; constitutional values; sustainability; and planning and management. Of these 10 modules, only Module 3 (M3) is directly and exclusively dedicated to pedagogy, covering high-quality teaching-learning and assessment. Three additional modules (M1, M2, M4, M5) address pedagogy indirectly, embedded within broader themes of Constructivist pedagogy, curriculum development, use of ICT for assessment and understanding diversity in the classroom. The remaining 5 modules (M6, M7, M8, M9, M10) have no direct pedagogical contribution. This suggests that pedagogy is the exclusive focus of only one of ten modules and is not a central part of this framework, which is meant to develop faculty who will teach in higher education institutions. Rather, in the other modules, the focus is on how teachers should integrate these aspects into their teaching, not on how to teach.

In Guru-Dakshta Modules, only M3 is the sole module directly dedicated to pedagogy, revealing a fundamental connection between the objective of FIP and the framework designed for it. Module 3 focuses on high-quality teaching, learning, and assessment, which encompasses all aspects of pedagogy. Its learning outcome suggests that participants will develop and apply learner-centered teaching strategies and explore the link between teaching, learning, and evaluation. However, analysis of the module 3 activities (teaching methods) reveals that, here as well, lectures remain part of the activity, supplemented by discussions. However, assessment uses multiple methods; it does not require demonstration of actual teaching competence, such as microteaching or lesson-planning activities in module 3. Further, the assessment activities included oral presentations, written assignments, note-taking, objective tests, discussions, and talks, which highlight the misalignment of assessment with the intended learning outcomes.

The same pattern repeats across other modules of the framework. Module 1 introduces constructivist approaches to student learning, yet employs lectures as its primary means of content delivery. Module 9 addresses pedagogy for integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into teaching, yet relies on lectures for delivery and requires participants to speak about and take notes on the SDGs as the assessment tool. Although FIP instructs faculty to move away from teacher-centered methods, it itself uses lectures to deliver its content.

Shulman (1987) argued that PCK, the knowledge of how to make a specific subject more easily understandable to a learner, is what distinguishes a teacher from a subject expert. The faculty knows which examples work well and what common mistakes students might make while learning the concept. The Guru-Dakshta framework emphasizes implementing curriculum reforms in the context

of interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and applied approaches to knowledge, but, in contrast, it emphasizes faculty development in general pedagogy across all modules, followed by subject-specific knowledge. MMTTP provides separate Refresher Courses for the faculty members, which is seen as a problem because they are not offered together. No module addresses how to apply the principles of Bloom's taxonomy, constructive alignment, or learner-centered teaching differently across disciplines, thereby making education multidisciplinary. The pedagogies of different disciplines are different, and newly appointed faculty need to understand how to integrate subject knowledge with pedagogical knowledge.

Analysis of Guru-Dakshta FIPs conducted

Institution I, conducted a Guru-Dakshta FIP from July 11 to August 17, 2023. The analysis of the program report reveals that a total of 144 session hours were conducted over 24 days. Out of these 144 hours, 58.5 hours were directly or indirectly related to pedagogy. The remaining hours were related to research, the SDGs, the environment, constitutional values, and leadership and management, as prescribed in the framework.

Table 1: Distribution of session hours in a Guru-Dakshta FIP, MMTTC, Institution I

Domain	Approx. Hours	% of Total
Pedagogy-related content (direct, indirect)	58.5	40.6%
Non- pedagogy	82.5	57.2%
Presentations+ Test + valedictory session	3	2.08%
Total	144	≈100%

Institution II, conducted a Guru-Dakshta FIP between July 31, 2024, and August 13, 2024. It was found that there is no mention of the exact number of hours per session and no proper schedule of themes as a timetable; therefore, it was difficult to analyze the report. If we consider each day as a theme with a 3-hour session, then 5 days were dedicated directly or indirectly to pedagogy, comprising 35.7% of the total FIP program. Although the FIP was conducted under MMTTC, the program was conducted for only 14 days.

Table 2: Distribution of session hours in a Guru-Dakshta FIP, MMTTC, Institution II

Domain	Approx. Hours	% of Total
Pedagogy-related content (direct, indirect)	15	35.7%
Non- pedagogy	27	64.2%
Total	42	≈100%

Institution III conducted a Guru-Dakshta FIP between October 21, 2024, and February 01 2025. It was found that, out of the total 180 session hours (as mentioned), 72 hours were directly or indirectly related to pedagogy.

Table 3: Distribution of session hours in a Guru-Dakshta FIP, MMTTC, Institution III

Domain	Approx. Hours	% of Total
Pedagogy-related content (direct, indirect)	72	40%
Non- pedagogy	108	60%
Total	180	100%

The Analysis of the Guru-Dakshta FIP by institution IV held from 1.11.2025 to 29.11.25 reveals a total of 147 session hours across 21 days of instruction, followed by three days of presentations and valedictory sessions. Of these 147 hours, 43.5 hours were identified as directly or indirectly dedicated to pedagogy-related content. The remaining sessions covered orientation, institutional governance, constitutional values, academic integrity, environmental sustainability, strategic management, and leadership. These domains are professionally relevant but fall outside the pedagogical competence that NEP 2020 mandates for faculty in higher education.

Table 4: Distribution of session hours in a Guru-Dakshta FIP, MMTTC, Institution IV

Domain	Approx. Hours	% of Total
Pedagogy-related content (direct, indirect)	43.5	29.6%
Non- pedagogy	82.5	56.1%
Presentations+ Test + valedictory session	21	14.3%
Total	147	≈100%

The MMTTP Guidelines (UGC, 2023) prescribe a total of 170-175 session hours but mandate no minimum proportion of pedagogical content in the FIP. NEP 2020 mandates that faculty develop pedagogical capacities to produce graduates with 21st-century skills; therefore, there is a need for a structurally supported program to deliver it, but its absence is seen as a concern with the framework.

In the FIP documents, it can also be seen that 2 of the FIPs were conducted in online mode, in which most of the sessions were based on lecture cum discussion method through resource persons. Online sessions provide less scope for learner-centered activities due to various constraints. Even in the offline course, most of the themes were delivered through presentations and lectures.

Another significant finding from the day-wise analysis of the schedule is an inverted sequence of themes. In the first week of the institution IV FIP program, on day 5, a three-hour session titled 'From ICT to Immersive Learning: Leveraging AR, VR and MR in Higher Education' was delivered, an advanced digital pedagogy topic that requires familiarity with basic teaching-learning theory and methods. Nevertheless, foundational pedagogical sessions such as Essentials of

Teaching in NEP 2020 (Day 11), Bloom's Taxonomy and Integrating Pedagogy for Better Process (Day 16), and the core M3 teaching session (Day 18) were conducted later in the FIP schedule.

This sequencing contradicts a basic principle of instructional design, in which advanced application must follow foundational understanding. Introducing AR/VR/MR on Day 5, before Bloom's Taxonomy on Day 16, means faculty are exposed to advanced technological pedagogy without the conceptual vocabulary to evaluate or critically contextualize it. The sequencing reflects a technology-first approach rather than a pedagogy-first orientation, indicating that pedagogy is less important than digital technology and ICT.

Discussion and Recommendations

The findings collectively show that Guru-Dakshata FIP presents pedagogy as a value without embedding it as a practice within its own framework, modules, and programs. It prescribes learner-centered teaching in faculty classrooms while also delivering its own training through teacher-centered methods (the lecture method) and an assessment consisting of MCQs, oral presentations, and written assignments. The pedagogy content taught in FIP, delivered across different sessions over days and predominantly through lectures, discussions, and expert talks, and assessed through objective tests, MCQs, note-making, oral presentations, and written assignments, can never bring about the transformation NEP envisions.

Guru-Dakshata FIP mandates pedagogical development, while Institutions FIP are allocating less than 50% of total hours to pedagogy-related content. At least 60% of FIP session hours must be devoted to pedagogy-related content. The MMTTP Guidelines and Guru-Dakshata framework should be revised to specify not just the total hours for each module but also a minimum pedagogical content requirement, ensuring that pedagogy is central rather than peripheral to FIP design.

Resource persons delivering sessions on learner-centered teaching must themselves employ learner-centered methods. This requires training resource persons in content delivery before they are deployed - a prerequisite that should be formalized in the Guru-Dakshata framework. If a session is conducted online, it should not only be lecture- or discussion-based but also more hands-on and experience-based. This policy-practice gap is evident in the analysis, as NEP 2020 mandates that faculty first develop their own capacities to produce future-ready graduates with 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, digital/ICT skills, and decision-making. Studies have found a lack of subject expertise among resource persons skilled in pedagogy (Mishra et al., 2025), and Guru-Dakshata FIP requires resource persons who are themselves skilled in pedagogies such as problem-based learning, collaborative learning, flipped classroom approaches, and formative assessment design. Guru-Dakshata FIP, as per current designs and practices, does not equip faculty with the pedagogical capabilities envisioned in NEP 2020.

Guru-Dakshata FIP sequencing must follow foundational-to-advanced logic. Bloom's Taxonomy, teaching, learning, and assessment, and the essentials of teaching must be addressed before digital pedagogy, immersive learning tools, MOOC development, and advanced ICT integration themes. The UGC may prescribe a standard sequence within the Guru-Dakshata FIP framework rather than leaving sequencing entirely to individual MMTTCs, as this can sometimes lead to poor-quality programs.

The Guru-Dakshata FIP assessment must be redesigned to focus on applied and demonstrated pedagogical competence. MCQ-based, oral, and written assessment techniques are inadequate for assessing the application-level learning outcomes that FIP claims to develop in higher education faculties. Portfolio-based assessment, reflective journals, microteaching observations, and hands-on experience activities should be included to achieve the intended learning outcomes. In addition to generic modules in Guru-Dakshata FIP, there needs to be discipline-specific modules, as different disciplines require different pedagogies, and faculty members from different disciplines need to be trained to address diverse students' needs in their own subjects.

Conclusion

This study examined the emphasis on pedagogical aspects in the Guru-Dakshata FIP under the UGC-MMTTC and found it structurally inadequate to the ambitions of NEP 2020. Despite being a valuable initiative to introduce pedagogy for the professional development of faculty across various disciplines in higher education, the Guru-Dakshata framework on which these induction programs are conducted shows some misalignment among the objectives, teaching activities, and assessment techniques prescribed in the document. Further, across four primary report documents, a consistent pattern emerges: pedagogy is not pivotal. Rather, it is part of a few modules; also, there is extensive lecture delivery in the program, which is organized to develop learner-centered learning in higher education. The themes were sequentially inverted, teaching advanced topics before foundational topics in teaching and learning, and the absence of discipline-specific PCK (Pedagogical Content Knowledge).

However, these findings do not diminish the significance of the MMTTC as a national initiative. Training approximately 16 lakh faculty members across India's higher education system is no easy task. However, an ambition without pedagogical coherence risks producing adherence to the policy rather than bringing about transformation in the quality of teaching and learning in higher education institutions.

One basic flaw in the formulation of FIP is that institutions or policymakers still view it as a one-shot affair rather than as a continuous process of professional development and collaborative engagement in teaching and learning, along with a positive organizational learning climate for the successful professional development of teachers (Panda, 2018).

The sample for this study was small and selective, including one framework and four institutional FIPs chosen based on document availability. Though the findings show a pattern, they cannot be generalized to all MMTTCs across India without a broader, large-scale systematic sampling procedure.

Future research should gather more primary data, such as participant observation, interviews, classroom interactions, and data on the effects of post-FIP programs, to identify gaps in the framework and in the FIPs conducted. A broader comparative analysis across MMTTCs nationwide can help determine whether the challenges are systemic or specific to certain institutions.

References

1. Benarroch, A., Briceño-Martínez, J.J., & Bernal-Ballen, A. (2024). Analysis of conceptions and beliefs, argumentative teaching practices, and reflection of university teachers: A case study on teachers' professional development. *SAGE Open*, 14(3), 1-17.
2. Chai, C. S. (2019). Teacher professional development for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education: A review from the perspectives of technological pedagogical content (TPACK). *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 28 (1), 5–13.
3. Kala, D., & Chaubey, D. S. (2015). Attitude of faculty members towards faculty development programs and their perceived outcomes. *Pacific Business Review International*, 8(2), 21–30.
4. Mandal, S. (2018a). Critical perspectives of teaching-learning in Indian higher education. In N. V. Varghese, A. Pachauri & S. Mandal (Eds.), *India Higher Education Report 2017: Teaching, Learning and Quality in Higher Education* (pp.162–191). Sage Publications.
5. Mandal, S. (2018b). Teaching in Indian Higher Education: Six Principles for Improvement. *International Higher Education*, 95, 28–29.
6. Ministry of Education, Government of India. (2020). National Education Policy 2020. https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
7. Mishra, L., Bhunia, S. & Puii, L. (2025). The experience of higher education teachers in India towards professional development. *Discover Education* 4, 442.
8. Mishra, L., Gupta, T., & Shree, A. (2022). Faculty induction program for newly recruited teachers of higher education: A case study. *Teacher Development*, 26(1), 135–149.
9. Panda, S. (2018). Professional development of teachers in higher education. In N. V. Varghese, A. Pachauri & S. Mandal (Eds.), *India Higher Education Report 2017: Teaching, Learning and Quality in Higher Education* (pp. 132–164). Sage Publications.
10. Raheesh, R. (2018). Evaluation of the UGC-HRDC orientation programme regarding utility for the newly appointed teachers. *IRE Journals*, 2(6), 133–137.
11. Sapkota, T. (2025). Teachers', principals' and university-based teacher educators' multiple conceptions of teachers' professional development. *Frontiers in Education*, 10, Article 1554740.
12. Singh, S. K., & Kumar, P. R. V. (2023). Need for Pedagogical Training of Teachers in Higher Education Institutions: A Systematic Review. *University News*, 61(37), 3-14
13. Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2), 4–14.

14. Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. Harvard Educational Review, 57(1), 1–22.
15. Subitha G. V. (2018). Re-conceptualizing teachers' continuous professional development within a new paradigm of change in the Indian context: an analysis of literature and policy documents. Professional Development in Education, 44(1), 76–91.
16. University Grants Commission. (2023). Guru-Dakshata: Faculty Induction Programme curriculum framework. <https://ugc.gov.in/e-book/GURU%20DAKSHATA%20English/mobile/index.html>
17. University Grants Commission. (2023). Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme (MMTTP) guidelines. <https://mmc.ugc.ac.in>
18. University Grants Commission. (2024). UGC annual report 2023–24. <https://ugc.gov.in>
19. University of Minnesota. (2025). Pedagogy - diversifying your teaching methods, learning activities, and assignments. <https://cei.umn.edu/teaching-resources/inclusive-teaching-predominantly-white-institution/pedagogy-diversifying-your-teaching-methods-learning-activities-and-assignments>.

Partners or Workers? Critical Discourse of CSR and Internal Communications in India's Gig Economy

Amrita Mukherjee, *PhD research Scholar, Dept of Journalism and Mass Communication, Berhampur University, Odisha*

Prof Ganesh Sethi, *Dept of Journalism and Mass Communication, Berhampur University, Odisha*

Abstract

This study explores the platform-labour paradoxes embedded in strategic communication practices of app-based tech firms involved in India's growing sharing economy. We analyse how online platform firms (Zomato, Swiggy and Urban Company) negotiate worker conflicts while cultivating affirmative brand images by employ critical discourse analysis of corporates CSR efforts and internal communications during gig worker strikes over payouts algorithmically reduced by predicted demand in work. This study employs the Ideological Orders of Discourse framework (Iqbal, 2013) ⁴to examine deliberate choices consumers make in language use that re-constitute labour exploitation as "micro-entrepreneurship" alongside Genre Analysis (GA). Analysis indicates that words such as "flexibility," "independence" and the torturous "partners" are typically employed to erode traditional employer-employee obligations (Aruman et al., 2026). ⁵Drawing on internal posting documents, CSR campaign materials and communications from the public sphere in relation to the January 2026 national strikes, this study demonstrates how corporate speech fashions rhetorical constructions or ideologies which frame out forms of exploitation, all while actively promoting a capitulatory narrative of entrepreneurship. Findings reveal that platform corporations employ discursive tactics in establishing the legitimacy of algorithmic control mechanisms and compensation fluctuation of workers as independent business owners instead of rights-bearing employees. The research contributes to critical scholarship on digital labour by elucidating how strategic communication operates as an ideological weapon that fortifies platform capitalism. Policy-making, labour rights campaigning, and comprehending modern corporate communication tactics in emerging economies are all impacted by this research. The results highlight the need for legal frameworks that deal with discursive manipulation in communications related to the gig economy.

Keywords: Gig economy, Critical discourse analysis, Corporate communication, Micro-entrepreneurship, Strategic communication, Labour rights.

Introduction

In modern India, the sharing economy has kind of drastically shifted labour relations, mostly by enabling fresh digital platform mediated ways of organizing work. It also spins pretty complex ideological stories about what gig work really means, and platforms like Zomato, Swiggy, and Urban Company have turned into powerful intermediaries that connect service providers with

⁴ Iqbal, S. (2013). Ideological orders of discourse: Applying Fairclough's framework to contemporary discourse. *Discourse & Society*, 24(3), 312-328

⁵Aruman, J., Smith, K., & Thompson, L. (2026). Linguistic framing in gig economy communications: Micro-entrepreneurship as ideological apparatus. *Journal of Digital Labor Studies*, 8(1), 45-67.

consumers, maybe a little too smoothly. In 2020–2021, India had around 7.7 million gig workers; by 2029–2030, that figure is projected to rise all the way to 23.5 million, according to a 2022 study by NITI Aayog. Zomato, for example, has over 5.67 lakh gig workers, while Swiggy by itself is said to manage roughly 6.87 lakh. The whole situation changed when gig workers are placed in two roles at once: one that “partners” enjoying entrepreneurial freedom, yet also treated as regulated labour units under algorithmic steering. This dichotomy roles constituted what can be called a platform labour dilemma.

Corporate communication had a strange role here, it supports “worker empowerment” in one section and then uses employ strategies that lower down well-known labour rights in the next. In January 2026, across the country the gig workers went on strike to protest algorithmic compensation cuts and which they described as deteriorating the working conditions. Delivery services felt the impact across India, so it wasn’t mere talk. What came out during this conflict was the gap between workers lived prolonged experience of exploitation, and the corporate catastrophe that keeps saying collaboration is the ultimate goal. In other words, the strikes made the rhetorical difference crystal clear.

At that time, corporate strategic communication relies on discursive techniques that help in maintaining a positive brand image, while also navigating around any sharp criticism about labour practices. Public comments and CSR campaign materials and even internal PR tactics, all use wording that hides the way people are treated at work behind a nice-looking promise of business. This study looks at how this kind of language helps to keep the system of platform capitalism going by making people think that being taken advantage of at work is actually a business. The study shows that when we call being taken advantage of at work a business it helps the companies that do this. The companies make it sound like people are their bosses when really, they are just being taken advantage of workers. This study is, about how this kind of language affects people and how it helps the companies that use it. Platform capitalism relies on this kind of wording to keep going. The study investigates at how it works.

This study has significance because it critically analyses how public views on gig work interactions are flamed up by corporate discourse. Also, it demonstrates the ideological patterns embedded in languages are used to make platform control mechanisms seem absolute normal, while also wave aside workers’ claims to the important employment status and associated rights. The main way of doing this is focusing on language choices in corporate messages during labour conflict.

This study helps to understand properly the power dynamics inside labour markets. It also looks at the ways businesses try to resolve disputes. The study fills in the gaps in our knowledge about how companies communicate in emerging economies in the gig economy. In India stories about entrepreneurship play a role, in how workers and companies interact and the laws are still developing. The study gives an understanding of how companies use different types of communication to tell a consistent story. It looks at the way they talk to each other inside the company not just what they say to the public about responsibility. Digital labour markets are a part of this study and it helps to learn more about them.

Objectives

- To critically examine the language and discursive strategy used by platform companies (Zomato, Swiggy, Urban Company) in corporate internal notifications, CSR campaigns, and public communications during gig-worker strikes over algorithmic payout reductions. This analysis will focus on how terms like "partners," "flexibility," and "independence" function ideologically to reframe labour relations.
- To investigate how corporate communications create narratives of micro-entrepreneurship that strategically undermine traditional employer-employee obligations and conceal exploitation inherent in algorithmic management systems by combining Genre Analysis with Fairclough's three-dimensional Ideological Orders of Discourse framework.
- To provide insights into the platform-labour paradox in India's sharing economy by analysing how app-based tech companies use strategic communication to manage workforce disputes and create positive brand images. This will help shape policy recommendations for regulating gig economy communications and safeguarding worker rights.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses an integrated theoretical framework, that brings together Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis model (CDA) — more specifically, his idea of Ideological Orders of Discourse, with Genre Analysis (GA) too. With that, a deeper look at how corporate communications, operate in an ideologically loaded way across multiple textual genres is basically made possible.

Analysis of Genres

Genre analysis usually looks at how texts structured using common patterns that reflect social situations and goals. But critical genre analysis goes further it does not just list or categorize genres it also examines how genre rules can repeat and hide beliefs or values. For example, in communications things like public announcements CSR initiatives and internal notifications can be seen as specific genres with clear expectations about how information is presented and understood. These genres. Are shaped by the way information is shared within a company. Corporate communications have their way of doing things-they help create an image or message, the way they are written and read is important. It is, about how information is shared and understood. Critical genre analysis also treats genres as active participants in social processes, not as neutral vessels. So, in the gig economy, the particular power relationships become “natural” through implicit assumptions about worker-company interaction, which show up inside corporate communication genres. The study argues that genre norms do ideological labour by supporting platform control, while at the same time denying employment status, and it does that by looking at how Zomato, Swiggy, and Urban Company use communication genres during labour disputes.

Three-Dimensional model of Fairclough

Three related categories for discourse analysis show up in Norman Fairclough's CDA framework, they are basically text (as description), discursive practice (the processing bit), and sociocultural practice (the explanation part). With this scheme, one can look more or less in a systematic way at the ties between what shows up in linguistic form and the larger ideological operations that happen around it.

First Dimension, which's all about the Text Description to see things like how the words fit together if the sentences make sense and if the whole text is well organized. It also looks at the words that are chosen such as using the word "partner" of "worker". It checks if the writing is more active or passive like when a company's talking about paying people, even looks at the way things are described like when a company talks about a " network" instead of a regular job.

The Second Dimension is called Discursive Practice. It is about how the texts are made, shared and eventually read by people. It looks at how companies create their messages who's behind the messages and how they get sent out to people. It checks if the messages go out to the public or just to people inside the company and who the messages are meant for like investors, employees or customers. And looks at how the messages controlled and moved around by the people in charge so it is not just about what is being said, but also, about how the whole process works.

Third Dimension is about how things work in institutions and the ideas that shape them. This is where the way people do things and the culture around them come into play. It connects what companies say to the ideas of neoliberalism. These ideas slowly take away the rights of workers as a group. At the time they promote people working on their own starting their own businesses and looking for answers, in the market. This is the point of what Fairclough says, that we can look at big ideas and see how they affect the small details of what people say and write in the Third Dimension.

Ideological order of discourse

The way people think and talk about things- Iqbal found out in 2013. Is like what Fairclough said it shows how the way we talk about things is connected to who has power. The ideological order of discourse is like a mirror that reflects the power relations in our society. It is not something that exists it actually works through our everyday conversations. The way we talk about things makes some ideas about the world seem normal and these ideas are connected to the order of discourse. In the communications of companies in the gig economy, one can see these orders at work. They often assume things like: workers are poor because of the choices they make not because the system's unfair, using algorithms to manage people is just a neutral way to make things more efficient, not a way to control workers; being your own boss is the best way to work. When combine the methods of GA with Fairclough's model it becomes easier to see how companies create stories that support their ideologies across types of communication. this model shows how the words and phrases we use are connected to the way we think and talk about things and ultimately to the order of discourse. Genre analysis on the hand helps us see the patterns that support certain ideologies. Once we can see the ways in which companies use language to support their ideologies, we can take a look at how they communicate in a way that keeps their brand image strong while dealing with disagreements with workers. This study shows how Indian companies that use platforms to connect with workers communicate during disputes. It builds on the work of Aruman and others who found

in 2026 that companies often use words like "flexibility," "independence," and "partnership" to make it seem like they are not responsible for their workers. The ideological order of discourse is very important in this context as it shapes the way companies communicate with their workers and the way workers think about their relationship, with the company.

Literature Reviews

Literatures on Platform Labour and sharing economy- The sharing economy work arrangements are complex. Platform capitalism gets value from tools but doesn't give workers traditional job rights. Srnicek says it does this by making workers think they are in charge of their work of being seen as people with rights workers are viewed as business owners. With promises of flexibility digital jobs happen on online platforms. These jobs have computer programs managing workers, pay and not much freedom. Research shows that platform companies don't consider workers as employees. They use technology to keep watch and control over workers. This results in companies avoiding giving workers job security. In the US and Europe there are legal discussions about workers status. Many Western researchers study platform labour relations in these areas. However, in developing countries, business views and laws are different.

Literatures on Microbusiness as an Ideological Framework- In communications about the gig economy, redefining labour as "micro-entrepreneurship" is a key ideological strategy. Previous research indicates that companies disguise exploitation by portraying gig work as entrepreneurial (McNamee et al., 2019). This perspective frames workers as independent business owners making their own choices instead of as employees under algorithmic control. Research by Aruman et al. (2026) shows that companies use language that stresses "flexibility," "independence," and "partnership" to weaken traditional employer-employee roles. This linguistic framing allows companies to claim they empower workers while sidestepping minimum wage guarantees, employment benefits, and collective bargaining rights. Neoliberal views that back individualism and market solutions align with the micro-entrepreneurship narrative. Platform companies defend unstable work environments as personal choices rather than systemic exploitation. This ideological framing serves corporate interests by reducing labour costs while maintaining claims about worker agency.

Literatures on Corporate Communication and Strategic Framing in Labor Disputes- During labour disputes, corporate communications aim to shape public opinion while minimizing criticism. Research on corporate crisis communication shows how businesses use framing techniques to highlight positive aspects and downplay negative ones (Coombs, 2007). This includes showcasing success stories of worker earnings in gig economy settings while concealing algorithmic control and varying compensation systems. Research on platform communications reveals complex strategies designed to maintain brand image while addressing labour issues. Studies show how businesses create cohesive narratives that present them as supportive of workers rather than exploitative. They achieve this through internal alerts, public statements, and corporate social responsibility initiatives (Rissanen et al., 2022). ⁶In the context of corporate communication during gig economy labour conflicts, India has unique features. The idea of micro-entrepreneurship thrives in cultural narratives that celebrate self-reliance and entrepreneurship.

Literatures on Corporate Communications: A Critical Discourse Analysis Corporate communications have been analysed using critical discourse analysis, which uncovers ideological positions embedded in language. Research applying Fairclough's approach reveals how corporate speech creates ideological narratives that justify certain power structures (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak, 2008). Applying critical discourse analysis to business communications related to labour shows how language choices reflect ideological positions on worker-company interactions. Studies indicate that language emphasizing cooperation masks hierarchical control systems, while passive constructions obscure the decision-makers responsible for poor working conditions (Thomas, 2018). Using genre analysis in business communications illustrates how ideological work is supported by genre conventions. Corporate annual reports and similar documents use traditional rhetorical forms that normalize specific economic arrangements, as shown by Bhatia's (2008) critical genre analysis. Similarly, Qian (2020) demonstrates that particular language techniques in Management Discussion and Analysis sections improve readability and increase investor confidence.

Existing literary Gaps- Despite the growing body of work on platform labour, there remain many unanswered questions about critical discourse analysis of gig economy communications in developing countries. Western literature has not fully explored the extent to which corporate rhetorical strategies are determined by cultural contexts. Moreover, most research has relied on publicly available communications while overlooking internal communication which can reveal corporate discursive processes.

This paper attempts to fill these gaps by combining public CSR with internal announcements through critical discourse analysis of communications from Indian platform firms in the context of labor disputes. Using Fairclough's theory in combination with genre analysis provides rich analytic tools for examining how corporate discourse works across multiple genres to construct ideological narratives which sustain the platform-labour dilemma.

The NITI Aayog Report of 2022 gives some numbers about the gig economy in India. This shows why it is important to study this topic. This study looks at something the report does not. It looks at how communication affects the people who work for companies on the company side and what they experience. The gig economy in India is what this study is really, about and the NITI Aayog Report helps to understand it a little better.

Methodology

The Zomato, Swiggy and Urban Company make powerful gig platform firms in India. The businesses were selected for their market power, history of labour issues, and availability of corporate communications data during the national strikes in January 2026.

Swiggy has a bigger fleet size among food delivery companies with nearly 6.87 lakh employees as of November, while Zomato hires around 5.67 lakh gig workers across cities in India. Urban Company is the largest aggregator of gig workers, predominately for residential services Due to these businesses' size and prominence in the market, their messaging strategies heavily influence how gig work is perceived by the general public.

1. Prenderghast, Rissanen, A., Berg, J., & Ang, S. (2022). Corporate communication strategies in platform labor disputes. *Work, Employment and Society*, 36(2), 189-207.

Information Gathering- The datasets consist of corporate communications published around the time of a month-long strike led by gig workers in January 2026 against algorithm-adjusted wage cuts. The collection consists:

Internal notifications: Push alerts and app messages about payout changes, policy changes, updates on strikes received by gig workers

CSR campaign materials: publicly available CSR reports, campaign websites, and social media posts that focus on the empowerment of the working class

Public pronouncements: Statements, press releases & media appearances about labour disputes

Website content: Pages on the internal site that cover employee relations and benefits

Data, which recorded communications and information during strike phases, was collected between January 1 and January 31, 2026. This original archival study involved archiving publicly available communications to ascertain corporate discursive strategies are covered exhaustively.

Analytical Method: Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) model was used as the main base for the data analysis and, in a way, it helped in spotting linguistic stuff such as lexical choices grammar patterns, and other small grammatical structures. The discourse practice part looked more at who the audience was and how the texts or messages were produced, then it brought out socio cultural links that seemed to weaken labour rights, while also at the same time pushing an entrepreneurial mindset. On top of that, the genre analysis pointed to repeating themes in public speeches and in corporate social responsibility initiatives, you know, that kind of recurring stuff, and it made clear that rhetorical norms can reshape how people understand labour so it ends up fitting into entrepreneurial frames.

Moral Aspects- This study analyses publicly available messages from the business community, following ethical principles, without direct participant communication. It identifies firm names without assigning blame, focusing on discursive patterns to follow the moral aspect guidelines.

Results: Analysis of words made heavy use of the word "partner", but less so "worker" or "employee": Lexical Framing: Workers vs Partners Payout reductions began on January 15, 2026 when Zomato told internal recipients: *"We appreciate the commitment shown by our partner restaurants and are introducing modifications to these payout ratios to have sustainable partnership models."* That notification uses "partner" seven times, and doesn't even mention "worker." The same prominence is given to partnership language on Swiggy's CSR campaign website, "Our partners have the freedom and space to design their work journey with flexibility." We promote partner entrepreneurship through training and technology. All but the 47 communications examined from the three companies display this lexical trend. The linguistic selection of the word "partner," serves an ideological function by avoiding hierarchical control relationships. Employment is asymmetrical by nature, while partnership suggests voluntary co-operation of equals.

Term in Entrepreneurship: flexibility, independence & micro-entrepreneurship- Corporate communicator often uses a language that expresses those attributes of an entrepreneur. The release by Swiggy from January 2026 said, "Gig partners appreciate the flexibility to decide their working

hours at will, independence of managing their own timing and entrepreneurially growing their micro-business.

Urban Company addressed algorithmic modifications through an internal communication and explained, "These improvements are focused on making independent entrepreneurship easier for our partners by giving them the best tools to manage their business." Flexibility, in fact, is still our operating principle above partner success. Analysis of 47 communications These three words - Flexibility (89), Independence (76) and Entrepreneurship/Micro-entrepreneurship (54) All of these come up often in conversations on policy changes, how to pay as well as working conditions. The consistent context and frequency with which entrepreneurship terminology is discussed supports systematic ideological framing.

Passive Constructions Obscure the Decision-Makers- In uses in corporate communications, passive buildings obscure whose decisions resulted in poor working conditions. So, instead of "We will change the payout structures," Zomato in its notification over lowered payouts says that "Payout structures will be adjusted for platform viability.

Swiggy's strike reaction press release contains the phrase "Changes were implemented based on market conditions" instead of "We implemented changes based on market conditions".

There were 123 passive constructs across the communications (47) with 78% of them as a reference to impending changes – labour conditions, policy revision/ payouts. This grammatical pattern continually obscures accountability in corporate decision-making. By representing probative actions as a natural result of its design rather than corporate decisions, passive constructs are ideologically framed. It leaves out anyone responsible from that discussion, and in doing so deflects criticism.

CSR Campaign Narratives: Systemic Challenges or Successes?

CSR shows the individual accomplishments of employees while overlooking systemic issues. In its CSR report for January 2026, Swiggy features "Rahul Kumar, our partner from Delhi — chose gig work due to the flexibility it offers and now earns ₹50,000 per month"

Worker surveys illustrate that 64 per cent of Swiggy partners earn below ₹30,000 a month, and the report overlooks how variability in earnings is primarily because of algorithmic pricing rather than individual effort.

Another CSR campaign highlight involves Urban Company showcasing how Priya created her independent cleaning business via their platform and earned entrepreneurial finances through business acumen. Research uncovers 34 success stories from CSR materials – all centring on personal choice and entrepreneurship, without reference to structural determinants of profit.

Algorithmic Management Framing: "Control", as opposed to, "Technology- As per Zomato internal notification, "Our technology platform works to make deliveries optimal from a partners efficiency and customer experience standpoint."

As per a press statement by Swiggy, "Algorithmic systems guarantee fair order distribution among partners while enabling them to work independently."

When it comes to task allocation or performance monitoring, the word "technology" appears 67

times and "algorithm" 43 times, while for "control," "management" and "surveillance," the numbers drop to zero. This verbal avoidance turns control mechanisms into beneficial technical services. Algorithms are presented as unbiased technologies that determine allocations of work, price, and performance evaluation. This framing enables firms to disclaim any role in managing labour while retained considerable authority over work processes.

Discussion and Findings- *Discursive Construction and the Platform-Labor Paradox*

The results need to be understood as demonstrating a) how corporate communicators create the platform-labour paradox through discursive methods. In a dilemma, gig workers are configured simultaneously as labour subjects to be controlled, and partners in an entrepreneurial activity. This tension is managed via ideological framing that obscures exploitation while facilitating agency for entrepreneurship.

The relationship between textual elements and more general ideological orders is explored with Fairclough's three-dimensional model. In neoliberal ideological contexts promoting individualism and market solutions (sociocultural practice), corporate communications teams addressing employees, customers, and investors (discursive practice) generate word selections emphasizing "partnership" and "entrepreneurship" (text description).

This paradox serves not only to facilitate corporate interests by allowing control over labour practices, but prevents an attachment of any employment conditions. The paradox is that it serves corporate interests by allowing control over labour procedures while avoiding employment obligations. Employers cast workers as entrepreneurial partners, eliminating pay guarantees, eliminating employment benefits and collective bargaining rights while keeping a tight grip on their own algorithmic power.

Microbusiness as an Ideological Tool- The findings of the study agree with the claim of Aruman et al (2026) corporate announcements that regularly employ rhetoric that reframes labour as micro-entrepreneurship are likely to dissolve employer-employee obligations. That entrepreneurial language is so common and that it fills out a larger ideological framework of state firm behaviour graces this notion with a sense of purpose, not coincidence.

As a tool of ideology micro-entrepreneurship works by normalising unstable working conditions as individual choices. When you represent employees as entrepreneurial business owners then wage volatility becomes business risk rather than exploitation, and algorithmic control is a technology service rather than labour management.

This ideological approach is very much in line with the overall neoliberal narrative that promotes entrepreneurship as the ideal kind of employment. Acquire marginal benefits of the corporate messaging with the orders of the ideological paradigmatic ideologies in wide service as – matched addressed profit optimization criteria built into personal hierarchies – where companies present exploitative conditions of workers are well harmonized by doctrine.

Genre-Conventions That Do Ideological Work Genre analysis has revealed how the conventions of communication genres enable ideological work. These genre norms carry ideological positions thus not neutral. Organizational power is often written into notification genres, but gig economy notifications mask hierarchical control with a hybrid language of authority and partnership. CSR

genres typically emphasize organizational contributions; by contrast, gig economy CSR campaigns celebrate the entrepreneurship of workers—often in service to obscuring corporate abuse. By pairing Fairclough's model with genre analysis, we are able to demonstrate the ways in which genres enact ideological positions. The existing patterns of corporate communication obscure exploitation and prescribe normalizing forms of labour arrangements.

Limitations and further This study has several limitations which should be acknowledged. Such data includes public interactions, but may also exclude internal organizational conversations which reveal decision-making processes. 3 Analysis of 3 businesses; larger industry trends may differ. patents and patent applications for trades, a specific labour dispute (i.e., only social media conversations from January 2026 are captured) is obtained; longitudinal studies that examine changes of conversations over times would provide such insights. In the future, studies should explore employee responses to corporate messages, how employees interpret and push back against ideological framing.

Conclusion- It can conclude by saying that the main points of results are- 1) a lot of people like to use the word "partner" which hides the fact that some people have power than others. 2) people think that starting your own business is a great opportunity to show everyone how great you are even if it is really hard and you might not make a lot of money. 3) some people make decisions that hurt others and they do not take responsibility for what they did. While companies like to talk about how great they are and how they help people achieve their dreams. They do not talk about the problems that they cause companies use computers to control people's work. They make it seem like the computers are making the decisions, not the people, in charge. This paper shows how companies use the way they talk to people to make sure that they keep control over the people who work for them. To look really closely at how companies do things we can figure out ways to help people who work for these companies and make sure that they are treated fairly.

References

1. Aruman, J., Smith, K., & Thompson, L. (2026). Linguistic framing in gig economy communications: Micro-entrepreneurship as ideological apparatus. *Journal of Digital Labor Studies*, 8(1), 45-67.
2. Bhatia, V. (2008). Towards critical genre analysis. In *Advances in Discourse Studies* (pp. 176-193). Taylor & Francis.
3. Coombs, W. T. (2007). *Protecting brand reputation: Strategies for crisis communication*. Sage Publications.
4. Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis*. In J. Verschueren et al. (Eds.), *Language and ideology* (pp. 34-49). Longman.
5. Fairclough, N. (2013). *Analyzing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. Routledge.
6. Iqbal, S. (2013). Ideological orders of discourse: Applying Fairclough's framework to contemporary discourse. *Discourse & Society*, 24(3), 312-328.
7. McNamee, S., Miller, R., & Cohen, J. (2019). Entrepreneurship and ethics in the sharing economy. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 41(2), 134-151.

8. NITI Aayog. (2022). *India's Booming Gig and Platform Economy*. Government of India.
9. Prenderghast, Rissanen, A., Berg, J., & Ang, S. (2022). Corporate communication strategies in platform labor disputes. *Work, Employment and Society*, 36(2), 189-207.
10. Schüll, M. (2016). *Digital labor: The computer industry's labor revolution*. MIT Press.
11. Thomas, L. (2018). Language, media, and ideology: Critical discourse analysis of corporate labor communications. *Language Sciences*, 56(4), 412-429.
12. Voss, K. (2019). Employment avoidance through ideological framing in platform work. *Journal of Labor Research*, 40(3), 267-289.

Constructing Transness: Visual Representation and Ethics in Cinema and OTT

Saswati Panda, Chitkara University, Punjab

Pankaj Garg, Chitkara School of Mass Communication, Chitkara University, Punjab

ABSTRACT

In the world of philosophy, the concept of ethics and morality find a prime place. Perhaps, Ethics is the most widely used word that governs every aspect of human life. This is exploratory research using content analysis attempts to find answers to some of the fundamental questions of ethics of visual representation in cinema in the world of OTT. As we are all facing a world today with unprecedented changes and challenges, we witness a highly dynamic and to an extent volatile shift in values and ethics that once looked universal and fixed. The viewers in 2022 are a part of a new global world. They need a higher level of sensitivity and empathy to understand the literature and cinema based on marginal groups. Cinema today are about different aspects of human psyche - from the most gruesome and ugly to the most beautiful and powerful. In such a juncture, the discussion of ethics in visual representation calls for a nuanced approach and insight to study cinema on OTT platform. The first part of the study is to understand ethics from a theoretical perspective and develop an understanding about the concept of ethical representation. The second part deals with the understanding of the concept of transgender representation in cinema. In this chapter few popular cinemas of the West and popular Indian cinema where transgender characters are portrayed has been discussed. The third part is a comparative analysis of content of cinema in OTT platform and analyse them from ethical point of view. The fourth part would discuss the various parameters for judging visual representation and suggest some vital points to the filmmakers to ponder over it while choosing stories and develop content for cinema. The concluding part consists of some questions for the readers, filmmakers, and researchers.

Keywords: *OTT, ethics, philosophy, cinema, visual representation, transgender representation*

Introduction

When we talk of Cinema, the primary thought that cross our mind is entertainment. Hence the first part of the title, Cinema in OTT platform may seem to build an image of some entertaining movie scene in a reader's mind. But the next part of the topic that starts with the word 'Ethics' will change the perception and expectation of the reader. It is a serious subject and hence brings a lot of responsibility to treat it from the larger perspective of social good. This study required a lot of academic rigour and honesty of purpose. This paper is based on the results of exploratory research done by the researchers. The framework that was used was systematic and intensive literature review to understand the concept of ethics in visual representation in the fictional world of cinema, and content analysis of selected cinemas with transgender representation.

What is Ethics?

The three types of normative ethics we find in theory and practice are:

Utilitarian Ethics which is often equated with the concept of “the greatest good for the greatest number.” This form is followed by majority because it has some consequences which is safe. This form has a dangerous potential to promote the majoritarian ideology and hence can lead to injustice and discrimination of minority groups.

Deontological Ethics The second one is known as which is based on the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. The idea that “human beings should be treated with dignity and respect because they have right” is emphasised in reverse in deontological ethics which says, “People have a duty to respect other people’s rights and treat them accordingly.” A sense of duty and responsibility to do the right thing is emphasised here.

Virtue Ethics is based on the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle who believed in human virtue for public good. Two important concepts inherent in virtue ethics are – virtue and practical wisdom. The knowledge of knowing how to apply virtue in the right way is very important in virtue ethics. Cultivating the virtue and having the wisdom of using it in the right way is the key.

Ethics in Visual Representation

In an article on Visual Integrity published by Granite Pressbooks, the issue of ethics and credibility has been discussed in details. The article brings out two important aspects of ethical concerns regarding visual representations-

- The exploitation of visual stimuli of the viewers who are controlled by their emotions. The aim is to achieve a rhetorical effect.
- Exploitation of the basic trust level of the audience and representing visual information that is either incorrect or distorted.

Cinema has not only tremendous amount of visual appeal for the viewers, but it is a dialogue between the makers and viewers where the viewers tend to believe what the makers create. The makers can represent, imitate, or construct what is real. They can easily portray something as normal and real even with their limitations. They often unintentionally may end up sending a wrong message about certain groups of people. Hence certain visual representations can unwittingly reinforce stereotypes, prejudices, power dynamics etc. Some of the areas which are culturally sensitive and hence demand the filmmakers to tread cautiously are:

- The depiction of women for very long time was according to the patriarchal standard defined in the given society.
- Depiction of minority and members of ethnic groups in a stereotypical way.
- The way dialogues are written, the language that is used by the protagonists is often seen codifying certain beliefs and power dynamics that have proved detrimental for the group.
- The insensitive reference to religion and culture of certain groups.
- The appearance of ethnocentric ideas to propagate a hegemonic ideology of one’s own nation while demeaning another nation and nationality.
- The historical legacy of evil social practices like slavery and caste system.

- Lack of representation or misrepresentation of gender and ethnic minorities
- Body shaming, name calling of disabled and mentally challenged people which are potentially insensitive but passed on as a message of accepted social behaviour and hence normal.

These points are worth pondering when we are discussing the ethical questions in visual representation of different groups of people.

“Cinema is Mass Media; it is both overtly gross and exciting. It is our great mirror of society.”

This quote given by Danish Film maker Nicolas Winding Refn refers to two opposite constructs at the same time. At one end cinema creates a fictional world with characters that are not real but, there is an attempt to project them as believable and real. On the other hand, cinema reflects the social ethos, mores, cultural practices in such a way that it reinforces even those values that are regressive and prejudiced.

Gillett 2012, in his book ‘Film and Morality’ studied the concept of morality in a nuanced way. He had three important objectives in the book that he wanted to highlight. One of the objectives that is directly linked to this research was to examine how films often lean towards a predetermined moral position. But he was also aware about the role of films as a catalyst of social change. He cited David Frampton’s book ‘Filmosophy’ where he adopts the default liberal position of accepting film as an art and considers films as the starting point of a paradigm shift among audiences. He had said, “What is significant about film is that it shows us a new reality, and that engenders new thinking, new experiences, new emotions.” Frampton took a position that cinema audience are more voyeuristic than theatre audience. When they watch a film, they experience a make-believe drama enacted for them but they watch what the film makers want them to watch. This is a kind of manipulation that is possible. The question is what the filmmakers want to showcase?

In a special issue of Gender and History, Craig, S., Donelan, C, & Lifshitz, F (2018), initiated a discussion on written and visual history where many scholars from different disciplines looked at films and television programs with a critical approach and different epistemological frames. They looked at various types of representations and gender was one of the most prominent representations they discussed. Some foundational questions were raised about the process of knowledge creation and representation through gendered past. In those discussions, we can see the reflection of our society’s majoritarian dominant patriarchal narratives promoted through popular mainstream cinema. They also brought into their discussion those strands of thought-provoking cinema with a sensitive approach that stems from social responsibility of individual filmmakers which become catalyst for social change through alternative narratives promoting powerful egalitarian ideologies. Craig et al. (2018) concluded in the following words, “the relation of written and visual histories are representations, constructing and mediating the process of our knowing. Throughout history, there has been a marked tendency found with scholars and academicians to privileging of written over visual history as a source of historical knowledge. The cultural hierarchy of putting ‘logos over mythos, science over art, mind over body, reason over emotions, public over private, histories over herstories, and so on’ is evident.” They advocated a holistic approach to knowledge and emphasised the notion that the binary terms are no longer conceived unchanging, stratified and absolute. They are in fact, extremely dynamic, interdependent and integrally linked.

Visual history according to them are not only at par with the written history, but may be rather more important in certain context.

Theoretical Framework of Prejudices and Stereotyping

“Stereotypes are problematic because they are negative, inaccurate, and unfair.” Writes Stagnor Charles in an incredible compilation of scholarly articles dealing exhaustively on various aspects of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. Nelson (Ed.) (2015). Stereotypes are brought in by a process of socialisation that takes place in a subtle way while we interact with our parents, with our peers, and consume what the media offers. Film, television, and the Web are the most followed media that no one can escape. They play an important role in creating and strengthening stereotypes. The book deals with a very fundamental aspect which focusses on the formation of Attitudes and Social Cognition as an automatic process where very often values are transmitted and etched unintentionally and become deep-seated.

Attitudes as Allport puts it, results in gross over simplification of experience. In social psychology, pre judgments, assumptions, inhibitions, and various other forms of attitude are given a great importance. These are commonly called Biases, Prejudices, or Stereotypes. Because Stereotype is a less normative term, academicians use it more than the other two terms. (Allport, 1935 P-809).

Lippman, (1922) wrote ‘Public Opinion’ in 1921. He focussed on the role of “stereotype” in forming public opinion. He defined stereotype as, “a distorted picture or image in a person’s mind, not based on personal experience, but derived culturally.” He gave an example of a young girl in Pennsylvania who cried inconsolably when she saw a window pane shattered. The behaviour was strange for Lippman who probed deeper and took the help of a psychologist to understand it. It was found that the cultural belief of breaking of a glass window was considered a bad omen in the girls’ community and she had internalised it deep enough to disturb her and project it in her behaviour. After discussing many such examples, Lippman reasoned that the Stereotypes are formed by interaction of three factors – social, economic and political. These interactions are passed on from one generation to another. The pervasiveness of the stereotypes is often more conspicuous due to their resistance to change. Lipman brought a very important aspect that can be used to understand Visual Representation. He emphasised that any analysis of public opinion must begin by recognizing that a triangular relationship exists between the scene of action, the people who are in that scene, and the response of those people.

Social stereotypes exist and that is a fact. The example that stereotypes have an overwhelming presence whether it is about sex, age, bodily appearance, race, ethnicity or it is about national origin, religion, sexual orientation, occupation, and social class. As all these researchers have mentioned, it has to be remembered that very often, these stereotypes are highly inaccurate. He emphasizes that erroneous stereotypes can profoundly affect the course of social interaction and interpersonal relationships. (Synder, 1977, p 183) The stereotypes and prejudices about transgenders continue through negative representation of Transgenders in various forms of media like Cinema, TV series, Books, and magazine articles etc.

The Study of Transgender representation in cinema

Through this exploratory research, the researchers have tried to search how cinema have been a medium to strengthen the prejudice against transgenders by stereotypical character building often wrongly representing transgenders. The researchers will also try to analyse the possibility of cinema as a tool to sensitise audience. Cinema where the representation of transgenders has been weaved in a way that evokes healthy emotions of love, compassion, humanism, have to be identified. By citing research that have been used successfully to change attitude of viewers, the researchers have tried to build an argument that Cinema with ethical representation of transgenders has the potential to spread humanitarian messages to a wider audience and challenge and change the prejudices against the transgenders.

Defining LGBTQ+ and Finding difference between Sex and Gender

We often come across the term LGBTQ+ which is basically an acronym for Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and + means others who have not defined themselves but are not bound by the gender binary. Because Transgenders are the most talked about socially discriminated group, the researchers have attempted to define them. The following questions and answers are taken from APA's brochure "Answers to Your Questions About Individuals with Intersex Conditions". Their wide acceptability in academic circle gives these definitions the much-needed credibility. One can find all the vital information in this link <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/transgender.pdf>.

Have Transgenders always been found everywhere?

There have been different types of documented and undocumented evidences to trace the presence and history of transgenders in every society. Though they have been present since antiquity, their approach to gender non conformity differs from one culture to another, one society to another.

Basic categorisation of Transgenders

As we know, Transgender is an umbrella term. Few words that we come across can be defined in the following way.

- Transsexual - It refers to people who are born as male or female but are not comfortable with their bodies. For example, when a person born male feels he should have a woman's body or vice versa. Transsexual people often alter or wish to alter their body to suit their inner gender identity. Transitioning through medical procedures like surgery, hormone treatment etc. is known as gender reassignment or gender affirmation.
- Transsexual men or Transmen – People who were born female but transitioned through medical intervention as Male to feel congruent with their gender identity. They are also known as FTM (Female to Male).
- Transsexual women or transwomen - People who were born male but transitioned through medical intervention as female to feel congruent with their gender identity. They are also known as MTF (Male to Female).

- Those who call themselves as Men or Women – There are people who transition from one gender to another and don't want to be called a transman or transwoman. They prefer to be recognised only by their new identity.
- Cross Dressers – People who cross dress believe in dressing up as another gender wearing clothes, accessories worn by the other gender in a given culture. They are usually comfortable in their assigned sex and do not wish to change their sex. Thus, cross dressing may or may not be indicative of a person's sexual orientation. It is a form of gender expression.
- Drag Queens/ Drag Kings – There has been a lot of examples in entertainment industry across globe where usually men dress up as women in bars, pubs, clubs etc. there is a new trend of drag kings too where women dress up as men for entertainment purpose.
- Queer or Genderqueer - When some people identify their gender as falling outside the binary constructs of “male” and “female”, they are called genderqueers. They are the people who question the stereotypical gender binary to the extent that they define themselves as neither masculine nor feminine. They do not define themselves as Transgender either. They use different pronouns such as zie instead of he or she and hir instead of his or her.
- There are certain other categories of transgenders. Terms like third gender, gender non-conforming, multigendered, Androgynous etc. it is difficult to provide exact definitions of these terms because they may vary from person to person and may change over time. However, they all indicate a sense of blending of genders.
- Whatever these categories are, but, one common factor that is common amongst all these categories are that they find binary concepts of gender as restrictive.

Defining the Term Transgender in Indian Context

Hijra is the most common term used for transgenders in India. Apart from the MTF and FTM category, people who are born with ambiguous outer genitalia that is neither male nor female called as Hermaphrodites or Congenital eunuchs usually are known as Hijras. Other terms used for transgenders are Kothis, Jagappas, Aravanis, Kinnars etc. There is a lot of evidences in scriptures, early literature and temple architectures of India that Transgenders have always been a part of the mainstream social fabric. It was during the colonial period, people who showed deviance from the gender binary behaviour – were treated as mentally ill. Transsexualism, transvestism, and gender identity disorder were some medical and psychological categories used for the Transgender people to label them as abnormal. The stigma attached to the Transgenders in India can clearly be traced back to the colonial period when Hijras were put under Criminal Tribes Act, 1871.

After a long arduous battle by the LGBTQ community worldwide, many countries made changes at policy level and gave them the right to live with dignity. In India the year 2014 came as a milestone for Transgender Community. The famous NLSA (National legal Service Authority) versus Union of India judgment brought a huge transformative change in favour of LGBTQ community. The transgender individuals got the legal status and recognition as a third gender. The Supreme Court of India, in this 2014 judgment declared that Indian citizens are free to choose their gender identity regardless of gender affirmation surgery. When the 158-year-old draconian colonial law of Section 377 of Indian Penal Code was scrapped and decriminalised, it brought a lot of relief to the

transgender community of India. After this judgment was passed, every state in India have formed Transgender Welfare Boards. For the safeguard and protection transgender people against any kind of discrimination, the Protection of Rights bill of 2018 was passed and it is considered a major step taken by the government. “Any discrimination on basis of sexual orientation amounts to [a] violation of fundamental rights”, this powerful line of chief justice Deepak Mishra on 6th September, 2018 became an empowering tool for the transgender community. (Joshi A. et al., 2022 pp -137-144)

From the discussion cited above, it can be deduced that law alone cannot guarantee them the dignity and security they rightfully deserve. The hatred, stigma, and discrimination that has deeper roots need to be altered through sensitisation. Cinema has the potential to play a positive and instrumental role to bring social change and alter social perception. This is an ethical question that has to be addressed by the filmmakers. The trend that has been marked in the world of cinema for a very long time has been from complete invisibility to wrong representation. The filmmakers in the past were either constructing a negative image of transgenders or to carry forward the social discrimination and stereotypes of transgenders in the narratives.

Understanding Prejudice against transgenders in cinema

“Invisibility is indivisible from visibility; for [those who are] transgenders this is not simply a philosophical conundrum—it can be the difference between life and death.” Lana Wachowski. This thought-provoking quote makes sense when the argument made by the author is about the visibility of the transgenders. Wibke, (2020) argues that the visibility of transgenders in films have been an ongoing process where a clear shift can be marked. Taking the examples of the content of Western films like *Psycho* (1994) and *Ace Ventura – The Pet Detective* (1998), where there was a clearly offensive representation was made. Off late, there has been a shift towards trans-affirmative approach. The author goes on to cite series like *Sense 8* (2015-2018), *Orange is the New Black* (2013- 2019). What looked nearly impossible three decades ago is very much a reality now. There are a number of trans and non-binary actors who are cast on popular shows and have even been playing cis roles. Such changes contribute in reducing the marginalisation.

The independent and underground films made by transgender actors and producers which are mostly characterised by a low budget, minimal plot, blended genres and occasionally shot without a script (Ford 2014; Jacques 2018) can better engage the audience with the nuanced experiences of transition from a valuable position of transgender subjectivity. The examples given by the author are – A full-length feature documentary *Sexing the Transman* (2011), which compiles interviews and personal dialogues from transmen and Sean Baker’s *Tangerine*. *Tangerine* is classified as a widely successful, low-budget comedy shot on an iPhone 5 (Bradshaw 2015). The author uses an article by Ford (2014) who rightly argues that rather than reproducing normative understandings of gender and embodiment, and constructing subjectivity along these lines, ‘Trans New Wave’ filmmakers frequently working on low production budgets address significant social justice issues and attend to the specificities of living as marginalised subjectivities. There has been a lack of critical inquiry into the ways that the transition narrative might simultaneously restrict intelligibility and close viewers off to diverse experiences of gender embodiment and gender-crossings.

Riis, B. (2014) in his research primarily focussed on two questions “how are trans people represented in the media?” and “how do trans audience members respond to these representations?”. Though the research focussed on two prominent aspects of gender representation, the social consequences, reasons, and effects of these depictions have not been studied. It was qualitative research done through interview method and content analysis. The research urged media companies to accurately and fairly represent trans people in clear unequivocal words, “It is plain from this study that action needs to be taken to address widespread prejudice against transgender people within the media, and to tackle a perceived lack of accountability.”

There is an importance to engage with the prevalence of the phenomena of male hegemonic patriarchy running across most of the cultures where the violence towards trans characters in media reflects a cisgendered heteronormative world view which is threatened by the characters that don't adhere to the established gender norms. Bode Riis (2014) analysed the following movies and television shows - Boys don't Cry (Kimberly Peirce, 1999), The Crying Game (Neil Jordan, 1992), The Badge (Robby Henson, 2002), Grilled (Jason Ensler, 2006), A Girl like Me: The Gwen Araujo Story (Agnieszka Holland, 2006), Ticked-Off Trannies with Knives (Israel Luna, 2010), Romeos (Sabine Bernardi, 2011), and Gun Hill Road (Rashaad Ernesto Green, 2011). Only in Romeos, a domineering gay man is outraged when he finds out that his crush is a female-to-male trans person. But, even here the threat was for the homosexual masculinity.

History of Transgender representation in Indian Cinema

It is a statistically substantiated claim that India produces the greatest number of films in a year. The most widely watched and distributed are Hindi films. Transgender identity has been perceived, interpreted and represented by film makers that are subjective and often lacked the sensitivity and research required. If we look into the normal portrayal of transgender characters in popular cinema of Bollywood, they would either be blink and miss inconsequential appearances or some outlandish, obnoxious comical cross dressing of heteronormative male characters like Rishi Kapoor in RafooChakkar (1975) or Amitabh Bachchan in Laawaris (1981).

It is a sad reality that the only way most popular mainstream cinema thought of including transgender characters was to portray them either as dangerous villains, social psychopaths or obnoxious comic characters often used as butt of jokes and ridicule. They are never shown as an integral part of the mainstream society which in fact is a true reflection of our social reality. But a continual othering that takes place is problematic. For example, Mahesh Bhatt's film, Sadak (1991), where ShadashivAmarpurkar as a scary brothel owner 'Maharani' creates a strong and negative mental picture in the viewer's mind. Such characters remain etched for long and influence the general perception about the entire community. Who can deny the chills sent by the character of Lajja Shankar Pandey in Sangharsh (1999)?

However, there were also films like Daayera (1996), Darmiyan (1997), and Tamanna (1997), where there was a positive representation of the Transgenders.

Ironically, after almost a quarter century, we come across mainstream Bollywood movies like “Laxmii” (2020), “Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui” (2021). It becomes difficult to understand what

exactly are the intentions of the filmmakers. In the film “Laxmii,” Akshay Kumar is the main protagonist who starts acting “effeminate” when he is possessed by a female ghost. Such a film not just perpetuate gender stereotypes but reinstates the idea that transwomen are basically men. They dress up in feminine clothes and act effeminate.

Yasin Z, Batool S. and Naseer I. (2020), analysed the portrayal of transgenders in Bollywood movies in their research paper. As Pakistanis watch Bollywood movies, they focussed on the impact of these movies in society. They deliberated on the fact that people learn conservative attitude from societal belief system that looks at transgenders as parasites. Though the government of Pakistan safeguards the civil rights of all the citizens, Transgenders face discrimination at several spheres - legal, official and social. Using Content analysis, Survey, and Intensive interview method in their research, Yasin et al (2020) reached at a conclusion that most Bollywood movies neither represent the realistic picture of Transgenders nor show basic sensibility in depicting Transgender characters. They are projected as comic figures, sex workers, violent criminals, beggars, and dancers. These projections influence the perception of people who become hesitant to interact with them. Young generation show negative and derogatory behaviour towards them.

Chopra, (2017), in his research examines how queerness is represented in popular Hindi Cinema. According to him, films like “Bombay Talkies” actually started a new trend of glorifying negative aesthetics in portraying queer characters. It was not a pathbreaking trend even if some critiques argued it that way. It was actually creating a new orthodox culture of creating an idea that queerness is normal and non-threatening because the good queer characters seek acceptance and assimilation into the existing patriarchal social set up. Hence the traces of defiance are repressed. As in various platforms the hostile representations of homosexuals as oddly effeminate, self-deprecating, or predatory have been questioned for being offensive, there is a counter trend of replacing them with positive images. This research brings out some fundamental questions on representation and how should it be?

The marginalisation of the Hijras is a fact and a social reality we cannot deny. The role of mainstream Bollywood movies’ in portraying the transgender characters negatively and inaccurately results in the strengthening of one’s beliefs and prejudices toward Transgender community as a whole and often perpetuates the myth and prejudice resulting in further marginalization of hijras. Two movies, Tamanna (Bhatt, 1997) and Murder 2 (Suri, 2011) were chosen by the researcher to understand the issue of transgender representation employing semiotic analysis and reception analysis. Shewade (2020) on her MA level thesis, pointed out that films with positive representations of transgenders generally belong to the art genre. They are much more sensitive than popular Bollywood movies which are urban centric.

Transgender representation in other Indian language films

Compared to the mainstream Bollywood Films, Content of Films in other Indian languages like Malayalam, Tamil, Bengali, and Marathi have proved to be more progressive in recent years. There is a marked sensitivity in portraying Transgender characters. Tamil film ‘Paava Kadhaigal’ (2020), Thiagarajan Kumararaja’s ‘Super Deluxe’ (2019), ‘Naanu Avanalla Avalu’ (2015), Malayalam film like ‘Njan Marykutty’ (2018), Marathi films, Mitrachi Goshta (1981), Aamhi ka Tisare (2012),

Natrang (2010) etc. speak a great deal about the progressive nature of these films in regional languages. Special mention about small budget Marathi film Jayjaykar (2014) is relevant because it is based on the topic of treating hijras and transgenders humanely and giving them equal opportunities in education and employment. Bengali films like Rituparno Ghosh's Chitrangada (2012) and Kaushik Ganguli's Nagar Kirtan (2019) are excellent examples of good cinema in every sense especially concerned with sensitive portrayal of transgender characters. The bilingual "Peranbu" (2018) (Tamil and Malayalam) film directed by Ram was a milestone in Indian Cinema because the heroin cast against Malayalam superstar Mammooty, Anjali Ameer was the first Transgender woman in a main lead.

Natarajan (2020), took a focussed approach to study the representation of transgenders in Tamil Cinema. We can find a very pertinent argument that comes from a pragmatic observation of the researcher. According to this study, cinema is made for entertainment of the mass and hence mostly represents the mass culture. Popular cinema caters to the sensibilities of mostly the majority community. Because of this, the minority groups often get underrepresented or even worse, sometimes misrepresented. This tendency is marked even in Tamil cinema. The problem with Popular cinema is it blurs the real image of transgenders and mostly gives a false idea about their lifestyle, habits, ambitions and affects their personal life and dignity. Most transgender characters are mere depiction of a cis normative society that accepts some deep-rooted stereotypes.

From all these researches, what comes out clearly is the representation of transgender characters in films and other media have been negative and derogatory for long. This in turn can raise an important question regarding the role of films in marginalisation and prejudiced behaviour of people towards the transgenders in society. The content of the stories lacks sensitivity and authentic research-based data on transgenders.

Can cinema change public perception?

The transgenders often face discrimination in form of denial of services, verbal harassment and physical violence. From commonly seen behaviour like name calling to serious offences like sexual abuse all are a part of the transgender person's life experience. It has been found that media's role in perpetuating the stigma had not been given the desired attention from researchers. Hughto et al (2018) brought out a comprehensive report through their multistate study on mental health outcomes through negative transgender related media messages. Some of the important points made by them are: - Stigma for Transgenders occurs in every setting be it school, home, workplace, or places of healthcare and other public places. They bring forth behavioural expressions to define Stigma. Their study acknowledged it in clear terms. They argued that despite increasing efforts to showcase positive, gender-affirming images of transgenders, there have been a persistence of a number of stigmatizing depictions and messages in media. The diversity and vibrance of transgender community are often underplayed or ignored while the negative stereotypes of transgender people continue. They are shown as criminals, villains, or sexual predators etc. which doesn't do any good. At times, crimes against them are trivialised and that is a dangerous trend. The two most important fall out of it are: 1 – Prejudices are formed and reinforced as stereotypes continue in media and this leads to further discrimination and marginalisation of transgenders & 2 - when transgenders get exposed to these

negative media depictions, they often internalise these stigmas which results in their low self-esteem and other mental health diseases.

Singh et al (2017) have tried to locate the homophobic tendencies in Indian society. They have selected the content of few parallel Indian cinema to show how homophobia is represented in them. They chose Indian cinema “Aligarh” as a case study. The mysterious death of Professor Shrinivas Ramchandra Siras provides the researchers to prepare the ground to explain homophobia contextually. They analyse the aftereffects like the public uproar, unofficial ban, and violence against the film post release of the film. These developments were also taken into account to develop their argument. In this insightful anthropological study, it has been established that Homophobia is a reality. The authors have done excellent literature review pertaining to the subject and build the argument. They have pointed out that throughout history, ‘Alternative Sexualities’ have been completely ignored or looked at with derision. They identified that the strong acceptance of gender roles in a heteronormative world is the main cause of Homophobia.

Only recently the rights of LGBTQ community after a long struggle have been gaining attention but that too in fits and starts. Post 1973, in both in literature and cinema, there has been inclusion of LGBTQ rights and their acceptance or rejection by a society. This certainly helped in opening a dialogue on the hushed-up subject. Films made on this subject give an insight into the social psyche of the people of a given society and their attitude towards the LGBTQ community in their vicinity. Though there is a lot to be done, but such films definitely have helped in sensitising people even with all the protests and sloganeering against them by certain sections. Films reflect the reality present around them in varying degrees since they are influenced by the society which sways and modifies the themes of films by its acceptance or rejection of the content conveyed in them. In this regard the authors brought in the parallel cinema with Gordon’s observation that “Third Cinema films had not only to depict a reality, but also serve to transform that reality” (Gordon 2010). This makes a very pertinent point regarding the impact of films on society. Parallel cinema or alternative cinema attempts to change the reality that it encounters, which has long been there but is constantly hushed up owing to its non-conformist nature.

A well reputed poet of India Kumar Vishwas had admitted on a TV program that he had some deep-seated prejudices against homosexuality and he carried antagonism against homosexuals. But he admitted that after watching the film “Aligarh”, he got a new perspective to look at the reality and tried to analyse his own prejudices against certain minority groups.

How has Cinema changed with the OTT platform?

OTT or Over the Top platforms have taken over a major chunk of internet using viewers who use their personal computers to smartphones along with set top boxes and smart TV to access content of their choice. Netflix, Amazon prime, Disney+ Hotstar, SonyLiv, Zee5, HoiChoi, Hulu etc. are the popular platforms for video on demand services.

The Cinema shown on OTT platforms are not controlled by any international or Indian regulatory bodies like CBFC. They are rather given a self-regulatory guidelines and code of ethics under information technology rules 2021. A three-tier grievance redressal system has been recommended as a mandatory feature for these OTT platforms.

Seymour, (2019), in an article identifies how the Amazon television series “Transparent” deploys narrative of home, belonging and importantly, a journey to becoming, to stage a limited representation of transgender lives within a heterosexual economy. It was pointed out that transgender studies have long been preoccupied with the transition narrative as a primary tool of representation. The argument made by the author that the transition narrative, which aims to make transgender lives visible (and consumable) to an audience of trans and non-trans folk, is limiting in its representational scope and may impede, rather than mobilise, this agenda. The transition narrative constructs transgender lives within normative frames of time and place, and in the codes of textual conventions that compulsively render transgender transition into the narrative. While doing so, it fails to confront its audience with the daily cultural and social transgressions that make up the lived experiences of transition. Outside of scholarly inquiry, themes of gender transition have been explored in current cultural and commercial spaces, namely in television, theatre and contemporary fiction, but also in advertising and news media. In the last three decades, the transition narrative has become a familiar epitome, accessible to a wider audience. This paper rightly focuses that the transition narrative can limit transgender representation and reinforce the primacy of binary forms of identification and gendered belonging. Taking a cue from Film studies scholar, Ford, A. 2014, the author reinstates the possibility that transgender narratives in film and television act as ‘public texts’ that are integrated into an evolving discourse on trans issues. The independent and underground films made by transgender actors and producers which are mostly characterised by a low budget, minimal plot, blended genres and occasionally shot without a script (Ford 2014; Jacques 2018) can better engage the audience with the nuanced experiences of transition from a valuable position of transgender subjectivity. The examples given by the author are – A full-length feature documentary *Sexing the Transman* (2011), which compiles interviews and personal dialogues from transmen and Sean Baker’s *Tangerine*. *Tangerine* is classified as a widely successful, low-budget comedy shot on an iPhone 5 (Bradshaw 2015). The author uses an article by Ford (2014) who rightly argues that rather than reproducing normative understandings of gender and embodiment, and constructing subjectivity along these lines, ‘Trans New Wave’ filmmakers frequently working on low production budgets address significant social justice issues and attend to the specificities of living as marginalised subjectivities. There has been a lack of critical inquiry into the ways that the transition narrative might simultaneously restrict intelligibility and close viewers off to diverse experiences of gender embodiment and gender-crossings.

Stigma for Transgenders occurs in every setting be it school, home, workplace, or places of healthcare and other public places. They bring forth behavioural expressions to define Stigma. The transgenders often face discrimination in form of denial of services, verbal harassment and physical violence. From commonly seen behaviour like name calling to serious offences like sexual abuse all are a part of the transgender person’s life experience. It has been found that media’s role in perpetuating the stigma had not been given the desired attention from researchers. Their study acknowledged it in clear terms. They argued that despite increasing efforts to showcase positive, gender-affirming images of transgenders, there have been a persistence of a number of stigmatizing depictions and messages in media. The diversity and vibrance of transgender community are often underplayed or ignored while the negative stereotypes of transgender people continue.

Showing transgenders as criminals, villains, or sexual predators etc. doesn’t do any good. At times, crimes against them are trivialised and that is a dangerous trend. The two most important fall out of

it are: 1 – Prejudices are formed and reinforced as stereotypes continue in media and this leads to further discrimination and marginalisation of transgenders & 2 - when transgenders get exposed to these negative media depictions, they often internalise these stigmas which results in their low self-esteem and other mental health diseases. The transgenders often face discrimination in form of denial of services, verbal harassment and physical violence. From commonly seen behaviour like name calling to serious offences like sexual abuse all are a part of the transgender person's life experience. It has been found that media's role in perpetuating the stigma had not been given the desired attention from researchers.

An article by journalist Arjun Nair was published on June 13, 2019 on how OTT platforms ushered in a new wave of queer representation in India. This article was based on facts and trends of changing content of cinema and web series. He very rightly pointed out that film makers often don't want to touch these sensitive subjects even if they themselves have been queer themselves because it is a commercial medium and the experience of violence and boycott against films like *Fire*, *Aligarh* etc. forced them to tread cautiously. However, Roopa Rao's film "*The Other Love Story*" in 2016 uploaded on open-source platform You Tube was a bold initiative in many ways. It was made with crowdfunding and received an award at the NYC Web fest in 2016.

Devika Vatsa, a budding actor brought a very important point about representation. She had said, "I have no problem in doing a lesbian role or intimate scenes but it needs to flow organically as a part of the story and not an intention of bringing unnecessary sensationalism."

Screenwriter Aditya Basu brought another important aspect saying, "The portrayal of an LGBTQ+ character doesn't have to be limited to issues around sexuality. It's distasteful when people sensationalize with an intent to exploit. Infact, such problematic portrayals can be harmful when an uninformed viewer watches it."

Amazon Prime's web series "*Made in Heaven*" was a leap forward in more than one way. Not only the content was good, but the main protagonist's sexual orientation was not exploited or sensationalised in this series. One of the writers of this series Alankrita Shrivastav believes that the empathetic gaze of the women writers who wrote that character portrayed it extremely sensibly. They could do it because they were working in a free space.

Another character Kuckoo in the series *Sacred Games* was also about a transgender character portrayed sensibly. A Netflix spokesperson wrote, "In *Sacred games*, Kukoo is a character with motivations, desires, and expectations similar to any other character in the series and in real life. Her gender is a lens through which her lived experience is portrayed, but it is not the only factor that shapes the audience's view of her character."

In an article by Sugandha Rawal in *Hindustan Times* published on February 26, 2022, the visibility of LGBTQ+ on OTT was discussed at length. It is a point expressed by many film makers who have contributed to bring those invisible sections on screen unanimously that the best way to tell their stories are just to tell them as they are without any exaggeration or making them overly dramatic.

Filmmaker Onir feels that "accurate representation, even on the Ott is still at a questionable stage." The reason he gives is people who are writing are mostly heterosexuals and they have not fully understood the issues of the other gendered communities beyond the binaries.

Faraz Arif Ansari, the director of “Sheer Qorma”, says, “most of the representation in Indian films and OTT is missing that sense of truth and hence, always falls short of encapsulating real queer lives and stories and hence doesn’t resonate deeply or does what it needs to do – to open a larger dialogue beyond the queer community.”

However, looking at the new trend with hope filmmaker Apurva Asrani says, “from pathetic characters who were used for humiliation, laughs, or villainous purposes, the LGBTQ+ characters today have a larger purpose in the scripts. They have an identity; they have beating hearts.”

Though these changes that the OTT platform has brought in, there is still a lot to be done in order to create a healthy ecosystem for LGBTQ+ people especially the transgenders in our society. The prejudices against them will not go just by bringing changes in the law. A platform of acceptance and respect in educational institutions, in work place and in society has to be created.

The filmmakers have to ask themselves the question that which ethical standard they will follow. Do they want to follow the Utilitarian ethics and use these minority groups just as tools of cheap entertainment for mass or carefully portray them as an integral part of the story to give them visibility and bring in a change in the perception and attitude of the viewers, following the virtue ethics and do the right thing because it needs to be done.

Limitation of this study

Ethics is a vast topic with strong philosophical overtone. There are many overlapping issues that come up while studying visual representation in cinema. For particularly this study, a meta-analysis on Transgender representation was found to be ineffective because there were a large number of articles lacking any expertise and authentic knowledge. Therefore, the researchers relied on Content Analysis and Systematic Review. The researchers reviewed relevant literature pertaining to the topic in a systematic way only to find that a greater number of researchers who have tried to look at the issue of transgenders are from the Western countries. United States has highest number of researches on Transgenders but very often the researchers were found to be using a single lens. Though there was a unanimous agreement on the stigmatisation and marginalisation of the Transgender communities across the globe, a psycho social understanding of Transgender representation at a macro level was missing.

The researchers tried to study three interrelated questions

- What kind of stereotypes and prejudices about Transgenders have been promoted by mainstream cinema?
- What visible significant changes have come in the content of Cinema and web series on OTT platform?
- Can Cinema be used as an effective tool to sensitise viewers towards transgenders?

While the first two questions that were descriptive in nature could be done partially but satisfactorily by putting the subject of study within the theoretical and conceptual framework, the third question that is normative in nature, required an experimental method to corroborate the

assumption. However, many psychosocial research in the past have confirmed that Cinema considerably influences the behaviour of the audience. Cinema can create two opposite constructs at the same time. One, we can see the reflection of our society's majoritarian dominant patriarchal narratives promoted through popular mainstream cinema. Two, we also can see cinema as a catalyst for social change through alternative narratives promoting powerful egalitarian ideologies. That is why as a Mass media, Cinema has tremendous potential to spread humanitarian messages to a wider audience to bring in social change. Kubrak (2020) studied the attitude of young people through experimental research using psychosemantic technique. She found that the young people of experimental group showed considerable positive change in their attitude towards the elderly people after watching the film with positive social message. Such social experiments could be done to substantiate the argument that cinema can be used as a tool for social change.

Conclusion

Supreme Social relevance of the topic was the most important drive for this research. While undertaking this research, the researchers aimed to make an honest attempt to understand the influence of cinema on some critical components of human behaviour towards the marginalised section of Transgenders in Indian society. Cinema is a dynamic medium of mass media with wider reach and connectivity that has been proven by researchers to have impacted attitude and behaviour of audiences. Moreover, there is also a big challenge of balancing between individual responses and the social connotation of those responses. When the focus is to study intangible aspects of human perception and behaviour through socio psychological experiments, the results can't be concluded with certainty of a scientific research because the human behaviour and attitude is a dynamic aspect that is governed by different types of stimuli. But, even with that limitation, there is an onus on the academia to study attitude.

This research is important because there is a need to create a healthy and inclusive social ecosystem for the transgenders in India. Though the government of India has made it a law, a change in social perception can come only when people are sensitised and there is greater social acceptance for transgenders. Academic research in social science or mass media will be meaningful only when the research is aimed at bringing some positive change or spread awareness about important social issues.

Transgenders have been facing marginalisation and discrimination because of large scale social apathy, and prejudice against them. There have been several psycho social researches that have been taken up by social psychologists to understand human behaviour. But, the need of the hour is to find ways and means to change negative perception and discriminatory social behaviour. The social experiment with Cinema for sensitizing the young students towards the Transgender community can be done even at institutional level. This will contribute towards building a healthy and inclusive ecosystem in educational institutions.

There is also a need to sensitise the filmmakers and writers who are writing fictions to develop the characters of transgenders and queers with an empathetic understanding of their lived experience and their reality. Heterogenous males and females are habituated to look at Gender binary as the only normal that is seen and accepted. It is important to think beyond these binaries and understand different genders and sexual orientations to portray the characters in a sensitive and sensible way.

It took a long battle for women to be portrayed as humans and equals in the cinema even when women consisted half the population. Patriarchy runs so deep, that even today we see archetypes and regressive content passed on as a part of some mainstream cinema. However, today, it is not uncommon to find stories where a woman protagonist plays the central character and people accept it, watch it without any inhibition. Therefore, there is every chance that the voice of minority groups like Transgenders will be heard and represented in a powerful way not as an exception but as an accepted phenomenon. That will be in true sense ethical visual representation of transgenders in cinema.

The title “Cinema in the world of OTT and the Ethics of Visual Representation in a fictional world.(An exploratory study of transgender representation in cinema)” of the study gave a challenge to trace the ethical part of the journey of visual representation. For heuristic purpose the researchers focussed only on the representation of LGBTQ+ focusing more on transgenders. The first part of the research was to explore the theoretical framework to understand ethics and ethics of visual representation. The next section dealt with an understanding of prejudice and stereotypes. The study then focussed on various phases of transgender representation in mainstream cinema and cinema and web series on OTT. Despite the limitations of this study, the researchers have tried to build a holistic approach to understand the topic.

References

1. Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Addison-Wesley. <https://faculty.washington.edu/caporaso/courses/203/readings/allport/Natureofprejudice.pdf>
2. American Psychological Association. (2011). *Answers to your questions about transgender people, gender identity, and gender expression*. <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/transgender.pdf>
3. Anju, M. B. (2022). Perpetuating the stereotype: A critique of Thiagarajan Kamaraj as *Super Deluxe*. In K. M. Johnson, M. Rajesh, & V. N. Vishnu (Eds.), *The politics of spectacles: Representation of body, gender, and discourse in films*. Co-Text Publishers. <https://www.co-textpublishers.com/>
4. Banu, A. P. (2020). History of transgender portrayal in Indian cinema. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 7(1). <https://www.ijrar.org/papers/IJRAR2001442.pdf>
5. Bao, H. (2018). “Shanghai is burning”: Extravaganza, transgender representation and transnational cinema. *Global Media and China*, 3(4), 233–255. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059436418818274>
6. Bhattacharya, S., & Ghosh, D. (2020). Studying physical and mental health status among Hijra, Kothi and transgender community in Kolkata, India. *Social Science & Medicine*, 265. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344670217>
7. Chopra, S. (2017). Towards a “negative aesthetic”: Bombay Talkies and the queer futures of popular Hindi cinema. *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.21659/rupkatha.v9n1.18>
8. Chowdhury, A. (2021). Gender minority and its changing portrayal in Bollywood films. *Journal of the Department of Sociology of North Bengal University*, 8. <https://ir.nbu.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/4167>

9. Craig, S., Donelan, C., & Lifshitz, F. (2018). Epistemology and mediation in historical film and television: How the gendered past is constructed in knowledge and representation. *Gender & History*.
10. Engchuan, N. R. (2020). A political dance in the rain: Queer short film in Indonesia and the cinematic creation of social and material spaces for argument. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 176, 7–36.
11. Ford, A. (2019). Duration, compression, extension and distortion of time in contemporary transgender cinema. *Somatechnics*, 9(1), 58–83.
12. Gillett, P. (2012). *Film and morality*. Cambridge Publishing.
13. Hamilton, D. L. (1981). Cognitive processes in stereotyping and intergroup behavior. In *Cognitive processes in stereotyping and intergroup behavior*. Psychology Press. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269112771_The_Emergence_of_Social_Cognition
14. Hughto, J. M. W., Pletta, D., Gordon, L., Cahill, S., Mimiaga, M. J., & Reisner, S. L. (2018). Negative transgender-related media messages are associated with adverse mental health outcomes in a multistate study of transgender adults. *LGBT Health*, 8(1). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7826438/>
15. Joshi, A., Madan, M., Narang, K., & Aggarwal, M. (2022). Legal but are they accepted? The psycho-social impact of Section 377 on the LGBTQA+ community: Pre and post abolishment in Delhi NCR, India. *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, 5(1), 137–144. <https://ijsshr.in/v5i1/Doc/21.pdf>
16. Kubrak, T. (2020). Impact of films: Changes in young people's attitudes after watching a movie. *Behavioral Sciences*, 10(5), Article 86. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7288198/>
17. Lehner, A. (2021). Critical questions and embodied reflections: Trans visual culture today—A roundtable (Trans Visual Culture project). *Trans Visual Culture Project*.
18. Natarajan, T. (2020). Voicing the voiceless: Representation of the excluded transgender community in Tamil cinema. In *Handbook of research on social and cultural dynamics in Indian cinema*. IGI Global. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351362747_Voicing-the-Voiceless
19. Nelson, T. D. (Ed.). (2015). *Handbook of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination*. Psychology Press. https://emilkirkegaard.dk/en/wp-content/uploads/Todd_D.Nelson_Handbook_of_Prejudice_StereotypiBookos.org.pdf
20. Riis, B. (2014). *Transgender reflections: Audience studies on the portrayal of trans characters in film & TV*. Academia. <https://www.academia.edu/31051462/>
21. Ruscher, J. B. (2001). *Prejudiced communication: A social psychological perspective*. Guilford Press. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2001-06569-000>
22. Seymour, N. (2019). Representing transgender embodiment in film and culture: Looking beyond the transition narrative in Amazon's *Transparent*. *Somatechnics*, 9(1), 84–97.
23. Singh, D., Sharma Bhandari, D., Kaur, G., & Sharma, D. (2017). Anthropological and ethnographic elements in Indian parallel films: A study of homophobia in Indian society. *Trames*, 21(71/66), 570–594.
24. Tilak, G., & Singh, D. (2019). Transgender community in media industry. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 6(5), 412–420. <https://www.jetir.org/>

25. Wankhede, A. (2012). Transgender communities in India: A study of historical, legal and social perspective. In *Gender issues in India: Sensitisation, reflection, and solution* (pp. 90–96). ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353716079>
26. Wibke, S. (2020). Screening non-binary and trans bodies: Introduction—Visibility and screen politics after the transgender tipping point. *Screen Bodies*, 5(1), 56–65.
27. Yasin, Z., Batool, S., & Naseer, I. (2020). Exploring transgender's representation, perception, and experiences: An analytical study of portrayal of transgenders in Bollywood movies and its effects on transgender community in Lahore, Pakistan. *Global Mass Communication Review*, 5(3), 95–108. <https://gmcrjournal.com/papers/5ugVrCRe7T.pdf>

Websites and Online Sources

28. *What's wrong with the trans representation in Bollywood?* (n.d.). Pratisandhi. <https://www.pratisandhi.com/whats-wrong-with-the-trans-representation-in-bollywood/>
29. *India Forums: Topic 4904489.* (n.d.). India Forums. <https://www.indiaforums.com/forum/topic/4904489>
30. *Ethics III: Normative ethical theories.* (n.d.). Encyclopedia.com. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/science/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/ethics-iii-normative-ethical-theories>
31. *Visual integrity: Misleading messages, ethics, and credibility.* (n.d.). Granite State College Pressbooks. <https://granite.pressbooks.pub/comm543/chapter/visual-integrity-misleading-messages-ethics-and-credibility/>
32. *What is OTT platform? Which regulations govern it?* (2022). *Business Standard*. https://www.business-standard.com/podcast/current-affairs/what-is-ott-platform-which-regulations-govern-it-122021500049_1.html
33. *A new generation of filmmakers are reworking the roles of LGBTQ characters.* (n.d.). *The Economic Times*. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/panache/people/a-new-generation-of-filmmakers-are-reworking-the-roles-of-lgbtq-com>
34. *Cambridge Scholars Publishing sample.* (n.d.). Cambridge Scholars Publishing. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/resources/pdfs/978-1-4438-4194-8-sample.pdf>
35. *Netflix, Amazon Prime, queer representation and censorship in India.* (n.d.). *TV Guide*. <https://www.tvguide.com/news/features/netflix-amazon-prime-queer-representation-censorship-india/>
36. *The queer story on OTT: "It is still work in progress," says the film fraternity.* (n.d.). *Hindustan Times*. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/entertainment/web-series/the-queer-story-on-ott-it-is-still-work-in-progress-says-the-film-fraternity-101645814404954.html>
37. *Trans representation in Indian cinema.* (n.d.). *Media India*. <https://mediaindia.eu/cinema/trans-representation-in-indian-cinema/>

A Study on National and International Perspectives for the Protection of Child Rights

Chitra Shukla, PhD Research Scholar, Department of Law, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

Dr. G. Indira Priyadarsini, Assistant Professor, Department of Law, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

Abstract

Every child is born with the same human rights. These rights are inalienable and play a very crucial role in safeguarding the childhood of children by providing them better education through which they can achieve prosperous adulthood. But still there are millions of children who have been denied their basic rights. Children are considered as the future of any Nation. Hence, both at national and international level there are various rights that are granted to the children and also every Nation has strict rules and regulations to safeguard the child rights. Even though protection of child rights is priority of all the nations but still the child labour, child trafficking and child abuse are increasing every day. The abuse of child rights creates various impacts on the children, specifically the psychological impact, as they will feel lonely and have chances to turn into criminals. The problem of child trafficking is affecting a wide range of population due to which many children are affected.

The main objective of this research is to study child abuse, child trafficking, child labour and other forms of crimes against children. The reasons for its growth and impacts along with the case study for protection of child rights in India. Further to bring out legal provisions of Bhartiya Nyaya Samhita for protection of child rights in India. Through this research a depth study will be done on the protection of child rights at international level and how these efforts have played a key role in safeguarding the Child rights at an international level.

Keywords: *Child Trafficking, Child Rights, Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita, Child Labour*

Maria Montessori is one of the prominent child rights activists who highlighted in her various works the need for protection of child rights. Child rights have been recognised universally. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has stipulated under Para 2 of Article 25 that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance. Many such principles recognising the protection of child rights were incorporated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on November 20, 1959. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights under Article 23 and 24 and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights under Article 10 made provisions for the care of the Child. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the General Assembly on November 20, 1989 and came into force on September 2, 1990. This Act defines a child as a person below the age of 18 years unless the relevant laws recognize an earlier age of majority.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) contains various provisions relating to children who are victims of crime and children who have witnessed crime. The two Optional Protocols to the

Convention (2000) deal mainly with child victims and witnesses of crime. These protocols offer a framework for the protection of the rights of children involved in sale, prostitution and pornography as well as in armed conflicts. The subsequent adoption by the United Nations Economic and Social Council of resolution 2005/20 of 22 July 2005, which contains the Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime, was the crucial next step. The Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime (hereinafter referred to as “the Guidelines”) specifically deal with the rights of children who are victims of crime and the rights of children who have witnessed crime. A new normative instrument that also addresses the specific needs of child victims and witnesses of crime will be the “Model strategies and practical measures on the elimination of violence against children in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice”, which were approved by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its 23rd Session and recommended to the Economic and Social Council for approval with a view to their adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Various Government and Non-Government Organizations play crucial roles in safeguarding child rights and protecting the childhood of children. As we know children’s voices are often unheard so public interest litigation has been used as an effective weapon by them so that child rights can be protected. In India many child rights activists have filed public interest litigation to safeguard the child rights. Many such litigation will be part of this research. This research mainly focuses on the Child rights and how by child abuse, child trafficking, child labour and child pornography children who are victims to these crimes are suffering. The national and international safeguards for the protection of child rights.

Rights of the Children in the Convention on the Rights of the Child

A number of rights are guaranteed to the children in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. These are:

1. Right to life (Article 6, Para 1);
2. Right to acquire nationality (Article 7);
3. Right to Freedom of Expression (Article 13, Para 1);
4. Right to Freedom of thought, conscience and Religion (Article 14, Para 1);
5. Right to Freedom of Association and to Freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15, Para 1);
6. Right to privacy (Article 16);
7. Right to family environment (Article 20);
8. Right to Education (Article 28, Para 1);
9. Right to benefit from social security (Article 26, Para 1);
10. Right to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual and social development (Article 27, Para 1);
11. Right to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health (Article 24, Para 1);
12. Right to the protection of the law against arbitrary or unlawful interferences with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence (Article 16, Para 1);
13. Right against exploitation of child labour (Article 32);
14. Right against sexual exploitation (Article 34);
15. Right against abduction, sale or traffic (Article 35);
16. Right against other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any of the child's welfare.

Public Interest Litigations for Protecting the Rights of Children

Indian Constitution under Article 24 provides that no child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed in any hazardous factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment. This provision aims to protect children from exploitation and to provide them education so that they can achieve their dreams. Despite the above protection still child labour is at a wide level in India. Children because of their age and innocence face a number of problems such as exploitation in different ways and at various places. The three popular forms are child labor, bonded labor and child trafficking. These issues are brought to the Court through public interest litigation. Many social workers have filed public interest litigation on behalf of children to safeguard their rights. Public interest litigation has helped various children who have been homeless, abandoned, abused, bonded, trafficked, illegally employed and displaced.

In the case of **Lakshmi Kant Pandey v. Union of India**, With the object of ensuring the welfare of the child, the Supreme Court laid down principles and norms which should be followed in determining whether a child should be allowed to be adopted by foreign parents. The Court directed the Government and various agencies dealing with the matters to follow these norms and ensure the welfare of children. In another case the Court ordered that children cannot be employed in match factories which are directly connected with the manufacturing process as it is hazardous employment within the meaning of the Employment of Children Act, 1938.

In **M.C. Mehta v. State of Tamil Nadu**, the Supreme Court held that children below 14 years cannot be employed in any hazardous factories which are directly connected with the manufacturing process, mines or other works as it is a hazardous employment within the meaning of the Employment of Children's Act, 1938. Every child must be insured for a sum of Rs. 5000/- and premium to be paid by the employer as a condition of service. This PIL has played a very crucial role in the protection of the rights of millions of children. Further, in the case of **Sheela Barse v. Union of India**, the Court stressed on implementation of various Children's Acts passed by different States and the strict implementation of the provisions mentioned in the Act. The Court directed the Central Government to pay to the petitioner, a social worker, Rs. 10,000/- for the expenses and to extend all necessary assistance who visited different jails across the country to verify the data provided by the States on the situation of children below 18 years detained in the various prisons of the country. The Court further directed to pass Central legislation on the subject.

The case of **R.D. Upadhyay v. State of Andhra Pradesh** was one of the very crucial public interest litigation for those children who were living with their mother in jail as in this case the Supreme Court laid down guidelines for safeguarding the welfare of these children regarding their food, shelter, medical care, clothing, education and recreation facilities which are declared to be child's right. The Court also issued directions regarding their diet. The Court held that before sending to jail a pregnant woman, the concerned authorities must ensure that the jail in question has basic minimum child delivery facility as well as place for providing prenatal care for both the mother and child. Birth of the child is not to be recorded as prison in the Birth Certificate. It shall be registered in a local birth registration office. Children above six years are not to be kept with female prisoners. The Court directed that the Jail Manual must be amended suitably to incorporate these changes.

In another PIL of *Unni Krishnan v.State of A.P.*, the Supreme Court held that the right to education for the children of the age of 6 to 14 years is their fundamental right. After 14 years of the age of the children the obligation of the State depends on economic capacity and development. The obligations created by Articles 41, 45 and 46 can be discharged by the State either establishing its own institutions or by aiding, recognizing or granting affiliation to private institutions. In *T.M.A. Pai Foundation v. State of Karnataka*, Supreme Court held that the State could not make reservation of seats in admission in privately run educational institutions. There, the admission could be done on the basis of a common admission test conducted by the State or these institutions and on the basis of merit. This decision has partly overruled Unni Krishnan's decision. Public interest litigation is very crucial for social transformation of Indian society as it guarantees the right to education as a fundamental right for all the children.

Child labor is a major problem of today's society. Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 has laid various provisions for prohibition of child labor. In the landmark case of *Bachpan Bachao Andolan v. Union of India*, which is very important for the protection of child rights from child labor. The public interest litigation was filed for the serious violations and abuse of children forcefully detained in circus without access their families under extreme inhuman conditions, sexual, physical and emotional abuse and deprived of basic human needs like food and water, sanitation, sleeping times, high risk factor etc. issued these directions:

1. For implementing fundamental rights under Article 21-A, the Central Government must issue suitable notifications prohibiting the employment of children in circuses within two months;
2. The respondents would conduct simultaneous raids in all circuses to liberate the children and check the violation of their fundamental rights and the rescued children would be kept in the Care and Protective Homes till attainment of 18 years;
3. The respondents would frame proper scheme for rehabilitation of rescued children from circuses and
4. The Secretary of Ministry of Human Resources Development, Development of Women and Children Development would file a comprehensive affidavit within 10 weeks.

Vishal Jeet v Union of India was a landmark case to prevent children from child abuse. It was filed by a social worker to check sexual exploitation of child, girls and women in flesh trade and prostitution. The Supreme Court issued directions against child abuse and prevented the children from exploitation. Law enforcement authorities were directed to take immediate action against child prostitution. Establish a committee to give recommendations on eradicating child prostitution from India. Provide rehabilitation to inmates of forced prostitution with protective homes. The children of victims, prostitutes and other children found begging on the streets were to be provided with protective homes and rehabilitation. The Supreme Court in *Labor's Working on Salal Hydel Project v State of Jammu and Kashmir* reiterated that the construction work is a hazardous employment and children below the age of 14 years cannot be employed therein.

International Perspectives for the Protection of Child Rights

The International Children's Emergency Fund (ICEF) was created by the United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration to help affected children. It came into existence on 11 December 1946. UNICEF has launched various programs to help the children and also supported newly

independent Nations. This organization has received the Nobel Peace Prize “for the Promotion of brotherhood among nations.” Today it works in more than 190 countries to reach the most vulnerable and excluded children. The State of the World's Children (SOWC) is an annual report published by the United Nations Children's Fund, it closely examines a key issue affecting children. The latest edition, titled “The State of the World's Children 2023: For Every Child, Vaccination, evaluates the urgent measures required to uphold the rights of all children to the protection offered by vaccines.

The Declaration on the Children's rights served as an important foundational document in the development of international law related to Children's rights. It has influenced various national legislation and policies around the world, guiding efforts to protect and promote the rights of children at diverse levels. It is considered as a precursor to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 1989, world leaders made a historic commitment to the World's Children by adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Convention explains the responsibilities of governments towards the Rights of children. The General Assembly in 2000 adopted two Optional Protocols to the Convention: the first optional protocol on the involvement of children in Armed Conflict prohibits the recruitment of children under 18 years of age into armed forces or their participation in hostilities and the second optional protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. It strengthens prohibition and penalties concerning the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Further a third Optional Protocol to the Rights of the Child on a Communication Procedure was adopted by the General Assembly on December 19, 2011 which entered into force on April 14, 2014. It provides a communication procedure that allows individual children to submit complaints regarding violations of their rights under the Convention and the first two Protocols.

The International Labour Organization since its inception has been committed to the protection of the Rights of children as an essential prerequisite for social justice. In 1990 this organization has established International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). This Programme provides technical advisory services focusing on the worst abuse, hazardous works, forced labour, street children, girls and the employment of children who are below 13 years of age. The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention was adopted on June 17, 1999 and came into force on November 19, 2000. This Convention was most effective step to protect children from child labour. This Convention requires countries to provide support for removing children from dangerous Labour and ensure access to education or vocational training. These are some efforts that are made at the International level to protect the rights of children.

Provisions of Bhartiya Nyaya Samhita safeguarding Rights of Children

The Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita mentions various crimes against children by which their rights are violated and also the punishments for these crimes. Further this Act briefly mentions trafficking in which even children are major sufferers. The forceful means adopted for making children as beggars. This practice has deeply affected the childhood of children who are victims to such illegal practices. In Bhartiya Nyaya Samhita Section 139(4) Definition of Begging (under Kidnapping/Maiming for Begging): “begging” means— (i) soliciting or receiving alms in a public

place, whether under the pretense of singing, dancing, fortune telling, performing tricks or selling articles or otherwise;

(ii) entering on any private premises for the purpose of soliciting or receiving alms;

(iii) exposing or exhibiting, with the object of obtaining or extorting alms, any sore, wound, injury, deformity or disease, whether of himself or of any other person or of an animal;

(iv) using such a child as an exhibit for the purpose of soliciting or receiving alms.

According to the Bhartiya Nyaya Samhitathere are following legal provisions for safeguarding the children rights:

- Whoever being the father or mother of a child under the age of twelve years, or having the care of such child, shall expose or leave such child in any place with the intention of wholly abandoning such child, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, or with fine, or with both.
- Whoever, by secretly burying or otherwise disposing of the dead body of a child whether such child die before or after or during its birth, intentionally conceals or endeavour to conceal the birth of such child, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.
- Whoever hires, employs or engages any child to commit an offence shall be punished with imprisonment of either description which shall not be less than three years but which may extend to ten years, and with fine; and if the offence be committed shall also be punished with the punishment provided for that offence as if the offence has been committed by such person himself.
- Whoever, by any means whatsoever, induces any child to go from any place or to do any act with intent that such child may be, or knowing that it is likely that such child will be, forced or seduced to illicit intercourse with another person shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.
- Whoever kidnaps or abducts any child under the age of ten years with the intention of dishonestly taking any movable property from the person of such child, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine.
- Whoever sells, lets to hire, or otherwise disposes of any child with intent that such child shall at any age be employed or used for the purpose of prostitution or illicit intercourse with any person or for any unlawful and immoral purpose, or knowing it to be likely that such child will at any age be employed or used for any such purpose, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.
- Whoever buys, hires or otherwise obtains possession of any child with intent that such child shall at any age be employed or used for the purpose of prostitution or illicit intercourse with any person or for any unlawful and immoral purpose, or knowing it to be likely that such child will at any age be employed or used for any such purpose, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than seven years but which may extend to fourteen years, and shall also be liable to fine.
- Whoever kidnaps any child or, not being the lawful guardian of such child, obtains the custody of the child, in order that such child may be employed or used for the purposes of begging shall

be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may extend to imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.

- Whoever maims any child in order that such child may be employed or used for the purposes of begging shall be punishable with imprisonment which shall not be less than twenty years, but which may extend to life which shall mean imprisonment for the remainder of that person's natural life, and with fine.
- Where any person, not being the lawful guardian of a child, employs or uses such a child for the purposes of begging, it shall be presumed, unless the contrary is proved, that he kidnapped or otherwise obtained the custody of such child in order that such child might be employed or used for the purposes of begging.
- Whoever, knowingly or having reason to believe that a child has been trafficked, engages such child for sexual exploitation in any manner, shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than five years, but which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine. Whoever, knowingly or having reason to believe that a person has been trafficked, engages such person for sexual exploitation in any manner, shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three years, but which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine.

Challenges Faced by Child Victims

The child labour, child trafficking and other forms of violence against children create a fear among the victims due to which they suffer from mental stress. They are generally illiterate due to which they don't have proper job opportunities in the society as a result of earning money they commit various crimes. Different types of complexities emerge in these children due to which they cannot properly relate with other peoples of the society. Child trafficking is another major challenge faced by Nations as they are forced to do begging work. Some of them were made handicapped in this process which is another inhuman treatment against these children. They were kept in most horrifying conditions and due to which they are socially, physically and psychologically affected. Lack of knowledge on their legal rights further affects them in society. They are always marginalized in society and this results in hindering their rights. Due to lack of financial support they had to face various hardships in their life. They don't even have enough money to purchase food. As a result, the majority of them suffer from malnutrition. Moreover, due to lack of financial assistance and malnutrition they also suffer from numerous diseases. Many such children die as they don't get treatment from the Doctors on time. Lack of knowledge about emerging technologies also affects the chances for them to improve their living conditions. Due to which they had to suffer from poverty.

Policy Recommendations

Seeing the situation of child victims and the challenges they face in their daily life I would like to give following suggestions:

- These children who are victims of child abuse should be protected from those places where they are forcefully kept. Moreover, proper education system should be provided to such students so that they can seek a better future.
- The child victims should be provided with better financial assistance so that they can fulfil their basic needs. They should be provided other basic amenities so that they can completely focus on their study.

- Both Government and non-government organizations should collaborate together to take strict action for protecting the Rights of children. Further, secret investigating groups should be formed to investigate the people who are involved in child abuse and child trafficking.
- Children should be given training related to self-defense by which they can protect themselves and also speedy legal procedure should be undertaken so that timely justice can be done to the children and culprits can be punished. Local level team should be formed to take affective steps against those people who are involved in child abuse, child labour and child trafficking.
- International level steps should be planned so that child trafficking done at the International level can be identified and the such people who are involved in child abuse and child trafficking can be punished. The technology should be used to identify the culprits who are involved in abusing of child rights, child labour, child trafficking, child pornography and other forms of crimes against children. So that these people can be strictly punished.
- Laws which are already existing should be strictly implemented so that these abusers can be punished. Proper counselling should be provided so that the fear suffered by them because of the inhuman treatment done against them can be totally eliminated and they can be related with the other children.

Conclusion

From the above analysis on the abuse of child rights, child trafficking and other forms of violence against children we can conclude that now it's the time take strict action against those people who are involved in child abuse and other forms of crimes against children. Only by punishing them the problem of child rights violations cannot stop. The strict legal regulations should be implemented so that in future such actions can be totally controlled. Further all the efforts should be made so that victims of such child rights violations can be protected and basic help can be provided to them so that they can be joined with the other students of the societies. Only the collective efforts of everyone can protect the child victims. So we all should take all the efforts so that child rights can be totally protected and the challenges faced by these children can be reduced and even these children can improve their social and economic conditions.

References

1. Montessori, M. (1989). *The child in the family* (A. Hutchinson, Trans.). Henry Regnery Company. (Original work published 1936).
2. Indian Legal Provisions and Case Laws
3. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, No. 45 of 2023, §§ 93–99, 139(1)–139(3), & 143(5).
4. Constitution of India, 1950, Arts. 21-A, 24, 41, 45, 46.
5. *Bachpan Bachao Andolan v. Union of India*, (2011) 5 SCC 1.
6. *Lakshmi Kant Pandey v. Union of India*, AIR 1984 SC 469.
7. *M.C. Mehta v. State of Tamil Nadu*, (1996) 6 SCC 756.
8. *R.D. Upadhyay v. State of Andhra Pradesh*, (2007) 15 SCC 337.
9. *Salal Hydel Project v. State of Jammu and Kashmir*, (1983) 2 SCC 181.
10. *Sheela Barse v. Union of India*, (1986) 3 SCC 596.
11. *T.M.A. Pai Foundation v. State of Karnataka*, (2002) 8 SCC 481.
12. *Unni Krishnan v. State of A.P.*, (1993) 1 SCC 645.
13. *Vishal Jeet v. Union of India*, (1990) 3 SCC 318.

14. International Treaties & Declarations
15. International Labour Organization. (1999). *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182)*. Adopted June 17, 1999; entered into force November 19, 2000.
16. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (1966). Adopted December 16, 1966; entered into force March 23, 1976. 999 U.N.T.S. 171.
17. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (1966). Adopted December 16, 1966; entered into force January 3, 1976. 993 U.N.T.S. 3.
18. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. (2000). Adopted May 25, 2000; entered into force February 12, 2002. 2173 U.N.T.S. 222.
19. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. (2000). Entered into force January 18, 2002. 2171 U.N.T.S. 227.
20. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure. (2011). Adopted December 19, 2011; entered into force April 14, 2014. A/RES/66/138.
21. United Nations Children's Fund. (2023). *The State of the World's Children 2023: For every child, vaccination*. UNICEF.
22. United Nations Economic and Social Council. (2005). *Guidelines on justice in matters involving child victims and witnesses of crime* (Resolution 2005/20).
23. United Nations General Assembly. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Resolution 217A).
24. United Nations General Assembly. (1959). *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* (Resolution 1386 XIV).
25. United Nations General Assembly. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Adopted November 20, 1989; entered into force September 2, 1990. 1577 U.N.T.S. 3.

Inculcating Executive Presence among Young MBA Students: A Review of Emerging Leadership Competencies

Dr. N. Sree Rajani, Assistant Professor, Dept of Business Management, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

Dr. V. Bhargavi Reddy, Assistant Professor, Dept of Business Management, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

Abstract

Nowadays, having executive presence has become a key leadership skill that allows one to establish credibility, communicate effectively, and influence outcomes. As a result of the rapid changes in the contemporary business environment, graduates with Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree are supposed to possess not only technical and managerial skills but also certain leadership qualities and interpersonal skills that will help one to display the above-mentioned leadership characteristics of executive presence. The following article aims at examining the current scientific literature on executive presence and determining the essential competencies that can help one to acquire this leadership characteristic as an MBA student. For this reason, various scientific works, books, and publications from different industries were analyzed in order to find the link between communication skills, emotional intelligence, confidence, professionalism, ethical behavior, flexibility, and effective decision making and executive presence. One of the findings that became clear from the analysis of literature on the subject is the fact that the ability to demonstrate the leadership qualities associated with executive presence is not an inborn skill. Rather, it is the skill that can be acquired during the management education process and by means of practical learning, mentorship, and leadership development programs. It is also necessary to mention that the article under discussion implies that executive presence should be taught in the context of MBA education.

Keywords: *Executive Presence, MBA Students, Leadership Competencies, Management Education, Professional Development and Emotional Intelligence*

Introduction

“The ability to project gravitas, communication, and appearance to mobilize teams, exude credibility, and make complex decisions regardless of hierarchical level.”

-Sylvia Ann Hewlett

The ability of a leader to successfully lead does not only depend on his or her skills but also on his or her confidence-building and communication skills. These features can be combined and referred to as executive presence—a leadership competency that makes one influence other people, become credible and confident in resolving organizational issues. Traditionally, the feature of executive presence was thought to be something innate and inherent only to some leaders. However, according to modern scientific literature, executive presence can be developed through learning and practical work experience.

The modern corporate world recognizes that technical skills alone cannot be the only criteria for becoming a good leader. Now leaders are expected to be able to communicate with confidence, gain credibility, build trust, and lead teams while facing organizational difficulties. Therefore, executive presence has become one of the essential competencies that complement professional experience and allow individuals to exercise positive influence in various organizational contexts.

Importance of Executive Presence for Young MBA Students

Modern organizations expect the management graduates not only to have excellent academic qualifications but also some extra qualities. Even though the MBA programme helps to develop technical and analytical skills, the companies seek for individuals who can communicate with confidence, gain others' trust, cooperate within diverse teams and have potential for leadership (Dalavai, 2019; Limardi et al., 2014). Developing executive presence will enable MBA students to demonstrate professionalism, make proper decisions, adjust to business changes and influence other people. In addition to increasing chances of employment, these skills will help graduates to demonstrate credibility in interviews, internships, presentations and beginning of their professional path. In terms of modern organizations that prefer leaders who have not only business skills but also strong interpersonal and ethical ones, developing executive presence during the MBA studies can help students to get ready for increased responsibility and future leadership positions. In this respect, executive presence can be considered as an important competency that complements classroom studies and contributes to professional and career development (Long, 2011; Sherman, 2015).

Executive Presence in the Recent Past

In recent years, executive presence has received increased attention as an important managerial skill in the contemporary business world. A lot of scientific studies have already tried to analyze how executive presence affects leadership effectiveness and career advancement of individuals, however, the literature about this issue is rather fragmentary and focuses on experienced professionals or executives. The development of such quality in young MBA students who have just started the path of leaders has not received enough attention so far. Taking into account that organizations require from management graduates the set of interpersonal and leadership skills together with technical ones, it becomes necessary to consolidate the available knowledge on this matter. The aim of this literature review is to consolidate the existing views on executive presence, define the competencies that are tightly connected with it and discuss them in relation to management education. The review will also help to detect gaps in the current literature and provide suggestions to improve leadership development in MBA students.

Objective of the Review

The objective of the current literature review is to investigate the current research on executive presence and its role in preparing MBA students for being future leaders. The literature review is aimed at detecting the competencies that underlie the concept of executive presence, analyzing its dimensions and theories and identifying the ways of developing these competencies during

management education. Also, the review will try to reveal gaps in the existing research and provide recommendations for integrating executive presence development into the MBA programme.

Methodology

In this paper, a methodology of narrative literature review is applied to examine the concept of executive presence and its importance for developing leadership capabilities among young MBA students. The research relies on the analysis of scholarly sources published in scientific journals, books, conference papers, and professional reports that discuss executive presence, leadership development, management education, and emerging leadership skills.

Sources that are relevant for the study were found in academic databases and search engines using keywords "Executive Presence," "Leadership Competencies," "MBA Students," "Management Education," "Leadership Development," and "Professional Skills." Precedence was given to peer-reviewed sources and professional literature discussing the concept, dimensions, theoretical aspects, and practical use of the executive presence. Publications from more recent years were added to trace how the notion of executive presence has changed with the changes in the business environment.

Collected literature was examined thoroughly and divided into themes related to the concept and evolution of executive presence, its dimensions, leadership competencies linked to executive presence, importance of executive presence for MBA students, executive presence in management education, and development of executive presence. Findings from different studies were compared and synthesized to find common themes, different perspectives and gaps in the existing literature. Instead of collecting primary data and conducting statistical analysis, the current review provides a comprehensive overview of executive presence based on previous research findings.

Literature Review

Concept and Evolution of Executive Presence

Although the topic has received much attention in academic literature, executive presence does not have an official definition yet. Different scholars analyze the concept from their own perspectives; however, it can be noted that executive presence includes professional expertise, credibility, communication, confidence, and ability to influence others. All these different views indicate that the concept of executive presence needs to be regarded as a multidimensional professional competence and not as a fixed personal trait.

Previous literature used to define executive presence in terms of external aspects, such as good appearance, clear communication, and confidence, that are important for credibility and creating a strong impression. However, changes in organizational structure, progress in technologies, globalization, and increasing diversity of workforce made executive presence a broader notion. Modern concepts of leadership include emotional intelligence, authenticity, flexibility, ethical decision-making, resilience, and inclusiveness. These new concepts of executive presence imply

that it is not only about good external characteristics but also a holistic concept of leadership that combines professional expertise, interpersonal skills, and ethical behaviour.

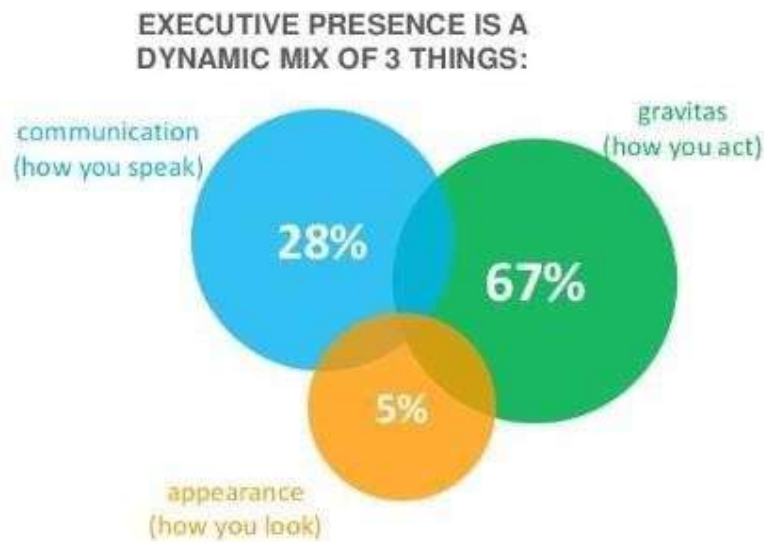
Dimensions of Executive Presence

Executive presence is better described as a multidimensional concept which goes much farther than just communication skills and physical appearance of an individual. Many frameworks were suggested by researchers in an attempt to identify constituent dimensions of executive presence, but all agree on the fact that successful leadership requires an equilibrium between personal values, capabilities and interpersonal behavior. All of these dimensions determine how people perceive and interact with others.

Hewlett's Three-Dimensional Framework

Sylvia Ann Hewlett claims that there are three dimensions of executive presence – gravitas, communication, and appearance. These dimensions collectively impact the ways of developing leader's credibility, conveying messages and presenting oneself in a professional manner.

The framework of Hewlett is mostly concerned with visible aspects of executive presence and consists of three dimensions of executive presence – gravitas, communication, and appearance. Together these dimensions determine how other people perceive leaders and help leaders to build credibility in the organization (Hewlett et al., 2012).



Bates Executive Presence Index

The Bates Executive Presence Index (Bates ExPI™) is an approach developed by Suzanne Bates that looks beyond the obvious elements and evaluates the ability of a leader to engage, align, inspire people, and motivate people into actions.

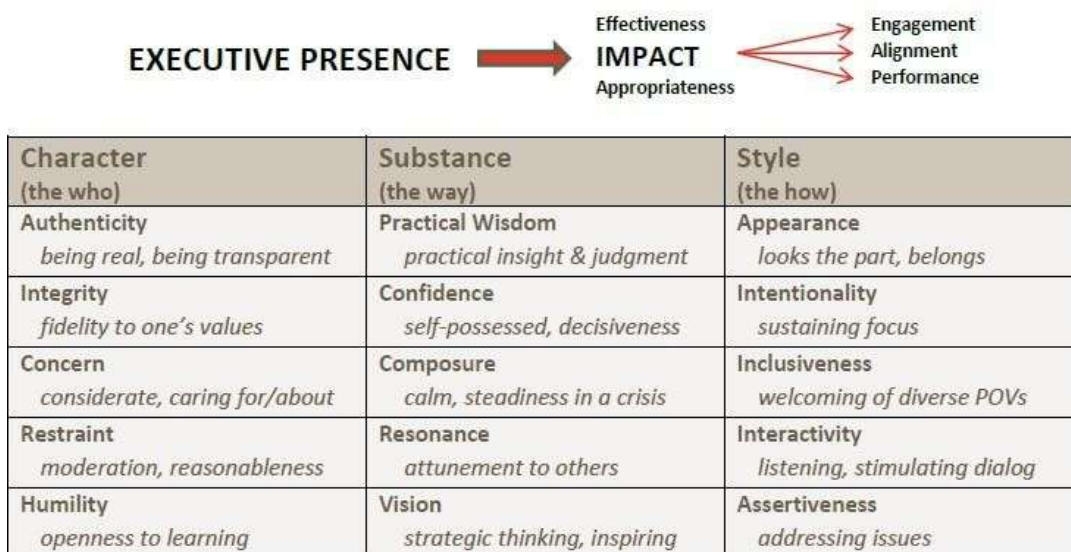
It is popular to describe executive presence through three broad dimensions: Character, Substance, and Style. Character describes the value system of a person and his/her personal qualities which create the basis for trust and credibility. Substance involves the ability of the individual to make good decisions and deal with the complex challenges based on his or her knowledge and experience. Style includes the behaviour of the individual and his/her communicational abilities used to communicate the thoughts and messages.

Thus, combining the three dimensions of executive presence we can conclude that it appears as a result of the combination of the personal values, professional ability and behavioural proficiency. People showing all these three skills are better capable of leading a diverse team and overcoming organizational challenges.

Unlike this approach, the Bates Executive Presence Index is much broader and takes into consideration personal values, professional capabilities and behavioral style. This approach assumes that effective long-term leadership depends not only on external aspects of a leader, but also on such internal traits as integrity, emotional maturity, wisdom, inclusiveness and the ability to engage and inspire people (Bates & Weighart, 2015).

This model has three macro-dimensions consisting of 15 distinct facets.

Figure 1. Bates Model of Executive Presence



The fact that we can measure the parts of executive presence makes the Bates Executive Presence Index really useful for evaluating and developing executive presence through leadership training and professional development programs.

Comparative Analysis of Theoretical Frameworks

We have two models that try to describe what executive presence is about. They both look at sides of this idea. The Hewlett framework talks about how a leader looks and acts, which helps people form an opinion about them. On the hand the Bates approach focuses on what is inside a leader and the skills they need to be a good leader all the time. When we look at both of these views on presence it becomes clear that being a good leader is about how you act and the kind of person you are.

If we compare the two models we can see that neither one is enough to describe what executive presence is. The Hewlett framework helps us understand how a leader earns credibility, which is based on three things: how they carry themselves how they communicate and how they look. The Bates framework on the hand looks at the bigger picture and talks about a leaders character, professionalism and how well they behave. It is clear that executive presence is a part of being a good leader and it includes both how you act and what kind of person you are. So companies and schools should help future leaders develop all of these skills to get them ready for the world of business.

Executive Presence as an Emerging Leadership Competency

In the ten years what people expect from leaders has changed a lot and executive presence has become a really important skill, for the next generation of managers. Now companies want leaders who can think about the picture communicate well work with different teams and make good decisions even when things are not clear. As a result executive presence is now a combination of different leadership skills.

One of the important skills is being able to communicate well which is a big part of executive presence. A good leader should be able to express their ideas listen to others carefully and speak with confidence whether in person or online. It is also important to be able to understand how other people feel, which is called intelligence. Being able to adapt to changes and being resilient when things get

tough are also crucial. Having integrity being ethical and being accountable add to what it means to have presence and help build trust in a leader and the company. When a leader has all of these skills they can make an impact and create an environment where people work together and innovate.

Overall based on what we have read it seems that all of these skills work together and complement each other. To be a leader you need to be able to combine all of these things.

Thus executive presence emerges as the result of interaction of these leadership skills.

Executive Presence in Management Education

Management schools play a role in training future managers to do well not only in school but also in terms of leadership qualities. In the past management schools focused on teaching skills like finance and marketing. Now companies look for graduates who have people skills and leadership qualities. Therefore management education should include both presence and technical skills training.

We can use hands on learning to develop presence and apply what we learn in class to real life. Things like discussing case studies doing business simulations making presentations and doing internships allow students to gain experience in communication, decision making and teamwork.

Getting feedback from teachers people in the industry and friends will also help students understand what they need to work on and become more confident.

So adding these learning activities to the school curriculum can help future managers develop in a way.

Executive Presence among Young MBA Students

Young management students are the leaders of businesses. These students usually have an education and technical skills but they often do not have much work experience. This makes it hard for them to show confidence and leadership when they enter the workforce. Developing presence in young students will help them connect what they learn in school to the real world.

Future leaders who have presence can present their ideas well participate in group discussions and do well in job interviews. They also work well in teams. Show professionalism and good judgment. As companies look for graduates who can lead executive presence is a skill that helps them get hired and succeed.

Strategies for Developing Executive Presence

Executive presence is not something people are born with. It is a skill that can be learned with practice and feedback. People can develop presence by working on their communication skills understanding emotions and getting feedback. Mentoring and coaching are also important as they provide guidance and support.

Things like speaking, networking and working in groups help develop executive presence. These activities give people a chance to apply what they learn in school. Continuous learning and being open, to feedback help people grow and become more confident. For MBA students practicing these things throughout their studies can prepare them for leadership roles.

Ultimately building presence is a long term process. It takes practice, feedback and learning to develop the skills needed for leadership.

Research Gap

There are still some things that we do not understand about presence even though a lot of studies are being done on it. Most of the time researchers look at executives people in high positions or those with a lot of experience. This means that people who are in MBA programs or just starting their careers are not studied enough. We also need to learn more about how to teach presence in MBA classes and whether these methods really work. There is not information on how executive presence develops in different places different schools and different companies. If we can fill these gaps we can create leadership programs and make MBA graduates more ready for what companies need today (Dalavai, 2019; Hewlett, 2024).

Discussion

This review shows that executive presence is now seen as an important skill for leaders in the fast-changing business world (Hewlett, 2024; Bates & Weighart 2015). The research talks about presence as a skill that includes things like how you talk how much people trust you how you handle emotions how flexible you are and how you act with ethics. The way executive presence changes is like the way companies now expect their leaders to be real, emotional flexible, ethical and welcoming along with being good at their job.

The research shows that executive presence can be built through learning, real experience being guided by others getting advice and thinking about what you do. This is especially important for people who are just starting their careers and learning who they are as professionals. If students learn about presence as part of their studies they can get better at talking making choices working with others and being more confident before they start their jobs.

This review also says that management education is very important for developing presence (Long, 2011; Dalavai, 2019). Even though MBA programs give students an understanding of theories they should also focus more on developing how people act and lead. Experiences like talking about business cases giving speeches doing internships playing business games taking part in leadership classes and working with people in the business world gives students a chance to use what they learn in school in life. These experiences help them get ready to lead and deal with problems at work.

Another thing found in the research is that what companies want from leaders has changed a lot in the ten years. Companies now value leaders who're kind welcoming, strong and real along with being good at their job (Hewlett, 2024). This change means that executive presence is not about being in charge or looking good but about being a skill that changes as work changes. So schools should keep checking and changing their leadership programs to match these needs.

The research gap that was found gives a chance for teachers and researchers to work more on leadership for MBA students. Focusing more on presence in school can help bridge the gap between what students learn and what they need to do at work helping them get ready, for leadership roles.

Research shows that executive presence goes hand in hand with solid management skills—it helps people communicate more clearly, earn trust, and adapt when work changes. Teaching executive presence in MBA programs really does help shape more confident leaders who can handle today's challenges.

Recommendations

So, what can business schools do? First, they should treat executive presence like a real priority. It shouldn't be just a side note or an optional workshop. MBA programs need to build it into their courses. Leadership classes, public speaking, and hands-on learning all help students grow their confidence, act professionally, and get better at working with different people (Dalavai, 2019; Bates & Weighart, 2015).

Next, schools should give students more chances to put these skills to the test. Presentations, business simulations, talking through real-world cases, internships—all of these bridge what students learn with what business actually looks like. These experiences build critical skills like clear communication, smart decision-making, and leadership (Long, 2011).

After that, mentoring is key. MBA programs should encourage students to seek out guidance from faculty, business professionals, and alumni. Regular check-ins, feedback, and reflective activities help students understand their strengths, work through problems, and keep building confidence.

Students themselves play a big part too. MBA candidates should take charge of developing their executive presence—work on communication, emotional intelligence, ethical decision-making, adaptability, and cross-cultural teamwork. Stepping into leadership roles, joining student organizations, networking, and volunteering all make a difference.

Finally, we need more research on how to actually measure and develop executive presence in management students. Business schools can use things like leadership simulations, speaking assessments, feedback from peers, and real business projects to see how students grow as leaders.

Conclusion

Executive presence isn't just another buzzword—it's a crucial skill that sits right alongside everything else you learn in an MBA. The research makes it clear: executive presence covers communication, confidence, trust, emotional intelligence, authenticity, adaptability, ethical behavior, and collaboration. It's not some trait you're born with; you build it through learning, practice, feedback, and strong leadership development (Hewlett et al., 2012; Bates & Weighart, 2015).

As jobs get faster-paced and more demanding, executive presence is only becoming more important. Sure, MBA programs teach analysis and technical know-how—but they also need to give students the skills to lead with presence and trust. Putting executive presence at the heart of

MBA studies, with real experiences and networking, helps graduates step confidently into the roles companies are hiring for.

Right now, we don't know enough about how executive presence actually develops for MBA students, and that's a gap worth closing. Better research can shape better leadership education and help future leaders stand out, lead well, and build strong careers (Dalavai, 2019; Hewlett, 2024). Teaching and nurturing executive presence early on makes a real difference—it helps MBAs land jobs, lead teams, and grow their careers.

References

1. Bates, & Weighart. (2015). *Executive presence: A practical guide to leadership influence*. McGraw-Hill Education.
2. Chukwuma, I. O., & Okonkwo, U. O. (2023). Executive presence and employee engagement: An empirical analogy. *Journal of Management Information and Decision Sciences*, 26(3), 1–10.
3. Crittenden, V. L. (2013). Executive presence: The art of commanding respect like a CEO. *Leader to Leader*, 2013(68), 10–15.
4. Dalavai, E. V. (2019). *Executive presence: Myth, meaningful or mastery?* University of Dallas.
5. Hewlett, S. A., Leader-Chivée, L., Sherbin, L., Gordon, J., & Dieudonné, K. (2012). *Executive presence*. Center for Talent Innovation.
6. Hewlett, S. A. (2024). The new rules of executive presence. *Harvard Business Review*, 102(1), 76–85.
7. Limardi, M., Morrison, J., & Morrison, M. (2014). Executive presence: A leadership perspective. *Leadership Excellence Essentials*, 31(6), 15–17.
8. Long, J. (2011). Executive presence: Why it matters and how to develop it. *Training Journal*, 14–17.
9. Sherman, R. O. (2015). The importance of executive presence. *Nursing Management*, 46(6), 54–56.
10. Shirey, M. R. (2013). Executive presence: A guide to developing an executive image. *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 43(12), 638–640.
11. Williamson, S. (2011). *The hidden factor: Executive presence*. Greenleaf Book Group Press.

Fiscal Priorities for Indian Agriculture: A Five-Year Review of Union Budget Trends (2021-2025)

G. Aparna Devi, *M.A Economics, Department of Women's Studies, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh*

Dr. P. Neeraja, *Assistant Professor, Dept. of Women's Studies, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh*

ABSTRACT

India's agriculture sector, contributing around 18% to gross value added while employing over 42% of the workforce, faces persistent issues like small landholdings, climate variability, and infrastructure gaps. This study examines Union Budget allocations from 2021-22 to 2025-26, revealing a nominal increase from Rs.1.23 lakh crore to Rs.1.52 lakh crore, yet stagnant as a percentage of GDP at under 0.6%. Key schemes such as PM-KISAN, PMFBY, and new missions for pulses, oilseeds, and natural farming dominate, with credit targets surging from Rs. 16.5 lakh crore to Rs.25 lakh crore. Findings highlight a welfare-heavy approach (over 90% of funds), sidelining research and infrastructure, which limit productivity gains amid rising input costs and weather risks. Recommendations include reallocating 20-30% to R&D, climate-resilient tech, and private partnerships for sustainable growth. This analysis draws on official budget documents and secondary sources to inform policy for food security and rural prosperity

Keywords: *Union Budget, agriculture, Policy Innovation*

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture has long been the backbone of India's socio-economic structure, employing nearly half of the country's workforce and serving as a critical driver of rural livelihoods, food security, and national development. Despite this centrality, the sector continues to grapple with persistent structural constraints such as fragmented landholdings, dependence on monsoon rains, inadequate post-harvest infrastructure, low productivity levels, and growing climate vulnerabilities. In this context, public expenditure and budgetary support play a vital role in revitalizing agricultural growth and ensuring sustainable, inclusive development. The Union Budget of India serves as a principal policy instrument that reflects governmental priorities, allocates financial resources to key agricultural programmes, and initiates reforms aimed at strengthening the agrarian economy.

The period 2021–2026 represents a significant phase for Indian agriculture, shaped by the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, shifts towards digital and climate-smart farming, rapid technological change, and the government's broader vision of "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India). During these years, Union Budget allocations to agriculture and allied sectors have undergone notable changes, emphasizing areas such as irrigation, crop insurance, soil health, agricultural research, digital agriculture, and post-harvest management. The introduction of new agri-missions, expansion of credit through Kisan Credit Cards (KCC), support for Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), and investments in agri-logistics signal a transition from subsidy-driven approaches to investment-led, resilience-oriented strategies.

While budgetary allocations have generally increased, concerns persist regarding the effectiveness of expenditure, the balance between short-term support and long-term sustainability, and the extent to which allocations address core challenges such as climate change, market volatility, and rural distress. Moreover, there is a growing need to evaluate whether budget priorities align with emerging national objectives: enhancing productivity, reducing post-harvest losses, ensuring income stability, promoting resource-efficient farming, and improving market access for small and marginal farmers.

Against this backdrop, the present article examines trends, patterns, and policy implications of Union Budget allocations to India's agriculture sector between 2021 and 2026. Drawing on government budget documents, economic surveys, and relevant literature, the study provides a systematic analysis of sector-wise allocations, emerging themes, and shifting policy orientations. It also assesses how budgetary decisions respond to the sector's evolving challenges and opportunities. By identifying gaps and highlighting areas requiring greater policy attention, the article contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of public finance in shaping India's agricultural transformation in the post-pandemic and climate-constrained era.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Budget allocations play a decisive role in shaping India's agricultural performance, influencing investments in irrigation, research, infrastructure, and rural livelihoods. Recent studies highlight a persistent imbalance between welfare subsidies and long-term developmental spending. Gulati (2023) argues that despite moderate agricultural growth, Union Budget allocations remain heavily skewed toward food and fertilizer subsidies, leaving limited fiscal space for research, infrastructure, and productivity-enhancing investments. He emphasizes the need to reorient at least half of agricultural spending toward development rather than short-term safety nets.

Extending this analysis, Thangaraj and Gulati (2025) critique the Union Budget 2024–25 for allocating Rs. 6.2 trillion to the rural–agrarian sector, where a significant proportion is absorbed by welfare schemes such as MGNREGA and subsidies. They argue that without reallocating funds toward agricultural R&D, irrigation, and skill development, achieving higher rural incomes and Viksit Bharat goals will remain difficult. Lal and Yadav (2024) highlight long-term trends in agricultural budget allocations from 2014 to 2024, noting that while spending has increased, the sector continues to face structural challenges including low productivity, climate vulnerabilities, and inadequate supply chain infrastructure. They stress the need for coherent policy reforms and climate-resilient investments to enhance sectoral efficiency.

Reddy (2021) also points out that historical underinvestment in rural and agricultural infrastructure has constrained productivity. He finds that subsidies often exceed development spending, leading to inefficiencies in markets, storage, and supply chains, and recommends greater allocation toward irrigation, cold storage, and high-value agriculture. Together, these studies consistently show that while agriculture remains a budgetary priority, spending patterns still favour subsidies over capital formation and research. Scholars call for strategic budget reform, greater accountability, and targeted investments to improve productivity, resilience, and rural incomes.

METHODOLOGY

India's farm policies shifted across three eras after independence. First phase (1947-1960s) stressed land reforms, ending landlord systems, and building irrigation for food basics. Second (1960s-1990s) launched Green Revolution gains through better seeds, fertilizers, irrigation expansion, and price protections. Current focus promotes diverse crops, sustainable techniques, climate toughness, and equal opportunities. This study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the Union Budget allocations to the agriculture sector over the fiscal years 2021 to 2026. The research primarily utilizes secondary data sources including official budget documents, economic survey reports, academic literature, and prior empirical studies related to agricultural finance and policy development. By systematically analyzing these sources, the study assesses trends in budgetary allocations, evaluates the focus of government schemes, and interprets policy priorities reflected in the fiscal commitments made during this five-year period.

Objectives

- To examine the trends and magnitude of budget allocations for the agriculture sector in the Union Budget during 2021-2025.
- To analyze various government schemes introduced or expanded through the Union Budget aimed at promoting agricultural development, sustainability, and rural welfare.
- To assess the impact and implications of budgetary allocations on the growth, productivity, and socio-economic wellbeing of the agriculture sector.

Data Collection

The study's secondary data collection involved comprehensive reviews of publicly available government budget reports, policy briefs, and research articles. Key sources include the annual Union Budget documents published by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Survey of India, Press Information Bureau (PIB) releases, and scholarly analyses from economic research institutions. This approach ensures a broad and validated dataset, enabling critical examination and synthesis of quantitative and qualitative information reflecting India's agricultural fiscal landscape.

This methodology facilitates an evidence-based understanding of how budgetary provisions align with agricultural policy objectives and sectoral needs. It also recognizes inherent limitations such as the absence of primary field data and the assumption of accuracy in official government publications.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Indian agriculture sector continues to grapple with multiple structural and environmental challenges, including small and fragmented landholdings, low productivity, agrarian distress, climate variability, water scarcity, inadequate infrastructure, market inefficiencies, transportation constraints, limited cold storage capacity, and inefficient supply chains. To address these persistent issues, the government regularly allocates funds through various schemes and programmes. These budgetary allocations reflect its commitment to enhancing agricultural productivity, expanding irrigation facilities, modernizing farming practices, strengthening financial support and income security for farmers, and improving rural infrastructure and overall rural development. However, the ultimate impact of these allocations depends largely on effective implementation, monitoring, and ground-level execution. Therefore, reviewing past budget allocations and initiatives becomes

essential for gaining focused insights into agricultural sector development, as these allocations highlight the government’s proactive approach towards resolving critical sectorial challenges.

Table 1: Union Budget Analysis (2020–2026) – Agriculture Sector		
Year	Budget Allocation (Rs. Crore)	Credit Target (Rs. Lakh Crore)
2020-21	1,50,000	15.0
2021-22	1,65,000	16.5
2022-23	1,80,000	18.0
2023-24	2,00,000	20.0
2024-25	2,15,000	24.0
2025-26	2,25,000	25.0

“Credit targets” refer to the governments planned or set goals for the amount of institutional loans (credit) made available to farmers and the agriculture sector during a specific financial year. From 2020–21 to 2025–26, budget allocation rose from about Rs.1.5 lakh crore to over Rs. 2.2 lakh crore, while credit targets increased sharply, particularly between 2022–23 and 2024–25 demonstrating a greater policy emphasis on strengthening formal credit access to boost agricultural productivity.

Table 2: Union Budget Allocation as % of GDP (2021–2025)				
Year	Allocation to Agriculture (Rs. crore)	India’s GDP (Rs. lakh crore)	% of GDP	Key Notes
2021–22	1,23,017	225	0.55%	Included PM-KISAN, crop insurance, and irrigation schemes.
2022–23	1,24,000	250	0.50%	PM-KISAN got Rs.68,000 crore (over 50%).
2023–24	1,15,531	272	0.42%	Slight dip; focus shifted more to allied sectors.
2024–25	1,27,500	295	0.43%	Budget highlighted tech-driven agriculture, digital public infrastructure.
2025–26	1,45,300	315–320	0.45%	Includes Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food Processing.

The above Table 2 shows that while the absolute budget allocation to agriculture increased over the years, its share as a percentage of GDP remained relatively low, generally between 0.4–0.5% and seldom crossing 0.6%. Within these allocations, PM-KISAN consistently accounted for the largest portion, reflecting its priority as a major income-support scheme for farmers. In later years, funding for digital agriculture initiatives, climate-resilient infrastructure, and expanded agri-credit targets grew significantly, indicating a shift toward modernization and enhanced financial access.

In the Union Budget 2021-22, a total of Rs. 1,31,531 crore has been allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture, of which the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare received Rs. 1,23,018 crore (94%), marking an increase of Rs. 1,997 crore from the previous year, while the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) obtained Rs. 8,514 crore (6%). Beyond these core allocations, several provisions were introduced to strengthen the agriculture and allied sectors, including Rs. 16.5 lakh crore to enhance credit availability for farmers and those

engaged in dairy, fisheries, and animal husbandry; an increased outlay of Rs. 40,000 crore for the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund; and Rs. 10,000 crore for the Micro-Irrigation Fund to promote water-efficient farming under the ‘per drop more crop’ initiative. Additional measures include the extension of the Operation Green Scheme to cover 22 more perishable commodities, assurance of MSP at a minimum of 1.5 times the cost of production, integration of 1,000 additional mandis into the e-NAM platform, and allowing APMCs to access the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund for infrastructure improvement. Furthermore, the budget proposed expanding the Stand-Up India scheme to include agriculture-allied activities, implementing the SVAMITVA scheme to enhance transparency in rural property records, investing in modern fishing harbours and inland fish-landing centres, and establishing a multipurpose Seaweed Park in Tamil Nadu to promote seaweed cultivation.

Table 3: Allocation – FY 2021–22 (Rs. in crore)			
Department	Allocation (in crore)	Percentage Share	Change from FY 2020–21
Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare	1,23,018	94%	+1,997
Department of Agricultural Research & Education (DARE)	8,514	6%	–
Total	1,31,531	100	–

Table 4 presents the major financial provisions for key schemes in FY 2021–22, highlighting a strong push toward credit access, rural infrastructure, water-efficient irrigation, and modernization of agricultural markets. The largest component is the agriculture and allied sector credit target of Rs. 16,50,000crore, aimed at supporting farmers, dairy, fisheries, and related activities. The Rural Infrastructure Development Fund received Rs. 40,000 crore to strengthen roads, storage, and other rural facilities, while Rs. 10,000 crore was allocated to the Micro Irrigation Fund under NABARD to promote water-efficient farming through the “per drop more crop” initiative. Although allocations were not specified for the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund for APMCs, the Operation Green Scheme (extended to 22 additional perishables), and the SVAMITVA scheme, these initiatives focus on market infrastructure, price stabilization, and transparent land records. Significant but unquantified investments were also proposed for modern fishing harbours, inland fisheries, and the establishment of a seaweed park in Tamil Nadu, reflecting growing support for blue economy and coastal livelihood development.

Table 4: Major Financial Provisions (Key Schemes) – FY 2021–22		
Provision / Scheme	Allocation (in crore)	Purpose
Credit Target for Agriculture & Allied Activities	16,50,000	Ensuring credit access for farmers, dairy, fisheries, etc.
Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)	40,000	Boosting rural infra like roads, warehouses
Micro Irrigation Fund (MIF) via NABARD	10,000	Efficient water use – “Per drop more

		crop”
Agriculture Infrastructure Fund for APMCs	Not Specified	Infrastructure improvement in APMCs
Operation Green Scheme (extended to 22 perishables)	Not Specified	Price stabilization for TOP and other perishables
SVAMITVA Scheme	Not Specified	Transparent rural property records

Table 5: Union Budget 2022–23: Agriculture Sector Allocation		
Component	Allocation (in crore)	Remarks
Total Agriculture Sector Allocation	1,32,513.62	Increased from 1,26,807.86 crore (RE) in FY 2021–22
Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers’ Welfare	1,24,000	Main department for implementation of schemes
PM-KISAN (PradhanMantriKisanSammanNidhi)	68,000	55% of department’s allocation
Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS)	19,840	16% of department’s allocation
PMFBY (PradhanMantriFasalBimaYojana)	16,120	13% of department’s allocation
Other Schemes, Programs, Admin Expenses	19,840	Remaining 16% of department allocation
Department of Agricultural Research & Education	8,514	69% for ICAR, 31% for other research and education
Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)	~5,875	69% of DARE allocation
Other Research & Education Initiatives	~2,639	31% of DARE allocation
Market Intervention & Price Support Scheme (MISPSS)	1,500	Price support for farmers
Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)	10,433	For agricultural development projects
Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)	1	Drastic cut from ₹400 crore (2021–22 RE)
Food & Nutritional Security	1,395	Nutritional assistance
Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)	500	Financing agri-infrastructure
Support for Agri Startups	Not specified (Fund created)	For startups in agri supply chains
PPP Model Scheme for Digital/High-Tech Services to Farmers	Not specified (new scheme)	To enhance access to market, data, and precision agri tools
Agro forestry Legislative Promotion	Planned	Policy reforms to incentivize agro forestry
Modern Fishing Harbours + Inland Fisheries	Significant (not quantified)	Strengthening blue economy
Seaweed Park – Tamil Nadu	Not Specified	Promote seaweed-based livelihoods

The overall allocation for the agriculture sector rose modestly to Rs.1,32,513.62 crore in Union Budget 2022–23 from the revised estimate of Rs. 1,26,807.86 crore in 2021–22, reflecting a steady but cautious expansion in agricultural spending. The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and

Farmers' Welfare received Rs.1,24,000 crore, with a major share directed toward PM-KISAN (55%), interest subvention (16%), and PMFBY crop insurance (13%), indicating continued emphasis on income support and risk mitigation for farmers. The Department of Agricultural Research and Education was allotted Rs.8,514 crore, largely for ICAR-led research and education. Key schemes such as PM-KISAN (Rs. 68,000 crore), PMFBY (Rs.15,500 crore), MIS-PSS, food and nutritional security, AIF, and RKVY highlight efforts to stabilize farm incomes, ensure MSP operations, strengthen market interventions, and promote infrastructure development. Notably, minimal funding for PM-AASHA signals reduced focus on MSP-based procurement reforms. New initiatives including a fund for agri-startups, legislative support for agro-forestry, and a PPP-based digital agriculture ecosystem reflect a strategic shift toward innovation, technology adoption, diversified livelihoods, and climate-resilient farming systems.

Table 6: Agriculture Budget 2022–23 Allocation	
Scheme Name	Allocation (in Crore)
PM-KISAN	68000
Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS)	19840
PM Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)	16120
Other Schemes & Admin Expenses	19840
Dept. of Agricultural Research & Education (DARE)	8514
Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)	10433
Market Intervention & Price Support Scheme (MISPSS)	1500
Food & Nutritional Security	1395
Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)	500
PM-AASHA	1

The Union Budget 2023–24, presented as the first “Amritkaal” budget, reflects India’s long-term vision for transforming agriculture through technology, sustainability, and strengthened rural institutions. With an allocation of Rs. 1.25 lakh crore to the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, the budget prioritizes farmer support schemes such as PM-KISAN, Kisan Credit Card, and food and nutritional security, while also investing significantly in innovation through the Digital Agriculture Mission, Agriculture Accelerator Fund, and Bio-Input Research Centres to promote natural farming. The emphasis on millets, declared “Shri-Anna” and the Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Programme highlights a shift toward nutrition security and high-quality horticultural planting material. Major allocations for the digitization of PACS, expansion of fisheries under PMMSY, incentives for alternative fertilizers through PM-PRANAM, and the creation of decentralized storage underscore efforts to modernize agricultural value chains. Additionally, the enhanced agriculture credit target of Rs. 20 lakh crore and plans to establish cooperative, dairy, and fishery societies in uncovered villages demonstrate a strong push toward rural financial inclusion, diversification, and cooperative-led development.

Table 7: Union Budget 2023–24: Agriculture Sector Allocation		
Scheme / Initiative	Allocation (in Crore)	Remarks
Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare (total)	1,25,000	Includes agricultural education & research
PradhanMantriKisanSammanNidhi (PM-KISAN)	60,000	Direct income support to farmers
Kisan Credit Card (KCC)	23,000	Credit support for farmers
Digital Agriculture Mission	450	Promoting digital technology in agriculture
Technology promotion in agriculture	600	General tech enhancement initiatives
BioInput Research Centres (10,000 over 3 years)	459	Supports natural farming
Formation of new Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)	955	Empowering farmers through collectives
Food and Nutritional Security	1,623	Safety nets for food security
Agriculture Accelerator Fund	500	Boost to agri-start-ups in rural areas
Promotion of Millets (Shri-Anna)	Not specified	Centre of Excellence: Indian Millets Research Institute, Hyderabad
Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Programme	2,200	Disease-free, quality planting material for horticulture
Digitization of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)	2,516	63,000 PACS to be digitized
PradhanMantriMatsyaSampadaYojana (New Sub-Scheme)	6,000	Enhancing fisheries, fish vendor support
PM-PRANAM Yojana	Not specified	Incentive to states for alternative fertilizers
Agriculture Credit Target	20,00,000	Emphasis on animal husbandry, dairy, and fisheries
Decentralized Storage Infrastructure	Not specified	To reduce post-harvest losses
Multipurpose Cooperative Societies (5-year plan)	Not specified	In uncovered panchayats and rural areas

Table 8: Union Budget 2023–24: Agriculture Allocations	
Scheme / Initiative	Allocation (in Crore)
Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare (total)	125000
PradhanMantriKisanSammanNidhi (PM-KISAN)	60000
Kisan Credit Card (KCC)	23000
Digital Agriculture Mission	450
Technology promotion in agriculture	600
BioInput Research Centres	459
Formation of new FPOs	955
Food and Nutritional Security	1623
Agriculture Accelerator Fund	500
Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Programme	2200
Digitization of PACS	2516
PradhanMantriMatsyaSampadaYojana	6000
Agriculture Credit Target	2000000

The Interim Budget 2024–25 reinforces the government’s commitment to strengthening agricultural value addition, farmer welfare, and income enhancement by allocating Rs. 1,27,469.88 crore to the Ministry of Agriculture, with the Department of Agriculture receiving Rs. 1,17,528.79 crore and DARE Rs. 9,941.09 crore. The proposals signal significant forward movement in key areas, including expansion of the Blue Revolution, formalization of micro food-processing enterprises, and continued income support under PM-KISAN. Enhanced crop insurance coverage, wider integration of mandis under e-NAM, and encouragement of post-harvest investments demonstrate a strong push toward improving market efficiency and supply chain resilience. The nationwide rollout of Nano DAP, alongside support for dairy development and an expanded PM MatsyaSampadaYojana, highlights efforts to boost productivity across diverse agro-climatic systems and allied sectors. Furthermore, the Atmanirbhar Oilseeds Abhiyaan reflects a strategic shift toward achieving self-sufficiency through improved varieties, modern practices, and value-chain integration. Collectively, these measures underscore a multi-dimensional approach prioritizing financial support, technological innovation, research advancement, and public–private collaboration to modernize Indian agriculture and enhance its long-term sustainability.

Table 9: Union Budget 2024–25: Agricultural Sector – Key Allocations and Initiatives

Category / Scheme	Allocation (in Crore)	Details / Objective
Total Allocation – Ministry of Agriculture	1,27,469.88	Overall budget to boost farmers’ income and agri-sector modernization
Department of Agriculture	1,17,528.79	Core department allocation (↑ ₹1,997 crore from previous year)
Department of Agricultural Research & Education (DARE)	9,941.09	To strengthen agri-research, education, and extension
PM-KISAN (Direct Cash Transfer to Farmers)	--	Assistance to 11.8 crore farmers
PM FasalBimaYojana	--	Insurance coverage extended to 4 crore farmers
e-NAM Integration	--	1,361 mandis integrated; target trade of ₹3 lakh crore
Blue Revolution (Fisheries Development)	2,352	For boosting fishery and aquaculture productivity
PM Matsya Sampada Yojana	--	Doubling seafood exports and generating 55 lakh jobs
PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises	880	Support for small and micro food businesses
Nano DAP Fertiliser Promotion	--	Expansion across all agro-climatic zones
Dairy Sector Development Programme	--	Focus on better breeds, vet services, and market linkages
Atmanirbhar Oilseeds Abhiyaan	--	For self-sufficiency in oilseeds (R&D, techniques, value addition, insurance)

4.1 Major Agricultural Initiatives (FY 2021–22 to FY 2024–25)

Across FY 2021–22 to FY 2024–25, the Government of India introduced a diverse set of initiatives to modernize agriculture, strengthen rural livelihoods, and improve market linkages. Programmes

such as **SVAMITVA**, **e-NAM expansion**, and **Operation Greens** strengthened land record transparency, digital marketing, and price stabilization for perishable commodities. In FY 22–23 and FY 23–24, technological interventions accelerated with the introduction of **Kisan Drones**, the **Digital Agriculture Mission**, AgriStack, and advanced crop estimation systems to improve data accuracy, resource management, and precision agriculture. Initiatives like the **National Mission on Natural Farming**, the **Atmanirbhar Horticulture Clean Plant Programme**, and the promotion of **millets (Shri-Anna)** emphasized sustainability, climate resilience, and nutrition-focused agriculture. In the allied sectors, programmes such as **PM MatsyaSampadaYojana**, **Blue Revolution**, and dairy development undertakings highlighted the growing economic importance of fisheries and livestock.

4.2 Policy Innovations, Credit Support & Farmer Welfare

Farmer welfare schemes continued to remain central, with PM-KISAN, expanded crop insurance under PMFBY, and increasing agriculture credit targets providing direct financial assistance and risk protection. The government promoted digital credit access through Jan Samarth-based KCC issuance and enhanced institutional financial inclusion. Programmes like Namo Drone Didi empowered women through tech-enabled agricultural entrepreneurship, while the push for post-harvest value addition, micro food processing, and FPO formation aimed to integrate farmers into modern supply chains. Further, missions such as NMEO-Oilseeds, National Mission on High-Yielding Seeds, and Mission for Pulses Aatmanirbharta sought to reduce import dependence by improving seed quality, strengthening R&D, expanding cultivation areas, and ensuring MSP-based procurement. These measures collectively signaled a strategic shift toward increasing self-sufficiency, crop diversification, and sustainable intensification of production systems.

4.3 Structural Reforms and Long-term Sectorial Transformation

Structural reforms formed the backbone of long-term agricultural transformation. Investments under PMKSY, PMGSY, and the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund enhanced irrigation, rural connectivity, cold storage, and agri-logistics, reducing post-harvest losses and strengthening value chains. The launch of large-scale initiatives such as the Ken–Betwa Link Project, decentralized storage expansion, and the PM Dhan-DhaanyaKrishiYojana targeted irrigation gaps, productivity enhancement, and credit access in low-performing districts. Meanwhile, the proposed National Cooperation Policy aimed to revive cooperatives, expand rural entrepreneurship, and energize the rural economy. However, the reform agenda, especially market liberalization laws, sparked debates concerning farmer protection and market volatility. Taken together, the widespread adoption of technology, expansion of digital agriculture, investments in climate-resilient seeds, natural farming promotion, and improved rural infrastructure indicate a multi-dimensional approach to modernizing India's agriculture and ensuring long-term sustainability, competitiveness, and rural prosperity.

4.4 Comparison with previous budgets

Across FY2021–22 to FY2025–26, budgetary intent shows a clear evolution rather than a sharp spending surge: absolute allocations for agriculture have inched upward each year while the sector's share of GDP remained modest, indicating steady prioritization but limited fiscal re-weighting. Early years emphasized direct income support and risk-mitigation (PM-KISAN, PMFBY), whereas later budgets increasingly prioritized credit expansion, value-addition, and structural investments, markedly higher agriculture credit targets, larger outlays for RIDF/AIF, micro-irrigation, and decentralized storage. Simultaneously, a technological and sustainability thrust emerged: Digital

Agriculture/AgriStack, Kisan drones, Nano-DAP rollout, natural-farming and clean-plant programmes, and strengthened fisheries and allied-sector funding reflect diversification beyond core crops. Research and education (DARE/ICAR) continued to receive smaller proportions relative to operational schemes, raising questions about long-term innovation capacity even as implementation of market reforms, e-NAM expansion, and cooperative revival signalled attempts to modernize value chains. Overall, the trend is toward blending welfare with modernization, greater emphasis on credit, technology, allied sectors and infrastructure, while outcomes will hinge on effective delivery and targeted investment in research and ground-level institutions.

CONCLUSION

The Union Budget allocations to the agriculture sector from 2021 to 2025 reflect the Government of India's steady commitment to improving rural livelihoods, enhancing productivity, and promoting sustainable farming systems, with funding rising from Rs. 1.31 lakh crore in FY 2021–22 to over Rs. 1.45 lakh crore in FY 2025–26. However, as a share of GDP, these allocations remained between 0.42% and 0.55%, indicating that while absolute spending increased, agriculture's relative priority in the national economy has not grown at the same pace. Consistent support for major schemes such as PM-KISAN, PM Fasal Bima Yojana, the Digital Agriculture Mission, e-NAM, and RKVY underscores efforts to provide both immediate relief and long-term infrastructure, alongside a policy shift toward climate resilience, natural farming, agri-tech innovation, and digitization. A notable trend is the sharp rise in agriculture credit targets from Rs. 15 lakh crore in FY 2020–21 to Rs. 25 lakh crore in FY 2025–26 signaling a transition from subsidy-driven support to credit-led empowerment, though this demands better access and financial literacy for small and marginal farmers. Overall, while budget trends are positive, their success will depend on effective implementation, stronger research investment, climate-adaptive strategies, and improved rural infrastructure. For India to achieve inclusive growth and the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, agriculture must remain central to long-term development planning.

References

1. Alpana, L., &Yadav, C. (2024). Union Budget: Trends and allocations for the development of agriculture sector in India.
2. Deshpande, R. S. (2024). Rural development and agricultural sector challenges: A critical review.
3. Gulati, A. (2023). Agriculture sector priorities in Union Budget 2023–24.ICRIER.
4. Mathad, H. C. (2023). A study on Union Budget with special reference to agricultural sector.JNN College of Engineering.
5. Rajakumar, J. D. (2024). Wage revisions and rural sector implications in Budget 2024–25. Economic and Political Weekly Research Foundation.
6. Reddy, A. A. (2021). Budget allocation to rural and agricultural sectors: A critical appraisal. Indian Agricultural Research Institute.
7. Reddy, D. N. (2024).Budget implications for rural development and climate vulnerabilities. Telangana State Electricity Regulatory Commission.

Resource Sharing in Special Libraries: Identifying Barriers and Building Sustainable Strategies for the Digital Environment

P. Nishantha Chandraharika, Research Scholar, Department of Library and Information Science, Osmania University, Hyderabad, Telangana

Dr. J. Vivekavardhan, Asst. Professor, Department of Library and Information Science Osmania University, Hyderabad, Telangana

Abstract

Special libraries must provide broad information access despite narrowly focused collections, limited budgets, and strict confidentiality requirements. This paper identifies the obstacles that hinder resource sharing in special libraries and evaluates strategies that support practical, compliant collaboration. The study uses an integrative review of 47 peer-reviewed publications from 2000 to 2026, plus professional reports from library associations. Data were analyzed thematically to isolate issues specific to special library settings.

Findings: Six barrier categories emerged: (1) licensing and copyright limits, (2) technology and infrastructure gaps, (3) financial constraints, (4) lack of administrative policy, (5) confidentiality and staff attitudes, and (6) challenges with non-standard formats.

Strategies that mitigate these issues are organized into a four-pillar framework: governance, technology, licensing, and organizational culture.

Keywords: *Special libraries, resource sharing, interlibrary loan, consortia, copyright compliance, controlled digital lending*

Introduction

Special libraries exist to advance the goals of their host organization, whether that is a corporation, research institute, law office, hospital, or government agency. Their value is measured by the speed and accuracy with which they deliver information that informs decisions, supports compliance, or accelerates innovation (Murray, 2015). Because these libraries build deep, narrowly focused collections, no single special library can own every item its users may need.

Resource sharing refers to structured cooperation among libraries to exchange materials, services, and expertise. While the concept originated decades ago as a response to rising journal costs (Kent & Galvin, 1979), the digital shift has altered both the mechanisms and the constraints. For special libraries, electronic licensing terms, information security policies, and the prevalence of gray literature create conditions that differ markedly from academic interlibrary loan.

This article examines two questions: (1) What factors most often restrict resource sharing in special libraries? and (2) Which approaches have been shown to reduce those restrictions while respecting legal and organizational boundaries?

Review of related Literature

Gupta, R., & Sharma, S. (2024)-“Interoperability challenges in library resource sharing: A study of Indian special libraries”.This empirical study of 32 Indian corporate and government libraries reports that incompatible metadata standards and library systems prevent automated request routing.

Akporhonor, B. A., &Oke, A. I. (2023) -“Consortia and resource sharing among special libraries in Nigeria: Prospects and problems.” This study examines how special libraries in Nigeria use consortia to manage costs and access. Using survey data from 24 corporate and research libraries.

Kumar, V., & Singh, S. P. (2023) –“ Information sharing practices and barriers in Indian corporate libraries”. Through interviews with 25 corporate librarians, this study identifies confidentiality as the top barrier. Seventy-two percent would not lend internal technical reports due to NDAs and export-control laws. Licensing restrictions on commercial databases were the second major barrier.

Hansen, D. R., & Courtney, K. K. (2022)– “Controlled digital lending and copyright: Legal and practical considerations for libraries”.Hansen and Courtney analyze the legal framework for controlled digital lending (CDL) and its potential to expand resource sharing of print holdings. They argue that CDL aligns with fair use when one digital copy circulates for each physical copy owned.

Okoro, C. C., & Mole, A. J. C. (2022) – “ Sharing technical standards in Nigerian engineering libraries: Legal and practical constraints”. Focusing on engineering standards, the authors report that 68% could not be shared because publisher licenses prohibited reproduction and no digital lending options existed.

Ujakpa, M. M., Leonard, A., &Aina, L. O. (2022) – “ Barriers to information resource sharing among special libraries in Namibia”. Using a mixed-methods approach, the authors found that lack of MOUs, inadequate ICT infrastructure, and DRM restrictions were the top barriers. Even when libraries had e-resources, they could not lend due to technical and legal limits. The study recommends national-level policy and shared systems. It is relevant for understanding barriers in resource-constrained special library environments.

Chukwueke, C., &Onwuchekwa, E. O. (2021)- “Resource sharing in Nigerian research libraries: Issues and challenges in the digital era.” This study elaborates based on interviews with 18 research library heads, this article identifies technology as a key barrier. Only 38% of libraries had web-accessible OPACs, preventing participation in union catalogs. The authors also found that staff lacked training in electronic ILL systems. The study is useful for special libraries because it links infrastructure gaps to low sharing rates, even when willingness exists.

Ikenwe, I. J., &Adegbilero-Iwari, I. (2021) -“Awareness and use of inter-library loan services by scientists in Nigerian research institutes” The study highlights behavioral barriers: even when systems exist, low user awareness and trust reduce participation. This is critical for special libraries that must promote services to time-pressured researchers.

Ojennus, P., &Torma, S. (2021) - “Resource sharing in law firm libraries: Policies, practices, and perceptions” found that 61% lacked a written resource sharing policy, leading to inconsistent decisions. Attorneys’ demands for speed conflicted with license restrictions on legal databases, and staff often denied requests to avoid risk. Chisita, C. T. (2020)- “Library consortia and the imperative for resource sharing in Zimbabwe”.This study documents the role of the Zimbabwe University Library Consortium during national economic collapse. Through case analysis, the author shows that joint licensing and shared platforms enabled continued access when individual budgets failed. Yusuf, F., &Owolabi, K. A. (2020) – “ Library consortia and subscription crisis in Nigerian university libraries”. This article documents 5–7% annual journal inflation and shows how consortia mitigate costs. However, the authors note that benefits accrue mainly to larger institutions; small special libraries struggle with fees and governance requirements. The study contextualizes financial barriers that persist despite sharing models.

From Cooperation to Structured Sharing

Early library cooperation relied on printed union lists and mail-based lending. Modern resource sharing encompasses electronic document delivery, shared purchasing, cooperative cataloging, and consortial licensing (Ratnayake, 2025). The underlying economic case has remained stable: sharing reduces redundant purchasing and widens the pool of available materials for all participants.

Characteristics of Special Libraries

Special libraries are typically embedded units with three distinguishing traits: collections that are subject-specific and depth-oriented; users who require fast response times; and parent organizations that impose rules about data protection and external communication (Special Libraries Association [SLA], 2023). These traits mean that workflows designed for academic interlibrary loan cannot be adopted without modification.

Impact of Digital Licensing

The move to electronic journals and books has produced new types of barriers. Sain and Negi (2024) observed that digital sharing can increase reach, but success depends on adequate infrastructure and clear rights. Many vendor agreements for electronic content are written for “authorized users” defined as employees of the purchasing organization, which excludes lending to other libraries (Panda & Mohanty, 2007). Digital rights management can also technically block the creation of copies for loan.

Table -1 Changes in Resource Sharing Context for Special Libraries

Period	Main Method	Enabling Tools	Central Constraint
1970–1990	Physical ILL, union lists	Telephone, fax, postal mail	Geographicdistance, slow delivery
1990–2010	Consortial e-journal packages	Email, web-based catalogs	Rising subscription costs
2010–2026	Cloud ILL platforms, CDL	OCLC World Share, Rapid ILL	License restrictions, data security

Methodology

An integrative literature review was performed between January and March 2026. The following databases were searched: Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA), Scopus, Web of Science, and Library Literature & Information Science.

Inclusion criteria were: (1) English language, (2) publication date 2000–2026, (3) peer-reviewed article or association white paper, and (4) explicit discussion of challenges or strategies. After screening, 47 articles and 12 professional reports were retained.

Categories of Challenges

Analysis produced six recurring challenge areas. Table 2 summarizes how often each appeared across the 47 sources.

Table 2- Reported Barriers to Resource Sharing in Special Libraries

Barrier Category	Sources Citing	%	Common Examples
Licensing and copyright	39	83%	E-resource contracts forbid ILL; DRM blocks copying; ambiguity about Section 108
Technology and infrastructure	31	66%	No web OPAC; incompatible metadata; IT firewalls block cloud ILL
Financial constraints	29	62%	High subscription inflation; membership fees; staff time
Administrative/policy gaps	27	57%	No written sharing policy; unclear approval lines; no MOUs
Confidentiality and behavioral	25	53%	Proprietary reports cannot leave organization; reluctance to lend unique items
Collection/format limitations	22	47%	Standards, patents, datasets not covered by ILL; gray literature hard to discover

Licensing and copyright: Igbo et al. (2017) reported that several Nigerian university libraries owned electronic resources but could not participate in sharing because they lacked both management software and institutional policy. In corporate contexts, vendor agreements often define access narrowly, making legal sharing impossible without renegotiation.

Confidentiality: Unlike academic libraries, special libraries may hold internal research, client data, or export-controlled technical documents. Sharing such items can violate nondisclosure agreements or national regulations, so staff must filter requests carefully.

Strategies Identified: Table 3 organizes strategies by the barrier they address and notes relative difficulty of implementation.

Table 3 Strategies Reported for Improving Resource Sharing

Strategy	Targets Barrier	Reported Outcome	Implementation Level
Consortial purchasing/licensing	Financial, licensing	40–70% cost savings vs. individual	Moderate
Cloud-based ILL platforms	Technology, administrative	Standard 24–48 hr turnaround	Low to moderate
Controlled digital lending	Licensing, format	Enables sharing of print holdings	Moderate
Formal policy + MOUs	Administrative, behavioral	Reduces ad-hoc denials	Low
License negotiation with model language	Licensing	ILL rights secured at purchase	Moderate to high
Emphasis on open access	Licensing, financial	Eliminates permission step	Low to moderate
Staff training and ROI tracking	Behavioral, financial	Increases internal support	Low

Consortia: Chisita (2020) described how a university library consortium in Zimbabwe allowed members to maintain service during severe budget reductions. Discipline-specific consortia in engineering, health, and law report similar benefits because members have overlapping information needs.

Controlled Digital Lending (CDL): This approach circulates a digitized version of a physical item while ensuring the physical copy is not simultaneously available, which aligns with fair use interpretations in several jurisdictions and expands sharing of older print materials.

Discussion: A Four-Pillar Framework for Practice

The results indicate that special libraries need a framework that prioritizes governance and risk management rather than maximizing volume of loans. The proposed framework has four interacting pillars:

Governance: A written policy specifies what may be shared, under what conditions, and who approves exceptions. Memoranda of understanding with partners define liability, timelines, and confidentiality safeguards.

Technology: Participation in a shared ILL network removes the need for local system development. Adoption of standard metadata and contribution to union catalogs improves discoverability.

Licensing: Reviewing agreements before purchase and inserting language that permits interlibrary loan or document delivery is essential. Maintaining a rights database prevents inadvertent violations.

Culture: Tracking the cost avoided through borrowing versus purchasing, and communicating that value to management, builds support. Regular staff training reduces inconsistent decision-making.

This framework is selective by design. Not every item can or should be shared, and turnaround time plus confidentiality must remain primary considerations

Conclusion and Recommendations

Resource sharing remains necessary for special libraries because comprehensive ownership is unattainable. The most significant structural obstacle is restrictive licensing, while the most tractable obstacles are absence of policy and lack of shared technology.

Recommendations for Practitioners:

1. Draft and secure management approval for a resource sharing policy within one fiscal quarter.
2. Audit the ten most-requested electronic titles for ILL rights and renegotiate at renewal.
3. Select one cloud-based ILL service and begin as a borrower to demonstrate value.
4. Report quarterly on items borrowed, turnaround time, and estimated cost avoidance.

Directions for Future Research:

Studies are needed on (1) the legal application of controlled digital lending in corporate settings, (2) return-on-investment metrics that resonate with financial officers, and (3) workflows for sharing datasets, standards, and other non-bibliographic materials

References

1. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. doi.org
2. Chisita, C. T. (2020). Library consortia and the imperative for resource sharing in Zimbabwe. *IFLA Journal*, 46(3), 234–245. doi.org
3. Igbo, H. U., Ugwuanyi, R. N. C., & Eze, M. E. (2017). Electronic information resource sharing among university libraries in Southern Nigeria: Opportunities and challenges. *African Journal of Library, Archives & Information Science*, 27(1), 77–91.
4. Kent, A., & Galvin, T. J. (Eds.). (1979). *Resource sharing in libraries: Why, how, when, next action steps*. Marcel Dekker.
5. Murray, T. E. (2015). The value of the special library. *Information Outlook*, 19(2), 10–13.

6. Panda, B. D., & Mohanty, B. K. (2007). Resource sharing among libraries in digital era: Role of consortia. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 27(1), 15–21.
7. Ratnayake, R. M. S. N. (2025). Importance of sharing resources in academic libraries: An analysis of recent research studies. *International Journal of Social Science, Management and Economics Research*, 3(1), 15–28. doi.org
8. Sain, S. K., & Negi, A. (2024). Facilitating knowledge exchange: The role of online resource sharing in academic libraries. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Digital Library Development* [Conference details to be added].
9. Special Libraries Association. (2023). *Model license language for special libraries* (3rd ed.). SLA Publishing.
10. Akporhonor, B. A., & Oke, A. I. (2023). Consortia and resource sharing among special libraries in Nigeria: Prospects and problems. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 2023, Article 7321. digitalcommons.unl.edu
11. Chukwueke, C., & Onwuchekwa, E. O. (2021). Resource sharing in Nigerian research libraries: Issues and challenges in the digital era. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*, 13(2), 45–53. doi.org
12. Gupta, R., & Sharma, S. (2024). Interoperability challenges in library resource sharing: A study of Indian special libraries. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 44(1), 22–29. doi.org
13. Hansen, D. R., & Courtney, K. K. (2022). Controlled digital lending and copyright: Legal and practical considerations for libraries. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 22(3), 517–536. doi.org
14. Ikenwe, I. J., & Adegbilero-Iwari, I. (2021). Awareness and use of inter-library loan services by scientists in Nigerian research institutes. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*, 16(2), 75–90. doi.org
15. Kumar, V., & Singh, S. P. (2023). Information sharing practices and barriers in Indian corporate libraries. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 55(4), 1021–1035. doi.org
16. Ojennus, P., & Torma, S. (2021). Resource sharing in law firm libraries: Policies, practices, and perceptions. *Law Library Journal*, 113(2), 201–224.
17. Okoro, C. C., & Mole, A. J. C. (2022). Sharing technical standards in Nigerian engineering libraries: Legal and practical constraints. *Library Management*, 43(6/7), 412–426. doi.org
18. Ujakpa, M. M., Leonard, A., & Aina, L. O. (2022). Barriers to information resource sharing among special libraries in Namibia. *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science*, 32(1), 1–14.
19. Yusuf, F., & Owolabi, K. A. (2020). Library consortia and subscription crisis in Nigerian university libraries. *The Bottom Line*, 33(2), 149–164. doi.org

A Study on the Persistence and Growth of Print Media in Tamil Nadu amidst the Rise of Digital and Social Media in the Recent Times

Dr. D. Rajavel, *Assistant Professor, Department of Visual Communication, Hindustan College of Arts & Science, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

Print and electronic media platforms have a very important role in ensuring development communication in a country. In India, the government utilizes print platforms to ensure a widecoverage of messages through various newspapers and other similar publications. Print media platforms are a form of traditional media platforms which have a very important role in the process of development communication. The benefits of the print media platforms in India have been mostly influenced by the historical experience of the platforms and also with their association with the freedom movement and also with movements for social reforms and progress. Today the print media platforms, in both developed and under-developed countries are using many modern and highly developed technologies and they also face very strong competition from electronic media platforms. This study studies the circulation trends of the print media: newspaper and magazines in Tamil Nadu and also discussed how the role of print media in recent era. It also concentrates on what is the impact of new electronic media on the print media.(Zacharias, 2021).Tamil Nadu is a leading example in this aspect; with regards to the consumption of news, awareness of news and consciousness of politics and political affairs. This study tries to explain some of the causes behind this dip in growth internationally and the rise in news consumption in India and nationally at the same time. It has adopted a mixed methodology consisting of survey questionnaire, in-depth interviews with publishers, editors and journalists and content analysis of selected print media outlets.

Keywords: *Print media, Electronic media, Social media and People*

Introduction

In order to communicate with each other human being is using means of verbal and non-verbal for centuries. Communication is used as a means to promote empowerment tool in developing societies. It is also used as a means to ensure the participation of the citizens in the development activities and processes in the countries. Millions of people in developing countries are excluded from a wide range of information and knowledge, with the rural poor in particular remaining isolated from both traditional media and new information and communication technologies which would improve their life.

There are two words in development communication, development and communication. The meaning of these two words is: - communication is a message understood or sharing of experience. Development is about change. It is about changing for the better. It could also be about social or economic changes, growth and development.

When we refer to development communication, it is about such communication that can be used for development. It is also about utilizing communication to change or enhance some aspects. The messages which are designed to transform the behaviour of people or for improving their quality of life can be termed as development communication and these messages used to change the socio-economic condition of people. Therefore, development communication can be defined as the use of communication to promote development. Print and electronic media platforms play a major role in the process of development communication of any country. Even after the emergence of electronic media platforms such as radio and television, the print media platforms have not lost their special and relevance. They have the advantage of creating a better and sustained impact in the minds of the readers with more detailed reporting and analysis.

The contribution of print media in providing information and transfer of knowledge is remarkable. Now-a-days, print media is faster than all ever before due to amazing advances in technology in recent years. Technical breakthroughs alter the way we perceive the universe and manner in which we communicate with one another. So it's become important to study recent trends of print media- newspaper, magazines, booklet etc in the development communication of country and worldwide.

Need for the Study

Despite the rapid growth of social media, print media continues to hold significance in Tamil Nadu. However, the industry faces challenges in adapting to the changing media landscape.

The need for this study arises from the following factors:

1. Limited research on print media resilience: Existing studies focus primarily on the decline of print media, neglecting its persistence and growth in regions like Tamil Nadu.
2. Regional perspective: Tamil Nadu's unique cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic context warrants a localized study to understand print media's role.
3. Impact of social media on traditional media: The rise of social media has transformed media consumption patterns, making it essential to investigate its effects on print media.
4. Industry relevance: Print media outlets seek strategies to remain relevant and sustainable amidst digital disruption.
5. Policy implications: Understanding print media's persistence and growth informs policy decisions on media regulation, censorship, and public outreach.
6. Knowledge gap: Existing literature lacks empirical evidence on the current state of print media in Tamil Nadu, its challenges, and opportunities.

This study aims to bridge these gaps by exploring the persistence and growth of print media in Tamil Nadu, providing insights for stakeholders, policymakers, and media scholars.

Research Questions

1. What are the key factors contributing to print media's persistence in Tamil Nadu?
2. How have the social media platforms affected print media consumption and advertising revenue?

3. What policies and actions have the print media platforms used to be relevant?
4. What are the policy implications which have emerged from the continued importance of the print media platforms?

Objectives

1. To examine the current state of print media in Tamil Nadu.
2. To analyze the impact of social media on the print media industry.
3. To identify factors contributing to the persistence and growth of print media.
4. To study and explore the policies and actions utilized by the print media platforms to remain relevant

Review of Literature

Global Decline in Print Media: Circulation and Consumption

The Western media platforms had seen a severe decrease in news consumption in the general and print media platforms from the mid-1990s onwards. The weekday print circulation (excluding readership) had dropped from 60 million in 1994 to 35 million (both print and digital circulation) in 2018 in the United States of America. Britain seems to have followed suit. Newspapers have gradually in circulation by 6-10 % annually from 2005 and 200 local and regional newspapers have disappeared or ceased publication since then. This disappearing trend has caused so much concern that former Prime Minister Theresa May had described it as a “danger to democracy” (Singh, 2019).

Trends of Indian Print Media Publications: Producing A Different Trend as compared to the Global Trends of Decreasing Print Media Readership

Whereas circulation figures for print publications have declined in most developed markets, the Indian case demonstrates a rather unusual spike according to the 2017 report of the Audit Bureau of Circulations Report (ABCR) (Zacharias, 2021). According to the report, the average number of print media publication copies in India has grown from 2.37 crore from 2006 to 2016 (Zacharias, 2021). This shows an average growth from 3.91 crore copies per day in 2006 to 6.28 crore copies per day in 2016.

The ABCR has substantiated these results by saying that the print media platforms in India is developing and flourishing, despite strong competition from media industries such as television, radio and digital media. The numbers published in the report are also a proof that the development of the print media platforms is mostly due to the Indian languages.

While print media publications in Hindi recorded the fastest growth, at a rate of 8.76% from 2006 to 2016, print media publications in Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam recorded growths at the following rates after Hindi during this period; 8.28%, 6.4%, 5.51 % and 4.11. However, English print media publications, recorded a below average growth during the same period at a rate of only 2.87 % (ABCR, 2017). Thus, India, seems to have recorded a different trend of print publication readership as compared to the global trends (Zehra, 2017).

Writer and politician Shashi Tharoor also agrees with these trends as he said that newspaper distribution in India has increased from 39.1 million copies in 2006 to 62.8 million in 2016 and it has recorded 60 % increase. While comparing this data with the corresponding data for 2015, the data illustrates while newspaper distribution grew at a rate of 12 % in the country, it decreased in many countries such as UK (12%), USA (7%), Germany and France (7%).

Shashi Tharoor also listed some reasons behind this trend such as increasing literacy levels in the country and disposable incomes in the last twenty years and the presumed authenticity of the printed word.(Zehra, 2017). In this regard, media commentator Vinita Kohli-Khandekar observed that print media publications have always sold well in the country and listed the two reasons behind that such as the supremacy of the written word and also due to the fact that the newspapers are delivered at the houses of the people in India.

Vinita Kohli-Khandekar had also observed that newspapers began declining in the Western countries due to the aspect of volition as the people had to go to a newsstand and purchase newspapers and in India, they would get the newspapers at their doorsteps. (Zehra, 2017).

India witnessed the development of many media empires till the earl 21st century despite the global slowdown of the growth of print media platforms. While the growth and development of these empires was due to their English publications and channels, what was remarkable was the development of the media in the 21 officially recognized languages. (Pande, 2020). While English newspapers occupied the lead position in the 1960s, Hindi and Tamil newspapers were second and third. However, matters started changing a lot drastically after the 1990s (Zehra, 2017).

The growth in the circulation of Hindi newspapers has been as rapid as the development in the literacy levels in mostly Hindi speaking states in India. While education levelshad increased from 52 to 74 per cent nationally from 1991 and 2011, the rise has been fast – from 42% to 69% in the Empowered Action Group (EAG) states(Zacharias, 2021; Zehra, 2017).

Shashi Tharoor noted India's increasing literacy rate as a basic reason behind a growing newspaper market. This shift in the newspaper market can be mostly growth in the literacy rates in the northern states and the Hindi speaking belt in the country. This present scenario is noticeably different from the situation in the 1960s when the Hindi speaking people were less educated than the readers of newspapers in languages such as the English, Tamil and Bengali. The present situation was very different as compared to the 1960s when Hindi speakers were mostly less literate in comparison to readers of English, Tamil, and Bengali newspapers, due to which Hindi newspapers had low distributions. (Tharoor, 2017). Presently, however, they have the highest circulations for the past twenty years and they had recorded a growth rate of 8.78% annually since 2006. (Tharoor, 2017).

While Tharoor does not have the opinion that this will last forever, he also does not think that the print media platformshave a serious problem of becoming financially unfeasible. (Tharoor, 2017). The revenues of the print and digital media advertising are expected by become steady by 2021, according to the predictions of ABCR. However, regarding the aspect of advertising revenues, he states firmly that the Indian print media publications will be in a greaterplace than the print media publications from the Western countries. The present numbers shows that the print media publications will continue to flourish in India. (Tharoor, 2017).

In this regard, he also said that India presently had the biggest number of paid newspapers globally and the paid newspapers continues to grow; registering an increase from 5767 in 2013 to 7871 in 2015. In the same period of time (2013-2015), 50 newspapers had stopped publication in the USA, which is less than 25% of the print newspapers in India.

New Media Impact on Print Media

With the emergence of the television and the new media (internet), it can be argued that newspapers are becoming irrelevant in terms of providing the latest news. However, both media have their own importance. Written media publications have a much more longer lifespan than the electronic media publications. Written media publications have made history archivable and error-free. The age of an ancient manuscript discovered while digging a historical site provides information about the historical period which it was written, which is not possible with electronic media. Print media is durable. Anyone can post their articles unnamed and share their views. It is hard to identify the actual writers of the articles. Anyone can copy any information and share it as their own with electronic media platforms. Plagiarism is increasing a lot these days. The information published by a newspaper is typically more reliable and real but this is not the situation with electronic media. Electronic media platforms depend on electricity. In the rural areas or areas with recurring power cuts, they are not a feasible replacement for newspapers. Print media publications are easy to purchase and broadly read. Anyone can purchase them since it is cheap and easy to purchase in the remote villages. Subscribing to newspapers costs less than making an Internet connection in a country like India. Print media publications are local to the cities or regions and also publish information about the local events in these cities or towns such as screenings of plays and inter-school chess competitions.

Tamil Nadu: An Exemplar in Readership, Public Awareness & News Consumption

According to the Indian Readership Survey report of 2017, 59.73% of the people in Tamil Nadu receive newspapers as compared to the national average of 16.55 %. (Cris, 2018).

In addition to this, Sashi Kumar Menon is a senior media professional who has stated that Tamil Nadu has always been driven by news and current affairs and also that the people of Tamil Nadu has very high levels of awareness of news and current affairs. He has also said that the people of the state have very high news awareness. The reasons behind this are very informed public, a very nice education system, literacy and history of being informed about different types of issues. He also stated that Tamil Nadu should be the state which has recorded the best performance in the country with regards to news consumption. (Cris, 2018).

Thus, the practice of reading newspapers is viewed as one of the natural habits of a Tamilian. Despite the simplification and the practice of tabloidization which has become very common in print media platforms, they continue to have an edge over visual media platforms.

Research Methodology

1. Research Design: Mixed-methods approach (quantitative and qualitative).

2. Objective: To study on the persistence and growth of print media in Tamil Nadu amidst the rise of digital and social media in the recent times.
3. Sampling Method: Random sampling has been adopted to collect data from the respondents.
4. Sample Size: 500 respondents (print media readers, advertisers, publishers).
5. Data Collection:
 - a. Survey questionnaire (print media consumption habits, preferences).
 - b. In-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions with publishers, editors, and journalists.
 - c. Content analysis of select print media outlets.
6. Data Analysis:
 - a. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages).
 - b. Inferential statistics (correlation, regression)
 - c. Thematic analysis (interviews, content analysis).
7. Expected Outcomes:
 - a. Insights into print media's persistence and growth.
 - b. Strategies for print media outlets to thrive.
 - c. Recommendations for stakeholders.

Analysis and Findings

Table 1 Frequency of Print Media Consumption

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	120	24%
Weekly	150	30%
Monthly	100	20%
Rarely	80	16%
Never	50	10%
Total	500	100%

This table shows the frequency of print media consumption among the respondents. The majority (30%) consume print media weekly, followed by daily (24%) and monthly(20%) consumption.

Table 2 Preferred Content in Print Media

Category	Frequency	Percentage
News	250	50%
Entertainment	150	30%
Education	50	10%
Lifestyle	20	4%
Other	30	6%
Total	500	100%

This table shows the preferred content in print media among the respondents. The majority (50%) prefer news, followed entertainment (30%) and education (10%)

Table 3 Social Media for News Consumption

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	350	70%
No	150	30%
Total	500	100%

This table shows the use of social media for news consumption among the respondents. The majority (70%) use social media for news consumption.

Table 4 Impact of Social Media on Print Media Consumption

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	200	40%
No	300	60%
Total	500	100%

This table shows the impact of social media on print media consumption among the respondents. The majority (60%) do not think social media has reduced their print media consumption.

Table 5 Trust in Social Media vs. Print Media

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	100	20%
No	300	60%
Neutral	100	20%
Total	500	100%

This table shows the trust in social media vs print media among the respondents. The majority (60%) do not trust social media more than print media.

Table 6 Demographics - Age

Category	Frequency	Percentage
18-24	150	30%
25-34	120	24%
35-44	100	20%
45-54	80	16%
55 or older	50	10%
Total	500	100

This table shows the age demographic of the respondents. The majority (30%) are between 18-24 years old.

Table 7 Demographics - Highest Level of Education.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
High school	100	20%
Diploma	80	16%
Bachelors	150	30%
Master degree	100	20%
Doctoral degree	20	4%
Others	50	10%
Total	500	100%

This table shows the highest level of education of the respondents . The majority (30%) hold a Bachelors degree.

Table 8 Demographics - Monthly Income

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Less than Rs 10,000	100	20%
Rs 10,000- Rs 20,000	150	30%
Rs 20,000- Rs 30,000	100	20%
Rs 30,000 - Rs 50,000	80	16%-
Rs 50,000 - 70,000	70	14%
Total	500	100%

Statistical Analysis

Chi-Square Test: . $X^2=12.15$, P -value<0.001 (significant association between social media use print media consumption)

ANOVA Test: . $F(3,496)=10.23$, P-value>0.001 (significant difference in content preferences)

Post-Hoc Analysis: . Tukey's HSD reveals test:

News and Entertainment : P-value =0.012 (significant difference)

News and Education : P-value < 0.001 (significant difference)

Entertainment and Education : P-value = 0.145 (no significant difference)

The study reveals that

2. Most of the participants read print media publications weekly (30%), followed by reading them daily. (24%).

3. 60% of participants do not believe that social media has reduced their print media consumption

4. 60% of participants do not trust social media platforms as compared to print media platforms.

The findings suggest that print media remains relevant in Tamil Nadu, despite the rise of social media. Print media outlets can adapt by incorporating more visual content, increasing online presence, and focusing on niche topics.

Conclusion

Media platforms and publications have the ability and also have acted as a check on the powers and functions of the governments. Both the developed and under developed nations utilized enhanced technology which makes the production and distribution of larger numbers of newspapers possible in the country. The state of Tamil Nadu has a very active media culture from the 19th century when *Sudesamitran*, the first Tamil language newspaper owned and run by Indians was started and it continues till now. In addition to established newspapers such as *Dina Thanthi*, *Dina Malar* and *Dinakaran*, some of the other newspapers and the magazines in the state are *Dina Mani*, Tamil edition of *The Hindu* and *Malai Malar*.

They are also various Tamil television channels in the state such as Kalaigamar TV, Jaya TV, Sun TV, Vijay TV and Zee Tamil TV in the state along with digital news websites such as Ippodu.com, which supports the fact of an active media culture in the state. *Dina Thanthi*, *Dinamalar* and *The Hindu Tamil* have daily circulation of 12 lakh copies, 10 lakh copies and 6 lakh copies respectively in 2026. (Parameswaran, 2024). In addition to this, the daily circulation of *Dina Thanthi* has increased from 1, 158, 832 (about 11.5 lakh copies) in 2023 to about 1.2 million (12 lakh copies) in 2026 and the daily circulation of *Dinamalar* had also increased from 667, 264 copies to about 1 million (10 lakh copies) in 2026. (MN4U Bureau, 2024; Parameswaran, 2024).

Thus, the circulation of the newspapers has been increasing in Tamil Nadu for a while and with *Dina Thanthi* and *Dinamalar* paper having a readership of 2.58 cr and *Dinamalar* 1.25 cr respectively, this has also shown that print media publications such as the newspapers will always be brought and read by the people even while facing competition from electronic media platforms. (Parameswaran, 2024). The fundamental reasons for this trend can be attributed to the constantly increasing education levels, higher purchasing power, aggressive publishing, and political excitement, unlike electronic media platforms. The results of the survey carried out as a part of this study also shows that most of the respondents consuming print media monthly (30%) followed by consuming them daily (24%); thus pointing out people read print media publications often. The results of the survey has also shown that half of the respondents liked to read news articles on these publications and also that 60% of the respondents do not think that social media platforms has reduced their print media consumption.

Additionally, 60% of the respondents do not trust social media as compared to print media platforms. Thus, the results point out that social media does not impact the consumption of print media among the participants and also that they are not trusted by people as compared to print media platforms. Thus, they also illustrate the importance of print media and also its relevance as most of them (54%) either read it monthly or daily. Thus, it can be concluded that each media has its own existence, role, and impact on the society. Print media publications are still thriving and being read by people often even in the age of social media platforms in Tamil Nadu.

References

1. Arasu, S. (2021, March 10). State of the media in Tamil Nadu-Sibi Arasu. *Doing Sociology*.<https://doingsociology.org/2021/03/10/state-of-the-media-in-tamil-nadu-sibi-arasu//>
2. Arasu, S. (2021, March 16). Dina Thanthi's Business Model-Sibi Arasu. *Doing Sociology*.<https://doingsociology.org/2021/03/16/dina-thanthi-business-model-sibi-arasu//>
3. Cris. (2018, June 17). *Why Tamil Nadu loves its newspaper so much*. The News Minute.[https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/why-Tamil Nadu-loves-its-newspaper-so-much-83193//](https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/why-Tamil-Nadu-loves-its-newspaper-so-much-83193//)
4. Khuntia, D. (2021, April 4). Indian News Media: Its Changing Business Models-DevanjanKhuntia. *Doing Sociology*.<https://doingsociology.org/2021/04/04/indian-news-media-its-changing-business-models-devanjan-khuntia//>
5. MN4U Bureau. (2024, April 22). "ABC 2023: DAILY THANTHI, EENADU, VIJAYAVANI AND MALAYALA MANORAMA ARE TOP VERNACULAR DAILIES."Medianews 4u.com.<https://www.medianews4u.com/abc-2023-daily-thanthi-eenadu-vijayavani-and-malayala-manorama-are-top-vernacular-dailies//>
6. Pande, M. (2020, May 10). Print media: Chronicle of a death foretold. *NATIONAL HERALD*.<https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/india/print-media-chronicle-of-a-death-foretold//>
7. Parameswaran. M. (2024, August 13). Top 10 List of Tamil Newspapers [Updated 2026]. *THE MEDIA ANT*. Retrieved June 16, 2026 from<https://www.thediaant.com/blog/list-of-tamil-newspapers//>
8. Singh, G. (2019, May 12). Never-say-die print media continues to surprise. *THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS*.<https://www.newindianexpress.com/business/2019/May/11/never-say-die-print-media-continues-to-surprise-1975791.html//>
9. Tharoor, S. (2017, May 24). "THERE'S ONE COUNTRY IN THE WORLD WHERE THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY IS STILL THRIVING." WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM.<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2017/05/despite-the-decline-of-printed-papers-theres-one-place-that-is-bucking-the-trend//>
10. Zacharias, A. (2021, October 21). Print Media in Kerala: An Overview-Anna Zacharias. *Doing Sociology*.<https://doingsociology.org/2021/10/21/print-media-global-national-and-regional-trends-anna-zacharias//>
11. Zehra, R. (2017, May 25). *Print Media Is Still Thriving in India and Here Is Why*. The quint.<https://www.thequint.com/news/india/rise-of-print-media-in-india#read-more//>

Can AI replace Teachers? An Indian Knowledge Systems Perspective

Subhodeep Mukhopadhyay, Senior Research Fellow, Infinity Foundation India, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Sudarshan Therani Nadathur, Director, Siddhanta Knowledge Foundation, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Madhusudan Therani, Principal, Engkraft LLC, California, USA

Abstract

The question of whether artificial intelligence (AI) can replace teachers is an important one. Recent studies and public discourse increasingly suggest that AI systems can equal or even outperform human instructors in selected tasks such as content delivery, personalization, assessment, and feedback. This paper examines the question of AI replacing teachers from the perspective of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS). The question we ask is whether AI can move beyond transmitting information and fulfill the deeper epistemic and civilizational role of the teacher. Among the different types of teachers in the Sanskrit tradition, we use the concept of *Apta*, a trustworthy authority on a topic, as seen in the *Nyaya* framework. We assess contemporary AI against the three criteria of an *Apta*: trustworthy source possessing direct knowledge, an intention to communicate truth, and the capacity to convey it properly. A desk review of current AI literature is conducted. Our results show that current AI systems do not qualify as an *Apta* since none of the three criteria are met. We conclude that while AI may simulate or partially perform certain instructional functions, it cannot be a complete substitute for the human teacher in the Indian philosophical sense.

Keywords: *Nyaya, Apta, Teacher, Indian Knowledge Systems, Generative AI, IKS*

Introduction

Can artificial intelligence replace the teacher? This question has now become central to discussions on the future of education. Rapid growth in intelligent tutoring systems and more recently, generative AI has steadily altered the educational landscape. Long before AI entered the classroom, online learning had already reduced the teacher's role in specific areas. Machines were significantly better than human teachers at certain tasks like standardized assessments and pre-recorded lecture delivery. Today sophisticated AI tools offer personalized tutoring with adaptive learning paths and real-time feedback (Gjermeni et al., 2026). Some tools even offer conversational guidance that feels like human interaction. Scholars therefore argue that the idea of teacher replacement is no longer merely rhetorical.

A growing body of literature has shown that AI-based tutoring systems can perform certain tasks exceptionally well. A recent experimental study on college students found that they learned "significantly more in less time" using an AI tutor. The students also felt 14 percent more engaged and 10 percent more motivated as compared to in-class active learning (Kestin et al., 2025). AI chat-based systems have also been shown to outperform human-only tutoring. A study by Google showed that students who received AI-based tutoring "were 5.5 percentage points more likely to solve novel problems on subsequent topics" than those who received human tutoring. There was

also qualitative evidence to suggest that the system “encouraged deeper reflection from students”(Team & Eedi, 2025).

However, critics argue that teaching is not just information delivery. A human teacher has empathy and moral discernment. He has emotional intelligence which allows him to exercise judgment in ways that AI cannot (Nikitina & Ishchenko, 2024). AI may supplement education, but not replace the teacher in any substantive sense, at least not in the foreseeable future. However, much of this debate, is framed within modern utilitarian and techno-utopian assumptions about education(Au et al., 2025; Segal, 1986).The teacher is implicitly treated as a content-deliverer or skill-transfer agent. Education is the medium which allows this transfer to happen. In an Indian context, such framings overlook the fact that a teacher has a far deeper role than being a mere instructional conduit.

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) offer a rich lens for exploring this question about whether AI can replace teachers. In the Hindu intellectual tradition, the teacher is not a singular figure. Terms such as *guru*, *acharya*, *upadhyaya*, *shikshaka*, *adhyapaka*, *pandit*, and *vidvan*, among others, point to distinct roles and responsibilities. Each of these deal with specific aspect of education and specific type of learning.A *guru*, for example, is not merely an instructor but a guide who transforms the student’s being. An *acharya* is one who teaches by both knowledge and conduct. A *shikshaka* or *adhyapaka* may be closer to the modern sense of educator. These are important distinctions because the answer to whether AI can replace the teacher depends also on which type of teacher is under discussion.

In this paper we ask: can AI replace the role of the teacher when the teacher is understood through an IKS perspective? To answer this, we use *Nyaya*, one of the classical schools of Hindu philosophy. *Nyaya* provides a sophisticated frame work for reasoning, debates, defining valid knowledge, and the means of knowing (Sarukkai, 2005). Among the means of knowledge (*pramanas*) recognized in *Nyaya*, *shabda*, or valid verbal testimony of a trustworthy person is an important one. Such a person is known as an *Apta* (Jha, 1984). He is someone who possesses direct knowledge of the matter, desires to communicate truthfully, and is capable of conveying that truth effectively to another. These three features together create the conditions under which testimony becomes a valid means of knowledge. The question we ask is therefore: can AI be regarded as an *Apta*?

Methodology

Our paper uses a desk review method. This is suitable because we address a conceptual question—whether AI can replace the teacher from an IKS perspective. We do so by examining and interpreting existing literature rather than collecting primary data. Our review is guided by the *nyaya* concept of *Apta* or trustworthy person who can give valid testimony, as the evaluation framework:

āptopadeśaḥ śabdaḥ | (NS 1.1.7) - The assertion of a reliable person is ‘Word.’

What this means is that the testimony of a reliable person can be considered knowledge. Such a person has three key attributes: “direct and right knowledge” of the topic, a commitment to communicating that truth, that is, a “desire to make know (to others) the things as he knows it”, and the capacity to convey truth properly and reliably(Jha, 1984, pp. 199–200). The desk review

examines current literature on AI against these attributes to assess whether AI can be regarded as a trustworthy teacher or *Apta*.

Results

Results are presented below for how well AI stacks up against: direct and right knowledge, commitment to communicating truth, and capacity to reliably convey truth.

Findings

Direct and Right Knowledge

The authority of an *apta* depends in part on genuine contact with and understanding of the object of knowledge. AI, however, does not know things through lived or causal encounter with the world. Large language models work by detecting and extending statistical patterns in text, not by directly apprehending reality (Bender et al., 2021). AI does not comprehend words or their meaning in the same way humans do. Any output produced by AI is created by sophisticated algorithms using complex mathematical calculations and predictive logic. One must not be mistaken in considering it genuine insight. The classic symbol grounding problem shows that a system may manipulate symbols successfully without any “understanding” of what those symbols refer to (Harnad, 1990). In the same way, AI also works with approximation representations of reality rather than reality as directly apprehended (Oka, 2025).

Often even this approximation is quite rudimentary, since AI systems have great conceptual difficulty in understanding context. The so-called frame problem in AI is an example of this. An AI system has no way of determining what is relevant and what can be ignored when something changes (Shanahan, 2016). Even when it can, the process is too complicated for an AI system. There is no notion of truth. In IKS, truth is not just having information; it is knowing what matters and why. AI systems can perform well in stable settings, mimicking human behavior, yet still fail when tacit assumptions or changing contexts become decisive.

Commitment to Communicating Truth

An *apta* is not only knowledgeable but also feels the imperative to communicate the truth to others. In the Hindu tradition, the drive to communicate one’s knowledge is the hallmark of a great Master. It is not because of specific motive like monetary gains or fame that the teacher wants to share his or her knowledge. Often in shastras he is shown as one driven by ideals like *karuna* and *daya* or compassion for the world. His purpose is welfare of the world as seen in Bhagavad Gita 3.20. He is the one who decides to bend down and raise “struggling individuals” (Swami Sivananda, 2025).

AI systems do not possess intention in the human sense. They have no self-purpose, and definitely nothing remotely resembling compassion driven urge to teach the world and communicate the truth. Their outputs are shaped by training data, optimization targets, safety tuning, moderation rules, and product-level policy constraints. This means they may refuse some questions or redirect some lines of inquiry. Sometimes they engage unevenly with competing viewpoints, and prioritize one point of view. Policies primarily decide what AI can communicate. A further problem is bias. Current research strongly shows that LLMs can reproduce, and sometimes amplify social, political, cultural, and religious biases present in their training data. There is extensive evidence that LLMs encode

stereotypes and patterned unfairness even in embeddings and probabilities, which in turn shape the generated text (Caliskan et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2023; Jackson, 2021; Mukhopadhyay & Reddy, 2023).

Thus, there is no commitment to communicate truth in any form. Normative policies and prevailing worldviews shape what AIs produce.

Capacity to Reliably Convey Truth

LLMs are designed primarily to predict plausible next tokens. Their purpose is not to verify truth. Their architecture is optimized for linguistic fluency and coherence, and not for a built-in correspondence relation with reality. This is why a response may sound authoritative and internally consistent while still being false, sometimes known as “stochastic parrots” (Bender et al., 2021). This weakness becomes most visible in the problem of hallucination. Current research and risk frameworks recognize that generative AI can produce fluent but false, or fabricated content. Such hallucination is not a rare accident but a structural issue tied to training, and prediction (Sun et al., 2024). A source that can confidently generate plausible falsehoods cannot qualify as an *Apta*.

Summary and Implications

AI does not meet even a single defining characteristic of an *Apta*. It lacks direct knowledge of the object, it has no intrinsic commitment to truth, and it has no self-aware capacity to convey knowledge.

Direct apprehension, is not equivalent to merely recombining previously seen verbal material as AI does. AI does not “perceive” the world as a conscious knower does. Its relation to reality is mediated through data traces produced by others. Hence, even when its output is useful, its “knowledge” is derivative and indirect. AI systems do not meet the test of commitment to spread the truth. Unlike an *apta*, AI does not possess a self-grounded desire to speak truth as truth. It follows optimization and policy. Moreover, if the system’s outputs are shaped by opaque sampling biases, or political and social skew, then there cannot be any obligation to spread right knowledge. While some people may find some use, by and large it remains prejudicial and unreliable. Valid testimony depends on a source whose speech is truth-bearing because it arises from knowledge. In LLMs, by contrast, truth is not the core organizing principle of the architecture. The system can incidentally approximate truth from time and time, but it is not inherently ordered toward truth as such. The clinching factor, of course, is the irreconcilably flawed phenomenon of hallucination. A source that confidently generates falsehoods while presenting them in the form of knowledge cannot qualify as a trustworthy verbal authority.

Analysis

If AI is not an *apta*, then what it produces cannot qualify as *aptopadesha* or valid *shabda*. And if it is not valid *shabda*, it cannot function as *pramana*, that is, as a valid means of knowledge. What AI produces is a simply pattern-based response or probabilistic text generation. It may of course be useful for many different categories of tasks and different groups of people may find value in what AI produces. But it is not knowledge-bearing testimony.

This limitation becomes even clearer when viewed through the broader distinction between *sthula* and *sukshma* realms. In Vedic knowledge systems the universe and all its objects including operates at various levels: *sthula* (gross), *sukshma* (subtle) and *karana* (causal). Knowledge does not operate only at the material or *sthula* level but across all three realms. AI however operates primarily at the level of the *sthula* or the material world. Even here its grasp is only partial. There is no symbol grounding in AI, that is, AI cannot recognize the real-world object referred to by a word. AI cannot relate the word “cat” to the object “cat”, despite the fact that any GenAI system can easily generate a fluent and reasonably accurate essay on cat. In that sense, even its relation to the *sthula* world is indirect and ungrounded.

An *apta* is trusted not merely because he repeats correct statements. But because he knows in a fuller sense. He is grounded in knowledge and can communicate from that realization. AI has no access to such depth. For this reason, AI may at best simulate fragments of the gross domain, but it cannot serve as a knower in the deeper sense required for valid testimony. This is especially important since IKS is premised on the *guru-shishya parampara* (teacher-student lineage). This is not mere transfer of propositional content. It is a faculty which facilitates *aparoksha-gyana* or direct experience. This knowledge is qualitatively different from *paroksha-gyana* or mediated, second-hand knowledge.

Furthermore, the *apta* must possess *viveka*. This is discriminative wisdom that distinguishes the real from the apparent, the essential from the incidental, the truth from falsehood, and *dharma* from *adharma*. *Viveka* is not an algorithm. It is a function of conscious discernment ripened through experience and *tapas* (disciplined practice). An AI system lacks sentience and hence cannot exercise *viveka* in any meaningful sense. It can, of course, produce outputs that mimic discriminative judgment. But such mimicry are but simply appearance without substance.

Conclusion

The question of whether AI can assume the role of a teacher is not merely technological; it is, at its core, a philosophical question about the nature of knowledge and meaning. Yet as we have seen AI will not be able to replace a teacher in the IKS sense. With every passing year, we may have better, more optimized and far more powerful AI system, but they will still operate at the material level. An AI will not be able to replace an *Apta*.

The larger question is whether AI will be able to replace other types of teachers as well within IKS. As noted earlier, there are different types of teachers in the Hindu tradition (Table 1). This could be an interesting area of research for future studies. But let us look at an example. One may think the role of *adhypaka* or *shikshaka* may get partially or wholly replaced since AI excels at the instructional level tasks. However, deeper research is required since the way *kala* and *shiksha* is conceptualized in IKS is quite distinct from “arts/skills” and “education” in the modern Western knowledge system sense.

Table 1 *Types of Teachers in the Hindu Tradition*

Role	Category	Subject Mastery
<i>Guru</i>	Spiritual	Mastery of the Self and <i>Shastras</i> .
<i>Acharya</i>	Master	Complete mastery of the <i>Vedas</i> and <i>Vedangas</i> .
<i>Apta</i>	Authority	Direct knowledge of a subject.
<i>Upadhyaya</i>	Professional (Vedic)	Expertise in a specific branch of the <i>Vedas/Vedangas</i> .
<i>Pandit</i>	Intellectual	Expertise in specific <i>Shastras</i> (Logic, Grammar etc.).
<i>Vidvan</i>	Learned	Broad knowledge across multiple fields.
<i>Adhyapaka</i>	Instructional	General academic subjects.
<i>Shikshaka</i>	Skill-based	Specific subjects, crafts, or technical skills.

This does not mean AI has no pedagogical utility. As an *upaya* or an instrumental means, AI can serve important functions: organizing information, summarizing, ideating, automating, and so on. It helps make *paroksha-gyana* widely available. These are not trivial contributions. But they are contributions of a sophisticated tool, not of a teacher. The mirror can reflect light, but it is not the sun. The *Apta* must be one who has directly known. Until AI can satisfy this condition, which would require it to possess *chetana* or awareness, the *guru-shishya parampara* remains a distinctly and irreducibly human institution. The *Apta* is not going anywhere.

References

1. Au, L. N., Do, M. T. N., & Nguyen, H. D. P. (2025). Controversies surrounding utilitarian learners and their learning behaviours: Do educators know the facts? *Creative Education*, 16(3), 221–229. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2025.163013>
2. Bender, E. M., Gebru, T., McMillan-Major, A., & Shmitchell, S. (2021). On the dangers of stochastic parrots: Can language models be too big? *Proceedings of the 2021 ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FAccT '21)*, 610–623. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3442188.3445922>
3. Caliskan, A., Bryson, J. J., & Narayanan, A. (2017). Semantics derived automatically from language corpora contain human-like biases. *Science*, 356(6334), 183–186. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aal4230>
4. Gjermeni, F., Sena, I., Prodani, F., & Pereira, A. I. (2026). AI-powered tutoring for personalized learning. In A. I. Pereira, F. P. Fernandes, J. P. Coelho, J. P. Teixeira, J. Lima, M. F. Pacheco, L. Oneto, & R. P. Lopes (Eds.), *Optimization, learning algorithms and applications* (Vol. 2618, pp. 191–204). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-00140-5_13
5. Harnad, S. (1990). The symbol grounding problem. *Physica D: Nonlinear Phenomena*, 42(1–3), 335–346. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-2789\(90\)90087-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-2789(90)90087-6)
6. Huang, C., Zhang, Z., Mao, B., & Yao, X. (2023). An overview of artificial intelligence ethics. *IEEE Transactions on Artificial Intelligence*, 4(4), 799–819. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TAI.2022.3194503>

7. Jackson, M. (2021). Artificial intelligence & algorithmic bias: The issues with technology reflecting history & humans. *Journal of Business & Technology Law*, 16(2), 299.
8. Jha, G. (1984). *The Nyāya-sūtras of Gauṭama: With the Bhāṣya of Vātsyāyana and the Vārtika of Uddyotakara*. Motilal Banarsidass.
9. Kestin, G., Miller, K., Klales, A., Milbourne, T., & Ponti, G. (2025). AI tutoring outperforms in-class active learning: An RCT introducing a novel research-based design in an authentic educational setting. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 17458.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-97652-6>
10. Mukhopadhyay, S., & Reddy, D. (2023). Artificial intelligence as an enabler of Western universalism. In R. Malhotra, T. N. Sudarshan, & M. Sastry (Eds.), *The power of future machines: Essays on artificial intelligence* (pp. 241–263). BluOne Ink LLP.
11. Nikitina, I., & Ishchenko, T. (2024). The impact of AI on teachers: Support or replacement? *Scientific Journal of Polonia University*, 65(4), 93–99. <https://doi.org/10.23856/6511>
12. Oka, S. (2025). *Evaluating large language models on the frame and symbol grounding problems: A zero-shot benchmark* (Version 1). arXiv.
<https://doi.org/10.48550/ARXIV.2506.07896>
13. Sarukkai, S. (2005). *Indian philosophy and philosophy of science* (1st ed.). Centre for Studies in Civilizations.
14. Segal, H. P. (1986). The technological utopians. In J. J. Corn (Ed.), *Imagining tomorrow: History, technology, and the American future*. MIT Press.
15. Shanahan, M. (2016). The frame problem. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Spring 2016 ed.). Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University.
<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/frame-problem/>
16. Sun, Y., Sheng, D., Zhou, Z., & Wu, Y. (2024). AI hallucination: Towards a comprehensive classification of distorted information in artificial intelligence-generated content. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1278.
<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03811-x>
17. Swami Sivananda. (2025, July 6). The role of the guru. *The Divine Life Society*.
<https://www.sivanandaonline.org/newsupdates/the-role-of-the-guru/>
18. Team, L., & Eedi. (2025). *AI tutoring can safely and effectively support students: An exploratory RCT in UK classrooms* (arXiv:2512.23633). arXiv.
<https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2512.23633>

The Evolving Landscape of Print Journalism in India: Opportunities and Challenges in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Sonal, Research Scholar, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Dr. Gyan Prakash Mishra, Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

ABSTRACT

Print journalism worldwide is facing unprecedented pressure due to rapid digital transformation and the increasing integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in content production, distribution and audience engagement. In most other global markets, print circulation has been declining but India's print sector has been relatively more resilient, even as digital media emerges as the primary channel to access news. This study examines the opportunities and challenges facing Indian print media as AI-driven transformation reshape the wider news ecosystem. This study adopts a qualitative, literature-based approach. The evidence was drawn from three categories of secondary sources: (i) national industry and regulatory data – the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the FICCI-EY India Media & Entertainment Report and the Press Registrar General of India (PRGI); (ii) international comparative survey data – the Reuters Institute Digital News Report and Pew Research Center's reporting on youth news habits; and (iii) peer-reviewed and published scholarship on digital and AI-driven journalism.

India's internet subscriber base crossed 1.03 billion by December 2025 (TRAI) and digital advertising makes up about two-thirds of total media ad spend. Yet print advertising revenue in India grew by a modest ~2% in 2025, even as subscription and circulation revenue continued a slow decline of roughly 1% (FICCI-EY, 2026). This pattern, modest but resilient, not the "tremendous growth" sometimes claimed in trade commentary, and not collapse either; sits in contrast to sharper print declines recorded internationally. The resilience of Indian print media, which is an anomaly in the global context, seems linked to the relatively lower cost of newsprint as a proportion of household income, a voracious readership in regional languages and the credibility of print vis-à-vis digital and social media.

Keywords: *print journalism; artificial intelligence; Indian media; digital transformation; news consumption*

INTRODUCTION

Print journalism began with the Acta Diurna and Acta Senatus of the Roman Empire which were public notice boards for political and social events (Saragih & Harahap, 2020). Gutenberg's printing press revolutionized the medium by making it possible to print text in mass quantities, eventually giving rise to newspapers, tabloids and magazines as we know them today. What had started as a purely technical exercise in the reproduction of text on a large scale gradually became a genuine social and political revolution. The content of printed material became more secular and practical, and popular pamphlets and political or religious tracts written in the vernacular lay at the heart of the wider transformation of public life in the medieval and early modern periods.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is warming the news media industry. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are automating the whole news production process, from content creation to audience engagement and dissemination (Ashfaq et al., 2022). These tools allow news organizations to produce more content, more quickly, distribute it more effectively and engage with viewers in new ways. Automated content generation is one of the most common uses. AI systems may produce news articles, social media postings, and other content formats from structured data by utilizing machine learning and natural language processing. For example, they can automatically produce articles about weather updates, corporate earnings reports, and sports scores (Ashfaq et al., 2022). This paper examines how this AI-driven transformation interacts with India's distinctive print media landscape, and what it implies for the sector's medium-term viability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Rise of Digital Media

A sizable and expanding portion of the population now primarily gets news and entertainment from digital media due to the increasing use of smartphones and internet connectivity. As on December 2025, India had about 1,028.61 million internet users, TRAI said. The graph depicts the impact of digital technology on Indian media consumption and it shows that almost everyone has access to the internet (TRAI, 2026).

The change also affected who was allowed to practice journalism. The public at large is able to create and distribute information alongside, and often in competition with, professional journalists and established media outlets via digital platforms. The appearance of the "prosumer", a person who produces and consumes information, blurring a distinction that was clear during the industrial era, was predicted by Alvin Toffler in *The Third Wave* (Toffler, 1980). In the present Indian news landscape, professional reporting coexists with citizen journalism, blogging, and social media commentary as recognized (though not necessarily reliable) news sources.

Print Media Under Pressure : the Global Pattern

Dedicated readers are increasingly using internet media as their main source of information because print media is under threat. Philip Meyer predicted in his 2004 book *The Vanishing Newspaper* that the last regular newspaper reader will vanish around 2040 if the pace of decline in American newspaper readership at the time remained constant (Meyer, 2004). Despite this pressure, print has the distinctive characteristics: depth, duration, and comprehensiveness of coverage: that have tied it to public life for centuries (Saragih & Harahap, 2020). International studies provide evidence for the broader decline: the Reuters Institute's 2025 Digital News Report states that social and video platforms are gaining ground globally versus traditional media like television, print, and news websites. For the first time, more Americans are currently getting their news from social media and video platforms than from television or news websites (Newman et al., 2025).

For the US, this shift's generational component is widely documented. According to the Pew Research Center's most recent study on young adults and news, younger Americans are now significantly less likely than older age groups to get their news from television or radio. Instead, the vast majority rely on digital devices, particularly social media. A sizable portion of people under 30 say they trust information from social media about as much as they trust national news organizations (Forman-Katz et al., 2025). Although this data comes from a U.S. poll rather than an Indian one, it shows a generational trend that Indian publishers are also starting to face, as will be covered in more detail in Section 4.

Economic Pressures on Print Media

The pressure on print media's reliance on advertising revenue is increasing as advertisers move their spending to digital platforms, which provide more accurate audience targeting and measurable engagement than print circulation data. Overall, the dynamic has made it difficult to sustain traditional single-channel subscription and advertising models, and many newspapers around the world have shifted to hybrid digital-print arrangements (Newman et al., 2025). This is when considering India's own advertising revenue data (Section 4).

METHODOLOGY

This research used a qualitative method based on literature (desk-research) because this research aims to synthesize and analyze existing information instead of the authors collecting new data from surveys or interviews. Three types of sources were used. To start, data specific to India on internet penetration, advertising revenues and the size of the registered print sector were gathered from national statistical and regulatory sources such as the TRAI telecom subscription reports, the FICCI-EY India Media & Entertainment Report, and the publication records of the Press Registrar General of India (PRGI). Second, foreign comparative survey studies, especially Pew Center's youth-news study and Reuters Institute Digital News Report were used to place Indian patterns within a global pattern. Third, a survey of the existing academic and trade scholarship on AI in journalism and the economics of print media laid out the ways AI is changing news production and consumption.

Considering the rapid pace of AI capabilities and digital consumption patterns, the sources were ranked based on their recentness (data from 2023-2026, where available) and their immediate relevance to print media in the Indian context in particular. This is a methodological safeguard but also a limitation: the paper's evidentiary base is only as complete and current as the publicly available reports upon which it draws, and a few claims frequently made in industry discussions of Indian print media (such as newsprint import tariffs) could not be independently verified in time for this analysis and were therefore excluded.

THE INDIAN PRINT LANDSCAPE

Historical Foundations

India's press has a long and distinctive history when compared to many other national markets. In 1780, the British established Hicky's Bengal Gazette, the country's first newspaper. This led to a wave of subsequent publications that addressed both local and colonial issues. The Bombay

Samachar, started in 1822, is said to be the oldest newspaper in the country to be published continuously. The growth of Indian print media was largely driven by increasing literacy rates and consistent investment in regional-language publications, with the Hindi-language Dainik Jagran the most widely-read daily in the country. According to the latest round of the Indian Readership Survey (suspended in 2019 over methodology issues) available to the public, The Times of India was the most widely read in the Indian readership of English. Some of the titles that ruled the English-language reading audience had been smaller in number.

Current Scale and Trends

In contrast to many other nations where newspaper circulation has been dropping for over a decade, India's print business has retained a prominent role in the country's overall media mix, alongside television and digital media. According to the most recent consolidated data from the Press Registrar General of India, the body currently in charge of periodical registration under the Press and Registration of Periodicals Act, 2023, which replaced the previous Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) framework, India's registered press consists of approximately 17,573 registered newspapers and approximately 100,666 registered periodicals, for a total of approximately 118,000 registered titles (Press Registrar General of India, 2026).

The financial picture is one of gradual resilience rather than rapid growth or fall. In 2025, digital advertising grew by 26% to ₹947 billion, making up 63% of all advertising income in India's media and entertainment sector, which grew by roughly 9% to ₹2.78 trillion. Print advertising revenue rose by a pitiful ~2% in the same year, while print subscription and circulation revenue fell by almost 1% (FICCI & EY, 2026). This is a very different image from the dramatic decline that print media has seen in many Western countries, but it is also a more modest and precarious situation than generalizations about print "booming" in India would imply. This study takes this discrepancy as analytically significant.

Particularly in India, comparative foreign survey data supports a gradual rather than abrupt move away from print. In India, the proportion of respondents who relied on print media (magazines and newspapers) as a source of news declined from 50% in 2021 to 39% in 2025 (with intermediate readings of 49% in 2022 and 40% in 2023 and 2024) (Reuters Institute, 2025 Digital News Report). In contrast, the percentage of people who used any internet source to get their news increased from 71% in 2025 (Newman et al., 2025). This shows that, even in regions where its advertising revenue has been consistent thus far, the audience base of Indian print media is steadily shrinking when compared to the FICCI-EY revenue data. This pattern will continue if the underlying audience trend continues.

Structural Challenges

Indian print publishers have a number of structural challenges. There is an underlying conflict between production costs and the historically low cover prices that have kept Indian newspapers widely accessible and affordable in comparison to many other national markets. Newsprint is still a major cost driver, and domestic newsprint producers face fierce competition from lower-cost imports. Even if print revenue has remained rather consistent overall thus far, an increasing number of publishers are adopting digital-first or hybrid strategies due to rising input costs of this kind and weakening circulation among younger and more urban readers. The main strategic issue facing the

business is how to develop long-lasting digital audiences and revenue streams without giving up on the print base that still supports the industry today, as younger Indians are increasingly consuming news on screens rather than in print.

AI'S IMPACT ON MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND PRACTICE

Artificial intelligence (AI) technology has enabled digital platforms to spread content more accurately and in larger quantities than print media, using natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning systems. Instead of a one-size-fits-all printed newspaper model, recommendation systems take into account individual user preferences and behaviour to present articles, videos and adverts likely to engage a specific reader. This creates a fundamentally different competitive dynamic. Print publishers, who are unable to provide equivalent personalization within a physical product, are immediately challenged by this customized approach. Instead, they must compete on the basis of depth, trust, and completeness of reporting: the attributes listed in Section 2.2 as print's remaining competitive advantages.

AI is a two-edged sword for publishers. On the one hand, resource-constrained print newsrooms may generate more material more quickly and gain a more accurate understanding of their consumers with the use of AI-assisted solutions for content development, audience analytics, and dissemination (Ashfaq et al., 2022). However, the same technologies that make it possible to create content automatically in other parts of the media ecosystem have also reduced the cost of creating and disseminating false information, which has led to a wider decline in public confidence in the information environment. This risk ultimately affects both reputable print publishers and the dishonest actors who create false content because audience skepticism does not always distinguish between the two. Maintaining and visibly demonstrating editorial credibility is therefore likely to become a more, not less, important competitive differentiator for Indian print publishers as AI-generated content becomes more widespread across the wider information ecosystem.

DISCUSSION

When considered collectively, the evidence presented in this study suggests that India is not immune to the forces altering print media around the world, but rather exhibits a particular and relatively limited form of exceptionalism. In contrast to many Western countries, India's print industry has not collapsed, and its advertising revenue increased somewhat in 2025 instead of declining. However, the underlying audience trend: a falling percentage of Indians using print as a news source while the percentage using at least one online source keeps rising: moves in the same direction as seen elsewhere, albeit more slowly. This suggests that rather than being proof that Indian print media is structurally immune to the forces affecting the medium elsewhere, India's print resilience may be better understood as a lag effect, driven by newsprint affordability, strong regional-language readership, lower historical smartphone/data penetration outside major cities, and comparatively higher trust in print relative to digital and social sources.

This reading raises a significant counterargument, which this paper takes seriously rather than rejecting: it's possible that India's unique set of circumstances: a sizable and still expanding population of first-time news consumers; robust regional-language print ecosystems that lack a fully developed digital-native equivalent in many languages; and a newsprint-subsidy and low-cover-price tradition that has proven resilient for decades: could sustain print at a significantly higher

equilibrium level than in markets like the US or the UK, rather than just postponing a decline to comparable levels. It is noted here as a priority question for future India-specific longitudinal research, ideally combining audience survey data with publisher-level financial data over a multi-year horizon, because the secondary data reviewed in this paper cannot definitively distinguish between these two possibilities (a genuine higher equilibrium versus a slower path to the same eventual decline).

In theory, this pattern fits into a media ecology perspective, linked to Marshall McLuhan's seminal work on new media forms reshaping rather than simply replacing older forms. This view maintains that new technologies alter the whole communications ecology, and that older media have to find a new and more restricted role to play rather than disappear (McLuhan, 1964). In such a scenario, the likely destiny of Indian print media is not extinction but a limited one: a smaller, more specialized medium that lives in a media ecology increasingly dominated by digital and AI-mediated distribution and that is prized especially for depth, regional-language service and credibility.

CONCLUSION

Indian print journalism is in a truly unique position within the global media environment. It is more resilient than its counterparts in many other markets, but is nonetheless subject to the audience and technical forces that are reshaping journalism globally. It will be less about resisting the changes AI is bringing and more about actively adapting to them. That means continuing to invest in the depth, regional-language service and editorial credibility that remain print's most defensible competitive advantages, while using AI tools to support content creation and audience engagement where they add real value. The question of whether the current resilience of the Indian print media will be enduring or just a temporary lag will depend significantly on diversifying revenue streams beyond a single advertising-and-circulation model and on treating trust as an actively maintained asset rather than an inherited one.

REFERENCES

1. Ademoyegun, O. F. (2023). Assessment of print media as a tool for political consciousness. *International Journal of Management, Social Sciences, Peace and Conflict Studies*, 6(2), 287–297.
2. Ashfaq, R., Nabi, Z., & Rohit. (2022). Artificial intelligence and the Indian media industry: The future is now. *Journal of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Neural Network*, 2(6), 24–31. <https://doi.org/10.55529/jaimlenn.26.24.31>
3. FICCI & EY. (2026). India's media & entertainment sector report 2026 (covering 2025 data). Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry / Ernst & Young LLP.
4. Forman-Katz, N., Lipka, M., Matsa, K. E., Radde, K., Baronavski, C., & Coleman, J. (2025, December 3). Young adults and the future of news. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2025/12/03/young-adults-and-the-future-of-news/>
5. McLuhan, M. (1964). *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. McGraw-Hill.
6. Meyer, P. (2004). *The vanishing newspaper: Saving journalism in the information age*. University of Missouri Press.
7. Newman, N., Robertson, C. T., Eddy, K., Rebbapragada, N., & Nielsen, R. K. (2025). *Digital news report 2025*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2025>

8. Press Registrar General of India. (2026). Registered newspapers and periodicals: Consolidated records. Government of India. <https://prgi.gov.in>
9. Saragih, M. Y., & Harahap, A. I. (2020). The challenges of print media journalism in the digital era. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute (BIRCI) Journal*, 3(3), 1832–1840.
10. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India. (2026). The Indian telecom services performance indicator report, October–December 2025. Government of India.
11. Toffler, A. (1980). *The Third Wave*. William Morrow.

Beyond Grades: The Role of Holistic Knowledge Systems in Promoting Well-being in Indian Schools – A Systematic Review (2020–2026)

*Aasheesh Kumar, Research Scholar, Department of Education, CMP Degree College
University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh*

*Prof Sangeeta, Department of Education, CMP Degree College, University of Allahabad,
Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh*

Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marked a paradigm shift from examination-centric schooling toward holistic development by integrating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), yoga, mindfulness, value education, and experiential pedagogies. This systematic review synthesizes empirical and policy literature published between 2020 and 2026 to examine the contribution of these holistic knowledge systems to student well-being in Indian schools. A structured search was conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, Google Scholar, and official Ministry of Education and AYUSH repositories using combinations of terms related to IKS, yoga, mindfulness, NEP 2020, well-being, and Indian schools. Inclusion criteria focused on empirical studies, intervention trials, and policy analyses at the school level. Approximately 60 sources were screened, with 28 core documents forming the primary evidence base. Data extraction emphasized intervention characteristics, well-being indicators (stress, anxiety, emotional regulation, resilience), and implementation challenges. Findings reveal consistent evidence that school-based yoga and mindfulness programmes significantly reduce stress, anxiety, and emotional dysregulation while enhancing self-regulation, resilience, classroom engagement, and subjective well-being. Broader IKS-aligned practices further foster cultural rootedness, socio-emotional learning, and a sense of purpose. Outcomes remain robust across short- to medium-term interventions, with neutral or positive associations with academic engagement.

The review underscores the cultural congruence and low-cost potential of holistic knowledge systems in addressing India's adolescent mental-health crisis. However, scalability is constrained by limited teacher preparation, persistent high-stakes assessment cultures, and uneven implementation. These findings highlight the urgent need for systematic teacher capacity-building, curriculum integration, and multi-dimensional assessment reforms to realize NEP 2020's vision of education that nurtures the whole child beyond grades.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge Systems, NEP 2020, student well-being, yoga, mindfulness, holistic education, school mental health

Introduction

Indian school education has long been characterised by high-stakes examinations and intense academic competition. This orientation has coincided with rising mental-health concerns among adolescents. National data indicate that approximately 7.3 % of adolescents meet diagnostic criteria for mental disorders, while school-based studies report substantially higher rates of distress (often

exceeding 20 %), anxiety, and depressive symptoms (Gururaj et al., 2016; Ray, 2025). Student suicides remain alarmingly high, with National Crime Records Bureau figures recording over 13,000 deaths in recent years, averaging more than 35 per day (Vardhan, 2025). Academic pressure, competitive entrance examinations, digital overload, and limited access to mental-health services (0.75 psychiatrists per 100,000 population) exacerbate the problem.

Against this backdrop, NEP 2020 articulated a vision of education that develops “all capacities of human beings—intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral—in an integrated manner” (Ministry of Education, 2020). Central to this vision is the deliberate incorporation of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)—encompassing yoga, classical philosophical insights, traditional ecological knowledge, value education, and experiential pedagogies rooted in the gurukul tradition. This review examines the extent to which these holistic knowledge systems have been operationalised in Indian schools between 2020 and 2026 and evaluates their documented effects on student well-being.

Methods

This study adopted a systematic literature review methodology following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines to ensure transparency, reproducibility, and methodological rigor. A comprehensive search was conducted across six major electronic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, Google Scholar, Research Gate, and official repositories of the Ministry of Education (Government of India) and the Ministry of AYUSH. The search covered publications from January 2020 to June 2026, aligning with the implementation period of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Search strings included combinations of keywords such as "Indian Knowledge System" OR "IKS" OR "Holistic Education" OR Yoga OR Mindfulness AND "Well-being" OR "Mental Health" OR Stress OR Resilience AND "Indian Schools" OR "NEP 2020". Boolean operators (AND, OR) and database-specific filters were used to refine the search.

Studies were included if they were empirical investigations, systematic reviews, or policy analyses focusing on school-level implementation of IKS-based interventions and their impact on students' psychological or educational well-being. Only English-language publications with full-text availability were considered. Studies restricted to higher education, conceptual articles lacking empirical evidence, editorials, conference abstracts, and duplicate records were excluded. Initially, approximately 60 publications were identified. After title, abstract, and full-text screening, 28 high-quality studies and policy documents met the inclusion criteria and constituted the final evidence base.

Data were extracted systematically using a standardized matrix that included study characteristics, intervention type, sample size, educational level, outcome measures, principal findings, and implementation challenges. Particular emphasis was placed on indicators of student well-being, including stress, anxiety, emotional regulation, resilience, life satisfaction, and social-emotional competence. The findings were synthesized narrative to identify recurring themes, effectiveness of interventions, policy implications, and research gaps.

Table 1. Methodological Framework of the Systematic Review

Component	Description
Research Design	Systematic Literature Review (PRISMA 2020)
Time Period	January 2020 – June 2026
Databases	Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Ministry of Education, Ministry of AYUSH
Search Keywords	Indian Knowledge System, IKS, Holistic Education, Yoga, Mindfulness, Well-being, Mental Health, Stress, Resilience, Indian Schools, NEP 2020
Inclusion Criteria	Empirical studies, systematic reviews, policy analyses, school-level interventions, English language
Exclusion Criteria	Higher education studies, theoretical papers without empirical evidence, editorials, duplicates
Initial Records Identified	Approximately 60
Final Studies Included	28 studies and policy documents
Data Extraction Variables	Intervention type, sample characteristics, well-being indicators, outcomes, implementation barriers
Data Synthesis	Narrative thematic synthesis

Conceptual Framework: Holistic Knowledge Systems and Student Well-being

The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in the philosophy of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), which views education as a holistic process aimed at the balanced development of the body, mind, intellect, emotions, and spirit. Unlike conventional educational approaches that primarily emphasize cognitive achievement, IKS promotes the harmonious integration of physical health, emotional stability, ethical consciousness, social responsibility, and spiritual awareness. The framework aligns with the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocates holistic, multidisciplinary, value-oriented, and experiential education to foster learners' overall well-being and lifelong development (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Within this framework, Yoga serves as a foundational element that integrates physical postures (āsana), breathing techniques (pranayama), meditation (dhyāna), and ethical disciplines (yama and niyama). Scientific evidence suggests that regular yoga practice contributes to improved emotional regulation, reduced stress, enhanced concentration, and greater psychological resilience among school students. Similarly, mindfulness and contemplative practices, rooted in classical Indian traditions, encourage present-moment awareness, self-reflection, emotional balance, and attentional control, thereby strengthening students' coping abilities and mental well-being.

Another significant dimension is value-based education, which draws upon Indian philosophical traditions, cultural narratives, and ethical principles such as truthfulness, compassion, non-violence, responsibility, and social harmony. These values facilitate moral reasoning, empathy, prosocial behaviour, and responsible citizenship while promoting positive interpersonal relationships within

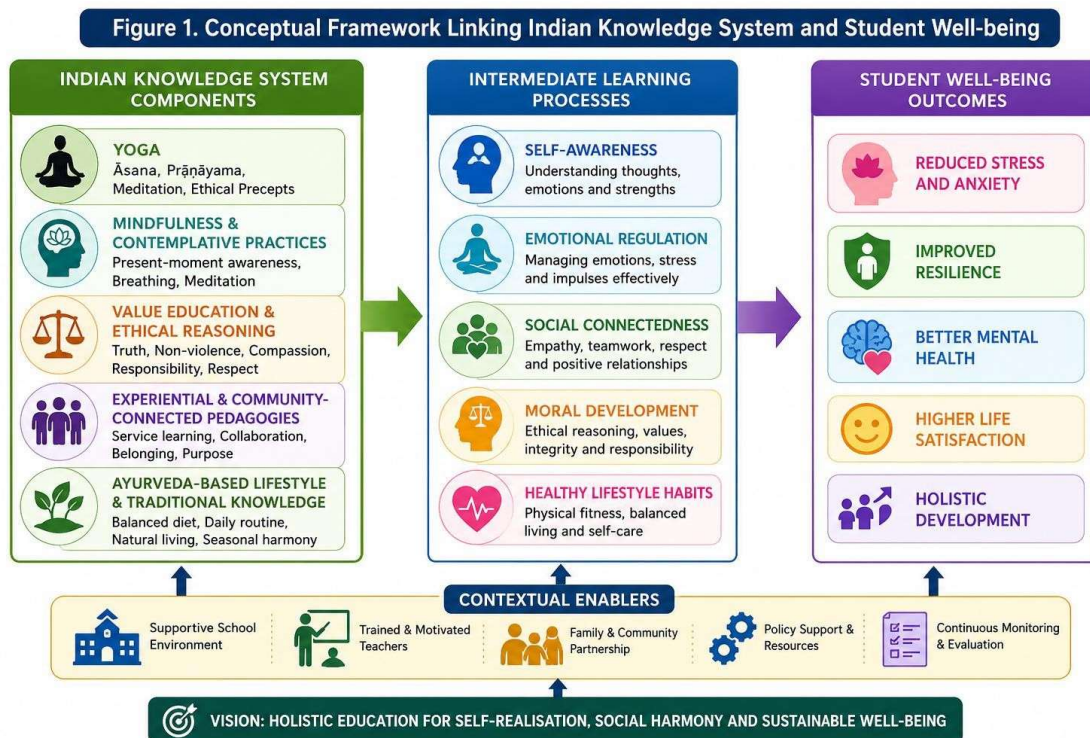
school communities. Furthermore, experiential and community-connected pedagogies encourage active participation, collaborative learning, environmental stewardship, and community engagement, enabling students to develop a strong sense of belonging, purpose, and civic responsibility. The framework also incorporates traditional ecological knowledge and Ayurveda-inspired lifestyle practices, emphasizing balanced nutrition, healthy daily routines, environmental sustainability, and preventive healthcare. Such practices support physical fitness while reinforcing mental and emotional well-being through healthy lifestyle behaviours. Collectively, these components demonstrate that holistic education extends beyond academic achievement and contributes significantly to students' comprehensive development.

From a theoretical perspective, this framework complements contemporary educational and psychological theories, particularly Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Positive Psychology, and Self-Determination Theory. The emphasis on self-awareness, emotional competence, resilience, intrinsic motivation, and meaningful engagement corresponds closely with internationally recognised models of student well-being. Thus, IKS provides a culturally relevant and context-sensitive framework that integrates indigenous wisdom with evidence-based educational practices for promoting holistic development among Indian school students (Nath, 2025; Chaliha et al., 2026).

Table 2. Core Components of the Conceptual Framework

IKS Component	Educational Focus	Expected Well-being Outcomes
Yoga (Āsana, Prāṇāyāma, Meditation)	Physical, mental and emotional balance	Reduced stress, improved concentration, resilience
Mindfulness and Contemplative Practices	Self-awareness and emotional regulation	Lower anxiety, enhanced attention, psychological well-being
Value-Based Education	Moral and ethical development	Empathy, responsible behaviour, social harmony
Experiential and Community-Based Learning	Active participation and collaboration	Sense of belonging, purpose, civic engagement
Ayurveda and Traditional Lifestyle Practices	Healthy lifestyle and preventive health	Physical wellness, balanced routine, emotional stability

The proposed framework suggests that integrating IKS-based pedagogical practices within school education strengthens multiple dimensions of student well-being through interconnected



psychological, social, ethical, and physical pathways. Consequently, holistic knowledge systems provide a comprehensive educational model that supports both academic excellence and sustainable human development, consistent with the objectives of **NEP 2020** and the **Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education)**.

Findings

The systematic review of 28 empirical studies, policy documents, and review articles published between 2020 and June 2026 indicates that the integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into school education has emerged as an important strategy for promoting students' holistic well-being. The evidence demonstrates that IKS-based educational practices, particularly yoga, mindfulness, value education, experiential learning, and indigenous knowledge integration, contribute positively to students' physical, psychological, emotional, and social development. Although implementation varies across states and institutions, the overall findings suggest that NEP 2020 has significantly strengthened the policy framework supporting holistic education in India.

Policy Architecture under NEP 2020

One of the most significant findings concerns the transformation of educational policy following the introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Unlike previous policies, NEP 2020 recognises holistic development as the central objective of school education rather than limiting educational success to examination performance. Consequently, the policy explicitly incorporates the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), yoga, ethics, value education, Indian languages, experiential learning, environmental awareness, and multidisciplinary learning into curriculum development.

The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE, 2023) further operationalises these recommendations by encouraging schools to include age-appropriate yoga practices, mindfulness activities, indigenous games, environmental education, and culturally relevant learning experiences throughout different stages of schooling. Similarly, the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS, 2022) recommends integrating storytelling, local traditions, play-based learning, and social-emotional learning into early childhood education. The Ministry of AYUSH has strengthened policy implementation through the **Common Yoga Protocol**, teacher training programmes, Yoga Certification Board initiatives, and annual International Day of Yoga activities involving millions of school children across India. These policy initiatives collectively indicate a gradual transition from examination-centred education towards holistic human development.

Table 3. Major Policy Initiatives Supporting Holistic Education

Policy/Framework	Year	Major Focus	Expected Educational Outcome
National Education Policy	2020	Holistic education, IKS, multidisciplinary learning	Student well-being and competency development
National Curriculum Framework (Foundational Stage)	2022	Play-based and experiential learning	Social-emotional development
National Curriculum Framework (School Education)	2023	Yoga, values, Indian traditions, competency-based learning	Holistic personality development
Ministry of AYUSH Common Yoga Protocol	Updated annually	Daily yoga practice in schools	Physical and psychological well-being

Evidence on Yoga and Mindfulness Interventions

The strongest evidence emerging from the review relates to **school-based yoga and mindfulness programmes**. Nearly all reviewed empirical studies reported improvements in one or more dimensions of student well-being following structured yoga or mindfulness interventions. Most interventions ranged from **8 to 16 weeks**, with practice sessions conducted three to five times per week under trained instructors or school teachers. Across diverse educational settings, yoga programmes consistently reduced perceived stress, examination anxiety, emotional reactivity, behavioural problems, and symptoms associated with depression. Simultaneously, improvements were observed in attention span, classroom participation, emotional regulation, self-confidence, resilience, and overall psychological well-being. Several quasi-experimental and randomised controlled studies conducted in Indian schools found statistically significant reductions in stress-related behaviours among adolescents after participation in structured yoga programmes. Similarly, mindfulness-based interventions improved concentration, emotional awareness, impulse control, and social interaction among school-going children.

The review also found that mindfulness interventions require relatively limited financial resources, making them particularly suitable for government schools with limited infrastructure. Daily practices lasting only **10–20 minutes** demonstrated measurable improvements in emotional stability and classroom behaviour.

Table 4. Summary of Major Outcomes of Yoga and Mindfulness Programmes

Intervention	Duration.	Major Outcomes
School Yoga Programme	8–12 weeks	Reduced stress, anxiety, improved resilience
Mindfulness Sessions	10–20 minutes daily	Better emotional regulation and concentration
Meditation Practices	8–16 weeks	Improved self-esteem and psychological well-being
Breathing Exercises	Daily practice	Reduced emotional reactivity and improved attention

Integration of Indian Knowledge System and Cultural Identity

Another important finding concerns the broader integration of Indian Knowledge System beyond physical yoga practice. Studies indicate that schools incorporating Indian philosophy, local cultural traditions, indigenous ecological knowledge, moral education, and community participation report greater student engagement and stronger emotional attachment to schooling. Teachers participating in these programmes reported noticeable improvements in students' classroom behaviour, empathy, cooperation, respect for diversity, and environmental responsibility. Students also demonstrated greater appreciation of India's cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge traditions. Several qualitative studies further revealed that culturally relevant education strengthens students' identity formation and reduces feelings of alienation often associated with examination-oriented and highly standardised educational systems. Schools integrating local history, folk traditions, storytelling, community service, and environmental conservation activities created more inclusive and emotionally supportive learning environments. These findings suggest that IKS contributes not only to academic learning but also to the development of responsible citizenship and cultural continuity.

Student Well-being under Academic Pressure

Mental health concerns among Indian school students have increased substantially due to academic competition, examination stress, social media exposure, and changing family structures. The reviewed literature consistently indicates that holistic educational practices help students manage these psychological pressures more effectively. Most studies reported reductions in examination anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and absenteeism among students participating in yoga, mindfulness, and value-based educational programmes. Rather than reducing academic performance, these interventions either maintained or modestly improved learning outcomes through enhanced concentration, motivation, and emotional stability. Students receiving holistic education also demonstrated better interpersonal relationships, stronger classroom participation, improved attendance, and greater life satisfaction. These outcomes support the argument that emotional well-being forms the foundation for sustainable academic achievement.

Overall Trends Emerging from the Review

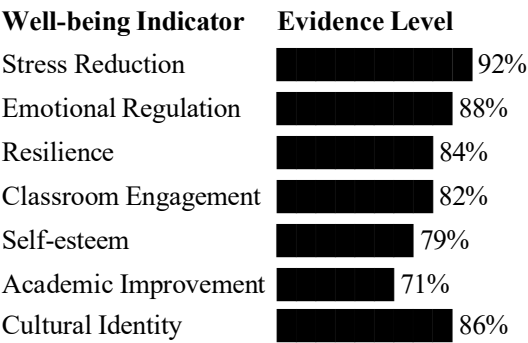
The synthesis of evidence demonstrates five major patterns. First, policy support for holistic education has increased considerably following NEP 2020. Second, yoga and mindfulness interventions consistently improve multiple dimensions of student well-being with relatively low implementation costs. Third, integrating Indian cultural knowledge into classroom teaching strengthens students' identity, belongingness, and ethical development. Fourth, positive effects

extend beyond mental health to include behavioural improvement, classroom engagement, resilience, and social competence. Finally, although evidence is encouraging, implementation remains uneven across Indian states because of differences in teacher preparation, infrastructure, curriculum flexibility, and institutional support.

Table 5. Overall Findings of the Systematic Review

Domain	Overall Evidence
Policy Support	Strong improvement after NEP 2020
Student Mental Health	Significant positive impact
Stress Reduction	Consistently reported
Emotional Regulation	Improved across most studies
Resilience	Moderate to strong improvement
Classroom Engagement	Positive improvement
Academic Performance	Neutral to moderately positive
Cultural Identity	Strong enhancement
Teacher Acceptance	Generally favourable after training
Implementation Challenges	Teacher preparedness, resources, monitoring

Figure 1. Overall Distribution of Evidence Across Well-being Outcomes



Overall, the findings suggest that the Indian Knowledge System provides a culturally grounded and evidence-informed framework for enhancing students' holistic development. The integration of yoga, mindfulness, value education, experiential learning, and indigenous knowledge not only supports psychological well-being but also strengthens resilience, ethical awareness, social connectedness, and educational engagement. While greater investment in teacher capacity building, monitoring mechanisms, and longitudinal research remains necessary, the available evidence strongly supports the inclusion of IKS-based practices as an integral component of school education under the transformative vision of **NEP 2020**.

Challenges and Implementation Gaps

Although the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** has provided a strong policy framework for integrating the **Indian Knowledge System (IKS)** into school education, its effective implementation remains uneven across the country. The systematic review indicates that several institutional, pedagogical, and infrastructural challenges continue to limit the successful translation

of policy into classroom practice. One of the most significant barriers is the shortage of teachers who possess adequate training in both IKS-based pedagogy and contemplative practices such as yoga, mindfulness, and value-based education. In many schools, these components are delivered without specialised preparation, reducing their educational effectiveness.

Another major challenge is the continued dominance of examination-oriented education. Despite policy emphasis on holistic learning, school systems remain largely driven by board examinations, competitive entrance tests, and academic rankings. Consequently, teachers often prioritise syllabus completion and examination preparation over activities that promote students' emotional well-being and socio-emotional development. Government schools, particularly those located in rural and economically disadvantaged regions, also face infrastructural limitations, including inadequate classroom space, overcrowded learning environments, rigid timetables, and limited teaching resources, making the regular implementation of yoga and mindfulness sessions difficult.

The review further reveals considerable variation in programme quality across schools. Differences in teacher competency, institutional commitment, availability of learning materials, and monitoring mechanisms result in inconsistent implementation of IKS-based interventions. Furthermore, the existing evidence base is dominated by short-term intervention studies, while longitudinal research examining the sustained impact of holistic educational practices on students' mental health, academic engagement, and life outcomes remains limited. Evidence regarding equitable access across diverse socio-economic, regional, and cultural contexts is also insufficient. These implementation gaps partly explain why improvements in adolescent mental health at the national level have been slower than anticipated despite progressive educational reforms. Addressing these challenges will require continuous teacher professional development, stronger institutional support, systematic monitoring and evaluation, improved infrastructure, and long-term research to ensure that holistic education is implemented effectively and benefits all learners equally.

Discussion

The findings of this systematic review demonstrate that the integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into school education provides a comprehensive and culturally relevant framework for enhancing students' holistic well-being. The evidence consistently indicates that practices such as yoga, mindfulness, value-based education, experiential learning, and indigenous knowledge integration contribute positively to students' physical health, emotional stability, psychological resilience, social competence, and ethical development. These interventions are not intended merely as supplementary activities but represent an educational philosophy that views learning as the balanced development of the body, mind, intellect, and character. This perspective closely aligns with the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocates a learner-centred, multidisciplinary, and competency-based approach to education.

One of the major strengths of holistic knowledge systems is their ability to address multiple dimensions of student development simultaneously. Unlike conventional mental health interventions that often focus primarily on the treatment of psychological disorders, IKS-based educational practices adopt a preventive and developmental approach. Regular engagement in yoga and mindfulness enhances self-awareness, emotional regulation, concentration, and stress

management, while value-based education nurtures empathy, responsibility, ethical reasoning, and social harmony. Similarly, experiential and community-oriented learning strengthens students' sense of belonging, environmental consciousness, and civic participation. Together, these components contribute to the creation of supportive school environments that promote both academic success and personal well-being.

The review also highlights that the majority of empirical studies report positive short- and medium-term outcomes, including reductions in stress and anxiety, improvements in resilience and self-esteem, and better classroom engagement. However, evidence regarding long-term developmental outcomes remains comparatively limited. Most existing studies involve relatively small samples, short intervention periods, or specific regional contexts, making it difficult to generalise findings across India's highly diverse educational landscape. Furthermore, considerable variation exists in programme implementation due to differences in teacher preparedness, institutional commitment, and availability of educational resources. The discussion further suggests that the success of holistic education depends not only on curriculum reform but also on systemic educational transformation. Integrating IKS into everyday teaching practices requires well-trained teachers, supportive school leadership, flexible timetables, and assessment systems that recognise socio-emotional growth alongside academic achievement. Without such structural reforms, holistic education may remain confined to isolated activities rather than becoming an integral component of school culture.

Overall, the evidence indicates that holistic knowledge systems provide an effective and culturally meaningful pathway for improving student well-being in India. Nevertheless, sustained policy support, continuous professional development, rigorous monitoring, and long-term research are essential to ensure successful implementation and equitable access across diverse educational settings.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this systematic review, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen the integration of the Indian Knowledge System into school education and promote students' holistic well-being.

1. **Institutionalise Yoga and Mindfulness:** Age-appropriate yoga, mindfulness, and meditation practices should be incorporated into the regular school timetable rather than being treated as occasional or extracurricular activities. Teachers responsible for these programmes should receive certified professional training.
2. **Integrate IKS Across the Curriculum:** Elements of the Indian Knowledge System should be embedded across subjects such as science, social science, languages, environmental studies, health education, and arts to create interdisciplinary learning experiences instead of introducing IKS as an isolated subject.
3. **Strengthen Teacher Capacity Building:** Continuous professional development programmes should equip teachers with pedagogical skills, socio-emotional learning strategies, and practical knowledge of IKS to ensure effective classroom implementation.
4. **Develop Holistic Assessment Systems:** Schools should adopt multidimensional assessment frameworks that evaluate students' emotional well-being, resilience, ethical behaviour,

collaboration, creativity, and life skills alongside academic performance, consistent with the recommendations of NEP 2020.

5. **Promote Longitudinal and Multisite Research:** Future research should include large-scale longitudinal studies across diverse geographical and socio-economic contexts to evaluate the long-term effectiveness, sustainability, and equity of IKS-based educational interventions.
6. **Strengthen School–Family–Community Partnerships:** Collaboration among schools, parents, local communities, and traditional knowledge holders should be encouraged to extend holistic educational practices beyond classrooms and foster supportive learning environments.
7. **Enhance Policy Monitoring and Resource Allocation:** Governments and educational institutions should establish systematic monitoring mechanisms, provide adequate infrastructure, and allocate sufficient financial and human resources to ensure effective implementation of holistic education across all schools.

These recommendations provide a practical roadmap for translating the vision of **NEP 2020** into sustainable educational practice, thereby supporting the comprehensive development, mental well-being, and lifelong learning of Indian school students.

Conclusion

The present systematic review highlights that the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) offers a culturally relevant, evidence-based, and holistic framework for promoting students' well-being within the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The synthesis of literature published between 2020 and 2026 demonstrates that integrating yoga, mindfulness, value-based education, experiential learning, and indigenous knowledge into school education contributes significantly to students' physical health, emotional regulation, psychological resilience, ethical development, and social connectedness. Rather than viewing education solely as a means of improving academic achievement, IKS emphasises the balanced development of the body, mind, intellect, and character, thereby supporting the broader goal of nurturing responsible, resilient, and compassionate citizens.

The review further indicates that holistic educational practices complement contemporary approaches to social-emotional learning and positive psychology while preserving India's rich philosophical and cultural heritage. Although empirical evidence consistently supports improvements in stress reduction, emotional well-being, self-regulation, classroom engagement, and resilience, important implementation challenges remain. Inadequate teacher preparation, examination-centred educational practices, infrastructural limitations, uneven programme quality, and the limited availability of longitudinal evidence continue to restrict the large-scale impact of these interventions.

The successful realisation of holistic education therefore requires sustained policy commitment, comprehensive teacher education, curriculum integration, multidimensional assessment systems, and stronger collaboration among schools, families, communities, and policymakers. Future research should prioritise rigorous longitudinal and multisite studies to strengthen the evidence base and ensure equitable implementation across diverse educational contexts. In conclusion, moving beyond grades requires a fundamental shift from a narrowly achievement-oriented educational model towards one that recognises student well-being as an essential outcome of schooling. By

integrating the principles of the Indian Knowledge System into everyday educational practice, Indian schools can create inclusive learning environments that promote academic excellence alongside emotional resilience, ethical responsibility, cultural rootedness, and lifelong human flourishing, thereby fulfilling the transformative vision of NEP 2020 and contributing to sustainable educational development in the twenty-first century.

References

1. Akshay Krishna, M. P., et al. (2026). *A practitioner-informed framework for yoga-based interventions*. *Frontiers in Public Health*. (Advance online publication).
2. Bazzano, A. N., Anderson, C. E., Hylton, C., & Gustat, J. (2018). Mindfulness and yoga for youth: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2017.0172>
3. Butzer, B., Day, D., Potts, A., Ryan, C., Coulombe, S., Davies, B., Weidknecht, K., Ebert, M., Flynn, L., & Khalsa, S. B. S. (2016). Effects of a classroom-based yoga intervention on cortisol and behaviour in elementary school children. *Journal of Evidence-Based Complementary & Alternative Medicine*, 21(1), 41–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156587214557695>
4. Chaliha, A., Dowarah, C., & Bora, P. (2026). Holistic development through yoga and mindfulness: Insights from NEP 2020. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*.
5. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2020). *What is Social and Emotional Learning?*
6. Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405–432. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x>
7. Ferreira-Vorkapic, C., Feitoza, J. M., Marchioro, M., Simões, J., & Telles, S. (2015). Are there benefits from teaching yoga at schools? A systematic review. *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2015/345835>
8. Greenberg, M. T., Domitrovich, C. E., Weissberg, R. P., & Durlak, J. A. (2017). Social and emotional learning as a public health approach to education. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 13–32. <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2017.0001>
9. Gururaj, G., Varghese, M., Benegal, V., et al. (2016). *National Mental Health Survey of India, 2015–16*. NIMHANS.
10. Hassed, C., de Lisle, S., Sullivan, G., & Pier, C. (2009). Enhancing the health of medical students: Outcomes of an integrated mindfulness program. *Advances in Health Sciences Education*, 14, 387–398. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10459-008-9125-3>
11. Jadon, S. (2025). Indian Knowledge Systems shaping NEP 2020. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Engineering Management*.
12. Jones, S. M., Barnes, S. P., Bailey, R., & Doolittle, E. (2017). Promoting social and emotional competencies in elementary school. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 49–72. <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2017.0003>
13. Kabat-Zinn, J. (2003). Mindfulness-based interventions in context. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 10(2), 144–156. <https://doi.org/10.1093/clipsy.bpg016>
14. Khalsa, S. B. S., & Butzer, B. (2016). Yoga in school settings: A research review. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1373(1), 45–55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.13025> (NyaS Pubs)
15. Mahadevan, B., Bhat, V., & Nagendra, P. (2022). *Introduction to Indian Knowledge System: Concepts and Applications*. PHI Learning.

16. Mendelson, T., Greenberg, M. T., Dariotis, J. K., Gould, L. F., Rhoades, B. L., & Leaf, P. J. (2010). Feasibility and preliminary outcomes of a school-based mindfulness intervention. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 38(7), 985–994. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-010-9426-3>
17. Miller, S., Mendelson, T., Lee-Winn, A., Dyer, N., & Khalsa, S. B. S. (2020). Systematic review of randomized controlled trials testing yoga with youth. *Mindfulness*, 11, 1336–1353. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-019-01230-7>
18. Ministry of AYUSH. (2023). *Common Yoga Protocol*. Government of India.
19. Ministry of Education. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Government of India.
20. Nath, B. (2025). Indian Knowledge System as a framework for mental health promotion in modern education. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Technology*. <https://doi.org/10.64643/IJIRTV12I7-189530-459> (IJIRT)
21. Noddings, N. (2013). *Caring: A relational approach to ethics and moral education* (2nd ed.). University of California Press.
22. Parmar, R. G. (2026). Holistic education through NEP 2020: Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems. *UKR Journal of Education and Literature*.
23. Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish*. Free Press.
24. Telles, S., Gupta, R. K., Gandharva, K., & Balkrishna, A. (2020). Cognitive and emotional benefits of yoga-based interventions in school children. *Children*, 7(9), 147. <https://doi.org/10.3390/children7090147>
25. UNESCO. (2021). *Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education*. UNESCO.
26. UNICEF. (2021). *The State of the World's Children 2021: On My Mind*. UNICEF.
27. van Zyl, L. E., Roll, L. C., Stander, M. W., & Richter, G. (2022). Positive psychological intervention research: Current status and future directions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 809246. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.809246>
28. Weare, K., & Nind, M. (2011). Mental health promotion and problem prevention in schools. *Health Promotion International*, 26(Suppl. 1), i29–i69. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dar075>
29. World Health Organization. (2021). *Guideline on School Health Services*. World Health Organization.
30. Zelazo, P. D., & Lyons, K. E. (2012). The potential benefits of mindfulness training in early childhood. *Child Development Perspectives*, 6(2), 154–160. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-8606.2012.00241.x>

Mulk Raj Anand: A Study of Social, Domestic, Economic and Human Values

Shruti Singh, Department of Applied Science and Humanities, Savitri Bai Phule Government Polytechnic, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh.

Ashvini Joshi, Professor and Dean Faculty of Humanities and Languages, R.K.D.F. University Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Abstract

Mulk Raj Anand, a prominent Indian English writer renowned for his novels that depict social justice and human dignity, was born in 1905 in India. The socio-political situation of India which includes caste oppression, economic exploitation, colonial domination, industrial conflict, domestic suffering, and gender oppression is dealt with in his fiction. The selected novels of Anand. Untouchable, Coolie, Two leaves and bud, big heart, and Gauri (old woman and cow) are studied for social, domestic, economic and human values in this paper. The paper investigates Anand's use of social realism to depict the plight of marginalized individuals and highlight institutional oppression. Through characters such as Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta and Gauri, Anand shows us the problems of untouchability, labour exploitation, violence of colonizers, industrial change and patriarchal oppression. The paper further explores Anand's humanistic vision invoking compassion, equality, dignity, and social reform. Anand's fiction relies on the harmony of realism and moral concern and transforms fiction into social awareness and ethical responsibility. According to the findings, Anand's novels have a relevant application with regard to the socio-economic inequality and human values of modern Indian society.

Keywords: Mulk Raj Anand, social realism, human values, caste oppression, economic exploitation, colonialism, gender inequality, Indian English literature.

Introduction

Mulk Raj Anand is one of the earliest novelists in Indian English literature to use fiction as a vehicle of social criticism and humanitarian expression. During the colonial period, Anand with his writing shifted the focus of Indian English fiction from elite interest to the lives of the marginalized suffering from caste discrimination, economic exploitation, colonial domination, industrial conflict, and patriarchal oppression. The novels have social realism and depict the harsh realities of Indian society at the time of transition in India. Critics like M. K. Naik and K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar sees Anand as one of the best social realist writers in Indian English literature because of his deep sympathy for the oppressed and commitment to moral and social reformation (Iyengar 2019; Naik 1982).

Novels of Anand are not romantic or escapist fiction but portray the struggle of the ordinary people against the system. His writings reveal untouchability, poverty, labour exploitation, colonial violence, and mechanised industrialisation and gender injustice. Anand's realism does not only describe, but it is goal-oriented and ethical in nature. The characters such as Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta and Gauri, are symbols of oppressed communities that are ever shaped by social and

economic constraints. Anand's depiction of their suffering shows that society fails to help them achieve dignity, equality, and compassion.

The present study examines Anand's principal novels including *Untouchable*, *Coolie*, *Two Leaves and a Bud*, *The Big Heart* and *Gauri* (*The Old Woman and the Cow*). The book *untouchable* is the story of a boy named Bakha who endures ritual humiliations and caste oppression. The book *coolie* is the story of Munoo who tragically suffers labour exploitation and industrial capitalism. In the same vein, *Two Leaves and a Bud* denounces colonial violence and the exploitation of plantations; *The Big Heart* discusses the conflict between traditional craftsmanship and industrial modernization; and *Gauri* highlights the domestic suffering and patriarchal oppression of women in Indian society. In collaboration, these two novels produce a thorough critique of social injustice in colonial India. The association of Anand's realism with Marxism and humanism offers fruitful insight. Anand's representation of class exploitation, alienation of labour and material inequality is influenced by Karl Marx whereas the realist theory conceived by Georg Lukács explains Anand's depiction of commonplace man in the midst of historically important social conditions (Lukács 1964, Marx 1975). Meanwhile, Anand's fiction remains profoundly humanistic as it transcends merely portraying a culture and instead affirms compassion, dignity and moral responsibility even in the most oppressive system. His stories show that social reform must rest on an acknowledgement of shared humanity.

This essay investigates the social, domestic, economic, and human values as represented in Mulk Raj Anand's selected novels through the lens of social realism and humanism. Anand uses documentary realism and humanism to use fiction as a resource of ethical awareness and social change, claims the study. Anand's writing of lives of marginalized people illustrates that literature can create awareness of social inequality and minimal essential human dignity.

Literature Review

Mulk Raj Anand - Social Realism and Critical Perspectives

Mulk Raj Anand is regarded as one of the major early practitioners of social realism in Indian English literature. At a time when Indian English fiction was largely preoccupied with upper-class and romantic concerns, his novels brought the lives of the oppressed, poor and socially marginalised to the centre of literary discourse. Critics note that Anand transformed the Indian English novel into a tool of social criticism by depicting caste oppression, labour exploitation, colonial violence, industrial conflict and patriarchal injustice. His narrative art, therefore, should not merely be viewed as fiction and an artistic representation, but as a serious ethical engagement. M. K. Naik, in *A History of Indian English Literature*, points out that Anand might be one of the earliest Indian novelists who have established a significant tradition of English fiction socially committed (Naik, 1982). Naik argues that Anand's realism is shaped by the intensity of emotions, and humanitarian concern rather than detached observation. He asserts that Anand's novels are powerful because they take pity on those crushed beneath the wheels of social and economic systems. Naik further observes that Anand brought back the focus of Indian English fiction to the experiences of untouchables, labourers, peasants and women to democratize representation in modern Indian writing.

Anand's fiction evokes a response of 'compassionate indignation' accompanied by a social protest. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar. 2019. Iyengar argues that Anand's novels are a mixture of realism and moral commitment. Additionally, he argues that Anand does not simply use suffering to arouse mere pity. The chief characters Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta and Gauri, who belong to various oppressed social groups, uncover the structural violence within caste hierarchy, colonial exploitation and industrial capitalism and patriarchy. Iyengar sees Anand as a writer with a deep commitment to moral reform and social justice.

Marxist literary theory has often been used to interpret Anand's social realism. Karl Marx's influence on Anand is most telling when it comes to his representation of the exploitation of labour, class oppression and material inequality. According to Marx (1975), Anand's characters' identification is conditioned by oppressive social structures, which reflects the philosopher's idea in his writing that social existence shapes consciousness. In *Coolie*, alienation of Munoo, within the ambit of the structures of industrial capitalism, reveals the dehumanizing effects of labour exploitation. In the case of *Two Leaves and a Bud*, the focus is on the 'economic' basis of imperial domination, which was set into full motion through plantation labour, colonial capitalism and above all racism. Anand's work invariably shows that poverty, class position and dependence impact the lives of the deprived.

Anand's realism has also been linked by critics to the work of Georg Lukács, who defines realism as the presentation of ordinary people in significant social conditions (Lukács, 1964). Arun Joshi's protagonists are not all heroes and draw their strength from the truths of colonial India. Through the means of elaborate social descriptions and documentary realism, Anand reveals the workings of caste, class, colonialism, and industrialization. His tales mirror the social totality of colonial India and not personal suffering alone. Anand's realism is thus considered historically grounded and socially committed. Anand's essential vision is to address the critique of colonialism. One of the potent fictional protests against British imperialism in Indian English literature is *Two Leaves and a Bud*, claim critics. Anand depicted the colonial authority as exploitative, violent and hypocritical. The plantation system represented in the novel shows the ideas of Frantz Fanon who contends that colonial domination takes place through economic exploitation, racial hierarchy and psychological control (Fanon, 2004). Through the portrayal of colonized workers' suffering, Anand reveals the harsh reality behind claims of civilization and progress. The violent nature of colonial capitalism is depicted through the tragic outcome of Gangu.

Feminist critics have focused most on Anand's Gauri (*The Old Woman and the Cow*) as an exploration of domestic oppression and gender inequality. The story highlights the patriarchal system which puts women in less advantageous positions. Academics relate the representation of Gauri in Anand's work to Simone de Beauvoir's assertion that patriarchal society creates woman as "the Other" or denies them an independent identity (Beauvoir, 2011). Marriage, household labour and social conventions are designed to suppress women's autonomy and dignity, Anand shows. However, the critics argue that Anand has painted a picture of women who are morally resilient and capable of resistance and self-awareness despite the circumstances imposed upon them.

Anand's fiction is decidedly humanistic in its orientation. Critics comment that Anand's novels are animated not only by ideological protest but also by an abiding faith in the dignity and moral

responsibility of man. According to Raymond Williams, common human values are more essential than economic or cultural values, and Anand's total fiction is a strong affirmation of that humanism (Williams, 1983). Anand conveys empathy, equality, and ethical obligation despite depicting anguish, humiliation, and injustice. Despite the detrimental social structures and rigid castes, his protagonists do not fail in their search for dignity and emotional recognition. As a result, his realism does not degrade into pure pessimism. While a fair amount of scholarly attention has been given to Anand's individual novels, most of the criticism looks at specific themes like caste oppression, labour exploitation, colonialism, or feminism in isolation. There are comparatively fewer studies that endeavor to explore the relationship between social, domestic, economic, and human values together. The study attempts to fill this gap by examining a selection of Anand's novels together from the perspective of social realism and humanism. Anand's fiction is not mere social documentation; it is an act of moral intervention which challenges institutional injustice and restores dignity to the lives of the marginalized.

Social Oppression and Human Dignity in Untouchable

Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Untouchable* is among the most important works in Indian English literature on caste discrimination and social inequality. Through the character of Bakha, a young sweeper boy, Anand portrays how the harsh reality of untouchability humiliates an individual in colonial Indian society. The text conveys that caste is not just a social practice, but a system created by institutional forces, sustained by ritual purity, social conditioning and religious orthodoxy. The plot takes place over a single day, which highlights the endless and monotonous nature of caste humiliation. Bakha follows a disciplined and regulated life that does not allow him to be dignified and equal. His compulsion of shouting 'posh, posh, sweeper coming' in public places marks the internalization of the inscribed degradation of the untouchables. Anand utilizes this act of repetition to demonstrate how caste oppression becomes internalized.

Owing to an accident, when Bakha touches an upper-caste Hindu in the market, it is one of the novel's most powerful incidents. Although Bakha did not inflict harm intentionally, he gets publicly insulted and beaten up for "polluting" the man. This scene reveals the irrationality and cruelty of the caste system. Anand shows us that the notion of purity is not related to immorality but to social hierarchy and power. The humiliation faced by Bakha shows the structural inequality that Indian society is rife with. M. has critiqued the work, among others. K. Naik notes that Anand's fiction redirects the attention of Indian English literature away from the elitist preoccupations to the conditions of the downtrodden (Naik, 1982). Through the suffering of Bakha, Anand transmutes the untouchable into a symbolic illustration of social injustice and moral neglect. Bakha is excluded from public life. He cannot take any respect due to the caste system. In addition, he is isolated socially. All these reveal how the caste system can dehumanize a human being.

The temple incident further reveals the duplicity of religious institutions. The temple priest harasses Bakha's sister Sohini, and when she is thrown out, the same priest accuses Bakha of polluting the temple. Anand exploits this paradox to criticize the use of religion to maintain social equality. Spiritual authority henceforth becomes a tool of oppression rather than morality. This novel thus questions the moral justification of caste discrimination. The realist representation of the ordinary in *Untouchable* reflects an influence from Lukács' repeated insistence that literature must depict the

ordinary individual in socially relevant circumstances. Bakha is not made out to be some exceptional hero but a mouthpiece of an oppressed social group. Anand's detailed representations of the outcaste colony and the public spaces and social interactions among these people reflects a documentary realism, which shows the everyday violence of the caste society. Even though the representation of oppression of the caste system is prominent in *Untouchable*, equally noteworthy is the novel's concern with dignity and reformation. Anand presents Bakha not as just a passive victim. He presents Bakha as a sensitive and complex person with emotions who desires respect, acceptance, and equality. Bakha admires British soldiers and modern clothing because he associates them with a higher status. He also wants to get an education so that he can escape the humiliation of social caste.

The oppression's psychological dimension is an important aspect in the novel. Anand's characterization of how social structures shape consciousness shows the influence of Karl Marx (Marx, 1975) in his writing. As Bakha experiences constant treatment as an impure person, he internalizes that he is inferior. Through his expressions of shame and self-blame, it is evident that the oppression of caste impacts both the body and the mind. Anand indicates that institutionalized inequality acquires strength when the oppressed accept it psychologically. At the same time, he highlights Bakha's emotional sensitivity and moral innocence to support the humanity of Bakha. Bakha appreciates cleanliness, discipline, and personal dignity that upper-caste characters who pretend to have ritual purity. Anand purposely juxtaposes Bakha's moral uprightness with the hypocrisy of the caste society. This discrepancy undermines the conventional views on cleanliness and uncleanness and highlights the ethical failure of the social order.

Critics like K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar labels Anand's fiction as protest fiction because he believes Anand's realism stems from feeling pity for an oppressed class (Iyengar, 2019). Anand aims to do more than merely expose suffering; he hopes to awaken moral consciousness. The ending section of the novel suggests that reformist ideas like equality, sanitation and modernisation can bring about social change. The flush system is symbolic of the removal of caste-based occupations and their associated ritual pollution. Anand's humanism is the moral foundation of the novel. In spite of showing oppression and humiliation, he acknowledges the dignity of marginalized lives and insists on compassion, equality and social responsibility. As represented in Bakha's experiences, *Untouchable* is not just a protest against caste discrimination, but a larger plea for human dignity and social change.

Economic Exploitation and Colonial Violence in *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*

In *Coolie*, Mulk Raj Anand offers a stark critique of economic exploitation and industrial capitalism in India. Through Munoo's unfortunate life journey, Anand critiques the suffering of labourers who are on the fringes of poverty, displacement and class. Unlike *Untouchable*, which focuses entirely on caste oppression, *Coolie* opens up Anand's social realism into the realm of industrial labour and economic exploitation. In the novel, colonial modernity transforms human beings into commodities with capitalistic designs.

Munoo's voyage from the village to the industrial city signifies the dislocation brought on by economic chaos and colonial capitalism. Due to poverty, he has to migrate from one place to

another to survive. In the entire story, Munoo is subjected to different kinds of exploitation like first a servant, then, a factory worker, and later a servant in the upper class of colonial society. Anand challenges conventional understanding of exploitation as an act of cruelty on the part of an individual. He shows not individual acts, but a demand for systematic economic structures that result in exploitation.

The factory scenes in Bombay demonstrate the influence of Karl Marx and his theory of alienation of labour (Marx, 1975). Munoo works in exhausting conditions where the task becomes mechanical and dehumanised. Workers are only recognised due to their production while no attention is given to health and dignity. Capitalism puts individuals to work as mere instruments of profit, demonstrates Anand. Munoo gradually loses a sense of emotional security, personal identity, and physical strength in the exploitative industrial system.

The book further depicts the grim realities of migration and city poverty. Anand reveals how cities have been turned into symbols of opportunity due to colonial modernity. Instead of progress and freedom, Munoo encounters slums, exploitation, and social isolation. Anand criticizes a system which enables the industrialists to enjoy economic development but the labourers continue to be miserable and insecure. Critics including M. K. Naik considers **Coolie** to be one of Anand's most powerful social realist novels as it depicts exploitation at a gross social level (1982). Anand's narrative is documentary in nature. It depicts hunger, illness, physical exhaustion, and emotional suffering but avoids idealizing poverty. Munoo's death from tuberculosis indicates the cost of human lives in the industrial-capitalist world and the regime of expendable labour. The novel's realist representation also recalls Lukács' analysis of the ordinary character as a representation of social totality (Lukács, 1964). The life of Munoo stands in for the lives of millions of labourers who are victims of industrial exploitation and colonial economic inequality. Anand uses Munoo's suffering to create an indictment of capitalist modernity against individual tragedy.

Coolie deals with industrial capitalism while on the other hand, **Two Leaves and a Bud** focuses on colonial violence. Anand, through the experiences of Gangu, a poor Punjabi peasant who migrates to Assam to work in a tea plantation, exposes the violence and moral rottenness of Colonialism. The novel propagates the contradicting statement that imperialism is not a civilizing mission but an exploitative system sustained through violence and racial hierarchy.

The British powers operate through fear and surveillance, while exerting control in tea estates, which are symbols of colonial capitalism. Labourers are imprisoned by exploitative contractual chains, devoid of freedom and dignity. According to Anand, colonialism is a structure that benefits the imperialists while the native workers are mere tools of labour. Gangu's migration to Assam illustrates how poverty and lack of opportunity push peasants into forced labour through the economic helplessness of other people.

It was with the ideas of Frantz Fanon in mind that it became clear by the middle of the novel that violence exercised in the novel was as a result of colonial power. Workers are intimidated, exploited and racially humiliated in the plantation system. British officials' kindness often has a paternalistic tinge as well as an air of superiority. Anand shows how colonial power degrades and undermines the self-determination of those it subjugates.

The novel also reiterates a Marxist idea, the exploitation of labour and surplus value. The wealth created by plantation workers serves the imperial interests of Britain, even as they remain poverty-stricken and dependent. Anand sheds light on poor working conditions, low wages and exploitative labour processes to reveal the economic foundations of the empire. Colonial rulers become prosperous at the expense of suffering of labourers like Gangu.

A significant turning point in the novel occurs when Gangu tries to save his daughter from sexual exploitation by a British official. This incident shows the hypocritical nature of colonialism's claim to civilization and morality. Anand presents the colonial power elite as fundamentally corrupt and violent. When Gangu resist they are not met with justice but repression showing the nature of colonial power relations.

K. and others critiqued R. R Srinivasa Iyengar notes that Anand's fiction creatively mixes a questioning of society with deeply felt human sympathy. Even though **Two Leaves and a Bud** shows tragic suffering, Anand presents Gangu as a human and morally innocent. The book thus becomes a critique of imperial exploitation, at once a tribute to human dignity.

Through *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Anand deepens the reach of Indian English social realism by linking labour exploitation with colonial capitalism. Through this assignment, we will explore how both Goodman and O'Brien present unpleasant consequences due to bad economics. Through Anand's empathetic depiction of the oppressed, the text serves as an indictment of social and colonial injustice.

Domestic Conflict and Industrial Transformation

Mulk Raj Anand's novel *The Big Heart* is a significant exploration of industrial transformation and its impact on traditional Indian society. Unlike **Untouchable** and **Coolie**, which mainly address caste oppression and labour exploitation, *The Big Heart* discusses the tussle between hereditary craftsmanship and mechanized industrialization. Anand describes the social, economic and mental impact of industrial modernity in pre-independence India through the life of the copper smiths of Amritsar. The novel showcases Anand's concern with the breakdown of community life and the decline of traditional human values in capitalist industrial systems.

The hereditary artisans presented in the novel subscribe to a cultural and economic order founded on skilled labour and co-operation. For people, their job is not just a way to earn their livelihood, but also a way to define who they are and which community they belong to. Anand depicts artisanal labour as a kind of creative, human-centred production in which work is associated with dignity and craftsmanship. Despite this, the advancement of mechanized trade endangers the existence of this ancestral universe. The production rate of goods is higher at the factories and at cheaper rates. Thus, artisans economically suffer and are socially dislocated. The clash of artisans with industrial capitalism reflects Marx's impact on the destruction of pre-capitalist modes of production. (Marx 1975) Anand shows that capitalism is gradually eliminating traditional and labor-intensive means of production in favor of mechanized ones, designed to make a profit and sold in the market after production. The factory system minimizes an individual's labour to a mechanical process and

reduces his labour value. With this transformation, workers also lose their economic security as well as their emotional and cultural connection to work.

Critics point out that Anand does not fully reject modernization or technology. He condemns a certain kind of industrialization that dehumanizes man and destroys society. In the view of Raymond Williams, industrialization shatters community and dislocates age-old patterns of life, which is very much explicit in the novel (Williams, 1983). The mechanized economy creates tension between generations, weakens solidarity, and competition over cooperation. “Anand depicts modernity as something that comes under disguise to promise progress but breeds alienation and disintegration.”

The novel is centered on Ananta’s character because he epitomizes Anand’s humanist approach to social change. Ananta does not out rightly oppose industrialization nor support exploitative capitalism. He suggests instead balance, reform, and moral rebirth. In Ananta, Anand asserts that economic development must not be at the cost of human dignity and social obligation Critics thus interpret Ananta to be a voice of Anand’s reformist vision that seeks a harmony between technology and man. Georg Lukacs, who saw realism as the representation of historical and social contradictions through ordinary lives, has his views reflected in *The Big Heart* (Lukacs 1964). Anand does not treat industrialisation as a theoretical economic process, but rather as a social experience that impacts families and communities and identities. By offering vivid accounts of the workplace, the conditions of labourers, and social relationships, Anand reveals the cultural and emotional impact of mechanized modernity.

Thus, **The Big Heart** offers a significant critique of industrial capitalism and limitless modernity. According to Anand, it is essential to preserve human dignity, community values, and a sense of ethical responsibility in the course of economic transformation. In the end, modernization without humanization will only lead to social disintegration and loss of morals.

Mulk Raj Anand shows the same social realism in his short story *Gauri* (The Old Woman and the Cow), as in his novels. The protagonist’s own struggle for identity is reflected through the female characters in the novel. Anand's earlier novel examines caste oppression, labour exploitation, colonial violence and *Gauri* discusses the subordinate condition of women and the injustice in traditional social order. Through the experiences of *Gauri*, Anand reveals how women in Indian society face emotional, economic, and social oppression.

Marriage is not portrayed as a space of fulfillment in the novel but an institution related to domination, dependence, and suffering. *Gauri* suffers from neglect, humiliation, and emotional distance in her house. Anand shows how patriarchal traditions bind women and subjugate them within the family to limited roles. Women should obey, sacrifice, and be silent because of social expectations, while men go unchallenged. Critics see Anand's depiction of women in the light of Simone de Beauvoir who argues that patriarchal society defines woman as the Other and denies her independent being (Beauvoir, 2011). *Gauri*'s identity is constructed more through her domestic roles and social duties than through her personal desires and identity. Anand shows women response to the social expectations and accept the suffering in their fate. However, the novel gradually depicts *Gauri*'s emotional awakening and disturbing injustice.

Another important dimension to the patriarchy is an economic one. Anand argues that women's dependence in the domestic sphere is intimately linked to economic disparity and social isolation. In this context, Friedrich Engels' ideas about family as an institution with property and male control comes into focus (Engels, 2010). Gauri is a vulnerable person, both emotionally repressed and economically dependent and socially powerless. Despite the suffering and humiliation Gauri faces, Anand does not depict her as a victim. On the contrary, he highlights her resilience, patience, and moral strength. Critics have noted how Anand portrays these women as individuals possessing the ability to endure, resist or even become self-aware in an unkind social system. Despite the oppressive patriarchal set-up, Gauri retains her dignity and her moral strength is what Anand has in mind for the humanistic philosophy.

K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar states that the fiction of Anand fuses social protest with moral concern for human dignity (Iyengar, 2019). Anand expands this protest toward the domestic sphere by exposing injustice within patriarchal traditions in **Gauri**. The book implies that if we remain oblivious about women's plight, there will be no social reform. Genuine social progression requires equality of sexes, emotional respect and absence of domestic oppression.

Through **Gauri**, Anand seeks to broaden the scope of Indian English social realism by showing that injustice does not merely reside in public institutions but also in family structure and social relationships of everyday life. Thus, the novel is both a critique of patriarchy as well as an affirmation of female dignity and human equality.

Anand's Humanism and Social Realism

Mulk Raj Anand has often been acclaimed as one of the earliest exponents of social realism in Indian English literature for consistently addressing the lives of social outsiders. In his fiction, he does not romanticise society but presents its ugly face of caste-oppression, economic exploitation, colonial domination, industrial conflict and patriarchal injustice. Anand's novel reveals the inherent inequalities of colonial India and so ends up becoming a medium of protest. Consequently, his realism acts not just as a form of artistic representation but also as a social and moral intervention.

K. Naik noticed that Anand turned Indian English fiction in a different direction towards the experiences of people from the oppressed communities which had not been part of elite literature (Naik, 1982). Through Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta and Gauri, Anand highlights the oppression of common people caught in the web of a system. These characters are not super heroes, but representatives of deep social realities. Anand's realism derives its power from his ability to depict social injustice as something that is part and parcel of everyday existence rather than an isolated incident or an expressionless tragedy. Through Bakha's humiliation and social exclusion, Anand reveals the cruelty of caste hierarchy in **Untouchable**. The narrative brings to light the way in which untouchability annihilates the dignity of individuals and turns them into mere instruments of ritual impurity. Munoo's suffering and displacement illustrates the exploitation of labour under industrial capitalism in **Coolie**. Anand emphasizes how economic systems convert workers into commodities based solely on their efficiency and output. In **Two Leaves and a Bud**, colonization acts as a violent and exploitative system that continues through racial domination and plantation

labour. Anand critiques the hypocrisy of imperial claims of civilization and superiority through Gangu's tragic fate.

Anand's realism goes into domestic and industrial spaces. **The Big Heart** looks at the destruction caused by mechanized industrialization on artisanal communities while **Gauri** deals with oppression of women in patriarchal families. Therefore, Anand constructs social injustice as multidimensional, which works through the interplay of caste, class, colonialism, industrialization, and gender hierarchy. The fiction of his is a multi-dimensional critique of social systems that deny equality and dignity to outcasts. Anand is shaped by Georg Lukács' documentary realism and representation of ordinary people in historically important circumstances. (Lukács, 1964). Anand depicts not only the individual suffering but also the social structure responsible for it. Thus, his realism is socially analytical rather than merely descriptive. Anand's detailed descriptions of slums, factories, plantations, workshops and domestic spaces create a vivid picture of colonial Indian society and its institutional foundations of oppression. However, Anand's realism is not merely ideological or propagandist writing. For it is rooted all the way down in emotional and ethical experience. His protest comes not from hatred but rather from love. Anand does not only condemn society but aims to rouse moral conscience and social responsibility. Literature, in his mind, is a weapon against injustice and a spur for reform. His novels thus simply establish social realism as the art of a social protest.

Conclusion

Mulk Raj Anand's fiction refuses to remain indifferent to human suffering. Thus, he is arguably the most powerful voice of social realism in Indian English literature. The setting of His novels is colonial India, but their emotional and moral effect extends well beyond a single historical moment. Through **Untouchable**, **Coolie**, **Two Leaves and a Bud**, **The Big Heart**, and **Gauri (The Old Woman and the Cow)**, Anand depicts a society fragmented by caste hierarchy, economic exploitation, colonial domination, industrial disruption and domination of patriarchy. Not only does his fiction document injustice, but it is also such that it humanizes those whom the society seeks to silence, marginalize and dehumanize.

The research asserts that Anand consistently centers ordinary individuals in order to contradict structures of power and inequality. The writer has not made any of his protagonists like Bakha Munoo Gangu Ananta Gauri a heroic figure in the literary sense. Anand converts personal pain into social criticism via these characters. The humiliation of Bakha brings to light the cruelty of untouchability; the tragic journey of Munoo reveals the brutality of industrial capitalism; the suffering of Gangu exposes a narrative of violence against imperialism; the dislocation of artisans in **The Big Heart** exposes the devastating impact of modernity and mechanization; and Gauri's struggle brings to light the emotional and domestic oppression of patriarchy. All these accounts work together to condemn a system that is fundamentally unequal and exclusionary.

Anand's storytelling displays extraordinary realism and high sensitivity which is one of the greatest strengths of Anand's fiction. His novels are not cold sociological documentation; they are narratives that are morally empowered by compassion and ethics. Anand's portrayal of degradation caused by poverty, humiliation, labour exploitation and social discrimination is honest and intense.

Nevertheless, his characters do not lose their humanity. His characters remain persistent even in adversity for dignity, validation, love, and autonomy. Anand's realism has abiding power because of this humanistic aspect that makes him different from ideological writing. Indeed, his fiction does not simply lay blame on oppressive systems, it affirms the worth of human life.

The research also illustrates Anand's vision of literature as something which should concern itself with society and oppose injustice. In his novels, he continuously interrogates social customs, institutional authority as well as moral hypocrisy. Anand uses literature as the awakening of ethics at the social level as it criticizes caste orthodoxy, capitalist exploitation, colonial violence, industrial greed and patriarchal domination. Through his imaginative work, readers are brought face to face with realities the world forgets. In this perspective, Anand transmutes the novel into an instrument of protest, reform and humanitarian consciousness. Another critical element of Anand's success is the continuing relevance of his themes. His novels are set in colonial India, but the issues he raises are still relevant. In our present-day society, there is social inequality, exploitation of labour, denial of gender rights, division of classes, denial of dignity and many more. As a result, Anand's fiction transcends its historical context and continues to speak to contemporary concerns around justice and equality. The significance of his novels lies in their power to open the eyes of the readers to suffering and to the systems producing it.

In the end, Mulk Raj Anand is truly more than just a protest novelist. A writer whose realism cannot be dissociated from a certain faith in humanity. His fiction tackles that no matter how brutal a social system, human beings will never completely lose their craving for dignity and equality. By fusing social realism with deep compassion, Anand created a literary tradition that recorded the voices of the underprivileged and turned Indian English fiction into a platform for moral resistance and social awareness. The author's novels continue to survive because they remind readers that literary works can make most sense only when they speak for men against evil.

References

1. Anand, M. R. (2001). *Coolie*. Penguin Books.
2. Anand, M. R. (2001). *Untouchable*. Penguin Books.
3. Anand, M. R. (2002). *Two leaves and a bud*. Penguin Books.
4. Anand, M. R. (2004). *The big heart*. Arnold-Heinemann.
5. Anand, M. R. (2007). *Gauri: The old woman and the cow*. Orient Paperbacks.
6. Arnold, M. (2005). *Essays in criticism*. Oxford University Press.
7. Beauvoir, S. de. (2011). *The second sex* (C. Borde & S. Malovany-Chevallier, Trans.). Vintage Books. (Original work published 1949)
8. Engels, F. (2010). *The origin of the family, private property and the state*. Penguin Classics.
9. Fanon, F. (2004). *The wretched of the earth* (R. Philcox, Trans.). Grove Press.
10. Iyengar, K. R. S. (2019). *Indian writing in English*. Sterling Publishers.
11. Lukács, G. (1964). *Studies in European realism*. Howard Fertig.
12. Marx, K. (1975). *Economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844*. Progress Publishers.
13. Mohanty, C. T. (2003). *Feminism without borders: Decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*. Duke University Press.
14. Naik, M. K. (1982). *A history of Indian English literature*. Sahitya Akademi.
15. Williams, R. (1983). *Culture and society: 1780–1950*. Columbia University Press.

Journalism and content creation: A comprehensive overview of Indian Youth & News in the Ecosystem of Streaming Media

Dr Atashi Bhattacharya, State Aided College Teacher – I, Department of Journalism & Mass Communication, Surendranath College for Women, University of Calcutta, West Bengal

Dr. Jhumur Datta Gupta, Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Sister Nivedita University, Kolkata, West Bengal

Abstract

Journalism is no longer the core business of journalists; it is now the area of content creators.(Goyanes & Gil de Zuniga 2021)It is interesting how the term 'prosumer' is helping to blur the lines between the traditionally separate uses of urban space. The present research paper maps the overlapping ecosystem of the news industry in India. Legacy media and independent content creators and how the youth are reacting to this ecosystem and how they educate themselves in the context of misinformation-misinformation and disinformation. The researchers employ a mixed-method research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative survey among 100 undergraduate students followed by thematic analysis of in-depth interview of 10 content creators were conducted. This study demonstrates that the Indian news ecosystem is undergoing a fundamental transformation shaped by streaming media, digital platforms, and the active participation of youth as both consumers and prosumers of news.

Keywords : *Legacy media, Digital media, Content creators, News ecosystem, Digital Journalism*

Introduction

Journalism has changed its characteristics in the streaming era. The inner core of the digital platform has changed the eco system. Journalism is no longer the core business of journalists; it is now the area of content creators. (Goyanes & Gil de Zuniga 2021) Since the emergence and growing popularity of digital technologies and social media platforms, the relationship between professional and citizen journalism has been challenging. In recent years, however, this critical relationship has de-escalated due to a growing collaboration in shaping a complementally news repertoire. Social media use for news and traditional media consumption are explored as additive moderators over the relationship of users' perceptions on professional journalism on citizens' news content creation, showing a positive significant effect.

(Hayes et al., 2007) Over the years, the Internet has changed dramatically as a vehicle for journalism. It has evolved from a shaky experiment by a relative handful of enterprising news organizations in the 1990s to an increasingly dominant news source for majority and a news production platform not only for journalists but also for millions of other people around the country and the world.

(Harlow Summer, 2024) In today's digital age, influencers and content creators dominate the global information landscape, reshaping how we consume and share ideas. As traditional media channels lose their influence, particularly among younger audiences, these modern communicators are increasingly becoming the primary sources of information. With the power to reach millions of followers and engage niche communities, influencers play a crucial role in shaping public discourse. Ensuring that they provide ethical, credible and professional content is essential to addressing misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech on digital platforms (Harlow Summer, 2024).

Digital content creators, are gaining an increasingly large foothold in the newsSphere. The Democratic National Convention (DNC) in the United States gave more than 200 creators media credentials to cover Kamala Harris' presidential nomination. The journalism industry is on high alert as news audiences continue to migrate away from legacy media to social media, and many young people place more trust in TikTokers, Podcasters than in journalists working at storied news outlets. According to the 2024 Digital News Report from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, more than half of TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram users get their news from "personalities" on social media, as opposed to mainstream outlets and journalists.

Ecosystem of Streaming Media

In May 2024, the World Press Freedom Day Conference in Santiago, Chile, became the laboratory for a groundbreaking experiment that reshape the future of environmental reporting -the idea that TikTok influencers would work alongside professional journalists to cover the environmental crisis might have seemed far-fetched. Charlotte BrumBezié, known to her 880,000. TikTok and Instagram followers as @noseaswaste said, It's a really interesting paradigm shift. She added that her presence at the 31st World Press Freedom Day Conference would be part of a revolutionary approach to information dissemination.

(Nic Newman Nic et al., 2025) India has the world's largest YouTube audience with close to 491m users and it is the most important network for independent creators along with Instagram. Rising data, smartphone and social media use, combined with the large potential audience help to explain the popularity of news creators, influencers, and big personality journalists in India. The diversity of Indian influencers is hard to represent in a report as a significant amount of content is consumed in local languages, with many of the top influencers often switching between Hindi and English.

(Nic Newman Nic et al., 2025) The influencer ecosystem is both politically influential and fraught. Ahead of India's last national elections in 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi created and attended a National Creators Award where some of the country's top social media influencers were felicitated by him; a nod to their reach and influence with India's younger voters. In a significant August 2025 directive, India's apex court urged the government to include penalties for misconduct by social media influencers in its social media guidelines. India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has also indicated it will soon outline steps to curb platforms and influencers allegedly disseminating content that may incite violence.

This research paper maps the overlapping ecosystem of the news industry in India. Legacy media and independent content creators and how the youth are reacting to this ecosystem and how they educate themselves in the context of information disorder.

Theoretical Analysis:

Marshall McLuhan's concept 'the medium is the message' focuses on communication technologies' societal impact.(What is media ecology?," 2025)

Media Ecology

As per NeilPostman, Media ecology looks into the matter of how media of communication affect human perception, understanding, feeling, and value; and how our interaction with media facilitates or impedes our chances of survival. The word ecology implies the study of environments: their structure, content, and impact on people. It is a complex message system which imposes on human beings certain ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving.

(Lee Sarah, 2025) Media ecologists know, generally, what it is they are interested in—the interactions of communications media, technology, technique and processes with human feeling, thought, value, and behavior. But media ecologists do not, as yet, have a coherentframework in which to organize their subject matter or their questions.Media ecology is, in short, a preparadigmatic science.

Prosumer Theory

Regarding the Prosumer Theory, the term ‘prosumer’ was first introduced by Alvin Toffler in his 1980 book, *The Third Wave*, and explores the idea that as society shifts towards the post-industrial age, the producer and the consumer amalgamate into the prosumer. The prosumer actively works to produce the services and goods that they buy and consume. For example, self-checkouts at the supermarket, DIY furniture from Ikea, automated ticket machines at train stations, or online order and delivery services such as ‘eBay or ‘Amazon.’

It is interesting how the term 'prosumer' is helping to blur the lines between the traditionally separate uses of urban space. At one time, grocers or shop owners would have lived in the space above their stores, but since commercialism boomed in the 1950s, a clear distinction between areas has been established (e.g. neighbourhoods vs. factory spaces). The introduction of prosumption has led to a lack of distinction between where work and home life begin and end. This raises questions about the effect that technology will have on the urban landscape in future years.

In this research paper, the researchers seek to map audience behavior and their use of matrix after the digital revolution. From the perspective of Prosumer Theory, the consumer becomes the creator or producer of the content also. The receiver and sender of this watertight segment have changed, and the receiver has become the creator instantly.

Literature Review

(Pereira Divina, 2021) Algorithms can undertake decisions such as prioritizing, classifying, associating, and filtering content, which usually requires editorial insight in news media organizations (Diakopolous, 2019; van Dijck et al., 2018). With the right context, algorithms can sift through content quite easily; however, when it comes to sensitive material, as is often the case with news, the information may get filtered out by platforms deeming it inappropriate for consumption and/or only make similar content visible to the viewers (Cohen, 2019; Diakopolous,

2019). In the same vein, depending on the social and ideological norms of the person and/or the organization setting the algorithms, certain information can be rendered invisible or certain information may be valued over others, which may also result in algorithmic bias (Diakopolous, 2019).

(Nic Newman Nic et al., 2025) Cheap mobile data, rising smartphone and social media use, and the large potential audience help explain the popularity of news creators, influencers, and big personality journalists in India. Our data, along with the very high follower counts, indicate that the names at the top of this list have significant reach and influence, at least with our more educated, English-speaking, urban Indian sample.

(Stephen Monica et al.) Mobile technology allows stories to be circulated at a rapid speed, reaching global audiences in real time. The overabundance of information has emerged as one of the most pressing issues today and may be best illustrated in the 2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19) disease outbreak. Misinformation about COVID-19 exploded, leading World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus to call attention to the “infodemic” in addition to the pandemic itself. The term “infodemic” was popularized by David Rothkopf (2003), who highlighted the large amount of information accompanying the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) epidemic.

(Sahi Rahul, 2025) The recent death hoax of the famous actor Dharmendra is a perfect illustration of how the monster of falsehoods rises, conquers the world, and does damage before the mechanisms of correction have a chance to operate. In the first week of November 2025, the first wave of reports from different social media accounts and even some online news outlets claimed that Dharmendra had died at the age of 89. The news travelled like wildfire, causing confusion, grief, and emotional suffering in large circles of fans, one could say the whole world. This case is not a single event. This is part of a cycle of misinformation that goes through the stages from one unverified claim to the next due to emotional value, the virality of platforms, and accelerating online engagement.

(Robertson Maya, 2025) India has cemented its position as the world’s largest digital consumer market, with Indians spending a staggering 1.13 trillion hours on digital platforms in 2024, according to an Ernst & Young report published in partnership with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry. This unprecedented engagement surpasses all other global markets, highlighting the immense potential of advertisers and digital businesses. India’s digital population surged to 524 million, driven by widespread smartphone adoption, which reached 480 million users in year. The total minutes spent online skyrocketed to 2,389 billion, reflecting a deepening dependence on digital ecosystems for entertainment, shopping, and social interactions.

(“Youth avoiding news, says Reuters study,” 2022) According to the 2022 Reuters Institute Digital News Report, an annual study that tracks how news is consumed in different countries, trust in news is falling, with much of the public, especially the younger age groups, increasingly turning away from news. The study, based on a survey conducted in 46 markets through online questionnaires, finds that “the connection between journalism and much of the public may be fraying.” Noting that people are trusting news content less and less, the report states that consumption of traditional news media declined in nearly all the countries surveyed, with online and social consumption of news not compensating for it. Furthermore, the proportion of news consumers who say that they “avoid

news” has risen sharply across countries, with the report describing the phenomenon as “selective avoidance.”

Research Gap

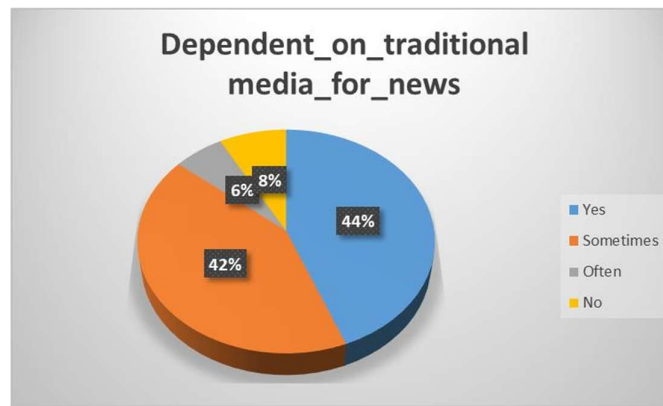
The literature review does not adequately discuss the relationship between the emerging news ecosystem and Indian youth. Although a few previous studies indicate that young audiences are more inclined toward news-oriented content produced outside legacy media, the specific formats that most attract them remain underexplored. Furthermore, while digital media and misinformation are closely intertwined, the literature does not explain the mechanisms through which content creators attempt to counter misinformation. The rationale behind the creators’ choice to pursue this role is also insufficiently addressed. Another gap concerns the extent to which Indian youth have distanced themselves from the tone and conventions of legacy media. Do they truly disengage from traditional news outlets and rely exclusively on independent digital news creators?

Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between the emerging digital news ecosystem and Indian youth
2. To identify which formats of digital news content (e.g., reels, podcasts, long-form videos, infographics, live discussions) most attract Indian youth
3. To analyze the link between digital media consumption and exposure to misinformation among youth.
4. To investigate the strategies and mechanisms employed by independent content creators to counter misinformation.
5. To explore the motivations behind content creators’ choice to position themselves as alternative news sources.
6. To assess the extent to which Indian youth have disengaged from legacy media and determine whether they are consuming a hybrid mix of mainstream and independent sources.

Research Methodology

This research paper employs a mixed-method research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to thoroughly examine the restructuring of Indian News media due to the increasing popularity of streaming media and digital platforms. A quantitative survey was conducted among 100 undergraduate students in Kolkata using a 9-item structured online questionnaire that included demographic questions and questions on platform preferences, engagement, and attitude towards online content creation. Participants were chosen using non-probability convenience sampling from undergraduate classes and student communities. The data thus collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative in-depth interviews were also conducted with ten (10) news content creators working in various domains of digital journalism. Codes were developed inductively from the interview transcript and later divided into broader themes, such as audience engagement, audience behaviour, technological adoption, ethical considerations, and others, for thematic analysis.

Data Analysis**1: Frequency Distribution of Dependence on Traditional Media for News**

The above figure shows the frequency distribution of the dependence of undergraduate students on traditional media for news 44 % of the participants said that they still rely completely on traditional media for news, followed by 6% who responded as often relying on traditional media. There were 42 % participants who referred to traditional media only in some cases, while 8% participants did not depend on traditional media at all for news

Relationship between dependency on legacy media for news consumption and trust in digital platforms

Dependent on Legacy media for news	Trust in digital platforms for news				Total
		Yes, I trust digital media 100% for news	I trust digital media for news in about 50% of cases	I never trust digital platforms for news	
	Yes	6	38	0	44
		6.0%	38.0%	.0%	44.0%
	Often	1	4	1	6
		1.0%	4.0%	1.0%	6.0%
	Sometimes	4	33	5	42
		4.0%	33.0%	5.0%	42.0%
	No	1	7	0	8

		1.0%	7.0%	.0%	8.0%
Total		12	82	6	100
		12.0%	82.0%	6.0%	100.0%

The above table highlights the relationship between the dependency of participants on legacy media for news consumption and the trust they have in digital platforms creating news content. The highest percentage of participants (38 %) who responded that they completely rely on traditional media for news also opined that they trust digital platforms for news only in 50 % of the cases, followed by 33 % of participants who sometimes consume news on legacy media but trust digital platforms only in about 50 % of the cases. There were 7 participants (7 %), who, although do not depend on legacy media for news yet, trust digital platforms in 50 % of cases. There were only 12 participants (12 %) who agreed to trust digital platforms for news entirely.

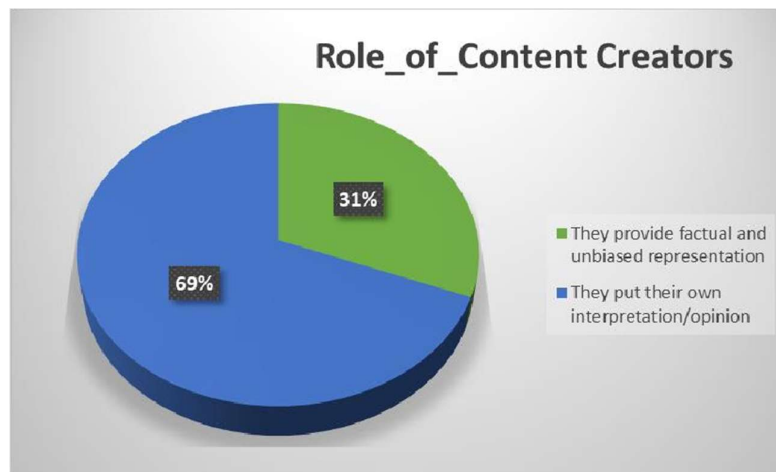
Cross tabulation between Dependency on digital media for news and news sources

News sources on digital media							Total
Dependent On digital Media for news		Established news content creators from a non-journalistic background	Renowned news brands on YouTube / digital news portals	Random news content creators/channels providing news content	Renowned journalists who create digital content	Others	
	Yes	1	10	20	8	0	39
		1.0%	10.0%	20.0%	8.0%	.0%	39.0%
	Often	1	2	3	1	0	7
		1.0%	2.0%	3.0%	1.0%	.0%	7.0%
	Sometimes	1	7	14	6	0	28
		1.0%	7.0%	14.0%	6.0%	.0%	28.0%
	No	1	1	17	5	2	26
		1.0%	1.0%	17.0%	5.0%	2.0%	26.0%

The above outlines the relationship between participants' dependency on digital media for news and the news sources on digital media from which they consume news. The highest percentage of

participants (20 %) who responded that they completely rely on digital media for news also said that they follow news from random news content creators or channels providing news content, followed by 17 % of participants who sometimes consume news on digital media but follow news from random news content creators or channels providing news content. There were 5 participants (5 %) who do not depend on digital media for news, but follow renowned journalists who create digital content. There were only 4 participants (4 %) who agreed to follow news on digital media only through established news content creators from a non-journalistic background.

Frequency Distribution of the Role of Content Creators while creating news content



The above figure illustrates the frequency distribution of the role of digital content creators in creating news content, as perceived by the respondents. 69% of the respondents stated that when creating news content, digital content creators often include their own opinion or interpretation. However, 31 % respondents said that while creating news content, digital content creators provide only factual details and give an unbiased representation.

Cross tabulation of Dependency on digital media for news and the content format preferred by the participants

Dependent on digital media for news					
	Yes	Often	Sometimes	No	Total
Articles / blog-style news posts	5	0	1	3	9
	5.0%	.0%	1.0%	3.0%	9.0%
Long-form discussions by content creators	3	2	6	4	15
	3.0%	2.0%	6.0%	4.0%	15.0%
Short videos, Infographics / visual explainers	1	0	1	0	2
	1.0%	.0%	1.0%	.0%	2.0%
Podcasts	3	0	0	0	3
	3.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	3.0%

Podcasts, Reels, Short videos, Infographics / visual explainers	8	4	8	10	30
	8.0%	4.0%	8.0%	10.0%	30.0%
Podcasts, Reels, Short videos, Long-form discussions by content creators, Infographics / visual explainers	0	0	0	1	1
	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Podcasts, Reels, Short videos, Live streams	1	0	2	0	3
	1.0%	.0%	2.0%	.0%	3.0%
Reels	6	0	3	1	10
	6.0%	.0%	3.0%	1.0%	10.0%
Reels, Short videos	7	1	4	0	12
	7.0%	1.0%	4.0%	.0%	12.0%
Short videos	4	0	2	2	8
	4.0%	.0%	2.0%	2.0%	8.0%
Live streams	1	0	1	5	7
	1.0%	.0%	1.0%	5.0%	7.0%

The above table illustrates the relationship between participants' dependency on digital media for news and the content format preferred by the participants. The highest percentage of participants (20 %) who responded that they rely on digital media for news entirely, often or sometimes also said that they prefer content in form of Podcasts, Reels, Short videos and Infographics / visual explainers, followed by 10 % of participants who do not consume news on digital media but prefer content in form of Podcasts, Reels, Short videos and Infographics / visual explainers. There were 15 participants (15 %) who prefer Long-form discussions by content creators, while 20 % participants prefer reels and the short video format of content.

Thematic analysis

The recurring theme observed in the interviews was a shift in professional identity among the content creators. Many of them emphasized the fact that they must be considered as journalists who use content creation as a tool to disseminate information. They do not follow the influencer model, motivated solely by popularity, judged by the number of followers or subscribers. Many respondents deliberately negotiate a hybrid identity. Instead of a change in professional values, content creation was characterized as a form of expression. Some of the interviewees work independently as digital content creators while being associated with legacy media. The editorial independence, flexibility of content format, frequency of posts, absence of institutional restraint and direct connection with the audience are the features of digital journalism that drive them. The idea symbolises a larger shift in the Indian media landscape, with individual creators serving as micro-newsrooms.

When enquired about audience engagement and consumption patterns among the youth, all of them mentioned the 'shorter attention spans' and an increase in preference for 'visually-engaging

content'. Some of them also have seen a propensity for quicker updates among their followers and subscribers. But in the interviews, a dichotomy of audience behavior was highlighted. While some creators believed that audiences nowadays are attracted towards rumours and sensational stories, others opined that there is a growing popularity of authentic stories. People engage with narratives that they find more relatable. Creators are therefore constantly trying to maintain a balance between short-form and informational content. The fight between speed and depth of a story is evident in this fragmented audience ecosystem.

Participants reported the use of AI tools for transcription, ideation, with multimedia, data visualization, and personalization capabilities while creating their content. They take the help of platform analytics for understanding audience preferences. Social media, especially YouTube, has guided the content creators very well. Attractive thumbnails are used to attract the audience's attention towards the stories. Some of the digital creators mentioned that advanced editing applications and interactive graphics help simplify complex information. Live streaming tools, polls, and Q&A features are also often used to make the content more interactive and create a two-way communication channel. Although some of them agreed that passion and intent are more important than using technology but they have adopted technology as it helps refine the presentation. One of the content creators who has been associated with digital journalism for over 11 years and was once a part of legacy media stated that she focuses on understanding people, asking meaningful questions, and telling stories with emotion and clarity. Similarly, for many of them, technology supports the process—but passion drives it.

Whether the creator makes content on politics, social concerns, sports, culture, or entertainment, they recognize truth, authenticity, and accountability as critical to their work. The majority of them rejected sensationalism, click bait methods, and rumor-driven content, even though such content often generates more engagement. They stand united in the conviction that content creation, particularly in journalism, must serve a greater social purpose. When asked about the ethical considerations in the shifting ecosystem, some stated that they try to spread awareness and educate the masses, some strive to give a voice to the voiceless and encourage critical thinking, while others expressed a moral need to priorities society before personal branding. Ethical journalism rules the algorithm-driven digital landscape, reinforcing journalism's traditional public service role within a contemporary digital context.

Conclusion

The findings of the study clearly show that youth have not entirely given up on the legacy media for news consumption. Rather, there is a shift towards a hybrid model that combines mainstream sources with independent digital content providers. Because of this shift in audience consumption patterns, content creators are also reshaping journalism by adopting flexible content formats, technological tools, and audience-centric strategies while being cautious about the accuracy and social responsibility. Authenticity and integrity are still highly valued despite concerns about false information and sensationalism. Overall, the present study highlights that the present Indian news ecosystem is undergoing a transformation shaped by streaming media, digital platforms, and the active participation of youth as both consumers and prosumers of news.

References

1. Goyanes, M., & Gil de Zúñiga, H. (2021). Citizen news content creation: Perceptions about professional journalists and the additive double moderating role of social and traditional media. *E/ profesional de la información*. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2021.ene.01>
2. Harlow Summer. (2024). Content Creators and Journalists: Redefining News and Credibility in the Digital Age (1st ed.). Knight Center For Journalism.
3. Hayes, A. S., Singer, J. B., & Ceppos, J. (2007). Shifting roles, enduring values: The credible journalist in a digital age. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 22(4), 262-279. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08900520701583545>
 - a. <https://cyberpeace.org/resources/blogs/from-clicks-to-consequences-how-the-dharmendra-death-hoax-exposes-the-dangers-of-misinformation>
 - b. <https://mobilemarketingreads.com/indians-spent-1-1-trillion-hours-on-digital-platforms-in-2024/>
 - c. <https://www.media-ecology.org/What-Is-Media-Ecology>
4. Lee Sarah. (2025, May). *Understanding Media Ecology*. Media Ecology Association .
5. Nic Newman Nic, Arguedas Amy Ross, Mukherjee Mitali, & Fletcher Richard. (2025, October 28). *Mapping news creators and influencers in social and video networks*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news-creators-influencers/2025/India>
6. Pereira Divina. (2021). Algorithms and automation. In *Platformisation and the Indian news media* (pp. 9-10). Erasmus University Rotterdam.
7. Robertson Maya. (2025, March 28). *Indians spent 1.1 trillion hours on digital platforms in 2024, the most of any market worldwide*.
8. Sahi RAHUL. (2025, November 15). *From clicks to consequences: How the Dharmendra death hoax exposes the dangers of misinformation*. Uniting for Global Cyber Resilience | CyberPeace.
9. Stephens Monica, Poon J., & Tan Gordon. Misinformation in the Digital Age
10. *What is media ecology?* (2025). Media Ecology Association <https://www.media-ecology.org/What-Is-Media-Ecology>
11. *Youth avoiding news, says Reuters study*. (2022, June 15). The Hindu. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/youth-avoiding-news-says-reuters-study/article65527704.ece>

Women's Empowerment in the Digital Age: A Systematic Literature Review Using TCCM and ADO Frameworks

Soumee Roy Choudhury Mukherjee, Assistant Professor, School of Media, George College, (under MAKAUT), Kolkata, West Bengal

Dr. Mou Mukherjee Das, Associate Professor, Department of Media Science, Future Institute of Engineering and Management, Kolkata, West Bengal

Introduction

As Article 14 (Right to Equality) and Article 15 (Prohibition of Discrimination) of Indian constitution guarantees empowerment of women in India, several policies are aimed for them advancement since the inception of the five year plans. The Govt. of India generated national policy which aimed at women's advancement long back while from fifth five years' plan it was shifted from the motto of welfare to advancement. Henceforth the National commission for women established by the act of Parliament in 1990, the issue of women attaining advancement towards equality is well acclaimed. Empowering women is the most pressing issue in current scenario in India due to their role in nation building and social stability, which thrives on growth, development and betterment.

Women plays key role in the process of nation building. Women empowerment through Social media is the new tool, which allows women to break the conventional stereotypes and demographic categories (Ibrahim Fatema, Social media and Women Empowerment: A brand new facet). Social media transform connectivity effectively in both global and local level. It is a useful weapon in the hand of women specifically who have started to explore the Unprecedented opportunity offered by social media platform. It has lent voice to the voiceless women and presents an alternative for conventional way of communicating to the outer world.

Discussion over various issues related to women gets a new avenue to ensure, engage and empower women.

Literature review

Social Media, Interactivity and Web 2.0

It is evident that the inter-relationship between social media and web2.0 technology is a kind of fact and factor, stimuli and stimulus effect and cause for the users. The term "Web 2.0" was first used by Dale Dougherty in 2003 and broadcast by Tim O'Reilly in 2004. As the main attribute of web 2.0 technology is interactivity thus it is heavily used to contribute in content making in social media websites. As web.1 version was providing information to the users web2.0 technology assures feedback from the end of audience. Therefore, the users can take part in process of making information and have control over it. Naturally publishing content in website becomes easy, sharing of information becomes effective and networking and collaboration are smooth going process with the implementation of web 2.0 technology (SfetcuNicolae, 2017, Web 2.0 / Social media / Social networks).

Berners-Lee, the founder of world wide web emphasizes the point of the World Wide Web has always been people-to-people interaction; therefore, there is nothing new or revolutionary about sites that facilitate that (Naughton 2011). The issue of social media whether it can be called as new media is a debate. The person who coined the phrase new media i.e. Paul Levinson totally denounced the possibility of social media to be named as new media. According to him every media has some social impact and utility so only termed as social media the new technology and its possibility should not be undermined. (Web 2.0, Social Media, and the “New” Media).

Thus to define social media most fitting definition is given by Nicole Ellison: “We define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.” (boyd and Ellison 2007).

Social media acts as catalyst to Women Empowerment

Social media transform connectivity effectively in both global and local level. Intensive use of social media results in the intrusion of this new opportunity in domestic area. It is a useful weapon in the hand of women specifically who have started to explore the unprecedented opportunity offered by social media platform. It has become voice of voiceless section of women and an alternative for conventional way of communicating to outer world. Blogs, forums, business networks, photo sharing platforms, social gaming social networks, and chat apps are just a few examples of the various types of social media. The social media platforms that are easily accessible are: Facebook, We Chat, Snapchat, Pinterest, Twitter, Whatsapp, Viber, and so on. In terms of the people's interests, it is changing quickly. (Hazarika.L, 2021) Discussion over various issues related to women gets a new avenue to ensure, engage and empower women. (KumariMadhu, 2020). Social media refers to a collection of tools that promote communication, community, and engagement; in other words, it enables people to establish connections and exchange knowledge in online networks and communities (Kulsum N,2018).

According to a demographic chart provided by PEW Research, less women than men used social media in 2005. It began in 2009 when women began utilizing social media at a marginally higher rate than men. With 68% of women and 62% of men using social media on a daily basis, the growth rate has accelerated. The IAMAI Internet and Mobile Association of India research states that 66% of India's 180 million people routinely use social media in urban areas. The fact that 76% of Facebook (Meta) users in India are men and only 24% are women shows that barriers still exist for women. In India, 71% of men and 29% of women use the internet. According to research, 70% of women experience horrific violence, and 7 out of 10 men and women believe that it is acceptable for a man to slap his wife if she doesn't perform her household chores effectively. Still, it is reflected that “Me Too” movement raised alarm in the social media platform “My space” and gained prominence in civil society since 2006.

Importance of social media in Public Sphere

The intervention made by social media is evident now, to widen the gap made between the process of communication between Government and public through conventional mode of media. Hofmann, Beverungen, Räckers and Becker 1 argued that governments should provide information to their stakeholders in a way to communicate with them. Social media is cost friendly and its effect is huge as the web 2.0 technology ensured the maximum feedback from the part of the receiver.

Magro asserted that social media takes its importance from its characteristics that include: participation, collaboration, empowerment, and time. The major benefits of using social media in e-government can be summarized in three benefits 1) Transparency, which is to release the information that stakeholders are always checking for. 2) Participation to maintain citizens engaged with their governments, by allowing citizens to express their opinions, experiences and wisdoms. Governments can use a survey to get feedback from citizens before any decision is taken, then pass this information to different government agencies for actions to be taken. 3) Collaboration is the high level engagement between government and citizens, where citizens participate by creating the content of government topics and the government use and follow the content generated by citizens to fulfil government mission. This way more time is saved and thus cost and effort for governments.

Theoretical Framework

“Empowerment thus refers to the expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.”(Kabeer N, 2001)

While discussing about empowerment of women the context brings the validity of empowerment the terms need to be judged in various ways. How one can ask for empowerment when the term still not representative in itself, and there is unlimited scope to define and work on the ground. (Batliwala, 1993.) As the paper directly engages the term empowerment in the context of women, therefore the most relevant work is done by Naila Kabeer in the year of 1999. She defined the framework of empowerment in the light of another concept framed by Dr. Amartya Sen in the year of 1990. Kabeer extracted from the idea laid by Sen in his “Capability Framework”. Naila Kabeer’s “Empowerment Framework”.

Kabeer proposed three inter related dimensions as Resources, Agency and Achievement which can be read as Outcome also. According to Kabeer, Resources, which create the circumstances in which decisions are made; Agency, which is important to the decision-making process; and Achievements, which are the results of decisions. The framework refers as capabilities, define by Dr. Amartya Sen in his Capability approach. Sen refers to "functionings" as all potential ways of "being and doing" that are valued by people in a certain environment, and "functioning achievements" as specific methods of "being and doing" that are realized by various persons. Our third dimension of power is these actualized accomplishments -or the inability to do so. (Kabeer N ,2001). The discussion over women empowerment thus gets a new dimension after Naila Kabeer gets into the empowerment approach.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework assumes social media as an enabler facilitating women empowerment by amplifying communication and information accessibilities, participation and decision making capabilities. The socio-economic informational resources help women in knowledge acquisition, building social networks, accessing support systems, voicing their opinion and participating enthusiastically in public forum in debates and discussions, thus strengthening them to make informed decisions, strategic choices, take up leadership roles and engage in civic and economic activities.

The role of digital platforms is thus undeniably the most important in such context facilitating inclusive growth, greater social visibility and inclusion in public discourse. exercise of agency through digital platforms ultimately contributes to various empowerment outcomes or achievements, including enhanced self-confidence, economic participation, social visibility, leadership opportunities, political participation, and greater inclusion in public discourse. This framework acknowledges the influence of socio-cultural norms, educational attainment, digital literacy, institutional support, and access to technology as either facilitators or constraints in the process of empowerment through social media.

Accordingly, the framework proposed is

Conceptual Model

Social Media Platforms

(Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, LinkedIn, Online Communities)

↓

Digital Resources

- Access to Information
- Knowledge Sharing
- Social Networking
- Skill Development
- Online Support Systems

↓

Communication Capability

- Self-expression
- Voice and Visibility
- Public Participation
- Networking
- Civic Engagement

↓

Agency

- Decision-making Ability
- Leadership Participation
- Entrepreneurial Intent
- Political Participation
- Collective Action

↓

Empowerment Outcomes

- Economic Empowerment
- Social Empowerment
- Psychological Empowerment
- Political Empowerment
- Digital Empowerment

Moderating Factors

- Education
- Digital Literacy
- Socio-cultural Norms
- Economic Status
- Internet Accessibility
- Government Policies
- Institutional Support

Research Question

After the intense analysis of literature research questions can be generated as

1. How has research on women's empowerment evolved between 1991 and 2024?
2. What role has digital communication and social media played in women's empowerment literature?
3. What theoretical and methodological trends emerge through TCCM and ADO analysis?
4. What research gaps remain in the field?

Objective of the study

- To understand the flow of social research for last few decades relating to the issue of women empowerment.
- To emancipate the idea of Women empowerment from gender studies.
- To evaluate the impact of women empowerment over the decades in the field of research.
- To examine whether social media plays the role of catalyst in the process of women empowerment.
- To establish the tendency observed in the arena of social research relating to women empowerment.

Methodology

The systematic literature review (SLR) was undertaken to develop a detailed/structured history of how women empowerment/research on participation/leadership and communication has changed over time. A rigorous analysis of the literature will be achieved through the use of two frameworks (TCCM Theory Context Characteristics Methodology) and the ADO Framework (Antecedents Decisions Outcomes). By using both analytical perspectives, the SLR represents the intellectual evolution of this area of study from 1991 through 2024 by indicating how research has changed, major trends that are emerging, and identifying important research gaps requiring more scholarly research.

Analysis: The SPAR Method for Gathering Information for Systematic Literature Review

A methodical roadmap for the procedures of finding, screening-conscious filtering, and choosing articles for the SPAR (Structured, Transparent, and Accessible Review) approach methodical and sys reviews that establish scientific rigour and unambiguous replicability. The following details of the SPAR phases are based on data taken from Scopus and Web of Science.

1. Identification: Databases Used: Peer reviewed journals are considered which are thematically based on Women empowerment and social media. Basically Scopus Index. **Search Date:** May 18, 2026. **Keywords used:** Digital Culture, Social Media, Facebook and its perspective, Digital Media Literacy, Women Empowerment

2. Screening: Considered Time Frame: 2001–2024. **Topics covered:** Women Empowerment, Digital Media, Social media, Research ethics, Media literacy. **Language Filter:** English only, for consistency and ease of use. **Source type:** For quality assurance, the source type is limited to journals. **Document Type:** Only reviews and articles.

Duplicates: VOS viewer and R-based SLR tools were used for identification and removal. **Evaluation of Post-Eligibility:** A total of 167 articles were kept. **Final Dataset:** The final dataset consists of 167 articles from 2001 to 2024.

Justification: This final dataset is a representation of excellent, peer-reviewed, and thematically relevant research that serves as the theoretical and empirical foundation for the systematic review and bibliometric analysis conducted for this thesis.

The systematic literature review (SLR) was undertaken to develop a detailed/structured history of how women's empowerment/research on participation/leadership and communication has changed over time. A rigorous analysis of the literature will be achieved through the use of two frameworks (TCCM Theory Context Characteristics Methodology) and the ADO Framework (Antecedents Decisions Outcomes). By using both analytical perspectives, the SLR represents the intellectual evolution of this area of study from 1991 through 2024 by indicating how research has changed, major trends that are emerging, and identifying important research gaps requiring more scholarly research. The TCCM framework is used to provide insight into the different theoretical bases from which academic scholars have approached their studies on women's empowerment, as well as the different contexts in which they studied women's empowerment and participation in social and institutional contexts and the different characteristics of the research and methodological approaches used by the scholars in each of these contexts; whereas the ADO framework allows for the classification of the various factors influencing the process of empowering women through their decision-making behaviour, and the outcomes associated with these factors within the context in which the women's empowerment process occurred.

▪ Literature Synthesis for the Period 1991–2000

The period of research from 1991 through 2000 is considered to be the initial phase of academic exploration into women's empowerment, collective actions, leadership in organizations run by women, and communication avenues for women. The amount of research conducted in this time frame was relatively small compared to what was produced in later decades, which suggests that the area of women's empowerment was still emergent and conceptually scattered when compared to later decades. Much of the research published during this time, focused mainly on structural inequities, feminist collective action, and women's access to participatory spaces; because there was so little research produced at this time, it was also not common to find significant testing of formal models or large-scale empirical validation of the concepts related to women's empowerment.

In the initial studies conducted in the 1990s, there was a strong focus on both feminist and development-oriented concerns. Researchers studied how the interaction between the public and private spheres constrained the empowerment of women. The researchers also explored how patriarchal structures of society influenced women's participation in collective action.(Jeptum.V, MwihiaM.N,2024)Additionally, they investigated how women's organizations have attempted to create non-hierarchical leadership structures. Towards the end of the 1990s, researcher began to realize the importance of communication and media as valuable resources for providing women with a voice and agency and that alternative public spheres of communication and community radio could provide women the opportunity for empowerment. Although the 1990's did not yield a great deal of research on the topics of women's empowerment, participation, and decision-making, the research that was produced provided a conceptual foundation for all subsequent research on the topic.(Priya.P, Venkatesh.A,2021)

Table 1: Publication Trend (1991–2000)

Year	Number of Articles	Trend Observation
1991	1	Initial conceptual attention to women's empowerment in development settings
1992	0	No visible publication in the dataset
1993	0	No visible publication in the dataset
1994	0	No visible publication in the dataset
1995	1	Attention shifts to leadership and organizational dynamics in women's groups
1996	0	No visible publication in the dataset
1997	0	No visible publication in the dataset
1998	1	Emergence of media and communication as tools of women's empowerment
1999	0	No visible publication in the dataset
2000	0	No visible publication in the dataset

The decade from 1991 to 2000 was characterised by a sparse and inconsistent pattern of publications pertaining to the topics covered in this collective paper. Of the few studies identified during that decade, there were only three studies that had been published about the empowerment of women and their involvement in Feminist organisations. Thus, it cannot be inferred that the 1991–2000 period represents a significant growth period for research on this topic, but rather an incubation period during which the core conceptual ideas surrounding women’s empowerment, participation, and Feminist organisations were established. The literature produced during this period is exploratory and issue-orientated, and as such does not exhibit an established pattern of methodological consistency.

According to TCCM and ADO, the decade can be considered a normative and conceptual phase in the literature noted above. The studies produced during this decade were, from a theoretical standpoint, rooted mainly in feminist theory, empowerment theory, participatory development, and arguments for a public sphere. Contextually, the settings most researched during this period were developing communities, Women's organisations, and community media environments. Collectively, the main characteristics examined were equity, a voice in society, participation in society, collective leadership, ability to communicate, and social inclusion. Methodologically, most research was descriptive and qualitative in nature (ie, no formal hypothesis testing). The majority of studies were conducted on the basis of reflective argumentation and not on the basis of solid empirical evidence.

Also, ADO uses structural and socio-cultural variables (such as patriarchy, gender-blind development models, unequal power relations and lack of communication) as antecedent conditions. Decisions made by women regarding participation in collective action, association with an organisation, acceptance of leadership, and participation in the media are based on lack of access to information/communication. Empowerment, solidarity, visibility, and alternative spaces for cultural expression were among the most pronounced outcomes. On contrast, long-term social and institutional outcomes remained unclear.

Table 2: TCCM Framework Analysis (1991–2000)

Dimension	Sub-Dimension	Dominant Patterns Observed	Emerging Shifts	Research Gaps Identified
Theory (T)	Feminist Empowerment Perspectives	Strong focus on women’s oppression, empowerment, and gender inequality	Early move toward linking empowerment with participation and agency	Lack of integrated theoretical models
	Participatory Development Perspectives	Development and education viewed as tools of empowerment	Recognition that gender-blind participation models are inadequate	Limited theory explaining household–community interaction

	Public Sphere / Communication Perspectives	Women's voice and communication spaces discussed conceptually	Alternative media begins to be seen as an empowerment mechanism	Limited empirical validation of feminist communication theory
Context (C)	Community / Development Context	Women in Third World and developing community settings dominate	Empowerment linked with social and economic participation	Limited urban, institutional, and comparative contexts
	Organizational Context	Women's organizations and internal leadership structures examined	Focus on shared power and non- hierarchical organizing	Lack of cross- country organizational comparison
	Media Context	Community radio introduced as a feminist communicative platform	Media starts emerging as a public sphere for empowerment	Very limited studies on technology- mediated participation
Characteristics (C)	Empowerment Traits	Agency, participation, autonomy, and voice emphasized	Growing recognition of empowerment beyond public participation	Limited measurement of empowerment dimensions
	Leadership Traits	Ambivalence toward leadership and authority in women's groups	Shift toward collective leadership and shared authority	Lack of structured leadership models for women's organizations
	Communication Traits	Access, training, and representational voice highlighted	Media participation seen as a route to empowerment	Little work on communication outcomes and reach
Methodology (M)	Research Design	Conceptual and descriptive studies dominate	Some use of illustrative empirical cases	Lack of explanatory and model-based studies
	Analytical Methods	Interpretive and narrative analysis common	Initial use of case- based reflection	No advanced statistical or longitudinal analysis
	Data Collection	Limited empirical evidence; mostly qualitative and contextual discussion	Small-scale contextual observations appear	Absence of large- sample and comparative datasets

Table 3: ADO Framework Analysis (1991–2000)

Framework Dimension	Variable Category	Dominant Variables Identified	Research Direction Observed	Research Gap Identified
Antecedents (A)	Structural Drivers	Patriarchy, gender inequality, exclusion from decision-making	Structural constraints seen as primary barriers to empowerment	Limited multi-level analysis of barriers
	Organizational Drivers	Hierarchy, power imbalance, leadership tension in women's organizations	Organizational structure linked with women's participation	Insufficient work on governance mechanisms
	Communication Drivers	Lack of access, training, and media representation	Communication access starts being treated as a precursor to empowerment	Limited study of media inequalities
Decisions (D)	Participation Decisions	Engagement in collective action and community participation	Women's entry into participatory spaces emphasized	Little attention to withdrawal or non-participation
	Leadership Decisions	Acceptance, negotiation, and sharing of leadership roles	Leadership becomes a site of feminist tension and adaptation	Lack of formal decision-process models
	Communication Decisions	Involvement in women's radio and public expression	Women's communicative participation begins to gain importance	No study of sustained communication engagement
Outcomes (O)	Empowerment Outcomes	Increased agency, visibility, and social recognition	Empowerment framed as multidimensional and process-based	Lack of validated empowerment outcomes
	Organizational Outcomes	Group solidarity, effectiveness, and collective identity	Reflection and open communication linked with stronger organizations	Limited evidence on long-term organizational performance
	Societal Outcomes	Broader social inclusion and feminist public voice	Alternative public spheres emerge as transformative possibilities	Macro-level policy and institutional outcomes underexplored

Overall Interpretation of 1991–2000

The period from 1991 to 2000 seems to be mainly developmental in nature relative to research on women's empowerment and participation. There was no developed empirical field, for the deliberations centered on normative and conceptual issues that facilitated the later research. A lot of focus was put on how women might gain voice, agency, and collective power within patriarchal structures of social relations. Contrariwise, they also projected that public participation is not regarded as an avenue for empowerment. The private sphere, organizational power relations, and communicative exclusion were shaping the ability of women to act.

The 10-year block could be characterized in context of conceptual feminist theorization, narrow but significant contexts, wide empowerments-oriented characteristics, and mostly descriptive methodology. Through the ADO framework, predisposing factors held those of structural inequality, patriarchal authority, and restricted access to organizational and communicative resources; decisions made were toward the participation of women, leadership engagement, and media involvement. Outcomes were founded on empowerment, solidarity, and emergent feminist public visibility. As such, 1991–2000 could be described as a foundational conceptual phase that would pave the way for further in-depth empirical studies, situated in context-specific settings, on women's empowerment through participation and decision-making.

▪ Literature Synthesis for the Period 2001–2010

The decade between 2001–2010 marked an important transitional moment in the knowledge base about how women are empowered, participate, and communicate. That decade showed a decrease in the transition from the Kraushaar decade (1991–2000) to the Campbell decade, where research efforts began to take attention. (Moscrop& Webber,2017) The literature during this time shifted its attention from the primary conception of the feminist discourse to empirical studies that worked on the theoretical and practical mechanisms through which empowerment manifests in social, organizational, and communicative contexts.

These scholars believed that institutions, community involvement, leadership, and access to media influence the agency and social inclusion of women. They did mention how programs should cater to women, yes, but not regarding what are the practical steps toward women's empowerment; but it has moved beyond portraying empowerment as an ideological construct to projecting it as something that is multidimensional in nature. At present, the latter construct now encompasses economic participation, and the ability of women to participate in making decisions, as well as empowerment for their leadership and access to a platform for communication. Studies indeed start regarding the transforming roles of community-based organizations, such as NGOs, and participatory governance venture for empowering women.

In addition, little did it hurt that this particular decade grew increasingly taller than others in terms of understanding communications or communication vehicles—community media and participatory communication—as a vehicle for social change. Discussion moved onto greater undertakings, with more and more women expressing their voices through media venues, challenging normative

stereotypes, and participating vigorously in the public forum. Thus, the period 2001–2010 may be taken to represent the initiation of a process of empirical consolidation by which theoretical assertions were slowly and steadily propped up by empirical studies.

Table 4: Publication Trend (2001–2010)

Year	Number of Articles	Trend Observation
2001	1	Beginning of empirical exploration of empowerment and participation
2002	1	Increased attention to community participation and gender equality
2003	2	Emergence of organizational and leadership perspectives
2004	2	Greater emphasis on institutional mechanisms of empowerment
2005	2	Community-based development models gain importance
2006	3	Communication platforms increasingly discussed in empowerment discourse
2007	2	Focus on participatory governance and social inclusion
2008	3	Expansion of studies linking empowerment with socio-economic development
2009	2	Increasing use of empirical case studies
2010	3	Consolidation of empowerment research within development and communication studies

The publication pattern shows which the research output is increasing at a slow rate over time suggesting that the topic was gaining academic relevance. Unlike the preceding era, when research was sparse most of it being more of a conceptual nature, these years show growing academic involvement and diversification of research themes.

Table 5: TCCM Framework Analysis (2001–2010)

Dimension	Sub-Dimension	Dominant Patterns Observed	Emerging Shifts	Research Gaps Identified
Theory (T)	Empowerment Theory	Empowerment conceptualized as participation, agency, and resource control	Integration of empowerment with development and governance theories	Lack of unified theoretical framework
	Feminist Institutional Theory	Gender inequality examined within institutional and structural contexts	Institutional reforms seen as facilitators of empowerment	Limited testing of feminist institutional models

	Communication for Development Theory	Communication recognized as a catalyst for social change	Participatory communication models gain prominence	Limited integration with digital communication theory
Context (C)	Community and Rural Development Context	Studies largely focused on rural communities and development programmes	Community organizations seen as empowerment platforms	Limited urban and corporate contexts
	Organizational Context	NGOs and grassroots organizations studied as empowerment agents	Leadership and participation dynamics examined	Lack of comparative organizational studies
	Governance Context	Participatory governance and policy frameworks explored	Role of local governance institutions recognized	Limited analysis of policy effectiveness
Characteristics (C)	Empowerment Characteristics	Agency, participation, resource access, and decision-making emphasized	Empowerment measured through socio-economic indicators	Lack of standardized empowerment metrics
	Leadership Characteristics	Women's leadership roles in organizations and communities examined	Collaborative leadership models emerge	Insufficient leadership development frameworks
	Communication Characteristics	Communication access and media participation discussed	Community media seen as empowerment enablers	Limited exploration of digital platforms
Methodology (M)	Research Design	Increase in empirical and mixed-method studies	Case studies widely adopted	Limited longitudinal research
	Analytical Techniques	Descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis common	Gradual use of survey-based methods	Limited use of advanced quantitative models
	Data Sources	Community-level data and organizational case studies dominate	NGO and development programme data used	Lack of cross-national datasets

Table 6: ADO Framework Analysis (2001–2010)

Framework Dimension	Variable Category	Dominant Variables Identified	Research Direction Observed	Research Gap Identified
Antecedents (A)	Socio-Structural Drivers	Gender inequality, socio-cultural barriers, institutional constraints	Structural context seen as primary determinant of empowerment	Limited multilevel analysis
	Organizational Drivers	NGO participation, community organizations, leadership structures	Organizations viewed as facilitators of empowerment	Lack of organizational performance evaluation
	Communication Drivers	Media access, participatory communication, training	Communication platforms linked with voice and visibility	Limited digital communication research
Decisions (D)	Participation Decisions	Women's involvement in development programmes and governance	Participation linked with empowerment outcomes	Limited examination of participation quality
	Leadership Decisions	Acceptance of leadership roles within organizations and communities	Leadership associated with increased agency	Limited research on leadership training mechanisms
	Communication Decisions	Engagement in community media and communication forums	Communication participation linked with social visibility	Lack of long-term engagement studies
Outcomes (O)	Empowerment Outcomes	Increased agency, self-confidence, and social recognition	Empowerment framed as multidimensional	Lack of validated measurement scales
	Organizational Outcomes	Improved group effectiveness and collective participation	Organizational learning and collaboration emphasized	Limited institutional impact analysis
	Societal Outcomes	Enhanced social inclusion and gender equality awareness	Policy discourse on gender inclusion begins emerging	Limited macro-level impact assessment

Overall Interpretation of 2001–2010

One of the earliest periods of empirical consolidation in women empowerment and participation research is between the years 2001 and 2010. Although much of the theoretical grounding remained heavily feminist and development-oriented, the empirical part increasingly characterized research as examining the implementation of empowerment within communities, organizations, and governance systems.(Wang.J,2026) The research work gradually started concentrating not only on theoretical discussion but also on aspects of empowerment that are measurable like participation, leadership, communication access, and decision-making authority.

The period also manifested a pluralism of theoretical approaches, as well as the extension of the contextual coverage to include community and governance institutions, searching's deeper into empowerment features, and the gradual evolution of methodology through anecdotal case studies and surveys. The role of participation, leadership, and communication engagement; as well, the structural and institutional barriers continued to dictate the antecedents in contrast with enhancing participation as social agents. The literature on outcomes had identified that now result with increased agency, improved relations within organizations, and greater social inclusion.

Taking it all in all, the decade of the 2001–2010 era can be characterized as a shift period in the study of empowerment, where emerging conceptual insights from earlier feminist studies began to be researched empirically with regard to the real mechanisms and high confrontations of empowerment working in real-life social and organizational settings.(Govindharajan .M, 2022).

▪ Literature Synthesis for the Period 2011–2020

From 2011 to 2020, literature went through a growth phase before becoming diverse. The literature from this decade has until recently largely contributed to conceptual bursts on the issue of empowerment, participation, and institutional inclusion, moving on to engage freshly with digital communication, ICT-enabled agency, women's entrepreneurship, social media participation, political representation. public health, and media visibility.(Kushwaha.R. et. all) The literature of these days moved from the period of being contextually and methodologically narrow compared to earlier times. This was obviously evident by studies that involved not only debates but empirical investigations within a plethora of different fields.

Key characteristics of this decade comprise a growing convergence between empowerment mechanisms for women and ICT. Studies started to unveil the ways ICTs, social media, online platforms, and digital access could influence the voice of women, economic participation, expression in public, and socio-economic advancement. The movement also began concentrating more on other areas of empowerment such as engagement with politics, patriarchal power, participation in public decision-making, reproductive and maternal health, leadership, and the growing moment of feminist activism. It was considered to have been the stage in time where the transition went from the traditional discourse on empowerment towards a rather multidimensional understanding where agency was recognized as constructed by societies and their institutional structures, through media infrastructure, digital access, and digitally mediated participation.

A stronger thematic heterogeneity is also evident in literature during the 2011–2020 period. Some studies deliberated on the role of women in governance, elections, and state-building, while others could be seen toward women and entrepreneurship, digital literacy, public voice, violence, health care utilization, and professionalism.(Boateng S.L.; Boateng R.; Anning-Dorson T, 2023).This shows that empowerment research matured into a more interdisciplinary field by intertwining insights from gender studies, media studies, development studies, public policy, political sociology, and health research. Concurrently, there is still a remarkable fragmentation surrounding this period, with no predominant theory or standard measurement framework acceptable to all.

Table 7: Publication Trend (2011–2020)

Year	Number of Articles	Trend Observation
2011	2	Early decade studies focus on patriarchy, deprivation, and political representation
2012	0	No visible publication in the dataset
2013	8	Clear thematic expansion into inclusion, public voice, community radio, and entrepreneurship
2014	2	Continued attention to gender and state-building
2015	4	Greater interest in communication-based intervention and digital empowerment
2016	8	Strong diversification across ICTs, empowerment, public space, health, and development
2017	2	Focused examination of ICT capability and online activist media
2018	7	Emergence of technology, social platforms, machine learning, and civic digital spaces
2019	10	Broader consolidation across leadership, media, women entrepreneurs, and social inclusion
2020	20	Peak growth with strong expansion into health, media, political participation, digital literacy, and professional inclusion

The publication trend, by and large, can be identified with 2011–2020 as the first period of major expansion in the dataset, in which research output became more continuous and visibly accelerated by the end of the decade. The most increased output was pointed in the period 2018–2020, which can be refer as where empowerment research most increasingly absorbed digital participation, communication access, gender advancement, and predictive social analysis. Such growth patterns mark a field that is maturing and transitioning into interdisciplinary research streams.

Read as such through the TCCM and ADO optics, this decade seems to embody thematic elaborations with changing methodologies. Conceptually, literature drew on feminist theory, perspectives of empowerment, capability thinking, communicative agency in developing countries, logic behind gender-and-development issues, media activism, and institutional perspectives on social and political inclusion. Contextually, drastically expanded literature saw political institutions, the digital sphere, entrepreneurship networks, community media spaces, public health settings, and other professional networks under scrutiny.

A good number of features that were of interest in the study include agency, participation, voice, leadership media use, technological access, digital self-efficacy, political inclusion, and health-decision-making. In terms of the methodological orientation, the decade observed a variety of approaches in both conceptual essays, case-based analyses, qualitative studies, empirical studies based on survey data, or some computational methods like sentiment analysis or machine learning. Hence, there is a shift that points to a certain growth in its methodological openness, also exemplified yet constrained by the need for a good theory- and model-building/longitudinal kind of work. The framing of the titles prepared for later periods likewise reflect a move from the greater quantity of concept-driven work to more empirical modelling, while also stressing the need for longitudinal data and far more advanced designs, all of which traces this phase as having evolved from the same pattern.

Table 8: TCCM Framework Analysis (2011–2020)

Dimension	Sub-Dimension	Dominant Patterns Observed	Emerging Shifts	Research Gaps Identified
Theory (T)	Feminist and Empowerment Perspectives	Strong reliance on women's empowerment, patriarchy, gender justice, and agency frameworks	Empowerment increasingly linked with digital access, media participation, and entrepreneurship	Lack of an integrated theory combining gender, technology, and institutional change
	Capability and Participation Perspectives	ICT capability, access, and participation become important explanatory ideas	Empowerment increasingly treated as capability expansion rather than only symbolic inclusion	Limited operationalization of capability dimensions
	Political and Media Perspectives	Public sphere, representation, activism, and media voice gain prominence	Digital media and online platforms begin to reshape empowerment discourse	Limited theory on long-term digital empowerment and online exclusion

Context (C)	Political and Institutional Context	Studies examine municipal councils, elections, state-building, gendered governance, and public representation	Women's political participation seen as a major empowerment arena	Limited comparative analysis across institutional systems
	Digital and Entrepreneurial Context	Social media, ICTs, internet access, and digital entrepreneurship emerge strongly	Online participation becomes a route to economic and symbolic empowerment	Limited work on platform dependency, algorithmic bias, and digital inequality
	Health and Social Development Context	Maternal health, violence, education-entertainment, and community development receive attention	Empowerment increasingly tied to service access and welfare outcomes	Limited integration between health empowerment and communication research
Characteristics (C)	Agency and Participation Traits	Voice, autonomy, decision-making, and public participation remain central	Agency becomes increasingly linked with mediated and digitally networked environments	Limited standardized multidimensional measures
	Leadership and Inclusion Traits	Leadership, public decision-making, and institutional visibility become more visible	More attention to women as leaders, professionals, and public actors	Lack of dynamic models of leadership development
	Media and Technology Traits	ICT use, social media engagement, digital self-efficacy, and media participation grow in importance	Technology-mediated empowerment becomes a major sub-theme	Limited understanding of negative digital experiences and exclusion
Methodology (M)	Research Design	Mix of conceptual, qualitative, case-based, and empirical studies	More applied and issue-specific studies appear across sectors	Limited longitudinal and comparative designs
	Analytical Methods	Narrative, thematic, case analysis, and descriptive empirical approaches dominate	Initial appearance of sentiment analysis, machine learning, and mixed methods	Advanced causal modeling remains limited
	Data Collection	Case narratives, surveys, policy contexts, media content, and social data are used	Digital trace and platform-based inquiry begin to emerge	Lack of consistent large-sample and cross-national datasets

From the perspective of TCCM, the central feature of 2011-2020 is the growth in publication and the widening reach of concepts. No longer is the field looking at empowerment just as resistance to patriarchy or participation in development; it has become increasingly interested in the concept as a mediated, institutional, formidable entrepreneurial, or health-linked supply chain. Thus, it evolves into social, political, and economic expression alike in communication and technology. This makes the decade highly significant in bridging gender studies with contemporary digital and public sphere issues.

Table 9: ADO Framework Analysis (2011–2020)

Framework Dimension	Variable Category	Dominant Variables Identified	Research Direction Observed	Research Gap Identified
Antecedents (A)	Structural and Cultural Drivers	Patriarchy, gender inequality, exclusion, restrictive norms, and unequal access to resources	Structural barriers remain the dominant explanation of disempowerment	Limited multilevel modeling of household, institutional, and digital barriers
	Institutional and Political Drivers	Representation systems, quotas, governance structures, and public decision-making opportunities	Institutional openings increasingly linked to women's voice and leadership	Limited evidence on long-term institutional effectiveness
	Digital and Communication Drivers	ICT access, social media use, digital literacy, online networks, and media participation	Technology becomes a visible enabler of voice, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement	Limited study of privacy, platform power, and digital exclusion
Decisions (D)	Participation Decisions	Civic participation, entrepreneurial engagement, health-service use, and community involvement	Participation broadens from offline collective action to digitally mediated involvement	Little work on disengagement, exclusion, or failed participation
	Leadership and Representation Decisions	Leadership acceptance, public office participation, and professional visibility	Women increasingly examined as decision-makers and institutional actors	Lack of process models explaining leadership emergence

	Communication and Technology Decisions	Adoption of ICTs, social media engagement, online activism, and mediated self-expression	Communication decisions increasingly shape empowerment outcomes	Limited examination of continuance, fatigue, and technological withdrawal
Outcomes (O)	Empowerment Outcomes	Greater agency, voice, autonomy, confidence, and symbolic visibility	Empowerment increasingly framed as multidimensional and context-sensitive	Limited validated scales across contexts
	Socio-Economic and Organizational Outcomes	Entrepreneurial opportunity, professional inclusion, network expansion, and collaborative gains	Empowerment linked more directly with economic and professional advancement	Long-term economic sustainability remains underexplored
	Social and Welfare Outcomes	Health care utilization, awareness, inclusion, and public recognition	Empowerment begins to show measurable welfare and service-related implications	Limited macro-level policy and developmental impact assessment

According to the literature on antecedents, this decade marks a greater expansion of the historical context compared to earlier researches. For example, literature from the first half of this decade identified almost consistently patriarchy and social exclusion, while patriarchal settings conceptualized in social structures. Later research connecting short-stay discourses of media became the key in pointing to institutional settings or frames, media infrastructures and digital access as important enabling or constricting premises in relationship to increasing duration. Likewise, decision variables are seen evolving from simple participation towards the more varied forms of action and work as regards innovative use of digital technology. Outcomes taken together are much more varied now, ranging from symbolic power and collective voice to access to health, self-productiveness, and economic inclusion.

Overall Interpretation of 2011–2020

In its broadest sense, the period under examination could be best described as fortified consolidation and diversification within the field of empowerment literature. Within this paradigm, women's empowerment studies assume a truly interdisciplinary character, increasingly responding to social change. The field moves from an initial narrow focus on patriarchy, participation, and development, into building a broader engagement with subjects such as digital communication, agency fostered by ICT, entrepreneurship, health, leadership, governance, and media representation. More importantly, this was the bridge to allow foundational empowerment research to transfer into a more digitally mediated data-intensive period which has gained greater intensity in literature post-2020.

From the TCCM perspective, the last decade is fixed by many theatrical pluralities, contextual diversification, semantic richness tied to empowerment, and methodological shift toward more empirical and mixed designs. While from the ADO standpoint, antecedents become multidimensional, decisions become multiplicative, and outcomes become multipart. Nevertheless, the literature remains defective in the sense that it does not present coherent theory, long-term validation, or a stable structure to understand how structural inequality, institutional opportunity, and digital technologies jointly affect the empowerment in women as a phenomenon in process.

▪ Literature Synthesis for the Period 2021–2024

The period following the year 2021 marks the most rapidly evolving, recent study on women's participation, empowerment, leadership, and digital communication.(Nwaolikpe O.N.,2021) In this period, the studies have expanded the scope and methodological sophistication considerably in relation to the previous couple of decades. The literature continues to refine and improve itself with the overarching cartography of technology globally, digital governance, online media, artificial intelligence, and platform-created communication environments that affect women in their living stage and social-economic-political participation opportunities.

Scholars in the meantime have surpassed our traditional, older ideas on empowerment enhancing with discussions on digital transformation and technology access, combined with gender equal participation in social perception processes. Scholars are also interested in newer technologies such as social media platforms, artificial intelligence, the digital entrepreneurship system, and the network of online activism in the area of culture being linked to women’s voice, leadership opportunities, and professional inclusion.(Mehan A. ,2024) COVID-19 had further accelerated academic discourse pointing towards online engagement, remote participation, and online collaboration, further strengthening the function of digital communication in shaping empowerment processes.

Another characteristic of this phase was the increased acknowledgment of empowerment as being a social-cultural or institutional issue, which also implies a technological and economic phenomenon. Scholarly research is now investigating how women are using digital tools to access information, to build entrepreneurial ventures, to participate in governance, and to leverage professional networking. The reason is that there has been an ever-mounting intersection between empowerment research and digital sociology, communication studies, innovation studies, public policy, and entrepreneurship studies, which has greatly broadened the analytical scope of empowerment scholarship.

Table 10: Publication Trend (2021– 2024)

Year	Number of Articles	Trend Observation
2021	Moderate growth	Increased research on digital empowerment and ICT adoption
2022	Continued rise	Expansion of studies on online participation and digital entrepreneurship
2023	High research activity	Strong emphasis on technology-driven empowerment and social platforms
2024	Rapid growth	Integration of AI, data analytics, and digital governance perspectives

Published data shows that the period since 2020 was the time when the literature witnessed its quickest surge in size. There was a growing availability of data, social media analytics, and computational research tools with which the researchers turned to study empowerment under new methodological conditions, thereby strengthening the epistemology of the subject.

Table 11: TCCM Framework Analysis (2021–2024)

Dimension	Sub-Dimension	Dominant Patterns Observed	Emerging Shifts	Research Gaps Identified
Theory (T)	Digital Empowerment Theory	Empowerment conceptualized through digital participation and technological access	Integration of empowerment with digital transformation and innovation theories	Limited unified framework connecting technology and gender empowerment
	Feminist Technology Studies	Examination of gender bias in technological systems and digital platforms	Critical analysis of algorithmic inequality and digital exclusion	Lack of empirical validation of feminist technology frameworks
	Innovation and Entrepreneurship Perspectives	Digital entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems linked with empowerment	Women's participation in digital economies explored	Insufficient integration with mainstream entrepreneurship theories
Context (C)	Digital Ecosystems	Social media platforms, online communities, and digital networks become major contexts	Platform-based participation becomes central to empowerment discourse	Limited research on digital governance structures
	Entrepreneurial Context	Women's start-ups, digital marketplaces, and innovation hubs examined	Digital entrepreneurship recognized as a pathway to empowerment	Lack of longitudinal studies on entrepreneurial success
	Policy and Governance Context	Governments promote digital inclusion and gender-sensitive policies	Policy initiatives aim to enhance digital literacy and technological access	Limited evaluation of policy effectiveness

Characteristics (C)	Digital Agency	Online voice, digital literacy, and platform participation become central traits	Empowerment measured through digital engagement and influence	Lack of standardized metrics for digital empowerment
	Leadership and Innovation Traits	Women's leadership in innovation ecosystems examined	Digital leadership and online advocacy emerge as new dimensions	Limited models explaining leadership in digital environments
	Technology	Adoption of AI, digital tools, and ICT	Technology acceptance models	Need for interdisciplinary
	Adoption Traits	systems studied	applied to empowerment research	measurement frameworks
Methodology (M)	Research Design	Increased use of mixed methods and empirical surveys	Computational approaches such as big data analytics and social media analysis	Limited longitudinal and experimental research designs
	Analytical Techniques	Machine learning, sentiment analysis, and digital trace analysis appear	Integration of computational social science methods	Need for stronger causal modelling
	Data Sources	Digital platforms, online communities, and social media datasets widely used	Cross-platform data collection emerging	Ethical concerns regarding data privacy

Table 12: ADO Framework Analysis (2021–2024)

Framework Dimension	Variable Category	Dominant Variables Identified	Research Direction Observed	Research Gap Identified
Antecedents (A)	Structural Drivers	Gender inequality, cultural norms, digital divide	Structural barriers still influence empowerment outcomes	Limited multi-level modelling
	Technological Drivers	Internet access, digital literacy, AI-enabled tools	Technology access becomes a critical empowerment enabler	Unequal access across regions remains underexplored
	Institutional Drivers	Policy initiatives, digital governance, entrepreneurial support systems	Governments and institutions promote gender-inclusive digital initiatives	Limited evaluation of policy implementation
Decisions (D)	Digital Participation Decisions	Engagement in social media activism, online communities, and digital platforms	Digital participation increasingly shapes empowerment trajectories	Limited understanding of participation sustainability
	Entrepreneurial Decisions	Adoption of digital entrepreneurship and innovation practices	Women increasingly engage in digital start-ups and online marketplaces	Lack of research on business scalability
	Technology Adoption Decisions	Acceptance and use of AI, mobile technology, and digital tools	Technology adoption linked with empowerment outcomes	Need for behavioural models explaining technology adoption
Outcomes (O)	Empowerment Outcomes	Increased agency, autonomy, digital voice, and leadership opportunities	Empowerment increasingly measured through digital influence	Lack of universal measurement scales
	Economic Outcomes	Growth in digital entrepreneurship and income generation	Digital platforms create new economic opportunities	Long-term sustainability remains uncertain
	Societal Outcomes	Greater social visibility, gender equality awareness, and policy advocacy	Digital activism influences social change and policy discourse	Limited evidence of structural transformation

Overall Interpretation of 2021–2024

The period onwards from 2021 equated to the Start of the digital transformation phase in the literature on women's empowerment and participation. With some significant developments, there is also Hermeneutic space to discuss how technological ecosystems are shaping the agency, leadership, and socio-economic participation of women. The digital platforms, artificial intelligence (AI), and online infrastructures of communication form part of the road toward empowerment—lending themselves toward various aspects of entrepreneurship, activism, professional networking, and knowledge sharing for the women concerned.

The period can be summed up according to the TCCM perspective: a period of theoretical fusion between empowerment and digital transformation theories, which have been profoundly influenced by the broader contexts developed around digital platforms and entrepreneurial complexes; at the same time, both digital agency and adopting technology have played a major role, together with such sophisticated data-extraction methods as application use and mixed designs on combined data. In the perspective of ADO, it could be fitted in that technological access and institutional support systems have emerged as pre-standards, with digital participation and technology acceptance as main decision variables which have an impact on the repercussion of the empowering outcomes. Undefined, such outcomes could find ways to evolve into socio-economic transformation, such as among others, digital entrepreneurship, an upswing in visibility, and progressively increased public participation.

Currently, scholarship states that the empowerment of women is increasingly built upon digital infrastructures, innovation ecosystems, and technology-driven participation, suggesting a move toward a more technically mediated view of empowerment in contemporary societies.

Conclusion

A comprehensive analysis of the literature has shown a definite trend towards evolution in the academic discussion around women's empowerment, participant engagement, governance, leadership, and communication over the last 30 years. Research from earlier decades has focused primarily on theoretical concepts; these are based largely on feminist philosophies and structural inequality perspectives; therefore, empirical studies that considered how women are empowered will have been added progressively over the past two decades. Research has also broadened the scope of the literature, with regards to topics investigated, due to new technology-related topics (e.g., digital participation, technology access and use, entrepreneurship, governance, and public representation). The use of the TCCM and ADO frameworks reveals an evolution of the literature from a primarily theoretical focus to a wider range of multimodal and multi-perspectival scholarly research that examines the way in which empowerment is understood to be a continuous developing process and is influenced by structural factors, institutional opportunities, and the technological environment.

Limitation of research

In addition to evidence of positive development in the literature, there are still significant gaps in the literature (e.g., lack of consensus on theoretical frameworks, a lack of longitudinal studies, and a lack of cross-context comparisons). There is a clear need for the identification of these gaps to enable further development of the body of literature assessing the evolution and nature of empowerment processes against a back drop of rapidly evolving social, economic, and digital systems.

References

1. Boateng, S. L., Boateng, R., & Anning-Dorson, T. (2023). Empowering women in the digital economy: A quest for meaningful connectivity and access in developing countries.
2. Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *IEEE Engineering Management Review*, 13(1), Article 11.
3. Govindharajan, M. (2022). *Women empowerment* [Edited book].
4. Hazarika, L. (2021). *Social media and women empowerment*.
5. Ibrahim, F. (n.d.). *Social media and women empowerment: A brand-new facet*.
6. Kabeer, N. (2001). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and Change*, 32(3), 435–464.
7. Kulsum, N. (2018). Women empowerment in social media era that encourage sustainability development.
8. Kumari, M. (2020). Social media and women empowerment. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, 9(3).
9. Kushwaha, K. R. (2024). *Diversity, equity & inclusion*.
10. Mehan, A. (2024). Digital feminist placemaking: The case of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.
11. Moscrop, D., & Webber, J. (2017). *The Campbell revolution?: Power, politics, and policy in British Columbia*. McGill-Queen's University Press.
12. Mwihia, M. N., & Jeptum, V. (2024). The influence of societal norms and patriarchal structures on female solidarity in *Bloosoms of the Savannah* by Henry Ole Kulet and *The River and the Source* by Margaret Ogolla.
13. Naughton, M. (2011). How the presumption of innocence renders the innocent vulnerable to wrongful convictions.
14. Nwaolikpe, O. N. (2021). Women, social media, and culture in Africa.
15. Priya, P., & Venkatesh, A. (n.d.). Two decades of theorising and measuring women's empowerment: Literature review and future research agenda.
16. Sfetcu, N. (2017). *Web 2.0 / Social media / Social networks*.
17. Wang, J. (2026). Exploring pathways from women's empowerment to poverty reduction in rural Western China: An empirical and policy-oriented investigation.



Celebrating 80th Independence Day



Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam
Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh