Contemporary SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Contemporary Social Sciences

Double-blind Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed Quarterly International Journal
Index Copernicus ICV : 62.45; General Impact Factor : 2.495
Scientific Journal Impact Factor : 6.731
Global Impact Factor : 0.765; InfoBase Index : 2.5

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Volume 34, Number 2 (April-June), 2025

Editorial Board

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Journal of National Development

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The Journal of National Development (JND) is an interdisciplinary bi-annual peer reviewed & refereed international journal committed to the ideals of a 'world community' and 'universal brotherhood'. The Journal is a joint effort of like-minded scholars in the field of social research. Its specific aims are to identify, to understand and to help the process of nation-building within the framework of a 'world community' and enhance research across the social sciences (Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Psychology, History, Geography, Education, Economics, Law, Communication, Linguistics) and related disciplines like all streams of Home Science, Management, Computer Science, Commerce as well as others like Food Technology, Agricultural Technology, Information Technology, Environmental Science, Dairy Science etc. having social focus/implications. It focuses on issues that are global and on local problems and policies that have international implications. By providing a forum for discussion on important issues with a global perspective, the *JND* is a part of unfolding world wide struggle for establishing a just and peaceful world order. Thus, the *JND* becomes a point of confluence for the rivulets from various disciplines to form a mighty mainstream gushing towards the formulation and propagation of a humanistic world-view.

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The Journal of National Development is published in volumes of approximately 250-300 pages, divided into two bi-annual issues–summer and winter. Besides, a special issue in Hindi is also published every year to meet the demand of social scientists, both research scholars and teachers of Hindi speaking states of India.

Subscription and Business Correspondence

The annual subscription is ₹1500 in India and US$ 80 abroad, including postage by Speed-Post/Airmail. Special issue in Hindi is free with annual subscription. All the subscriptions must be prepaid in favour of *The Journal of National Development*, payable at *Meerut*.

ISSN 0972-8309; doi : 10.62047/JND

All correspondence pertaining to subscription, change of address, purchase of back numbers, books for review and advertisements should be addressed to :

Media as an Agency of Globalization: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

This research article provides a comprehensive examination of the media's pivotal role as an agent in the ongoing process of globalization. It delves into the multifaceted ways through which various forms of media-including print, broadcast, digital, and social media-facilitate the rapid dissemination of information across borders, enabling unprecedented levels of connectivity and interaction among societies. The study highlights how media fosters cultural exchange by transmitting ideas, values, and lifestyles globally, thereby contributing to the shaping of a shared global consciousness. At the same time, it critically analyzes the transformative impact of media on socio-political and economic structures, revealing how it influences governance models, market dynamics, and public opinion on a global scale. Methodologically, the study follows a doctrinal research approach, drawing mainly from secondary sources, including academic literature, policy documents, media content, and digital archives. A central theme of the paper is the dualistic nature of media within the globalization process. On one hand, media functions as a force of integration and homogenization, promoting dominant cultural narratives and contributing to the erosion of local identities. On the other hand, it serves as a powerful platform for resistance, allowing marginalized communities to assert their voices, preserve cultural distinctiveness, and challenge global hegemonies. Overall, the paper offers a critical and balanced analysis of media as a double-edged instrument-both facilitating global integration and enabling localized resistance-thereby underscoring its significance in the contemporary global order.

Keywords

Media, Globalization, Cultural exchange, Information flow, Cultural imperialism, Digital media.

1

Media as an Agency of Globalization:
A Critical Analysis

1. Introduction

Globalization is widely understood as the process of increased interconnectedness and interdependence among countries, societies, and individuals. Globalization is a multidimensional process characterized by the increased flow of goods, services, ideas, technologies, and people across national boundaries. It leads to the compression of time and space, allowing distant parts of the world to become more connected and interdependent. This phenomenon influences economic, cultural, political, and environmental domains, resulting in both opportunities and challenges for societies world-wide. According to Croucher (2003), "Globalization (or globalization) in its literal sense is the process of globalizing, transformation of some things or phenomena into global ones. It can be described as a process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society and function together. This process is a combination of economic, technological, socio-cultural and political forces."

In Malcolm Waters' (2000) words, "Globalization is a social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly" David Held *et al.* (1999) have opined that "Globalization can be thought of a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions-assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact-generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power." Thus, it can be said that Globalization is a set of processes of social change in which involves deterritorialization and which stretches human activities, relations and networks across the globe.

Among the key drivers of globalization, media is one of the most influential. It refers to the channels used to store, transmit, or deliver information, encompassing both traditional forms like newspapers, radio, and television, and digital platforms such as social media and streaming services. Denis McQuail (2010) defines media as "the

means of communication that reach large numbers of people in a short time." Media serves multiple functions—informing, educating, entertaining, socializing, and shaping public opinion—making it central to the construction of social narratives in a globalized world.

Media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, informing citizens, and constructing social narratives. From traditional print to digital platforms, media facilitates the cross-border movement of ideas, images, values, and commodities. This article explores how media acts not merely as a passive channel but as an active agent shaping the contours of globalization.

2. Theoretical Framework

The analysis draws on following theoretical perspectives:

2·1 Marshall McLuhan's Global Village (1989)

Marshall McLuhan's Global Village theory envisions the world as a single, interconnected community shaped by electronic media. As technologies like television and the internet collapse distances, people experience events simultaneously, reshaping perception and social interaction. While this fosters global awareness and collective identity, it also raises concerns about cultural homogenization and media dominance.

2·2 Herbert Schiller's Cultural Imperialism Theory (1976)

Cultural Imperialism Theory argues that global media, dominated by Western powers, especially the U.S., marginalizes local cultures by spreading their values, lifestyles, and consumer goods. It suggests that media serves as a tool of cultural domination, eroding local identities and promoting cultural dependency, particularly in the Global South, while limiting the diversity of global voices.

2·3 Appadurai's Scapes (1996)

Arjun Appadurai's Scapes Framework explains globalization as a set of fluid, overlapping flows—ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes—that shape culture in complex, non-linear ways. Rather than one-way domination, it highlights how global and local forces interact to produce hybrid identities and diverse cultural expressions.

These frameworks offer critical insights into understanding media's global reach and cultural impact.

3. Review of Literature

The role of media in globalization has been extensively explored across disciplines such as communication studies, cultural studies, sociology, and political science. Scholars widely agree that media acts as both a facilitator and a reflector of globalization, though interpretations differ on its implications and outcomes. This review is divided into following parts based on the theme of study:

1. Media and Global Cultural Flow: Arjun Appadurai (1996) in his seminal work Modernity at Large introduced the concept of "mediascapes", highlighting how global media flows enable the circulation of images, narratives, and ideologies across borders. He argues that media contributes to the deterritorialization of culture, reshaping identities and aspirations globally. Similarly, Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2004) discusses the idea of globalization as hybridization, suggesting that while media does spread global culture, it also results in the fusion and reworking of local identities.

2. Media and Cultural Imperialism: Herbert Schiller (1976) and later, Tomlinson (1991) critiqued media's role in perpetuating Western dominance through cultural imperialism. Schiller warned of the danger posed by U.S.-centered media conglomerates exporting ideologies and consumer culture, marginalizing indigenous cultures. This view is supported by the "homogenization thesis", which holds that global media promotes uniformity, often eroding local traditions and knowledge systems.

3. Media Monopolies and Global Capitalism: Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's Manufacturing Consent (1988) explored how media, under capitalist control, serves elite interests by shaping public discourse and limiting dissent. Their Propaganda Model highlights how media ownership, funding, sourcing, flak, and anti-communist ideology contribute to biased global narratives. More recent scholars like McChesney (2008) examine the consolidation of media ownership and its implications for democracy and public discourse in a globalized media economy.

4. Digital Media and Global Connectivity: Castells (2009) emphasized the rise of the network society, wherein digital technologies allow global communication beyond traditional boundaries. Digital media, especially social platforms, has enhanced the agency of individuals and social movements to influence global agendas. However, van Dijk (2020) and others also caution that the

digital divide exacerbates inequality in participation, particularly among marginalized communities.

5. Media as a Platform for Resistance and Identity Assertion: Scholars such as Zayani (2005) and Fuchs (2017) have analyzed how new media empowers grassroots activism and identity politics. The Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, and indigenous media movements are often cited as evidence of media's dual role-as both a tool of globalization and a means of resisting its negative effects. These cases illustrate how marginalized voices use global media networks to challenge dominant ideologies and assert cultural autonomy.

4. Presentation of Data and Discussion

4·1 Media and the Spread of Information

Media has transformed global information sharing by acting as both a transmitter and creator of knowledge and public opinion. Platforms like television, radio, newspapers, and especially digital media allow information to reach millions in seconds, breaking barriers of time and space. This instant dissemination fosters global interconnectedness and shared awareness. With 24/7 news and real-time reporting, media influences diplomacy, humanitarian responses, and public opinion—evident in the global coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Similarly, international news channels like BBC or CNN broadcast political, economic, and social developments worldwide, while social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram allow users to not only consume but also create and share content in real time. Media also plays a crucial role in shaping public discourse by framing how events are interpreted, who gets to speak, and which stories are prioritized. However, this influence is double-edged-while media can empower marginalized voices and democratize information, it can also spread misinformation, reinforce stereotypes, and reflect the agendas of dominant powers or corporate interests. Thus, media serves as both a mirror and a molder of society in the age of globalization.

4·2 Media as a Vehicle for Cultural Exchange

Media is a powerful tool for cultural exchange, enabling the global sharing of traditions, values, and artistic expressions through entertainment, journalism, social media, films, music, and literature. It exposes audiences to diverse cultures, fostering understanding and

often blending foreign elements into daily life. Examples include the global reach of Bollywood films, K-pop, and international cuisine shows. Platforms like YouTube and TikTok amplify this exchange by showcasing cultural practices to global audiences. While this fosters hybrid identities and cross-cultural appreciation, it also raises concerns about cultural dominance and appropriation. Still, media plays a central role in shaping a dynamic, interconnected cultural landscape.

4·3 Media and Economic Globalization

Media plays a vital role in economic globalization by promoting global markets, shaping consumer behavior, and enabling the cross-border flow of goods, services, and capital. Through advertising, business news, and digital platforms, it creates demand for international products and lifestyles. Global brands like Apple and Coca-Cola use media to tailor campaigns across cultures, while outlets like Bloomberg and CNBC inform real-time financial decisions. Social media and e-commerce platforms connect global consumers with producers, including small businesses in developing countries. Influencer marketing and brand storytelling further integrate global tastes. Though media-driven globalization raises concerns about cultural homogenization and labor exploitation, it remains central to the expansion and dynamics of the global economy.

Global advertising campaigns, e-commerce platforms, and digital marketing strategies rely heavily on media to promote international trade and consumer culture. Media corporations play a pivotal role in shaping global markets and influencing consumer behavior. For Example, Platforms like Amazon and Alibaba utilize media algorithms and advertisements to target global consumers.

4·4 Political Globalization and Media

Political globalization and media are deeply interconnected, as media functions as a key instrument in shaping political awareness, international diplomacy, and global governance. Through 24/7 news coverage, live broadcasts of international events, and social media activism, media allows citizens across the globe to stay informed about political developments beyond their national borders-be it elections in the U.S., protests in Iran, or climate summits at the UN. News outlets like Al Jazeera, BBC World News, and CNN International report on international conflicts, human rights issues,

and policy decisions, creating a globally informed public that can engage with and influence political debates and movements.

Media has the power to shape political discourse on a global scale. It influences international relations, diplomatic strategies, and global movements. Political leaders and activists use media platforms to communicate their agendas and mobilize support. For Example, Social movements like #ArabSpring and #MeToo gained momentum through digital media, highlighting its role in global political activism.

Media also facilitates transnational political engagement-for example, global campaigns for climate action, gender equality, and democratic rights gain traction across countries through viral videos, hashtags, and online petitions. Platforms such as Twitter and YouTube have become tools for political expression and mobilization, especially in times of crisis (e.g., Arab Spring, Black Lives Matter, or pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong). Moreover, media plays a critical role in shaping the image and soft power of nations; governments use international broadcasting (e.g., Russia's RT, China's CGTN) and digital diplomacy to sway global public opinion and project political narratives.

At the same time, media is also used for propaganda, surveillance, and political manipulation, raising concerns about misinformation, censorship, and foreign interference in domestic politics (as seen in allegations of electoral meddling via social media). Despite these challenges, media remains central to the processes of political globalization by linking leaders, citizens, and institutions across borders in real-time political discourse.

4·5 Digital Media and the Technological Divide

Digital media has revolutionized global communication, education, commerce, and governance, but it has also exposed and widened the technological divide-the gap between those with easy access to digital technologies and those without. Digital media platforms like Google, YouTube, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter) enable people to access and share information instantly, participate in online education, engage in e-governance, and connect across continents. However, in many parts of the world-especially in rural or economically marginalized regions-limited access to reliable internet, smartphones, or digital literacy prevents large populations from fully participating in this digital revolution.

Thus, while digital media has expanded access to information, it has also highlighted the digital divide between the global North and South. Limited access to internet and digital literacy in many regions inhibits full participation in the global information society. For Example, Rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia often lack infrastructure for digital connectivity, creating unequal access to global media.

For example, urban youth may access digital media for online learning, global job markets, or political activism, while rural communities may remain cut off due to poor connectivity, low device penetration, or lack of digital skills. This digital divide exacerbates existing inequalities in education, employment, healthcare, and political voice. Moreover, even within connected societies, generational and gender-based gaps persist-older individuals or women in some regions may have less access to or control over digital tools.

The divide also impacts the global flow of media content and representation: voices from digitally excluded communities are often under-represented or misrepresented in mainstream media. Governments and global organizations have recognized this challenge and are working on digital inclusion initiatives-like building infrastructure, offering digital literacy programs, and creating affordable access to devices-to ensure that digital media becomes a bridge rather than a barrier. Without addressing the technological divide, the promise of digital media as a tool for empowerment and globalization remains incomplete and unequal.

5. Criticisms of Cultural Homogenization and Media Monopoly

Criticisms of cultural homogenization and media monopoly focus on the ways media globalization can lead to the erosion of cultural diversity and the concentration of media power in the hands of a few dominant corporations or nations. Cultural homogenization refers to the process by which local and indigenous cultures are diluted or replaced by a standardized global culture, often shaped by Western-especially American-media values. This is evident in the widespread adoption of English language content, Hollywood movies, fast-food culture, and consumer lifestyles portrayed in international advertising and entertainment, which can marginalize or overshadow local traditions, languages, and identities.

Media globalization faces criticism for promoting cultural homogenization, where dominant global cultures overshadow local traditions. A few major conglomerates—like Disney, Meta, and Google—control much of the media landscape, influencing global content and norms. Platforms such as Netflix, Instagram, and TikTok often promote Western lifestyles, leading younger generations to adopt foreign values at the expense of their own cultural heritage. This trend raises concerns about cultural imperialism and the loss of cultural diversity.

Media monopoly refers to the concentration of media ownership among a few global conglomerates like Disney, Comcast, Meta, Google, and News Corp. These corporations dominate news, entertainment, and social media, controlling content production and distribution. This consolidation limits media diversity, weakens journalistic independence, and favors profit-driven content over varied and critical perspectives.

Moreover, the algorithmic control of content on digital platforms can create echo chambers, suppress alternative voices, and manipulate public opinion, undermining democratic discourse. Critics argue for the need to support local media industries, strengthen public broadcasting, and promote media literacy to resist the negative impacts of homogenization and monopolization, ensuring a more balanced, diverse, and inclusive global media landscape.

6. Media as a Platform for Resistance and Identity Assertion

Media as a platform for resistance and identity assertion has become increasingly powerful in the age of globalization, offering marginalized communities, social movements, and indigenous cultures a voice to challenge dominant narratives, assert their rights, and preserve their identities. Through digital platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter (now X), and independent blogs or podcasts, individuals and collectives can bypass mainstream gatekeepers and speak directly to global audiences. This democratization of media has enabled movements such as Black Lives Matter, Fridays for Future, #MeToo, and various indigenous and tribal campaigns to gain worldwide visibility and solidarity.

In many parts of the world, media is used by oppressed communities to document injustices-such as police brutality, land grabs, or cultural erasure-and to mobilize protests and political

action. For instance, during the Arab Spring, citizens used social media to organize protests and spread real-time updates, undermining state-controlled media. Similarly, LGBTQ+ communities across Asia, Africa, and Latin America have utilized digital platforms to share their stories, build support networks, and challenge legal and cultural discrimination.

Media also plays a key role in cultural revival and identity affirmation. Indigenous groups use video storytelling, online museums, traditional music recordings, and native language apps to preserve and share their heritage. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram have become spaces for young people to showcase traditional dances, clothing, rituals, and dialects, reasserting cultural pride in modern formats.

Despite challenges like surveillance, online hate, and censorship, media empowers resistance by allowing marginalized groups to reclaim narratives, influence public discourse, and advocate for change. It serves not only as a tool of globalization but also as a space for asserting identity, dignity, and justice. Independent media and social platforms enable communities such as tribal groups, LGBTQ+ activists, and indigenous populations to preserve culture and challenge dominant narratives.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, media as an agency of globalization plays a transformative yet contested role in shaping the interconnected world. It acts as a powerful force for disseminating information, facilitating cultural exchange, advancing economic and political integration, and giving voice to resistance and identity assertion. However, this global influence is not without critical concerns-issues of cultural homogenization, media monopolies, the digital divide, and the unequal flow of information raise important questions about power, representation, and access. While media has the potential to democratize knowledge and foster global understanding, it can also reinforce inequalities and suppress diverse voices if left unchecked. A critical analysis, therefore, must recognize both the enabling and limiting aspects of media in globalization, urging a more inclusive, pluralistic, and equitable media landscape that respects local identities while engaging with the global.

In fact, media is a double-edged sword in the globalization process. While it fosters global integration and cross-cultural

understanding, it also poses challenges such as cultural imperialism and digital inequality. A balanced approach that promotes media diversity, ethical journalism, and inclusive access can harness media's potential as a positive force in globalization.

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Legacy of Partition: Lines that Divide and Scars that Rankle

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Abstract

The Partition of 1947 was a culmination of nearly two centuries of colonial subjugation of the Indian subcontinent. This watershed event in the history of South Asian geopolitics marked the violent birth of twin nations that were very similar to each another, but their differences spiralled to such an extent that they consumed all the shared memories, cultures, and literatures in one blow. The religion-based division fostered by the British imperialistic powers led to a massive exodus, displacing millions, making them refugees in their own country. The aftermath saw such brutal and beastly violence, abductions, gang-rapes, and massacres resorted to by either side that the streets were filled with blood and gore. It was the most compelling and heart-wrenching period ever witnessed post the Jewish genocide by the Nazi army. Was this the prize for freedom? What went wrong and why? How could their Ganga-Jamuni Tahzeeb collapse so horribly? The cross-border skirmishes, communal tensions, insurgencies, random acts of terrorism, militarization still shape contemporary South Asian politics despite the passage of seventy-eight long years. The trauma of being torn apart still rankles and finds expression in cinema, literature, and oral histories, contributing to the collective memory and shared grief. Through this paper, we intend to explore the factors leading to the division of the country and the lasting legacy of distrust and scepticism that has been bestowed willy-nilly on its citizens.

Keywords

Homelessness, Communal violence, Trauma of partition, Territorial reorganization, Massacres.

2

Legacy of Partition: Lines that Divide and Scars that Rankle

1. Introduction

15th August, 1947, is a watershed moment that altered the life of the people of Indian subcontinent forever. For some, it was a synonym of independence, for others partition and the darkest period in Indian history. It was a birth that forcibly tore apart mono-ovular twins out of the same womb and condemned them to an existence wherein they became sworn enemies of each other. What could not be separated were their shared histories, and memories that ran deep. In his seminal novel, *The Shadow Lines*, Amitav Ghosh talks about the looking glass borders between the two states, saying, "The simple fact that there had never been a moment in the four thousand year old history of that map, when the places we know as Dhaka and Calcutta were more closely bound to each other than after they had drawn their lines-so closely bound to each other, that I in Calcutta had only to look into the mirror to be in Dhaka: a moment when each city was the inverted image of the other, locked into an irreversible symmetry by the line that was to set us free-our looking glass border" (Ghosh, 1988: 233). Despite 78 years of separation till date, the mirrored borders between India and Pakistan are more reflective of the interconnectedness of the two communities rather than difference and alienation.

The Indian Independence Act was passed by the British Parliament on 18th July, 1947, and it was set to come into effect at midnight of 14th and 15th August, 1947, dividing the subcontinent into two religion-based nations, India and Pakistan. The transfer of power to Pakistan culminated on 14th August and to India on 15th August 1947, enabling the then Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, to attend both the ceremonies. The British relinquished their imperialistic and exploitative powers on a country which they had dominated for nearly two centuries on 15th of August, but announced the formal borders to come into effect from 17th August i.e., two days later, unleashing an unprecedented spate of horror which charred the national consciousness for all times to come. The massive exodus left

the two communities wallowing in the vortex of communal hatred, thirsting for each other's blood even before the division was complete. The vitriolic violence that erupted affected millions of people. The number who faced the brunt of partition ranged from 200,000 to 2,000,000. The newly-demarcated borders forced the Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims to flee to their respective sides, hoping to find a safe haven, but instead they found themselves ambushed, caught, and massacred in cold blood by the communal forces of the 'other'. "Britain's precipitous and ill-planned disengagement from India in 1947-condemned as a 'shameful flight' by Winston Churchill-had a truly catastrophic effect on South Asia, leaving hundreds of thousands of people dead in its wake and creating a legacy of chaos, hatred, and war that has lasted over half a century" (Wolpert, Introduction).

2. Timeline of Key Events Leading to Partition

Timeline of key events leading to partition are shown in the following table:

Year	Event
1905	Partition of Bengal by the British (later reversed)
1906	Formation of the Muslim League
1909	Morley-Minto Reforms: separate electorates for Muslims
1915	Formation of Hindu Mahasabha
1920s	Intensification of communal violence
1925	Formation of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha (RSS)
1928	Simon Commission and Jinnah's Fourteen Points
1930	Jinnah's first articulation of Muslim nationhood
1935	Government of India Act: Provincial autonomy - separate electorates for Hindus and Muslims
1940	Lahore Resolution (the demand for Pakistan)
1942	Quit India Movement
1944	End of World War II, British in economic and political crisis
1945	Victory of the Labour Party in England, pledge to end colonial rule
1946	Elections Muslim League wins Muslim seats
August 16, 1946	Direct Action Day, Calcutta violence and massacre on a massive scale

June 3, 1947	Lord Mountbatten arrives, Partition inevitable, Dominion of India and Pakistan announced w.e.f. 15th August 1947
June 8, 1947	Cyril Radcliffe arrives to draw the borders dividing United India into two nations
July 18, 1947	The Indian Independence Act was passed; the British announced the plan of withdrawal
August 14-15, 1947	Partition of India and creation of Pakistan. Massive bloodshed and violence
August 17, 1947	Border lines drawn between India and Pakistan come into effect

3. Factors leading to the Partition

There is a complex interplay of historical, social, religious, and political factors that have resulted in the fragmentation of the Indian subcontinent. It is not a single cause that can be held responsible but rather a culmination of years of tensions, apprehensions, hostilities, and mistrust that resulted in massive communal violence, mass displacements and unprecedented genocide.

3.1 The Religious Divide

Although the Hindus and Muslims had co-existed peacefully and lived amicably for centuries, they had their own cultural and ideological differences, the advantage of which was taken by the British who created a deliberate rift between them through their divisive politics. The religion-based division of Bengal in 1905 is a glaring example of their policies. The British Census and the separate electorate system introduced by them from 1909 onwards (Morley-Minto Reforms) institutionalized these differences and deepened the religious identities further. Religious affinity and affiliation became the cornerstone of voting rather than the national good. India witnessed innumerable instances of communal violence and riots in the second and third decade of the 20th century. It was particularly pronounced in regions with mixed populations like Punjab and Bengal.

3.2 Proposal for a Two-Nation Theory

Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his Muslim League vociferously asserted that Hindus and Muslims were not merely two religious communities but two distinct nations that deserved their own sovereign power (Jinnah). They weren't the only ones to propagate the

two-nation theory. In the year 1876, Syed Ahmad Khan, the founder of Aligarh Muslim University had also expressed his reservations about Hindus and Muslims ever becoming one nation. In his speech in Meerut in the year 1888, he said, "I am convinced that these two nations [Hindus and Muslims] will not join whole- heartedly in anything. At present there is no hostility between the two communities, but no one can predict when the situation may change" (Muhammad, 1969: 179). In the New-York Daily Tribune of 15th April 1854, Karl Marx had stated that "the Muslim legislation reduces the geography and the ethnography of various people into the simple and convenient distinction of two nations and two countries, the believers, and the non-believers" (Marx). Ambedkar also accepted the demand of a separate Muslim nation for he was sceptical whether the two communities could coexist peacefully in free India (Ambedkar, 1945: 156). With the rise of Hindu nationalist organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the Muslims felt threatened that their identity, culture, and rights would get compromised in a Hindu-majority state, paving the way for a formal demand for Pakistan in the Lahore Resolution in the year 1940, propagating the Two-Nation Theory to justify the division based on irreconcilable religious differences (Bhatti, 2015: xxxi).

3·3 The Divide and Rule Policy

The British adopted the Roman maxim, "Divide et impera". The 'Divide and Rule' policy of the 'whites' always played native communities against each other in matters of employments, services, and education, and took advantage of their differences and mistrust to maintain their own supremacy over the 'brown skin'. The introduction of discriminatory policies like separate electorates, differential recruitments in the armed forces, differential access to education only led to widespread resentment, competition, and long-term fragmentations between the two communities, fracturing the socio-political fabric of the nation forever. Privileging one religion over the other destroyed the Indian polity, creating caste divides that ran very deep. Expressing his views on the British policy of Divide and Rule, in an article for Aljazeera on 10th August 2017, Shashi Tharoor wrote, "The British imperialistic policy fomented religious antagonisms to facilitate continued imperial rule that reached its tragic culmination in 1947" (Tharoor).

3·4 Failed Efforts at Sharing Power

The differences between the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress over issues of federalism and minority rights had fructified to such an extent that reconciliation of any sort looked impossible. The Nehru Report of 1928 sought no separate electorates which was countered by Jinnah with his Fourteen Points in 1929, ("Jinnah's Fourteen Points") insisting on religious autonomy, separate electorates, adequate representation, federal governance, and cultural protection. The Cripps Mission of 1942 was also unacceptable to both, making the shared vision of United India even more elusive.

3·5 Communal Violence and Weakened British Control

World War II on one hand and civil unrest, Quit India Movement (1942), Naval Mutinies (1946), communal violence on the other, had drained the Raj economically and politically too. The extent of violence and hatred that followed the Direct Action Day (1946), killing approximately 4,000 people, wherein Jinnah's proclamation, "We do not want war. If you want war we accept your offer unhesitatingly. We will either have a divided India or a destroyed 'India'" (Bourke-White, 1949: 15) made even the staunchest supporter of united India consider the division of the country favourably. Partition seemed to be a lesser evil to prevent the civil war. Moreover, the Labour Government that came to power in 1945 was also committed to decolonization, which further expedited their political withdrawal from India as it was seen as a practical remedy with minimal damage (Kaul). Lord Mountbatten, thus preponed the transfer of power from June 1948 to August 1947, stating, "We have to get out quickly. The longer we stay, the worse it will be" (Panigrahi, 2004: 57).

3.6 Absence of Shared National Consciousness

Gradually things came to such a pass that the religious identities and affiliations took full precedence over the collective Indian identity and gave in to sectarian politics. Many historians are of the opinion that warped-up negotiation strategies, personal rivalries and mistrust between Gandhi, Nehru, and Jinnah played a major role in the partition of the country. Gandhi's vision of unity and communal harmony was too idealistic to be practical and Nehru's leadership alienated Jinnah who felt that Muslim interests were being sidelined by majoritarian Hindus.

Thus, it was decades of diabolic colonial policies and practices, competing nationalisms, deep religious divide, fanned communal passions, mutual distrust, and narrow self-centredness which led to the traumatic birth of two nations from the same womb.

4. The Impact of Partition on Contemporary India

The year 1947 heralded the end of the colonial era, but it remained central to India's collective consciousness and political rhetoric, initiating simultaneously an era of communal hatred, identity crises, fanatic nationalism, cross-border skirmishes, and tensions in its wake. It continues to shape contemporary India across social, political, religious, cultural, and gendered lines. Below are enumerated some ramifications on present day India:

4·1 Religious Polarization

"Partition bequeathed India not just memories of loss but also structures of suspicion that define Hindu-Muslim interactions" (Pandey, 1990: 12). William Dalrymple, in his 22 June, 2015 article, 'The Great Divide' quotes Yasmin Khan's acclaimed work of history, *The Great Partition: The making of India and Pakistan*, where she states that partition "… stands testament to the follies of empire, which ruptures community evolution, distorts historical trajectories and forces violent state formation from societies that would otherwise have taken different-and unknowable-paths" (Dalrymple). The extreme fanaticism and communal distrust that led to the breaking away of a nation-state in 1947 is still very much entrenched in the socio-political fabric of the nation. Religious passions are often manipulated and fanned for political gains by political parties. There has been a significant increase in religious polarization since the 1990s with the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), and National Register of Citizens (NRC). The Indian society has witnessed a significant upsurge in Hindu nationalism with the Bhartiya Janta Party coming to power at the centre in 2014 apparently to counter the Muslim appeasement policy adopted by the earlier Congress government. Vote bank politics plays crucial role in fanning religious polarization.

4·2 Resettlement of Refugees

Mass movement of people from either side rendered them homeless and at state mercy. The demographic landscape underwent a massive transformation with the influx of refugees from West

Punjab and East Bengal who needed to be resettled (Butalia). In Delhi, "Punjabi refugees redefined the city's economy, culture, and political clout within a generation" (Malhotra, 2019: 214). Although they carried a huge psychological baggage yet they also brought their own entrepreneurial drive and vigour with them to survive the harsh realities. In Pakistan, for example, the refugees were derogatorily referred to as Muhazirs, and had to face marginalization at the hands of their own communities when they succeeded in rebuilding their shattered lives.

4·3 Cross-Border Terrorism

The unresolved territorial claims of Jammu and Kashmir and East Pakistan at the time of partition has led to three major wars in 1965, 1971 and more recently, in 1999 in Kargil. Besides, there have been Phulwama and Balakot strikes, countless conflicts, rampant acts of terrorism, insurgencies and military stand-offs between India and Pakistan. Since Jammu and Kashmir has been a contentious issue between the two nations, it was accorded a special status through Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, the abrogation of which in 2019 resulted in widespread violence and terrorist attacks. The 1990 exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits, who had a long history in the Kashmir valley dating back thousands of years, also has been a consequence of the militancy and terror mechanisms used by Pakistan against India.

4·4 Genre of Trauma Literature

Literature, art, cinema, paintings, etc. are idioms of loss, longing, and nostalgia that not only provide an escape from the harsher realities of life, but also provide a valuable insight into the nuanced experiences of people. The psychological and emotional trauma of partition has been vividly captured and documented through the heart-wrenching literature penned by writers like Saadat Hasan Manto, Bhisham Sahni, Amrita Pritam, Khushwant Singh, Intizar Hussain, Chaman Nahal and others in many languages. Many of the works have been given an added visual dimension through the potent medium of cinema as they highlight the horrendous impact of fracturing not just nations, but people and memories too. "Partition was not just a political event but a rupture of human consciousness" (Menon and Bhasin, 1998: 32). This excessively horrific period has been etched forever in the national memory through endless stories, anecdotes, plays, novels, excepts, experiences, autobiographies,

poems. The shared experiences of the trauma, with all its entailing horror, have been documented, adapted, and readapted repeatedly in various languages across the length and breadth of both the nations, India and Pakistan. The visuals of trains filled with massacred bodies of women, children, young and old, eerily rumbling down the stations still send a shiver down our spines. Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956), Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar* (1950), Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Ice Candy Man* (1988), Bhisham Sahni's *Tamas* (1974), Manto's *Toba Tek Singh* (1955), Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* (1965), Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1980) and the list is endless. Films like *Garam Hawa* (1973), *Gandhi, Jinnah, Lahore, Earth* (1998), bring to light some extremely gut-wrenching tales of partition horror.

4·5 Gendered Trauma of Partition

Women were the worst sufferers; they paid an extremely heavy price for partition as they were used as 'weapons of war' (Kelly Oliver) by the countless un-named perpetrators of violence from either community to inflict humiliation upon their rivals and discredit their masculinity. More than 100,000 women were abducted, gang-raped, mutilated during the violence of partition (Menon and Bhasin). This extreme form of hatred on the female bodies of the 'other' community was appallingly brutal. The Inter-Dominion Conference on December 1947, in Lahore began the recovery and search operation for all such women to be returned to their respective homes. The operation lasted for many months, by which time, many violated women had compromised with their fate and found new homes with their abductors. Some who could finally manage to return, were tainted as 'polluted' and were no longer acceptable to their own kith and kin as they prioritized honour over emotions, thereby killing or abandoning the 'dead' all over again.

4·6 Regional Impact in Bengal and Northeast India

Although Punjab and Bengal faced the maximum brunt of partition, the partition of the north-east India was an even more complicated process since linguistic antagonism and ethnicity of various communities living in the plains and hills was also involved. It led to a massive disruption of the socio-economic and personal lives of people as they found their region inundated with check-posts and barriers instead of inter-community connects. It physically separated the north-east region from the rest of the mainland save a

narrow stretch of 22 kilometres, known as the chicken's neck in popular parlance. The demography went through a big change with issues of immigrations, both legal and illegal, from within and from across the newly formed borders too.

4·7 Economic and Strategic Consequences

Partition disrupted agricultural production, trade routes, and industries. Post the partition of the country, a large region of the fertile Indus basin went over to Pakistan which necessitated the Indus Waters Treaty (Gilmartin, 1999: 1068-1095). The migrant movement and refugee resettlement required a restructuring of a different kind. Smuggling and cross-border illicit trade flourished along the borders with the complicity of locals on either side. There was, and is, human trafficking of women and children, too.

4·8 Administrative and Bureaucratic Challenges

The postcolonial Indian bureaucracy had to face administrative challenges as it was a bifurcation of its workforce as well. The Europeans and most Muslims civil servants had moved to their chosen countries. There was shortage of foodgrains, coupled with price rise, which brought its own challenges as the rationing system had to be introduced. There was an urgent need for the recruitment and training of public personnel quickly. Managing millions of displaced, homeless people required creation of rehabilitation departments and refugee commissions and manpower.

4·9 Loss of Linguistic Identity

The linguistic identities of people were reshaped by partition. Urdu became the language of Pakistan and Hindi/Devanagari of India. Punjabi language suffered, as did other diverse languages of the Punjab. Both East Pakistan, later Bangladesh, and West Bengal shared linguistic and cultural roots, but political lines divided them.

4·10 History of Partition and Memory Politics

The history of partition and the narratives attached to it are portrayed differently across various states, with some emphasizing the trauma and reconciliation and others focussing on religious fanaticism and antagonism. Some promote national integration by underplaying the gendered and communal violence. The 1947 Partition Archives preserve the oral history of partition in the Partition Museum in Amritsar. Many of the traumatic experiences

are thrown into the chasm of silence as the victims of violence do not want to talk about the agonizing memories. There are many second and third generation Indians who have inherited anxieties of the painful past of their forefathers.

4·11 Vote Banks and Electoral Demographics

The electoral map of India has been shaped by refugees, displaced communities, and legal as well as illegal immigrants. Partition passions are fanned time and again to consolidate religious vote banks and electoral appeasement by political parties has become a norm.

The cultural landscape of art, music, painting, cuisine has also found itself fractured between the two countries. Music Gharanas have split. There is nostalgia about the 'lost ancestral homes' in Pakistan and Bangladesh. The 'Samjhauta Express', and 'The Thar Express' are the two trains that have been providing the rail links between India and Pakistan as per the Shimla Agreement but due to the strained relations, the services often get suspended.

5. Conclusion

"To talk of despair is to conquer it", says the French philosopher, Albert Camus in his 1951 book-length essay, *The Rebel* (Camus, 1991: 263). Although it has been 78 years since the nation was fractured into two, harmony and peace are still elusive. The ghosts of partition are yet to be exorcized, the problems and issues remain the same, and both the countries are familiar with each other's pulse just like two blood brothers. They continue to irk, antagonize and run down each other endlessly ever since they have submitted to their shared historical, socio-cultural, and linguistic legacy being divided by the colonial power.

The divisive lines have penetrated so deep that people feel that peace and solace can only be found in the proximity of co-religious groups. The myopic vision persists and is visible in hate speeches, inter-religious clashes, cross-border skirmishes, and wanton acts of terrorism. It has been 78 years since the two nations parted ways, but the otherization continues. The scars still rankle. The relationship between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh is still fraught with a deep sense of mistrust and scepticism. The countries have seen an unprecedented rise in religious militant nationalism where 'Being Human' holds no value as nations continue to fight the ghosts from the past.

The entire ecosystem of painful memories, unexpressed silences, fragmented identities, institutionalized violence, cultural transformations that partition has left behind in its wake, has reshaped the destiny of the subcontinent for all times to come. The seeds of distrust that were sown then still get reflected in instances of insurgencies and acts of cross-border terrorisms. This is a hard reality that is in no hurry to make its departure anytime soon. The crucial questions that arise are: What is the way forward? Would mankind ever rise above these differences and embrace universalism? In which direction are we all headed? It is imperative to introspect and deliberate upon ways for garnering greater inclusivity.

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Bridging Sociology and Public Policy: An Analytical Inquiry with Reference to Nepal

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Abstract

This paper examines the sociological engagement with public policy by highlighting the discipline's critical role in shaping, analyzing, and improving policy processes. While public policy has traditionally been driven by technological innovation and economic rationalism, these approaches often neglect the underlying social structures, actions, and power dynamics that influence policy outcomes. Sociology, through empirical investigation and theoretical insight, offers a deeper understanding of human behavior and social systems-providing policy actors with tools for more informed and equitable decision-making. The paper explores sociology's role in various stages of public policy, including agenda setting, policy formulation, globalization, and the function of epistemic communities. It underscores the discipline's unique capacity to connect structure and agency, as well as macro and micro dynamics, in a way that reflects current trends in public policy development. Ultimately, sociology contributes to a more holistic and inclusive policy process by illuminating marginalized perspectives, questioning formalistic assumptions, and offering new conceptual frameworks for problem-solving and coordination. The paper also draws on Nepal's evolving public policy landscape as a contextual reference, illustrating how historical legacies, socio-political transformations, and efforts toward inclusive governance shape the interplay between sociological insights and policymaking in a developing, multicultural democracy.

Keywords

Sociology, Public policy, Agenda setting, Globalization.

3

Bridging Sociology and Public Policy: An Analytical Inquiry with Reference to Nepal

1. Introduction

Public policy has long been dominated by technological innovations, administrative pragmatism, and economic rationalism. While these approaches offer important tools for governance, they often overlook the complex social dimensions underlying public issues. The exclusion of sociological perspectives has contributed to policy outputs that are frequently ineffective, inequitable, or disconnected from the lived realities of diverse populations. As Wilson (1993) critically observed, sociology has often been marginalized by policymakers and the media, given minimal attention in decision-making arenas. Yet, sociology is uniquely positioned to illuminate the contradictions embedded in categorical value judgments and to offer scientifically grounded insights that enhance the quality of instrumental decision-making.

Sociology's engagement with public policy is both analytical and normative. It provides a deeper understanding of the social structures, cultural patterns, and power relations that shape policy outcomes. Wilson (1993) advocates for a renewed sociological presence in the policy domain through four key contributions: (1) broader use of even preliminary sociological data in policy debates, (2) greater incorporation of theoretical concepts and hypotheses, (3) alternative mechanisms for communicating sociological insights, and (4) confronting the formalistic fallacy in conventional policy research. Sociological data-both qualitative and quantitative-can reframe public controversies and expand the horizons of policy discourse.

From persistent poverty and environmental degradation to urban planning and criminal justice, sociological research offers indispensable insights into how communities function and how policies affect them. Sociology does not merely describe social problems; it redefines them, offers critical perspectives on causality, and introduces new interpretive frameworks. As Kingdon (1984) notes, sociology contributes to every stage of the agenda-setting process-problem recognition, proposal generation, policy formu-

lation, and public deliberation-by embedding these processes within broader social narratives and relational structures.

Moreover, sociology has historically aligned itself with marginalized voices, earning a reputation as a 'champion of the underdog'. This orientation equips sociology to interrogate power relations, reveal structural inequalities, and advocate for more inclusive and just policy outcomes. Sociological inquiry reveals the experiences and needs of disadvantaged groups-poor minorities, inner-city populations, or working-class communities-that are often overlooked in policy debates. In doing so, sociology becomes not only a tool for understanding but also a vehicle for transformation. The influence of sociology on government policy is often indirect yet profound. Policymakers may adopt sociological language, theories, or concepts to frame debates, legitimize decisions, or broaden their understanding of complex social dynamics. As Weiss (1993) argues, the impact of sociology on policy may be diffuse, slow-moving, and difficult to quantify, but it nonetheless reshapes the conceptual terrain on which policies are built. Theories of social mobility, class conflict, participatory governance, or linguistic rights have all left their mark on diverse fields such as education, health, and social welfare.

In the context of globalization, the challenges of governance have become even more intricate, requiring multi-scalar analyses and culturally informed responses. Here too, sociology offers tools for interpreting transnational flows, local adaptations, and the shifting nature of state-society relations. As the world becomes more interconnected, sociological engagement with public policy becomes not just relevant, but essential-for both understanding and shaping the future of collective life. This article has discussed the linked the sociological theory and public policy by applying review of previous reading and secondary sources.

In Nepal, the trajectory of public policy reflects a complex interplay of historical legacies, socio-political transformations, and struggles for inclusion. Rooted in ancient South Asian governance traditions yet shaped by centuries of elite-dominated, centralized rule, Nepal's policymaking has historically marginalized popular participation. The shift from oligarchic Rana rule through monarchy-centered Panchayat governance to the restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990, and ultimately to a federal democratic republic after the 2006 People's Movement, illustrates a gradual but incomplete democratization of policy processes. Despite consti-

tutional reforms and efforts to institutionalize inclusivity, Nepal's policymaking often remains elite-driven with limited engagement of marginalized communities. The 2015 Constitution enshrined principles of inclusion and participatory governance, highlighting citizen involvement as essential for democratic legitimacy and social cohesion. This evolving political context underscores the urgency of integrating sociological insights into Nepal's public policy to better address the country's diverse social realities and ongoing demands for justice and equity.

This article adopts a qualitative research methodology to bridge sociological theory and public policy through a comprehensive analytical inquiry. It is grounded in a critical review and interpretive analysis of a wide range of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed academic literature, theoretical writings, policy documents, governmental and non-governmental reports, and historical records. The study employs thematic analysis to identify, categorize, and interpret key sociological concepts, frameworks, and debates relevant to public policy processes. Special attention is given to how sociological insights can inform more inclusive, equitable, and context-sensitive policy-making, with particular focus on Nepal's historically layered and politically transitional context. Rather than producing new empirical data, the research prioritizes conceptual synthesis and critical reflection to articulate the relevance of sociological perspectives in shaping effective and socially responsive public policy frameworks.

2. Sociology as a 'Champion of the Underdog' and Public Agenda

Sociology exerts a significant influence on the public agenda by shaping both how societal problems are understood and how they are addressed by policymakers. Through its theories, empirical research, and conceptual frameworks, sociology contributes to the identification, framing, and prioritization of social issues within the public and political spheres. As Burawoy (2005) argues, public sociology serves as a dialogical process between sociologists and diverse publics, influencing not only what people think about but also how governments respond to pressing social concerns. Sociological research challenges dominant narratives, provides alternative explanations, and introduces critical perspectives that redefine public debates around social problems.

One of the central contributions of sociology lies in its ability to illuminate the underlying structures of power, inequality, and social relations that shape collective outcomes. By connecting individual experiences with broader institutional forces, sociology helps to uncover the systemic causes of issues such as poverty, discrimination, and social exclusion. It also offers interpretive tools to reframe the terms in which such problems are discussed, moving beyond simplistic or technocratic solutions (Fraser, 1989). In doing so, sociology broadens the understanding of policy processes by highlighting how actors, events, and decisions are embedded within complex power dynamics and historical contexts.

Sociology has long been viewed as the "champion of the underdog" within the policy arena due to its sustained focus on marginalized and disadvantaged populations. From its foundational studies on class, race, and gender to contemporary analyses of urban poverty & structural inequality, sociological inquiry has consistently given voice to those often excluded from formal political processes (Gans, 1995). Policy-relevant sociological research frequently reflects the lived experiences and concerns of these groups, thereby enriching the policy discourse with grounded and inclusive perspectives.

A vital role of the sociologist, particularly in applied or public settings, is to capture and interpret the diverse viewpoints of various social groups. This includes identifying how different communities experience similar social problems in distinct ways and how their perspectives can inform more equitable policy interventions. For instance, research on urban poverty, ghettoization, and residential instability has revealed the long-term effects of social disinvestment and structural racism-insights that are crucial for designing effective urban and housing policies (Wilson, 1996; Massey & Denton, 1993).

Moreover, sociology contributes to policy debates on market relations by examining the social norms, institutional practices, and power asymmetries that shape economic behavior. It provides analytical tools for understanding the motivations and constraints faced by actors such as finance-oriented managers and institutional investors, thereby informing regulatory and governance strategies (Fligstein, 2001). Through both qualitative and quantitative methods, sociology offers nuanced analyses of social issues ranging from inner-city inequality and working-class decline to the cultural dynamics of the lower middle class-all of which hold significant implications for setting and shaping public policy agendas.

In sum, sociology not only informs what issues enter the public agenda but also transforms how those issues are perceived and addressed. Its emphasis on social justice, interpretive depth, and critical engagement makes it an indispensable resource for developing policies that are both effective and socially responsive.

3. Sociology and Government Policy

For policy actors, it is often difficult to trace specific research studies that have directly altered their perceptions or decision-making processes. The influence of sociology on public policy is rarely immediate or overt; rather, it tends to be diffuse, incremental, and embedded within broader cognitive and institutional frameworks. As Weiss (1993) notes, the impact of social research, particularly sociology, is often "indirect, sometimes amorphous, sometimes slow", and more perceptible to those deeply involved in the policy process than to external observers. Nevertheless, policymakers frequently draw upon sociological research and theory to provide legitimacy, justification, and intellectual coherence to their positions. In this sense, sociology does not simply inform policy-it becomes a rhetorical and cognitive resource used to persuade, advocate, and justify.

Sociology offers critical forms of enlightenment that extend beyond empirical data, contributing conceptual clarity and normative guidance to the policy arena. Sociological information is often used not as definitive evidence for action, but as a means of shaping how policy actors frame social problems and envision appropriate responses (Weiss, 1993). For example, broad theoretical frameworks—such as those concerning class conflict (Marx), social stratification (Weber), or individual mobility (Blau & Duncan, 1967)—have had a lasting influence on government interventions in education, community development, and social welfare. These theories guide the formation of policy agendas by offering interpretive tools that highlight the structural roots of inequality and the mechanisms of social change.

In addition, more specific sociological concepts have entered into public discourse and practice, influencing various sectors of policy. Ideas such as "labeling theory" (Becker, 1963) have reshaped thinking in criminal justice and mental health, challenging punitive models of behavior and promoting rehabilitative or restorative approaches. Concepts like "participatory decision-making" and "community

empowerment" have informed democratic governance, social planning, and development initiatives. Even seemingly technical areas, such as language policy in education, have been shaped by sociological understandings of identity, cultural capital, and social integration-emphasizing the significance of maintaining native language competence for cognitive development and social inclusion (Bourdieu, 1991).

Crucially, it is often sociological ideas-rather than isolated datasets-that shape how policy actors conceptualize issues. These ideas reorient debates, reduce misunderstanding over factual disagreements, and help bridge ideological divides by introducing more nuanced understandings of social dynamics. Sociology helps decision-makers move beyond simplistic or individualistic explanations of social problems, enabling them to recognize the complex interplay between agency and structure, and between cultural norms and institutional constraints.

Furthermore, sociology enriches public decision-making by offering deeper insights into social structure, group processes, and the subtleties of human behavior. It refines political discourse by introducing more sophisticated notions of social conflict, disorganization, collective action, and normative change. The intellectual tools provided by sociology allow for the redefinition of public problems and open space for alternative solutions that may be more equitable, inclusive, and contextually grounded (Burawoy, 2005; Mills, 1959). Over time, these contributions accumulate and subtly reshape the political and policy landscape-expanding the boundaries of what is seen as possible, legitimate, or just.

In sum, while the impact of sociology on public policy may be indirect and difficult to quantify, it remains profound. It equips policy actors with interpretive frameworks, legitimizing narratives, and analytical tools that transform both the understanding of public issues and the range of policy options considered viable.

4. Globalization and Public Policy

Sociology provides critical analytical tools to understand the evolving dynamics of globalization and its profound implications for public policy. The contemporary trend of globalization, especially under the influence of neoliberal ideology, has significantly altered the traditional role of the state in policymaking. Sociological inquiry allows us to examine globalization not just as an economic or political

phenomenon, but as a broad structural transformation that reshapes the relationships among states, markets, and societies.

One of the key developments in the global policy landscape is the increasing influence of transnational actors, including multinational corporations, international financial institutions, and global governance bodies. This transformation is well captured in the work of Cerny (2001), who contrasts the classical "iron triangle" model of policy formulation-comprised of politicians, bureaucrats, and interest groups-with what he terms the "golden pentangle." The "golden pentangle" reflects the growing complexity and internationalization of policymaking, wherein five broad actor groups interact: traditional national actors (politicians and bureaucrats), non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions (e.g., the IMF, World Bank, WTO), multilateral forums (e.g., G7, G20), and hybrid public-private institutions (such as transnational markets).

According to Cerny, the rise of these exogenous policy actors-often operating across borders and beyond the formal control of democratic institutions-has led to a profound shift in how policy agendas are set. In contrast to the relatively closed and nationally bounded iron triangles, the golden pentangle model grants greater influence to elite transnational actors who are better positioned to navigate and shape the global policy environment. These elites-often drawn from the financial sector, multinational business networks, and technocratic policy circles-have acquired enhanced structural and relational power due to their mobility and strategic positioning within global markets.

This shift also contributes to what Cerny identifies as a "democratic deficit" in contemporary governance. The declining influence of organized labor, along with the increasing constraints on welfare states imposed by global financial markets and institutions, has marginalized national actors and weakened domestic accountability mechanisms. As Cerny (2001) explains: "Globalization is a complex process that, while generally driven at the elite level, also creates new playing fields for a wider range of groups to participate. However, it is also a circumscribed process, constrained by underlying structural change-financial globalization in particular. It involves the continual evolution of both new constraints and new opportunities".

This sociological perspective reveals that while globalization may open new arenas for participation and exchange, the structure of global governance often privileges highly mobile sectors of international capital, particularly finance, and entrenches unequal power relations. Consequently, the role of national governments in shaping public policy is increasingly subordinated to transnational forces, raising urgent questions about democratic representation, accountability, and social justice in the global era.

Sociology, therefore, plays an indispensable role in decoding these transformations. It brings to light how global institutional arrangements and neoliberal ideologies shape national policies, influence welfare systems, and constrain the agency of domestic actors. By situating policy processes within global power structures, sociological analysis fosters a deeper understanding of the challenges and contradictions of contemporary governance.

4. Epistemic Community and Policy Coordination

Sociology plays a crucial role in the formation of epistemic communities-networks of knowledge-based experts who contribute to policy coordination by creating transnational relationships and illuminating the salient dimensions of complex issues. These communities are composed of individuals with shared normative and principled beliefs, common causal understandings, and a consensual knowledge base, often grounded in sociological theories and empirical research. They operate beyond national boundaries and help shape policy debates on global concerns, especially where technical uncertainty and complexity hinder clear decision-making.

As Haas (1992) explains, epistemic communities are instrumental in articulating cause-and-effect relationships of multifaceted problems, helping states define their interests, framing issues for international deliberation, and identifying key points for negotiation and policy resolution. He notes: "The networks of knowledge-based experts-epistemic communities-play [a role] in articulating the cause-and-effect relationships of complex problems, helping states identify their interests, framing the issues for collective debate, proposing specific policies, and identifying salient points for negotiation".

Within this framework, sociology does not merely provide empirical data but also fosters the interpretive lenses-such as frames, narratives, and paradigms-through which policy actors comprehend

and respond to public problems. Scholars like Campbell (2002) have emphasized that ideas-including theories, worldviews, principled beliefs, and institutional norms-are socially constructed and significantly shape policy-making. Sociology, therefore, contributes to the construction and diffusion of these ideas across policy networks, reinforcing the embeddedness of the policy process in broader social, cultural, and institutional contexts. It plays a key role in interpreting the meaning of policy problems, framing alternatives, and legitimizing policy choices.

Beyond agenda-setting and formulation, sociology also informs the processes of policy implementation. Traditional implementation models-such as the top-down or bottom-up approaches-have often failed to account for the contextual, relational, and transnational dimensions of policy outcomes. In response, sociology advocates for more integrated and dynamic frameworks that bridge the macro-micro divide, and highlight the interplay between structure and agency. This perspective emphasizes the contextual embedded-ness of implementation processes, recognizing how local practices, institutional arrangements, and transnational connections interact to influence policy delivery and effectiveness.

By linking global epistemic networks to grounded local realities, sociology offers an essential analytical toolkit for understanding and improving both the design and execution of public policy in an increasingly interconnected world. It highlights the importance of social interpretation, contextual variation, and the co-construction of meaning among actors situated across different scales of governance.

5. Public Policy in Nepal

Public policy in Nepal has been a subject of discussion and development across both state and non-state arenas over different historical periods. Broadly defined, public policy encompasses constitutions, legislative statutes, judicial rulings and precedents, as well as administrative rules and regulations that guide societal actions and interactions (Dye, 2017). The roots of public policy in Nepal can be traced back to ancient times, drawing intellectual and normative references from classical South Asian texts such as Sukraniti and Kautilya's Arthashastra. These early texts emphasized governance, ethics, and statecraft, and have influenced policy perspectives in various South Asian polities, including Nepal.

Despite such ancient foundations, structured and participatory policy formulation was limited in Nepal's historical periods. During the Lichhavi (c. 400-750 CE) and Malla (12th-18th centuries) periods, policymaking was highly centralized in the hands of monarchs and ruling elites. The general population had little to no involvement in the development of public policy. This historical continuity of elite-centric governance meant that participatory policymaking mechanisms never had the opportunity to take root in the early phases of Nepal's state formation.

The advent of the Rana regime in 1846 marked the beginning of a 104-year-long oligarchic rule characterized by authoritarianism and systemic exclusion of the public from policy processes. The Rana rulers monopolized state authority and governance, using public policy as a tool to consolidate power and enrich their own families at the expense of national resources and the general populace (Joshi & Rose, 1966). The state's coercive machinery was employed not for inclusive development but for extraction and domination. Public policy under the Ranas lacked social legitimacy, as it was crafted through a top-down approach devoid of public engagement or consultation. One of the first formal and codified expressions of public policy during this period was the promulgation of the Muluki Ain (National Civil Code) in 1854 by Jung Bahadur Rana. Although significant as a written legal framework, this policy document emerged from an autocratic, hierarchical process and reflected the Rana regime's interest in social control rather than democratic inclusion.

The downfall of the Rana regime in 1951 following a popular revolution ushered in a new era of political openness and democratic aspiration. With the introduction of a constitutional monarchy and the first general election in 1959, Nepal appeared poised for democratic governance. However, this experiment was short-lived. In 1960, King Mahendra dismissed the elected government and introduced the partyless Panchayat system, which re-centralized power in the monarchy. Under this system, the King held executive, legislative, and judicial authority, and public policy was formulated under royal prerogative. Nonetheless, a major reform was introduced in 1963 when the Muluki Ain was amended to promote caste equality and abolish untouchability, signaling a shift toward more progressive legal norms, albeit within a non-democratic framework.

The restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990, following the first People's Movement, marked a critical juncture in Nepal's public policy landscape. A new liberal democratic constitution was adopted, which limited monarchical powers and recognized political pluralism (Upreti *et al.*, 2010; Upreti, 2010). Political parties became the dominant actors in the policy process. However, the new constitution failed to fully accommodate Nepal's deep-rooted socio-cultural diversity and marginalized communities. Public policymaking remained elite-driven, and meaningful participation from various social groups was minimal. This exclusion generated widespread dissatisfaction, particularly among historically oppressed and under-represented communities.

This discontent culminated in the Maoist insurgency, which began in 1996 and evolved into a decade-long armed conflict affecting large parts of the country. The movement was rooted in demands for socio-economic justice, inclusion, and structural transformation of the state. The political deadlock was eventually resolved through the 2006 Second People's Movement, led by a coalition of seven political parties and the Maoists. This movement not only brought an end to the monarchy but also declared Nepal a federal, democratic, secular, and inclusive republic. Subsequently, two Constituent Assemblies (elected in 2008 and 2013) were mandated to draft a new constitution. The promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal in 2015 (often referenced as 2017 in the Nepali calendar) marked a significant step toward inclusive governance. The constitution-making process was envisioned as a participatory and inclusive exercise, acknowledging that genuine democracy requires public engagement in the formation of fundamental public policy frameworks (Ghai & Cottrell, 2008).

Citizen participation in the drafting of the constitution was viewed not only as a democratic imperative but also as a developmental process for individuals and society. As Adhikari (2010) argues, broad-based public deliberation enhances collective social learning, fosters mutual understanding across diverse societal sectors, and helps create a shared sense of purpose and public reason. The constitution thus serves as a meta-policy document that provides both the legal and normative foundation for inclusive and participatory policymaking in contemporary Nepal.

6. Conclusion

Public policy, long dominated by economic rationalism and technological determinism, has often struggled to produce equitable and effective outcomes. While economic frameworks emphasize growth, efficiency, and cost-benefit calculations, they frequently overlook the underlying social complexities, power relations, and lived experiences that shape both the formation and impact of policy. This limitation highlights the indispensable role of sociology in enriching the policy process. By foregrounding the relationship between structure and agency, sociology offers critical insight into how policies are shaped by broader social forces and how they, in turn, affect diverse communities.

Sociological engagement with public policy introduces analytical depth by addressing questions that lie beyond narrow economic interests. It reveals how public problems are socially constructed, how power is distributed across institutions, and how social norms and cultural meanings influence both the perception of issues and the selection of solutions. The sociological perspective is particularly valuable in the agenda-setting phase, where it identifies problems that might otherwise remain invisible, especially those concerning marginalized or under-represented groups. Sociology also facilitates a more inclusive discourse by integrating the voices of those most affected by public decisions.

Furthermore, in the context of globalization and increasing policy interdependence, sociology plays a vital role in connecting domestic governance with transnational dynamics. Through the concept of epistemic communities, sociology helps explain how networks of knowledge-based actors coordinate policy responses to global challenges, such as climate change, migration, and inequality. These communities do not simply transmit technical knowledge; they shape policy debates by introducing new frames of understanding, identifying cause-effect relationships, and negotiating shared meanings across borders. As Peter Haas (1992) and John Campbell (2002) argue, ideas-rather than mere interests-are crucial in shaping the direction of public policy. Sociology, in this regard, serves as a generative force that supplies theories, worldviews, and conceptual frameworks to structure policymaking and implementation.

Moreover, sociology extends its influence beyond policy formulation to the implementation phase. By challenging the limitations of traditional top-down or bottom-up models,

sociological inquiry promotes more dynamic and contextual approaches that consider the complex interplay between global forces and local realities. It bridges macro-level institutional analysis with micro-level lived experiences, offering more responsive and adaptive models of governance.

In sum, the integration of sociological insight into public policy enriches the process at every stage-problem identification, agenda setting, formulation, implementation, and evaluation. It ensures that policies are not only technically sound and economically viable but also socially just, culturally resonant, and democratically legitimate. As the global policy landscape becomes increasingly complex, interconnected, and uncertain, the contribution of sociology is not merely complementary but essential. By advancing a deeper understanding of human behavior, institutional dynamics, and normative frameworks, sociology helps reimagine public policy as a more inclusive, reflexive, and transformative endeavour.

This is particularly evident in the case of Nepal, where public policy has undergone a long and turbulent evolution-from autocratic, elite-driven frameworks to efforts at participatory and inclusive governance. The 2015 Constitution marked a turning point, establishing a foundation for federal, democratic, and inclusive policymaking. Yet, the challenges of social inequality, exclusion, and elite domination persist. Here, sociology can play a pivotal role in ensuring that Nepal's public policies genuinely reflect the aspirations of its diverse population. By embedding sociological understanding into Nepal's policy discourse, we can better navigate the tensions between tradition and modernity, central authority and local autonomy, and technocratic decision-making and grassroots participation-ultimately fostering a more just and responsive public policy environment in Nepal.

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Systematic Review on Socio-economic and Environmental Impacts of Hydropower Projects: A Global and Indian Perspective

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Abstract

One of the most well-known renewable energy sources, hydropower is essential for lowering reliance on fossil fuels and slowing down global warming. But even though hydropower is renewable, its growth has always been linked to intricate and extensive socioeconomic and environmental effects. This systematic analysis looks at case studies from India and around the world, highlighting problems such community dislocation, environmental damage, difficulties with governance and participation, and the exclusion of underprivileged groups, particularly women and indigenous populations. The review also looks at other models and solutions that have been suggested, like micro- and small-scale hydropower projects. In order to provide a comparative viewpoint, theme analyses are presented after structured summary tables of pertinent studies. Finally, this review concludes with policy recommendations meant to guarantee equitable and sustainable hydropower development.

Keywords

Hydropower, Socio-economic, Environmental, Displacement and Energy.

4

Systematic Review on Socio-economic and Environmental Impacts of Hydropower Projects: A Global and Indian Perspective

1. Background

Hydropower projects present serious socioeconomic and environmental issues, despite being hailed as a renewable energy source with the ability to boost the economy.[1] Dam development and related infrastructure have been widely linked to ecosystem damage and community displacement, especially among vulnerable groups like tribal tribes.

About 17-19% of the world's electricity is produced by hydropower, which is also a major part of renewable energy portfolios.[2] Thousands of megawatts of electricity are produced by large dams and hydroelectric reservoirs, which support industrialization, rural electrification, and economic expansion. However, there are significant ecological and socioeconomic costs associated with the development and maintenance of hydroelectric facilities.

Hydropower projects around the world, and especially in developing nations like India, have caused river ecosystems to be disrupted, biodiversity to be destroyed, and millions of people to be displaced. Furthermore, the negative effects of these projects are made worse by governance problems such poor rehabilitation of impacted areas, a lack of transparency, and insufficient public consultation.

For an in-depth understanding of the multifaceted effects of hydropower, this review methodically synthesizes the existing literature and arranges it into both Indian and international studies. This study uses comparative analysis to identify similarities and differences and suggest sustainable methods for developing hydropower.

2. Methodology

The secondary data gathered from academic journals, government papers, environmental studies, and non-governmental organization (NGO) publications is analyzed methodically in this review.

2·1 Selection Criteria

⤷ **Focus on Displacement and Rehabilitation**: Research examining the socioeconomic impacts of relocation brought on by hydropower projects.

⤷ **Environmental Impact**: Studies describing how hydropower development affects biodiversity and the environment.

⤷ **Governance and Public Participation**: Evaluations of governance frameworks and participatory methods.

⤷ **Gender and Tribal Issues**: Research on the effects on under-represented populations, such as women and indigenous people.

⤷ **Alternative Solutions**: Studies supporting small-scale and sustainable hydropower solutions.

In order to promote systematic analysis and comparative topic discussion, studies were divided into two categories: Indian and International.

3. International Studies on Hydropower Projects

3·1 Displacement and Resettlement Issues

Numerous international studies draw attention to the substantial human displacement brought on by hydropower developments. According to Menzes (1991), the main reasons why displacement is problematic are because it is often forced and infrequently receives just compensation.[3] In his 1995 analysis of China's Three Gorges Dam, Chau noted that more than a million people had been displaced and underlined the difficulties of relocation in impoverished areas. Concerns about displaced people frequently becoming poorer without proper compensation or rehabilitation were voiced by Michael, (1996).

The Impoverishment hazards and Reconstruction (IRR) model was first presented by Cernea (1996, 2003), and it outlined dangers such social dis-articulation, homelessness, and landlessness.[4] His approach highlights how crucial it is to address the cultural and social effects of resettlement in addition to the economic ones.[5]

3·2 Environmental Impacts and Economic Considerations

Degradation of the environment is another recurrent issue. In their analyses of hydropower projects in Brazil and Turkey,

respectively, Cummings (1995)[6] and Biro (1998) noted the loss of agricultural land and irreversible harm to ecosystems. According to Biro's analysis, many projects lost their economic viability when environmental costs were internalized.[7]

Silva (1990) looked at the wider environmental effects of Sri Lankan development, such as resource depletion and pollution associated with hydro projects.[8] Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) are essential for methodically addressing these issues, according to Brismar (2003).[9]

3·3 Governance, Participation and Human Rights

To reduce negative effects, international organizations such as the World Bank (1998)[10] and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/DDP) (2001) have acknowledged the importance of using participatory approaches in hydropower planning.[11] However, research by Sinclair (2003)[12] and Peterson (2001) revealed that social instability was frequently caused by insufficient public participation.

Human rights may be violated by development-induced relocation, particularly when disadvantaged groups are disproportionately affected, according to Robinson (2003). Schmoelling (2003) suggested actions to reduce environmental risks, such as waste management and the use of renewable energy.[13]

4. Indian Studies on Hydropower Projects

4·1 Displacement and Socio-Economic Impacts

Large-scale displacement has occurred in India as a result of the development of hydropower. Singh (1992)[14] and Mridula Singh (1992) talked on how current policies disregard women and landless people, making them susceptible to poverty after displacement. Roy (1987, 1999)[15,16] and Nehru (1958) criticized the propensity for massive dam construction and argued in favor of more manageable, neighborhood-friendly alternatives.[17]

A large number of hydroelectric projects are situated in Himachal Pradesh, where displaced inhabitants experience economic and social challenges, as demonstrated by studies like as those conducted by Advani (2009)[18] and Bala (2010).[19] Roy (1987) also emphasized health issues, such as the rise in vector-borne illnesses in areas impacted by dams.[20]

4·2 Environmental Concerns and Biodiversity Loss

In river systems impacted by dams, Gaur (2007)[21] and Qureshi (2007) reported negative ecological effects, such as a decline in biodiversity and disturbance of aquatic life. Particular attention was drawn to the decline in fish populations in the Jhelum River and other rivers as a result of dam construction.[22]

Saxena (1994) highlighted the necessity for context-specific technological adaptation while pointing out the potential of small hydropower projects for sustainable rural development.[23] Given the high density of planned dams in areas like the Himalayas, Singh (2006) criticized the inadequate biodiversity assessment in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and argued in favour of cumulative effects analysis.

4·3 Governance and Policy Shortcomings

It has been discovered that institutional structures and government policies are insufficient to handle displacement. According to the Government of India (1984) and later research, land acquisition regulations prioritize monetary compensation over proper rehabilitation and resettlement. Affected populations are left vulnerable by the National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation (2004)'s lack of legislative support.

Despite stipulations under the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, Soren (2006) talked about how tribal rights are being neglected in the development of hydropower.[24] The absence of significant public involvement in hydro project planning in India, especially in the Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, was highlighted by Diduck (2007)[25] and Sinclair & Diduck (2000).

5. Emerging Alternatives and Mitigation Approaches

5·1 Small-Scale Hydropower and Community-based Models

The potential of small and micro-hydropower projects as sustainable substitutes for major dams was examined by Mehra (2007)[26] and Sengupta (1987).[27] Though they still need careful planning, some projects are thought to be more socially and environmentally acceptable.

5·2 Integrating Environmental and Social Safeguards

Important steps were emphasized, including the need for thorough Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), inclusive

planning, and incorporating social safeguards. Diduck (2007)[28] and Sinclair (2003) focused on increasing public involvement,[29] although Biro (1998) promoted include environmental costs in evaluations of economic viability.[30]

6. Comparative Analysis of Hydropower Impact Studies: International vs. Indian Perspectives

Comparative Analysis of International vs. Indian Perspectives of Hydropower Impact Studies is depicted in the following table:

Table-1: Comparative Analysis of International vs. Indian Perspectives of Hydropower Impact Studies

Aspect	International Studies Findings	Indian Studies Findings	Comparative Analysis
Displacement and Rehabilitation	According to Menzes, Michael, and Chau, displacement is primarily involuntary, undercompensated, & causes socio-economic vulnerabilities.	Large-scale relocation with little to no resettlement; excluded are vulnerable populations such as landless workers (Singh, Bala, Roy).	Displacement with inadequate rehabilitation is evident in both situations. While international studies stress the effects of dis-placement on a broad scale, India places greater emphasis on tribal dis-placement.
Environmental Impact	Extensive environmental deterioration, encompassing pollution, biodiversity loss, and forest loss (Silva, Biro, Cummings).	Severe harm to aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as disturbances in river flow (Gaur, Qureshi).	Environmental deterioration is a widespread worry. International research emphasizes biodiversity loss and the wider landscape, while Indian studies concentrate on river ecosystems.
Public Participation and Governance	Lack of inclusive governance and frequent disregard for public consultation (Peterson, Sinclair).	Lack of transparency and inadequate public participation in project development (Diduck, Sinclair & Diduck).	Although a lack of public involvement is common around the world, Indian studies draw attention to additional problems with administrative and policy short-comings in governance.

Gender and Tribal Issues	There are a few mentions of vulnerable groups; however gender and indigenous rights are not given as much attention (Cernea, Robinson).	Gender prejudice is widespread in resettlement, and women's and tribal rights are neglected (Mridula Singh, Soren).	While worldwide literature discusses vulnerable groups in general terms, Indian studies are unusual in that they focus on gender and tribal issues in particular.
Alternative Solutions	Better EIA is required, and renewable options are mentioned (Brismar, UNEP/DDP).	Encouragement of modest hydro projects as environmentally friendly substitutes (Saxena, Mehra).	Both promote different approaches. International research concentrate on improved EIA and public involvement, while Indian studies prioritize small-scale hydro.

7. Thematic Inferences and Comparative Analysis

7·1 Displacement and Rehabilitation

One of the most significant social effects of hydropower development is displacement. Studies conducted in India and abroad emphasize how involuntary displacement causes socio- economic vulnerabilities, the uprooting of entire communities, and the loss of livelihoods. Systemic exclusions in resettlement planning are shown by Indian research that goes deeper into the implications of caste, gender, and tribe. For example, Singh (1992) concentrates on the predicament of landless communities that do not receive formal compensation, while Mridula Singh (1992) highlights the unique vulnerability of women.

International studies like Menzes (1991) and Michael (1996), on the other hand, focus on more general economic displacement but provide little analysis that breaks down gender.

7·2 Environmental Impact

Environmental deterioration is still a global issue, and Indian and foreign experiences are very similar. Deforestation, biodiversity loss, and river system pollution are all included in international studies such as Silva (1990) and Biro (1998). These worries are supported by Indian studies like Gaur (2007) and Qureshi (2007), which highlight

the loss in fish populations and river ecosystems and how it affects livelihoods that depend on these resources.

7·3 Public Participation and Governance

The problems of governance are universal. Diduck (2004) in India and Peterson and Sinclair (2003) worldwide both draw attention to the dearth of effective community involvement and participatory planning. Cases from India also highlight opacity, corruption, and institutional barriers that limit community involvement. Conflict and opposition to dam projects, like the Narmada Bachao Andolan, are frequently caused by this lack of transparency.

7·4 Gender and Tribal Issues

Gender and tribal concerns are examined in greater detail and with greater depth in Indian studies. The systematic marginalization of women and indigenous groups, who have limited control over project design and relocation procedures, is revealed in works such as Mridula Singh (1992) and Soren (2009). Vulnerable groups are mentioned in international studies, such as Cernea (1997), but no focused analysis is offered, indicating a deficiency in inter-sectionality research worldwide.

7·5 Alternative Solutions

The necessity for alternatives is acknowledged in both Indian and international literature. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (2001) and Brismar (2003) promoted the use of non-dam renewable energy sources and strict EIAs. Small and micro-hydropower projects are emphasized by Indian academics such as Saxena (1994) and Mehra (2007) as less intrusive, community-managed solutions that can satisfy local energy demands without causing ecological harm or broad displacement.

8. Summing Up

The literature emphasizes that although hydropower projects can make a large contribution to economic growth and energy generation, they also come with a high cost, which is mostly paid by natural ecosystems and vulnerable communities. Strong legislative frameworks that guarantee equitable restitution, efficient relocation, environmental protection, and sincere community involvement are desperately needed. While still providing for energy demands, a

move toward smaller, locally driven hydroelectric projects could lessen some of these negative effects.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this systematic review on socio-economic and environmental impacts of hydropower projects, following recommendations have been made:

1. **Strengthen Resettlement Laws:** Implement inclusive policies for Tribes, gender-sensitive rehabilitation, and land-for-land compensation.

2. **Mandatory Environmental Assessments:** Make sure that thorough, open EIAs are conducted with active public involvement.

3. **Encourage Small/Micro Hydropower:** Provide assistance to locally run small-scale hydropower initiatives.

4. **Community Engagement:** Establish inclusive and open planning procedures

Financial Support and Sponsorship

Nil .

Conflicts of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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Utilization Pattern of Kisan Credit Card Scheme: A Comparative Study of Punjab and Haryana

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Abstract

Kisan Credit Card (KCC) emerged as an innovative credit delivery mechanism to meet out production credit requirements of the farmers in a timely and adequate manner. The present investigation was carried out during the year 2021-22, in two purposively selected Mansa district of Punjab state and Sirsa district of Haryana state. The results revealed that the share of all categories of farmers in full utilization of loan amount was higher in Punjab as compared to Haryana which indicates that the farmers of Punjab were utilizing their loan amount for the intended purpose. The study showed that 41.99 per cent of loan amount was fully utilized by farmers of Punjab whereas only 37.92 per cent was fully utilized by Haryana farmers. The maximum loan amount was misutilized by the large farmers of Haryana (71.38%) and minimum amount of loan (38.49 per cent) was misutilized by medium farmers of Punjab. Large farmers of Haryana misutilized the share of their loan amount more than farmers of Punjab in majority of the activities namely social ceremonies, settling old debt, capital expenditure, plot purchasing and other expenditures except house construction and non-farm business.

Keywords

Kisan Credit Card, Utilization pattern and Loan amount.

5

Utilization Pattern of Kisan Credit Card Scheme: A Comparative Study of Punjab and Haryana

1. Introduction

In 1998, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) created a model program that served as the foundation for the Kisan Credit Scheme (KCC).By providing financial support to farmers; the program was created to address the different credit needs of the agriculture industry. Maintaining the value of KCC, The purpose of the study was to evaluate the farmers' perceptions of the usefulness of KCC. NABARD and RBI revised the KCC scheme's guidelines in 2012, adding many new components beyond meeting short-term lending requirements for investment finance and crop cultivation. Previously, eligible farmers were given a Kisan Credit Card and a pass book or card-cum-pass book as part of the KCC program. KCCs have been converted into RuPay or smart card-cum-debit cards to facilitate ATM use, and the KCC scheme has been simplified. KCC holders are also covered under the Atal Pension Yojana as of 2015. The updated plan gives banks general instructions on how to operationalize the KCC program. Since its inception, Punjab and Haryana have operated the KCC system, which benefits farmers by providing financing to meet their agricultural production demands and related activities. Thus, by carried out a primary data based study in the study area an attempt has been made to analyze the utilization pattern of credit provided through this scheme which will be helpful in providing a real scenario of credit utilization and requirements of the farmers in study area.

2. Objective of the Study

Objective of the study is to analyze and compare the utilization pattern of credit availed through KCC Scheme in Punjab and Haryana.

3. Methodology

The states of Punjab and Haryana, which are well-known agricultural regions, have been selected as research areas in order to

learn more about the purpose and effectiveness of the Kisan Credit Card Scheme. The farmers provided the primary data related to KCC for the years 2021-2022 that was required according to the objectives of the study.

4. Results and Discussion

In this paper an attempt has been made to evaluate the credit utilization pattern of the KCC scheme in Punjab and Haryana in term of amount sanctioned to them. Simple averages were calculated for this analysis and a comparison has been shown between the utilization pattern and misutilization of credit provided through KCC scheme in Punjab and Haryana.

Table-1: Comparison of Utilization Pattern of Credit Availed through KCC in Punjab and Haryana (By Amount of Credit Utilized)

Utilization of Credit	Punjab		Haryana	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
Small Farmers				
Fully utilized	2348902.3	41.99	2034279.00	37.92
Totally misutilized	3245678.45	58.01	3329873.42	62.08
Total	**5594580.75**	**100.00**	**5364152.42**	**100.00**
Medium Farmers				
Fully utilized	6943093.34	61.51	6549321.34	58.33
Totally misutilized	4343782.41	38.49	4678352.56	41.67
Total	**11286875.75**	**100.00**	**11227673.9**	**100.00**
Large Farmers				
Fully utilized	6245134.66	35.20	5978037.66	28.62
Totally misutilized	11497824.76	64.80	14908796.76	71.38
Total	**17742959.42**	**100.00**	**20886834.42**	**100.00**

The above table depicts the Comparison of Utilization Pattern of Credit Availed through KCC in Punjab and Haryana (By Amount of Credit Utilized). The share of all categories of farmers in full utilization of loan amount was higher in Punjab as compared to Haryana which indicates that the farmers of Punjab were utilising

their loan amount for the intended purpose. Table shows that 41.99 per cent of loan amount was fully utilized by farmers of Punjab whereas only 37.92 per cent was fully utilized by Haryana farmers. The share of medium and large farmers in full utilization of loan amount in Punjab was 61.51 per cent and 35.20 per cent respectively and it was 58.33 per cent and 28.62 per cent in Haryana respectively. The maximum loan amount was misutilized by the large farmers of Haryana (71.38%) and minimum amount of loan (38.49 per cent) was misutilized by medium farmers of Punjab. The study showed a significant difference between the utilization patterns of credit availed by small, medium and large farmers for fully utilising the loan amount as well as for misutilization the loan amount.

Table-2: Comparison of Misutilization Pattern of Credit Availed through KCC in Punjab and Haryana (By Amount of Credit Utilized)

Utilization of Credit	Punjab		Haryana	
	Number	%	Number	%
Small Farmers				
Social ceremonies	1876422.38	33.54	1083540.81	32.54
House construction	1127308.02	20.15	709596.03	21.31
Settling old debt	906881.54	16.21	499814.00	15.01
Capital expenditure	440293.51	7.87	248075.57	7.45
Non-farm business	451482.67	8.07	298689.65	8.97
Plot purchasing	—	—	—	—
Other expenditures	792192.63	14.16	490157.37	14.72
Total	**5594580.75**	**100.00**	**3329873.42**	**100.00**
Medium Farmers				
Social ceremonies	1630953.55	14.45	1302921.19	27.85
House construction	1981975.38	17.56	0.00	0.00
Settling old debt	1690773.99	14.98	752279.09	16.08
Capital expenditure	2863480.38	25.37	1381517.51	29.53
Non-farm business	—	—	—	—
Plot purchasing	—	—	—	—
Other expenditures	3119692.46	27.64	1241634.77	26.54
Total	**11286875.75**	**100.00**	**4678352.56**	**100.00**

Large Farmers				
Social ceremonies	5225301.55	29.45	4658998.99	31.25
House construction	2012051.60	11.34	1590768.61	10.67
Settling old debt	1554283.25	8.76	1353718.75	9.08
Capital expenditure	1873656.51	10.56	1717493.39	11.52
Non-farm business	1362659.28	7.68	—	—
Plot purchasing	3667469.71	20.67	3718253.91	24.94
Other expenditures	2047537.52	11.54	1869563.11	12.54
Total	**17742959.42**	**100.00**	**14908796.76**	**100.00**

The above table-2 shows the comparison of misutilization pattern of credit availed through KCC in Punjab and Haryana (By Amount of Credit Utilized). Small farmers of Punjab had misutilized higher share of loan amount sanctioned to them for social ceremonies (33.54%), Settling old debts (16.21%) and capital expenditure (7.87%) as compared to the farmers of Haryana. The small farmers of Haryana had misutilized higher share of their loan amount for house construction (21.31%), non-farm business (8.97%) and other expenditures (14.72%). On the other hand, medium farmers of Haryana had misutilized higher share of their loan amount as compared to farmers of Punjab for activities like social ceremonies (27.85%), settling old debts (16.08%) and capital expenditure (29.53%) while share of medium farmers of Punjab remained higher than farmers of Haryana in house construction (17.56%) and other expenditures (27.64%). Apart from this, the table also shows the misutilization pattern of large farmers as well. Large farmers of Haryana misutilized the share of their loan amount more than farmers of Punjab in majority of the activities namely social ceremonies, settling old debt, capital expenditure, plot purchasing and other expenditures except house construction and non-farm business.

5. Conclusion

Overall study found that the share of small, medium and large farmers in full utilization of loan amount in Punjab was 41.99 per cent, 61.51 per cent and 35.20 per cent respectively and it was 37.92 per cent, 58.33 per cent and 28.62 per cent in Haryana respectively. The maximum loan amount was misutilized by the small, medium and large farmers of Punjab was 58.01 per cent, 38.49 per cent and

64.80 per cent respectively and it was 62.08 per cent, 41.67 per cent and 71.38 per cent in Haryana respectively. The utilization percentage of total loan amount of all categories of farmers was higher in Punjab as compared to Haryana which indicates that the farmers of Punjab were utilizing their loan amount for the intended purpose. Further it has been found that large farmers of Haryana misutilized the share of their loan amount more than farmers of Punjab in majority of the activities namely social ceremonies, settling old debt, capital expenditure, plot purchasing and other expenditures except house construction and non-farm business.

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Editorial Mediations in Translation: A Study of Translator's Role Beyond Linguistic Equivalence

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Abstract

Translation is a process that involves in-depth comprehension, analysis, transference, and reconstruction keeping the grammatical, referential, connotative, denotative, and socio-cultural meaning of the source text intact. In highly literary translations, simple, word-to-word translations alone do not suffice. What is required is a quality translation that is accurate, error-free and that which offers relevant contextual and cultural nuances of the original text to its readers. For it to be so, the process must go through rigorous checks and rechecks, expert editing support and responsible proofreading to ensure quality. There is confusion about the role of translators, editors, proofreaders, and reviewers as their area and scope of work often overlap. Though editing and proofreading are two separate activities, they often get used interchangeably. Their end objective is similar - delivering accuracy and quality but the degree of criticality varies. There are different linguistic aspects involved in it; each must work towards imparting a finesse to the text in hand. This paper intends to trace how the lines between them are vague and how the translator is expected to take over the three-in-one role, the myriad challenges that she must face before a polished product can be delivered to the publisher.

Keywords

Translation, Source text, Target text, Socio-cultural nuances, Connotative meaning, Denotative meaning, Editing, Proofreading .

6

Editorial Mediations in Translation: A Study of Translator's Role Beyond Linguistic Equivalence

1. Introduction

William Tyndale was the first person to translate the Holy Bible from Hebrew and Greek into English which created quite a furor in the early 16th century Catholic England. If it hadn't been for him, the protestant Reformation and Renaissance movements would have had a different story to narrate. Similarly, Latin and Roman Literatures are offshoots of Greek literatures to a great extent. In fact, the entire human civilization owes its very existence to translations. Without them, many of the ancient texts on literature, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and several other branches of knowledge would have either gone extinct or would have been rendered undecipherable. Chaucer, Homer, Horace, Kalidas, Shudrak would have all faded into oblivion. Very few would have heard of Orhan Pamuk or Haruki Murakami. In India, we have always believed in *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam* i.e., the entire world is one big family. It is through the translations that we can access the rich literary heritage not only of the various regional Indian literatures but also of world literature at large.

Today, we are living in a multilingual, multicultural world, where globalization and commercialization have blurred the borders. The need to understand each other's language, literature, culture, way of life, politics, religion has become even more imperative as it impacts our lives on an everyday basis. Since there are hundreds of languages and dialects that are spoken all over the world, each with its own distinct culture and cultural nuances and styles, the role of translation and interpreting gains further centrality. A piece of visual art is there for everyone to see, admire and appreciate but a piece of literature requires a reader-base who can read and understand the language in which it is written. Translation picks these texts from their language-specific regions and gives them the required acceleration to transcend boundaries.

2. Multidimensional Role of Translators

In her book, *Introductory Course in Translation Principles*, Barnwell defines translation as "a re-telling, as exactly as possible, the meaning of the original message in a way that is natural in the language into which the translation is being made" (Barnwell, 1986, Introduction). Translation is a process that involves in-depth comprehension, analysis, transference, and reconstruction keeping the grammatical, referential, connotative, denotative, and socio-cultural meaning of the source text intact. In highly literary translations, simple translations alone do not suffice. What is required is a quality translation that is accurate, error-free and which takes care of providing its readers with relevant contextual and cultural nuances of the original text. For it to be so, the process has to go through rigorous checks and rechecks, expert editing support and responsible proofreading to ensure a good quality translated text. According to the International Standard ISO 17100:2015, translators must check their draft translations "for possible semantic, grammatical and spelling issues, and for omissions and other errors, as well as ensuring compliance with any relevant translation project specifications" (Mossop, 2019: 18-19).

To accomplish this, the translators need to be linguists par excellence with a thorough academic and practical knowledge of both the source and the target language so that the flavor of the original work is retained. It is not merely about literal translation, substituting word-for-word, but about translating and interpreting ideas, concepts, cultural nuances inherent in the source works and conveying them into another language altogether. Translators deconstruct the crux of the text and reconstruct it in a parallel language. They are multi-taskers engaged in multidimensional activities of translating, analyzing, interpreting, editing, proofreading all together. The existence of linguistic complexities and non-equivalence in various language-systems make their work extremely challenging. They need to have the required skills to build bridges of communication between different knowledge systems and possess the expertise to select the right registers, words, phrases, grammatical structures, and socio-cultural contexts.

Translators have the ability to create brand-new text from the original. At times, the act of translation becomes challenging when they are unable to find right equivalents of the region and

culture-specific words and phrases in the target language. They cannot take the source text too lightly or deviate from their path and ascribe their own meaning to the words written. It is imperative for them to remain faithful to the source work or risk it becoming an adaptation or a transcreation. Often issues relating to the translation come up for discussion as to whether a particular piece requires a word-to-word literal translation or a free translation, or whether the region-specific words should be used in their original language or be defined in terms of footnotes or glosses, or how a culturally sensitive topics should be approached. If we go by the chess-game analogy, the truth is - "In translation, context is Queen. There is no King." The translator needs to be well versed in all the areas to give her valuable inputs.

There are misperceptions aplenty about the roles of translators, editors, proofreaders, and reviewers primarily because their area and scope of work overlap to a considerable extent. Each language that is spoken in the world has its own unique set of grammatical and syntactical rules regarding sentence structures, sentence length, spellings, punctuation, etc. but they are all guided by certain common factors that bring out their significance in every translation. Editing and proofreading are two separate activities but are often used interchangeably. Their end objective is similar - delivering accuracy and quality but the degree of criticality varies. There are numerous linguistic aspects that need to be worked upon at length to make the work error-free. Before delving further, let us also have a quick overview of some of the various literature reviews on the same.

3. Literature Reviews

In *Handbook of Translation Studies*, Gambier & Doorslaer (2010) discuss the multifaceted role of translators as editors, reviewers, and proofreaders. The book explores the editing process in translation, the importance of linguistic and stylistic reviews, and the role of proofreading in ensuring quality translations. Shlesinger & Jettmarová, (2006) have also examined the socio-cultural aspects of translation and interpreting, including the role of translators as editors and reviewers and its impact on the final product. The translators are "intercultural mediators who evaluate consistency, coherence and even formatting - functions that are typically associated with editors and proofreaders", argues Anthony Pyn in his work, *Exploring Translation Theories* (Pyn, A., 2014).

Snell-Hornby, M. (2006) focuses on the key developments in translation studies and discusses the evolving role of translators. Brian Mossop published his 4th edition, *Revising and Editing for Translators* from Routledge in the year 2019 wherein he writes extensively about the overlapping and distinguishing features of editing, reviewing, and proofreading. Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha write about the intersecting of translation, editing and publication in their edited volume, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. While shedding light on the multifarious role of translators as editors, reviewers, and proofreaders, these reviews emphasize the importance of translators' linguistic and stylistic expertise in ensuring the quality and accuracy of translated texts.

4. Editing, Proofreading and Reviewing

Since no human being is perfect, and are liable to err howsoever careful or experienced they might be, there is a need for editing, revising, and proofreading even the most seemingly 'impeccable' work before it goes out in the public domain. The best and the most renowned of them may commit some inadvertent oversights despite their best intentions.

4·1 Editing

If one goes by the definition, "editing is the process of selecting and preparing written, photographic, visual, audible, or cinematic material used by a person or an entity to convey a message or information. The editing process can involve correction, condensation, organization, and many other modifications performed with an intention of producing a correct, consistent, accurate and complete piece of work" (Mamishev, & Sean, 2009: 128).

Brian Mossop, in his book *Revising and Editing for Translators*, lists a few elements of the many that can go wrong with a translation: from typographical errors to format inconsistencies to grammatical problems to inappropriate treatment of a genre, etc. There are four broad types of editing: copy editing, stylistic editing, structural editing, and content editing (Holmes, 1998). There are some corrections that do not conform to any pre-set linguistic rules, for example, when the inter-sentence connectors are poor or if there is excessive verbosity then stylistic editing is required to bring about fluency in the text. The vocabulary and sentence structures have to be tailored to suit the target audience.

Content editing of the text is required both at the micro and macro level to rectify all factual, logical, or syntactical errors and to rule out obscurity and confusions of every kind. Accuracy is the touchstone for all editorial works which lends finesse and quality to the final product. It is only when the writer has finished writing that the role of editor comes into play where she checks for any stylistic dissonances in usage of language, vocabulary, grammar, etc. Some of the points that are kept in mind while editing any piece of writing are:

- Is the introduction clear and purposeful? Do paragraphs have topic sentences? Is there a clarity? Has every idea been given sufficient weightage?
- Are there any unnecessary digressions?
- Do the chosen words express the ideas correctly? Or has there been an excessive use of thesaurus throughout the document?
- Has there been an appropriate use of voice? Passive voice is always preferred over active voice. Is the overall tone appropriate for the target audience?
- Are the sentences unnecessarily long and winding? Is excessive explanation diluting the narrative?
- Has the gendered language been used appropriately?
- Have the linking words been used appropriately to connect ideas?
- Is the text a meaningful whole?
- Has the text been worded concisely? Is terminology consistent?
- Is the conclusion concise and clear?
- Does the text meet the readers' needs?
- Are the citations in place?
- Have the copyright laws been adhered to?
- Is it error free and print-ready?

Editing, as such, plays a significant role in the presentation of a particular literary or artistic work - be it a film, a piece of fiction or a document, or a research paper or an article. On it depends the readability, quality, and crisp style. Editor lends clarity, consistency and succinctness of style and register to the edited work keeping it as close to the source work as possible. The translator too, if she so wishes and if she possesses the required linguistic expertise, can take over the roles of editor, proofreader, and reviewer all rolled into one.

Editors rectify all loopholes, flaws, gaps, and disconnects, lend it a consistent fluidity and a natural style and transform it into an independent creative piece. Many a times, when the work in hand is split amongst multiple people owing to its sheer size, it is the editor's task to ensure that consistency and coherence in style is maintained throughout the work. She also needs to ensure that the edited work complies with the patron's requirements.

A skilled editor has dynamism and the linguistic prowess of both the source and target language texts along with an in-depth understanding of the socio-cultural nuances. Apart from this, excellent communication skills, flexibility, adaptability, ability to research and multitask, advance knowledge of computer and computer-aided software becomes imperative. That lends her the expertise to edit and polish all the finer nuances of translation.

4·2 Proofreading

Proofreading, on the other hand, is about correcting superficial errors in the typed copy before it goes into final print. There could be errors in formatting, punctuation, grammar, spellings, syntax, etc. Once the task of the copy editor is over, the role of the proofreader comes in. She combs through the entire document minutely and sifts out any flaws or errors that could have been left behind including typographical ones and makes it print-ready. Howsoever meticulous the editor may be with his work; some slipups and oversights inadvertently crop up that require rectification. Faulty or incorrect use of punctuation or grammar may mar the text in question, put off the reader for all times to come, crash its market-worth and destroy its brand value completely. Therefore, the role of a competent proofreader is also equally important. Earlier only one copy used to get typed and all the corrections were incorporated manually in that but in today's digitally advanced era, corrections can be done in the soft copy itself. There are now various online apps and software available that can flag any inconsistencies and rectify them with a simple click of a key.

Thus, editing is related to the overall linguistic quality and appropriateness which retains the natural look-and-feel of the original text, whereas proofreading is the final double-check on the printed copy to rule out any errors before it gets published.

4·3 Reviewing

Similarly, reviewing too is undertaken by a subject matter expert who is a native or near-native speaker of the target language. A reviewer's work is to assess the quality of translation and smoothen out all rough edges through proof reading. She double-checks the linguistic reviews and anomalies, if any, in its quality, consistency, tone and style. It is an objective evaluation of the literary piece where one adheres to the conventions and guidelines of the target language in question.

5. Translator as Editor, Reviewer, and Proofreader

The question that arises then is, should a translator also take on the work of editing, proofreading, and reviewing upon herself as is expected of her? Can she be a good editor, proofreader, and reviewer too? Academic translators are quite often confronted with such questions. Are there any clear-cut answers to these? Probably not, since the work in-hand is subjective by its very nature. It is wholly dependent on the kind of skill-sets that an individual translator possesses. Why are the translators then expected to edit and proofread their own work thoroughly and meticulously before submitting it to the publishers? Probably, a fresh pair of eyes would evaluate it more differently and more objectively and detect any possible slipups, shortfalls, redundancies, inconsistencies, or typographic errors which would have escaped the translator's eye. Since they must switch between two syntactically diverse language-structures, the chances are that they may inadvertently leave behind occasional traces of the source language in their translations. And despite feeling that they have accomplished the task to their satisfaction and are all set to go into print, there still might be some areas left that need further refinement. The best of the authors, writers, award winning translators, literary giants may require the help of editors to polish their works. Just as authors need editors to edit their works, similarly translators too may need editors. They can obviously edit their own work but it would be better if the work passes through the eyes of an independent editor, especially if it has to go into print.

However, if the translation is for private circulation, notes, lectures, translated abstracts, etc. then professional editing becomes optional. Editing is not required if the translation is a literal one, for e.g., for information brochures, instruction manuals, directions,

questionnaires, etc. It is also not required if it is for a limited audience, such as an M. Phil or doctoral thesis but if the focus is to publish it, then it becomes desirable. Many a times, the publishing houses have their own in-house team of editors and proof-readers but they still expect the translators to give a finished product that is duly edited, proofread and is print-ready. This might lead to certain inadvertent flaws in the final copy for they cannot be expected to fulfil both the roles simultaneously.

Though the translators are extremely proficient in both the source as well as the target language, yet editors have a keener eye for detail. They can undertake different types of edits on a particular piece of writing - content edit, structural edit, copy edit, line edit and/or mechanical edit. They can edit the text keeping the target audience and market in mind. Often with the first draft, the translators do not even realize that flow and fluency is somewhat compromised but the expert editors are able to identify and fix any lapses that may have been inadvertently committed in the process of translation. They not only weed out inconsistencies in the translated texts but are able to remodel them according to the target audience and market requirements. They are equally adept in giving a bilingual review of both the source and target texts in question. Their professional commitment requires them to not only verify the efficacy and appropriateness of the references quoted but also to make sure that the translated message is conveyed accurately.

As such, before it comes out as a print copy, the original text must pass through several revisions and re-revisions, edits, and reviews. It is proofread minutely to discard any dissonances and flaws. Both the editors and proofreaders work meticulously to rule out the lurking inconsistencies, if any. Their focus is to improve the overall style, check the accuracy of grammar, punctuation, spellings, references, etc.

The translators too are expected to undertake the same process to produce quality translation. "They serve as invisible editors and rewriters", states Venuti Lawrence in his seminal work, *The Translator's Invisibility*. Since they are so closely associated with both the source and the target text, that they can easily replicate their expertise and take over the work of editing, reviewing, and proofreading the manuscript not only for themselves but for the original author as well. She also needs to tread cautiously and ensure that she does not impose her own personal style upon the text in

hand or resort to over corrections. Neither should she interfere with the original unnecessarily and mar its uniqueness either by over-simplification or by an excessive use of jargon. Since the translator too is a language professional who understands the finer nuances of each word and phrase used, their work tends to overlap. The editor, on the other hand, may or may not be an expert of the source language from which the translator has translated. It will not pose as much of a hindrance for it is not imperative for her to know the source text but it would be advantageous to have an in-depth idea regarding the translated text and look for false cognates, if any.

Many a times culturally loaded idioms become a stumbling block. Prepositions too work differently in source language and target language and so do punctuations. These flaws make the structure weak, if due care is not taken. Editing a translation does not require much structural editing, it is mostly copy-editing and sometimes stylistic editing too. Once the translated manuscript is received by the editor, he has to do a concordance check to see if all the paragraphs are incorporated properly from the source text.

The translators, too, sometimes take liberties with translation to ensure readability and fluency. By the time the product reaches her, it has already undertaken several rounds of reading and re-reading, checking and re-checking, editing and re-editing, reviewing and re-reviewing. Despite this, the translators sometimes come across certain dissonances that need to be addressed. It may appear as a lapse on the part of a reviewer or editor of the original text, but it usually is not so. Instead, it raises an important question as to why and how do these weak spots surface typically at the end of the line, when it is undergoing translation? The answer probably could be found in the nature of translation itself. What gets translated is the idea, concept or meaning behind the text more than merely words. It is only when the translators deconstruct and reconstruct them in target language that the flaws surface. Since they too are writers of sort, who are engaged in rewriting the text-in-question into a different language-system after scrutinizing it thoroughly, it isn't surprising if they encounter certain discrepancies in the process. Professional translators are likely to question and seek clarifications in such instances since they are the ones who read the text most closely. They may encounter certain resentment too from the author/editor who might feel that her authority is being challenged. The occasional misprints may be overlooked but when it is related to

more intricate issues like rephrasing the entire sentence or correcting the terminology used in order to enhance the fluency, the translator may find herself in a tight spot.

5. Conclusion

Translation and editing are both subjective activities. Every contribution matters in the entire game of things - be that of a writer or editor or proofreader or reviewer or translator. They aren't separate entities or rivals who are competing against each other but are engaged in complementary activities that enhance the quality of the end-product created.

Today, in the age of artificial intelligence, we have different apps and devices at our disposal which are designed and customized to do our every bidding. We have Google translate, dictionaries, thesauruses, glossaries, and apps like Grammarly that correct grammar and do spell-checks, etc. too. They are helpful to some extent as they flag the inherent errors but it is always a human touch that is required to rectify them. Computer-aided translations provide the backend support, no doubt, but their success rates are rather dismal. Many a times, the end-result turns out to be ambiguous and disheartening, and even nonsensical at times, especially when a literary translation must be accomplished. As such, the need for a human translator is unlikely to fade away.

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Occupational Health and Safety Laws in Agricultural Sector: An Emerging Need in India

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Abstract

Occupational health and safety issues in agricultural sector are a neglected issue across the world. Although the International Labour Organization has viewed agriculture as one of the dangerous occupations involving the occupational health hazards and safety issues, India has not adopted concrete legal steps to safeguards the agricultural workers. The failure to enact special laws to address the health and safety of agricultural workers in India in line with the international legal mandate has endangered their interests. The paper is an attempt to discuss the various issues pertaining to occupational and safety laws in agricultural sector in India. The study is based on doctrinal research and uses both primary and secondary sources of data.

Keywords

Tourism, Satras, Majuli, Economic activities, Income, Dependency.

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Occupational Health and Safety Laws in Agricultural Sector: An Emerging Need in India

1. Introduction

Agricultural sector, as the oldest and most fundamental human occupation, is the backbone of India's economy. It contributes substantially to the livelihood of a large section of population in India. As per the Economic Survey of 2024-25, the estimated agriculture sector is expected to rebound to a growth of 3.8 per cent in Financial Year 2025 (Summary of Economic Survey 2024-25, 2025). The agricultural sector plays a vital role to ensuring food security, rural development and economic stability. In spite of its vital role, the agricultural sector in India neglects the health and safety of agricultural workers. Occupational health and safety refers to practices, policies and systems designed to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of persons working in any workplace. Although India has a stringent regulations regarding industrial sector, agricultural sector continues to operate in precarious conditions, often outside the protection of labour laws. Agricultural workers are regularly exposed to a wide range of risks, including exposure to pesticides, extreme weather conditions, accidents with tools and machines, and ergonomic hazards. The agricultural sector being mostly informal or unorganized sector, the workers are often have limited or no access to healthcare, insurance, or safety equipment. As per International Labour Organization, agriculture continues to be a hazardous sector (Kalifungwa, 2024: 694), but the occupational health and safety regulations are almost non-existence. The present research paper aims to address the current state of the legal aspects of health and safety at work in the Indian agricultural sector and propose corrective measures to strengthen the legal framework. It delves into exploring international and national legal standards, identifying regulatory gaps and proposing concrete reforms.

2. Basic Concept of Occupational Health & Safety (OHS)

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) is a multidisciplinary field concerned with the safety, health, and welfare of people at work

(Nduka, 2018: 206). It deals with identification, evaluation, and mitigation of risks associated with the working environment (Alauddin *et al.*, 2024: 72). It is more than a legal framework; it guarantees workers dignity and guarantees all workers, irrespective of their sector of activity, the right to safe working conditions. Combining the definition of Health as provided by World Health Organization (WHO), occupational health may be defined as promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental, and social well-being of workers in all occupations (Klikauer, 2018: 122). The common definition of occupational health adopted by Joint Committee of ILO and WHO on occupational health and safety is "Occupational health should aim at the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations; the prevention among workers of departures from health caused by their working conditions; the protection of workers in their employment from risks resulting from factors adverse to health; the placing and maintenance of the worker in an occupational environment adapted to his physiological and psychological capabilities; and, to summarize, the adaptation of work to man and of each man to his job" (International Labour Office, 1998: 23).

3. Review of Literature

The issue of occupational health and safety in agriculture has attracted limited academic and policy attention, especially in the Indian context. While there is considerable research on OHS of industrial sector, agricultural work is still under-represented in national legal framework and in academic research. Here an attempt shall be made to review the available literature, both international and national, to unearth the existing research gaps.

Globally, a number of studies have identified agriculture as one of the most dangerous sectors. According to the estimate of International Labour Organization (ILO), more than 170,000 agricultural workers are killed every year, amounting to half of all fatal workplace accidents (International Labour Organization, 1997). While reporting that exact data on the OHS status of agricultural sector is not available in developing nations, the authors have noted that the in pesticide-related diseases estimated 2 to 5 million people are exposed to acute poisonings each year and that 40000 die (Cole, 2006). In India, it is stated that atleast 120 fatalities occur in agriculture every day (Dimple *et al.*, 2021: 229).

The dearth of OHS legislations to cover the self-employed workers of agricultural sector is a major issue across the world. In one such study in European countries, the authors point out that one of the most serious problems and shortcomings in EU health and safety legislation is the exclusion of self-employed farmers, who represent almost 90 percent of the agricultural population (Jakob *et al.*, 2021: 452).

In one of the study conducted in the context of Turkey, the authors have inter alia noted that when examining the issue of health and safety at work in agriculture, it is clear that a sufficient level of awareness has not yet been created, both in Turkey and in other parts of the world (Saygýlý & Çakmak, 2021).

In India, few researchers have tried to map the prevalence and nature of occupational hazards in agriculture. In one of these studies, the authors reported that farmers are exposed to various biological, respiratory, noise, skin diseases, certain cancers, chemicals linked to environmental and safety issues, musculoskeletal injuries, etc (Dimple *et al.*, 2021: 229). In another study carried out in the context of rural agricultural workers of India, the authors reported that common occupational health hazards related to farming are different types of mechanical hazards (Manwani & Pandey, 2014: 22). In another study, the authors inter alia observed that there is a need to increase the level of health education, safety literacy of the farmers (V. P. Sharma *et al.*, 2021). Despite the fundamental role of agriculture in the Indian economy, there is a significant lack of academic, institutional and legislative focus on the health and safety of agricultural workers.

4. International Legal Standards related to Occupational Health and Safety in Agricultural Sector

At the international level, there has been recognition of occupational health and safety (OHS) laws. It focuses on safe and dignified working conditions along with welfare of the workers as one of the important facets of workers' rights. The ILO keeping in mind the hazardous nature of agriculture developed a comprehensive OHS standard regarding agricultural sector.

4·1 ILO Convention No. 184 on Safety and Health in Agriculture (2001)

The Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 is an international legal instrument developed by the ILO to address the

OHS issues in agriculture sector. The Convention requires the member states to adopt a coherent policy on OHS in agriculture and periodically review it. The policy should provide for prevention of accidents and injury to health arising out, linked with or occurring in due course of work by elimination, minimization and control of hazards (Singh, 2009: 411). The Convention contains 29 Articles. Article 1 of the Convention defines the agriculture. Under the Convention, the term agriculture includes agricultural and forestry activities carried out in agricultural holdings, including crop production, forestry, livestock and insect farming, and the processing and maintenance of agricultural and livestock products by or on behalf of the holding operator, including all processes, storage, operation and transport within the holding (Cardona *et al.*, 2015: 1502). Under Article 2, agriculture does not include (a) subsistence agriculture; (b) industrial processes using agricultural products as raw materials and associated services; and (c) the industrial exploitation of forests (Cardona *et al.*, 2015: 1502). The broad definition of agriculture under the Convention may be perceived from the relevant Articles. It covers agricultural workers working for a wage (Art. 1), whether permanent, temporary or seasonal (Art. 17) (Vapnek *et al.*, 2007a: 24). Further, non-binding Recommendation 192 provides that the member state should progressively extend the Convention of 2001 to self-employed farmers and agricultural workers who own or rent the land on which they work, including small tenants, sharecroppers, small owner- operators, members of farmers' cooperatives and subsistence farmers.

Under Article 3, a Member State that ratifies the Convention may initially exclude certain sectors of agriculture or groups of workers for reasons of substantial problems, but it must plan for their inclusion over time. These exclusions and plans of action must be notified to the ILO, with detailed justification and future actions. As per Article 4, the member states must develop and regularly review a national policy on agricultural safety and health with an aim to eliminate, minimize or control work-related injuries (Vapnek *et al.*, 2007b: 24). The policy must be formulated after consulting the employer's organization, worker's organizations and national conditions. The national legislation should define responsible authorities, outline rights and duties of employer and worker, ensure coordination, and enforce penalties, suspend or restrict the agricultural activities posing imminent risk (Vapnek *et al.*, 2007b: 24).

Labour inspection is an important aspect of labour law. The ILO has a Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 specially for inspection purpose in agriculture. As per Article 17 of the 1969 Convention, agricultural labour inspection services shall be involved in the preventive inspection of new plants, new materials or substances and new methods of handling or processing products which appear likely to pose a health or safety risk, in so far as the competent authority so determines (Labour Inspection, 2006: 33).

As per Section 5 of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001, member state must establish a well-equipped and effective inspection system for agricultural workplaces. As per national laws, inspection duties may be delegated to or shared with approved public or private bodies under government control. Article 6 mandates that in accordance with national laws, the employers must ensure the safety and health of workers in all aspects of agricultural work. The Article further fixes the responsibility upon multiple employers or self-employed persons operating in the same agricultural setting. The relevant national legislation must provide that they must coordinate to uphold health and safety standards in workplace. Article 7 imposes the duty upon employers to assess workplace risks and take necessary steps to ensure all agricultural tools, equipment, and processes are safe and compliant with standards. It further encompasses the duty of employer to provide adequate training and instructions on safety and health, information regarding risk and workplace hazards to agricultural workers (Turhanoðullari & Özçatalbaþ, 2014: 314).

Furthermore, it requires the employer to stop any task posing immediate danger and evacuate the workers. As per Article 8 of the Convention, Agricultural workers shall have the right to be informed, consulted and involved in security measures and to be able to withdraw from dangerous situations (Turhanoðullari & Özçatalbaþ, 2014: 314). Workers and their representatives must, in turn, adhere to safety rules and assist employers in carrying out their responsibilities. Article 9 and 10 of the Convention stipulates that agricultural equipment and tools must be safe, well-maintained, and operated by qualified personnel only. Under Article 11, the handling and transport of materials, in particular manual lifting, must comply with safety requirements to protect workers against injuries. According to Articles 12 and 13 chemical safety systems must cover the import,

labelling, use and disposal of chemicals and must provide clear information on hazards and ensure the safe disposal of waste. As per Article 14, the national laws and regulations should prescribe that the biological agents must be handled to prevent infections, allergies, and injuries. Further, Article 15 provides that agricultural installations must also comply with health and safety regulations.

Despite its importance, India has not ratified Convention No. 184 (Moore *et al.*, 2025: 252). This reflects a reluctance to extend mandatory legal protection to agricultural workers in terms of OHS, although many of the principles of the Convention are in line with India's constitutional safeguards and sustainable development goals.

4·2 ILO Convention No. 155 (Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981)

The Convention is one of the key international instruments adopted by ILO. It ordains every member state to formulate, implement, and periodically review a national policy on occupational safety and health (Koradecka, 2010: 17). The Convention is not sector-specific, all comprehensive and covers all branches of economic activity(International Labour Office, 1991: 19). The Convention endows the employers with responsibility to ensure that all practicable preventive and protective measures are taken to minimize occupational risks. The Convention mandates that the employers are responsible for providing adequate information, comprehensive in-service training and the necessary OHS training, for consulting workers on health and safety related issues related to their work and for informing the competent authority of cases of occupational injuries and diseases (Occupational Safety and Health in Public Health Emergencies, 2020: 4). Further, the employers are also required to provide workers with adequate protective clothing and equipment and adequate training in their use to avoid, as far as possible, any risk of adverse health effects(Backhouse, 2013: 73). Not only employers but also workers are vested with obligations under the Convention. Workers are required to take reasonable care for their own safety and for the safety of others, to follow safety instructions, to report hazards and injuries at work (Backhouse, 2013: 74). India has also not ratified the Convention, which limits its liability in the international enforcement of labour rights (Up-to-Date Conventions Not Ratified by India, 2025).

4·3 OHS Laws Related to Agriculture in Different Countries

In Brazil, extensive laws have been adopted regarding OHS in agricultural sector. Originally, rural labour security was regulated by virtue of Law No. 5.889 of June 5, 1973. But in 2005, this law was replaced by a single specific Regulatory Norm, NR-31. This NR-31 This Regulation lays down the principles to be respected in the organization and working environment with a view to planning and developing activities in agriculture, livestock, forestry, aquaculture and in the field of health and safety at work (da Silva *et al.*, 2021: 4).

In USA, The agricultural sector is subject to specific regulations under the Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) programme. It provides a list of simple rules to remind farmers of the important safety issues (Pyykkönen & Aherin, 2012: 400). In Australia, health and safety legislation covers all sectors of the economy and state-level authorities implement agricultural safety codes and training programmes for farmers. In other words, the Australian agricultural sector is required to comply with state/territory legislation to maintain a safe workplace (Donham & Thelin, 2016: 489). However, from 2012, all jurisdictions in Australia are subject to a single overarching legislation called the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, which will strengthen these requirements (Lower *et al.*, 2011: 293).

5. Indian Legal Standards related to Occupational Health and Safety in Agricultural Sector

In India, the occupational health and safety (OHS) sector has multiple legislations addressing the various sectors of economy. However, in order to consolidate and adopt a single comprehensive legislation, the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 has been enacted. Although, India has a robust framework of OHS, the agricultural sector remains under-represented in these legislative frameworks. The present section is devoted to discuss critically the national legal standards related to to OHS in agriculture.

5·1 Constitutional Provisions

Although the Indian Constitution does not explicitly provides any provisions regarding OHS in agriculture, it implicitly regulates occupational health and safety under a number of fundamental rights and directive principles. Article 21 guarantees the right to life

and personal liberty, which has been interpreted by the Supreme Court to include the right to health and safe working conditions. Article 39(e) directs the State to ensure that the health and strength of workers are not abused. Article 42 mandates the State to make provisions for securing just and humane conditions of work.

5·2 Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020

This Code consolidates 13 existing labour laws pertaining to OHS into a single, comprehensive legislation. However, its scope largely excludes agricultural workers. The key features of the code are:

- ‣ Applicable primarily to establishments with a fixed number of employees.
- ‣ Focus on formal and industrial sectors such as factories, mines and construction
- ‣ It includes provisions for plantations but excludes agriculture.

Although the Code does not contain a specific reference to agriculture, it does establish a Social Security Fund in accordance with Section 115. The Social Security Fund has been created for unorganized sector labour. The unorganized sector labour has been given the same meaning as is assigned to it under clause (m) of section 2 of the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008. Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 has defined unorganized sector worker as a home based worker, self-employed worker or a wage worker in the unorganized sector and includes a worker in the organized sector who is not covered by any of the Acts mentioned in Schedule-II of Act i.e. the Employee's Compensation Act, 1923 (3 of 1923), the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (14 of 1947), the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 (34 of 1948), the Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provision Act, 1952 (19 of 1952), the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (53 of 1961) and the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 (39 of 1972) (Harish & Venkatashami, 2015: 43). This has the potential to include unorganized sector agricultural workers.

5·3 Plantations Labour Act, 1951

The Plantations Labour Act, 1951 is milestone legislation in the field of plantations. The Act provides welfare measures such as housing, medical care, and sanitation for workers in tea, coffee, cinchona, cardamom and rubber plantations, it does not extend its benefits to agricultural workers. Furthermore, the Act only applies to

plantations which admeasure 5 hectares of land size and employing a minimum 15 workers, thereby excluding small-scale and family-run farms (R. C. Sharma, 2016: 663).

5·4 Insecticides Act 1968

The Insecticides Act 1968 is one of the legislation relevant to agriculture. The Act has been enacted to regulate the import, manufacture, sale, transport, distribution, quality and use of insecticides in order to prevent risks to humans (Singh *et al.*, 2019: 51).

6. Problems of Existing OHS Related Legal Framework

6·1 Exclusion from Key Legislation

The first and foremost issue is the deliberate exclusion of OHS aspects in agriculture from labour laws such as the OSH Code, 2020. Although the Code consolidates 13 labour laws and promises universal OHS standards, it is largely oriented toward factories, mines, plantation and construction establishments. This leaves more than 46 percent of the Indian workforce employed in agriculture outside the scope of OHS protection (Bhagirath, 2025).

6·2 Lack of Legislative Will

Agriculture is often seen as a traditional, subsistence activity rather than as a formal sector of the economy requiring OHS regulation. The OHS aspect of agriculture is limited to enactment of the Insecticides Act 1968. In case Plantations also the safety provisions were added to the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 only in 2010 (Joseph & Viswanathan, 2016: 161).

6·3 Minimal Judicial Intervention

Although the courts have ruled in favour of labour rights under Article 21, judicial intervention in the agricultural sector remains limited. Without specific legislation to interpret, the role of judiciary is limited in enforcing the OHS standards for agricultural workers.

6·4 Socio-Economic Challenges

a. **Informal Sector of Economy and Seasonal Nature of Work:** Most agricultural workers are either self-employed (Afridi, 2025) or hired for a short period with daily or piece-rate basis payment (Pal, 1994: 1), making it difficult to monitor or mandate OHS measures. The lack of legal identity and records for such workers complicates the delivery of OHS benefits.

b. **Low Literacy and Awareness Levels:** A large proportion of agricultural workers have low literacy (Arcury *et al.*, 2010), which makes it difficult for them to understand safety instructions or how to use protective equipment.. Even in states having highest literacy rate like Kerala , agricultural workers have been exposed to OHS issues due to 'inadequate understanding of the toxicity levels, unscientific handling practices and poor personal protective mechanism' (Devi, 2009: 263).

c. **Economic Constraints:** The small and marginal farmers who dominate Indian agriculture often lack the financial means to invest in safety equipment or ergonomic tools. They very often rely on locally manufactured tools and traditional equipments lacking safety and design standards which cause injuries specially among women agricultural workers (Pai *et al.*, 2021: 451).

7. Suggestions

a. **Amending the OSH Code to Include Agriculture:** The first and foremost suggestion to improve the OHS standards of agricultural sector in India is to amend the OSH Code, 2020, to explicitly include agricultural workers and define safety standards applicable to this sector.

b. **Adopting mandate of Internal Legal Regime:** The Indian legal regime should include provisions regarding OHS measures as provided in the ILO Convention No. 184. This Convention could be adapted to Indian agricultural sector and include provisions on risk assessment, pesticide safety, ergonomic tools and mobile health services.

c. **State Level OHS Policy on Agriculture:** Whereas the OSH Code, 2020 is amended would be a Central legislation to be implemented at state level, States could be encouraged to develop regional OHS frameworks for agriculture in order to establish a solid legal framework for OHS in the agricultural sector. This will facilitate the needs for occupational health and safety in the agricultural sector, tailored to local crops, climates, practices and the needs of agricultural workers.

d. **Creation of Database of OHS issues:** There is an urgent need of creating a national database on agricultural injuries, diseases, and fatalities which will greatly facilitate in evidence-based

policymaking and revision of list of agricultural hazards or diseases. In addition, the integration of these data with existing surveys on health and labour can provide a clearer picture of the landscape of occupational health and safety in the agricultural sector in India.

e. **Arrangement of Awareness Programme and Training Programme:** As the agricultural workers or farmers lack awareness regarding OHS needs of agricultural sector, the Farmer cooperatives, panchayats, and NGOs can be mobilized to deliver safety training, demonstrate proper use of tools, and distribute protective gear. Government-sponsored schemes should include a budget for OHS education.

f. **Financial Aid and Subsidies of Government:** The government can provide financial assistance for the adoption of safety measures through Subsidized ergonomic tools,,Tax exemptions for farms implementing OHS standards, mandatory health insurance for agricultural workers or farmers, Insurance premium discounts for small or marginalized farmers.

g. **Integration of OHS with Rural Healthcare:** The agricultural activities are primarily carried out in rural areas. Hence, it is imperative to strengthen the rural healthcare with proper facilities to take care of the OHS issues. In this regard, training of ASHA workers, primary healthcare providers, engagement of doctors and nursing staff specializing Occupational Health may be undertaken.

h. **International Collaboration on OHS:** India can work with global agencies such as the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organisation to adopt international best practices. Pilot projects may be launched with technical and financial support to demonstrate scalable models for OHS. Further necessary steps should be taken to ratify and implement ILO Convention No. 184 by India.

8. Conclusion

Agriculture is the lifeline of Indian rural economy contributing substantially towards rural livelihood and nation building. In spite of its substantial contribution, the agricultural workers continues to work under an unsafe and inequitable labour conditions. Although

agriculture is one of the most dangerous professions, it is largely excluded from the scope of current legislation on health and safety at work. This legal opacity not only contravenes constitutional values, but also violates the international legal order. In this context, India can draw important lessons from global practice. The adoption of key principles from ILO Conventions and the adaptation of successful models such as Brazil's NR-31 could help to create a strong national legal framework for the protection of OHS in agriculture. Furthermore, ratification of the ILO Convention No 184 and alignment with the SDGs would strengthen India's international commitments and improve the well-being of workers.

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Review of Interstate Analysis of Food Security in India's Hill States: Himachal and Uttarakhand

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Abstract

Food security continues to be a vital developmental issue in India, especially in geographically sensitive areas like the Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand hill states. This review of literature examines the four dimensions of food security-availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability-in the context of these two Himalayan states. Through review of current research, policy contexts, and empirical analyses, the review identifies inter-state differences and similarities in agricultural productivity, infrastructure, climate resilience, and socio-economic determinants of food security outcomes. Particular focus is placed on terrain-induced constraints like limited arable land, recurrent natural disasters, and logistic challenges in supply chains. The analysis also assesses government interventions such as the Public Distribution System (PDS), integrated farming schemes, and climate-smart agriculture with respect to effectiveness in combating food insecurity in hilly areas. The review ends by examining gaps in existing literature and suggesting a localized, terrain-specific approach in order to ensure sustainable food security in mountain states.

Keywords

Hilly region, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Inter-state analysis, Agriculture sustainability, Climate resilience, India.

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Review of Interstate Analysis of Food Security in India's Hill States: Himachal and Uttarakhand

1. Introduction

Food security has always been at the center of India's developmental agenda, inextricably linked with the socio-economic planning of the nation, public welfare programs, and poverty reduction strategies. Traditionally, the center of Indian food security has been the attainment of food grain self-sufficiency, specifically in the post-independence period when the country witnessed repeated famines, excessive reliance on food imports, and severe under-nourishment among vast sections of its population. The 1960s and 70s Green Revolution was a watershed moment in India's food production capability, shifting the nation from being a food-deficit economy to one with large surpluses in major staples like wheat and rice. But this aggregate-level hunger-reducing production-based model of food security, though effective, eventually showed its limitations in dealing with the multidimensionality of food insecurity. Modern concepts of food security, as identified by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), include four main dimensions: availability, access, utilization, and stability. In India, these are heavily determined by a myriad of regional variations, socio-economic disparities, climatic exposures, and gaps in policy implementation.[1] Although the country as a whole might reflect encouraging trends in availability of food grains, serious inter-state as well as intra-state differences show up in real access to food and nutrition outcomes. Especially at risk in this regard are India's mountain and hill states, where topographical obstacles, lack of infrastructure, and climatic vulnerabilities add to the challenges of maintaining across-the-board food and nutritional security.[2]

One of the states that represent these challenges are Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, both within the Western Himalayan region. Despite having geographical and ecological commonalities, they have differential socio-economic profiles, development paths, and policy competencies. Himachal Pradesh has historically

performed better than a number of other Indian states on major human development indicators and has pursued comparatively successful horticulture-based models of agriculture. In contrast, Uttarakhand-although endowed with natural resources-has perennial problems of out-migration, fragmented holdings, and poor infrastructure that directly affect food production and food distribution systems.[3]

The food security situation in these two hill states is influenced by a number of terrain-related problems. Steep topography and limited arable land prevent mechanized agriculture and high-value agricultural production. Road transport bottlenecks, which are augmented by seasonally triggered disruption such as landslides and heavy snowfall, obstruct the efficient operation of the Public Distribution System (PDS), a lifeline for food availability among rural and tribal populations. Further, altered climatic trends-such as irregular rainfall, glacial withdrawal, and high frequency of extreme weather events-create very serious threats to subsistence agriculture as well as commercial horticulture, hence compromising the overall food system stability of the region.

Apart from environmental and infrastructural limitations, socio-economic vulnerabilities add complexity to the food security situation in these states. Marginalized groups such as Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), women-headed families, and economically weaker sections tend to experience structural exclusion in accessing entitlements and public services. Low levels of education, lack of access to care, and social gender roles have negative impacts on dietary variety, maternal and child nutrition, and general use of available food. All these inequities are frequently exacerbated in distant and interior areas where state extension and civil society efforts are inadequate or geographically lopsided.[4]

In this backdrop, it becomes necessary to study the current body of literature pertaining to the food security dynamics of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. While a number of studies at the national level have discussed the food security of India in general terms-considering the progression of policy, performance of PDS, agricultural growth, and nutritional levels-there is a comparative lack of academic literature that engages with the regional peculiarities of hilly regions in depth. Most notably missing is a rigorous, comparative study that considers the various ecological,

administrative, and socio-economic environments of these two Himalayan states.[5,6]

This chapter attempts to plug this gap by providing a holistic review of literature on food security in India, focusing particularly on Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The review follows a thematic structure and is divided into separate sections on agricultural production and land use dynamics; food distribution systems such as the PDS; public health and nutritional status; infrastructure and climatic vulnerability; gender and social equity; and institutional and governance structures. By combining evidence from academic writings and policy reports, the chapter attempts to capture patterns, challenges, and innovations in food security as faced by these hilly states.

In addition, the review identifies current gaps in research, including under-representation of rural high-altitude populations, absence of dis-aggregated data, and need for terrain-sensitive implementation designs. It also emphasizes the imperative for an inter-state comparative perspective that not only reflects the complexity of realities in every area but also informs more targeted, local-level policy interventions. Ultimately, this chapter adds to a more nuanced understanding of food security as an everyday experience within India's mountain areas-one that is beyond aggregate figures to capture the intricacy of hunger, nutrition, and well-being in geographically peripherized places.

2. The Discourse on Food Security in India

India's transition from scarcity of food in the initial decades after independence to comparative food surpluses today is well documented. Early research, for example, Devi (1966) had examined the Madras State (now Tamil Nadu) and presented one of the first sub-national critiques of India's food policy. She came to the conclusion that the lack of a coherent and efficient food policy had resulted in a reduction of both the extent under food grain cultivation and actual output levels. Her results showed a strong corres-pondence between food price volatility and variations in the size of cultivation, which meant that farmers' choice of production was extremely sensitive to market conditions when they did not have policy support. The research actively promoted the formulation of a stable, long-term food policy, advocating that only such stability could provide agricultural stability and food security for the state.[7]

Gupta (1970) approached the problem from a more general, national stance, claiming that India's national food policy needed to reconcile two fundamental objectives: Increasing food production, and enhancing the distribution network to accommodate large-scale, equitable access to all regions. He condemned the absence of an integrated national plan, which he claimed had resulted in regional resentment and inefficiency, famously termed a food muddle. Gupta reiterated that the fair distribution of foodstuffs between states, irrespective of their local production, should be a cornerstone of India's food security strategy. His research also highlighted the need for voluntary discipline and collective responsibility on the part of producers, consumers, and the government if the system were to work well.[8]

Ensminger (1977) proceeded and put greater emphasis on the fact that India's food security issue is just as much an issue of farm output as it is one of coping with population pressures and guaranteeing equal access to all the states.[9]

Subsequent researches, including Gopalan (1995) and Radhakrishna (1996), came to appreciate how structural transformation and urbanization were resulting in new risks to consumption and nutrition patterns, especially for the weaker sections. The Green Revolution period was both a success story and a school of failure-while cereal output increased, regional and crop-specific imbalances ensued.[10,11]

3. Agricultural Production in Hilly Lands

Agriculture constitutes the backbone of the social and economic existence of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. In these rural, hill states, most of the populace depends directly or indirectly on agriculture for livelihood, employment, and generation of income. However, hill farm production is fundamentally distinct from plains farm production, not only in scale and crop choice but also in systemic limitations, environmental exposure, and livelihoods. The complex hill agriculture dynamics are examined in this section by examining the key constraints, traditional practices, diversification trends, and food security policy environments that shape food security in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.[12,13]

Sharma *et. al* (1996) provide significant insights into the organization, productivity, and adaptive capacity of conventional

farming systems in the Western Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. These systems, while frequently classified as low-yielding by mainstream agronomic criteria, are extremely resilient and ecologically integrated, especially if measured against the backdrop of local agro-climatic conditions, topographical limitations, and resource scarcity. It noted, along with these practices, the delicate mountain ecosystems, in which steep slopes, shallow soil, and restricted irrigation render intensive monoculture-based agriculture unfeasible. Crops are not chosen merely for their market value but also their resilience to climatic fluctuation, poor soils, and labor shortages.[14] Also Sharma *et.al* (2022) also highlights the multi-functional character of such traditional systems. In addition to food production, they support ecosystem services such as the maintenance of soil fertility, the conservation of biodiversity, and water regulation. Though less productive on a yield per hectare basis than high-yielding varieties (HYVs), their stability, sustainability, and adaptability translate into long-term food security, particularly under climatic disturbances.[15]

Purohit *et al.* (1996) carried out a seminal study of integrated and diversified farming systems in India's dryland and desert regions with the aim of identifying ways in which ecologically suited, resource-conserving models of agriculture can be employed to enhance the livelihood of small and marginal farmers in adverse environments. Though the research was conducted in the dry tracts of western India, its conclusion has implications in general, particularly for mountainous areas such as Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, which have similar constraints-limited cultivated land, delicate soils, erratic rainfall, and exposure to environment.[16]

4. Public Distribution System and State-Level Performance

The Public Distribution System (PDS) has traditionally been one of India's main institutions for supporting food access and smoothing consumption, particularly among poor and geographically isolated groups. As part of India's overall food security system, the PDS is intended to provide staple commodities like rice, wheat, sugar, and kerosene at subsidized rates through a system of Fair Price Shops (FPSs).[17]

Himachal Pradesh is often cited as a relatively successful example of PDS functioning, especially among hill states. With over 90% rural

population, the state government has historically maintained a universal approach to food distribution, even after the introduction of TPDS. Swaminathan (1996)[18] admired Himachal for its effective distribution system, which made coverage possible in high-altitude and snow-covered regions by well-coordinated pre-positioning of stocks and PDS performance in Uttarakhand, however, is a more varied case. While the state has endeavored to computerize ration cards and organize supply chains, field-based studies and social audits in the countryside and hill districts such as Pauri Garhwal, Tehri, and Almora, demonstrate continued gaps at the implementation level. As cited by Swaminathan (1996a) and subsequent observations by civil society groups, the PDS in Uttarakhand is afflicted by poor road infrastructure, Low levels of awareness amongst beneficiaries regarding their entitlements, Irregular operations of Fair Price Shops, especially in thinly populated villages and state capacity weakness for monitoring and grievance redressal.

Additionally, Uttarakhand has had persistent underutilization of PDS entitlements, partly because of variable grain quality and irregular supply.

In areas with robust subsistence farming culture, individuals will resort to home-bred cereals instead of relying on poor state delivery. With both states further refining their welfare delivery mechanism, terrain-sensitive, locally adaptive approaches are necessary to make sure that the aims of the PDS-availability, accessibility, and equity of food-are adequately met. Swaminathan (1996) and Radhakrishna (1996) research continues to hold value today, citing the conflict between general food policy models and calls for place-specific implementation models. An in-depth review by Sasi *et al.* (2024) indicates that India's PDS, being theoretically sound, requires contemporary updates and terrain-sensitive modifications in implementation-especially for areas such as Uttarakhand.[19,20]

5. Nutrition Security and Public Health Implications

The theory of food security in India has increasingly developed from a constricted concentration on grain food production and calorie availability to a widening, more complex definition that encompasses nutritional adequacy and public health impact. This development has become increasingly significant as it came to acknowledge that sufficiency of calories does not necessarily translate into nutrition security, particularly among vulnerable

populations like women, children, and the elderly. The Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh states, although they have moderately succeeded in enhancing food supply and distribution by means of schemes such as the Public Distribution System (PDS), still struggle with ongoing issues in attaining overall nutritional security.[21,22]

Swaminathan & Bhavani (2013)[23] point out that nutritional security is more than maintaining a sufficient caloric intake. It is access to varied, balanced, and micronutrient-dense diets, along with sanitation, health care, and education, among pregnant women, lactating women, and children. Their study contends that looking only at grain-based caloric consumption could conceal underlying protein, vitamin, iron, and other nutrient deficiencies.

Here, both Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh show a paradoxical nutritional profile. While indicators of basic food security like calorie consumption and availability of subsidized staples have shown improvement, malnutrition in large areas remains unabated. Both states report very high rates of stunting (low height-for-age), wasting (low weight-for-height), and anemia, particularly among the under-five and reproductive-aged women, as per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5).

Radhakrishna et al. (2004) and Mishra & Rampal (2020) focus on the role of programs such as ICDS and mid-day meal scheme in nutritional outcomes, but quality, coverage, and delivery are still issues. Terrain-induced remoteness decreases the effectiveness of these programs in Uttarakhand. In Himachal Pradesh, an improved healthcare system has helped moderate some nutritional issues to some extent, but regional differences continue to exist.[24,25]

Prajapat & Ranawat (2024) observed that while ICDS has improved service uptake in some rural areas, infrastructure limitations and declining child participation pose serious challenges.[26]

6. Climate Change and Environmental Vulnerability

Climate variability poses a major threat to food systems in hill areas. High frequency of landslides, floods, and irregular rainfall interfere with agriculture cycles and lower domestic food security. Vyankatrao (2017) and Jangir & Goswami (2025) chronicled the negative impacts of climate change on rice and wheat crops, advocating for increased investment in climate-resilient agriculture.

In spite of various policy interventions, such as crop insurance and drought relief schemes, climate-smart agriculture adoption is low in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Research points towards inadequate institutional capacity and farmer awareness about adaptive measures, such as water harvesting, agroforestry, and climate-resilient crops.[27,28]

7. Socio-Economic Inequality and Food Access

Mehta & Jha (2015) and Gupta (2020) establish that Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and women bear a disproportionate brunt of food insecurity. These populations tend to live in the most inaccessible and resource-deficient areas of the hill states. Restricted access to land, financial credit, and public services adds to their risk.

Agarwal (2018) identified effective models of women's collectives improving food access and economic empowerment. Systemic issues such as patriarchal land tenure, bureaucratic latency, and weak outreach, however, impede scaling.[29,30,31]

8. Institutional and Governance Mechanisms

Decentralized institutional mechanisms, including Gram Sabhas and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), can play a major role in enhancing food delivery systems. Awanish (2011) illustrated that Gram Sabhas, when empowered, could serve as instruments of local monitoring of food schemes. Institutional capacity continues to be weak in high-altitude districts, where administrative extension is thin.[32]

Basu (2011) and Chand (2005) emphasized that structural change in the food grain market, such as effective procurement and distribution, had the potential to sustain local economies and de-link dependency on markets far away.[33,34]

9. Comparative Evaluation: Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand

While both the states fall within the same agro-climatic regions, they vary considerable in economic organization and administrative effectiveness. Himachal has improved infrastructure, greater per capita income, and relatively better institutions. Uttarakhand, on the other hand, is plagued with greater out-migration, lack of investment in agriculture, and poor enforcement of central schemes.

The comparative literature indicates that these factors account for a broader food security shortfall in Uttarakhand. In spite of similar policies, they have different outcomes as a result of differences in political will, administrative capability, and civil society mobilization.[35,36]

10. Literature Gaps and Future Research Directions

While there is a large amount of national and sectoral research on food security in India, region-specific studies that address the specific difficulties of mountain states like Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are comparatively limited. These two Himalayan states, given their unique topographical, climatic, and socio-economic conditions, need focused scholarly inquiry to enhance comprehension of the specificity of food access, nutritional realities, and program delivery within mountain contexts.[37]

Perhaps the most significant gap in the literature is the paucity of disaggregated data, especially by gender, caste, tribal status, and geographic location. This deficiency significantly constrains policymakers' and researchers' capacities to formulate inclusive and equity-oriented interventions. For instance, although aggregate nutrition data indicate moderate improvements, latent differences among women, SCs, STs, and geographically hard-to-reach rural communities are usually hidden.

Another significant deficiency is in the scarceness of empirical work on hill agriculture's climate adaptation and resilience. Given the fact that both Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are extremely sensitive to climate-related disasters like landslides, irregular rainfall, and glacier retreat, there is a strong need for field-level evidence on how small and marginal farmers are adapting to environmental stresses.[38] Research on adaptive cropping systems, water harvesting, and local knowledge systems might provide useful lessons for the development of climate-resilient food systems.[39]

Economic studies can also reveal the significant gap in systematic assessment of public programs such as the Public Distribution System (PDS), National Food Security Act (NFSA), and Poshan Abhiyan, in hilly regions. Although these schemes constitute the framework of India's food and nutrition security systems, their efficacy in inaccessible, remote, and scattered areas has not been properly evaluated. Problems of implementation in such areas like

seasonal inaccessibility, lack of personnel, weak monitoring, and community apathy need special investigation.

Aside from that, there is scarce literature focusing on the application of technological innovations to improve food security in the mountainous zones.The role of agri-tech solutions like drone-based input delivery, GIS-based crop monitoring, digital grain tracking, and mobile-based extension services play a role in bringing improvement to the food supply chains in far-flung regions has not received enough attention. As these technologies have the potential to fill terrain-related gaps, it is essential that future research assesses their feasibility, affordability, and scalability in hilly settings.

In view of these gap, future studies need to follow a multidisciplinary, participatory, and localized research framework. Blending quantitative analysis of data with qualitative inputs from communities, and situating research within the region's socio-political and cultural context, will be critical for producing meaningful, policy-relevant results. In addition, longitudinal studies that follow the effects of interventions over time, especially in the context of climate change, migration, and changing agricultural practices, are essential. A robust policy focus that connects research to outcomes of action will be vital to further food and nutritional security in India's hill states.[40,41]

11. Conclusion

Literature evidently demonstrates that food security in mountainous states such as Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand is a result of interrelated challenges, climatic, geographical, institutional, and economic. Although national food policies set the structural context, their effectiveness in hill areas relies on localized adaptation, more governance, and increased community involvement.

An inter-state comparative approach that identifies terrain-specific opportunities and needs can allow for more effective food security intervention design and implementation. If India is to achieve its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), removal of the structural bottlenecks in its mountain states will be critical to inclusive and resilient development.

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Impacts of Seasonal Migration on the Education of Children: A Case Study of Barahatal Rural Municipality in Surkhet District, Nepal

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Abstract

This study aims to study impacts of seasonal migration on children's education. This article examines the educational effects of seasonal movement in the Ekheni village of Barahatal Rural Municipality-6, Surkhet, Nepal. Descriptive and exploratory study design, were adopted for which data were gathered with semi-structured in-depth interview focus group discussion and interviews with 107 community-living persons and local informants selected by convenience sampling method. The data were processed through simple statistical methods to uncover patterns and highlights. The temporary movements have important effects on disadvantaged populations, notably in rural Nepal, where they affect children's access to education through changes in dropout and absenteeism patterns. This process is fueled by pull factors, better prospect of infrastructure, superior economic chances or education, medicine and transportation facilities in destination locations in comparison to pull locations, and push factors, low land productivity, economic difficulties and scarcity of important social services in origin locations. Results show that seasonal movement is driven mainly by the demand to maintain livelihood in the local environment and greater hopes of finding opportunity elsewhere. At the same time, the migration of economically productive people disrupts family compositions and exposes children to school disruption risks, like school dropout and chronic absenteeism. The study suggests that local actions are needed to provide for the roots of and outcomes of seasonal migration. Which enhanced employment opportunities, better access to schools and stronger rural facilities are equally important for minimizing the negative impact of seasonal migration on children's schooling.

Keywords

Seasonal migration, Rural Nepal, Education, Livelihoods, Children.

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1. Introduction

Migration, a major driving factor of population change, is the process of moving one area to another with the aim of living permanently (or semi-permanently) in that area. As defined by the United Nations Multilingual Dictionary, "Migration is a type of geographical transfer from geographical unit to another, and it regularly includes a change of domicile, from the place of departure (from the origin) to the place of arrival (at the destination)". Migration can be voluntary or involuntary and is defined as the act of changing one's place of residence by crossing specified administrative or political boundaries (IOM, 2005; Lee, 1966, as cited in Belbase, 2013: 29). Migration is a process of selection, and is mediated by economic, social, educational, and demographic aspects of individuals or families.

Internal migration processes are the change in population distribution between regions of a country without changing the total size of the national population. International migration, on the other hand, involves movement across national boundaries and may occur voluntarily, in search of better opportunities, or involuntarily, as a result of adverse circumstances (Acharya, 2018: 30).

Internal displacement of the population can also be a-classification based on time, movement and geography (permanent, temporary, semi-permanent and seasonal migration). There are recurring patterns e.g., rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural, rural-to-rural and urban-to-rural movement in motion (Gyawali, 2011: 121) . Migration is one of the most intricate demographic phenomena, which is influenced by economic social conditions, political territorial stability, and so on. Push factors, such as limited resources, lack of opportunities, and unfavorable environments, compel individuals to migrate, while pull factors, such as better employment prospects and access to services, attract them to new destinations (Gyawali, 2011: 121).

Seasonal migration, i.e., short-term, repetitive movement for survival or occupation, is one form of temporary migration. It is frequently related to agricultural or climatic cycles (Nelson, 1976; Zelinsky, 1971). In the case of India, for example, the seasonal migrant is defined as any household member having stayed away for one month but not more than six months in the course of the past year, usually for work (NSSO, 2010). In Nepal seasonal migration is a continuum, and is usually carried out for economic reasons and there is an attempt to stay connected with the area of origin (Keshri & Bhagat, 2011).

Migration has significant implications, especially with rural populations where it degrades quality of life and, as in the case of school children, education. Quality of life includes all the resources and facilities which are needed for the well-being of the people (Acharya, 2018: 122). Seasonal migration adversely impacts children by increasing school dropout rates, absenteeism, and disrupting their academic progress and overall development (Suwal, 2014: 245).

In Nepal, a low-income, geographically diverse and socio-economically threatened country, internal migration is a major problem. Accelerated population growth and migration have engendered different social, economic, and political problems for municipalities and developmental projects. Migration is frequently a consequence of the undesirable situation in the place of origin, that of the promise of improvement in the place of destination (Suwal, 2014: 245).

Tarai area which has a climate of tropical and subtropical, provides an example of the intricacy of internal migration in Nepal. Despite covering only 23 percent of the country area, it houses a far greater proportion of its population. In 2001, the Tarai housed 48.percent of Nepal's population, with significant migration from the hills and mountains (Acharya, 2074: 123). In Surkhet district, the migration rate reached 20.68 percent with male and female migration rates of 21.76 percent and 19.64 percent respectively (CBS, 2002). The 2068 census showed a total population of 169 421 males and 181 303 females in the district with an annual increase of 1.95 percent (CBS, 2068). The 10 yr Maoist war exacerbated internal displacement within the Karnali belt to place like Surkhet.

Recently in so much of Barahatal Rural municipality-6 the Ekheni community has been suffering large-scale seasonal movement. With

restricted local employment, economically able persons have been forced to relocate to seek a better life, with both children and elderly people compromising with the situation. The consequences of this migration include family separation, disrupted education, parental absence, and early marriages. Although there has been a great deal of research regarding international migration and economic effects, few research has been made to examine the educational implications of seasonal migration in the country of Nepal. The present study seeks to address this gap investigating the direct and indirect effects of seasonal movement on the learning of children in Ekheni rural area.

2. Literature Review

2·1 Theoretical Review

According to Bedford, Bedford, and Ho (2009: 14), seasonal migration, typically lasting less than a year, remains a consistent form of circular migration between countries with high and low income levels. The livelihood approach shifts away from traditional economic and Marxist frameworks of political and institutional analysis, viewing migration as a strategy employed by individuals, households, or communities to improve their livelihoods (Skeldon, 2002; Kothari, 2002; Ellis, 2000; 2003; de Haan, 1999; 2000; Deshingkar, 2004; McDowell & de Haan, 1997). Contemporary theories extend beyond Marxist and neo-classical economic interpretations by incorporating perspectives on livelihoods and social exclusion (Deshingkar & Start, 2003). Kothari (2002) highlights that while livelihood strategies are varied and multifaceted, migration remains a key component for many poor populations in developing countries.

Migration is not a modern idea, but rather an ongoing process in human history. It is a global phenomenon shaped by a complex interplay of social, economic, psychological, political, institutional, and environmental factors (Singh, 1998). Nepal, a country with a varied topography and socio-economic limitations, is not an exception. Migratory tendencies are so closely linked to the nation's history that Toni Hagen (1960) described Nepal as a "Migratory Nation". Historical documents give an estimate that by 1978, around 600,000 Nepalese 9 percent of the overall Nepalese population-permanently lived in locations other than their birthplace" (Sharma, 1978: 9).

The factors of migration are commonly described as push and pull factors. Push factors are those that compel individuals to leave their

place of origin, such as lack of job opportunities, inadequate access to education and healthcare, social and cultural constraints, environmental challenges, and political instability. On the other hand, pull factors entice migrants to destination areas by better employment opportunities, enhanced infrastructure and a good range of quality education and health services, fertile land for cultivation, and in general better living circumstances (Islam, 2015: 30).

2·2 Trends in Migration

The process of migration has been an integral part of the socio-economic fabric of Nepal for the early years of its nation-building history. Internal migration was first concentrated in the eastern Terai, especially in hill and mountainous areas. The availability of fertile agricultural land in the Terai served as a major pull factor, leading to a significant population increase in the western Terai, which grew more than six fold between 1952/54 and 2001. The majority of migrants come from the western hills/mountains. Over time, urban migration has also become increasingly prevalent. Rural-to-urban migration share increased from 17.2 percent in 1991 to 25.5 percent in 2001, indicating the historic, changing nature of migration in Nepal (Gurung, 2012: 3).

Push and pull forces have an important role on migration patterns. Access to jobs, food, healthcare, education, and transportation and recreational facilities are potent attraction factors for migration to urban and Terai settlements. On the other hand, push factors, including fewer employment possibilities, lower health and education services, social and political bias, violence, natural disasters and undesirable environmental situation, compel people to emigrate from their home centers (Islam, 2015: 30).

2·3 Impacts of Migration

Migration has significant effects on both origin and destination locations. In the place of origin, migration leads to a decrease in population, leaving behind a high proportion of dependent individuals such as children and the elderly. This loss of human power has a negative impact on local security, economic productivity, and civic vitality. Conversely, at the destination, migration results in population growth, increasing pressure on resources, escalating land values, and altering the demographic composition, often causing environmental degradation and social challenges such as crime and inequality (Gyawali, 2011: 133).

The demographic consequences of migration include changes in population distribution, composition, and growth patterns. At the point of origin, the death of young, working people lowers agricultural productivity and food security. In the meantime, at the destination, congestion, unemployment, and over-competition for scarce and limited services and resources are the typical results. These trends are highly salient in Nepal, where movement to the Terai region of the foothills and mountains has impoverished many rural areas of skilled labour and disrupted their customary agricultural practices (Belbase, 2013: 35).

2·4 Economic Impacts

Economically, migration generates a split in the place of origin and the destination. In rural areas, the absence of skilled and educated individuals hinders the mobilization of local resources, leading to reduced agricultural output and food insecurity. In urban and Terai area, migration leads not only to land price increase, but also to housing and service density, and employment rate increase as the competition between workers increase. Despite the level of education, many high educated migrants are forced to take low-skill jobs because they can find few job opportunities that are suitable for their skills (Dhakal, 2015: 65).

Foreign migration has further economic implications. Remittances sent by migrants are sources of household income, but lack of reinvestment or economic growth might occur. The exodus of highly skilled labour to other nations, and the inflow of foreign labour into Nepal, have generated a dependence on foreign economies which in turn affects the economic security of the whole country (Belbase, 2013: 35).

2·5 Social and Health Impacts

The social and health consequences of migration are multifaceted. In rural regions, the process of emigration has disrupted the ancestral family organization, and a large number of households have suffered from lack of male adult members. This trend adds new pressures to women and children, breaking the social fabric and enhancing the risks. Overcrowding in urban areas has overloaded infrastructure and services and resulted in unhygienic living environments, Limited access to drinking water and disease outbreaks. Further, unemployment in migrant

populations is a factor that often result in social crimes, i.e., theft, robbery and domestic violence (Dhakal, 2015: 66).

2·6 Demographic and Educational Impacts

Migration exerts a demographic force on demographic attributes including sex ratio, age structure, and dependency structure. In rural areas, the mass exodus of young men depletes the working-age population, which in turn leaves behind a much larger proportion of women, children and elderly. At the destination, the arrival of youth, working age migrants, is pro-employment-age, and can at the same time lead to local-migrant tensions resulting in social tensions or conflict (Sapkota, 2016: 52).

Migration is a dynamic and complex phenomenon that shapes multiple dimensions of society. Push and pull forces of migration in Nepal contribute to substantial internal and external movement, which carries deep consequences on the demographic, economic, social, and health fabric of origin and destination areas. Addressing these challenges requires targeted policies and interventions that balance development across regions, reduce inequalities, and enhance opportunities in rural areas to mitigate the adverse effects of migration.

The education of children from migrant households is significantly disrupted by seasonal migration. These children are either left behind with one parent or no parental care or accompany their parents to work. Those who travel with their parents often face interruptions in their schooling, leading to early dropouts or complete withdrawal from education. Even when children remain enrolled in schools, either in their home communities or at migration destinations, frequent movement between source and destination regions hampers their academic progress and overall achievement (Shah, 2021).

3. Methods of Study

The study was conducted in the Ekheni community of Barahatal Rural Municipality-6, Surkhet, Nepal, a rural area located on the banks of the Bheri River. The Ekheni community is composed of displaced individuals who were relocated during the Maoist armed revolution in 2009 AD from various districts of the Karnali Province. This community was selected due to its high prevalence of seasonal migration and its significant impact on children's education.

A descriptive and exploratory research design was adopted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. The descriptive design facilitated a detailed examination of the patterns and impacts of seasonal migration, while the exploratory design allowed for an in-depth investigation of participants' perspectives and lived experiences.

Semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and field observations were used to gather data which provided qualitative insights into the socio-economic drivers of migration and its effects on children's education, while field observations offered a contextual understanding of the community dynamics and the challenges faced by children and families.

Convenience sampling was employed to select participants who could provide relevant and diverse perspectives on the topic. A total of 107 participants, including parents, children, community leaders, and teachers, were chosen to ensure a holistic understanding of the impacts of seasonal migration. The collected data were analyzed using simple statistical tools and techniques to identify trends, patterns, and key findings related to the educational impacts of seasonal migration.

4. Result/Findings

4·1 Caste/Ethnicity structure of Respondents

Nepal is multilingual, multi religious and multiethnic society. Many religions have made sufficient foundation for vividness of castes too. There is saying "Nepal is a country of four castes and thirty-six different tribes". The social features of migrants are diverse. Another important factor that has a direct impact on migration is ethnic composition. Caste and ethnicity compositions of seasonal migrant's in study area are given in the following table:

Table-1: Caste/Ethnicity Composition of Respondents

Ethnicity	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Brahmin	1	0.93
Chhetri	1	0.93
Thakuri	2	1.86
Magar	19	17.75
Dalit	84	78.50
Total	**107**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table-1 shows that majority 78.50 percent of respondents were Dalit. Similarly, 17.75 percent of respondents were Magars. Likewise, 1.86 percent respondents were Thakuri , 0.93 percent from Chhetri and 0.93 percent from Brahmin. The above table shows that the majority population is found from Dalit.

4·2 The Respondents' Occupational Status

One of the key characteristics of migrants is their occupation. Seasonal migrants frequently look for better jobs that would improve their level of life and financial situation. People's occupations have an impact on their lifestyles, traditions, and educational attainment. The occupational composition has a significant impact on people's social and economic standing. Occupational composition of the seasonal migrants in study area is given below

Table-2: Occupational Status of Respondents

Occupation	No. of respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	27	25.23
Trade	5	4.67
Seasonal migration labour/ agriculture	70	65.42
Government service	5	4.67
Total	**107**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The above table shows that 65.42 percent of all respondents worked in agriculture and seasonal jobs. Similarly 25.23 percent of total respondents were involve in agriculture as their occupation. Likewise, 4.67 percent population engage in small business in the community.

The Focus Group discussion reveals that majority of the people migrated in the Kala Pahad (India) for seasonal employment because they have no any option of livelihood except of seasonal migration. Ramesh Ramjali adds that most people of Ekheni have 9 kattha land per house hold but due to the lack of irrigation thought the year we have food sufficiency only for three month so we had to survive by eating roots of Thakal from the forest during the lockdown during the covid 19th period.

4·3 Literacy Status and Educational Attainment of Respondents

Education is the prominent factor of human being to be a rational responsible. Literacy and educational attainment are vital indicators of migrants' social status. Educated population migrated more than non-educated person because educated person wanted to more opportunity in every sector than illiterate population. Educated people migrate in search of various life chances than uneducated.

Table-3: Distribution of Respondents by Literacy Status and Educational Attainment

Literacy status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Literate	91	85.04
Illiterate	16	14.95
Total	**107**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Data contained in the table above show that 85.04 percent of the total respondents were literate and rest of them 14.95 percent of respondents were illiterate.

4·4 Average Monthly Income of Respondents

The level of living standards and other economic activities are significantly influenced by the average monthly income. They may live a better life if their average monthly salary is higher. In the study area, average monthly income of the respondents is given below:

Table-4: Distribution of Respondents by their Average Monthly Income

Monthly Income (NPR)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 5000	20	18.69
5000 -10000	70	65.42
10000 - 20000	12	11.21
20000 and Above	5	4.67
Total	**107**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The above table on the preceding page shows that 65.42 percent of respondent's average income was 5000-10,000. Likewise, 18.69 percent of the total respondent's average monthly income was less than 5,000 and above. In this way, nearly 11.21 percent of respondent's in come was 10000-20000 like wise 4.67 percent of respondents had above 20,000 income in per month.

4·5 Causes of Seasonal Migration

No one people will ordinarily like to leave the place of origin, friends as well as kin and near relatives. The causes of leaving or migratory movements are deliberately made and many causes are responsible for it. We have to take into consideration the factors accountable for such deliberate movement of people.

Table-5: Distribution of Respondents by Causes of Seasonal Migration

Causes	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of opportunities in locality	93	86.91
Lack of irrigated land	7	6.54
Lack of capital	4	3.73
No land	3	2.80
Total	**107**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The above table shows that 86.91 percent of respondents were leaved their community in temporarily due to lack of opportunities. Likewise 27.27 percent of the total respondents were leaved their community due to the lack of irrigated land . In this way, 3.73 percent of respondents were leaved their origin due to lack of capital in their community and rest of respondents were leaved their origin due to no land for agriculture.

4·6 Impacts of Seasonal Migration on Education

Education is the backbone of an individual for his/her further career but searching better opportunity most of the people leave their birthplace Education is the light of life which shows a successful future. But sustaining is seen most priority in Ekheni community which causes seasonal migration of the parents hamper on the education of children Quality education causes of leaving or migratory movements are deliberately made. The following table shows the impacts of seasonal migration on education:

Table-6: Impacts of Seasonal Migration on Education of Children

Impact	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Going with parent to India for specific time	83	77.57
Being parent less	9	8.41

Early marriage and drop out	8	16.82
Lack of Study environment	7	6.54
Total	**107**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The above table shows that, among total respondents majority 77.57 percent of respondents responded caused of dropout is seasonal migration because we take our children with us to India while we go for seasonal migration to India. Likewise 8.41 percent of the total respondents are being like parentless because there is no any responsibleness toward the children of those people who are in India. Likewise, 16.82 respondents responded had early marriage due to the parent lessens and leaved the school.

The Focus Group discussion represents that majority of the people leave their place of origin for job opportunities seasonally due to the lack of opportunities in the study area. Most land of the Ekheni Community of Baraha Rural Municipality have no irrigated land at all and rest of the people leave due to the lack fertile land and opportunities.

4·7 Impacts of Seasonal Migration

Similarly, developments of society, change in the misconceptions, nuclear family, improvement of economic status of women, job opportunities are the positive impacts of internal migration in the destination (Sharma, 1978: 10).But the seasonal migration from the Ekheni community to India did not any positive changes rather it created different problems in the community among them education dropout is important problem seen in Ekheni community as discussed in the issue of social mobility for searching the opportunities by the people of study area. Following table presents the distribution of respondents by impacts that seen in the study area:

Table-7: Distribution of Respondents by Impacts that were seen in the Study Area

Impact	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Irregularity in school	45	42.05
Drop out from school	13	12.21
Poor performance of children	49	45.79
Total	107	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table-7 shows that majority 42.05 percent of respondents answer was there is lack of school regularity due to the seasonal migration labour children do not go to school due to poor condition likewise there is lack of human resource in the study area because women and male are found here most of the young male go to kala pahad for seasonal job . Similarly, 12.21 percent of respondent's answer was children were dropped out due to the seasonal migration and 45.79 answered that there is poor performance due to irregularities in school as well as frequently migration of the parents along with children.

The Focus Group discussion reveals that Majority of the people felt difficulty in education due long period absenteeism and seasonal migration in the Ekheni community. On the other hand, seasonal migration creating the situation of parentless family because of the second marriage of father and mother too during the period of seasonal migration. Among the participants of FGD the Puja BK revels her family sufferings due to the seasonal migration of her father who married with another girl during seasonal migration and ignored the family members after this economic crisis was created so mother also married with another husband as a result Puja BK and her two younger sister became parent less , after some years Puja BK also married with a boy of the same community in recommendation of villagers on the other hand two sister are becoming helpless in family now they are spending their life by living in the relatives' house turn by turn . This process is gradually increasing day by day in the Ekheni community due to the effects of seasonal migration.

It is quite clear that the data highlight that the majority of respondents 78.50 percent are Dalits, indicating their significant reliance on seasonal migration labour, with 65. percent of all respondents engaged in this occupation. Agriculture is the second most common livelihood, involving 25.23 percent, while trade and government service each account for only 4.6 percent. The dominance of Dalits and other marginalized groups in seasonal labour suggests persistent socio-economic disparities and limited local opportunities. These findings point to an agrarian-based economy with high economic vulnerability and minimal occupational diversification, emphasizing the need for inclusive development policies, skill-building programs, and improved local employment opportunities.

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents 65.42 percent earn a modest monthly income of NPR 5,000-10,000, with 18.69

percent earning less than NPR 5,000, highlighting widespread economic vulnerability. Seasonal migration is primarily driven by a lack of local opportunities, as reported by 86.91 percent of respondents, followed by the absence of irrigated land 6.54 percent, lack of capital 3.73 percent, and landlessness 2.80 percent. These factors suggest that limited income and structural challenges in local livelihoods compel migration, underscoring the need for policies that promote local job creation, agricultural infrastructure, and resource accessibility to alleviate dependence on seasonal migration.

Seasonal migration in the Ekheni community has significant adverse effects on children's education. The majority 77.57 percent of respondents reported taking their children to India during migration, causing school dropouts. Additionally, 16.82 percent cited early marriage and school dropout due to parental absence, and 8.41 percent mentioned children being left parentless, leading to neglect. Seasonal migration also results in 42.05 percent of children experiencing irregular school attendance, 45.79% facing poor academic performance, and 12.21 percent dropping out entirely. The Focus Group Discussions revealed that migration disrupts family stability, increases absenteeism, and fosters issues like second marriages, leaving children without parental care. These challenges emphasize the urgent need for community-focused interventions, such as improving local opportunities, providing educational support, and addressing family instability caused by seasonal migration.

5. Discussion

The study of the Ekheni community reveals compelling insights into the reasons behind migration. A significant proportion, 86.91 percent, of respondents reported leaving their community temporarily due to a lack of local opportunities. This highlights the pressing need for livelihood options within the community. Additionally, 27.27 percent migrated because of limited access to irrigated land, indicating the role of agricultural challenges in driving migration. A smaller fraction, 3.73 percent cited the lack of capital as a reason for their departure, while others left due to the complete absence of agricultural land. These findings underscore the structural challenges that compel individuals to seek opportunities elsewhere.

Previous research provides a broader context to these migration patterns. KC (2015) identifies poverty, income inequality,

unemployment, difficult living conditions, and food insecurity as key drivers of internal migration. These same factors are increasingly pushing individuals to explore opportunities abroad. When viewed together, both the Ekheni-specific findings and broader studies suggest that migration is not merely an individual choice but rather a response to systemic socio-economic and environmental pressures. Addressing these underlying issues requires targeted interventions to enhance local livelihood opportunities and reduce disparities, which could potentially mitigate the need for migration.

Insights from the focus group discussions (FGD) further highlight the educational struggles faced by children in the Ekheni community, particularly those whose parents engage in seasonal migration. A high dropout rate is observed among these children, primarily because no one is available to provide adequate care or support in their parents' absence. This lack of supervision not only contributes to poor academic performance and chronic absenteeism but also exposes children to other socio-economic vulnerabilities, including an increased likelihood of early marriage, driven by poverty and limited opportunities.

Seasonal migration poses significant challenges to the education of children from migrant families, disrupting their learning and overall development. As noted by Shah (2021) and Adunts and Afunts (2019), children often either accompany their parents to work sites or remain behind with minimal parental supervision. Those who migrate with their families frequently drop out of school or remain enrolled only nominally, with constant relocations severely hindering their educational continuity and progress. This transient lifestyle places children in a vulnerable position, making consistent schooling an unachievable goal for many.

This study reveals that 42.05 percent of respondents reported irregular school attendance due to seasonal migration, exacerbated by poor living conditions. School dropouts were linked to migration in 12.21 percent of cases, and 45.79 percent of respondents attributed poor academic performance to frequent parental migration and irregular attendance. Moreover, the migration of young males to Kala Pahad for work leaves communities with insufficient local resources to support children's education.

The previous researches show that seasonal migration disrupts children's education, particularly for those migrating with parents or

engaging in temporary work. As Rai *et al.* (2023) highlight, these children often prioritize earning over schooling, resulting in academic struggles and missed opportunities for higher education, which perpetuates cycles of labour migration. Siddiqui (2003, as cited in Moala & Lam, 2016) adds that while parental migration may sometimes enhance education through remittances, the absence of mothers adversely impacts educational outcomes.

In developing countries, seasonal labour migration from rural to urban areas or less developed to more developed regions is a common household strategy to combat poverty. However, children of migrants are the most adversely affected, whether they travel with their parents or remain in their villages (Roy *et al.*, 215).

6. Conclusion

Seasonal migration significantly disrupts children's education in the Ekheni community, primarily due to the socio-economic vulnerabilities and structural challenges faced by migrant families. The study shows that, most of respondents migrate due to insufficient prospects in their community, disproportionately affecting underprivileged communities like Dalits. Parents are frequently forced to move with their kids due to seasonal migration, which results in low academic performance, inconsistent attendance, and school dropouts. Furthermore, neglect, early marriage, and insufficient supervision are common among children who are left behind, which further impedes their academic and psychological growth. These difficulties draw attention to the serious social and educational repercussions of migration, especially for marginalized groups, and underscore the necessity of focused initiatives to address these problems.

Migration as a coping strategy underscores systemic issues, including low agricultural productivity, lack of irrigation, insufficient capital, and limited access to quality education and local employment. These challenges perpetuate cycles of poverty and dependence on migration while destabilizing family structures. Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions, such as improving local livelihoods, enhancing educational infrastructure, and providing support systems for migrant families. Without such measures, seasonal migration will continue to undermine the educational opportunities and long-term potential of children in the Ekheni community.

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An Empirical Study of the Current Microfinance Landscape in Rural Financial Systems

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Abstract

The rural sector is quite important in the Indian economy, and it has either directly or indirectly affected all economic activity of the country. Despite the crucial role of rural sectors, it faces many challenges such as poverty, illiteracy, and poor health, which are all more prevalent in rural areas. Thus, the present research paper emphasizes on the current microfinance landscape in rural financial systems and approach of beneficiaries towards the access of microfinance. Present research work primarily covered rural areas across Western Maharashtra i.e. Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara, Solapur and Pune. Overall, the survey covered 1020 households (HH) across 102 villages spread over 17 tehsils from 5 districts. Out of 1020 households, 237 households have received loan from microfinance institutions. Study finds that, loans received from microfinance institutions stands fifth position among the different sources of rural finance. Females are ahead towards taking loan from microfinance, educational background of beneficiaries is less than 10th standard, majorly housewife's and agriculturists and low annual income respondents are taking loans, and other than general category respondents are the key beneficiaries of microfinance. Less documents required, early availability and immediate disbursement, no need of mortgage and easily available of loan are the key attracting reasons while approaching towards the microfinance.

Keywords

Rural, Finance, Microfinance, Purpose and Problems.

An Empirical Study of the Current Microfinance Landscape in Rural Financial Systems

1. Introduction

The rural sector is quite important in the Indian economy, and it has either directly or indirectly affected all economic activity of the country. Despite the crucial role of rural sectors, it faces many challenges such as poverty, illiteracy, and poor health, which are all more prevalent in rural areas. The rural population comprises agricultural producers, landless labourers, tenant cultivators, village artisans, and small business people. Moreover, most rural people's livelihood depends on the agriculture sector, and the rest will depend on wage earnings. Low productivity of agriculture and heavy dependency on monsoon will not give the farmers definite income. The volatility of agricultural production affected not only the farmers but also wage earners also too. As a result, they must rely on various financial institutions to obtain credit when their income falls short. Finance is an essential requirement for almost every activity, and the rural sector is not an exception. Credit requirements among rural people are very pressing. The government of India has initiated many steps and set up institutional agencies such as commercial banks, co-operative banks, land development banks, regional rural banks etc. Thus, the present research paper emphasizes on present state of microfinance in rural finance and approach of beneficiaries towards the access of microfinance. With this backdrop, the underlying objectives of the study are twofold: *firstly*, to study the socio-economic characteristics of microfinance beneficiaries, and *secondly*, to elaborate the present status of microfinance towards its availability, accessibility and beneficiaries approach towards it.

2. Methodology

The present research work is based on primary data. Present research work primarily covered rural areas across Western Maharashtra. Western Maharashtra consists of five districts Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara, Solapur and Pune. For the selection of the

respondent's multi-stage stratified random sampling design has been used. The total number of tehsils in Western Maharashtra is 58, out of which 30 per cent, i.e., 17 tehsils' has been selected. Tehsils within each district were stratified on bank branch density. Statistics about bank branches have been taken from the annual credit plans of each district. For the Pune district branch, banking statistics and priority sector lending were considered to select tehsils. Selection of the villages was stratified based on the size of the population, villages having bank branches and villages not having bank branches within their boundaries. The study has selected ten households from each village from five parts of the village, i.e., centre, eastern, western, southern and northern. Overall, the survey covered 1020 households (HH) across 102 villages spread over 17 tehsils from 5 districts. Out of 1020 households, 237 households have received loan from microfinance institutions.

3. Data Presentation and Analysis

Data presentation and analysis has discussed the demographic profile of the microfinance beneficiaries, share of microfinance in rural finance of western Maharashtra, present status of microfinance with key indicators, purpose of getting microfinance and mortgage required for it, key reasons for approaching microfinance and problems to access microfinance.

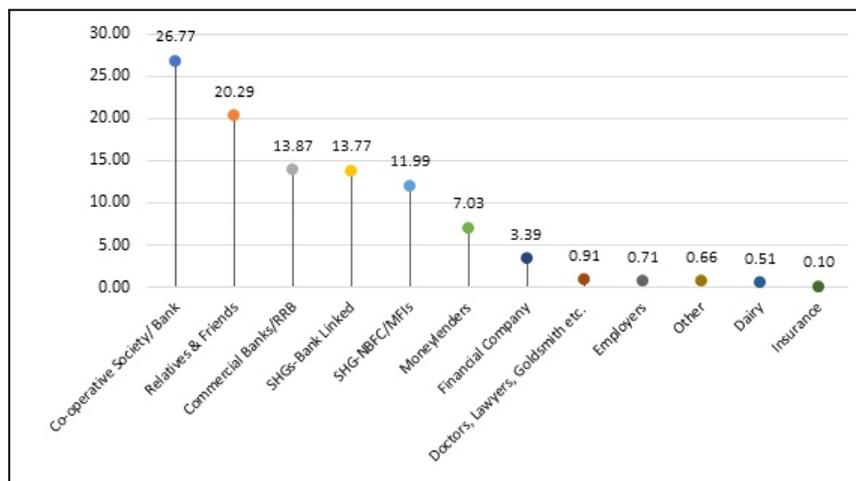**Figure-1: Ranking of Distribution of Loans according to Source of Credit**

Figure-1 depicts that, loans received from microfinance institutions stands fifth position among the different sources of rural finance. Loans from co-operative societies are much popular among

rural area due to easy access and community trust and followed by relatives and friends, commercial banks etc. The share of formal finance increases but informal finance shares also remain significant in this region. People prefers sources that are easy to approach and require less paperwork.

Table-1: Demographic Profile of Microfinance Beneficiaries

Particulars	Sub-particulars	Percentage
1. Gender	Male	27.43
	Female	72.57
2. Age	18-30	14.77
	30-40	30.80
	40-50	27.43
	50-60	14.35
	Above 60	12.66
3. Education	Uneducated	25.32
	Up to 10th	59.07
	Up to 12th	10.55
	Graduate	4.22
	PG & Above	0.84
4. Occupation	Agriculture	23.21
	Workers	17.72
	Business	12.66
	Salaried	9.70
	Other	9.30
	Housewife	27.43
5. Social category	General	28.27
	OBC	20.68
	NT/VJ	24.47
	SC/ST	26.58
6. Type of Ration Card	White	—
	Orange	53.16
	Yellow	44.73
	No Card	2.11

7. Annual Income	Up to 50000	13.92
	50000 to 150000	55.70
	150000 to 250000	16.46
	250000 to 350000	5.49
	Above 350000	8.44

The above table depicts the demographic profile of the microfinance beneficiaries. Gender wise classification shows the females are ahead towards taking loan from microfinance. Educational background of beneficiaries is less than 10th standard. Majorly housewife's, agriculturists and low annual income respondents are taking loans from Microfinance Institutions (MFIs). Other than general category respondents are the key beneficiaries of microfinance. Those who are having orange and Yellow ration card are the major borrowers of the microfinance as well as around seventy percent of the microfinance beneficiary's annual income is up to one lakh fifty thousand only. The demographic profile indicates that microfinance primarily supports economically weaker, less-educated, non-general category women engaged in household or agricultural work.

Table-2: Present Status of Microfinance

Particulars	Sub-particulars	Percentage
1. Duration for Loan Taken (In Years)	Up to 1	2.53
	1 to 3	94.94
	3 to 5	1.69
	Above 5	0.84
2. Distribution of Loans by Nature of Interest Rate	Interest free	—
	Simple	—
	Compound	100
	Concessional	—
3. Classification of Interest Rate (r/i)	Up to 10	1.27
	10 - 20	41.77
	20 - 30	38.82
	30 - 40	13.50
	Above 40	4.64

4. Processing Fee for Sanctioning Loan	Up to 5000	43.88
	5000-15000	2.95
	15000-25000	0.42
	Above 25000	—
	None	52.74
5. Time Taken for Granting Loans	Up to 7 days	40.08
	7-15	51.05
	15-30	7.17
	30-45	1.69
6. Number of Times Visited for Sanctioning Loan	Up to 2	96.20
	3-5	3.38
	More than 5	0.42

The above table presents the status of microfinance in terms of availability, accessibility and feasibility. Most of the beneficiaries has taken loan for the period of 1 to 3 years period short term borrowing to meet the immediate needs. Microfinance institution loans incur compound interest, with interest rates often ranging from 10 to 30 percent. The interest rates on microfinance loans are relatively high, and borrowers experience a repayment burden over time. Fifty percent respondents responded that there are no processing charges while granting loan it shows the loans are mostly low-cost in processing. Number of visits for sanctioning loan are also less due to microfinance institutions provide a door step loan facility. Time taken for granting loans is also short i.e. 91 percent borrowers get loans within 15 days due to quick loan processing system. Overall, microfinance will be based on the principle of quick availability, easy accessibility, easy finance despite relatively high interest rates and a rigorous repayment responsibility.

Figure-2 on next page illustrates the purpose of microfinance, highlighting the priorities and financial behaviour of rural people. The most significant portion of the funds has been used for the purchase of livestock, i.e., 17.65%, followed by borrowing a loan to support other household members, and meeting current expenditure in non-farm businesses. The borrowing pattern indicates that the majority of funds are being used for livelihood support and meeting family-related responsibilities. This trend indicates that people are

prioritising their immediate and essential needs over long-term investments in sustainable livelihoods or family growth.

Figure-2: Distribution of Loans by Purpose
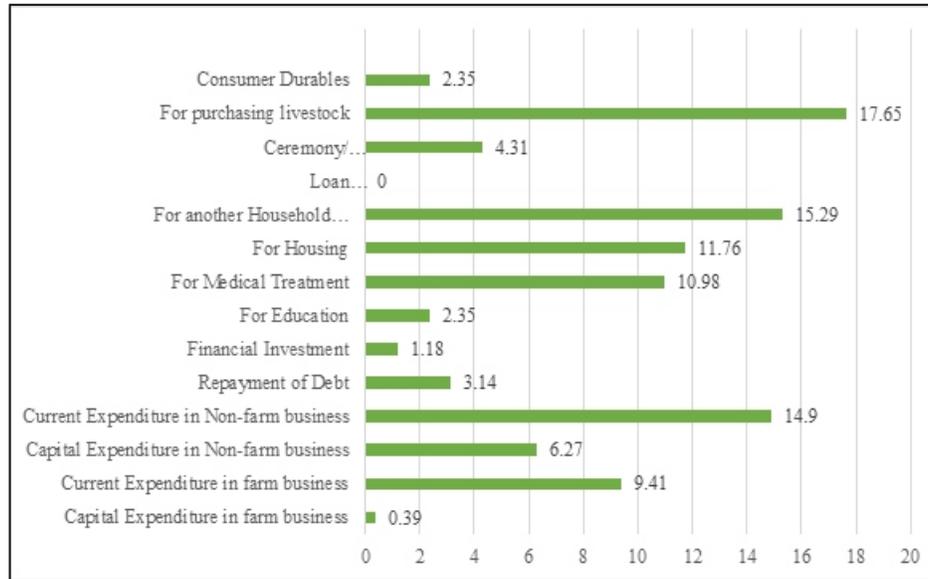
Figure-3: Distribution of Loans by Type of Mortgage
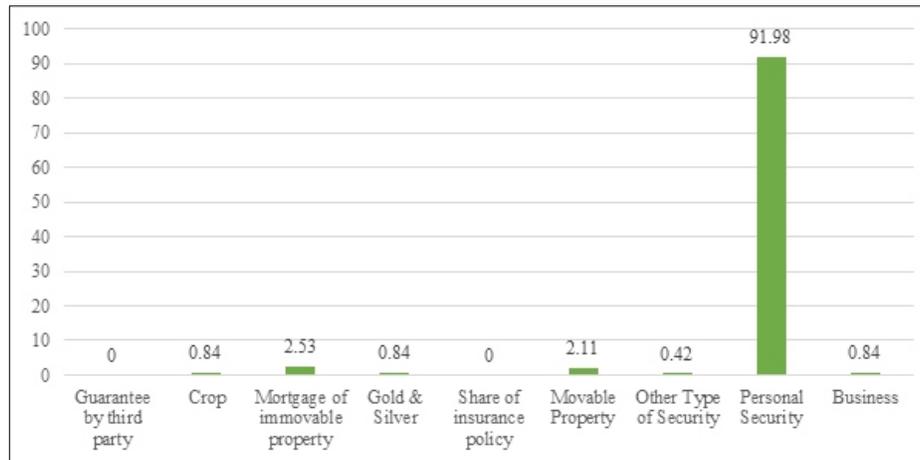
The above Figure-3 shows the status of the mortgage of microfinance. Mainly, loan was received based on a personal security basis; therefore, it's popular among the beneficiaries. It indicates that most borrowers do not provide any physical collateral. Other securities, such as guarantees by third parties, crops, mortgages of immovable and movable property, gold and silver, and other types of security, are not often required to receive a loan from MFIs. Therefore, rural people are attracted to take loans from MFIs.

This trend shows that lenders like SHGs, MFIs, or MUDRA schemes give loans based on trust. They do not ask for property or assets as security. This helps poor and rural people who have no collateral to get loans. But it also increases the risk of non-repayment. So, proper monitoring and group-based repayment are needed to keep the system safe.

Figure-4: Key Determinants of Approaching to Microfinance

Micro-Finance Institutions:

A - No Need of Mortgage

B - Not received loan in Nationalized Banks

C - Less Documents Required

D - Early Availability and Immediate Disbursement

E - Satisfy Urgent Need

F - Available with References

G - Easily Available

H - Do not have Other Option

I - Sufficient Repayment Duration

Figure-4 represents the key reasons while approaching towards the microfinance. It finds that the multi-faceted motivations behind individuals while preferring the loans from microfinance. Among the different reasons, first stands as less documents required followed by early availability and immediate disbursement, no need of mortgage and easily available of loan are much prevalent while choosing the microfinance.

Table-3: Problem faced by Respondents to Access Microfinance

Problem Faced	Microfinance	
	Yes	No
1. Lack of Awareness	11.02	88.98
2. Complex Formalities & Documentation	1.69	98.31
3. Non-Co-Operative Behaviour of Bank Staff	2.12	97.88
4. Insufficient Security	2.12	97.88
5. Delay in Disbursing Credit	0.85	99.15
6. Unsuitable Margin Money Requirement	5.08	94.92
7. High Rate of Interest	73.73	26.27
8. High Processing Charges	33.47	66.53
9. Inadequate Amount of Credit	2.12	97.88
10. Restricted Utilization Norms	1.69	98.31
11. Insufficient Period of Credit	2.12	97.88
12. Inconvenient Repayment Terms	7.63	92.37
13. Rigid Recovery Norms	8.90	91.10
14. Distant Location of Bank from Home	5.08	94.92
15. Other	—	100

The above table describes the perception or opinion of the respondents towards the access of microfinance. Moreover, microfinance borrowers reported high interest rates, high processing charges, inconvenient repayment terms and rigid recovery norms are the key detrimental factors while accessing the loan from MFIs. These are the key challenges that hinder the effectiveness and affordability of microfinance loans for many borrowers. It indicates that the only cost and inflexibility is associated with microfinance.

4. Conclusion

Overall, it can be concluded that, loans from MFIs is quite popular among rural people. Less documentation, easy disbursement method and no need of mortgage are the prominent factors behind it. Moreover, majority of MFI loans were disbursed to female, less educated, reserved category and low annual income people from the rural area. Most of the beneficiaries has taken loan for the period of 1 to 3 years' period, MFIs loans are charged as the

compound interest rate and the rate of interest of most loans are 10 to 30 percent. Microfinance borrowers are facing problems towards high interest rates, high processing charges, inconvenient repayment terms and rigid recovery norms.

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Roger Fry: A Pioneer of Modern Art Criticism and Aesthetics

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Abstract

Roger Fry (1866–1934) was a pivotal figure in the development of modern art criticism and aesthetics, whose influence extended far beyond the boundaries of traditional art history. As a multifaceted personality – painter, writer, curator, and critic – Fry played a central role in introducing and legitimizing Post-Impressionism in England, fundamentally reshaping the British public's understanding of modern art. This paper delves into Fry's intellectual journey, examining his major writings, curatorial work, and critical theories that challenged conventional Victorian aesthetics. It highlights his groundbreaking exhibitions, his interpretations of visual perception and emotional response in art, and his pedagogical role in shaping future generations of artists and thinkers. Furthermore, the study reflects on Fry's enduring legacy in the broader context of cultural criticism and modernist discourse, establishing him as not only a key figure in the history of art but also a profound thinker whose ideas continue to resonate in contemporary debates on art and aesthetics.

Keywords

Seminal, Scholarly, Intellectual, Aesthetics, Psychological, Legacy.

Roger Fry: A Pioneer of Modern Art Criticism and Aesthetics

1. Introduction

Throughout the vast expanse of world art history, countless individuals have contributed to the evolution of artistic thought and critical discourse through their unwavering dedication to study, research, and intellectual inquiry. Among these distinguished figures, Roger Fry emerges as a seminal presence—a British painter, prolific writer, and pioneering art critic whose work profoundly shaped the trajectory of modern art appreciation and interpretation. Known for his passionate engagement with aesthetics and his sharp analytical insights, Fry played a crucial role in redefining the boundaries of art criticism in the early 20th century. His efforts to introduce and advocate for Post-Impressionism in Britain not only challenged prevailing Victorian artistic sensibilities but also laid the foundation for a more psychologically and emotionally attuned understanding of visual art. Fry's legacy, rooted in both practice and theory, continues to influence generations of artists, critics, and scholars, affirming his place as a transformative figure in the history of art.

2. Biographical Background

Roger Eliot Fry[1] was born on December 14, 1866, in London into a wealthy Quaker family, whose values of discipline, intellectual rigor, and social responsibility would significantly shape his worldview. His father, Edward Fry, was a prominent judge and legal reformer known for his commitment to humanitarian causes, while his sister, Margery Fry, would later distinguish herself as an academic and social reformer, eventually becoming the Principal of Somerville College, Oxford. Raised in an environment that valued both moral seriousness and intellectual exploration, Fry received a rigorous education. He attended Clifton College, a respected public school, before enrolling at King's College, Cambridge. There, he developed a deep interest in the arts and philosophy, and became actively involved in the Conversazione Society (commonly known as the Cambridge Apostles), a secretive intellectual group that included

some of the most brilliant minds of the time. It was in this stimulating environment that Fry encountered key intellectual influences such as philosopher John McTaggart and political theorist Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, both of whom helped shape his analytical approach and broad humanistic perspective. These early academic and social experiences laid the groundwork for Fry's later contributions as an art critic, aesthetic theorist, and cultural thinker.

Although Roger Fry initially excelled in the field of Natural Sciences during his studies at Cambridge, his growing passion for art eventually led him to shift his focus toward artistic pursuits. Determined to refine his skills and immerse himself in the traditions of European art, he traveled extensively to Paris and Italy, where he studied the techniques of the Old Masters and the evolving trends of modern painting. It was during this formative period that he began to specialize in landscape painting, developing a distinctive style influenced by both classical and contemporary aesthetics.

In 1896, Fry married Helen Coombe, an artist in her own right with a shared interest in the creative world. The couple had two children, Pamela and Julian, and initially enjoyed a life enriched by their mutual appreciation for the arts. However, their domestic life was soon overshadowed by personal tragedy. Helen began to suffer from a debilitating mental illness, which grew progressively severe and led to her permanent institutionalization in 1910. This deeply affected Fry, who bore the emotional burden while continuing to raise their children with the help and emotional support of his sister, Joan Fry.

Amid these personal challenges, Fry found renewed intellectual companionship and artistic stimulation through his association with the Bloomsbury Group—a circle of progressive writers, artists, and thinkers who challenged Victorian norms and embraced modernist ideals. His introduction to the group came through his close friendship with artist Vanessa Bell and art critic Clive Bell. Within this vibrant and unconventional community, Fry found both personal solace and professional synergy, further shaping his role as a leading voice in early 20th-century art and culture.

3. Personal Life and Artistic Associations

Fry's emotional world was complex. After Helen's illness, he developed a romantic relationship with Vanessa Bell, which ended

when she chose to live with Duncan Grant. Despite the heartbreak, Fry and Vanessa remained lifelong friends. He later had connections with Nina Hamnett and Josette Coatmellec but found lasting companionship with Helen Maitland Anrep, though they never married. He died in 1934 after a fall in his London home, and his ashes were interred at King's College, Cambridge.

4. Academic Career and Contributions

In the early 1900s, Fry began teaching at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London. In 1903, he co-founded The Burlington Magazine, the first British scholarly journal dedicated to art history, and remained a key contributor until his death. He authored over 200 pieces for the magazine, covering a wide range of topics from children's drawings to Bushman art.

Fry's reputation as an art critic was cemented by his advocacy of "Post-Impressionism", a term he coined. His 1910 Grafton Galleries exhibition introduced the British public to artists like Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Matisse. Though initially controversial, this exhibition marked a turning point in British art appreciation.

5. The Omega Workshops and Institutional Legacy

In 1913, Fry founded the Omega Workshops in London, a design enterprise that integrated fine arts with applied design. Members included Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, and other Bloomsbury artists. Though Omega closed in 1919, it reflected Fry's vision of holistic artistic creation.

In 1925, alongside Samuel Courtauld and John Maynard Keynes, Fry helped establish the London Artists Association. His influence also led to his long-awaited appointment as Slade Professor at Cambridge in 1933.

6. Contributions to Aesthetic Theory

Fry's most enduring theoretical work is An Essay in Aesthetics (1920), in which he argued that art is not merely an imitation of reality but an expression of imaginative life. He emphasized the importance of formal elements-line, colour, and composition-in evoking emotional responses from the viewer. According to Fry, the level of Fry's most enduring theoretical work is An Essay in Aesthetics (1920), in which he argued that art is not artistic development within a society reflects its imaginative and moral capacity.

He distinguished between mental and artistic synthesis, suggesting that a true work of art is a unified experience independent of everyday reality. For Fry, the artistic value lay not in what was represented, but in how it was represented-a concept he illustrated using Rembrandt's emotionally powerful renderings and Raphael's Transfiguration.

7. *Major Publications*

Fry was a prolific writer whose works continue to inform art scholarship. His notable publications include:

- Vision and Design (1920)[2] - A collection of essays on art and aesthetics.
- Duncan Grant (1923)
- The Artist and Psycho-Analysis (1924)
- Art and Commerce (1926)
- Transformations (1926)[3]
- Henri Matisse (1930)
- The Arts of Painting and Sculpture (1932)

His translations of French Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé and his writings on Seurat further underscore his intellectual range.

8. Vision and Design: A Closer Look

Vision and Design (1920) is widely regarded as one of Roger Fry's most influential contributions to art criticism and theory. This seminal collection of essays brought together some of his most important writings, including "Art and Life", "An Essay in Aesthetics", "Art and Socialism", and "The Art of Florence". Through these texts, Fry laid out a coherent and compelling framework for understanding the visual arts, one that broke sharply from the prevailing Victorian ideals of moralism and realism in art.

A central argument in Vision and Design is Fry's insistence on distinguishing between art and utility. In essays like "An Essay in Aesthetics", he contended that the primary function of art is not to imitate life or convey moral instruction, but to evoke a unique kind of emotional response through its formal elements—such as line, colour, rhythm, and spatial composition. For Fry, the aesthetic experience was a distinct mode of perception, one that engaged the viewer's imagination and emotions in a way that ordinary objects or utilitarian

design could not. He maintained that representational accuracy was secondary to the expressive and structural power of the artwork.

Fry's approach also reflected a modernist sensibility that valued abstraction and formal innovation. His analysis of non-Western art forms—such as African and Asian sculpture—challenged Eurocentric hierarchies and anticipated later movements toward global and comparative art history. In "Art and Socialism", Fry explored the social dimensions of art, expressing concern over how mass production and commercial pressures could erode genuine aesthetic experience. Yet he also believed that art had the power to transform consciousness, offering moments of clarity, harmony, and emotional depth in an increasingly industrialized world.

By articulating a formalist theory of art grounded in emotional resonance and visual harmony, Vision and Design helped to shape the discourse of 20th-century aesthetics. It provided both a philosophical foundation for modernist art and a practical method for evaluating works across different historical periods and cultures. The book remains a landmark in art criticism and continues to influence scholars, curators, and artists interested in the interplay between form, feeling, and meaning.

9. Legacy and Influence

Roger Fry's influence extended far beyond the realm of art criticism; he was instrumental in redefining the British public's perception of modern art at a time when it was widely misunderstood and even scorned. He reshaped British understanding of modern art, championed artists whose significance was then unrecognized, and laid foundational ideas in art aesthetics. As a curator, theorist, and artist, Fry introduced Post-Impressionism to England, organizing groundbreaking exhibitions in 1910 and 1912 that challenged academic conventions and opened up new aesthetic possibilities. His advocacy helped to elevate the reputations of artists such as Cézanne, Matisse, and Van Gogh—painters who were initially dismissed by the British art establishment. Fry also made significant theoretical contributions through his writings, such as *Vision and Design* (1920), in which he argued that the formal qualities of art—line, colour, and composition—were more essential than narrative content or moral messages. This approach laid the groundwork for later formalist criticism and influenced generations of art historians and critics.

As Kenneth Clark, an influential art historian, stated, remarked that Fry was the only figure since John Ruskin who had the power to alter the course of English art appreciation—a testament to Fry's visionary role. Moreover, Fry's impact was not limited to academia or gallery spaces; through his lectures, writings, and personal relationships, he brought modernist ideas into mainstream cultural conversations. His engagement with the Bloomsbury Group further amplified his legacy, as he influenced leading intellectuals and writers of the time.

Virginia Woolf, a close friend and fellow Bloomsbury member, captured Fry's intellectual depth and cultural significance in her *Roger Fry: A Biography* (1940)[4], portraying him as a man of unparalleled knowledge, insight, and artistic sensitivity. Her portrayal helped immortalize Fry not only as a pioneering critic and artist but also as a central figure in the cultural reawakening of early 20th-century Britain. Today, his legacy endures in modern art scholarship, curatorial practice, and the continued appreciation of modernist aesthetics.

10. Conclusion

Roger Fry remains a towering figure in the intellectual history of modern art. His aesthetic theories, curatorial work, and relentless efforts to bridge the gap between artists and audiences continue to resonate. His emphasis on formalism and imaginative expression not only redefined visual art interpretation but also positioned aesthetics as a crucial component of cultural discourse.

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Place of Publication	:	Delhi, India
Periodicity	:	Quarterly (English)
Printer's Name	:	Dr. Priyanka Mahajan
		M/S Saksham Computers
Nationality	:	Indian
Address	:	D-59, Shastri Nagar
		Meerut-250 004 (INDIA)
Editor's Name	:	Dr. Dharam Vir
Nationality	:	Indian
Address	:	D-59, Shastri Nagar
		Meerut-250 004 (INDIA)
Names and addresses of the individuals who own the journal and of the partners or share-holders holdings more than one per cent of the total capital	:	Dr. S. S. Shashi
		B-4/245, Safdarjung Enclave
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