‘
शोध के चक्र, ज्ञान का मार्ग रचें
लेकिन पहुंचाएं सामाजिक
सशक्तीकरण तक
’

From the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Readers,

Greetings from **SHODHAYTAN!**

I hope this message finds you in great health and high spirits.

It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you to, the multidisciplinary journal of Rabindranath Tagore University, Raisen, dedicated to advancing scholarly dialogue across Commerce, Arts, Education, Law, Sociology, and the broader Humanities.

As Editor-in-Chief, I am deeply honored to be part of a platform that encourages diverse intellectual inquiry and fosters an inclusive academic community. The journal's mission is to provide a credible space for original research, critical reflections, and innovative ideas that address both contemporary and timeless issues across disciplines.

We remain committed to upholding academic rigor, ethical publishing practices, and the highest standards of peer review. I invite researchers, academicians, practitioners, and thought leaders to contribute to this vibrant forum and help build a rich body of knowledge that resonates beyond disciplinary boundaries.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with **SHODHAYTAN.** I look forward to your valuable contributions and to the continued growth of our scholarly community.

Warm regards,

Dr. Rachna Chaturvedi
Editor-in-Chief
Shodhaytan
Rabindranath Tagore University, Raisen

In this Issue

Vol XII/Issue XXIV   **June– 2025**

Catalyzing Growth: The Role of Government Schemes in Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises in Madhya Pradesh

Ajay Kumar Choubey[1], Rachna Chaturvedi[2], Neha Mathur[3]
[1]Research Scholar, Rabindranath Tagore University, Bhopal (M.P.) India.
[2]Professor, Dept. of Management, Rabindranath Tagore University, Bhopal (M.P.) India.
[3]Principal, BITM, Bhopal (M.P.) India.

ABSTRACT

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a pivotal role in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and creating employment opportunities, particularly in emerging economies like India. This research paper delves into the influence of government-initiated schemes on the development and sustainability of SMEs in Madhya Pradesh. Drawing upon primary data collected from a diverse sample of 300 respondents across key industrial sectors, the study assesses the outreach, implementation efficacy, and perceived challenges of flagship initiatives such as the Industrial Promotion Policy, SME Support Programs, and the Make in Madhya Pradesh campaign. The analysis reveals a broadly positive impact of these schemes, especially in facilitating easier access to institutional finance, strengthening infrastructure provisions, and promoting skill development among entrepreneurs and workers. However, the study also uncovers persistent bottlenecks such as bureaucratic delays, limited awareness among beneficiaries, and inadequate post-implementation support, which hinder the full realization of these policies' potential. By synthesizing field-level insights and policy review, the paper offers concrete suggestions for enhancing the responsiveness and inclusivity of SME-related programs. The findings aim to inform future strategic planning for economic development and entrepreneurial ecosystem strengthening in the region.

Key words: SMEs, Government Schemes, Madhya Pradesh, Industrial Promotion Policy, Make in Madhya Pradesh, Policy Impact, Economic Development

I INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) serve as the backbone of economic development in both developing and developed nations. In India, SMEs contribute significantly to GDP, exports, and employment generation, acting as a catalyst for balanced regional growth and inclusive development. Recognizing their strategic importance, successive governments have launched a series of policy initiatives and support schemes aimed at nurturing SME growth, improving competitiveness, and integrating them into the larger economic framework.

Madhya Pradesh, with its diverse industrial base and growing entrepreneurial ecosystem, has emerged as a focal point for SME promotion in central India. The state government, in alignment with national priorities, has introduced a variety of programs such as the Industrial Promotion Policy, SME Support Programs, and Make in Madhya Pradesh. These schemes are designed to address key challenges faced by SMEs, including limited access to credit, inadequate infrastructure, skill gaps, and regulatory bottlenecks. Despite the proliferation of these initiatives, there remains a critical need to evaluate their real-world impact, particularly from the perspective of beneficiaries. Are these schemes truly bridging the gaps in access to finance, technology, and markets? How effectively are they addressing the operational

challenges faced by SMEs at the grassroots level? Are there disparities in reach and outcomes across different industrial sectors and geographies within the state?

This study aims to fill these knowledge gaps through a comprehensive field-level investigation involving 300 SMEs from diverse sectors in Madhya Pradesh. By analyzing the experiences and perceptions of entrepreneurs and stakeholders, the research seeks to evaluate the effectiveness, limitations, and potential of government schemes in fostering SME development. The findings will contribute to the policy discourse and provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening the support infrastructure for SMEs in the state.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have long been recognized as engines of economic growth, employment generation, and innovation. Globally, SMEs contribute to more than 50% of employment and GDP in most economies (OECD, 2017). In India, their contribution stands at around 30% of GDP and 45% of total exports, underscoring their significance in economic planning (Ministry of MSME, 2022). According to Beck et al. (2005), targeted policies such as credit support, market access facilitation, and infrastructure improvement significantly influence SME sustainability. In the Indian context, schemes like the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) and the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) have expanded credit access, especially for first-generation entrepreneurs (Sahoo & Arora, 2021).In Madhya Pradesh, specific schemes like the Industrial Promotion Policy and Make in Madhya Pradesh initiative have been launched to create a more supportive ecosystem. These aim to reduce regulatory hurdles, provide interest subsidies, and develop industrial clusters (MPIDC, 2020). However, the effectiveness of such schemes is still under research, especially from a field-validated perspective. Multiple studies have identified persistent challenges faced by SMEs, including lack of skilled labor, limited innovation capacity, and weak linkages with formal financial institutions (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011; Ayyagari et al., 2007). These constraints often hinder SMEs from leveraging policy benefits effectively. Bhavani (2016) argues that awareness of schemes and ease of access remain major hurdles, particularly in Tier-II and rural regions. Evaluations of policy interventions across Indian states have yielded mixed results. For instance, Singh and Krishna (2020) found that while capital subsidy programs improved firm survival rates, they did not necessarily lead to technological upgrading. On the other hand, Sharma (2019) demonstrated that cluster-based development models, such as those in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, had a positive correlation with employment and export performance.

The case of Madhya Pradesh remains relatively underexplored in existing literature. While there is anecdotal evidence of the success of state-led initiatives, systematic field-based assessments are limited. This study attempts to bridge that gap by evaluating the ground-level impact of government schemes on SME growth in the region, using primary data.

(a) **Methodology** - A structured questionnaire was administered to 300 respondents from various industrial sectors, with a focus on their experiences with government support programs. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations to identify trends and effectiveness metrics.

III RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to evaluate the impact of government schemes on the growth and development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Madhya Pradesh. The research is rooted in both qualitative insights and quantitative data collected from primary sources, supported by secondary data from policy documents, government reports, and academic literature.

IV OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to examine the overall impact of government schemes on the growth and development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Madhya Pradesh by assessing the levels of awareness, accessibility, and effectiveness of these schemes across various sectors, and identifying the key benefits and implementation challenges related to finance, infrastructure, skill development, and market access.

V METHODOLOGY

(a) Data Collection

To comprehensively assess the impact of government schemes on the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Madhya Pradesh, primary data collection was carried out using structured questionnaires. A total of 300 SME respondents were selected through stratified random sampling from diverse industrial sectors, including textiles, manufacturing, food processing, agri-tech, and services. This sectoral diversification ensured that the sample reflected the heterogeneity of the SME ecosystem in the region.

The questionnaire was designed to elicit both quantitative and qualitative insights, incorporating a mix of close-ended questions for statistical analysis and open-ended questions to capture nuanced perspectives. The instrument was developed with the aim of measuring multiple dimensions related to government scheme engagement, such as:

- Awareness levels regarding flagship initiatives like the *Industrial Promotion Policy*, *MSME Support Programs*, and *Make in Madhya Pradesh*.
- Accessibility and ease of utilization, including eligibility understanding, procedural clarity, and support infrastructure.
- Perceived outcomes from participating in these schemes, particularly in critical areas such as financial access, infrastructural enhancement, technical and vocational training, and market linkages.
- Challenges encountered during different stages of scheme interaction, including application bottlenecks, administrative delays, inadequate information dissemination, and logistical constraints.

Data was collected through face-to-face interviews, online surveys, and telephonic conversations, depending on the geographical reach and digital literacy of the respondents. The collected data was later cleaned, coded, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis to derive meaningful conclusions regarding policy effectiveness and gaps in implementation.

(b) Sampling Technique and Secondary Data Sources

To ensure a representative and diverse dataset, the study employed a stratified random sampling technique. This method allowed for proportional representation from both urban and semi-urban districts of Madhya Pradesh, with a particular focus on key industrial centers such as Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior, Jabalpur, and Ujjain. The stratification was carried out based on industrial concentration and the density of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in these areas, thereby enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the research findings. In addition to the primary data collected through surveys, a broad range of secondary sources was reviewed to support and contextualize the analysis. These included official government documents outlining major policy initiatives such as the *Industrial Promotion Policy* and the *Make in Madhya Pradesh* campaign. Furthermore, institutional reports from organizations like the Madhya Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation (MPIDC), the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME), and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) were examined to provide policy context and statistical support. The study also drew upon scholarly articles and peer-reviewed publications that offered theoretical frameworks and empirical insights relevant to SME development and public policy implementation in India.

VI ANALYSIS

The quantitative data gathered from the survey was meticulously analyzed using descriptive statistical methods such as percentages, frequency distributions, and mean scores. This approach enabled the researchers to develop a detailed understanding of the SME ecosystem in Madhya Pradesh. To further explore the relationships within the data, cross-tabulation techniques were utilized, revealing sector-specific trends and regional variations across factors like industry classification, geographical distribution, and levels of participation in government schemes.

The data analysis was conducted using both SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and Microsoft Excel, which streamlined the processes of coding responses, organizing data sets, and creating visual outputs such as charts, graphs, and tables. Where applicable, basic inferential statistical tests were also applied to examine the significance of observed relationships.

The evaluation centered on several key performance indicators (KPIs) that were used to assess the impact of policy interventions. These included the level of access to financial support, indicating improvements in credit availability, subsidies, or incentives following scheme enrollment; participation in training and skill development programs, reflecting the effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives; infrastructure and technological enhancements, measuring upgrades in production capacity and digital adoption; and growth in revenue and employment, which served as indicators of business expansion and job creation resulting from scheme involvement.

This comprehensive analytical framework offered a robust, data-driven basis for assessing the efficacy of government schemes and identifying critical gaps in their design and execution across different regions and industrial sectors.

VII RESULTS

The analysis of survey data from 300 SME respondents across various sectors and regions of Madhya Pradesh yielded significant insights into the awareness, accessibility, and effectiveness of government schemes. The findings provide concrete empirical evidence of how these initiatives are shaping the growth trajectory of small and medium enterprises in the state. Regarding awareness and outreach, 68% of

respondents indicated familiarity with at least one major government initiative, such as the Industrial Promotion Policy, MSME Support Programs, or the Make in Madhya Pradesh campaign. Awareness levels were notably higher in urban districts like Indore and Bhopal, compared to semi-urban areas such as Ujjain and Gwalior. Sector-wise, manufacturing and food processing enterprises reported the greatest degree of engagement with these schemes.

Despite this, only 46% of those who were aware of the schemes had successfully accessed or participated in them. Major obstacles included the complexity of documentation requirements (reported by 61% of respondents), lack of procedural guidance (48%), and limited digital literacy (34%). Additionally, only 23% of SMEs had utilized government-run facilitation centers, pointing to a significant underuse of available support mechanisms. In terms of financial and infrastructure support, 41% of respondents reported having received some form of financial assistance, such as subsidized loans or capital investment support. Among these, a remarkable 76% experienced tangible improvements in production capacity or operational efficiency. SMEs associated with the Industrial Promotion Policy in particular reported benefitting from infrastructure grants and rental subsidies in designated industrial zones.

When it comes to skill development and training, 52% of respondents had participated in government-sponsored programs, with 71% rating the training as useful. These programs were especially valued for enhancing competencies in digital operations, quality control, and regulatory compliance. Interestingly, female-owned SMEs demonstrated a higher interest in entrepreneurship and marketing-oriented training modules, indicating a gender-specific dimension to skill-building needs. Concerning business growth outcomes, SMEs that participated in the schemes reported an average revenue increase of 18% within 12 to 18 months post-intervention. Employment levels also improved, with an average of 1.7 new hires per business, particularly within the agri-tech and services sectors. Respondents also noted improved business confidence and more robust planning for future expansion, which they attributed to their access to institutional support.

Finally, notable sectoral and regional disparities were observed. Textile and food processing SMEs in Bhopal and Indore showed the most comprehensive gains across all measured metrics. Conversely, Ujjain and Gwalior lagged behind, both in scheme participation and impact, signaling the need for more localized and tailored implementation strategies. In summary, while the impact of government schemes on SMEs in Madhya Pradesh has been broadly positive, especially for those able to access and utilize the support mechanisms, the findings also underscore critical gaps in outreach, procedural efficiency, and regional equity. Addressing these gaps is essential for ensuring the inclusive and sustainable development of the SME sector in the state.

VIII DISCUSSION

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the role of government schemes in influencing the growth trajectory of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Madhya Pradesh. While the evidence clearly demonstrates that various schemes have positively impacted access to finance, infrastructure improvements, and skill development, it also highlights several systemic and structural barriers that continue to hinder their equitable and widespread implementation.

A prominent issue revealed by the data is the disparity in awareness and access between urban and semi-urban regions. SMEs based in cities like Bhopal and Indore showed higher levels of engagement with and benefits from government schemes, whereas enterprises in semi-urban and rural districts faced challenges due to limited dissemination of information, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and a lack of supportive institutional

infrastructure. These gaps contribute to uneven growth outcomes and reinforce existing regional inequalities.

Another major barrier is the administrative complexity associated with accessing government support. A significant proportion of SMEs reported difficulties with excessive documentation, while the low usage of government facilitation centers indicates that many entrepreneurs lack the guidance necessary to navigate these schemes. These obstacles are especially burdensome for grassroots entrepreneurs, including women and members of marginalized communities, who may lack the resources and networks needed to overcome procedural hurdles.

The study also uncovered sectoral variations in the effectiveness of the schemes. Manufacturing and food processing enterprises were the primary beneficiaries of infrastructure-related and financial incentives, while SMEs operating in the agri-tech and services sectors found limited alignment between available support and their operational needs. This finding suggests that the current policy framework may be too generic and highlights the importance of designing sector-specific interventions to maximize impact.

Finally, while human capital development emerged as a crucial benefit of these schemes, the reach of training and capacity-building programs remains limited. Respondents who participated in such initiatives acknowledged their value, particularly in improving operational efficiencies. However, the study points to the need for enhanced training content that includes digital finance, regulatory compliance, and e-commerce, which could further strengthen the entrepreneurial capacity and long-term sustainability of SMEs.

IX POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis and findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness and reach of SME-focused government schemes in Madhya Pradesh. First, there is a pressing need for regional facilitation and decentralized support. Establishing dedicated SME facilitation cells at the district level can help entrepreneurs with application processes, documentation, and navigation of various schemes. Collaborating with local chambers of commerce, civil society organisations, and NGOs would further ensure last-mile delivery and provide personalised handholding support, especially in semi-urban and rural areas.

Second, simplification of scheme procedures is crucial to reduce administrative burdens. Streamlining application formats, creating unified digital portals, and introducing self-certification options where feasible can significantly ease compliance. In addition, offering multilingual, step-by-step instructional videos and establishing responsive helpdesks will aid marginalized business owners who may lack technical or bureaucratic experience.

Third, the government should focus on sector-specific customization of policies. Developing tailored modules for various sectors—such as machinery leasing for textile enterprises or cold chain logistics for food processing units—can enhance the relevance and impact of interventions. Instituting continuous feedback loops involving SMEs and industry bodies will help refine and update these schemes in response to ground-level needs.

Fourth, promoting inclusive capacity building is essential for long-term sustainability. Training programs should be broadened to include critical content such as financial literacy, digital tools for business operations, e-commerce management, and regulatory compliance. Special emphasis should be placed on

reaching female entrepreneurs and first-generation business owners through gender-responsive curricula and flexible delivery modes, such as online and modular formats.

Lastly, outcome-based monitoring and transparency mechanisms should be institutionalized to evaluate and communicate the real-world effectiveness of these schemes. This includes deploying performance monitoring frameworks to track key indicators like employment generation, revenue growth, and market expansion. Public dashboards displaying real-time data on fund disbursement, approval timelines, and beneficiary coverage can also foster greater accountability and trust among stakeholders.

X CONCLUSION

Government schemes have the potential to be transformative for SMEs in Madhya Pradesh. However, to maximize this potential, policies must be adaptive, inclusive, and responsive to ground-level realities. Strengthening institutional frameworks, embracing digital simplification, and designing sector-sensitive interventions are essential steps toward creating a more enabling ecosystem for SME growth and innovation.

REFERENCES

[1]   Ayyagari, M., Beck, T., & Demirgüç-Kunt, A. (2007). Small and Medium Enterprises Across the Globe. *Small Business Economics*, 29(4), 415–434.

[2]   Banerjee, A., & Duflo, E. (2011). *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*. PublicAffairs.

[3]   Beck, T., Demirgüç-Kunt, A., & Maksimovic, V. (2005). Financial and Legal Constraints to Growth: Does Firm Size Matter? *Journal of Finance*, 60(1), 137–177.

[4]   Bhavani, T. A. (2016). Development of Small and Medium Enterprises in India: The Role of Policy. *Journal of Development Studies*, 52(4), 564–577.

[5]   Ministry of MSME. (2022). *Annual Report 2021-22*. Government of India.

[6]   MPIDC. (2020). *Industrial Promotion Policy, Government of Madhya Pradesh*.

[7]   OECD. (2017). *Enhancing the Contributions of SMEs in a Global and Digitalised Economy*. OECD Report.

[8]   Sahoo, S., & Arora, N. (2021). Impact of Financial Inclusion on MSME Growth in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 56(29).

[9]   Sharma, V. (2019). Role of Industrial Clusters in MSME Growth: Evidence from Indian States. *Indian Journal of Economics and Development*, 15(3), 101–110.

[10]   Singh, R., & Krishna, A. (2020). Evaluating Government Incentives on MSME Growth: A State-wise Analysis. *Indian Economic Review*, 55(2), 89–115.

Assessing Customer Satisfaction: A Comparison of SBI and HDFC Bank in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh

Amita Pandey[1], Ankita Pandey[2]

[1]Research Scholar, Govt. Jamuna Prasad Verma P.G. Arts and Commerce College, Bilaspur C.G.) India.
[2]Guest Faculty, Dept. of Commerce, Govt. Jamuna Prasad Verma P.G. Arts and Commerce College, Bilaspur (C.G.) India.

ABSTRACT

The main goal of the research is to explore and compare the customer satisfaction levels at the State Bank of India and HDFC Bank in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh. The evaluation is grounded in the service quality model established by Parasuraman et al. in 1988. This study utilizes an analytical method to gather primary data from customers of both banks. A standardized questionnaire was used to collect this information. The sample consisted of 150 participants, including 75 customers from the State Bank of India and 75 from HDFC Bank, all randomly chosen from branches in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh. The research results indicate that the State Bank of India and HDFC Bank in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh exhibit comparable service quality dimensions and levels of customer satisfaction with no significant differences.

Keywords: Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Banking

I INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, the financial service industry has become very competitive due to changes like liberalization, privatization, and globalization. Banks, as key players in this sector, need to provide excellent service to keep their customers. To assess the f service quality in this research, we use a popular model originally developed by Parasuraman and Berry, which looks at five important aspects: tangibility (how things look), reliability (trustworthiness), promptness (how quickly services are delivered), assurance (confidence in the service), and empathy (understanding customers' needs). Our goal is to see To measure the customer satisfaction levels with the services provided by State Bank of India and HDFC Bank and to compare the outcomes.

Research by Hammoud and colleagues in (2018) highlighted the connection between online banking service quality and customer satisfaction. They provide services to customers Lebanon and identified key areas such as reliability, efficiency, ease of use, promptness, communication, security, and privacy as important. They found that improving these aspects can lead to happier customers and give banks a competitive edge.

Another study by Akhtar and others in (2016) examined what influences customer loyalty in banks. Their research revealed that service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty programs are interrelated and play a significant role in fostering customer loyalty. This suggests that banks should focus on enhancing service quality and implementing effective loyalty programs to retain their clients.

Chiguvi and Guruwo (2015) investigated how customer satisfaction affects loyalty in banking. They conducted surveys with customers at Standard Chartered Banks and analyzed the data using software tools. Their study confirmed that higher customer satisfaction tends to lead to greater loyalty, meaning banks should work on improving satisfaction to foster loyalty among their customers.

Khan and Fasih (2014) Investigate the interconnections between banking service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty. Their survey of 270 bank customers showed a clear link: better service leads to happier customers, which in turn results in more loyalty.

Ragavan and Mageh (2013) highlighted how important it is for banks to be responsive to customer needs, noting that quick and efficient service greatly affects customer satisfaction.

Ramachandran and Chidambaram (2012) pointed out that banks need to regularly check how well they are serving their customers to stay competitive. They discussed various factors, including service experiences, wait times, and how complaints are handled, which all affect how satisfied customers feel. Their insights can also apply to other industries like travel, insurance, healthcare, and telecommunications, where service quality is crucial.

Mihalis and colleagues (2001) noted that understanding customer satisfaction is essential for businesses today. It helps organizations focus on what customers want and expect. Their study introduced a new way to measure customer satisfaction in private banking, using methods to assess different service aspects and understand customer preferences better.

Parasuraman and Berry (1988) conducted comprehensive research across different service sectors to create a framework for assessing service quality. They started with ten dimensions and eventually focused on five key aspects that effectively summarize customer needs:
assurance, empathy, reliability, promptness, and tangibility.

II OBJECTIVES

(a) To assess customers' satisfaction levels from SBI and HDFC banks.
(b) To identify the differences in satisfaction levels between customers of SBI and HDFC considering various aspects of satisfaction.
- **Hypothesis**

No significant difference was observed in customer satisfaction between State Bank of India and HDFC Bank in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.

III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Sampling -** The study's sample comprised 150 respondents evenly split between SBI (75) and HDFC Bank (75) branches in Bilaspur Chhattisgarh selected randomly.

IV DATA ANALYSIS

(a) **Demographic Profiles of Respondents -** The survey responses were categorized and analyzed based on demographic variables such as gender, age, account uses, and other relevant factors with the result visualized in the following diagram, highlighting the diversity of participants from both SBI and HDFC Bank. The collected demographic information provides insights into the gender, age, and account tenure of participants from both banks. However, it does not include other potentially significant factors such as income level, education, or occupation, which could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the study participants.

Gender and Age

	MALE	FEMALE		AGE	Less than 25	25 - 35 year	36 - 46 year	above 47 year
SBI	40	35	75		18	25	20	12
HDFC	50	25	75		10	30	20	15

SBI   HDFC
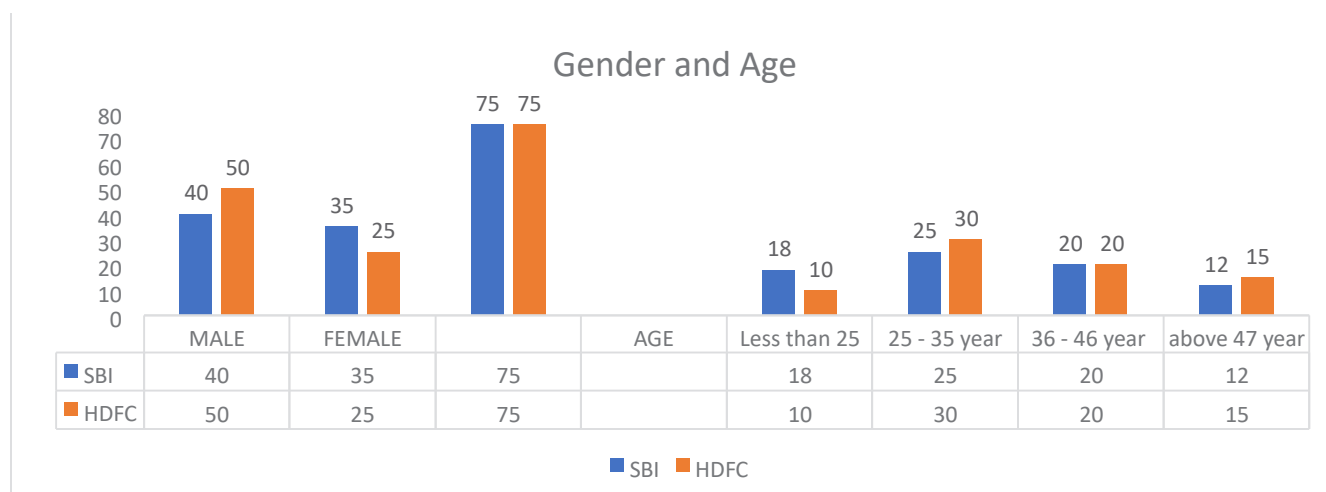
HDFC has a higher percentage of customers in the age groups of less than 25 years (10%) and 36-46 years (20%). The gender distribution among SBI customers shows a majority of males (40%), followed by females (35%), while HDFC exhibits a more balanced distribution with 50% male and 25% female customers. Regarding age distribution, SBI has a higher percentage of customers in the 25-35 age group (25%) and above 47 years (12%), whereas HDFC has a higher percentage of customers under 25 years of age. The demographic differences between the two banks suggest varying customer bases and potentially different marketing strategies or product offerings tailored to their respective clientele. The gender distribution among SBI customers shows a majority of males (40%), followed by females (35%), while HDFC exhibits a more balanced distribution with 50% male and 25% female customers. Regarding age distribution, SBI has a higher percentage of customers in the 25-35 age group (25%) and above 47 years (12%), whereas HDFC has a higher percentage of customers under 25 years of age. The demographic differences between the two banks suggest varying customer bases and potentially different marketing strategies or product offerings tailored to their respective.

Education and Occupation

	Higher Secondary	Graduate	Post Graduate	OCCUPATION	Business	Govt. job	Pvt. Job	Housewife	others
	15	40	30	75	12	13	40	15	5
	12	35	28	75	13	12	40	5	5
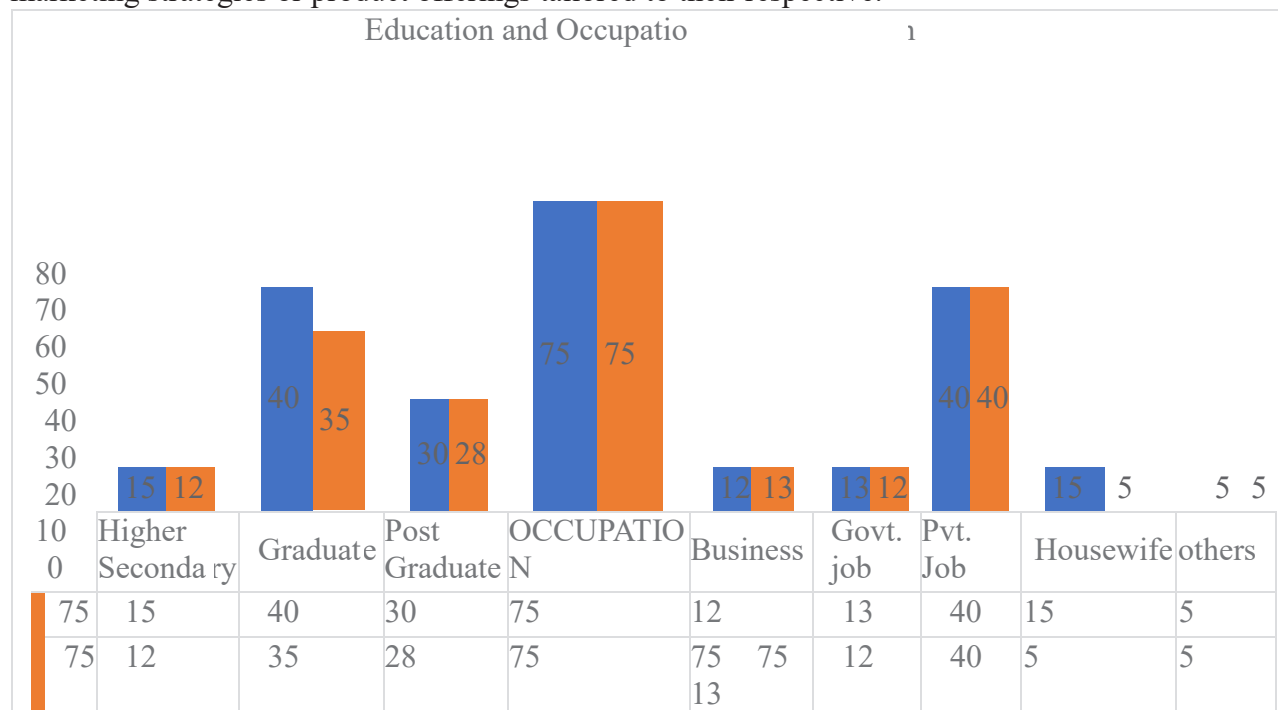
Both SBI and HDFC banks exhibit similar educational distributions among their customers, with 75% having a higher secondary education. However, HDFC had a slightly higher percentage of postgraduates (13%) than SBI (10%). Occupationally, both banks have a significant proportion of private job holders (40% each), followed by business owners (30% for SBI and 35% for HDFC). SBI has more government employees (13%), whereas HDFC has more housewives (15%) as customers. Gender-wise, SBI showed a male majority (40%) with 35% females, whereas HDFC had a more balanced distribution (50% male, 25% female). Agewise, SBI has more customers aged 25-35 years (25%) and above 47 years (12%), while HDFC has a higher percentage of customers aged under 25. These demographic variations suggest different customer bases and potentially tailored bank marketing strategies.

Monthly Income

	Less than 10,000	10,000 - 20,000	20,000 - 50,000	above50,000
SBI	10	20	20	25
HDFC	10	20	25	20
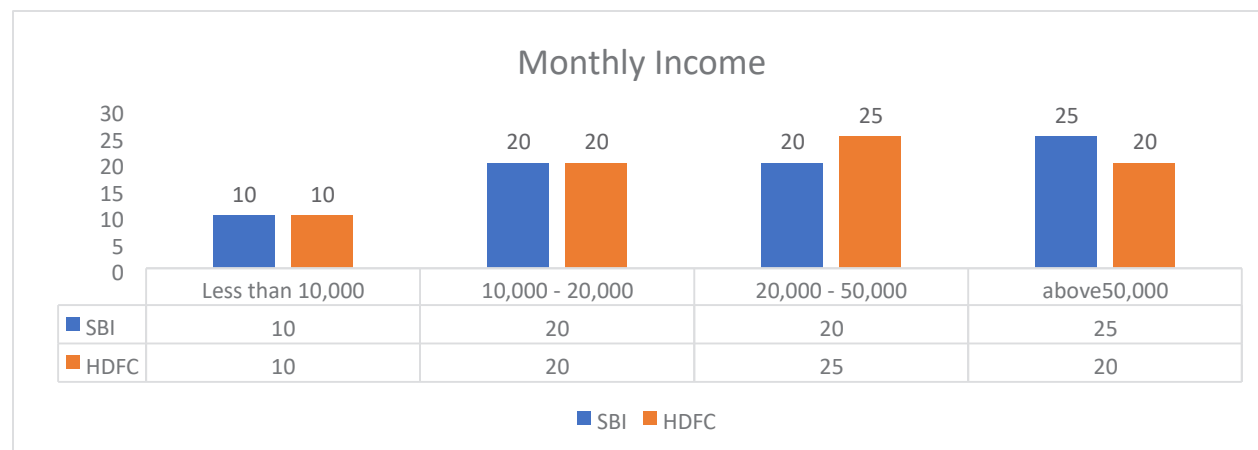
The income distribution of customers differs between the SBI and HDFC banks. The SBI shows a higher concentration in upper-income brackets, with 25% of customers earning above 50,000 per month, 20% in the 20,000-50,000 range, 20% in the 10,000-20,000 range, and 10% earning less than 10,000. In contrast, HDFC displays a more balanced distribution across income groups, with 25% earning 20,000-50,000 per month, 20% earning above 50,000, 20% in the 10,000-20,000 range, and 10% earning below 10,000. These data suggest that SBI has a larger proportion of high-income customers, whereas HDFC maintains a more evenly distributed customer base across various income levels.

Duration of Account

	Less than 1year	1 -5 year	6- 10 year	10 - 15 year	more than 15 year
SBI	15	20	20	10	5
HDFC	20	20	20	10	5
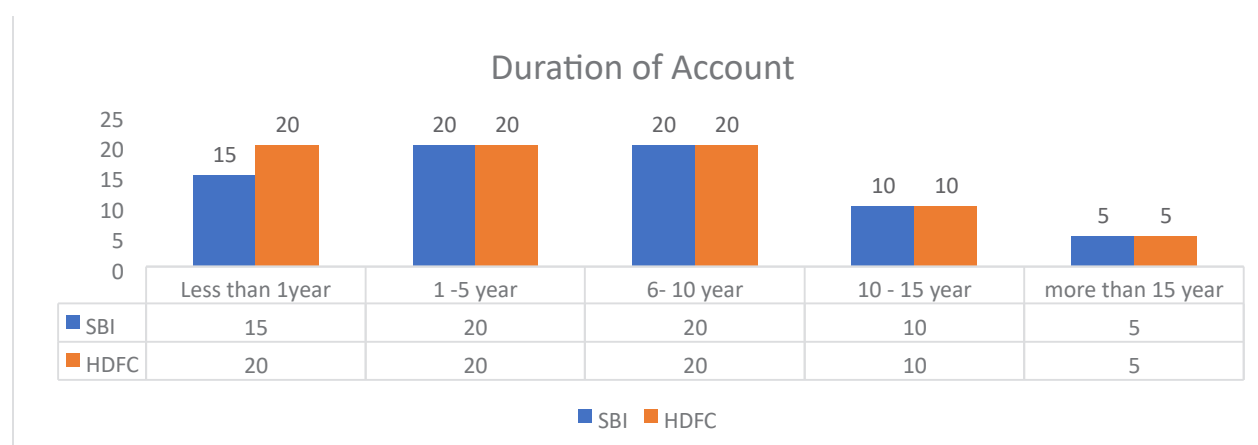
The distribution of customer account durations varies between SBI and HDFC banks. SBI has a higher concentration of newer accounts, with 20% of customers holding accounts that are less than a year old, 20% with accounts in the 1-5-year range, 20% in the 6-10-year range, 10% in the 10-15-year range, and 5% with accounts older than 15 years. In contrast, HDFC demonstrates a more balanced distribution across account durations, with equal percentages in each category: 20% for accounts less than one-year-old, 20% for accounts in the 1-5-year range, 20% for 6-10 years, 10% for 10-15 years, and 5% for accounts older than 15 years. This data indicates that SBI has more customers with newer accounts, while HDFC maintains a more evenly distributed customer base across different account durations.

(b)   T - TEST (Customer Satisfaction Level)
- **Null Hypothesis (H0):** No significant difference was observed in customer satisfaction between State Bank of India and HDFC Bank in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (Ha): S**ignificant difference was observed in customer satisfaction between State Bank of India and HDFC Bank in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.

Table - 1

Bank	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
SBI	75	5.7533	1.25284
HDFC	75	5.7533	1.25284

Table – 2

Dimensions	N	Mean	STD. DEVIATION
Tangibility	150	5.2200	1.05468
Assurance	150	5.5067	1.23564
Reliability	150	5.4667	0.96005
Responsiveness	150	5.4067	1.07502
Empathy	150	5.1267	1.30716
Customer satisfaction	150	5.7533	1.25284

Levene's test for equality of variances

Table -3

	Levene's test for equality of variances		T – TEST equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	T	DF	Sig.(2 tailed)
Equal variances assumed	3.109	.80	-.521	148	.603
Equal variances not assumed			-.526	137.239	.600

The analysis showed small variations in service quality dimensions (tangibility, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy) between SBI and HDFC Bank, but these differences were not statistically significant.

V CONCLUSION

This research provides a comprehensive understanding of customer satisfaction levels between SBI and HDFC Bank in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, by employing the SERVQUAL model for data analysis. Despite the competitive landscape in the banking sector driven by liberalization, privatization, and globalization, The study findings suggest that both Bank demonstrated similar service quality and customer satisfaction levels full feeling customer needs however it emphasizes the importance of proactive service quality assessment and enhancement faster long term customer loyalty and satisfaction amidst rising competition. Future research could explore specific strategies for improvement and examine variations across different regions to enrich the understanding of customer experiences within the banking sector. Customer satisfaction is essential for banks to stay ahead in a crowded and competitive market. Customers in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, demonstrate similar satisfaction levels with both banks, with "Tangibility" emerging as The most significant factor impacting customer satisfaction. Based on these results, this study suggests that both banks should further focus on employee training to enhance customer satisfaction. The highest satisfaction levels were noted in the tangible dimension, including factors such as modern facilities, a clean environment, and convenient locations. Bank employees' responsiveness, including prompt service and effective problem-solving, also received high ratings. However, moderate satisfaction levels were observed in areas such as reliability (error-free records and timely service) and assurance (security and employee knowledge). Notably, the low level of courtesy displayed by public sector bank employees represents a significant concern.

VI SUGGESTIONS

To improve customer satisfaction, banks should prioritize employee training, maintain transparent communication regarding charges, and enhance branch facilities. Adopting modern technology, fostering strong customer relationships, and implementing efficient service strategies are also recommended.

REFERENCES

[1] Chris Manolis, w., & Lasser, r. D. (2000). "service quality perspectives & satisfaction in private banking. Journal of Service Marketing 14 (3).

[2] Hayat muhammad awan, k. S., & iqbal, a. (2011). Service quality and customer satisfaction in the banking sector: A comparative study of conventional and Islamic banks in Pakistan. Journal of Islamic Marketing, vol 2 no.(3), pp 203-224

[3] Kotler, p. (2003). Marketing management. United of America, p 415: New Jersey.

[4] Maysam Molaee, r. A., & teimuori, h. (2013). Analyzing the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the banking industry of iran. International journal of academic research in accounting, finance and management sciences, 3 (3), 5-13.

[5] Mohammad, a. A., & alhamadani, s. Y. (2011). Service quality perspectives and customer satisfaction in commercial banks working in Jordan. Middle eastern finance and economics (14), 60-72.

[6]   Mualla, & Deeb, n. (1997). Mualla a measuring banking service quality provided by Jordanian commercial banks: a field study" depressant for administrative science. Derassat for administrative science, vol 25 no(2), pp 335-357.

[7] Oakland. (2001). Total organizational excellence: achieving world-class performance. Uk: oxford: butterworthheinemann.

[8] Parasuraman, z., & berry.l. (1988). "servqual: a multiple-item scale for measuring customer perceptions of service quality. Journal of retailing, spring, 12-40.

[9] S.g.h., & srivasteva, k. (2010). Hozra impact of service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and commitment in the indian banking sector.indian journal of marketing,23-35. Saghier, n. E., & nathan, d. (4-5 april 2013). Service quality dimensions and customers" satisfactions of banks in egypt. Proceedings of 20th international business research conference. Dubai, uae.

[10] Sureshchandar, g., & rajendran c., a. R. (2002). The relationship between management's perceptions of total quality service and customer perceptions of service quality. Total quality management, vol 13 (1), 69-88

[11] Ramachandran, a., chidambaram, v. (2012) "a review of customer satisfaction towards service quality of banking sector", periodica polytechnica social and management sciences, 20(2), pp.

[12] 71–79. Https://doi.org/10.3311/pp.so.2012-2.02

[13] Chiguvi, d., & guruwo, p. T. (2017). Impact of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty in the banking sector. International journal of scientific engineering and research (ijser), 5(2), 55-63.

[14] Mihelis, g., grigoroudis, e., siskos, y., politis, y., & malandrakis, y. (2001). Customer satisfaction measurement in the private bank sector. European journal of operational research, 130(2), 347-360.

[15] Khan, m. M., & fasih, m. (2014). Impact of service quality on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty: evidence from banking sector. Pakistan journal of commerce and social sciences (pjcss), 8(2), 331-354.

[16] Hammoud, j., bizri, r. M., & el baba, i. (2018). The impact of e-banking service quality on customer satisfaction: evidence from the Lebanese banking sector. Sage open, 8(3), 2158244018790633.

[17] Kumar, R., & Kumar, A. (2010). Assessment of Customer Satisfaction and Behavioural Intentions in Terms of Customer Service Quality Perception towards Technology- Based Banking Services Provided by Selected Commercial Banks Operating in India. IIMS Journal of Management Science, 8(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/ims.2017.8.2.229

The Impact of Workplace Flexibility on Employee Productivity at Dr. C.V. Raman University, Khandwa (M.P.) India.

Deepak Sharma
Asst. Prof., Dr. C.V. Raman University, Khandwa (M.P.) India.

ABSTRACT
Workplace flexibility has become an essential component in modern organizations, influencing employee productivity, mental health, and overall job satisfaction. This research investigates the impact of workplace flexibility on employee productivity at Dr. C.V. Raman University, Khandwa. A survey of 40 employees was conducted to assess their perceptions regarding flexible work arrangements, mental well-being, stress levels, motivation, and skill development. The study's findings indicate a strong positive correlation between workplace flexibility and increased employee productivity. However, challenges such as time management and distractions were also identified. The paper concludes with recommendations for optimizing workplace flexibility to maximize employee efficiency and organizational performance.

Keywords: Workplace Flexibility, Employee Productivity, Work-Life Balance, Organizational Efficiency, Remote Work

I INTRODUCTION

Workplace flexibility is a crucial factor influencing employee satisfaction and performance. In recent years, organizations have increasingly adopted flexible work arrangements to enhance productivity and accommodate employee needs. Flexible work arrangements allow employees to have control over their schedules, promoting a better work-life balance and fostering higher job satisfaction. Research has shown that employees who experience greater autonomy in their work arrangements tend to be more engaged and motivated, leading to increased productivity and improved organizational outcomes.

Dr. C.V. Raman University, Khandwa, has recognized the importance of workplace flexibility and implemented policies that enable employees to work in a manner that best suits their personal and professional lives. With the rise of digital transformation and remote work technologies, employees can now collaborate effectively even outside traditional office settings. The study seeks to understand employees' perceptions of workplace flexibility, its advantages and challenges, and its overall effect on organizational success. By analyzing data from 40 university employees, this research aims to offer insights into how workplace flexibility can be optimized to improve employee efficiency.

II OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To evaluate the impact of workplace flexibility on employee productivity at Dr. C.V. Raman University, Khandwa.

- To evaluate the impact of workplace flexibility on employee productivity at Dr. C.V. Raman University, Khandwa.
- To examine employee perceptions of flexible work arrangements.
- To identify challenges and opportunities associated with workplace flexibility.
- To provide recommendations for optimizing flexible work policies.

III LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplace flexibility encompasses various aspects, including remote work options, flexible working hours, and hybrid work models. Several studies have highlighted the benefits of workplace flexibility, including reduced stress, increased motivation, and improved work-life balance.

Ahmad et al. (2019) emphasize that workplace flexibility positively impacts employee performance by enhancing work-life integration and reducing burnout.

Abid and Barech (2017) found that flexible working hours contribute significantly to increased job satisfaction and overall efficiency.

Esther, Edwinah, and Okocha (2022) provide a theoretical perspective, suggesting that workplace flexibility is a strategic tool that can enhance employee well-being and retention. Gaur and Dhamija (2024) assert that workplace flexibility not only benefits employees but also improves overall organizational performance.

Additionally, Altındağ and Siller (2014) conducted an empirical study in Turkey, demonstrating that flexible working methods positively influence productivity by fostering a balance between professional and personal responsibilities.

Further research suggests that workplace flexibility can lead to a reduction in absenteeism and employee turnover. Employees who have control over their schedules are less likely to experience burnout and stress, leading to improved mental health.

Studies indicate that organizations that embrace flexibility witness higher levels of innovation, creativity, and job commitment. However, workplace flexibility must be accompanied by clear guidelines and communication strategies to prevent mismanagement and lack of accountability.

IV METHODOLOGY

This study follows a mixed-method research approach using both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Survey data was collected from 40 employees of Dr. C.V. Raman University, Khandwa, to assess their views on workplace flexibility, its effects on their productivity, and the challenges they face. The data was analyzed using statistical tools to determine trends and relationships.

The research design is based on a descriptive and analytical framework. The questionnaire was divided into sections focusing on different dimensions of workplace flexibility, such as work-from-home options, the clarity of organizational policies, and the effect of flexibility on mental well-being and stress levels. Interviews with select employees were also conducted to gain deeper insights into their experiences.

The research methodology also included an in-depth analysis of theoretical perspectives on workplace flexibility, drawing from previous studies and empirical data to provide a comprehensive understanding of its impact on employees. By using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, this study ensures a well-rounded approach to understanding workplace flexibility in the academic setting.

V DATA INTERPRETATION

(a) Workplace Flexibility Levels

60% of respondents rated workplace flexibility as high or very high.
30% indicated moderate flexibility, while 10% found it low.

The high percentage of employees who perceive workplace flexibility as beneficial indicates that the university's policies are well-received. Employees with higher workplace flexibility tend to have greater job satisfaction and enhanced productivity levels. Furthermore, flexible work arrangements allow employees to manage their work-life balance more effectively, reducing stress and increasing motivation. This is particularly important in academic settings where workload fluctuations can vary significantly throughout the academic year.

Additionally, departments with a structured approach to flexibility reported fewer conflicts between personal and professional responsibilities. Employees who experience higher workplace flexibility are also more likely to be proactive and engaged in their job roles, leading to improved institutional outcomes.

(b) Frequency of Remote Work

45% reported frequent remote work options.
30% had occasional opportunities.
25% rarely worked remotely.

Employees who frequently work remotely reported higher productivity levels and better work-life balance. Remote work flexibility has been a key driver in reducing commuting stress and enabling employees to allocate more time to work-related tasks. However, those who rarely worked remotely cited a lack of flexibility in work policies as a challenge. This discrepancy suggests a need for a more consistent remote work policy that accommodates the varying needs of employees across different departments.

Research indicates that remote work allows employees to operate in an environment that suits their productivity levels. Factors such as fewer workplace distractions, customizable workspaces, and personal schedule adjustments contribute to increased efficiency. However, maintaining communication and collaboration in a remote work setup remains a challenge. Organizations that implement hybrid models, combining in-office and remote work, often see better results in terms of employee engagement and performance.

(c) Impact on Productivity

70% stated workplace flexibility increased their productivity.
20% reported slight improvements.
10% found no significant impact.

The results show a strong correlation between flexible work arrangements and employee performance, with a significant majority experiencing higher productivity due to increased autonomy and reduced workplace distractions. Employees who have control over their schedules tend to structure their work more efficiently, leading to enhanced performance.

Furthermore, flexible work arrangements have been associated with higher employee retention rates. Organizations that offer flexibility experience lower turnover as employees feel valued and empowered.

A key factor in productivity enhancement is trust—when employees are trusted to manage their work schedules, they are more likely to take ownership of their tasks and responsibilities.

Challenges related to productivity in flexible work environments often stem from ineffective time management, lack of supervision, and communication barriers. Organizations must implement structured workflows, periodic performance evaluations, and communication strategies to ensure that flexibility does not compromise productivity.

In addition to direct productivity benefits, flexible work environments contribute to higher creativity and problem-solving abilities. Employees who work under flexible conditions report a greater sense of purpose and alignment with organizational goals. This, in turn, creates a positive feedback loop where motivated employees perform better, leading to higher overall institutional performance.

(d) Mental Well-Being and Workplace Flexibility
- 65% of employees believed flexible work arrangements improved mental well-being.
- 60% said flexibility helped reduce stress levels.
- 50% reported that flexibility contributed to improved job satisfaction.
- The data highlights the psychological benefits of workplace flexibility. Employees with the freedom to work according to their preferred schedules report lower levels of stress and anxiety. Job satisfaction also plays a crucial role in employee well-being, as individuals who feel their work aligns with their personal needs and responsibilities tend to be more content and engaged.

However, some employees reported feelings of isolation when working remotely. This suggests that while flexibility is beneficial, social interaction and team collaboration must not be overlooked. Employers should encourage virtual check-ins, team meetings, and collaborative projects to maintain a sense of connection within the workforce.

(e) Challenges in Workplace Flexibility
40% cited time management as a key challenge.
30% identified distractions as an obstacle.
20% found difficulty in separating work and personal life.
Despite the advantages, workplace flexibility presents certain challenges. Time management is one of the most common issues employees face when given autonomy over their schedules. Without clear boundaries, employees may struggle to prioritize tasks effectively, leading to potential productivity losses.

Distractions, particularly in remote work environments, also pose a significant challenge. Employees working from home may face interruptions from family members, household responsibilities, or digital distractions. Organizations can support employees by offering time management training, productivity tools, and structured work expectations.

Another notable challenge is maintaining a clear boundary between work and personal life. Employees who work flexibly may find themselves working beyond regular hours, leading to burnout. Establishing clear guidelines on working hours and encouraging employees to maintain a work-life balance is crucial to ensuring sustainable productivity.

(f) Communication and Collaboration in a Flexible Work Environment
- 50% preferred frequent check-ins with their supervisors.
- 30% valued open and transparent communication.
- 20% prioritized clear and concise messaging.
- Effective communication is key to ensuring the success of workplace flexibility policies. Employees thrive in environments where expectations are clear, and communication channels are open. Regular check-ins help align employees with organizational goals and provide opportunities for feedback and support.

While remote work offers many advantages, one of the major challenges is maintaining a seamless flow of information across teams. Companies that invest in collaboration tools such as video conferencing, project management software, and instant messaging platforms experience fewer disruptions in communication. Creating a structured yet adaptable approach to communication ensures that employees remain engaged and informed, regardless of their work environment.

(g) Training and Skill Development in a Flexible Work Environment
45% found time management training useful.
35% preferred skill development programs related to technology and digital tools.
20% valued leadership and decision-making workshops.
Flexible work environments require employees to develop new skills to manage their workload effectively. Training programs focused on time management, digital literacy, and leadership skills empower employees to maximize their potential in a flexible setting.
Organizations should prioritize continuous learning initiatives, ensuring that employees are equipped with the necessary tools and resources to navigate workplace flexibility. By fostering a culture of learning, companies can enhance employee adaptability, productivity, and long-term growth
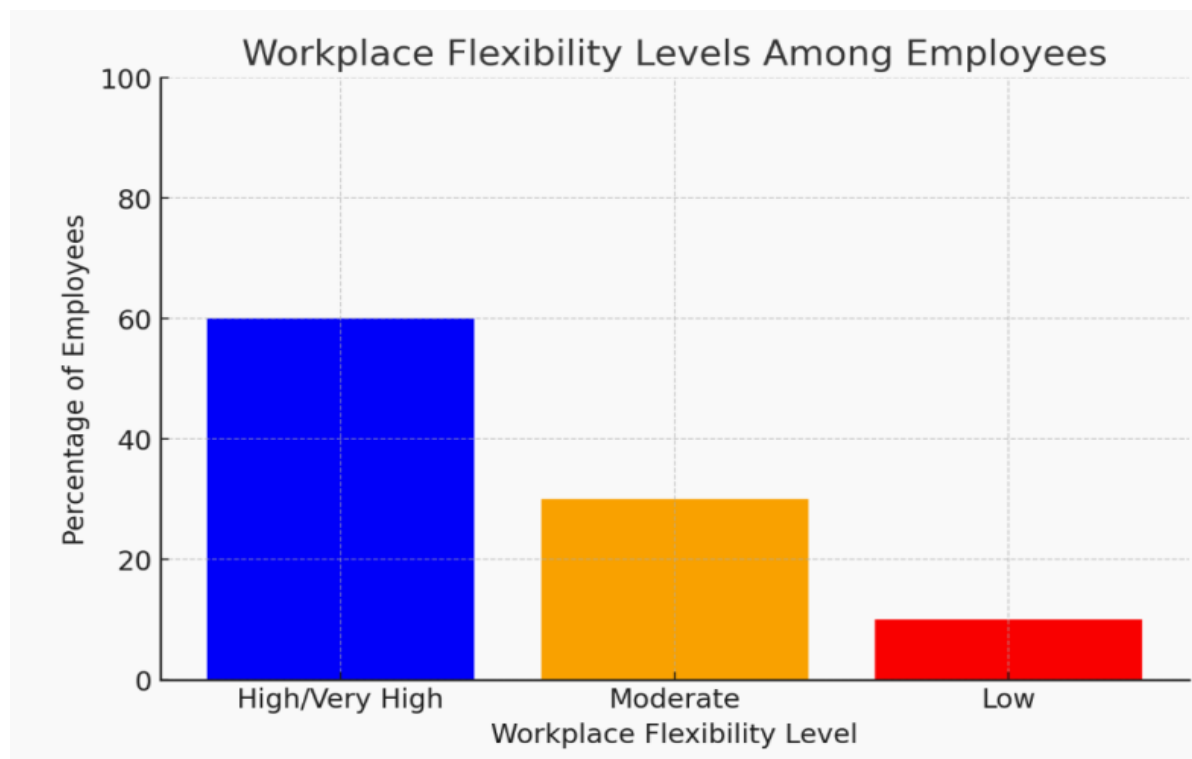
VI FINDINGS

The findings of this research indicate that workplace flexibility has a direct and positive impact on employee productivity. Employees with access to flexible work arrangements reported higher job satisfaction, improved mental well-being, and reduced stress levels. The ability to balance professional and personal commitments was identified as a major contributing factor to increased efficiency and motivation.

However, challenges such as time management, distractions, and lack of proper communication were also observed. While flexibility allows for greater autonomy, it also requires employees to manage their time effectively to meet deadlines and maintain productivity. Organizations must implement clear policies and provide necessary training to help employees navigate flexible work environments efficiently.

VII RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that workplace flexibility has a predominantly positive impact on employee productivity. Employees who frequently engage in remote work or have control over their schedules tend to report higher motivation and job satisfaction. Moreover, flexible work conditions contribute to better mental health outcomes, leading to lower stress levels and increased job retention. The results further suggest that the ability to customize work schedules helps employees optimize their peak productivity hours, resulting in improved performance. However, certain challenges persist, including the need for disciplined time management and effective virtual communication. Some employees faced difficulties in staying connected with colleagues and supervisors, which could impact teamwork and collaboration. Employers must implement strategies such as regular virtual check-ins, mentorship programs, and time management training to address these concerns. By fostering a culture that supports flexibility while ensuring accountability, organizations can maximize the benefits of flexible work arrangements.

Impact of Workplace Flexibility on Employees
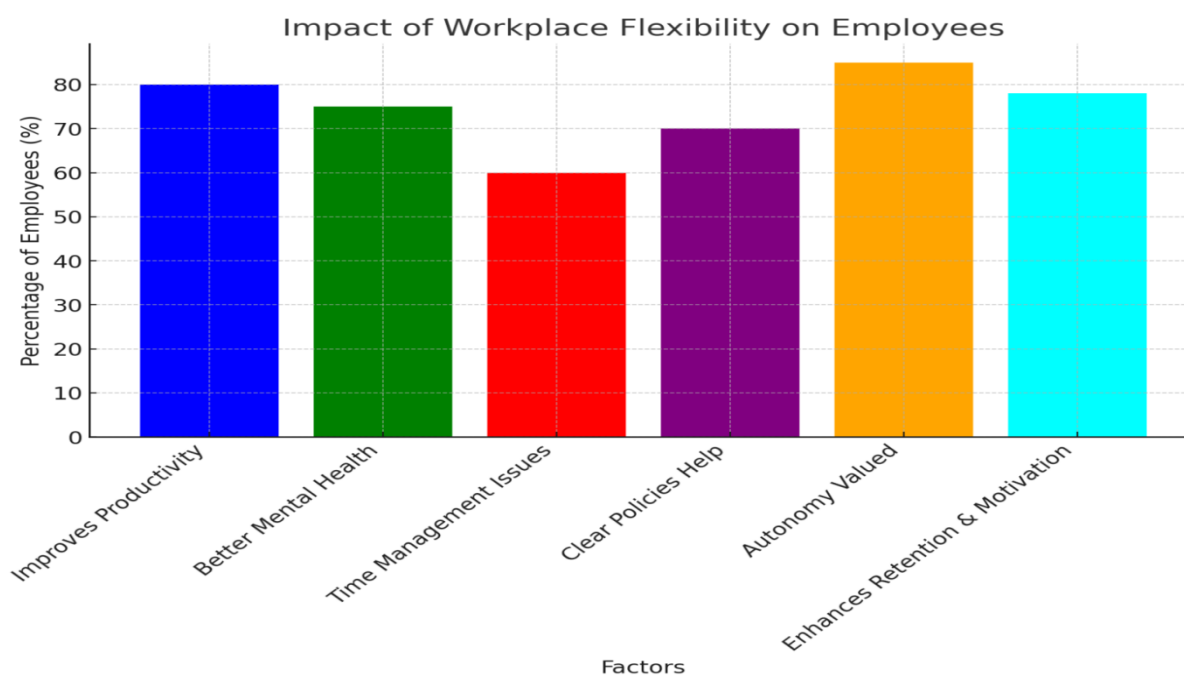
VIII CONCLUSION

Workplace flexibility is a crucial factor in enhancing employee productivity and well-being. While it offers numerous benefits, including improved mental health, increased job satisfaction, and enhanced work-life balance, its effectiveness depends on proper implementation, clear policies, and employee support systems. Organizations must address the challenges associated with flexible work by providing necessary training, ensuring effective communication, and fostering a balanced approach to work autonomy and accountability. Establishing clear expectations, leveraging technology for seamless communication, and promoting a culture of trust can further optimize the impact of flexible work arrangements. Ultimately, workplace flexibility can serve as a powerful tool for organizations seeking to enhance employee engagement, retention, and overall performance while adapting to evolving workforce needs.

REFERENCES

[1] Gaur, A., & Dhamija, A. (2024). Impact of workplace flexibility on employee and organizational performance.

[2] Esther, G. Y., Edwinah, A., & Okocha, N. O. (2022). Workplace flexibility and employee productivity: A theoretical perspective.

[3] Ahmad, G., Rafiq, M., & Ahmed, U. (2019). Impact of work flexibility on employee performance.

[4] Abid, S., & Barech, D. K. (2017). The impact of flexible working hours on employee performance.

[5] Altındağ, E., & Siller, F. (2014). Effects of flexible working method on employee performance: An empirical study in Turkey.

LINKS

[1] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376392615_Impact_of_Work_Flexibility_on_Employee_Performance/link/657625b7cbd2c535ea10e6f4/download?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19

[2] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271072345_Effects_of_Flexible_Working_Method_on_Employee_Performance_An_Empirical_Study_in_Turkey/link/54bcd8870cf253b50e2d69bf/download?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19

[3] https://bpasjournals.com/library-science/index.php/journal/article/download/1019/616/1623

[4] https://www.arcnjournals.org/images/272142562621.pdf

[5] https://ijecm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/5731.pdf

Legal Challenges Faced by MSMEs in Khandwa an Analysis of Compliance and Regulatory Frameworks

Suyash Soni
Asst. Prof., Dr. C. V. Raman University, Khandwa (M.P.) India.

ABSTRACT

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in India's economic development by contributing significantly to employment generation, industrial production, and exports. However, MSMEs face various legal and regulatory challenges that hinder their growth and sustainability. Through a survey of 42 respondents, including MSME owners and stakeholders, this study analyzes the compliance burden on MSMEs in KHANDWA, focusing on legal awareness, challenges in compliance, and associated costs. Through a structured survey, the study identifies key issues such as complex registration processes, high compliance costs, tax disputes, labor-related challenges, and legal disputes. Findings suggest that a majority of MSMEs lack sufficient knowledge of applicable laws, leading to compliance difficulties. Additionally, the cost and time required for legal adherence place an excessive burden on small businesses. The study highlights the need for policy reforms, including simplifying legal procedures, reducing compliance costs, and enhancing government support to create a more MSME-friendly regulatory environment.

Keywords: MSMEs, Compliance Challenges, Regulatory Framework, Legal Issues, Business Growth

I INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) serve as the backbone of India's economy, playing a pivotal role in fostering employment, income growth, and poverty alleviation. They are instrumental in driving economic independence and sustainable development, contributing significantly to India's socio-economic balance. MSMEs are a cornerstone of economic growth, innovation, and job creation, making them indispensable for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Globally, MSMEs constitute approximately 90% of businesses and contribute over 50% of employment. However, their participation in Global Value Chains (GVC) remains relatively limited compared to larger enterprises. Despite their crucial contributions, MSMEs face a myriad of challenges that hinder their growth and sustainability. Limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, lack of skilled manpower, and complex regulatory frameworks are some of the key hurdles. These issues have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which triggered liquidity crises and increased the sector's non-performing assets. Moreover, regulatory challenges, such as cumbersome registration processes and high compliance costs, continue to impede their potential. Given the labor-intensive nature of MSMEs, their role in employment generation, industrial production, and exports is unparalleled. Particularly in rural and backward areas, they act as a catalyst for industrialization and equitable development. Yet, the sector's growth is often constrained by inadequate financing, poor infrastructure, and an overly burdensome regulatory environment. Understanding the legal challenges faced by MSMEs, particularly in terms of compliance and regulatory frameworks, is essential to addressing these obstacles and unlocking their full potential.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a critical role in the economic development of India by contributing significantly to employment generation, income growth, and poverty reduction. Various studies have highlighted both the opportunities and challenges faced by MSMEs, emphasizing their importance in fostering economic independence and sustainable development, particularly in rural and underdeveloped areas (Kumar et al., 2020).

Despite their contributions, MSMEs in India encounter several challenges that hinder their growth and sustainability. One of the most pressing issues is limited access to finance. Studies indicate that many MSMEs struggle to secure credit due to stringent lending norms, lack of collateral, and high-interest rates (Sharma, 2019). Even though government initiatives such as the Udyam Registration Portal and financial assistance schemes exist, access to finance remains a significant barrier, necessitating alternative financing options like microfinance and venture capital (SEDME, 2022).

Another critical challenge is regulatory compliance. The complexity of the registration process, high compliance costs, and frequent changes in regulatory requirements increase operational expenses and discourage businesses from formalizing their operations (Das et al., 2018). Additionally, studies have highlighted the negative impact of major economic reforms such as demonetization and GST implementation on the cash flow and operations of MSMEs (SEDME, 2022).

Infrastructure and Technological Challenges also pose major obstacles. Many MSMEs suffer from inadequate infrastructure, poor transportation, and limited access to advanced technology, which affects their productivity and competitiveness (Gupta & Singh, 2021). The digital transformation and adoption of cyber security measures remain underdeveloped due to high costs and a lack of skilled personnel (Wales SME Study, 2022).

Furthermore, the lack of skilled manpower has been identified as a crucial constraint, affecting innovation and global competitiveness. Skill development programs and vocational training initiatives have been introduced, but gaps still exist in effective workforce training and retention strategies (Rao, 2020).

MSMEs globally contribute substantially to business activity and employment. However, their participation in Global Value Chains (GVCs) remains limited due to smaller scale, restricted access to advanced technology, and lack of integration into global networks (World Bank, 2019). Regulatory barriers such as complex tax structures and high compliance costs disproportionately impact smaller enterprises, making international expansion challenging.

Additionally, sustainability policies for MSMEs remain underdeveloped. Research on Indonesian SMEs indicates that existing regulations primarily apply to large enterprises, leaving smaller businesses without structured sustainability reporting frameworks (OJK Study, 2022). A more proactive approach is required to encourage sustainability reporting and corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices within the MSME sector.

Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a holistic approach that simplifies regulatory processes, enhances access to finance, improves infrastructure, and promotes skill development. Policy measures such as optimizing regulatory frameworks, increasing financial transparency, and encouraging innovation through technology adoption can significantly improve the growth prospects of MSMEs (SEDME, 2022). Additionally, fostering MSME participation in GVCs by providing targeted support and incentives can help integrate them into global markets (World Bank, 2019).

Moreover, collaboration between MSMEs and government agencies to tackle cybersecurity challenges and enhance digital literacy can safeguard businesses against emerging threats (Wales SME Study, 2022). Encouraging sustainability reporting and compliance with CSR initiatives will also ensure long-term economic and environmental benefits (OJK Study, 2022).

III OBJECTIVES

On the basis of previous reviews my study has highlighted some main objectives of the study which are given below:
- To investigate the role of MSMEs in promoting inclusive economic growth, particularly in rural and underdeveloped regions.
- To assess the challenges MSMEs face in accessing global markets and their potential integration into international trade networks.
- To study the effectiveness of government subsidies and tax incentives in promoting MSME development.
- To evaluate the social and economic impact of MSMEs on marginalized communities and small-scale industries.

IV RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive research design to analyze the legal challenges faced by MSMEs in India, particularly concerning compliance and regulatory frameworks. A survey-based approach is utilized to collect primary data from MSME owners, managers, and key stakeholders. The primary objectives of this research are to assess the level of awareness of MSME owners regarding regulatory compliance, identify key legal challenges faced by MSMEs, evaluate the compliance burden in terms of cost and time, and gather insights into suggested reforms for improving the MSME regulatory environment. Primary data is collected using a structured questionnaire covering demographic details, regulatory compliance, legal challenges, compliance costs, and suggestions for regulatory reforms, while secondary data is gathered from government reports, legal documents, MSME policy frameworks, academic research papers, and industry reports. The target population includes MSME owners, managers, and key decision-makers across manufacturing, services, and trading sectors. A stratified random sampling technique is used to ensure representation across various business sizes and industries, with a sample size of at 42 respondents. The collected data is analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study focuses on MSMEs operating in Khandwa and examines their legal and regulatory challenges. However, it is limited to willing participants, self-reported data, and lacks an in-depth sector-specific legal challenge analysis. Ethical considerations include informed consent, confidentiality, and data integrity. This research methodology ensures a comprehensive and structured approach to understanding the legal challenges faced by MSMEs in India.

V DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Understanding of MSMEs
   1. Question: You understand Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

Interpretation:
Most respondents claim to understand MSMEs, yet their awareness of legal and regulatory aspects varies. Many are either "not very familiar" or "not at all familiar" with MSME-related policies and compliance requirements. This suggests a gap in knowledge that could be addressed through awareness programs and training sessions.

2. Business Ownership and Industry Type
Question: Do you own a business? If yes, what is the nature of your business?
Interpretation:
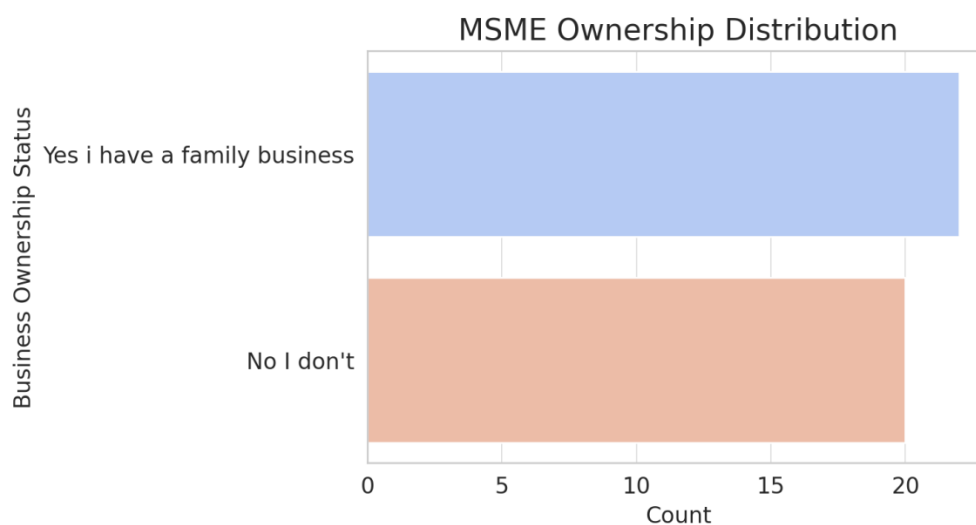
The responses indicate a mix of business owners and non-owners. Among the business owners, the manufacturing sector is dominant, followed by the services industry. This aligns with the broader MSME sector trend in India, where manufacturing and services constitute a significant portion. Non-owners in the survey include professionals, students, or aspiring entrepreneurs interested in MSMEs.

3. Business Experience and Turnover
Question: How long has your MSME been in operation? What is your annual turnover?
Interpretation:
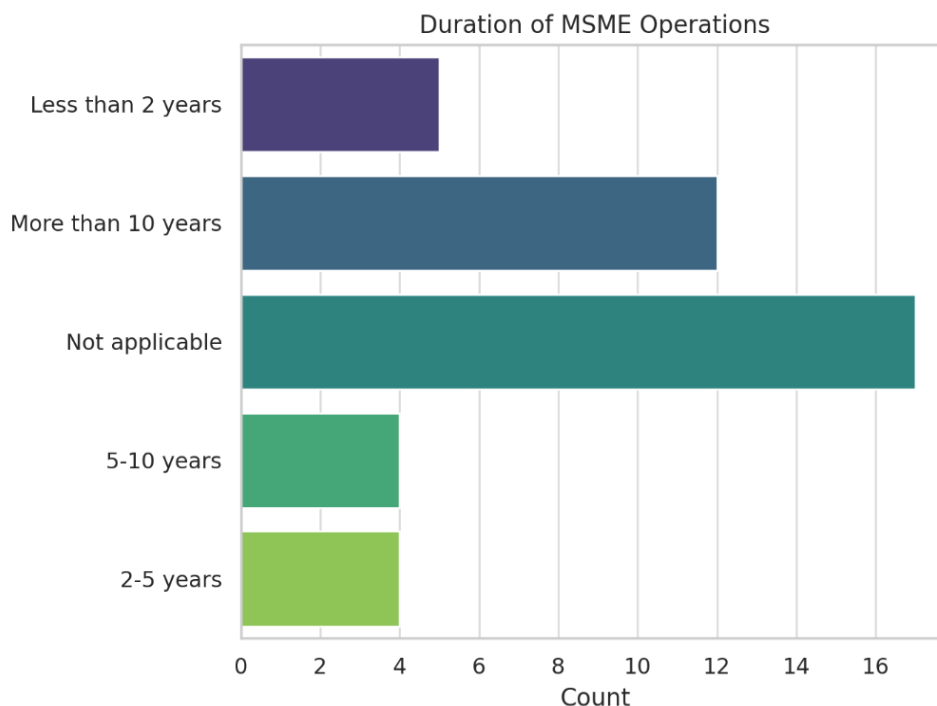
The MSMEs surveyed vary in operational experience, ranging from startups (less than 2 years) to well-established businesses operating for over a decade. Turnover figures also differ significantly, with some businesses earning less than ₹50 lakh annually, while others generate more than ₹5 crores. This diversity highlights the varying financial capacities and challenges faced by MSMEs at different growth stages.

4. Workforce Size
Question: How many employees does your MSME have?
Interpretation:

MSME Employee Size Distribution
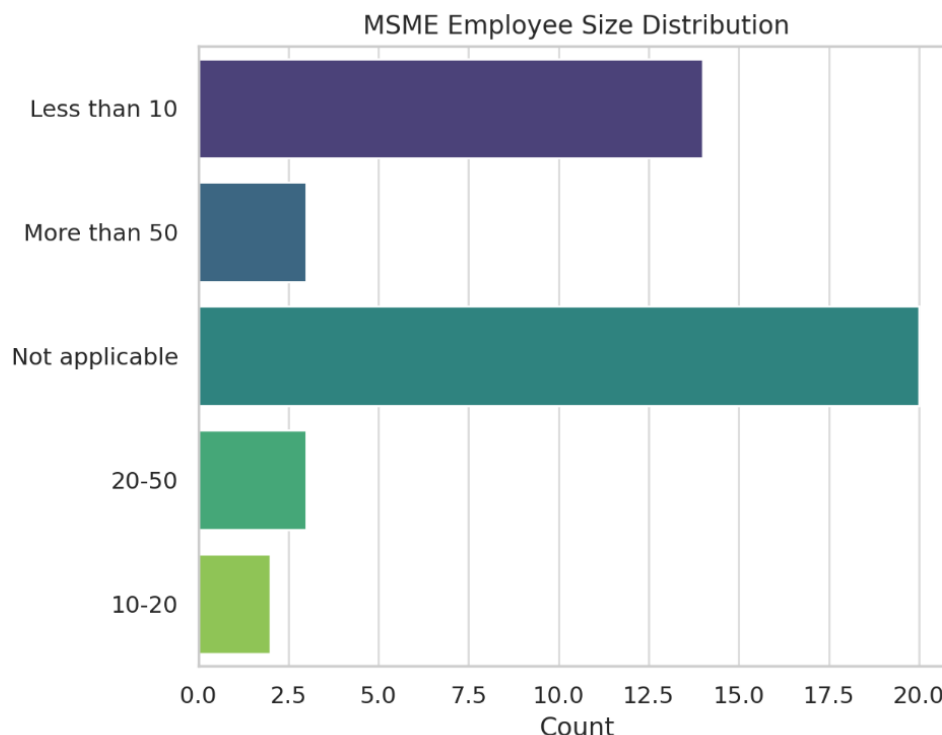
Most MSMEs in the survey have fewer than 10 employees, which aligns with typical small business characteristics. A smaller proportion employs more than 50 people, indicating a subset of well-established MSMEs. This suggests that workforce expansion policies, skill development programs, and automation incentives could support business growth and employment generation.

5. Legal Compliance Awareness and Challenges
Question: How familiar are you with various laws and regulations applicable to MSMEs in India? Have you faced challenges in complying with them?
Interpretation:
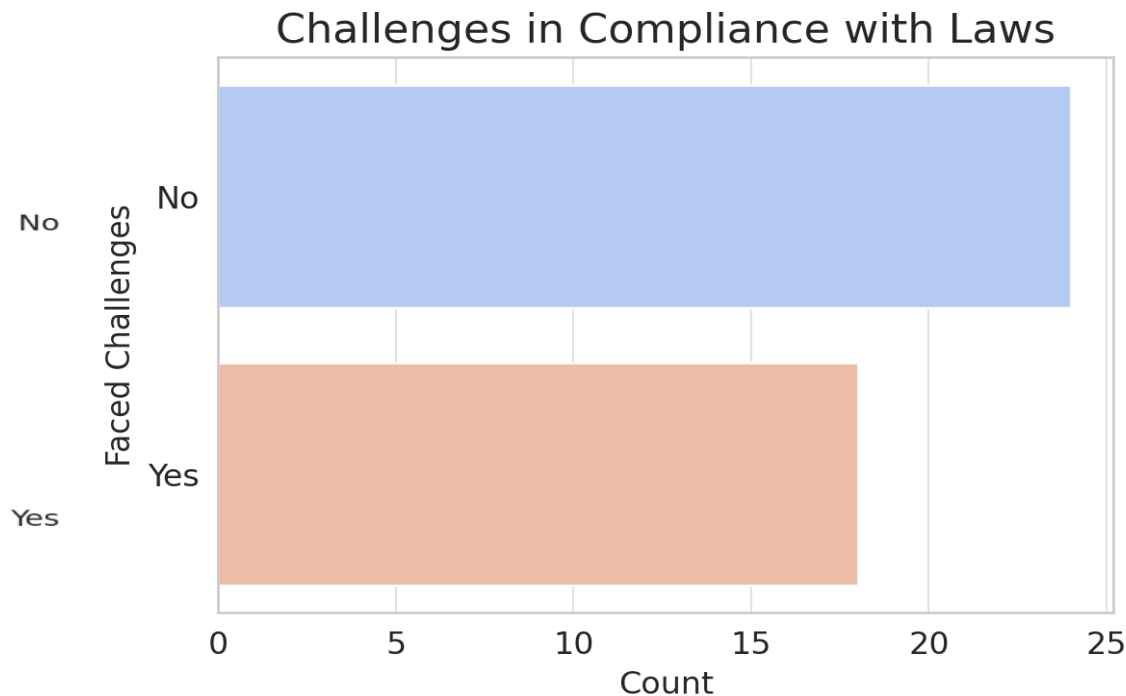
Challenges in Compliance with Laws

A significant number of respondents are either unfamiliar or only slightly familiar with MSME laws and regulations. This lack of awareness can lead to non-compliance, penalties, or missed opportunities for government benefits. Additionally, many MSMEs report tax disputes and labor-related challenges, indicating that regulatory compliance remains a significant hurdle. Simplified policies and greater transparency could ease these difficulties.

6. Compliance Strategies
Question: How do you ensure compliance with laws and regulations?
Interpretation:

Familiarity with MSME Laws
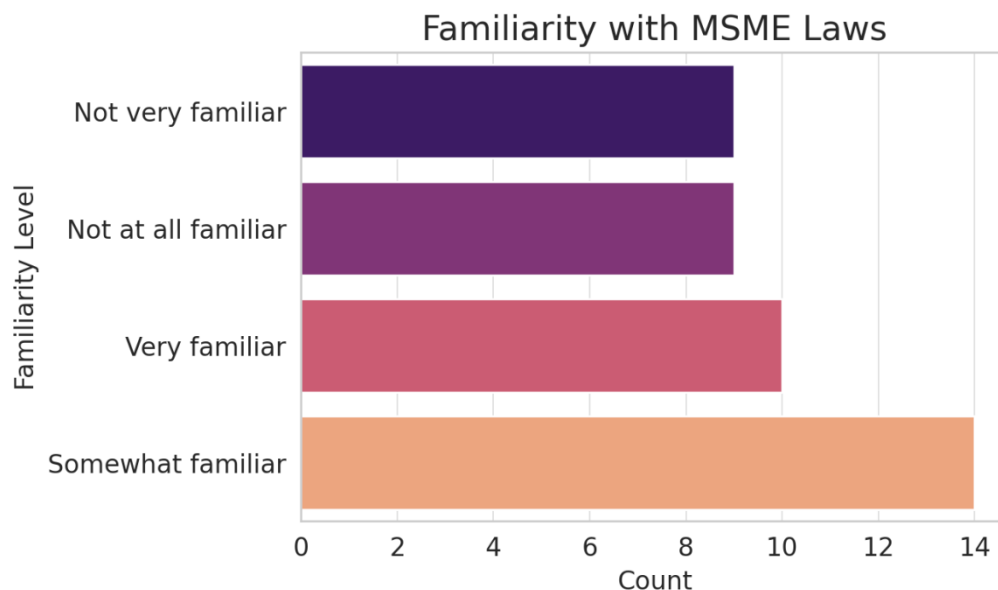
MSMEs adopt a significant number of respondents are either unfamiliar or only slightly familiar with MSME laws and regulations. This lack of awareness can lead to non-compliance, penalties, or missed opportunities for government benefits. Additionally, many MSMEs report tax disputes and labor-related challenges, indicating that regulatory compliance remains a significant hurdle. Simplified policies and greater transparency could ease these difficulties.

7. Legal Disputes
Question: Have you ever been involved in a legal dispute or litigation?
Interpretation:
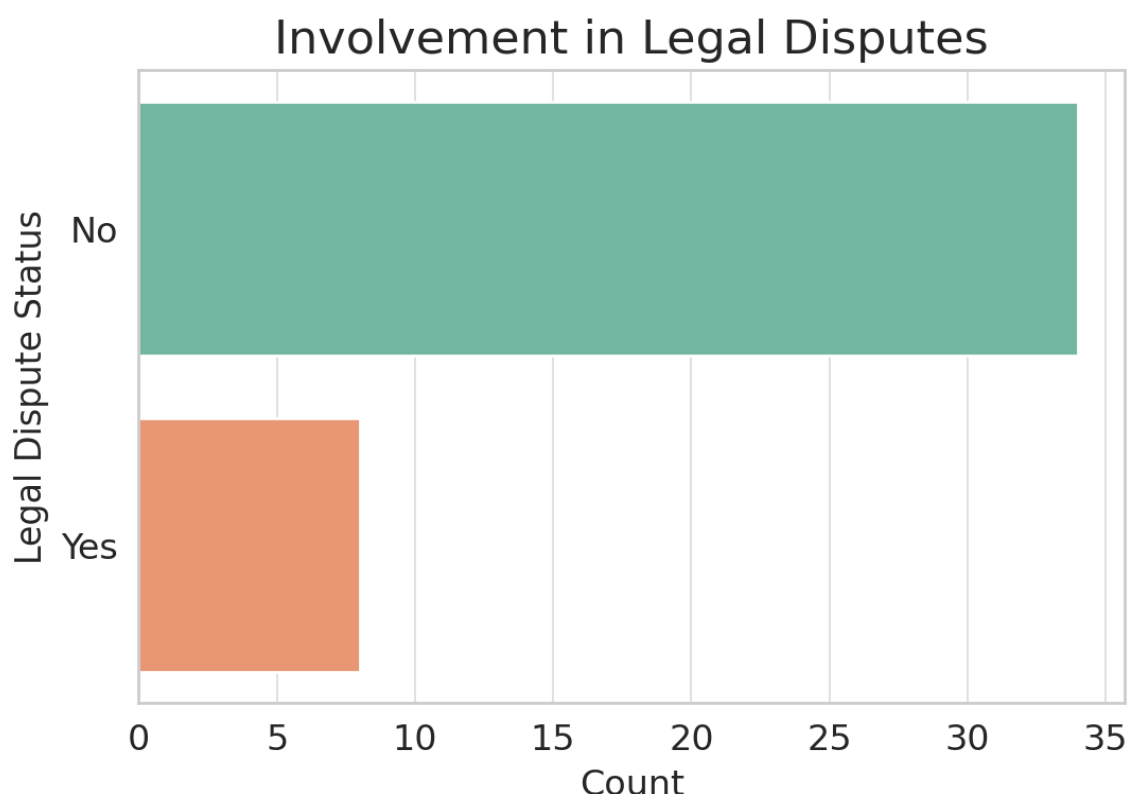
MSMEs adopt varied strategies for compliance. Some rely on external consultants, others use in-house teams, and a growing number utilize online resources. The dependence on external consultants suggests that compliance procedures are often too complex for MSME owners to manage alone. The increasing use of online resources also indicates a shift towards digital compliance solutions and self-learning.

8. Cost and Time Spent on Compliance
Question: What is the approximate annual cost of compliance? How many hours per week do you or your employees spend on compliance-related activities?
Interpretation:

Weekly Time Spent on Compliance Activities
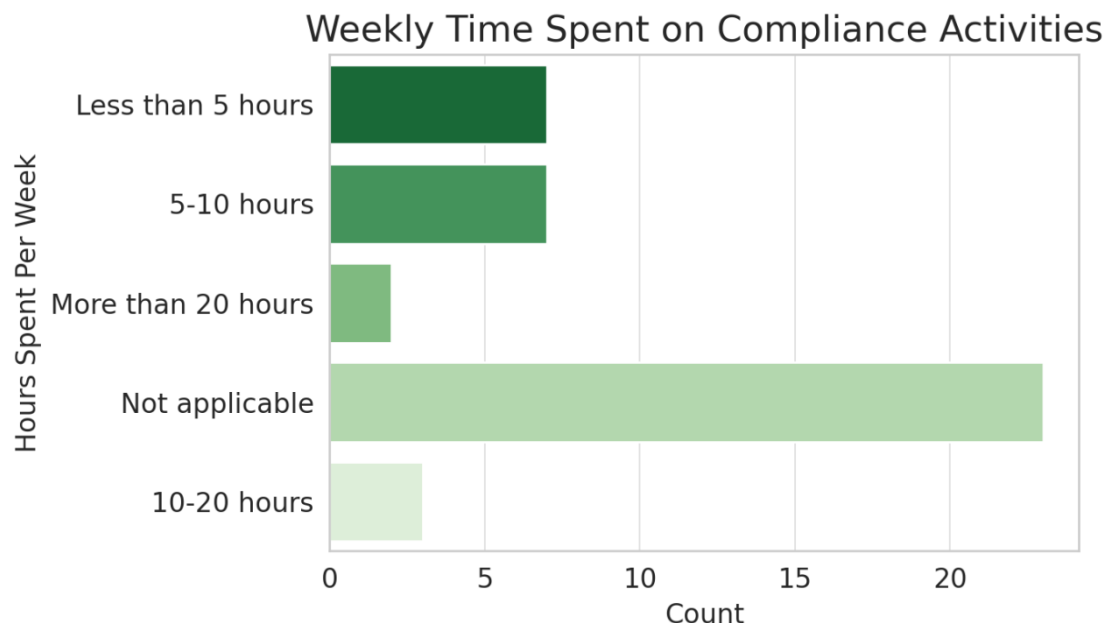
Compliance costs vary, with some businesses spending less than ₹50,000 annually, while others exceed ₹5 lakhs. Similarly, the time spent on compliance ranges from less than 5 hours per week to more than 20 hours. These figures indicate that regulatory procedures are often burdensome, necessitating process simplification and cost reduction initiatives to ease the compliance load on MSMEs.

9. Desired Reforms for MSMEs
Question: What changes or reforms would you like to see in the regulatory framework?
Interpretation:

Preferred Regulatory Reforms
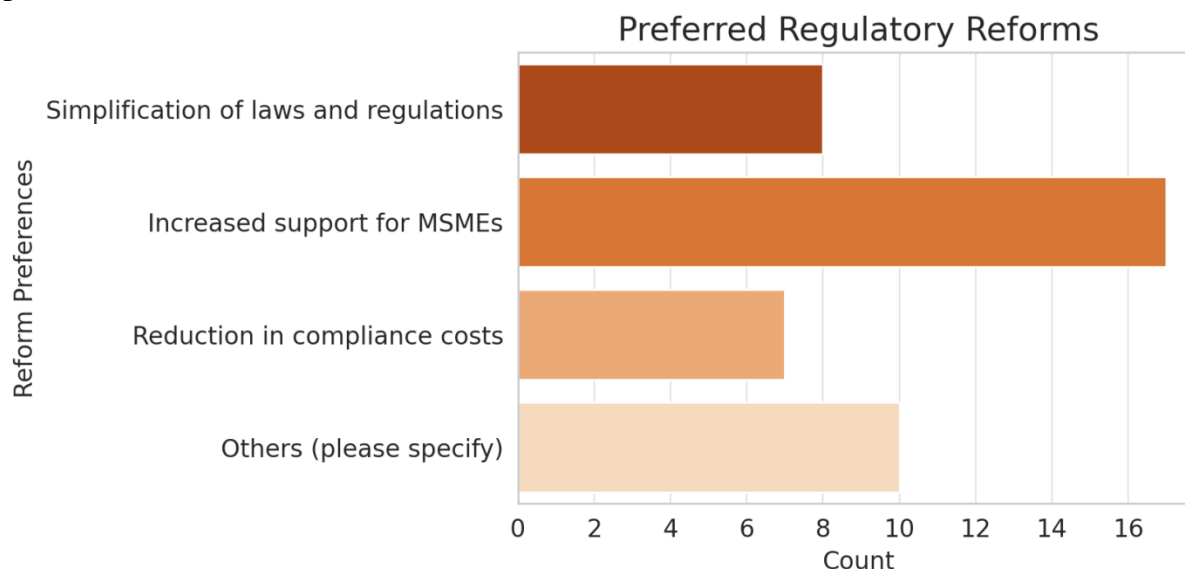
The most common suggestions include:

- **Simplification of laws and regulations –** Many respondents find compliance too complex and time-consuming.
- **Reduction in compliance costs** – High legal costs and paperwork hinder MSME growth.

- **Increased support for MSMEs –** Businesses seek better government initiatives, financial aid, and policy support.

VI FINDINGS

The survey findings reveal significant insights into the MSME sector. A large number of respondents own or are involved in family-run businesses, with the majority operating in the manufacturing sector, followed by services and trading. The duration of MSME operations varies, with many businesses being less than 2 years old, indicating a rise in new ventures, while a substantial number have been in existence for over 10 years, demonstrating business sustainability.

Financially, most MSMEs have an annual turnover of less than ₹50 lakhs, reflecting the dominance of small-scale enterprises, though a few report earnings above ₹5 crores, showcasing their financial growth. Employee size also varies, with the majority employing less than 10 people, highlighting their micro and small-scale nature, while some businesses employ more than 50 people, indicating larger MSMEs.

Legal and regulatory compliance remains a challenge for many MSMEs. A significant number of business owners are not very familiar or not at all familiar with MSME laws, pointing to a knowledge gap. While some MSMEs navigate compliance smoothly, others struggle due to complex regulations. Tax disputes and labor issues emerge as the most common legal challenges, although most MSMEs have not been involved in legal disputes.

Cost and time spent on compliance vary among businesses. A majority of MSMEs spend less than ₹50,000 annually on compliance, but some bear over ₹5 lakhs in costs, making compliance a financial burden. Additionally, while most MSMEs dedicate less than 5 hours per week to compliance activities, larger businesses spend more than 20 hours weekly on regulatory obligations.

To improve the MSME ecosystem, business owners seek simplification of laws and regulations, increased government support, and reduction in compliance costs. These findings underscore the urgent need for policy reforms, enhanced legal awareness, and financial support to enable MSMEs to thrive in a competitive market.

VII RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey results indicate that MSMEs play a crucial role in the economy but face several operational and regulatory challenges. A significant number of businesses are in the manufacturing sector, followed by services and trading. Many MSMEs are relatively new, with a large portion operating for less than 2 years, while others have been in business for over a decade, showcasing sustainability in the sector.

Financially, most MSMEs generate an annual turnover of less than ₹50 lakhs, with only a few surpassing ₹5 crores. The majority employ fewer than 10 people, reinforcing their classification as micro or small enterprises, while a small percentage operate on a larger scale.

A key concern among MSMEs is compliance with laws and regulations. Many business owners lack awareness of MSME laws, leading to difficulties in compliance. Tax disputes and labor issues are among the most frequently cited legal challenges, although most MSMEs have not been involved in legal disputes. The cost of compliance also varies significantly, with some businesses spending less than ₹50,000 annually, while others bear expenses exceeding ₹5 lakhs. Additionally, larger businesses dedicate more than 20 hours per week to compliance-related activities, whereas smaller businesses spend much less time.

Business owners strongly advocate for simplification of regulations, increased government support, and a reduction in compliance costs to foster a more MSME-friendly environment. These results highlight the need for policy improvements, legal awareness initiatives, and financial support mechanisms to help MSMEs overcome their challenges and achieve sustainable growth.

VIII CONCLUSION

The survey findings highlight the critical role of MSMEs in the economy, while also shedding light on the challenges they face. Most MSMEs operate in the manufacturing sector, with a significant number being relatively new, while others have demonstrated long-term sustainability. Financial constraints, low turnover, and limited workforce size characterize the sector, making growth and expansion challenging for many businesses.

One of the most pressing concerns is compliance with laws and regulations, as many MSME owners lack legal awareness. Tax disputes and labor issues are among the most common challenges; though legal disputes remain relatively rare. Compliance costs and time spent on regulatory obligations vary widely, with some businesses bearing a high financial and operational burden.

To create a more MSME-friendly environment, simplification of laws, increased government support, and reduction in compliance costs are essential. Addressing these issues through policy reforms, legal education, and financial assistance will enable MSMEs to overcome their challenges and contribute more effectively to economic growth and employment generation.

REFERENCES

[1] Kapoor, A. (2024). Enhancing the competitiveness of MSMEs in India.

[2] Jomon, T. K. (2024). Legal frameworks and regulatory challenges in fostering sustainable growth for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs): A management perspective. (Unpublished manuscript).

[3] Rawindaran, N., Jayal, A., Prakash, E., & Hewage, C. (2023). Perspective of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and their relationship with government in overcoming cybersecurity challenges and barriers in Wales. (Unpublished manuscript).

[4] Maheshkar, C., & Soni, N. (2022). Problems faced by Indian Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Retrieved from

[5] Rathi, S., & Kumar, P. (2022). The impact of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) on the Indian economy in India. Retrieved from

[6] Lama, P. (2013). Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India: Problems and prospects.

Links

[1] https://www.caluniv.ac.in/dj/BS-Journal/Vol-33-34/Micro_small_medium.pdf

[2] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/367511018_the_impact_of_micro_small_and_medium_enterprises_msmes_on_indian_economy_in_india

[3] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358435688_Problems_Faced_by_Indian_Micro_Small_and_Medium_Enterprises_MSMEs

[4] https://www.competitiveness.in/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/TID_WP_29_Enhancing_Competitiveness_of_MSMEs_in_India.pdf

COVID-19, Social Networks, and Educational Transformation: Opportunities and Obstacles for Youth in Northeast India

Durgesh Tripathi[1], Priyanka Sachdeva[2]
[1]Dean, University School of Mass Communication, GGSIP University, (New Delhi) India.
[2]Asst. Prof. (Guest), Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi, (New Delhi) India.

I INTRODUCTION

Communication is an essential need for humans, started with interpersonal communication to mass media. Since the late 1990s, the desire to connect socially has gradually shifted to the digital world. It started with early internet chat rooms, forums, and instant messaging. Over the period of time, social networking sites have become a major part of our lives, allowing users to create profiles, keep in touch, and share different types of content across geographic borders. Pioneering platforms like Six Degrees.com (1997) showed the potential of online profile-based networks (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). However, it was the rise of Friendster (2002), My Space, Facebook, and Twitter that made these sites a key part of everyday life (Chafkin, 2007). By the late 2000s, these platforms had turned into ecosystems with billions of users. They supported not just personal interaction but also became essential for business marketing, education, entertainment, and political campaigning. This change happened alongside advancements in communication technology, like smartphones and mobile data, which made it possible to engage with social networking sites at any time and from any place (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). For today's youth, particularly in developing areas like India's North-East, using social networking sites has become nearly a part of their daily social life, learning, and cultural expression. The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced this trend, as lockdowns and social distancing moved almost all forms of peer, educational, and political interaction online.

- **Youth and the Social Media Landscape Youth**
The youth as defined by the UN, includes individuals aged 15 to 24, while Indian policy considers those aged 15 to 35. They represent the most digitally active group. These individuals are called "digital natives" because they have grown up in digital environments. Social networking sites are not just tools for them; they are the foundation of their social lives. These sites help shape their identities, share experiences, and pursue personal and collective goals.

- **Social Media and Youth: Key Impacts Socialization, Communication, and Learning**
Social media platforms are a significant pathway for young people to socialize and communicate. They encourage community involvement, creative expression, and the growth of social networks (Boyd, 2007). Research by Bryant, Sanders-Jackson, and Smallwood (2006) shows that teens often prefer digital communication over face-to-face interaction. This choice impacts how they build relationships and express themselves. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram are also used for group learning, collaborative projects, and sharing information (Wang et al., 2011). Mental Health Concerns On the other hand, excessive use of social media is linked to higher risks of anxiety, depression, and feelings of inadequacy among youth. For example, research by Abela and Hankin (2008) indicates a rise in depressive disorders in adolescents related to social stressors, particularly those intensified by online activities. Scholars such as Kuss and Griffiths (2011) highlight the dangers of social media addiction, which can harm emotional health, school performance, and personal relationships. Studies show that the amount of time spent on social media is not as important as the frequency and context of use. Negative comparisons, cyberbullying, and fear of missing out (FoMO) are significant risk factors for mental health issues (Elhai et al., 2016). Privacy, Cyberbullying, and Digital Footprint Privacy are major concerns, especially for youth who may

unknowingly share personal information online (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2008). Cyberbullying is a widespread problem. It has similar emotional and psychological effects to traditional bullying, as noted by Mishna et al. (2018). The digital footprint users leave can impact their future job prospects and identities (Hong et al., 2014). Addiction and Behavioral Change There is growing worry about addiction. In North-East India, 34.6% of respondents said they experience social media addiction, alongside privacy challenges, trolling, and shorter attention spans (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011; Lin et al., 2016). The quick and constant nature of these platforms can lead to compulsive behaviors and distract from real-life activities (Twenge et al., 2017).

- **COVID-19 and Digital Dependency**

The COVID-19 pandemic created unique conditions that accelerated existing digital trends. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how the infodemic, an overabundance of inaccurate or misleading information, can thrive on social media (WHO, 2020). Lockdowns and physical distancing made in-person social interactions difficult. This pushed young people to meet their needs for companionship, information, education, and activism mainly through social networking sites (SNSs). Key shifts included: **Spike in Internet Usage** Global and local data showed increases in daily active users across all major platforms. Messaging apps, video conferencing, and social video platforms experienced particularly sharp jumps. Another Shift seen was **Education went Online**. Schools and universities moved to digital learning platforms. This required a shift to online classrooms, remote peer collaboration, and education-focused Social Networking Sites(SNS). The major challenge and a shift was seen as **Mental Health Strains**. Long periods of isolation paired with anxiety about health, academics, and job prospects. SNS use had a dual role. It provided emotional connection but also sometimes worsened fears through misinformation or harmful comparisons.

Rise of the **"Infodemic":** The **World Health Organization** (WHO) coined this term to describe the flood of information, both accurate and misleading, circulating alongside the pandemic. In India, as in other places, conspiracy theories, false cures, and misleading statistics spread quickly through social media. The Infodemic during COVID-19 can be categorized as, (Derakhshan & Wardle, 2017) Misinformation – False or inaccurate information shared without harmful intent. Disinformation – Deliberately created falsehoods intended to cause harm or achieve strategic effects. Mal-information – Genuine information shared with the deliberate intention to cause harm.

The scale of COVID-19 misinformation was staggering. Thousands of false narratives appeared in many languages, ranging from fake public health guidelines to politically motivated rumor campaigns. In India, misleading health advice, communal narratives about the virus, and conspiracy theories linked to technology (such as 5G myths) were particularly common. Identifying falsehoods requires media literacy and critical thinking. Populations with less training in evaluating information sources were more vulnerable. This made young people both potential amplifiers—through rapid, uncritical sharing—and potential defenders if trained in verification and discernment.

- **Significance of Media Literacy**

Media literacy is the skill that help individuals to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media in various forms. Media literacy has become a crucial skill to fight against misinformation and encourage thoughtful news consumption (Derakhshan & Wardle, 2017; Hobbs, 2006). Studies show that 65% of young respondents can tell fake news from real stories. This finding emphasizes the need for critical thinking and digital literacy in a media-driven world (Sachdeva & Tripathi, 2020). Disruptive behaviors can affect real-life interactions (Twenge et al., 2017). In the context of SNSs and the infodemic, media literacy empowers users to Evaluate the credibility of sources before sharing. It helps distinguish between opinion,

satire, and factual reporting. Media literacy helps in recognizing manipulative framing, emotionally charged language, and misleading imagery. The essential skill developed through media literacy is understanding the economic and algorithmic incentives that influence platform content distribution. Media-Literacy and Infodemic studies aimed to assess the changes in youth news consumption patterns, their ability to identify fake news, and their tendency toward mindful versus passive exposure. The findings provide important insights that around 70 percent recognized the need to verify a news item's credibility before sharing. Many dismissed simplistic cues like "interesting headlines" as proof of authenticity. However, not everyone could reliably identify manipulated stories without direct prompts. Encouragingly, 65% correctly identified a fake news example when directly tested. These results suggest that while awareness exists among young people, there is room to improve practical verification skills and deepen critical consumption habits.

The study uses several key communication theories to explore youth engagement with social networking sites (SNSs) and their effects on behavior and thinking:

Uses and Gratifications Theory (Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch) suggests that users actively choose media channels to meet specific psychological or social needs. For young people using SNSs, these platforms help satisfy various personal needs, including: **Information**: Finding news, updates, and knowledge that relate to their interests and daily life. **Entertainment**: Enjoying content like videos, music, games, and social interactions. **Social Interaction**: Connecting with friends, family, and wider networks to maintain and expand social relationships and **Self-expression**: Creating online identities and sharing personal opinions, creativity, and experiences. Thus, youth use of SNSs is purpose-driven. They seek to fulfill specific social and psychological needs.

Agenda-Setting Theory (Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw) emphasizes how media outlets and content curators shape public perception by highlighting certain issues over others. On SNSs, feeds and trending topics promote specific narratives, affecting which issues gain attention in public discussions. For youth on SNSs, this means: The visibility and repetition of topics in their feeds can influence what they focus on and care about. The SNS algorithms and user communities help determine which information spreads widely. This process leads to youth forming opinions and awareness based on topics that are prominently displayed in their online spaces.

Cultivation Theory (George Gerbner) was originally developed to understand the effects of long-term broadcast media exposure, this theory suggests that regular exposure to media can influence individuals' views of social reality. Applied to SNSs and youth, we see that: Continuous consumption of SNS content—such as images, opinions, and social norms—can subtly shape how young people perceive the world, social issues, and behavior standards. SNS content can create specific attitudes about what is considered "normal" or "risky" behavior, impacting youth expectations and worldview. This is especially significant for youth, as their developmental stages make them more open to media influences.

Social Cognitive Theory highlights that people learn behaviors, attitudes, and emotional responses through direct experience and by watching others. On SNS platforms, youth: Observe the actions, feedback, and social rewards that other users gain for particular behaviors or attitudes. Model their actions and self-image based on peers or influencers they follow or engage with. Accept norms, social roles, and coping methods shown in their SNS settings. As a result, youth behavior and attitudes can be shaped by the social learning that takes place within SNS communities.

Framing Theory: Erving Goffman introduced the concept of framing in sociology. Scholars such as Robert M. Entman further developed framing theory specific to media studies. Framing theory explains how the way information is presented influences understanding and responses:

On SNSs, information is framed by content creators, media outlets, or user communities; this framing helps guide how audiences understand and react. The tone, emphasis, and context given to news or user-generated content can cause youth to view threats, risks, or social issues in various ways. In cases of misinformation, the way false or misleading information is framed can increase fear, stigma, or confusion, affecting youth behavior and public health responses. Framing on SNSs is crucial in shaping attitudes, beliefs, and actions related to information consumption and challenges surrounding misinformation.

Together, these theories provide a solid framework to understand not only why youth engage so much with SNSs but also how SNS content and interactions affect their knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and mental health. They highlight the complex relationships between individual needs, media environments, social learning, and how messages are interpreted, which shape youth experiences in the digital social world.

- **Area of Study- North-East India: A Unique Socio-Cultural and Digital Context**

The North East India(NEI) is geographically and culturally different, consisting of eight states Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura with over 220 tribes. Each tribe has its own socio-political history and developmental challenges. NEI's digital engagement profile is influenced by several factors like **High Literacy Rates with Regional Variations**: Despite economic struggles, many states report literacy rates that exceed national averages, providing a solid foundation for adopting digital skills. **Geographic and Infrastructure Constraints**: Challenging terrain and gaps in infrastructure make connectivity difficult. However, initiatives from Digital India have improved smartphone and internet access. **Cultural Diversity**: Social Networking Sites (SNSs) help maintain connections between tribes and their diasporas. They also allow users to share indigenous art and traditions. At times, these platforms host heated political discussions on autonomy, rights, and development. **Migration Trends**: Young people often migrate for education or jobs, increasing the role of SNSs in maintaining relationships with family and friends over long distances. During COVID-19, NEI youth followed global trends in using SNSs to keep up with education, public health information, and social support. They also faced the same risks from misinformation and online harm.

II RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

The research underlines that Youth in NEI have increased their SNS use, amplified by COVID-19, for socializing, education, sharing information, and political expression. This raises concerns about changes in how they engage with these platforms, how this influences their opinions, their exposure to misinformation, and the potential effects on their behavior or mental health.

Research Objectives include: - Understanding how SNSs help youth address social and personal issues and develop opinions. - Gauging the impact of SNSs on behavior, knowledge, and interests. - Examining SNSs as a tool for finding relationships. - Identifying what drives SNS addiction. - Assessing the use of SNSs for education during COVID-19. - Evaluating the level of media literacy and resilience to misinformation.

III MENTAL HEALTH, ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AND SOCIAL EFFECTS

The broader literature frames the effects of SNSs across a spectrum drives positive and negative impacts. **Positive Potentials**: Improved social connections, awareness of different cultures, opportunities for collaborative learning, and avenues for civic engagement. (Clark et al.; Seabrook et al.). **Negative Risks**: Research shows a link between high SNS use and issues like depression, anxiety, dissatisfaction with body image, fear of missing out (FoMO), and being targeted by cyberbullying. Factors contributing to these issues include social comparison, disrupted sleep, reduced offline activities, and cognitive overload. (Twenge et al.; Sherman et al.; Shafer; Strickland; Lup, Trub, and Rosenthal; Frison and Eggermont). The empirical findings indicate that: - Addiction is linked to shorter attention spans and lower academic performance. - FoMO is a strong predictor of online relationship intensity, sometimes harming offline connections. - A larger online friend network does not always mean more time spent on SNSs, indicating varied usage patterns. - Peer pressure on SNSs does not directly correlate to addiction, suggesting that individual differences and psychological factors play a role.

IV MEDIA LITERACY AS POLICY AND EDUCATIONAL IMPERATIVE

With the interrelated issues of misinformation spread and high youth SNS usage, investing in media literacy education becomes vital. This involves: **Curriculum Integration**: Adding skills for verifying information, understanding platforms, and responsible digital citizenship into school programs. **Public Awareness Campaigns**: Initiatives led by the government and NGOs that promote habits of fact-checking and skepticism toward unverified viral content. **Platform Collaboration**: Working with companies like Meta, Google, and Twitter to enhance in-app prompts, label sources, and promote credible information. **Community-Based Training**: Especially in regions like NEI, using local languages and cultural references to ensure the training resonates with the community.

V RECOMMENDATIONS

The study suggests several recommendations based on the data collected and themes analyzed: **Targeted Digital Literacy Programs in NEI** that build both technical and critical thinking skills, customized for cultural contexts. **Support Systems for Mental Health**: Offering both on-campus and online counseling to address SNS-related stress, including cyberbullying and FoMO. **Balanced SNS Use Campaigns**: Promoting tools for digital well-being to limit excessive use and encourage offline interactions. **Strengthening Local Content Ecosystems**: Supporting the creation and sharing of verified, relevant local content to combat misinformation. **Collaborative Governance**: Developing multi-stakeholder policy frameworks that include state agencies, educators, youth organizations, and platforms to tackle the infodemic.

VI CONCLUSION: NAVIGATING DIGITAL FUTURES

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed both the essential role of social networking sites (SNSs) and the risks they pose to young people. For NEI youth, SNSs have served as vital tools for education, social connections, and cultural preservation during times of physical isolation. However, these networks also spread unverified and often harmful information, which has real psychosocial effects. To tackle these challenges, we need a two-pronged approach: we should use the benefits of SNSs for empowerment and community-building while also reducing risks through media literacy, responsible platform design, and active mental health support. The insights from the Media Literacy and Infodemic findings extend well beyond the pandemic. In a time when global crisis, whether related to health, the environment, or politics, will likely continue in online spaces, it is crucial to prepare youth to be thoughtful, ethical, and balanced participants in digital environments. This preparation is vital for the health of democracy and social well-being.

REFERENCES

[1] Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachment as a human motivation. Psychological Bulletin, 117(3), 497–529.

[2] BBC. (2005). News Corp in $580m internet buy. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4695495.stm

[3] Benzie, R. (2007). Facebook banned for Ontario staffers. Toronto Star. Retrieved from http://www.thestar.com/News/article/210014

[4] Boyd, D. (2004). Friendster and publicly articulated social networks. ACM Press.

[5] Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13(1), 210–230.

[6] Chafkin, M. (2007). How to kill a great idea! Inc. Magazine. Retrieved from http://www.inc.com/magazine/20070601/features-how-to-kill-a-great-idea.html

[7] Contenuti Digitali. (2020). Statistikhe sull'uso dei social network — Lo stato dei social network in Italia. Retrieved from https://www.contenutidigitali.net/statistiche-utilizzo-social-network#utenti-attivi-social

[8] Coyle, C., & Vaughn, H. (2008). Social networking: Communication revolution or evolution? Bell Labs Technical Journal, 13(2), 13–17.

[9] Elhai, J. D., Levine, J. C., Dvorak, R. D., & Hall, B. J. (2016). Fear of missing out, need for touch, anxiety and depression are related to problematic smartphone use. Computers in Human Behavior, 63, 509–516.

[10] Ferenc, J. (2020). Interfacing the city: Digital human modelling and ergonomics, mobility, and intelligent environments. In Digital Human Modeling and Ergonomics in Mobility, Transportation and Travel (pp. 271–285). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-59987-4_20

[11] Hakoyama, M., & Hakoyama, S. (2011). The impact of cell phone use on social networking and development among college students. The American Association of Behavioral and Social Sciences Journal, 15, 1–20.

[12] Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet? Journal of Interactive Marketing, 18(1), 38–52.

[13] Hobbs, R. (2006b). Multiple visions of multimedia literacy: Emerging areas of synthesis. In M. McKenna et al. (Eds.), International Handbook of Literacy and Technology (pp. 15–26). Lawrence Erlbaum.

[14] Hobbs, R. (2017). Approaches to teacher professional development in digital media literacy education In B. De Abreu, P. Mihailidis, A. Lee, J. Melki & J. McDougall (Eds). International Handbook of Media Literacy Education (pp. 88 – 113). New York: Routledge

[15] Kozinets, R. V. (1999). E-tribalized marketing? The strategic implications of virtual communities of consumption. European Management Journal, 17(3), 252–264.

[16] Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2011). Online social networking and addiction: A review of the psychological literature. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 8(9), 3528–3552.

[17] Lederer, E. (2020). Misinformation about COVID-19 is the new enemy. Time Magazine.

[18] Lin, L., Sidani, J. E., Shensa, A., Radovic, A., Miller, E., Colditz, J. B., & Primack, B. A. (2016). Association between social media use and depression among US young adults. Depression and Anxiety, 33(4), 323–331.

[19] Lup, K., Trub, L., & Rosenthal, L. (2015). Instagram #Instasad? Exploring associations among Instagram use, depressive symptoms, negative social comparison, and strangers followed. Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 18(5), 247–252.

[20] Mendoza, M., Poblete, B., & Castillo, C. (2010). Twitter under crisis: Can we trust what we RT? Proceedings of the First Workshop on Social Media Analytics, 71–79.

[21] Raacke, J., & Bonds-Raacke, J. (2008). MySpace and Facebook: Applying the uses and gratifications theory to exploring friend-networking sites. Cyberpsychology & Behavior, 11(2), 169–174.

[22] Sherman, L., Payton, A. A., Hernandez, L. M., Greenfield, P. M., & Dapretto, M. (2016). The power of like in adolescence: Effects of peer influence on neural and behavioural responses to social media. Psychological Science, 27(7), 1027–1035.

[23] Smith, A., & Anderson, M. (2018). Social media use in 2018. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/2018/03/01/social-media-use-in-2018/

[24] Strickland, A. (2017). Exploring the effects of social media use on the mental health of young adults. Retrieved from http://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorstheses1990-2015/1683/

[25] Sachdeva, P., & Tripathi, D. (2019). A critical education for 21st century: A study on youth and media literacy. Journal of Content, Community & Communication, 10(5), 64–72. https://doi.org/10.20961/ijpte.v8i2

[26] Twenge, J., Joiner, T., Rogers, M., & Martin, G. (2017). Increases in depressive symptoms, suicide related outcomes, and suicide rates among U.S. adolescents after 2010 and links to increased new media screen time. Clinical Psychological Science, 6(1), 3–17.

[27] Wang, Q., Chen, W., & Liang, Y. (2011). The effects of social media on college students. MBA Student Scholarship, 5, 1–12.

Inside The Criminal Mind: A Comprehensive Analysis of Psychology, Motivations and Justifications of Crime

Anushka C. More[1], Piyush Maheshwari[2]

[1]Dept. of Law, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj University, Panvel (M.S.) India.
[2]Asst. Prof., Dept. of Law, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj University, Panvel (M.S.) India.

ABSTRACT

The study of the criminal psychology is important for preventing crime, rehabilitating offenders, and enforcing the law. Criminal behavior remains a mystery for many people. Why do some individuals abide the law while others do not? Exploring the driving force behind criminal actions uncovers a complex interplay of psychological, environmental, and social factors. Every criminal act is influenced by a person's thoughts, feelings, environment, and culture. Understanding the motivations behind criminal behavior can enhance our responses and prevent them in future. This paper examines the psychological mechanisms behind criminal behavior, focusing on the motivations and justification of offenders, as well as the theoretical frameworks, cultural influences, and societal norms that shape a criminal mindset. This paper uses archival research method and real-life examples to explore the reasons behind criminal actions, assessing the psychological triggers, personality traits, rationalizations, and differences between planned and impulsive crimes. These findings provide valuable guidance to law enforcement agencies, criminologists, and policymakers for effective and timely interventions.

Keywords: Criminal psychology, motivations for crime, rationalization mechanisms, personality disorders, cognitive distortions, behavioral patterns in offenders

I INTRODUCTION

Criminal behavior is influenced by a complex interplay of psychological, social, and situational factors. The motivations behind such behavior are often difficult to explain simply, prompting a deeper exploration of the underlying psychology. Crime poses a significant challenge to societies worldwide, making it essential to investigate its root causes thoroughly. The study of crime and criminal behavior has long been a central concern across various disciplines including psychology, sociology, forensics, and criminology. Traditional approaches often focus on legal and punitive measures. However, a deeper understanding requires examining the internal and external forces that shape an individual's decision to commit a crime (1). While motivations for crime have been widely studied, there has been less focus on understanding the mental and emotional processes offenders experience during criminal acts. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring the intersection of criminology and psychology to uncover the deeper workings of the criminal mind. By examining these aspects, we can develop more effective prevention and intervention strategies.

II OBJECTIVES

This paper aims to:
(a) Identify the key psychological triggers influencing criminal actions.
(b) Examine the impact of socio-economic pressures, such as poverty and inequality, on crime rates.
(c) Investigate the influence of social factors, like peer pressure on crime.
(d) Explore how personality traits and disorders, such as psychopathy and impulsivity, affect criminal actions.

(e)   Analyze the rationalizations offenders use to justify their behaviors.
(f)   Distinguish between planned crimes and impulsive acts of passion or opportunity.

III METHODOLOGY

A thorough review of existing research was conducted on the psychological factors, motivations, and rationalizations behind criminal behavior. This analysis aims to lay a theoretical base that can help future studies. The research also included crime data and socio-economic indicators to identify important patterns and relationships among these factors.

The study is based on a varied range of scholarly articles and case studies from reputable databases. The findings include journal articles, research papers, and reviews related to
criminal behavior, along with additional resources such as books and case studies.

Criminal cases were studied to provide valuable insights into the field of criminology, highlighting the various factors responsible for the criminal behavior. Major factors include socio-economic status, psychological state, environmental conditions, and social interactions. These can help us better understand the intricacies of criminal actions and how these elements intertwine to shape an individual's path into crime.

IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Motivations and influences behind criminal behavior:
1) Psychological Triggers:
Psychological factors such as impulsivity, aggression, low self-control, and mental health issues significantly impact a person's likelihood of committing a crime. These elements, which are influenced by people's ideas and emotions, influence their behavior and decision-making. Substance abuse and addiction, also impairs judgment and increase the chances of offending. Adverse childhood experiences, such as trauma, neglect, or abuse, can increase the risk of developing psychological issues that can lead to criminal behavior (2). These experiences can distort their view of life and social rules. One infamous example is John Wayne Gacy, whose troubled childhood and mental health issues played a role in his crimes.

Cognitive processes, including perception, memory, and reasoning, play a crucial role in shaping how individuals understand the world and their behavior within it. Cognitive distortions, such as misinterpreting social signals and or holding biased beliefs, can increase the risk of criminal behavior. For example, some individuals may interpret ambiguous actions as hostile, leading to aggressive responses (3). Furthermore, individuals who struggle with moral reasoning may find it difficult to distinguish right from wrong, which can lead to criminal acts. Research also suggests that disruptions in cognitive processing can hinder one's ability to correlate personal experience with objective reality which can impact criminal behavior (4).

Emotional states, such as anger, fear, and frustration, can also serve as triggers for criminal behavior. Intense emotional arousal can impair cognitive functioning, leading to impulsive decision-making. Some individuals with gambling disorder may tend to act impulsively during heightened emotional states (5). Exposure to violence can also desensitize individuals, reducing their emotional response to aggression and increasing their likelihood of engaging in violent behavior (6).

The analysis reveals that the interplay of psychological motivations is central to understanding criminal behavior. Cognitive distortions, emotional factors, and childhood traumas are significant contributors to the risk of criminal activity. Individuals who have difficulty managing their emotions are particularly prone to impulsive violence.

2) Socio-Economic Pressure:

Economic factors significantly influence crime rates, with poverty, unemployment, and inequality often identified as key contributors. These conditions can create environments where crime thrives and limit chances for people to improve their economic situation. Poverty can make people feel desperate and hopeless, pushing them to commit crimes to survive. Studies show a link between high poverty rates and crimes such as theft and drug offenses. Economic inequality, or the gap between the rich and the poor, can also lead to crime. When some people have much more than others, it can create feelings of injustice and anger. This may cause some individuals to commit crimes as a form of protest or rebellion. Furthermore, inequality can weaken community ties and trust, which can increase crime rates. Research suggests that areas with more income inequality often have higher crime rates than those with fairer wealth distribution.

The lack of legitimate opportunities can lead individuals to seek alternative, though illegal, means of obtaining resources (7). People living in impoverished environments often face limited access to education, recreational activities, and employment opportunities, increasing their likelihood of engaging in criminal activities (2). Additionally, living in neighborhoods with high crime rates, violence, and social disorganization increases exposure to criminal influences and the risk of engaging in delinquent behaviors. Therefore, it is essential to provide access to constructive opportunities (2).

3) Social And Cultural Influences:

Social and cultural elements significantly influence a person's attitudes, beliefs, and actions. Different societies have unique approaches to dealing with issues such as violence and exploitation. In certain cultures, practices like honor-based violence and revenge can be socially acceptable to uphold family's reputation, leading individual toward criminal activities. Neighborhoods and communities can also influence criminal conduct as factors like peer pressure, gang culture, and media portrayals can normalize crime, particularly for adolescents, who are often heavily swayed by their peers and social circles. Social learning and peer dynamics can lead youth involved with troubled kids to adopt criminal behavior (2).

Gang culture can strengthen these behaviors by offering a sense of belonging, identity, and status to individuals who might not find these elsewhere. Gangs typically establish their codes and norms, which often clash with societal laws and values. The pressure to fit in with these standards can push individuals into criminal activities, even if they wouldn't normally consider such actions. Additionally, juvenile delinquency is largely influenced by the characteristics of the offender's personality, while age impacts their level of development regarding forces, intelligence, drives, and even the capability to commit various crimes (8). A notable example is the emergence of urban youth gangs that attract teenagers with the allure of power and respect, frequently resulting in violent offenses.

Media portrayals of crime can significantly affect people's attitudes and actions. Regular exposure to violent content, including films, TV shows, and video games, can make people less sensitive to violence and heighten the likelihood of aggressive behavior. Additionally, when criminals are depicted as cool or powerful in the media, it can normalize and even glamorize criminal actions, particularly for younger audiences. The media contributes to the development of a criminal youth subculture (8). It's important to

understand that the connection between media exposure and criminal behavior is complex. Other factors, like personal traits and social surroundings, also play a significant role.

Role of personality traits and disorders in criminal actions:
Many factors influence criminal behavior, but personality traits and disorders are often overlooked. Some people may be more impulsive, narcissistic, or antisocial, which can lead to criminal actions (9). These traits significantly affect behavior, including the likelihood of committing crimes. While certain traits and disorders can increase the chances of illegal behavior, criminal activity is complex and tied to various social and psychological factors. Thus, you cannot predict criminal behavior based solely on one trait. However, some traits and disorders are associated with a higher risk of criminal activity (2). They are:

1) Psychopathy and Antisocial Personality Disorder-

Psychopathy and Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD) [5]involves a pattern of ignoring other people's rights, showing lack of empathy, and being deceitful. People with these conditions often act impulsively and break the law. To assess psychopathy, professionals use the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R)[6], which looks for traits like coldness and a lack of remorse. ASPD is a recognized diagnosis in the DSM-5[7], while psychopathy is not, though many with ASPD also have psychopathic traits (10). Studies show that psychopathy is a strong indicator of re-offending (3).

2) Narcissism-
Narcissism is defined by an exaggerated sense of self-importance, a strong need for admiration, and lack of empathy. Individuals with narcissistic traits may engage in criminal behavior to maintain their self-image or seek revenge against those they believe have wronged them. Their sense of entitlement and disregard for others can lead to manipulation for personal gain. While not al narcissists commit crimes, these traits can increase the likelihood of such behavior. Furthermore, narcissistic traits resemble those of histrionic personality disorders than antisocial personality disorders (11).

3) Impulsivity-
Impulsivity, the tendency to act without thinking, is a significant risk factor for criminal behavior. Impulsive individuals are more likely to engage in risky activities, make poor decisions, and respond aggressively to perceived threats or provocations. Factors such as substance abuse, stress, and lack of sleep can worsen impulsivity. Research has consistently shown a connection between impulsivity and a wide range of criminal of behaviors, including violence, theft, and drug offenses. For example, gamblers who engage in illegal activities are more likely to report an increased lack of premeditation (5).

4) Borderline Personality Disorder-

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) [8]leads to instability in mood, relationships, self- image, and behavior. People with BPD often have intense emotions, impulsive behaviors, and difficulty regulating their feelings, which can heighten the risk of criminal behavior, especially during conflicts or rejections. While not all individuals with BPD engage in crime, the disorder's traits can contribute to such actions. A study found that having a personality disorder did not significantly impact treatment response and retention (12).

Rationalization and justification mechanisms used by offenders:
Offenders often use specific techniques to justify their criminal behaviour, reduce feelings of guilt, and maintain a positive self-image. These techniques help them avoid taking responsibility for their actions.

Sykes and Matza's neutralization theory (13) describes several key techniques:
- Denial of responsibility- Offenders claim their actions were caused by external factors. They might say they had no choice, were following orders, or were in the wrong at the wrong time. This helps them avoid guilt.
- Denial of injury- Offenders downplay the harm caused by their actions. They may argue that the victim wasn't seriously hurt or that the crime wasn't that bad. This makes them less guilty.
- Denial of the victim- Offenders blame the victims for their suffering. They might say that the victim provoked the crime or deserved it in some way. This allows them to avoid responsibility for their actions.
- Condemnation of the condemners- Offenders shift the focus to those who criticize them, claiming that critics are hypocrites or biased.
- Appeal to higher loyalties- Offenders justify their actions by claiming they are protecting a greater cause, like family, friends, or community.

Albert Bandura's moral disengagement theory (14) explains how people can separate their actions from their moral beliefs, allowing them to act harmfully without feeling guilty. The main mechanisms include:

- **Moral justification-** Offenders may frame their harmful actions as necessary for the greater good, making them seem more acceptable.
- **Euphemistic labelling-** Offenders use softer or less direct language to describe their actions, making them seem less serious.
- **Advantageous comparison-** By comparing their actions to worse behaviours, offenders make their actions seem less severe.
- **Displacement of responsibility-** Offenders may pass the blame onto others, like authorities or group leaders, to avoid taking personal responsibility.
- **Diffusion of responsibility-** When responsibility is shared among a group, individuals may feel less guilty about their actions.
- **Disregarding or distortion of consequences-** Offenders may ignore or minimize the negative effects of their actions, allowing them to justify what they did.
- **Dehumanization-** Offenders might view victims as less human, making it easier to justify harming them.
- **Attribution of blame-** Offenders blame their victims for their victimization, suggesting they brought harm upon themselves, which helps absolve the offender of guilt.

Planning vs. Impulsivity in crimes:
Criminal acts can come in various forms, ranging from meticulously planned and premeditated offenses to spontaneous acts driven by immediate emotional impulses. Understanding the difference between these two types of crime is essential for creating effective prevention strategies and intervention programs.

1) Premeditated Crimes:

Premeditated crimes are characterized by careful planning and intention, revealing a higher level of thought and a strategic approach to criminal behaviour. These offenses are often carried out with a specific, pre-established goal, which may include financial gain, revenge against an individual or group, or a quest for power and dominance. Individuals who commit these crimes typically engage in extensive consideration of their actions. They analyse the potential risks and rewards, evaluate their options, and take deliberate measures to avoid the chances of being caught. Because these crimes can be complex, they often involve multiple individuals collaborating to execute their plans. Additionally, the motivations driving these offenders can be influenced by personal histories, psychological factors, or situational triggers that lead them to commit such acts (15).

2) Crimes Of Passion And Opportunity:

On the other hand, crimes of passion and opportunity are typically characterized by their impulsive nature and lack of foresight. These offenses usually happen in the heat of the moment when an individual responds to intense emotional states such as anger, jealousy, or fear (16). When such feelings dominate, offenders may act without fully considering the consequences of their actions, leading to incidents that are emotionally charged rather than premeditated.

Crimes of passion often involve violent encounters, where the offender is provoked by strong emotions and reacts in a way that is aggressive or harmful to others. While crimes of opportunity usually revolve around property offenses such as theft, where the offender takes advantage of a sudden opportunity, perhaps motivated by a desire for material gain or desperation.

Furthermore, the environment for these crimes, particularly for prison officers, can significantly heighten the intensity and tension in their daily responsibilities. These professionals regularly interact with inmates prone to criminal behaviour, facing various confrontations. This dynamic, coupled with the manipulative tendencies of some offenders, creates a challenging workplace environment that can contribute to stress and the need for constant vigilance among the prison staff (17).

In conclusion, the wide range of criminal acts highlights the need for tailored approaches in the criminal justice system, recognizing that motivations and circumstances can differ greatly for each type of crime.

V CASE STUDIES

Patterns can be found by examining terrorists or serial killers. Many have radical beliefs, mental health issues, or a difficult upbringing. They frequently use political motivations, revenge, or a sense of greater purpose as justifications. These instances demonstrate the complex nature of mental states and motivations.

Theodore Robert Bundy, also known as Ted Bundy, was one of the most notorious and prolific American serial killers, who demonstrated psychopathic traits and manipulative tendencies (18). His terror was concealed by his attractiveness. Additionally, he displayed cognitive distortions that enabled him to justify his actions. The case of Jeffery Dahmer revealed how his behavior was influenced by developmental problems and childhood trauma. Both cases reflect how severe crimes can result from underlying psychological issues. Stockholm syndrome, in which hostages form emotional relationships with their captors, is a common occurrence during hostage crises. These case studies illustrate how environmental factors and emotional attachment influence criminal behavior. (19)

VI RECOMMENDATIONS

This research recommends several actions for improving policy and practice in preventing crime and supporting rehabilitation:

(a) **Invest in Economic Programs-** Support programs that reduce economic inequality and create job opportunities. This investment can help those in need and lower crime rates.

(b) **Implement Early Intervention:** Start early intervention programs to help at-risk individuals recognize and manage harmful thoughts and emotions. These programs should offer support similar to criminal profiling methods.

(c) **Promote Positive Social Norms:** Encourage healthy social norms and limit exposure to violence in media. This can help change attitudes and behaviors in communities.

(d) **Provide Mental Health Services:** Offer mental health support to offenders with personality disorders. This care is crucial for their recovery and integration into society.

(e) **Prioritize Rehabilitation:** Shift the focus from solely punishing offenders to rehabilitating them. This approach can lower the number of repeat offenses.

(f) **Build Resilience and Social Skills:** Use programs that strengthen resilience and social skills. These programs can help individuals resist negative peer pressure.

(g) **Develop Evidence-Based Strategies:** Create crime prevention strategies based on research. These strategies should tackle the real causes of crime in society.

(h) **Ensure Safety for Convicts:** Provide management, support, and educational opportunities to ensure the safety of convicts. This help is important for their successful return to society (20).

VII CONCLUSION

This study offers a comprehensive analysis of the psychology behind criminal behavior, exploring the motivations and justifications that drive individuals to commit crimes. It investigates psychological triggers, socio-economic factors such as poverty and education, and cultural influences that shape societal attitudes towards crime.

This study also considers personality disorders that may predispose individuals to criminality and the psychological mechanisms that people use to rationalize their actions. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of planning in criminal activities, distinguishing between premeditated and impulsive offenses. Overall, the study underscores the complex interplay of various factors that contribute to criminal behavior.

REFERENCES

[1]   Garmyshev Karoslav, Koryagina Svetlana, Lavygina Irina. Moral and Psychological characteristics of criminals personality. 2018.

[2]   Shaibu, Abdul-Salam. Personality Traits That Trigger Criminal Behavior. 2024.

[3]   Sergio, Canavero. Criminal minds: neuromodulation of the psychopathic brain. 2014, Vol. 8.

[4]   Vladimirovna, Starosel'tseva Olga. Criminal activity of persons accused of particularly serious crimes in the context of violations of the motivational and target levels of regulation of activity. 2020.

[5]   Mestre-Bach Gemma, Steward Trevor, Granero Roser and 13 more. Gambling and Impulsivity Traits: A Recipe for Criminal Behavior? 2018, Vol. 9.

[6]   Read, C. Stanford. Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry, Society and the Criminal. 1923, pp. 35-39.

[7]   Ekpenyong, Nkereuwem Stephen (Ph.D), Yong A. Nkpha. IOSR Journal of VLSI and Signal Processing (IOSR-JVSP), Confusing Violent People with Violent Places: An Investigation of Urban Change and Criminality in Port Harcourt. 6, 2013, Vol. 3.

[8]   Nesterov, Artyom Y. Bulletin Of Nationalacademy Of Sciences Of The Republic Of Kazakhstan, Essence and Features of the Criminal Activity of the Marginal Adolescent: Modern Condition and Trends. 2020, Vol. 5, Pp. 103-116.

[9]   Mckee, J. A. Criminal Behavior. [Online] 2023. https://docmckee.com/cj/docs- criminal-justice-glossary/criminal-behavior-definition/.

[10]   Dany, Paul Baby, MD. What's the Difference Between a Psychopath and a Sociopath? [Online] 2023. https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/psychopath- sociopath-differences.

[11]   Abdalla-Filho, Elias and Völlm, Birgit. Does every psychopath have an antisocial personality disorder? 2020.

[12]   Hussain, M. Ishrat and Caravalho, Andre F. The importance of assessing personality traits and disorders in clinical trials of major depressive disorder. 2020.

[13]   Sykes and Matza. Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency. 1957.

[14]   Bandura, Albert . "Moral Disengagement: How People Do Harm and Live with Themselves" and "Moral Disengagement in the Perpetration of Inhumanities". 1991; 1999.

[15]   Grushin F.V., Peremolotova L.Yu. and Zhilko I.A. Russian Journal of Criminology, The concept of research into the formation of destructive personality traits of a convicted person. 2020, Vol. 14, pp. 120-127.

[16]   III, Michael Alarid. How Arizona Courts Consider Background, Motive and Circumstances in Violent Crime Sentencing. [Online] https://www.alariddefense.com/blog/arizona-courts-consider-background-motive-and- circumstances-in-violent-crime-sentencing.

[17]   Muzychuk T.L., Kulakova S.V. and Spasennikov B.A. Russian Journal of Criminology, Prevention of illegal actions by employees of the penitentiary system working with convicts held in locked premises. 2019, Vol. 13, pp. 585-594.

[18] A Shocking Serial Killer: Ted Bundy. [Online] https://www.cram.com/essay/A- Shocking-Serial-Killer-Ted-Bundy/5F9EC0E4562C2CE9 .

[19] Reddy, K. Jayasankara. International Cases in Forensic Psychology: Inside the Criminal Mind. 2025.

[20] Smirnov, Alexander. Victimological Safety of Persons Sentenced to Imprisonment: Conceptual Aspects. 2020.

[21] A mental health condition characterized by a long-term pattern of disregard for others, often violating their rights, and lacking remorse for their actions.

[22] A 20-item scale used to assess psychopathy in individuals, particularly in forensic and clinical settings.

[23] The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Illnesses, a handbook used by healthcare professionals as authoritative guide to the diagnosis of mental disorders.

[24] A mental health condition characterized by significant instability in mood, self-image, and interpersonal relationships.

Transitioning Identities: Livelihood and Socio-Economic Changes among the Birhor Tribes of Hazaribagh District of Jharkhand

Ranjeet Kumar
Asst. Prof., Dept. of Geography, AISECT University, Hazaribagh (Jharkhand) India.

ABSTRACT

The word 'Birhor' literally imply Man of Jungle i.e. the community residing in Jungle/Forest. In the earlier decade of 20th century S.L Roy conducted field work among Birhor Community of Chhotanagpur Plateau and wrote a monograph on their life and culture. During that period, this community literally used to live in dense jungle and their settlement were knowns as Tanda which temporary in nature made up of tree leaves and branches. Their livelihood was totally based on forest-based products. Traditionally Birhor were hunting and Food Gathering community. However, over period of century, things changed. Though perceived identity about Birhor more or less remained same among mainstream society. But in reality, the so called 'Men of Jungle' are no more Jungle Men. Their livelihood dependency on forest have remarkably been changed. Their Primary identity as hunter and food Gathering had had been shifted. This paper explores the profound socio-economic transitions and livelihood shifts experienced by the Birhor community in recent periods with a specific focus on Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand which contains substantial portion of this marginal Population, drawing on available sources and personal interview conducted among Birhor community in the region.

Key words: Birhor, Livelihood, Modernity, Economic Shift, Sustainability

I INTRODUCTION

The Birhor, one of India's Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), have traditionally existed as skilled forest-dwellers and nomads across the Chhotanagpur plateau (Roy, 1925a; Ghosh & Chatterjee, 2024). With a population of just over 10,000 as per the 2011 Census, their culture and livelihood have long revolved around an intimate relationship with the forest, animist beliefs, and specialized rope-making (Roy, 1925b; Pankaj, 2008).

In recent decades, however, the onslaught of modernity through environmental change, state intervention, and socio-economic integration has brought rapid transformation—both positive and negative—to Birhor economic practices, culture, and social structure (Bose, 2016; Oraon, 2024a).

The single greatest disruptor of Birhor livelihood has been loss of forest cover due to mining, industrial expansion, and cash-crop agriculture (Ghosh & Chatterjee, 2024; Bose, 2016) and also restriction on forest usage due to imposition of different restrictive environmental laws. Deforestation reduces wild animals and plant diversity, undermining hunting, gathering, and rope- making—critical elements of Birhor sustenance and culture (Pankaj, 2008). Where once the Birhor could follow resources, shrinking forests and government land restrictions have curbed nomadism and led to new forms of marginalization (Oraon, 2024a).

Further urban economic forces and the "pull" of cities have drawn many Birhor, especially youth, into wage labor (Pankaj, 2008; Bose, 2016). This shift has largely resulted into near collapse or commodification of forest-based livelihoods. Though push pull factor drawn these vulnerable communities into urban work system but they have joined at lowest level of capitalist system where exploitation persist heavily. (Pankaj, 2008; Oraon, 2024a). Market integration also introduces new consumption patterns and value systems, challenging older identities and priorities (Bose, 2016). This paper intends to highlight how the different process of modernization have changed impacted economy and livelihood of marginal and vulnerable Birhor community in North Chhotanagpur region of Jharkhand which has not been researched till now.

II DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY

Fieldwork for the present study was undertaken in the year 2025 across different Birhor settlements of Hazaribagh district, Jharkhand. In order to capture the diversity of experiences within the community, the sites were carefully selected to represent both settlements located close to urban centres as well as those situated in remote areas near forests (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Settlements Where Survey Have Been Done

Village	Block	Distance from Urban Centre	Male Respondents	Female Respondents	Total Respondents
Demotarn	Sadar	Within 10 km	15	7	22
Nagri	Churchu	Far	5	10	15
Sijua	Ichak	Within 10 km	7	3	10
Kandsar	Katkamsandi	Far	5	15	20
Kewal	Barhi	Far	9	16	25

Data collection was carried out using a semi-structured questionnaire that allowed flexibility in responses and ensured that both factual information and personal experiences could be recorded. In addition to this, two Focus Group Discussions were conducted, one at Demotarn and another at Nagri, in order to capture group perspectives and shared insights from community members.

The field team consisted of two facilitators and one investigator. Notably, one of the facilitators was himself a member of the Birhor community and well-versed in the Birhori language, which played a crucial role in building trust with the participants and ensuring effective communication during the discussions. Throughout the survey process, the dignity, cultural identity, and autonomy of the Birhor people were fully respected, and the research was conducted in strict adherence to ethical guidelines for field studies.

Once collected, the data was systematically processed and analysed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were employed to examine numerical patterns, while content analysis and thematic analysis were applied to interpret narratives, opinions, and experiences shared by the respondents. Together, these methods helped provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the Birhor community across different settlement contexts.

III DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

Due to different external forces of change such as Restrictive forest policy and increasing influence of capitalism, Birhor's Nomadic way of living has been changed as community settled in the out skirts of forest. Further their isolationist nature had changed over period of time. This change in nature from Nomadic way of living to settled life and their enhanced interaction with rest of world have also changed their economic and livelihood pattern also. From survey of different settlement of Birhor Community, Certain picture can be concluded in terms of their economic activities. From Graph it can be analyzed that their Primary work for which they were known for has become secondary. Now their primary occupation is totally oriented towards market-based economy (Fig 1.1).
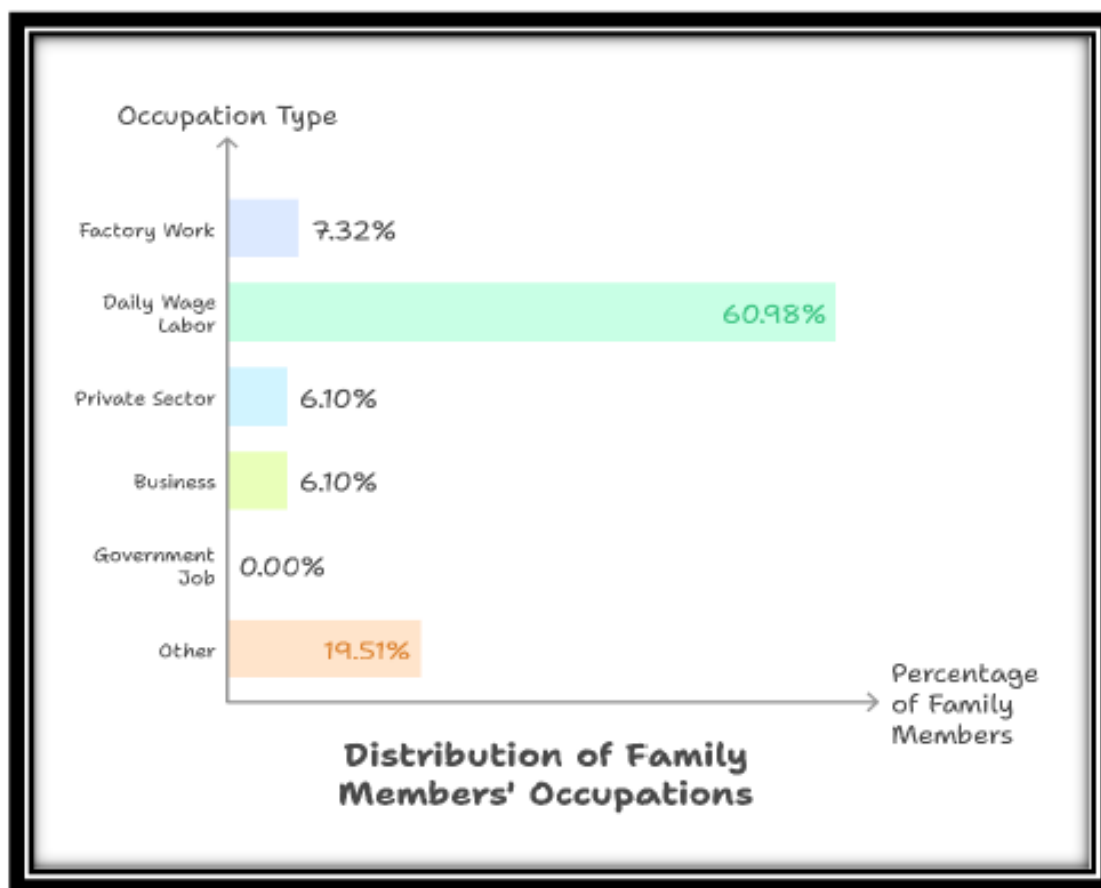
Fig 1.2: Changing Birhor Source of Livelihood

- Reduced Hunting and Gathering: As per the survey, Birhor Youth and older people do hunting and foraging activity on weakened or on any occasion. Their visit to forest has become irregular and uncertain due to forest degradation and prohibitory forest laws. They capture wild animals and birds, like Monkey, Deer, hares, Mouse, Parrots and sell them in local Markets which held on weekly basis.

- Rope-Making Challenges: Rope Making activity which was main occupation of Birhor women still prevails. However earlier ingredients to make Rope were Forest based Creepers and lianas collected by Birhor Male and Female during regular visit of Jungle are rarely available now a days. As a result, Since Few Decades, the natural ingredients by which ropes were made had been replaced with artificial resins obtained from sacs of cement packet. The reason for this replacement is easy accessibility of cement sacs in local market at cheaper price. Majority of Birhor people work as Daily wage laborer at Construction, Brick Kilns, Road construction sites and also in other lands as farm labour. There are certain number of youths who are engaged in operating tractors of other mainstream people for livelihood. Further 8-10% people engaged in Factory where sorting and packaging activity takes place.

- Migration for Work: Challenges in traditional livelihoods have led to seasonal or longer- term migration to other cities and places, sometimes for 2-5 months a year, with entire families moving to work in industries like brick kilns. It has also been observed that many Birhor male people get shift to their wife home and start living and working as labourer there.

- Other Income Sources: There are also certain minor group who are involved in selling Minor Forest produce such as Honey, Mahua, tendu leaves.

- In every Birhor settlement, there is an 'Baidya'/Ojha who has good knowledge about natural herbs which they collect from Forest. These 'Baidya' sells these herbs as medicine to cure minor ailments such as Fever, Joint pains, cough, etc.

- Apart from these, child labour is quite prevalent in this marginalised community. After attaining Primary education male children quit study as they see their parents deplorable economic condition, and start working as cleaner in hotels & restaurants. Further female Child are seen along working their mothers in Brick kilns and construction sites.

- Changing Consumption Behaviour: Previously their dependency over forest were much more. Now a day their most of needs are catered through Local daily and weekly market. Apart from these due increasing internet penetrations through mobile phone, they have learnt to purchase goods through digital marketing.

- Gender Roles in Changing Economy: While men traditionally focused on hunting, women were primarily involved in gathering. In the changing economy, women continue to collect forest products and firewood, and both participate in honey collection and some hunting activities. Women are also increasingly engaged in new income-generating activities through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and as agricultural labourer during sowing season.

Fig. 1.2: Changing economic Activities among Birhor Community

IV CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is quite evident that Birhor people are in deplorable state. In this era of Capital Based economy, Birhor community are capital less either in terms of land or Finance. Since they don't have any capital as security, Bank don't give loan to conduct any economic activity. Further they are land less and skill less, as such they are bound to do menial work. Wherever they work, they are under paid. As such economic exploitation persist as they don't have capacity to bargain. Whenever any official a researcher like us visit to these settlements, they look them as messiah with hope that these people certainly change their economic condition.

Despite several visits of D.C level Official ranks officer, their scion- economic level remained deplorable. They are quite energetic to work; however, they need sufficient skill, finance and guidance to get empowered.

REFERENCES

[1] Bose (Majumdar), R. (2016). Changing Lives of Birhors in Purulia: A Socio-economic Observation in Twenty-first Century. *Contemporary Voice of Dalit*, 8(2), 206–219.

[2] Ghosh, D., & Chatterjee, D. (2024). Birhor Society and Culture: A Study on Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of Jharkhand, India. *International Journal of Research and Review*, 11(6), 191–201.

[3] Gautam, A. (2016). The Hinduization of Tribals of Jharkhand: An Outline since Beginning. *Anthropology*, 4, 159.

[4]   Manna, S., Sarkar, R., & Ghosh, A. (2013). Education and Patterns of Marriage System: A Micro Study on the Birhors in Hazaribag District, Jharkhand. *International Journal of Social Science*, 2(2), 109–118.

[5]   Modernity's Impact on the Socio-Cultural Profile of the Birhor Tribe of Jharkhand. (n.d.). [Article]. Murmu, S. C. (2020). Religious Transformation of the Birhor Tribe: A Sociological Study. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Studies*.

[6]   Oraon, S. (2024a). A study of Socio-economic Development of the Birhor Tribal Communities in Bilaspur District. [Unpublished thesis].

[7]   Oraon, S. (2024b). A Study of Cultural Practice of Birhor Tribes with special reference to Chhattisgarh. *Quest Journals Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 12(4), 58–65.

[8]   Pankaj, R. (2008). The Changing Economy of the Birhor of Jharkhand. *Indian Anthropologist*, 38(2), 75–82.

[9]   Panna, A., & Munda, A. (n.d.). Resilience and Transformation: The Story of Birhor Settlements in Jharkhand. [PDF Report].

[10] Roy, S. C. (1925a). The Birhors: A Little-Known Jungle Tribe of Chota-Nagpur. *American Journal of Sociology*, 31(3), 402–403.

[11] Roy, S. C. (1925b). The Birhors a Little-known Jungle Tribe of Chota Nagpur. *Nature*, 116, 421–422.

[12] Sahu, C. (1995). Food and Health Condition of the Birhor: A Vanishing tribe of Bihar. Indian Anthropologist, 25(2), 13–24.

The Role of Social Media and Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

Rohit Kumar[1], Suraj Kumar[2]
[1]Associate Professor, IIMT Meerut, (U.P) India.
[2]Lecturer Government Polytechnic, DOS

ABSTRACT

Prior to and throughout the pandemic, social media like Face book and Twitter have become strong online networks for learning and networking among populations. In this article, the authors discussed using social media with a focus on Twitter to get students involved in taking online courses in high school. Similar to all technology, Social Security creates increasingly sophisticated and regrettable problems. Students are not keen to employ social media, particularly within the classroom, and sadly this reluctance has intensified further. Due to these achievements, social media have emerged as a polarizing device in education but an essential component of most individuals' lives both socially and at work Genetic engineering (Gen AI) devices such as Chat GPT, Lensa AI, Canva The emergence and success of Magic Write usher in new pitfalls and opportunities. Can media and AI tools be salvaged in these uncertain times? By way of a mix of literature review and qualitative auto ethnographic research, the authors take a step back into a critical discourse of (1) planned use of social media, (2) pitfalls, what we have learned from our social media in communication, and what we have learned from our online courses. And social media problems and (3) artificial intelligence impact analysis. Following the "Hope" theme, the authors authored these chapters in educational technology with the inquiry, "Where do we come from?" It responds to the inquiry and acts as a guidebook. The authors are pre-service teachers and interns at Southwestern University and are curious about knowing more about education, design, and learning technology. Their voices represent teachers, faculty and Student.

Keywords: Chat GPT; social media platforms; on Twitter; artificial intelligence; critical conversations; Online education.

I INTRODUCTION

For good or ill, the educational technology environment has shifted radically in the early 2020s with various landmark events unfolding. These are the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdown, which have affected education delivery and experience enormously; evolution in the social media landscape; and the release of the Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (Chat GPT) based on generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI). One of the key ways in which it is conducted is through asking critical questions and engaging in critical discussions regarding the ways in which individuals use the internet. This can range from extremely contentious topics regarding mental, physical, and digital health and safety to the effects of power provision and involvement in education, while it's too early yet to know how the epidemic will impact all, the concerning but promising findings do appear to have stabilized somewhat. It Education is under stressful conditions as a result of the pandemic effect, which has brought about disruption, failure and disengagement among the students [1,2,3], together with extreme levels of unpredictability and variability manifested through new and current technologies [3In spite of these challenges, there is optimism because human beings are the next best thing to our students and to one another We will do our best to capture.

The significant activities of the early 1920s, good and bad, radically altered the terrain of educational technology. These are the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lock-down, and its effects on experiential training, disruption of social media, and the spread of artificial intelligence (Gen AI) software like the Chat Generative Pre-Training Transformer (Chat GPT). From the mental, physical and digital health/safety concerns of internet use, there are many serious questions and debates about the harms and consequences of energy and commitment to teaching and learning of the son of the. It is too soon to know the impact of the pandemic on higher education; But then things about hope seem to stop altogether. The time has come for a reason The dilemma, the impossibility and inhumanity of instruction owing to the pandemic [1,2], and the uncertainty and lack of trust that arises in present and new technology [3] But we hope because we are human beings and we will do our best to make the next step in the best possible way for our students and each other.

In this paper, we map our paths as teachers and auto ethnographers in the co-production of love, care, and hope learning [4-7].

We are sharing this learning experience with each other and with students. Anticipating new challenges and evolving nature of technology and social media, over the years, we have transformed our teaching method from a tool-based method to a student-focused and personalized approach to online education. It shows in our movement from viewing social networks like Twitter as tools of technology and learning platforms to their ability to learn and their ability to be applied, like courses aimed at uniting communities and building connection it has been done.

II APPROACHES AND SITUATION

The two of us who wrote this text enjoy writing together because of our compatible experiences in providing the most rewarding experiences for our college students, especially in online learning environments. We teach basic online textbooks on educational age and STEM programs in quality education. We teach any graduates (especially conservation professors) and college grads. Our college undergraduates include professors, schools, and others willing to identify themselves as educators or instructional programs. We always primarily meet via net conferencing using Zoom but additionally in character as much as we can. We use our archived online courses to connect in critical conversations, where we share our experiences and explore what works and what doesn't from a shared behavioral perspective and comparative experiences in. We look through modern books and engage in our own networks on LinkedIn, fb, X (formerly known as Twitter), Tik Tok, and share with everyone different what we meet and do well. We started to transcribe our conversations onto the net conferencing tool Zoom, because this is a text that acts as a kind of context and chain of information.

In our work with other colleagues, we realized that the best way to describe our research picture is from qualitative social engineering research and using collaborative auto ethnography (CAE) strategies therefore, its own and using the facts of his own life Understand social issues" [9]. CAE "preserves the specific self-reflective abilities associated with autobiographical information, ethno cultural interpretation, and a wide range of factors associated with solidarity." [9] This approach "requires the hegemony of objectivity in situations or the artificial distance of one from one's research subjects" [9], as well as some of the blessings of CAE and "qualitative date collaboration including power sharing, . mutual recognition, and effectiveness in communication". while distanced 2 people, our CAE approach is duo ethnography: "a whole pattern of language between researchers," as described by Chang et al. [9] as a "Critical Conversation," as noted in this article. In addition to our ongoing, asynchronous conversations (e.g., e-mail, Google doctors, and social media messages), and simultaneous

conversations (e.g., zoom, telephone, and in-person meetings), we believe in the general principles of ethnic acceptance, including the importance of considering flexibility and power differentials within the counselor to establish such a collaborative baseline simply the "ad hoc additional need to note position" [9]. As we expand the manuscript, we simultaneously draw and sequence, using Zoom and Google doctors to think, write and rewrite to communicate. It is each a challenging but particularly rewarding process, with non-public outcomes that can go beyond writing and are important for our own curriculum design and college students, as we navigate the digital landscape of protein, it is not obvious, and it is dangerous.

For years, part of our ongoing rhetoric and research has focused on using social media, especially Twitter, to increase interaction and presence and, therefore, engagement, community development and knowledge of our online catalog. We currently teach online with the course management product Canvas, and the net meeting tool Zoom. Although using Twitter has been one of our main lessons, we have also used facebook, TikTok and Instagram. In 2022, however, Twitter was sold, renamed X, and changed dramatically each time, making it difficult to ask college students and, for the first time in years, writers in the fall of one of them no longer attended his online course of social media Resources: Since we were considering these problems and this study in early 2023, Gen AI technology enters the virtual panorama. These tools, especially Chat GPT, are causing a lot of disruption in education and becoming part of our conversation. Consequently, the motivation for this look is to recognize the overarching question "can we just go from here". As it relates to the use of social media and artificial intelligence among our counselors and our college students.

III DISCUSSION WITH RECENTLY PUBLISHED TEXT

The request for this special issue served as an appropriate and timely stimulus to an important discussion about the changes and developments in social media and the introduction of new Gen AI tools and their implications for teaching and learning in in our own online high schools. During our critical discussion, we discussed the areas of focus in this article, including what we learned about the purposeful use of social media, challenges and concerns with social media tools in the 19th century, and its implications in artificial intelligence We also dipped into current scholarly gray literature**.**

(a) Intentional Social Media Use:
Although social media was not intended to be used in education, its features—social networking and Web 2.0 applications—have made it a valuable tool [10 Twitter is a micro blogging tool that supports professional [11] and personal learning [12], communities for students, and. includes communication, accidental (informal) learning [13], and hashtags have an interesting and systematic element Social media enhance communication for specific communities and are widely discussed in professional and/or individual learning of the development of networks (PLNs) [14, 15], with individual -Expands opportunities for group learning Professional education communities have developed various networks, networks and capabilities [16], and adopt Black Twitter [17] importantly the seriousness of the a "powerful example of black digital knowledge" and "one of the largest gatherings of black internet users to date" (para. 3); Some ask, "What will happen to Black Twitter?" (Section 2).

Research on social media and education has shown that the use of wikis [18], Twitter [19,20], and/or Facebook [21] can lead to enhanced and better learning outcomes in secondary and higher education in [22]. In our recent survey, we examined the use of social media and Twitter in our online courses. In one study, we found that students "developed academic proficiency in formal learning activities using Twitter to support intellectual and social presence beyond academic requirements, and (1) evidence of

it." that there are intellectual, social, and learning experiences for students who use Twitter to complete coursework i.e. for their formal learning for their informal education that is" [8]. We found in the research that followed the importance of engaging students in the following activities: (1) learning objects a sharing, (2) creative learning practice, (3) considering having fun, and (4) collaboration and teamwork This validated the following points for us: (1) the importance of planning a based on students, (2). technical capabilities and the appropriate tools for use and retrieval, and (3) community use of communication channel models and community monitoring systems" [23]. Using Twitter this successful implementation prompted us to rewrite our courses, emphasizing student engagement as a major concern during and after the pandemic as challenges associated with online learning increased but in 2022 we started sharing our concerns about the use of social media and our learning, as well as our students.

(b)   Social Media's Difficulties and Unsettling State:
Social Media Challenges and Violent Status Until recently, the integration of social media in education seemed to have more advantages than disadvantages [24, 25], which many educators—including us—have acknowledged a way to promote engaged learning Of course, there are drawbacks to the use of social media in the classroom. Distractions in learning , students feeling a loss of control , the negative effects of multitasking, and decreased attention to learning, performance and retention have been described all described as challenges Students who feel uncomfortable using social media also expressed concerns about social media exposure and cyberbullying , have also expressed concerns about security and privacy issues such as the availability of information to the public and the emergence of inaccurate and misleading information and an emergence of inaccurate and misleading information.

Sundar and Radha looked at the safety aspects of young people using the internet and social media. They found that social networks collect user information remotely in order to sell that data to advertisers and customize services. These uses add to the creation of "big data" and increase privacy and commodity concerns about personal information. The Obama White House Office of Science and Technology has recognized big data as a top priority and concern from 2014 to 2016. In addition, the use of algorithmic and automated processes in social media has raised questions about biases and irreparable discrimination, which can be attributed to news sources and scholarly writings. has been reinforced. Scholars have explored the issue of bias in machine learning. Practitioners argue that these technologies are not objective, but rather standardized. Moreover, their constructions can produce "ethnic, gendered, and colonial orders" [37] (pp. 2123–2124). These problems have intensified in recent years, especially due to major events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Twitter sale, and the development of Gen AI tools Studies felt the need to go with each other and their disciples. As people and teachers.

(c)   The Results of Artificial Intelligence:
Artificial intelligence has been the object of educational research for over 20 years. It is only in the most recent years (2022–2023) that AI tools, specifically generative AI, have become common and started impacting online learning practices Examples of such tools include Chat GPT, DALL-E, Mid Journey, Bard, Bing Conversations, Lensa AI, Canva Magic Show [3,]. When Open AI released Chat GPT to the public in the fall of 2022, it estimated that it would have "100 million monthly active users.".

It has been referred to as the "fastest growing consumer service in history, with 'users in January 2023'". Reading up on initial research into Chat GPT, Waters and Lemansky identified that "negative sentiment is high. "Some time-saving teaching features of Chat GPT are disseminated by Sok Heng. Some of these include brainstorming, assisting teachers with learning research, providing virtual learning, and program writing. Issues were identified in the utilization of Chat GPT, particularly academic integrity. Some issues include biased academic research, invented or inaccurate information, and excessive usage of

artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as AI to produce outlines or brainstorming sessions can If location is proximate development works to offset student learning is accomplished with similarly powerful teaching and learning capabilities. Applied properly, these new Gen AI tools.

Even if most of the conversation is led by Chat GPT, the effect of Gen AI on educational procedures is still in its beginning stages. Discussions vary from language of opportunity, efficient scheduling, positive change, and the power to transform education [57–59] to language of challenge and concern These concerns are about how research will impact and issues it still has there are primarily about theft and fraud [58], but they also speak of susceptibilities to bias, misinformation, and cybersecurity and privacy as well Fullan, Azorin, and Harris refer to means, "Assessing the true impact of this technology. "Explicit pedagogical practices can "enable educators to weather and even flourish in the fast-evolving AI era," according to Mills, Bali, and Eaton's second book, "How Do We Respond to Generative AI in Education.";(16) Shared with one of us on LinkedIn." was and starts answering the aforementioned questions by benefiting open teaching practices, two of which were particularly applicable to this research: collaboration with students in exchanging ideas and involvement in interdisciplinary and interdisciplinary online communities results; it is not a fantasy.

IV CHAT GPT MODELING AND FUNCTIONAL EXPOSURE

I did an example and explanation this year of using Chat GPT in class. As the Appendix A: We all know we all agree that, according to Class AI and standards, it is essential to be transparent and open regarding Gen AI tool usage and provide credit for wherever we need to borrow, particularly to Chat GPT. We have a usage specification in this article, and now quotes from Chat GPT have been included in our reference list.

I subscribed to Chat GPT Plus. I have requested three different grants from him at the time of writing. Initially, at times I sought inspiration to emulate what I was attempting to say. For instance, in the first sentence of the introduction, I wrote the following: "Several things occurred that, in early 2020, Second, after asking him for an editorial review, we refreshed our literature review with some of his ideas. For instance, Chat GPT had proposed that "a more extensive discussion of the implications of AI in education, including opportunities and challenges, would make the case" whereas we began with only two major publications Description of the Artificial Intelligence section the rebuild period References section. To assist in creating it, I gave references numbered. Most of the military service had already been completed. We then verified that some journal titles were abbreviated by adding the places and dates of publication of conference proceedings and journal years in bold.".

V DISCUSSION

With educational technology continually evolving, it is our responsibility as educators to evolve and adjust accordingly, break down barriers, address students' needs in real-time, and offer a strong support system. Doing so will enable us to assist students to further their studies in ways that will enhance their productivity and job satisfaction. We are committed to identifying means of implementing social media and AI into worthwhile learning experiences, most of which, in our case, occur online, while embracing changing technology as individuals and professionals he knows life. Our experience revealed the utility of social media in improving student communication, developing COIs, and tailored learning interactions [7,8,23], hence supporting student learning engagement in and greater support.

In our best future, our appreciation for the versatility of technology will be matched by our ability to harness it for problem solving, communication and learning. Capitalizing on this potential depends on a sound emphasis on community formation and unity through stimulating discussion. Our aim is merely to facilitate practitioners, teachers, researchers and students to employ these instruments to their maximum capacity as opposed to debating whether or not they must be utilized. We value practices that make the education system more human by tackling issues openly, building community, and designing networking activity and research. Our vision is beyond mere interface integration. This policy will assist us in achieving our educational objectives, preserving academic integrity, and meeting ethical issues.

We balance our use of technology in learning and teaching with sound safety and mental health consciousness We include participatory curricula, practice reflection on an ongoing basis, and foster loving, caring and the hope doctrine. Although we will discontinue using certain tools, we will never discontinue seeking innovative methods by which to engage students in the appropriate ways now through the application of our teaching, methods, and tools. Some tools are tried and true. Programs, or they can come up with new, innovative technologies like AI and VR that we need assistance on to serve our communities. Prohibiting AI from being applied in similar tools like Chat GPT is not a feasible solution. Rather, we promote cooperative inquiry with students to find learning styles.

We gauge the success of our teaching by connecting and connecting our students with our lessons, contributing and co-constructing in an active illuminating community, employing resources like Twitter and Chat GPT and Open Educational Resources (OERs) that are utilized creatively by students for primarily online—based on data supplied by our students. Students learn best in our classroom when they are working together and finishing assignments. Our central mission is to engage students in their work and to give learning meaning and relevance. We construct courses with their success in mind, instruct on instructional design as well as educational theory, and reference in the curriculum that grades are considered an added accomplishment like athletic performance. The background information. We have students that are engaged in our courses, participating and interacting in an active, learning community, and we assess the success of our instruction with tools such as Twitter, Chat GPT, and Open Educational Resources (OERs), innovative application of simple web resources provided by students. This data is gathered from our students. Group projects and assignment fulfillment are central elements of student achievement in our classroom. Our ultimate aim is to make the course meaningful and applicable by making students proud of their work. We build curriculum with their success in mind, instruct instructional planning together with educational theory, and discuss awards that are perceived as innovative achievements that are akin to athletic excellence

VI FUTURE OF ONLINE EDUCATION WITH SOCIAL MEDIA AND AI TECHNOLOGIES

We advocate and recommend extensive virtual and media literacy training, advanced cybersecurity education, in-intensity discussions of vital matters, and the emergence of hands-on use guidelines as we foresee the future of on line instruction with social media and AI technology. It is imperative that teachers attain expert development on how to merge these tools into the classroom. We aid the education of college students in a manner to utilize these resources judiciously and in line with ethical concepts. As the usage of equipment may be different, it is imperative to make the codes of conduct client-specific for the respective stage of the path. It is important to stress the ideal quote and revelation of AI aid. Also, we recommend designing assignments that require essential wondering as well as writing so that

one can steer learning even when there is technology. Grading criteria should focus on aspects that AI struggles to address.

In summary, we provide a vision for future online education with teaching and practice interlinked and emphasizing human-centered efforts to personalize teaching and learning. This is our response to the question where do we go from here? Our project is centered on the idea of participatory design and collective and personal learning experiences, in which students are the active agents in their own learning, in the context of loving, caring and hopeful pedagogy under all things. Along with enabling online learning communities such as the COI framework is an example of, we are proponents of design practices that enable the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which makes multiple modes of engagement to be represented, and event/description.

While planning and teaching are prior, technology selection and application have to be purposeful. People using the tools and making significant pedagogical choices bring hope, not the tools themselves. Here, rather than depending entirely on social media like Facebook and Twitter, we chose to employ established technologies like our learning management system, Canvas with the in-built Canvas Studio and using Zoom, a web conferencing technology, for learning purposes in an effort to boost engagement. We also included student creation software such as Canva and tested the potential of new technology such as Ready Player Me to set up virtual reality and the Gen AI software Chat GPT to get students excited.

REFERENCES

[1]   Nussli,N.;Oh,K.;Davis,J.P.Capturingthesuccessesandfailuresduringpandemicteaching:Aninvestigationofuniversitystudents'perceptionsoftheirfaculty'semergencyremoteteachingapproaches.*E-Learn.Dig.Media***2022**,*21*,1–28.[CrossRef]

[2]   Robbins,K.;Cipollone,K.Thereallearningloss:Alostopportunitytoreimagineschooling.*Educ.Stud.***2023**,*59*,184–205. [CrossRef]

[3]   Mishra,P.;Warr,M.;Islam,R.TPACKintheageofChatGPTandgenerativeAI.*J.Digit.Learn.Teach.Educ.***2023**,*39*,235–251.[CrossRef]

[4]   Freire,P.*PedagogyofHope:RelivingPedagogyoftheOppressed*;BloomsburyPublishing:NewYork,NY,USA,2021.

[5]   Hooks,B.*TeachingCommunity:APedagogyofHope*;Routledge:NewYork,NY,USA,2003.

[6]   Noddings,N.*TheChallengetoCareinSchools*,2nded.;TeachersCollegePress:NewYork,NY,USA,2015.

[7]   Chatterjee, S.; Parra, J. Innovative design revisions on an undergraduate technology integration course for K-12 preservice teachers.In*Teaching,Technology,andTeacherEducationduringtheCOVID-19Pandemic:StoriesfromtheField*;Ferdig,R.E.,Baumgartner,E.,Hartshorne,R.,Kaplan-Rakowski,R.,Mouza,C.,Eds.;AssociationfortheAdvancement of Computing in Education(AACE): Waynesville, NC, USA, 2020; pp. 331–441. Available online: https://www.learntechlib.org/p/216903/ (accessed on 15June2020).

[8]   Chatterjee, S.; Parra, J. Undergraduate students engagement in formal and informal learning: Applying the community of inquiryframework.*J.Educ.Technol.Syst.***2022**,*50*,327–355.[CrossRef]

[9]   Chang,H.;Ngunjiri,F.;Hernandez,K.A.C.*CollaborativeAutoethnography*;Routledge:NewYork, NY,USA,2016.

[10]   Rehm,M.;Notten,A.Twitterasaninformallearningspaceforteachers!?TheroleofsocialcapitalinT witterconversationsamong teachers.*Teach.Teach.Educ.***2016**,*60*, 215–223.[CrossRef]

[11]   NASSP.UsingMobileandSocialTechnologiesinSchools.2019.Availableonline:https://www.nassp.org/policy-advocacy-center/nassp-position-statements/using-mobile-and-social-technologies-in-schools/(accessedon5November2023).

[12]   Luo,T.;Sickle,J.;Cheng,L.Preserviceteachers'participationandperceptionsofTwitterlivechatsaspers onallearningnetworks. *TechTrends***2017**,*61*,226–235.[CrossRef]

[13]   Reed, P. Hashtags and retweets: Using Twitter to aid community, communication and casual (informal) learning.*Res.Learn.Technol.***2013**,*21*.[CrossRef]

[14]   Kreijns,K.;VanAcker,F.;Vermeulen,M.;VanBuuren,H.CommunityofInquiry:Socialpresencere visited.*E-Learn.Digit.Media* **2014**,*11*,5–18.[CrossRef]

[15]   Prenger,R.;Poortman,C.L.;Handelzalts,A.Professionallearningnetworks:Fromteacherlearningt oschoolimprovement? *J.Educ.Chang.***2021**,*22*,13–52.[CrossRef]

[16]   Li,J.;Greenhow,C.Scholarsandsocialmedia:Tweetingintheconferencebackchannelforprofessio nallearning.*EMIEduc.MediaInt.***2015**,*52*,1–14.[CrossRef]

[17]   Brock,A.What'sGoingtoHappentoBlackTwitter?MSNBC.2023.Availableonline:https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/elon-musk-black-twitter-future rcna93458(accessedon8November2023).

[18]   Trocky,N.;Buckley,K.Evaluatingtheimpactofwikisonstudentlearningoutcomes:Anintegrativere view.*J.Profs.Nurs.***2016**, *32*,364–376.[CrossRef][PubMed]

[19] Aydin, S. Twitter as an educational environment. *Turk. Online J. Distance Educ.* **2014**,*15*,10–21. Availableonline:https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Selami-Aydin/publication/274703688_Twitter_as_an_educational_environment/links/552644000cf25d66dc94822c/Twitter-as-an-educational-environment.pdf?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19(accessed on20 January 2020).

[20] Forgie,S.;Duff,J.;Ross,S.;Ellison,N.;Lampe,C.;Lenhart,A.;Purcell,K.TwelvetipsforusingTwitterasalearningtoolinmedicaleducation.*Med.Teach.***2013**,*35*,8–14.[CrossRef][PubMed]

[21] Yang, Y.; Wang, Q.; Woo, H.L.; Quek, C.L. Using Facebook for teaching and learning: A review of the literature. *Int. J. Cont. Eng.Educ.Life-LongLearn.***2011**,*21*,71–86.[CrossRef]

[22] Hew, K.; Cheung, W. Use of web 2.0 technologies in K-12 and higher education: The search for evidence-based practice. *Educ. Res.Rev.***2013**,*9*,47–64.[CrossRef]

[23] Chatterjee,S.;Parra,J.UsingTwitterforengagementandstudent-centereddesigninonlineteacherpreparationcourses.In*ARetrospectiveofTeaching,Technology,andTeacherEducationduringtheCOVID-19Pandemic*; Baumgartner,E.,Kaplan-Rakowski,R.,Ferdig,R.E.,Hartshorne,R.,Mouza,C.,Eds.;AssociationfortheAdvancementofComputinginEducation(AACE):Waynesville, NC, USA, 2022; pp. 251–257. Available online: https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/221522 (accessed on 19September2022).

[24] Dunlap, J.C.; Lowenthal, P.R. Tweeting the night away: Using Twitter to enhance social presence. *J. Inf. Syst. Educ.* **2009**, *20*,129–136.

[25] Sinnappan,S.;Zutshi,S.Usingmicrobloggingtofacilitatecommunityofinquiry: An Australian tertiary experience. In *Changing Demands, Changing Directions, Proceedings of the ASCILITE, Hobart, Australia, 4 December 2011*; Williams, G., Statham, P., Brown, N.,Cleland,B.,Eds.;AustralasianSocietyforComputersinLearninginTertiaryEducation:Tugun,Australia,2011;pp.1123–1135.

[26] Joshi, A. (2013). M-learning to lead the future of education in India. International Journal of Applied Services Marketing Perspectives, 2(2), 409.

[27] Joshi, A., & Goswami, S. (2017). Modified round robin algorithm by using priority scheduling. Advances in Computational Sciences and technology, 10(6), 1543-1549.

[28] Joshi, A., & Tiwari, H. (2012). Security for E-governance. Journal of Information and Operations Management, 3(1), 254.

[29] Singh, B. P. & Joshi, A. (2024). Ethical Considerations in AI Development. In R. Kumar, A. Joshi, H. Sharan, S. Peng, & C. Dudhagara (Eds.), *The Ethical Frontier of AI and Data Analysis* (pp. 156-179). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2964-1.ch010

Constructing Identities Online: A Study of Self-Presentation on Social Media Platforms

Arya Jha[1], Durgesh Tripathi[2]

[1] Research Scholar, University School of Mass Communication, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (New Delhi) India.
[2] Dean, University School of Mass Communication, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, (New Delhi) India.

ABSTRACT

This paper delves into the various aspects of self-presentation and identity building on modern social media platforms. Utilizing principles of impression management and digital sociology, this research analyzes the curation of online personas by social media users, the determinants of such choices, and the anticipated consequences on real-world identity. Most importantly, the research focuses on how relentless social media-driven expectations of projecting a wealthy and successful lifestyle can result in serious damage to mental health, finances, and overall personal well-being, all of which are harmful and unsustainable, dynamically elaborated through telling case studies. The research identifies key themes in self-disclosure, audience perception, and the negotiation of authentic versus idealized digital selves through a qualitative analysis of user profiles and interview data, supplemented by a quantitative survey of 55 people. The results of the survey show that although social connection is the main driver, a sizable percentage of users are swayed by social validation and expressly experience pressure to project a particular image online, which frequently causes a gap between their online and offline identities. The result highlights the performative and dynamic nature of online identity, where users actively engage in strategic self- representation to manage different social contexts and obtain social validation, sometimes at a significant personal cost. Based on these results, it is recommended that social media companies provide users with more precise guidelines and tools to help them better understand and manage their digital footprint, encouraging more genuine and less performative interactions. Additionally, it is recommended that society change its emphasis from viewing consumption as a sign of success to appreciating authenticity and mental health.

Keywords: Online Identity, Self-Presentation, Social Media, Impression Management, Digital Selves, Dramaturgical Theory, Online Behavior, Survey, Mental Health, Financial Well-being.

I INTRODUCTION

Social media has changed the way we engage, communicate, and, most importantly, how we present ourselves to the world. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), and TikTok have made a huge impact on social interaction, as personal lives are now crafted as narratives that are easily accessible to the public and semi-public. Moreover, the lines between public, private, and real and ideal selves have become blurred. "Self-presentation", which by default is associated with sociological theories of impression management, is being redefined in the digital age.

Social media has cultivated a culture in which people curate their lives for public consumption. Many people have been driven to extreme, sometimes even life-threatening, behaviors by the pressure to appear successful, fashionable, and wealthy. This fixation on appearance and "showing off" frequently comes at the expense of one's happiness, financial security, and mental well-being.

II EXAMPLES OF LUXURY OBSESSION

(a) Following examples are concerning trend:
- **The iPhone and the Teenage Boy:** An iPhone worth ₹1.5 lakh was purchased by a teenage boy's mother, a flower vendor at a temple, who makes just enough money to survive. His mother, unable to bear to see her son suffer, spent all of her savings to satisfy the boy's demand after he had gone three days without eating (Sharma 2024).
- **The Girl Who Almost Committed Suicide:** In another case, a girl requested her family to buy her an iPhone, and when they refused, she locked herself in her room and attempted to cut her wrist. She was admitted to a hospital just in time, but still refused to come to terms with the fact that her family could not afford an iPhone (Kumar 2025). In both situations, the kids were driven more by a desire to flaunt their belongings on Instagram and other platforms than by a need.
- **The Trend of Fake Luxury -** In adults, the same tendency is evident. Many consumers purchase fake branded bags, clothing, or shoes just because they have a fancy label since they cannot afford real luxury goods. Online, these are displayed as though they were real. This kind of behavior is a result of insecurity and a fear of appearing unworthy on the internet. Stress, anxiety, and despair result when it becomes impossible to sustain this false persona.
- **The Indian Wedding Syndrome -** The "Big Fat Indian Wedding" is among the first instances of extravagant display in India. To throw lavish weddings, families spend enormous sums of money, sometimes even taking out loans. Even while the festivities appear lavish, many families find it difficult to pay back the debt and EMIs that follow. People now go out of their way to embellish their weddings for social media, frequently depleting their life resources for the sake of appearance, as this trend has moved online.
- **Consumption as a metric of success -** Many people still associate success with consumption in a labor market that is failing, and inflation is on the rise. Purchasing a home that is well beyond one's means, a fancy SUV, or a new iPhone, becomes a mark of success. Many young individuals view owning an iPhone as a sign of status and prosperity. In a similar vein, some people go above and beyond their means to acquire expensive cars only to impress others, instead of a sensible car.

(b) Examples of Show-Off in Daily Life
- Students with limited allowance spend their money at Starbucks or Café Coffee Day to take photos and upload them on the internet rather than for the event itself.
- Dishes (food) are now ordered to be photographed and uploaded rather than consumed, reflecting a shift in food culture. In order to create an image, even regular people act like influencers by producing content about food, coffee, and clothing.
- There are already private jet studios like Delhi Jet Square where clients pay to have pictures taken inside a fictitious "private jet" while feigning an extravagant lifestyle they cannot afford.

(c) Influenced by content creators to live a lavish life
There is also pressure to live the lavish lifestyle because of influencers and content creators. For example:
1. YPM Vlogs[2] (Yadu Priyam Mehta) also shows luxurious cars, trips and expenses. But later, it was revealed that most of the luxurious lifestyle was fake.
2. Natalia Taylor[3] once did a photo shoot in an IKEA and pretended she was on vacation in Bali. Her followers thought she was really in Bali, and it wasn't until she revealed the prank that her followers saw how easily the audience can be influenced.

Many fake podcasts and staged interviews are all over the internet that make the creators look more successful and influential than they actually are.

(d) The Dark Aspect: Mental Health Crisis
This continual pressure to maintain an online presence has an awful toll on mental health. For examples:

1. Creator Lee MacMillan shared a happy van-life on social media but was suffering from depression and anxiety privately. She took her own life, which she announced in her last post about her declining mental health (Welsh 2021).
2. Many influencers say they are depressed because they cannot keep up with their online selves. The fear of being "exposed" causes more anxiety. Heavy social media use has been strongly linked in multiple research studies to an increased risk of contemplating suicide, self-harm, loneliness, anxiety, and depression (Robinson 2025).

In today's time, people are not afraid of being poor but of looking poor online. Cultures of show- off (iPhones, weddings, cars, food, fake luxury, etc.) thrive on insecurity and validation. Social media may give a happiness fix from likes and comments but will create long-term damage from debt, mental health issues, and further widening distances between real life and curated online life.

Through this article, the study examines issues of how individuals systematically build and negotiate their identities via social media networks. It is established that online identity is neither definitive nor fixed but performs identity work, as it is subject to individual agentic circumstances, and impacted by both technological affordances and the creators' audience. Understanding these dynamics is paramount not only to clarify social behaviour in contemporary settings but also to respond to the psychological and social consequences of life in a digitally driven world. This study intended to clarify how users display and craft their presence, the factors influencing curated identities, the performance of or connection to perceived authenticity of social media profiles, and the rising anxiety and negative externalities mentioned above.

(e) Hypothesis
Individuals utilise social media platforms to actively construct and express their unique online identities, tailoring their self-presentation to reflect personal values, interests, and desired social perceptions.

III OBJECTIVES

This research intends to address the following objectives:

1. To identify and classify the specific strategies used by individuals for self-presentation on discrete social media, including those born from a desire to show an idealised version of 'wealth' and/or 'success'.
2. To assess the motivations behind users' choices on self-presentation, including but not limited to social validation, impression management, community building, and the fear of being seen as "less" online.
3. To understand how users view the authenticity and correspondence between their online and offline selves, especially when performing acts of luxury or achievements.

4. To examine how platform-based features (i.e., ephemeral content, public vs private profiles, algorithmically curated content) affect self-presentation decisions, and how this might elevate the tendency to "show off".

IV REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The framework of self-presentation is rooted within Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical theory, which suggests we are actors playing different roles in social space and presenting ourselves in ways to create a desired impression. The "front-stage" and "back-stage" aspects of this theory easily align with the online space in which users actively manage their "front-stage" presentation online (Goffman 1956).

Initial attention was paid to online identity studies to discuss the anonymity and pseudonymity of chatrooms and forums that allow individuals to experiment with their identity (Turkle 1995). As persistent, profile-based social media emerged that allowed for representation of oneself, research focuses moved towards the concept of actual self-representation and managing of real-world relationships (Boyd, 2007). Users are now not anonymous, but may be tethered to their offline identity, resulting in a negotiation of transparency in the face of privacy.

The body of research on impression management in digital environments identifies strategies, such as selective self-disclosure (Joinson, 2001), idealized self-presentation (Ellison 2007), and the preservation of one's online "face" (Papacharissi 2002). Researchers have also looked at awareness of the audience in self-presentation emphasizing how content can be shaped by those whom users think are looking at their profiles (Brandtzaeg 2009). These strategies and audiences are often the result of the social pressures to conform, and the ways in which we benefit from social media for the attention we are rewarded for through "likes" and "comments".

Moreover, there is growing attention towards the role of algorithmic feeds and platform architecture in what content is foregrounded and consequently how users choose to represent themselves. This includes how platforms may inadvertently facilitate a sort of status display, competitive consumption culture that incites user anxiety and mental health struggles as they strive to keep pace with imagined standards online. While research is robust and growing, we still do not have a deep understanding of the unique and evolving means of constructing social media identity across the diverse range of contemporary social media platforms particularly as it relates to the tension between data affordances, user motivations and negative outcomes of rampant "show-off" culture, as subject to future empirical investigation.

V RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining a quantitative survey with qualitative research (social media profile content analysis and semi-structured interviews). This methodology enables a thorough investigation of subjective experiences as well as the gathering of more comprehensive demographic and attitudinal information about online self-presentation, especially that which is motivated by the desire to present an idealised image.

(a) Tools
- **Social Media Platforms:** Information was gathered from publicly accessible Facebook, Instagram, and X (Twitter) profiles. These platforms were selected because of their varied user bases and unique features, which support the culture of self-display by focusing on short-form video, personal networking, and visual content, respectively.
- **Interview Protocol**: To facilitate discussions with participants, a structured interview protocol was created. It focused on their reasons for participating, their methods, and how they perceive their online persona, including the pressures they face to project a particular image and the effects this has on their mental health.
- **Survey Questionnaire:** A questionnaire was designed to collect demographic details and measure users' perceptions concerning motivations for posting, the alignment between real and virtual self-representation, the role of social validation influence, and self-imposed pressure to present oneself online.
- **Consent Forms:** To guarantee ethical data collection, standard informed consent forms were used.

(b) Techniques
- **Content analysis:** A purposive sample of 50 public profiles (15 from Instagram, 15 from Facebook, and 20 from X) was chosen based on their levels of user activity and content variation. The research systematically analyzed visual content (photos, videos), textual content (captions, bios, comments), and behaviour (likes, comments, shares) to extract recurring themes and patterns in self-presentation, particularly focusing on instances of projecting perceived wealth, success, or idealized lifestyles. The study created an inductive coding scheme from the data, which was used to classify types of self-disclosure, impression management strategies, and other thematic content included in the "show-off" culture.
- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** The study recruited 20 social media users aged 18-35 via a convenience snowball sampling method. The interviews (lasting approximately 45-60 minutes) focused on participants' strategies, conscious or unconscious, for self- presentation; their perception of audience; their emotional responses to online interactions; and their sense of authenticity in their online self. In addition to this, questions specifically addressed instances participants had felt pressure to "show off", instances of aspirational consumption they used for the purposes of online display, and ill effects on their mental health in maintaining a curated self-image online.
- **Survey:** Fifty-five people (N=55) were given a quantitative survey. Convenience sampling techniques were used to find participants.

(c) Demographics of Survey Participants (N=55):
Age Range: Participants ranged in age from 18 to 42.
Occupation:
- **Students (70.9%):** Representing a variety of fields, including foreign languages, agriculture, international relations, literature (in both Hindi and English), law, master's and doctoral degrees, and management.
- **Working Professionals (29.1%):** Advocates, dieticians, investment bankers, attorneys, public relations specialists, social workers, researchers, and professors are among the working professionals.

- **Ethical Considerations:** Participants' privacy was protected and all data were anonymized. Only explicitly public content was taken into consideration, and publicly accessible data were handled with consideration for user privacy.

(d) Sampling Strategy

Convenience and snowball sampling was used to sample participants for both the survey and semi-structured interviews. The population of social media users is dispersed, heterogeneous, and difficult to sample randomly in practice. Convenience sampling allowed the researchers to approach readily available participants while snowballing established additional respondents through referrals of a peer. The sampling strategy may have caused bias in the sample and limited generalisability of the findings, but it was deemed appropriate for exploratory research on identity construction in digital environments where access to participants is mediated through trust and personal networks.

(e) Validity and Reliability Measures

Given the importance of validity and reliability of data collection and data analysis, steps were taken to support the validity and reliability of the data collection and data analysis. First, the survey questionnaire was pilot-tested by a small number of respondents to help improve wording and clarity. Second, in regard to the content analysis, inter-coder reliability checks were conducted by researchers coding a number of profiles separately to confirm consistency in thematic categorisation. Third, triangulation was used by comparing results across qualitative interviews, quantitative survey data, and content analysis findings. The process of methodological pluralism adds credibility to the findings and reduces the risk of relying too heavily on one dataset.

(f) Limitations of Methodology

This mixed-methods design provides a broad perspective, but some limitations should be recognised. The reliance on self-reported data in surveys and interviews can be affected by social desirability bias. Participants may present themselves in ways that fit social norms. The analysis of curated online profiles might not fully reflect users' offline identities, resulting in incomplete representations. Additionally, the sample mainly consists of students and young adults, which may restrict the ability to apply the results to other age groups and professional categories. Acknowledging these limitations is crucial to understanding the findings and shaping future research directions.

VI DATA ANALYSIS

- **Thematic Analysis**: Interview transcripts and content analysis observations were analysed using thematic analysis, consistent with Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework (familiarization with the data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; producing the report) (Braun 2006). This allowed an overarching theme to emerge alongside some of its variations and significant insights regarding online identity construction in a specific context related to motivations and outcomes of the "show-off" culture previously considered in the introduction.
- **Descriptive Statistics**: The survey data were analysed descriptively (percentages) to summarize quantitative outcomes relevant to motivations, self-image, commitments to planned self-presentation, effects of validation, benefits/outcomes, and influences of perceived pressure.

- **Triangulation:** Findings from analysis of the content analysis, interviews, and survey were triangulated, to assess the validity and reliability of the study by cross referencing qualitative data points with quantitative trends, to derive consistent and divergent themes, consciously reflecting on the prescriptive pressure for idealized self-portrayed self- presentation and discovered influence of consequences.

VII FINDINGS

The analysis drew together qualitative information from profile content and interviews and quantitative data from surveys (N=55), and highlighted key insights into online identity construction and implications for the pressures of the 'show-off' culture.

To begin, it was evident that the participants consciously curated their online profiles, with an awareness of both their choice of photos, captions, and followers. Subsequently, it would appear that curating their profiles was influenced mostly by social validation and the tracking of "likes", "comments" or "followers" as measures of social acceptance, which often perpetuated performative action.

Survey Findings (N=55):
(a) Motivations for Posting on Social Media:
- To connect with friends and family — 46.4%
- To express creativity — 26.8%
- To share achievements — 19.6%
- To gain likes, comments, and followers — 7.1%

These results indicated that although social connection was still the main motivator, sharing accomplishments and expressing oneself which frequently took the form of carefully manicured displays of success were important motivators for a sizable percentage of users. Even though it might not seem like much, the 7.1% who actively sought likes, comments, or followers validated a direct correlation between engagement metrics and posting motivations.

(b) Perception of Online vs. Real self:
- Yes, completely represents — 44.6%
- Somewhat represents — 37.5%
- Not at all — 17.9%

An overwhelming majority (82.1% combined for "completely" and "somewhat") perceived their online self to reflect their real self, indicating that a large number of users felt tied to their online self even if that online self was strategically curated. Of course, the 17.9% who agreed the online- self did not represent their real-self helped demonstrate a large amount of authenticity dissonance and support the qualitative observations of authenticity pressure with an idealised version of self that often differs from reality.

(c) Influence of Likes, Comments, and Shares on Future Posts:
- Strongly influenced — 25%
- Some influence — 28.6%

- Very lightly influenced — 23.2%
- No influence — 23.3%

In total, more than half of the respondents (53.6% for "strongly" and "some influence") acknowledged that social validation metrics influenced their future posting decisions. This quantitative data provided strong evidence for the qualitative finding that social validation was a motivating factor for performative behavior, where users modified their content to please a non-existent audience while pursuing the ideal online persona.

(d) Pressure to Present Oneself in a Certain Way on Social Media:
- Yes — 29.1%
- Maybe — 9.1%
- No — 61.8%

Even with the dominant impact of social validation, most (61.8%) felt that they did not explicitly face pressure, and an additional 9.1% were unsure if they did. While this may seem contradictory to the influence of likes/comments, it could evidence either an unconscious internalisation of pressure or a hesitance to admit to social influence, indicating the complexity of self-perception in online contexts. Regardless of this, the 29.1% who explicitly did feel pressure confirmed that a sizeable portion of the user base directly did experience bulk pressure, directly aligning with the main assertion and case studies (ex. the teenage boy and iPhone) explored in the introduction, with respect to the "show-off" culture.

There was a distinct difference between idealised versus honest self-presentation; while most users desired to be honest, the pressure to conform to what are perceived as social norms and standards of aesthetics that reflect wealth, or success, often led users to present an idealised, aspirational version of themselves, even creating experiences or purchasing fake luxury items; these trends were distinctly visible on Instagram and X, as highlighted by the qualitative data. The survey data revealed 17.9% felt that online, their real selves were not represented and 29.1% explicitly expressed pressure, which provided some quantitative evidence to match the qualitative.

Third, the affordances of the platforms being used were a clear determinant of the types of self-presentational strategies that were deployed. For example, Instagram users tended to value visual aesthetics and providing a polished image of escape from everyday life that typically consisted of glimpses of some sort of lavish lifestyle which would take place outside their normal lives. Facebook users tended to maintain a stable identity based on their networks; however they were similarly subject to broadcast the symbols of status, similar to Instagram. X, with its emphasis on short-form, usually funny or performative videos, provided users even more fluid and experimental ways to express identity, but which also was able to stage elaborate scenes representing luxury; however, it is possible that even the simplicity of X as a format and the frequency of productive and unproductive rhythmic movement challenged users' perception of staged reality. It is important to note some of the relevant connections between the everyday examples of show-off (students with Starbucks, etc) which demonstrated how possible the everyday and the inherent affordances of the online platform were enabling and generally encouraging these self-curated demonstrations of life.

Despite moderate or mild psychological disturbance, participants reported some degree of authenticity dissonance due to a gap or disconnect between their online identity and offline self that created stress, anxiety, and depression. The perceived negative impact of 'looking poor online' was an internally persuasive force for participants to engage in these behaviors. This explanation was further supported by data from qualitative interviews and indirectly by the pressure and influence of likes findings from the survey. The perceived expectations of the audience-influencer participants to adopt new strategies that included issues of 'context collapse', where their curated content was viewed by many different social groups, leading to even more pressure and expectation to maintain a consistent and often fictitious glamorous lifestyle. Overall, while social media created temporary social gratification through likes and comments (with over 50% of respondents reporting they were influenced by these), the enduring mental and financial costs of a pervasive culture of 'show-off', as articulated in our 'dark side' case studies, are substantial.

Therefore, the research hypothesis that "Individuals utilise social media platforms to actively construct and express their unique online identities, tailoring their self-presentation to reflect personal values, interests, and desired social perceptions" stands proven.

VIII RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on integrated results from qualitative analysis and the survey results:

1. **For Individuals:** Promote digital literacy programs to assist users in understanding the performative nature of online self-presentation and help them better understand authenticity, privacy, and the mental impacts associated with social media uses. These should include a nuanced approach to the dangers of perpetuating the "show-off" culture, focussing on financially aware approaches to mental health to denote the emphasis on understanding value not in terms of display but function, especially given that the large majority of users (53.6%) are susceptible to validation metrics as seen in. Another large portion of users (17.9%) also do not represent their real self on social media ("not at all").

2. **For Social Media Platforms:**
   - Add features to help users better control audience segmentation, which can help avoid "context collapse" and lessen the pressure for idealised self-presentation, particularly for the 29.1% of users who said that they feel pressure to project themselves in a certain way.
   - Provide tools or nudges that push for more diverse content creation outside of purely aesthetic/aspirational portrayals, such as highlighting real or non-fancy content, and promoting more realistic portrayals of life, to provide balance against the motivations seen throughout sharing achievements and seeking acknowledgment.
   - Increase transparency around algorithmic presentation of content, so that users know how their content is presented and perceived, and how algorithms can inadvertently promote content that calls attention to luxury and idealised lifestyles, potentially amplifying the "show-off" culture.
   - Proactively reduce fake luxury trends and publicity stunts with clearer policies, and possibly flag content like other misinformation policies, to clarify and combat the insecurity around "looking poor online" that motivates essentially fake displays.

3. **For Researchers:** Future research should delve into longitudinal research on the evolution of online identities, the implications of new platforms (for instance metaverse platforms) on self-presentation, cross cultural investigations on identity construction techniques on social media, particularly, in relation to findings demonstrated in this study on the show- off culture in relation to mental-health and promoting authenticity, also further quantitative research would add depth to this research surveys with quantitative information regarding further exploring experiences of implications of their self-presentation strategies on financial behaviours, psychological well-being and perceived online self and real self, and further, the influence and pressure to seek out validation, in particular investigating the consistent discrepancy between nature of pressure reported and influence.

4. **For Policymakers:** Think about ways for digital well-being initiatives and digitally responsible behavior and practice. These could include policies and best practice guidelines for social media companies to encourage them to design their platforms to prioritise the mental health of their users rather than metrics of engagement that perpetuates the "show- off" culture of social media itself. Policies could also raise public awareness of the financial and psychological consequences of maintaining a fake online facade, to help mitigate and counter the anxieties and pressures driven from online environments.

REFERENCES

[1] Bargh, J. A. & McKenna, K. Y. A. (2004), "The Internet and social life", *Annual Review of Psychology, 55*, 573-590.

[2] Boyd, D. (2008), "Why youth (heart) social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage social life", In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity, and digital media* (pp. 119- 142), MIT Press.

[3] Boyd, Dabah & Ellison, Nicole (2007), "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship", Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, Vol 13, Issue 1, 1 October 2007, Pages 210-230.

[4] Brandtzaeg, Petter Bae & Heim, Jan (2009), "A typology of social network sites users", *International Journal of Web Based Communities, 7*(1): 28-51.

[5] Brandtzaeg, Petter Bae & Heim, Jan (2009), "Why People Use Social Networking Sites", *Lecture Notes in Computer Science, International Conference on Online Communities and Social Computing*.

[6] Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006), "Using thematic analysis in psychology", *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.

[7] Digennaro, Simone (2024), "The syndrome of multiple bodies: the transformative impact of the onlife existence on preadolescents", *Frontiers in Education*.

[8] Ellison, Nicole B., Steinfield, Charles, & Lampe, Cliff (2007), "The Benefits of Facebook "Friends": Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites", *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 12*(4), 1143-1168.

[9] Freitas, Donna & Smith, Christiana (2017), *The Happiness Effect: How Social Media is Driving a Generation to Appear Perfect at Any Cost*, New York, NY : Oxford University Press.

[10] Goffman, Erving (1956), *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, New York: Doubleday-Anchor.

[11] Joinson, A. N. (2001), "Self-disclosure in computer-mediated communication: The role of self-awareness and visual anonymity", *European Journal of Social Psychology, 31(2), 177–192.*

[12] Kumar, Govind (2025), "Denied iPhone worth Rs 1.5 lakh, Bihar girl slits wrist", *India Today*, Online: https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/bihar-girl-cuts-hands-wrists-parents-   refused-iphone-munger-hospitalised-stable-doctors-2698846-2025-03-25

[13] Livingstone, S. (2008), "Internet literacy: The production of new forms of engagement", *In The SAGE handbook of media studies* (pp. 523-539), SAGE Publications.

[14] Nadkarni, A. & Hofmann, S. G. (2012), "Why do people use Facebook?", *Personality and Individual Differences, 52*(7), 892-896.

[15] Papacharissi, Zizi (2002), "The virtual sphere: The internet as a public sphere", *New Media & Society, 4*(1), 9-27.

[16] Robinson, Lawrence (2025), "Social Media and Mental Health: Are You Addicted to Social Media?", HelpGuide.org, Online: https://www.helpguide.org/mental- health/ wellbeing/social-media-and-mental-health

[17] Rosana, Anita & Fauzi, Irfan (2024), "The Role of Digital Identity in the Age of Social Media: Literature Analysis on Self-Identity Construction and Online Social Interaction", *Journal of Social Science*.

[18] Sam, Ashish Mathew & Devi C., Neela (2025), "The Fragmentation of Self: Existential Identity Crisis in Digital Spaces", *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, Vol. 14, Issue 1, January 2025, Pages: 288-290.

[19] Sharma, Anoushka (2024), "Flower Seller Forced To Buy iPhone For Son On Hunger Strike, Internet Reacts", *NDTV*, Online: https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/jnu- probationary-professor-terminated-over-unauthorised-leave-teachers-body-objects- 101756391443730.html

[20] Taylor, C. (1989), *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity,* Harvard University Press.

[21] Tripathi, Rajeev Lochan (2024), "Fragmented Selves: Identity, Consciousness and Reality in the Digital Age", *Journal of Data Science and Intelligence*, Vol 2 Issue 1, Nov 4, 2024.

[22] Turkle, Sherry (1995), *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

[23] Valkenburg, P. M. & Peter, J. (2008), "Social consequences of the Internet for adolescents: A decade of research", *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 17*(1), 1-5.

[24] Welsh, Nick (2021), "Instagram Travel Influencer Lee MacMillan, 28, Killed by Train in Noleta", *Independent*, Online: https://www.independent.com/2021/03/29/instagram- travel-influencer-lee-macmillan-28-killed-by-train-in-noleta/

[25] Zhao, S., Grasmuck, S., & Martin, J. (2008), "Identity construction on Facebook: Digital empowerment in anchored relationships", *Computers in Human Behavior, 24*(5), 1816- 1836.

Links

[1] https://delhijet.square.site/

[2] https://techkhera.com/ypm-vlogs/

[3] https://edition.cnn.com/videos/travel/2020/02/24/youtuber-bali-vacation-ikea-natalia-taylor mxp- vpx.hln

Common Crisis, Contrasting Frames: A Comparative Framing Analysis of Media Coverage on Migrants

Pranta Pratik Patnaik
Asst. Professor, Dept. of Culture & Media Studies, Central University of Rajasthan,
Ajmer (Rajasthan) India.

ABSTRACT
The media narratives around migrants during the pandemic were mainly constructed through fear, suspicion, doubt, and failure. We got images of how large numbers of migrants are a kind of threat, disruption, and social problem. The failure of governance to curb the situation was overshadowed by the success stories of migrants who could fight for survival. The onus was no longer on the government but on the migrants as citizens. Against this background, this paper intends to critically analyse the communication process during the COVID-19 pandemic. The dismal representation of the 'footloose labourers' on moving from the city to their native villages compels one to think – How does the media create discourses around migrants in a crisis? What is the nature of the politics of language and representation in such communicative events? Why is there a difference in the reportage of the same event on different media platforms? These research questions essentially guided this study by analysing media stories from two news channels. The news items collected from these two media channels were analysed using the Framing Analysis model. It was observed that the organised news channel reported the event to be under control due to government initiatives. On the other hand, the independent news channel provided a ground report that contradicted the narrative of the organised news channel. The comparative analysis of news unravels the political economy of media organisations. The paper concludes by hinting at the communication crisis that affects the democratic functioning of media institutions.

Keywords: Communication Bias, Crisis Communication, Pandemic, Migration, Framing Analysis, MOJO

I AN UNSCRIPTED TRAVELOGUE: INTRODUCTION

The lockdown during the pandemic brought to our living rooms harrowing and nerve-wrenching images of lakhs of migrant workers stranded at bus stands and railway stations. Some even go foot slogging on the roads and railway tracks, hoping to reach their hometown or native place. The imposition of the lockdown was carried out to curb the spread of the virus, but it worsened the condition of the unorganised and semi-organised labour sector. The ordeal in their journey home unfolded a tragic script of suffering that was exacerbated due to a lack of food, water, medical and governmental assistance. Their bone-chilling travelling experiences exposed the failure of effective governance (Shome, 2021; Suresh et.al, 2020). The media coverage of the migrant workers' condition during COVID-19 makes one wonder – Can these workers be considered as migrants? What was the need behind this internal exodus of such a massive population from rural areas and towns to urban cities?

The Census of India defines migrants based on their place of birth or last place of residence and a deviation from it. However, such a characterisation of migrants is limited as it excludes the short-term seasonal movements, also known as 'footloose labourers' (Breman, 2020), which form a significant component of the migration process. The data is also inadequate due to the problem of tabulating the migration of accompanying children and women. In addition to this, the large-scale migration that occurs from remote tribal areas goes unreported.

According to the 2011 Indian Census, the total number of internal migrants is estimated to be approximately. i.e. 450 million – 30% higher than in 2001. Gopal Guru (2020) identifies the reason behind such internal migration by differentiating between "want" and "need". The workers, he argues, do not want to leave their native place, but their need for survival compels them due to the failure of their respective state governments to provide employment. They migrate to urban areas, engage in construction sites and brick kilns, and provide services like domestic help, security guards, drivers, etc. Some get absorbed as non-skilled workers in factories, while others open small businesses like teashops, tiny eateries, hotels, and restaurants. This entire workforce under the informal sector constitutes 93% of India's total workforce. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) reports that about 400 million workers in the informal economy were at risk of falling into poverty during the crisis, mostly the marginalised of the informal economy of urban India, consisting of a significant population of migrants. This paper concerns circular migrants (Srivastava,2020; Jesline et.al, 2021) and their representation in Indian media during the COVID crisis.

II MEDIA NARRATIVES ON MIGRANTS: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The relationship between crowded places, human mobility and the virus spread created a media framing of migrant workers as responsible for spreading disease. Extensive media coverage of the episodic internal migration made it challenging to distinguish between fact-based and opinion-based information. The migrant workers were represented as a 'threat', a carrier of the virus back to their native places, creating a sense of fear and panic among rural and urban populations. In a way, it made the invisible migrant workers visible on the screen and as a menace to governance. According to V.B. Shahare (2020), the government's responsibility in this crisis should have been the protection of the migrant workers, the failure of which led to a humanitarian crisis. Agarwal and Sarkar (2022), in their study of print media coverage of the plight of the migrants during the pandemic, found that most of the newspaper articles in The Hindu and The Times of India displayed a neutral sentiment towards the crisis. Similarly, another study by Adarsh Raj et.al (2021) looks into the prominence of migrant issues in three English newspapers – The Hindu, The Times of India, and The Hindustan Times. Their findings point to the different issues highlighted in the print media during the three phases of lockdown. Simon and Baby (2023), in their analysis of media representation of the migrant crisis during the pandemic, looked into three media units – Dainik Bhaskar, Times of India, and NDTV. They found that the media units have highlighted the emotional turmoil of the migrants as well as the problems faced by them in the first phase of lockdown. However, they do not point out the differences in representation among these media units. The bias in print media regarding their coverage of the migrant workers during the pandemic has been highlighted in the study by John and Anuj (2021), who found that English-language newspapers were instrumental in spreading the misinformation that migrant workers are carriers of the virus. The articles in the newspapers, they argue, mainly relied on the views of the political leaders, and government official data, statistics, and reports without any verification on the ground.

- **Identifying the Research Gaps:** A vast amount of literature has been available on the media coverage of the migrant issue during the pandemic, focusing primarily on print media. No study has made a comparative analysis of TV news coverage along with an independent news channel. There is a knowledge gap in understanding the nuances of audio-visual media in representing the migrants. Furthermore, the analysis of the news coverage, even in the print media, does not go beyond the news to understand the role of political economy responsible for such representations. This study attempts to fill this gap by comparing news coverage through framing analysis guided by the following research questions.

- **Research Questions**:

RQ1: How does the media create discourses around migrants in a crisis?
RQ2: What is the nature of the politics of language and representation in such communicative events?
RQ3: Why is there a difference in the reportage of the same event on different media platforms?

III KNOWING THE MEDIA FRAMES: METHODOLOGY

In order to explore the above-mentioned research questions, this study developed a two-pronged approach. The study proceeded with a quantitative assessment of what ZEE News, a Hindi news channel, produced in its Prime-time news about COVID-19 and internal migration in India throughout the lockdown. A simultaneous search of news related to internal migration during COVID in the MOJO channel, an independent online news channel, was also carried out. A total of 124 news items were identified about internal migration during COVID-19.

(a) Sampling Procedure: Specific steps were followed for sampling. Within the lockdown period, the initial identification of stories on migrant workers during COVID-19 was made over the internet using Boolean search with the keywords – "migration OR migrant workers in India", "COVID-19 and Migrant Workers in India", "MOJO channel and COVID Reportage"; "COVID-19 and Indian Media"; "Migrant workers and COVID in India"; "News on Migrant workers during COVID-19 in India"; "ZEE TV news on COVID-19".

(b) Criteria of Inclusion & Exclusion: A total of 1,207 items were found through this search, out of which the following videos were excluded (i) 356 were news about the origin of the virus, its symptom and preventive measures ; (ii) 432 were videos about the impact of COVID on the general public, the number of death in different parts of the country but not specifically on migrant workers; (iii) 229 videos were 'positive' stories about surviving tales of COVID patients, vaccination for the epidemic. The remaining 190 news videos were related to migrant workers' conditions during COVID-19, out of which 36 videos were duplicates (repeat uploading of the same news); 40 video clips were less than 2 minutes long, and hence, both were excluded. The study did not include textual news or one-liners scrolling at the bottom of the screen. The news, having visuals and discussion about the internal migration during the pandemic, with a screen time of 5 – 8 minutes, was a part of the analysis for this study. A similar methodology could not be applied to the MOJO channel, as it had complete coverage of this issue for more than 10 minutes. Therefore, all the news on internal migration in the MOJO channel was included without any exclusion criteria. On ZEE TV, some news items were repeatedly telecast, which were also excluded from the study.

(c) Sample Size: After applying the criteria of inclusion and exclusion, a framing analysis was done of 124 news video clips (68 from MOJO (nothing excluded) and 56 from ZEE News) related to migrant workers and COVID-19 in India using the tool developed by Neuman et al. (1992) and Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) that identifies six news frames (Table-1). After selecting the sample for the study, the transcript of the videos was carried out on a logbook, identifying the emerging themes and categories from the news narratives that were matched according to the six frames undertaken for the study.

Table 1
An Overview of the Six Frames Applied

S.No	Frame	Description	Examples
1	Conflict	"Conflict between individuals, groups, institutions or countries" (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000)	• Conflict between the government and the migrant workers, the Central and State governments, migrants, and inhabitants.
2	Human Interest	Bringing "a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue or problem" (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000)	• News outlining the vulnerabilities, struggles, successes, and challenges faced by the migrant workers.
3	Attribution of responsibility	"Presenting an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for causing or solving to either the government or to an individual or group" (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000)	• Migrant workers are considered to be irresponsible and cause the spread of the virus. • The state government is responsible for the influx of population to urban areas.
4	Morality	"Morality and social prescriptions" (Neuman et al., 1992)	• Assertions of the values of governments • Sympathy for migrant workers
5	Power(lessness)	"The dominance of forces over weak individuals or groups" (Neuman et al., 1992)	• The power of the government to implement a lockdown • The powerlessness of the migrant workers
6	Economic impact	"The preoccupation with profit and loss" (Neuman et al., 1992)	• Impact of the pandemic on the livelihood of migrant workers

In order to measure the extent to which specific frames appear in the news stories that mention the plight of migrant workers during the pandemic, 2-3 questions were made to measure each frame. It was also considered that a news story might have one or two frames and not all frames. The questions designed for each frame are evident in Table 2.

Table 2
Frames and Related Questions

S. No	Framing Items	Corresponding Questions
1	Conflict	- Does the news story reflect dissent between individuals and government bodies/ centre-state conflict? - Does the news story refer to multiple facets of the problem or issue? - Does the news story provide any solution for the conflict?
2	Human Interest	- Does the news story cover specific problems individuals and groups face? - Does the news story cover the personal trials and tribulations of the migrant workers? - Does the news story use visuals that generate feelings of empathy, sympathy or compassion?
3	Attribution of Responsibility	- Does the news story suggest the role of the government in causing/solving the problem? - Does the news story hold any particular group or community responsible for the problem?
4	Morality	- Does the story contain any message related to moral values? - Does the news story mention social prescriptions about behaviour during a crisis?
5	Power(lessness)	- Does the news story refer to the power equation during a crisis? - Does the news story indicate the powerlessness of the marginalised?
6	Economic Impact	- Does the news story refer to financial losses due to the problem? - Does the news story mention the economic consequences of the crisis?

The purpose of putting these questions is not to elicit a response based on 'yes' or 'no' but to probe deeper into how these questions were answered through audio-visual representations. A simple yes-no category was used only to measure the occurrence of frames in the news. The high presence of the attribution of responsibility scale indicated that the news story implies that governmental intervention is essential to alleviate a problem and that the government is equally responsible for causing the problem. A high number of 'yes' on the human-interest scale implies that the story employs personal vignettes to generate strong feelings among the viewers.

IV UNFOLDING THE MEDIATION OF MIGRANT WORKERS: FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

One of the primary interests of this study was to compare the use of frames in television news and independent news portals and to consider whether there are important differences between these media forms. The related research question to this was: Does the use of frames vary significantly between television and news portals? At the outset, it needs to be mentioned that there was also some overlapping of the frames, which has been taken into consideration and, as such, has not been counted twice for analysis (**Figure 1**).

Comparative Analysis of News Frames on Migrants

	Conflict Frame	Human Interest Frame	Responsibility Frame	Morality Frame	Power (lessness) Frame	Economic Impact Frame
ZEE News	32	25	35	3	34	19
MOJO Story	24	44	18	28	45	23
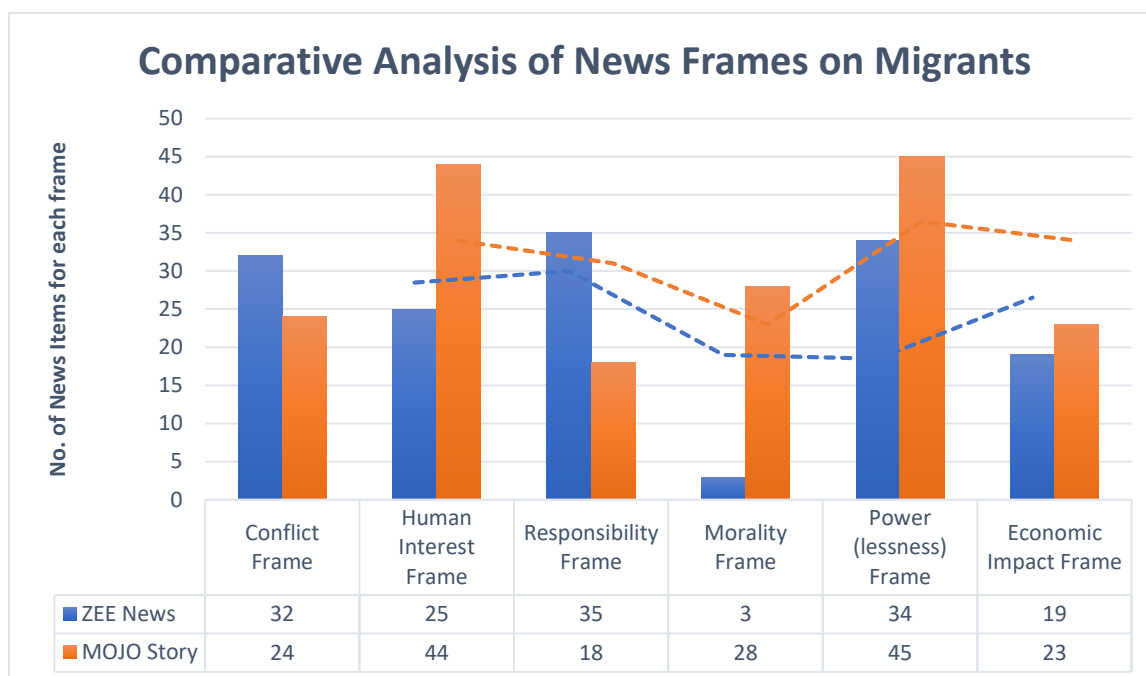
Fig. 1 – Comparative Analysis of News Frames on Migrants

The news related to migrant workers during the pandemic on the ZEE news channel was predominantly "episodic" in Iyengar's (1991) sense of the term, which focused on the specific event that occurred in the past 24 hours. In contrast, the MOJO channel was entirely "thematic", taking information from different points in time and providing a context or interpretation for an event. The study made a comparative analysis of the frames that vary in each of the news platforms – ZEE News and MOJO channel, and found the following:

- **Conflict Frame**: During the analysis of the news item, it was observed that ZEE News focused on the conflict between the central and the state government. The state governments held the central government responsible for the plight of the migrant workers. The news anchor repeatedly referred to this conflict – *'Rajya sarkar aur Kendriya Sarkar k beech takrar'* (there is a conflict between the state and central government). Zee News also focused on messages of political leaders of the central government, who accused the state government of not cooperating with the former to take back the migrant workers of their state of origin. The focus was more on conflict than providing any solution to this menace.

On the other hand, the MOJO channel focused on the conflict between the people and the government. The government's apathy towards the migrant workers was referred to through visuals of migrant workers using the word '*sarkar*' and being indifferent to them. The word '*sarkar*' here refers to the government without any clarity, referring to either the central or the state government. However, it refers to those in power and the authorities entrusted to make crucial decisions during this time. Hinting towards the conflict between the central and state governments, the news anchor discussed the possibility of reaching an amicable solution through cooperation.

- **Human Interest Frame**: According to this parameter, Zee News mostly used camera angles with wide shots of migrant workers, indicating that all migrant workers are the same, a flood of people in trouble. The only concern was to return the workers to their respective states of origin because they were considered the potential carriers of spreading the virus faster due to non-compliance with social distancing. There was never a story or cover story on the migrant workers, let alone any single migrant

worker. On the other hand, MOJO channel covered the news story from 'the perspective from below', considering how this problem differs for men, women and children. The men worried about their families and losing jobs, talked about their employers, the women thought of 'what to cook for the children, and the children were unaware of their continuous movement, following their parents and the crowd. Most of the camera shots used close-ups and mid-close-ups to capture the workers' emotions and to create empathy among the viewers. Visuals of barefoot walking on the roads, cooking in open spaces, and close-up shots of their utensils, tools, food and faces were used quite often, implying a bleak future and the worst survival conditions. The MOJO channel only used the human angle to cover a story.

- **Attribution of Responsibility Frame**: Apart from blaming the state government, poverty was also held responsible for this crisis on Zee News. Poverty and unemployment led the workers to leave their state of origin and move to urban areas. The cause of poverty was attributed to the state government's lack of education and employment opportunities. In one of the news items by Zee TV, the news anchor made use of phrases like 'garibo ki kismat' (poor man's fate), 'garibo ki awaaz' (poor man's voice), implying that poverty has no fate nor voice, and there is no solution to it. In some news coverage, it held the state government to be doing nothing about this problem and, as such, is responsible for aggravating it. In others, it referred to poverty as the root cause of this problem. Another news coverage on Zee TV posed the question to the audience - "*Eske Liye zimmewar Kaun?*" (Who is responsible for this?) The news anchor provides the options to choose from – "Rajya Sarkar? Gareebi? yaa yeh majdoor khud?" (state government? Poverty? Or the workers themselves?) On the other hand, the MOJO channel did not explicitly hold the central or state government responsible for the crisis but used the term' government' in its coverage. The focus was more on the stories of the migrants, the ordeal they were undergoing, walking barefoot for miles to reach their state of origin. The visuals of children cramped in a truck, women carrying luggage on their heads, and toddlers tied to their bodies brought news about their condition rather than playing any 'blame game'. In one of the news items, the news anchor said in English, "*In these difficult times, it is not ethical to debate who is responsible for this plight of workers, but rather to devise a mechanism through which they can reach their destination with ease*". Mojo has presented the difficulty, despair, and plight of migrant labourers in a very reliable and bold manner. It shows how small children, older women, and other family members are forced to go home by crouching into trucks and buses loading on each other. During this, sometimes they lose their lives in an accident, and sometimes a train or bus is put on them. Moreover, if they survive somehow, they die of starvation and exhaustion. They lament, and their dead body is not destined for even the last journey of their life. Mojo sincerely conveys their family's anguish to the audience through their voices to show their plight. Nevertheless, Mojo has never mentioned that the government or any other authority is responsible. It never questioned why they were getting into such a predicament.

- **Morality Frame**: The morality frame has been used less on the Zee News platform. Out of 56 news items from Zee News, only three videos used the morality frame in the news coverage using the word 'naitikta k drishtikon se' (from the viewpoint of morality); the state government should have taken some remedial measures for the poor migrant workers. The word 'naitikita' also occurred in news coverage of the protest by migrant workers on the streets and their clash with the police forces. It was indicated that on moral grounds, the workers should have demonstrated peacefully rather than becoming violent and inviting the state's unnecessary violent and repressive attitude. Religion was brought into the picture in another news coverage that gave reference to the alleged spread of the virus due to social gatherings of the Muslim community and hinted at a similar occurrence due to overcrowding of migrant workers – 'Musalmano ki tara en mazduro ko bhi khatra ho sakta hain lekin yeh mazdoor es baat se anjaan hain'. (The workers are unaware that they could meet a similar fate to the Muslims.) This became another ground for the news channel to consider that the irresponsibility

of the workers in not following the COVID protocols will aggravate the crisis. Towards the end of the news, social prescriptions were given regarding how the migrant workers ought to behave in such a critical situation.

On the other hand, the MOJO channel did not use the word '*naitikta*' but primarily referred to humanity ('*manavikta*'). To quote the news anchor from MOJO channel - "*We are going to remember this image of a worker crouched, driven by poverty, fear, panic, and often being orphaned by the state. This image will never be erased from the memory of humanity*". In another instance, the news anchor mentions, "*On humanitarian grounds, the government should note that they are not workers of a particular state but citizens of India, and more importantly, individual human beings*". The MOJO channel referred to religion only once in news coverage of Anwar, a migrant worker who lost his life due to hunger and starvation while walking to his native place in Uttar Pradesh. There have been no moral prescriptions in the MOJO channel about how migrants should behave during the pandemic.

- **Power Frame**: Regarding the power(less) frame, Zee News talked about the abuse of power by the state government, particularly the Delhi government. Often it blamed the state government for every problem of the workers, giving a political dimension to the human crisis – "*Dekhiye Satta ki taqat ne en majdooron ko kaise bebas aur lachar kar diya hain. Dilli Sarkar apne bal prayog se en majdooron pe lathi charge karwaya*". (See how the lust for power by the Delhi government has left the workers helpless on the roads, and with the use of power, there has been a lathi charge on them.) The news also claimed the state government's plan is visible only on paper. On coming to the ground, it is found that the labourers are helpless and in despair, and no facility is being provided to them. However, if the central government imposed the lockdown across the country, it is not clear where the responsibility of the central government lies. Zee News ignores this. Overall, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Zee News pays more attention to the leaders' rhetoric by ignoring the root cause of the problem. The powerlessness of the migrant workers was understood through the lens of wrongdoings of the state governments, particularly those governments where the ruling party at the centre does not form the government. The entire focus of the MOJO channel under this frame was on the powerlessness of the migrant workers. It has tried to show the problem of migrant labourers, their difficulty, their sorrow, and their pathetic condition very deeply and through their words. The problematic situations and hurdles faced by the migrant labourers during their return to home are very succinctly presented as they cook food, cook tea, boil milk for the children on the way beside the road and reach their home after travelling thousands of kilometres while holding their child on their shoulders, be it rain or storm or thunder they have to move to achieve their destination by breaking every obstacle and facing every hardship. In one of its news coverage, Mojo has shown their (workers) helplessness and poverty, pointing to the fact that poor labourers do not have slippers on their feet, the migrant labourer making arrangements for food by selling their resources, mobile phones, and gas cylinders and doing menial work in slums. It highlighted the temporary nature of their work. They do not have proper employment. Mojo has shown the class struggle between the business and labour classes, pointing to poverty. It was reported that the workers were not given their salaries, and the factory owner forced them to leave. The power struggle is not between the workers and the government but, most notably, between the workers and their employers, which comes under the economic frame.

- **Economic Impact Frame**: The economic impact of the pandemic on the government's financial condition was discussed through the money spent by the government in experimenting with the remedy for the virus in the form of vaccines. Zee News also highlighted the effect of COVID on the downfall in the share market. There was less discussion on the economic consequences, and more on the politics played during the pandemic. The MOJO channel brought out stories of migrant

workers through their economic conditions. Most of them were thrown out of their jobs without being paid for their work, and their economic hardship grew as they had to spend their little savings on returning to their native place. The economic consequences of the pandemic were mentioned in the MOJO channel by taking into consideration the fact that the migrant workers are deprived of the public welfare schemes such as Public Distribution Service(PDS), as they would not have an identity card or any document provided by the state, hence considered to be an 'outsider' in their native place. This has worsened their economic situation to a more significant extent.

V MOVING BEYOND THE FRAMES: CONCLUSION

The different ways of representation in both news platforms have enormous implications towards understanding the political economy of communication and re-thinking the neutrality and objectivity of news. Zee News, being guided by the organisation's rules and having a political affiliation with the ruling party, has decided not to question the central government. Its main target is the apathy of the state governments. News is manufactured in these studios and media organisations where its objective character of putting facts before the audience is scrutinised. It presents the plight of the workers and demands an immediate solution from the state government. It compels one to question – Is migration a new problem? Certainly not. For the last 70 years, unskilled working-class people have been moving from one place to another for their livelihood. What are the rights of such migrant workers? Why is there no policy to monitor such a crisis among the workers? There are many more questions that the media organisation does not engage with, instead of putting them aside.

On the other hand, Mojo frames the issue of migrant labourers by blending them all, reflecting on their economic status, cultural perspective, way of life, social status, political participation, and work oppression. It has told its story to the people while blending their cultural backgrounds. The Mojo shows how the migrant labourers are forced to flee in this calamity by packing their petty belongings, working tools, clothes, etc., in a small bag and bucket. In this way, the Mojo shows their belongings and ability to work as if their whole world is contained in these small buckets and bags. With this, it wants to show how compulsive they are and how they work in unskilled areas. Mojo shows the actual conditions of migrant labourers. It reports how they were compelled to move without food, water, or transportation facilities. During the journey, they sometimes succumbed to death due to rail and road accidents or starvation, exhaustion, and hunger. It never passed any judgment or opinion on who is responsible for migrant workers' suffering. It proposed complete freedom for the public to think about the situation and form their own opinion about who is responsible for the plight of migrant workers.

The finding of this study also indicates that migrants' issues receive emotional and opinion-based coverage. It does not seek the root cause of the problem. Nor has there been talk about the rights of migrants, nor any constitutional provisions to protect the interests of migrant workers. Furthermore, there is no discussion about the government scheme, initiatives, and policy measures to address the problem of migrant workers. There is no coverage regarding mental health and psychological distress, which the migrant workers have gone through during the lockdown and isolation. To ensure the employment of migrant workers after returning to their home state for their livelihood and sustenance. There should be more priority on this angle, but no attention has been paid towards their rehabilitation.

REFERENCES

[1] Agarwal S, Sarkar S (2022). Topical analysis of migration coverage during lockdown in India by mainstream print media. PLOS ONE 17(2): e0263787. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0263787

[2] Breman, J. (2020). The Pandemic in India and Its Impact on Footloose Labour. *Indian Journal of Labour Economics.* 63, 901–919. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41027-020-00285-8

[3] Census of India (2011) Census schedule: household. Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, New Delhi

[4] Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis: An essay on the organisation of experience*. New York: Harper & Row.

[5] Guru, G. (2020). A Tragic Travelogue. *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol.LV No.19: p. 9.

[6] Iyenger, S. (1991). *Is anyone responsible? How television frames political issues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

[7] Jesline, J., Romate, J., Rajkumar, E. *et al.* (2021). The plight of migrants during COVID-19 and the impact of circular migration in India: a systematic review. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 8, 23.

[8] John, Ekatha Ann and Kapilashrami, Anuj (2021). Victims, villains and the rare hero: Analysis of migrant and refugee health portrayals in the Indian print media. *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*, VI (2). pp. 145-155. DOI https://doi.org/10.20529/ijme.2020.131

[9] Neuman, W.R., Just, M.R., & Crigler, A.N. (1992). *Common knowledge. News and the construction of political meaning*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

[10] Pan, Z., & Kosicki, G.M. (1993). Framing Analysis: An approach to news discourse. *Political Communication*. Vol. 10: 59 – 79.

[11] Raj, A., Anjali, R., & Goswami, M. P. (2021). Migrants, miseries, and media: measuring the prominence of the miseries of migrants in the coverage of leading Indian English dailies during COVID-19. *Media Asia*, *48*(1), 5–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/01296612.2021.1881283

[12] Semetko, H.A. & Valkenburg. (2000). Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News.

[13] Simon, R., & Baby, B. B. (2023). Media Representations of the Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown on Migrant Labour in India. *Migration and Diversity*, *2*(1), 35–48. https://doi.org/10.33182/md.v2i1.2941

[14] Shahare B (2020). Covid-19 lockdown and fate of migrant labour in Delhi. J Adv Res Humanit Soc Sci. 7(1):9‑13

[15] Shome, R. (2021). The long and deadly road: the COVID pandemic and Indian migrants. *Cultural Studies*, *35*(2–3), 319–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2021.1898033

[16] Srivastava R (2020) Understanding circular migration in its nature and dimensions, the crisis under lockdown and the response of the state. IHDI WP IHDI WP 4:1‑30

[17] Suresh, R., James, J., & R.S.J., B. (2020). Migrant Workers at Crossroads–The Covid-19 Pandemic and the Migrant Experience in India. *Social Work in Public Health*, *35*(7), 633–643. https://doi.org/10.1080/19371918.2020.1808552

[18] Van Dijk, T.A. (1988). *News as discourse*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Role of Women in Agricultural Decision-Making: A Study of Women's Participation in Rural Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh

Sanjeev Kumar[1], Sanjeet Singh[2]

[1]Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Shahpur (Himachal Pradesh) India.
[2]Head, Dept. of Economics, Central University of Himachal Pradesh Shahpur (Himachal Pradesh) India.

ABSTRACT

Background: Women have always played a significant role in agriculture history, and have contributed significantly to a variety of farming and agricultural activities such as tillage/preparation of land, sowing, weeding, harvesting, and post-harvest management. However, they play a negligible role in the decision making processes as they are either dominated by men or inhibited by sociocultural norms and economic inequalities. Women are still lack access to indispensable agricultural choices such as crop selection, resource allotment, financial management and market access. **Objective:** *This study focuses on the extent of women's involvement in decision-making related to agriculture in the rural areas of Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh, especially in its Nadaun block. It also aims to find out the key constraints to women's decision-making power and how they could potentially become an empowered force.* **Methods:** *Through multistage random sampling, the study included 80 numbers of farm women from Bharial and Dar villages of Nadaun block. Structured personal interviews were used to collect the data which was descriptively analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis each determined the factors influencing women in decision making.* **Findings:** *The findings show that even though women are involved in operations on the farm, their share in decision making is very low. Just 25% of women are involved in crop selection, 10% of decisions about finances. Low education, lack of land ownership, restricted mobility and patriarchal norms are among the biggest barriers. Nonetheless, access to agricultural training (r = 0.62) and financial resources considerably strengthens the decision-making power of women.* **Conclusion:** *It is critical to focus on addressing socio-cultural barriers, enhancing women's access to education and financial resources, and creating enabling policies in order to bridge the gender gap in agriculture. Empowering women in decision-making will improve agricultural productivity, strengthen food security and promote economic development in rural areas.*

Keywords: Women in Agriculture, Decision-Making, Agricultural Participation, Gender Roles, Rural Development, Socio-Cultural Barriers, Women Empowerment, Patriarchy in Farming

I INTRODUCTION

The Indian Economy relies heavily on Agriculture, where almost 50% workforce in India is employed in this sector which contributes 17% to the nationally owned revenue (GDP) of India (Deshpande, 2017). India is one of the largest producers of several agricultural products such as wheat, rice, sugarcane, cotton, jute, cereals, groundnuts, tea, etc. It is also a major producer of spices, fruits, vegetables and dairy. In India, the agricultural sector depends hugely on monsoon rains for irrigation, and a wide variety of crops can be ternalised in a diverse climate and soil conditions. The Kharif season (June to October) and the Rabi season (October to March) is the two most essential agricultural seasons in India (hardacre et al., 2015). In many areas, traditional farming methods (e.g, plowing by oxen) are still predominant, but modern techniques have been introduced to improve production (e.g., use of irrigation systems and genetically modified seeds) (Kumar et al., 2009). While there are many

government initiatives to increase crop yield and improve the lives of farmers, challenges continue in the form of low productivity, lack of access to capital and technology, and the impact of climate change. In India women a major workforce in agriculture. From soil preparation to post-harvest activities, rural women play an active role in agricultural production (Ahmed & Hussain, 2004). They are responsible for field cleaning, sowing, weeding, harvesting and threshing, and grain storage. Household management (SOFA Team & Doss, 2011); Women are also involved in animal husbandry, food processing, and wage labour in agricultural enterprises. It is estimated that women perform more than 70% of the total farm work and comprise ~60% of the farming population (Choudhary & Singh, 2003). But women's contributions, which play such an essential role, often remain unknown, and they are seen as unpaid labour instead of decision-makers. Over the time, they are mischaracterized as economically inactive women, whose role is only to support their male counterpart but not involved in the agricultural decision-making process (Samanta, 1994).

There are different socio-economic and cultural reasons for women being left out of decision making in agriculture. Many farm women are uneducated and have restricted access to modern technologies in farming, which hinders their capacity to make knowledgeable decisions (Katiyar et al., 2008). Moreover, their mobility and authority are limited by patriarchal norms and traditional gender role expectations, which contribute to maintaining male domination in decisions (Damisha & Yohanna, 2007). These limitations also limit a substantial role for women in agricultural planning, resource allocation and marketing decisions which marginalizes their contributions in agriculture.

Nonetheless, recent efforts such as training schemes, self-help groups and community-based organisations have aimed to promote women's agency and encourage their participation in decision-making (Enete & Amusa 2010). According to research, improving women involvement in decision making regarding agriculture results in better productivity, food security and living conditions (Tsegaye et al., 2012). Acknowledging and incorporating women's roles in agricultural planning is critical for promoting gender equality and sustainable rural development. In light of this, the following study aims to investigate the extent to which women participate in agricultural decision-making throughout India and ascertain the barriers that prevent their full potential from being reached. The paper also discusses potential approaches to integrate gender aspects in agriculture decision-making, with the ultimate goal of equitable and sustainable agricultural development.

(a) Status of Women in Agriculture Globally
Women globally are a pivotal part of the agricultural workforce, with an estimated 43% of the agricultural workforce in developing countries being female (FAO, 2021). There is, however, wide variation in female participation: women make up approximately 50% of the workforce in both Eastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa but only 20% in Latin America (Global Agriculture, 2024). Yet, even with this significant level of participation, women encounter a plethora of obstacles that restrict their productivity and economic success. For example, variations in legal and cultural frameworks mean that significantly fewer women than men have access to land ownership, with under 20 % of landholders being women across much of the world (FAO, 2021; Global Agriculture, 2024).

In developing countries, women are responsible for 60–80% of food crops globally (Global Agriculture, 2024). Yet, they frequently do not have access to basic inputs like agricultural extension and financial assistance. Only 5% of agricultural extension services target female farmers (FAO, 2021), and just 10% of total aid for agriculture goes to women (Global Agriculture, 2024). This is a gender gap that not only affects the livelihoods of many women but has implications on food security and the economy at large.

Covid-19 pandemic aggravated existing inequalities, resulting in a higher number of job losses in agrifood systems for women than men (FAO, 2021) Women's agricultural work is often informal and part-time, making them more susceptible to economic shocks. Commenting on this gap would be an important step to help improve as women empowerment and had a positive impact on the overall agricultural productivity. Global agricultural productivity could be increased by 20–30% per year if the gender gap was closed (Global Agriculture, 2024).

(b) Status of Women in Indian Agriculture
World over, women make of about 33% of agricultural work force, and is the back bone to food production as well as economy in rural areas (FAO, 2021). Indian women, however, despite their vital contributions, are plagued by major barriers to land ownership and access to resources. Publishing data is often limited to women inheriting or owning the legal title to land, which results in the marginalization of women only about 13% of landowners are women (FAO, 2021). Since they do not own land, they have limited ability to invest in farming practices that would improve productivity.

Indian agriculture employs women mostly in subsistence farming and most of these works under low wages, high workload and adverse condition. They frequently engage in unpaid work on family farms and poor access to agricultural training or extension services (FAO, 2021). Furthermore, women's roles in households are often defined by cultural norms, limiting their ability to move up economically.

Policy frameworks that enhance women's access to agricultural resources in-sync with policy paradigms for gender equality in decision-making processes is well recognized by the Indian government. Programs like the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, improve women skills, and ensure financial assistance to them (Global Agriculture, 2024). But its implementation is still uneven from state to state. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated challenges for women in agriculture, increasing their caregiving obligations but reducing their economic opportunities (FAO, 2021). Thus, gender equality in agriculture is essential, yet not just for the purpose of improving the livelihoods of women but also for reaching national food security aspirations.

(c) Status of Women in Himachal Pradesh
Women in Himachal Pradesh have a strong presence both in agriculture and in subsistence farming, which is one of the prominent forms of agricultural practices. They play an important role in household food security and carry out a range of agricultural activities including planting, weeding, and harvesting (FAO, 2021). Women represent up to 50 per cent of the agricultural labour force in the state but are facing a lot of challenges, making it difficult for them to participate fully.

Societal norms usually promote the right of inheritance for men, leaving women with minimal power over land resources. Women farmers may, therefore, experience barriers to credit facilities and agricultural inputs needed for productivity growth (Global Agriculture, 2024). Beyond these hurdles, there have been changes to help women farmers. Government programs such as the Himachal Pradesh State Rural Livelihoods Mission aim to increase women's access to resources such as training programs and funding (FAO, 2021). These programs empower women and help them develop their skills as well as empower self-help group formation to organize collective action among women farmers.

And local organizations have played a key role in advancing women's rights when it comes to agricultural policies. They promote more gender-sensitive strategies that account for the specific challenges women face and their indispensable role in agriculture. But in account of these initiatives is not uniform in all regions of Himachal Pradesh. Women farmers in Himachal Pradesh have been further beleaguered by a persistently COVID-19 pandemic. The rise in domestic responsibilities during lockdowns has affected their capacity to engage actively in agricultural activities (FAO, 2021). Hence, specific interventions that tackle the challenges of economic empowerment and social norms are necessary to promote the gender equality in agriculture at the state level.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

(a) Role of women in agricultural decision-making
Women are vital players in agriculture, but socio-economic and cultural barriers limit their involvement in decision-making. While women play an essential role in the agricultural economy of a household, they are often less involved in some important decisions regarding agricultural production such as whether to land preparation, sowing, weeding, harvesting, and post harvest management as they are responsible for agricultural activity in the farm (Aggarwal, Sharma, & Sharma, 2013). Research has shown repeatedly that women are often for countries to have equal access to critical farming resources like land, finance, and modern agriculture technologies due to gender-specific disparities.

(b) Constraints Faced by Women in Decision-Making
This includes the multiple challenges when it comes to women working in agriculture, including the dual burden of both farm and domestic responsibilities. Amin et al. (2009) mentioned that, in addition to physical farm labour, women in agriculture can be involved as caretakers through household chores like cooking, child care, and even animal husbandry, which to some extent curtails their participation in decision making. This dual role has far-reaching implications for their participation in agriculture leadership roles.

A major obstacle to women's participation in agricultural decision-making is their lack of access to resources. In many parts of the world, particularly rural India, studies indicate that women have, at best, little or no control over the ownership of land, access to financial credit and the inputs necessary for them to farm. Johansson et al. (2010) also found that women who worked on a family farm were often unpaid, their work was undervalued and their power over decisions was limited. Even with the right to own or administrate land or property, women have less financial freedom to make choices about strategic farming?

(c) Socio-Cultural Barriers
Women are often marginalized from participatory agricultural decision-making due to traditional gender norms and patriarchal frameworks. They are also conditioned to role subordinate to their men and are found to lack confidence and decision-making for their overall well-being. In a similar vein, Lal & Khurana (2011) argued that while initiatives focused on women's empowerment have made strides, entrenched gender biases remain freedom inhibitors particularly in rural environments.

Women become even more effective farmers when they receive agricultural education and training, yet this is lacking. Most farm women do not have a formal education and technical knowledge of modern agricultural practices. As a result, they are less able to make informed decisions about their farming activities and participate in the policy-formulation process (Pathak, 2022). Sharma (2013) similarly found that the lack of extension services provisioned for women, is a related to their low participation in agricultural decision-making

(d) Women's Participation in Agricultural Decision-Making
Research indicates that closing the gender gap in agricultural decision-making increasing women's voice and control on the farm can dramatically increase agricultural productivity and improve household food security. Research done by Patil & Suresh Babus (2018) found out that the farms where women were involved in decision-making process the farms had higher crop yields and resources were managed more efficiently. In the same vein, Mohapatra (2012) has stated that if women are empowered in agriculture, it is likely to lead to better nutritional status of families and overall economic development. Moreover, Tsegaye et al. (2012) and others have emphasized that when women participate in decision-making, the efficiency of farms improves because women make more sustainable decisions about seed choice (i.e., which seed to plant), fertilizer use, and irrigation. In areas where women exercise greater control over agricultural resources, farm incomes and household welfare are significantly enhanced (Enete & Amusa, 2010).

(e) Efforts to Promote Gender Inclusion in Agricultural Decision-Making
Over the last few years, several governmental and non-governmental initiatives for gender equality in agriculture have been undertaken. Programmes of training, schemes for financial inclusion, and interventions in policy have been introduced to empower women with resources and a say (Alvi et al., 2021).

These efforts include training from community-based organizations that equip women with technical training in modern farming techniques and financial literacy. These initiatives have been found to be effective in empowering women in developing decision-making skills, such as confidence in the area of agriculture (Godara, Poonia & Jyani, 2014) Empowerment of women through women's self-help groups (SHGs) and cooperatives has further strengthened bargaining power of women along with access to credit facilities.

III OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

(a) To measure the level of participation of women in decision making in agriculture in rural areas of Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh.
(b) To assess the socio-cultural and economic constraints hindering women decision-making role in agriculture and discuss possible measures for their empowerment.

IV RESEARCH QUESTIONS

(a) Research on the level of participation of farm women in decision making in regard to agricultural activities of rural Hamirpur of Himachal Pradesh
(b) What are the key socio-cultural and economic barriers affecting women's engagement in agricultural decision-making and what are the mechanisms to improve their engagement?

V RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(a) Study Area

The study was carried out in Nadaun block of Hamirpur district of Himachal Pradesh, an area with high agricultural activity. The block's geography is agrarian, and maize, paddy, and wheat are the major crops. Various irrigation facilities such as lift irrigation and Kuhals are available in the region which is considered as a major enhancer of agriculture production (HP Biodiversity, HP Agriculture Department).

From within the Nadaun block, two villages, Bharial and Dar, were chosen for the study. Sector to Kharif season maize and paddy farmers are in this village. The role of irrigation and modern agricultural practices is in ensuring better income and food security (Hamirpur District Agriculture Plan, 2021). Dar Village: Farmers traditionally grew all staple crops; however, they are now switching to profitable vegetables and fruits due to better market access and irrigation facilities. (Hamirpur District Agriculture Plan, 2021)

(b) Research Design

This study was carried out through a descriptive research design and the aim is to investigate the extent of women's ability to participate in agricultural decision making and to underscore the socio-cultural and economic barriers that women encounter. This study utilized a mixed-method approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.

(i) Sampling Procedure

The respondents were selected through a multistage random sampling approach, where:

- **Selection of the Block:** Since Nadaun block has high agricultural activity and considerable rural population, it was selected purposively.
- **Selection of Villages:** Two villages, Bharial and Dar, were purposively selected for the study based on their involvement in agriculture and diversity in cropping pattern.
- **Selection of Respondents:** 80 farm women from two villages were randomly taken selecting the same number of respondents from both villages.

(ii) Data Collection

A pre-tested interview schedule was utilised for data collection. As the interview schedule was cutting into two parts: Demographic Information: Age, level of education, land ownership, and household members. There was a role of women in important decision based on crop choice, resource distribution, economic planning, and new technology implementation. Qualitative data was collected through focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with village leaders and agricultural officers to obtain more in-depth knowledge of the challenges and opportunities of women in decision-making.

(c) Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was secured from relevant authorities, while debriefing in informed consent was conducted among all participants prior to data collection. Study participants were given assurances of confidentiality and anonymity in the study results.

VI RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

(a) Socio-Personal Characteristics of Respondents

The socio-personal characteristic of 80 farm women respondents is shown in table 01. Middle-aged women were found to be the largest respondents actively engaged in crop production among the respondents with Age group of 31–45 years having the highest percentage (40%) followed by age group of 46–60 years (31.25%) representing farmers. These are respondents educational status of which 25 illiterate, 31.25 Primary completed, 25 above intermediate and 18.75 (Masters and above). Women in the area have very little formal education (16.25%) and literacy levels are comparatively low, making it difficult for them to participate in decision-making processes or have access to modern farming techniques and financial management. 60% own land and 40% do not. It indicates that a significant number of farm women is landless, which could potentially limit their control over agricultural decisions since ownership is directly proportional to power — who can decide what crop to grow? The marital status data show that nearly all respondents (85%) are married, which implies that their agricultural tasks are closely associated with family tasks. Of the family income per year, the predominant range is in ₹50,000 - ₹1,00,000 (33.75%) which confirms lower economic status and limited financial independence in agriculture decision. The results indicate that women's participation in the decision-making process on agricultural practices is significantly influenced by socio-economic categories including education, ownership of land, and income.

Table 1
Socio-Personal Characteristics of Respondents (n=80)

Variable	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	18-30 years	15	18.75%
	31-45 years	32	40.00%
	46-60 years	25	31.25%
	Above 60 years	8	10.00%
Education Level	Illiterate	20	25.00%
	Primary	25	31.25%
	Secondary	22	27.50%
	Higher Secondary & Above	13	16.25%
Land Ownership	Owns land	48	60.00%
	No land ownership	32	40.00%
Marital Status	Married	68	85.00%
	Widow	7	8.75%
	Unmarried	5	6.25%
Annual Family Income (INR)	Below 50,000	18	22.50%
	50,000 - 1,00,000	27	33.75%
	1,00,000 - 2,00,000	20	25.00%
	Above 2,00,000	15	18.75%

(b) Involvement of Farm Women in Decision-Making in Agriculture

Table 2 shows the scope of women involvement in different agricultural activities. The results further revealed that women primarily engage in labour-intensive activities (e.g., weeding (62.50%) and harvesting (60%), while their involvement in strategic decision-making activities remains low. A good 25% of the respondents take part in crop selection and 37.50% in seed selection, implying that the key decisions that take place related to agricultural planning are still in the hands of menfolk.

However, involvement in fertilizer application (27.50%) and irrigation (18.75%) tends to be lower, which is a result of social norms that restrict women from participating in technical and resource-intensive activities. The findings reflect that financial independence is also absent as only 10% of women are engaged in financial decision-making and just 12.50% in marketing of agricultural products. These data point to an acute gender imbalance in agricultural decision-making; despite their involvement, women appear more active in operational functions than in strategic activities or financial control. Women sitting at the heart of key decisions not only empower them but also accelerate the agricultural sector.

Table 2
Involvement of Farm Women in Decision-Making in Agriculture (n=80)

S. No.	Farm Activities	Involvement of Farm Women Frequency (n)
1	Crop selection	20
2	Seed selection	30
3	Sowing	35
4	Fertilizer application	22
5	Weeding	50
6	Irrigation	15
7	Harvesting	48
8	Marketing of produce	10
9	Financial decisions	8

(c)   Factors Affecting Involvement of Farm Women in Decision-Making
Personal Variables and Women Involvement in Agricultural Decision-making: The correlation coefficient (r-value) between various personal variables and women involvement in agricultural decision-making is as shown in Table 03. There is a positive, low correlation between education level (r = 0.45) and decision-making indicating educated women are more likely to take part in decisions regarding their agriculture. In the same vein, land ownership (r40 = 0.50) demonstrates a strong positive association, implying that women who own land exercise greater authority, over farmland decision making.

The highest positive correlation is access to agricultural training (r = 0.62), highlighting that those women with formal agricultural education or access to knowledge exchange programs in agricultural practices are more empowered to make decisions. Conversely, significant negative correlations are seen in social constraints (r = −0.48) and male dominance in decisions (r = −0.55), confirming that cultural and patriarchal restrictions limit the potential of women to participate in farm-related decisions. The results highlight the need to reduce socio-cultural barriers and improve women's access to education, training and land ownership, thereby increasing their agency in agricultural decision-making.

Table 03
Factors Affecting Involvement of Farm Women in Decision-Making (n=80)

S. No.	Personal Variables	Coefficient of Correlation (r)
1	Age	0.32
2	Education Level	0.45
3	Land Ownership	0.50
4	Annual Family Income	0.38
5	Access to Agricultural Training	0.62
6	Social Constraints	-0.48
7	Male Dominance in Decisions	-0.55

Note: Positive r values indicate a direct relationship with involvement, while negative values indicate a restricting factor.

(d) Major Social Constraints Against Women's Involvement in Farming Decisions
The social constraints that hinder women's involvement in agricultural decision-making are listed in Table 04. A significant barrier identified by 47.50% of respondents as a high-level barrier is the lack of education. Decision making by males is also a major issue, where 52.50% of the respondents indicated it as a high constraint. 55% of Pakistanis assume that women cannot freely choose to leave the house and access available markets and training programs, with cultural limitations on movement (58.75%) and lack of decision-making power cited above.

On the other hand, less financial access (41.25%) and less support from the government (43.75%) are considered as a moderate to high constraints. These findings point to necessary interventions through education, inclusion in financial and economic systems, and policy reforms that promote women's independence for enhanced agricultural productivity.

Table 04
Major Social Constraints Against Women's Involvement in Farming Decisions

Constraints	Low	Moderate	High
	No.	%	No.
Lack of education	12	15.00%	30
Male dominance in decision-making	10	12.50%	28
Limited access to financial resources	15	18.75%	32
Cultural restrictions on women's mobility	8	10.00%	25
Lack of government support/training	10	12.50%	35

VII FINDINGS

The evidence shows that women across the world are active in farming, yet continue to be marginalised when it comes to the decision-making process. The results show that socio-economic and cultural barriers, like low education levels, not owning any land, and the patriarchal nature of post-colonial societies, still hamper women's empowerment.

Although women actively engage in agricultural tasks like weeding (62.50%), harvesting (60%), and sowing (43.75%), their participation in strategic decisions such as selecting a crop (25%) and planning finances (10%) remains low. This is in line with previous research suggesting that the voices of women, despite their contributions to labour, are largely excluded from decision-making agriculture value chains (Amin et al., 2009).

The study notes that education and land holdings have a strong impact on women's financial decision-making involvement. Women with education are more engaged in important decisions (r = 0.45), while land ownership (r = 0.50) gives women the freedom to make decisions. These results are consistent with the findings of other studies that report women with a higher level of education and land ownership are more empowered in agricultural planning (Enete & Amusa, 2010).

Men's negative role (−0.55) and social constraints (−0.48) are the major bottlenecks for women's participation in farming decisions as revealed by the study. Cultural barriers, inability to move, and lack of financial independence all render them marginalised. Similar studies suggest that within patriarchal societies, the role of women is frequently limited to operational rather than leadership tasks (Nain & Kumar, 2010).

Access to agricultural training (r = 0.62), one of the key identified factors, significantly promotes the participation of women. Providing women with technical knowledge and financial literacy through training programs will go a long way in bridging the gap in decision-making power. Several government initiatives like self-help groups (SHGs), microfinance schemes, and women-led cooperatives, can empower the farm women.

VIII CONCLUSION

In addition to emphasizing the pivotal role of women in agricultural activities, the study also sheds light on their struggling position in decision-making processes. Even though women are responsible for nearly 50% of agricultural work including sowing, weeding, harvesting and post-harvest handling, they are still excluded from strategic planning pertaining to crop selection, finance and market access. This exclusion stems from socio-cultural, economic and structural barriers to their participation in agricultural planning and resource allocation decisions.

The study found age, level of education, ownership of land and access to training all play an important role in women getting involved in making decisions. Women who are aged 31-45 years old represent the largest group of agricultural workers but low literacy levels and the absence of formal agricultural training limit the extent to which they can influence decisions on the farm. Land ownership is also important for women's empowerment, as women with land have a much bigger role to play in decisions relating to farming, the study found. However, the fact that over a third (40%) of female agricultural workers are landless, implies that the dependence of the majority of female agricultural workers on male family members means that a considerable percentage do not control crucial farm assets.

This latter point is underscored by the finding that one of the most important constraints in agricultural decision-making remains male dominance. Women have a very low participation rate in financial decision-making (10%) and marketing of produce (12.5%), which continues the trend of the gender gap in agricultural leadership. Another organizational barrier is traditional gender roles, with 58.75% saying this limits their mobility when making farm decisions, or the inability to access financial resources (41.25%).

On the positive side, the study showed that access to agricultural training (r = 0.62) had the highest positive correlation with decision making participation. It indicates that women can play a crucial role in farm-related decisions when they are empowered through training programs, extension services and self-help groups (SHGs). The women from Bharial and Dar villages who started adopting modern farming techniques, particularly in horticulture, with encouragement are moving in a positive direction towards greater economic independence.

Women in agriculture are soenzhyping they affect a large part of the economy, to give some numbers women is the backbone of the smallholder farmers producing more food particularly in developing countries. Women are the backbone of India's agricultural workforce but their contributions are invisible in key policy and planning processes. Environmental efforts to strengthen their educational access, financial independence and leadership roles in agriculture are an economic imperative, not just a gender-related issue.

Thus by empowering women to play an active role in decision making, India can reach the peak of its agricultural industry that would in turn ensure higher productivity, greater food sustainability and also lead to sustainable rural development Closing the Gap in Agriculture: Empowering Women Through Decision-Making

IX RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) **Improving Education and Training:** Creation of agricultural training centres tailored specifically for women to offer technical and financial knowledge.
(b) **Increase Land Ownership Rights:** Policies that strengthen joint land ownership for both spouses can ensure women play more a role in decision-making on what to grow.
(c) **Financial Inclusion:** Access to low-interest agricultural loans and grants is beneficial to farm women as it can enhance their ability to make decisions.
(d) **Promoting women's participation in cooperation:** Women's participation in cooperatives and market linkages should be promoted.
(e) **Policy:** Gender-sensitive agricultural policies must be part of government schemes because women are not only found behind fields ploughing all day.

REFERENCES

[1] Ahmed, N., & Hussain, A. (2004). *Women's role in forestry: Pakistan agriculture.* Agriculture Foundation of Pakistan, Islamabad, pp. 79-81.

[2] Choudhary, H., & Singh, S. (2003). Farm women in agriculture operations. *Agriculture Extension Review, 15*(1), 21-23.

[3] Damisha, M. A., & Yohanna, M. (2007). Role of women in farm management decision-making process: Ordered probit analysis. *World Journal of Agriculture of Agricultural Science, 3*(4), 543-546.

[4] Deshpande, T. (2017). *State of agriculture in India.* PRS Legislative Research, 113, 1-29.

[5]   Enete, A. A., & Amusa, T. A. (2010). Determinants of women's contribution to farming decisions in cocoa-based agroforestry households of Ekiti State, Nigeria. *Journal of Field Actions, 6*(4), 23-29.

[6]   Katiyar, S., Acharaya, G. P., & Tripathi, S. N. (2008). Role of farm women in decision-making concerning farm and home activities. *Rajasthan Journal of Extension Education, 16*, 195-198.

[7]   Kumar, G., Chhetry, N., & Belbahri, L. (2009). Indigenous pest and disease management practices in traditional farming systems in northeast India: A review. *Journal of Plant Breeding and Crop Science, 1*(3), 28-38.

[8]   Samanta, R. K. (1994). The reap less than show. *The Hindu, April 7*, Chennai, India.

[9]   Sangral, C. (2015). Changes in cropping pattern and crop diversification in Jammu and Kashmir. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 20*(4), 7-9.

[10] SOFA Team & Cheryl Doss. (2011). *The role of women in agriculture.* ESA Working Paper No. 11-02. Food and Agriculture Organization, Agricultural Development Economics Division, p. 47.

[11] Tsegaye, D., Dessalegn, T., Yimam, A., & Kefale, M. (2012). Extent of rural women participation and decision-making in seed production activities. *Global Advanced Research Journal of Agricultural Science, 1*(7), 186-190.

[12] Food and Agriculture Organization. (2021). The status of women in agrifood systems. FAO Knowledge Repository.

[13] Global Agriculture. (2024). Women in agriculture.

[14] Aggarwal, H., Sharma, S., & Sharma, R. (2013). A study of agricultural activities performed by rural women and problems faced by them in Jammu district of J&K state. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 3(1)*, 1–3.

[15] Amin, H., Ali, T., Ahmad, M., & Zafar, M. I. (2009). Participation level of rural women in agricultural activities. *Pakistan Journal of Agricultural Sciences, 46(4)*, 294–301.

[16] Enete, A. A., & Amusa, T. A. (2010). Determinants of women's contribution to farming decision in cocoa-based agroforestry households of Ekiti State, Nigeria. *Journal of Field Actions, 6(4)*, 23-29.

[17] Godara, A., Poonia, U., & Jyani, U. (2014). Role of women in decision-making process in agriculture sector: A case study of District Fatehabad. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 4(2)*, 1–9.

[18] Jägerskog, A., & Jønch Clausen, T. (2012). *Feeding a thirsty world: Challenges and opportunities for a water and food secure future*. SIWI Report, Issue 31.

[19] Lal, R., & Khurana, A. (2011). Gender issues: The role of women in the agriculture sector. *International Journal of Business Economics & Management Research, 1(1)*, 29–39.

[20] Mohapatra, K. K. (2012). Women workers in the informal sector in India: Understanding the occupational vulnerability. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 2(21)*, 197–207.

[21] Nain, M. S., & Kumar, P. (2010). A study of women participation and decision-making in farm management. *Journal of Community Mobilization and Sustainable Development, 5(1)*, 67–71.

[22] Pathak, A. (2022). *Rural women in agricultural and household practices: An overview*.

[23] Patil, B., & Suresh Babus, V. (2018). Role of women in agriculture. *International Journal of Rural Studies, 4(12)*, 109–114.

[24] Sharma, Y. (2013). Women entrepreneurs in India. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management, 15(3)*, 09–14. https://doi.org/10.9790/487x-1530914.

[25] Tsegaye, D., Dessalegn, T., Yimam, A., & Kefale, M. (2012). Extent of rural women participation and decision-making in seed production activities. *Global Advanced Research Journal of Agricultural Science, 1(7)*, 186-190.

CALL FOR PAPERS

GUIDELINES FOR MANUSCRIPT

General Format, Page Layout and Margins: Standard Letter (215.9mm x 279.4mm) portrait page set-up should be used. Margins should be 0.75cm at left and right with top 1cm and bottom margin set to 0.75cm. Do not use any headers, footers or footnotes. No page numbers. All main text paragraphs, including the abstract, must be fully (left and right) justified. All text, including title, authors, headings, captions and body, will be in Times New Roman Font. Paper text must be in single columns, font, Size 12 and Line spacing 1.0.

Title: Time New Roman Font 16, bold, centered first alphabet capital.
Dev Nagari 010 Font 18 bold, centered in Hindi

Author: Author name are to be written in 14 pt. Bold & centered in Times New Roman font
Dev Nagari 010 Font 16 bold, centered in Hindi

Abstract: First page, top left column, title bold-left aligned, text from next line, 12 font, Italics and 200-250 words. The text must be fully justified
First page, top left column, title bold-left aligned, text from next line, Dev Nagari 010 Font 14, Italics and 200-250 words. The text must be fully justified

Key words: The keywords section begins with the world, "keyword" in 12pt. Times New Roman, bold italics. There may be up to five keywords separated by commas in times new roman 12 font.

Section & Sub Section Heading: 14 fonts, bold, centered, roman numbered in block capital letters, | text after single space, left aligned sub heading: left aligned numbered small alphabetical within bracket 12 font, bold, text left aligned, single spacing. Introduction and conclusion must be included as separate sections ensure that introduction and literature survey is not more than 15% of total article size.

Dev Nagari 010 fonts16, bold, centered, roman numbered in block capital letters, | text after double space, left aligned sub heading: left aligned numbered small alphabetical within bracket 14 font, bold, text left aligned, single spacing. Introduction and conclusion must be included as separate sections ensure that introduction and literature survey is not more than 15% of total article size.

Figures and Tables: All inserts, figures, diagrams, photographs and tables must be centre- aligned, clear and appropriate for black/white or gray scale reproduction. Figures (eg. Figure 1) must be numbered consecutively, 1, 2, etc, from start to finish of the paper, ignoring sections and subsections. Tables (eg. Tables 1) are also numbered consecutively, 1,2 etc. (Close to text where mentioned).

Reference:(a) Articles in English Language - The Reference section begins with the world, "REFERENCE" in 14 pt.' Times New- Roman, bold, Capital, Centered & should not be numbered. Reference should be numbered in square bracket. Name of Author starting with surname with year of publication in bracket, then Topic, ; Name of Journal/Book in Italics, Volume Number, issue number in bracket, separated by Name of Journal with colons, Name of publisher, page no. as shown in example below.

(b) Articles in Hindi Language - The Reference section begins with the world, "REFERENCE" in 16 pt.' Dev Nagari 010, bold, Capital, Centered & should not be numbered. Reference should be numbered in square bracket. Name of Author starting with surname with year of publication in bracket, then Topic, ; Name of Journal/Book in Italics, Volume Number, issue number in bracket, separated by Name of Journal with colons, Name of publisher, page no. as shown in example below.

[1]   Bowman, M. Peterson L. (1997). A Study on Video Browsing Strategies. *Technical Report*: 13(1), PP.8-12
[2]   Patil G., Forman M.J., (2004) *Handbook of Statistical Studies*, Himalaya Publishers, PP. 213.
[3]   Sannela M.,(2007) Constraint satisfaction & Debugging for Interface User Interfaces, Doctoral Thesis Doctoral Thesis. *UMI Order Number*: GAX95-09398. Univers it" of Washington.

Attention Authors & Contributors for SHODHAYTAN

Contributors for SHODHAYTAN are requested to pay attention to the following:-
- ➢ **Papers should be original work of research in Commerce, Education, Arts, Sociology and Humanities and a certificate must accompany stating that the work is authors own research work and has not been so far published.**
- ➢ **Paper will be accepted only if it is in the format as per guidelines given in this issue.**
- ➢ **In each issue one research paper with direct concern for society and/or raising some burning issue of national interest will be highlighted.**

DEADLINES For Authors Issue	June Issue	Dec Issue
Last date for Receipt of Papers	31 March	30 Sept
Acknowledgment and Suggestions to Authors after Peer Review	30 April	30 Oct
Information for Acceptance to Author	15 May	15 Nov

-- cut here --

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORMAT - SHODHAYTAN

If you are interested in receiving it regularly please fill up the following format and send along with DD/Cheque/RTGS on address given below. Subscription - Rs. 1000/- annual – June & December. For libraries after second copy 50% discount on third copy onwards.

Subscriber's Details:

1.	Name and Designation:...
2.	Organization:..
3.	Mailing Address:..
	                             Pin..
4.	Phone: ....
5.	Fax:..
6.	Mobile No.:.. ....
7.	Email:..
8.	Number of Copies Ordered For ....
9.	Payment Mode- DD/Cheque/RTGS as per following details
10.	Enclose Following (Cross whichever not applicable)
	DD No...for Rs..
	Cheque No...................................... for Rs...
	RTGS Details..
	RTGS on Account no 3227002100050952 in Punjab National Bank, Vidya Nagar, Bhopal, IFSC: PUNB0655300

Date:.................... 		Place:.................. 		Signature & Seal

Note- For prompt action please mail scanned copy of this form and DD/Cheque/RTGS details also on
crig_agu@aisect.org

Send this format at University Address by post
Rabindranath Tagore University-Village Mendua, Post-Bhojpur, Dist.-Raisen, {M.P.) INDIA, Pin-464993
-- cut here --