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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, Bhopal, 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, Bhopal

In this Issue

Vol XII/Issue XXIII

December– 2024

S. No.	Title of Paper	Name of Author	Page No.
1.	Impact of E-commerce on Sustainable Environment- A Systematic Analysis	Bhupesh T K	2234
2.	E-Payment Adoption and User Satisfaction: A Study on Digital Payment Trends	K. Naveen Kumar, R. Renuka	2249
3.	Comprehensive Study on the Interplay Between Promotional Expenditure, Sales, and Profitability in Indian Public Sector Enterprises	Naresh Saini, Ashish Kumar Saxena	2257
4.	Dating and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA): Navigating Privacy in India's Digital Romance Landscape	Nirjhar Sharma	2262
5.	Bridging Realities: Augmented Learning for Inclusive Education	Rippandeep Kaur	2265
6.	Tribal Areas of India: An Overview of Socio-Economic and Cultural Dynamics	Savita Kumari	2276
7.	उच्च शिक्षा में प्रभावी ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के लिए तकनीकी संरचना और समर्थन प्रणाली	सीमा शर्मा	2282
8.	विश्व स्त्री विमर्श में महादेवी को क्यों नहीं मिला सिमोन—सा स्थान ?	इंदिरा दाँगी	2286
9.	निमाड क्षेत्र के प्राचीन भूले बिसरे मंदिरों का ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक अध्ययन	देवास उईके	2291

Impact of E-commerce on Sustainable Environment- A Systematic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

E-commerce experienced a revolution in the manner through which goods and services are bought and sold, consequently leading to significant changes in consumer behavior as well as market dynamics. The environmental impact of e-commerce is increasingly becoming an issue due to the rising number of online shoppers who prefer it for its convenience and availability. E-commerce has positive environmental impacts, such as reducing physical retail footprints, efficient inventory management, consolidated shipping, and dematerialization of goods. However, it also has negative impacts, such as packaging waste, last-mile delivery challenges, high return rates, energy consumption, and resource use. To address these issues, e-commerce companies can adopt sustainable packaging solutions, implement green logistics, reduce return rates, invest in renewable energy sources, and support carbon offset initiatives. Sustainable packaging options, green logistics, and reducing return rates can help reduce the environmental impact of e-commerce. Additionally, investing in renewable energy sources and supporting carbon offset programs can contribute to global sustainability efforts.

Keywords: E-commerce, Environment, Sustainable Packaging, Last-Mile Delivery, Carbon Footprint, Inventory Management, Packaging Waste, Green Logistics, Renewable Energy, Carbon Offsetting, Efficient Shipping

I INTRODUCTION

The environmental impact of e-commerce is increasingly becoming an issue due to the rising number of online shoppers who prefer it for its convenience and availability. Therefore, this research aims to explore how e-commerce affects the environment by examining its energy consumption, waste generation, and carbon emissions. We will analyse the ecological footprint of online shopping by considering different aspects such as manufacturing, packaging, transportation or delivery, among others, hence suggesting sustainable solutions that can be employed to mitigate any negative impacts associated with the system. To help them make effective decisions on developing strategies for greener and more sustainable practices in the digital marketplace, policymakers need to understand how e-commerce affects the environment. E-commerce has revolutionised the way people buy and sell goods, leading to significant shifts in consumer behaviour and market dynamics. As more people turn to online shopping for convenience and accessibility, the environmental impact of e-commerce is becoming a growing concern. This research aims to investigate the environmental implications of the e-commerce industry, focusing on its energy consumption, waste generation, and carbon emissions. By examining the various aspects of e-commerce operations, from manufacturing and packaging to transportation and delivery, we will assess the ecological footprint of online shopping and the potential sustainability solutions that can mitigate its negative effects. Understanding the environmental impact of e-commerce is crucial for policymakers, businesses, and consumers to make informed decisions and develop strategies for greener and more sustainable practices in the digital marketplace.

- (a) **Statement of the Problem** - One significant environmental impact of e-commerce lies in the packaging and shipping processes. With the increase in online shopping, there is a corresponding rise in the demand for packaging materials such as cardboard boxes, bubble wrap, and plastic envelopes. These materials contribute to deforestation, increased greenhouse gas emissions from production, and waste generation. Furthermore, the transportation of goods purchased online adds to the carbon footprint of e-commerce. Delivery trucks emit pollutants, contributing to air pollution and traffic congestion. According to a report by the World Economic Forum, online shopping typically results in more carbon emissions than traditional brick-and-mortar retail due to multiple individual deliveries. As e-commerce continues to grow globally, addressing these environmental challenges is crucial to mitigate its negative impact on the planet. Implementing sustainable packaging solutions, optimizing transportation routes, and promoting greener delivery options are essential steps in reducing the environmental footprint of e-commerce (Alan McKinnon).
- (b) **Need of the study**- E-commerce has experienced significant growth in the past two decades, revolutionizing the way consumers buy products and services. However, this growth has also led to environmental challenges. Understanding the environmental impact of e-commerce is crucial for a sustainable future. The industry has led to increased packaging waste, carbon emissions from delivery, energy consumption of data centers, high return rates, and resource utilization. Research can help develop innovative packaging solutions, optimize delivery routes, adopt electric or hybrid vehicles, and encourage eco-friendly shipping options. Understanding the lifecycle of electronic devices can lead to more sustainable manufacturing processes and recycling programs. Comprehensive research on e-commerce's environmental impacts can inform policy and regulation, guide corporate responsibility, increase consumer awareness and behaviour, drive innovation in sustainable technologies, and ensure long-term environmental sustainability. By addressing these issues, we can develop innovative solutions to minimize packaging waste, reduce carbon emissions, optimize delivery routes, adopt renewable energy sources, reduce high return rates, and promote sustainable manufacturing processes.
- (c) **Objectives**
- To examine the impact of e-commerce on the environment
 - To identify the pros and cons of e-commerce on environmental sustainability
 - To understand ways and means of environmental protection from e-commerce operations.
- (d) **Scope of the study** - A study on the environmental impact of e-commerce operations should be well-defined to provide actionable insights. The objectives include quantifying carbon emissions, energy consumption, and waste generation, comparing e-commerce with traditional retail, identifying key areas contributing to environmental degradation, and exploring potential strategies to mitigate these impacts. The study should focus on the world, Asia-Pacific, and developing countries. Operational scopes include supply chain and logistics, data centres, customer interactions and returns, and Efficient Shipping
- (e) **Methodology** - The methodology for researching the environmental impact of e-commerce is a comprehensive approach that combines quantitative and qualitative research approaches. This comprehensive methodology seeks to evaluate different environmental aspects, including carbon emissions, energy usage, packaging waste, and resource utilisation. Here is a comprehensive overview of the methods that can be employed to carry out such a study.
- (f) **Research Design** -The research design involves several stages: literature search, selection criteria, data extraction, and analysis. In recent years, e-commerce has revolutionised the way we shop, providing unparalleled convenience and access to goods from around the globe. However, as the digital

marketplace continues to expand, it's essential to scrutinise its environmental impact and explore ways to make e-commerce more sustainable. This article delves into the environmental implications of e-commerce and highlights strategies for fostering a greener future.

II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

E-commerce has emerged as a crucial element of the worldwide economy, altering the dynamics of retail and influencing customer behaviour. Nevertheless, researchers, politicians, and business stakeholders have been more concerned about its environmental impact. This study compiles current literature on the environmental consequences of e-commerce, emphasising significant discoveries and pinpointing subjects that require additional investigation.

Sl No	Author(s)	Year	Key Variable(s)	Main Findings	Implications
1	Chen & Dubinsky	2003	Future Directions and Gaps	More studies on the long-term environmental benefits of renewable energy in data centers..	Research on consumer behavior and government policies' role in shaping sustainable e-commerce practices..
2	Edwards et al.	2010	Packaging Waste	E-commerce packaging contributes to global plastic pollution and landfill waste.	Sustainable packaging solutions like biodegradable plastics and reusable systems can reduce environmental impact but face challenges like higher costs and scalability issues.
3	Ramanathan	2011	High Return Rates	High return rates increase transportation emissions and waste.	Artificial intelligence can be used to better predict and manage returns.
4	Dekker et al.	2012	Comprehensive Environmental Impact	E-commerce can reduce physical stores and energy consumption but also introduces challenges like increased packaging waste and transportation emissions.	The net environmental impact of e-commerce depends heavily on specific practices and policies.
5	Song et al.	2013	Warehousing Emissions	E-commerce warehouses consume more energy due to their size and operational demands.	e-commerce warehouses, due to their size and operational demands, consume significantly more energy, leading to higher carbon emissions.
6	Fichtinger et al	2015	Packaging Waste	Online shopping increases packaging materials use, contributing to landfill waste. Sustainable pack.	Sustainable packaging solutions and policies are needed to manage waste effectively.
7	Van Loon et al	2015	Carbon Emissions from Delivery	The "last-mile" delivery process is particularly carbon	Electric delivery vehicles could significantly lower the environmental

Sl No	Author(s)	Year	Key Variable(s)	Main Findings	Implications
				intensive, especially in urban areas..	footprint of e-commerce logistics.
8	Verghese et al.	2015	Sustainable Packaging Solutions	Biodegradable plastics and reusable systems can reduce environmental impact, but widespread adoption faces challenges like higher costs and scalability issues.	It pointed out that the increased use of single-use plastics and cardboard in e-commerce contributes significantly to environmental degradation..
9	Ellen MacArthur Foundation	2016	Packaging Waste	E-commerce's growth has led to a surge in single-use packaging materials, contributing to global plastic pollution and landfill waste.	It emphasized the contribution of e-commerce packaging to global plastic pollution and landfill waste.
10	Golev and Corder	2016	Resource Utilization	Production and disposal of electronic devices have significant environmental costs.	A circular economy approach is important in managing electronic waste..
11	Jones	2018	Digital Infrastructure	Data centres account for about 2% of global electricity consumption, highlighting the increasing energy demand associated with online shopping.	highlighted the increasing energy demand associated with the growth of online shopping.
12	Jones	2018	Energy Consumption of Data Centers	Data centers are energy-intensive facilities, often relying on non-renewable energy sources..	Renewable energy adoption and energy-efficient technologies in data centers are needed to mitigate their environmental impact.
13	Nguyen et al.	2020	Consumer Behaviour	Increase in home deliveries and online shopping contribute to higher carbon emissions.	E-commerce warehouses consume more energy due to their size and operational demands.

III THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

(a) Positive Environmental Impacts of E-commerce

- **Reduction in Physical Retail Footprints** - One of the most significant advantages of e-commerce is the reduction in the need for physical retail spaces. Traditional brick-and-mortar stores require considerable resources for construction, maintenance, and operation. By contrast, e-commerce reduces the demand for such infrastructure, potentially decreasing urban sprawl and the environmental impact associated with building and running retail locations.

- **Efficient Inventory Management** - E-commerce platforms utilize advanced algorithms and logistics systems to manage inventory efficiently. This optimization reduces overproduction and waste, aligning with sustainable practices. Companies can forecast demand more accurately, leading to better resource utilization and minimizing the environmental footprint of excess inventory.
- **Consolidated Shipping** - When implemented effectively, e-commerce can lead to more efficient shipping processes. By consolidating shipments and optimizing delivery routes, e-commerce companies can reduce the number of trips made, thus lowering carbon emissions. Large e-commerce players often use sophisticated logistics networks to maximize delivery efficiency, contributing to a reduction in transportation-related environmental impact.
- **Dematerialization of Goods** - The shift to digital goods, such as e-books, music, and software, exemplifies e-commerce's potential to reduce physical production and distribution. These digital products eliminate the need for physical materials, manufacturing, and shipping, significantly lowering their environmental footprint.

(b) Negative Environmental Impacts of E-commerce

- **Packaging Waste** - The increase in e-commerce has led to a surge in packaging waste. Items ordered online often require multiple layers of packaging to protect them during transit, resulting in excessive use of cardboard, plastic, and other materials. Unfortunately, not all of these materials are recyclable, leading to significant waste and pollution.
- **Last-Mile Delivery Challenges** - The "last mile" of delivery, which involves transporting goods from a distribution center to the final destination, poses considerable environmental challenges. Delivering packages to individual homes is less efficient than bulk deliveries to retail stores, leading to higher vehicle emissions and increased traffic congestion. This inefficiency can negate some of the environmental benefits of consolidated shipping.
- **High Return Rates** - E-commerce is characterized by higher return rates compared to traditional retail. This phenomenon results in additional transportation, handling, and potential waste if returned items cannot be resold. The environmental cost of processing returns can be substantial, adding to the carbon footprint of e-commerce.
- **Energy Consumption** - Data centers supporting e-commerce platforms consume significant amounts of energy. While some companies are investing in renewable energy sources, many still rely on non-renewable energy, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, the energy consumption associated with maintaining and running data centers continues to rise with the growth of e-commerce.
- **Resource Use** - The production and disposal of electronic devices necessary for e-commerce operations, such as servers, computers, and smartphones, have their own environmental costs. The lifecycle of these devices involves mining for raw materials, manufacturing, and eventual disposal, all of which have significant ecological impacts.

(c) Strategies for a Sustainable E-commerce Future

- **Sustainable Packaging Solutions** - To combat packaging waste, e-commerce companies can adopt sustainable packaging materials. Biodegradable, recyclable, and reusable packaging options can significantly reduce the environmental impact. Additionally, innovations like minimal packaging designs and the use of sustainable materials can make a big difference.
- **Green Logistics** - Implementing green logistics solutions is crucial for reducing the environmental footprint of e-commerce. This includes using electric or hybrid delivery vehicles, optimizing delivery routes to minimize emissions, and investing in sustainable fuels. Moreover, encouraging

customers to choose slower, more environmentally friendly shipping options can help reduce the carbon footprint.

- **Reducing Return Rates** - Accurate product descriptions, detailed sizing guides, and customer reviews can help minimise return rates. By ensuring customers receive the right products the first time, e-commerce companies can reduce the environmental impact associated with returns. Additionally, improving the returns process to handle items more sustainably can mitigate negative impacts.
- **Investing in Renewable Energy** - E-commerce companies should continue to invest in renewable energy sources for their data centres and warehouse operations. Solar, wind, and other renewable energy sources can significantly reduce these facilities' carbon footprint. Companies like Amazon and Google are already making strides in this area, setting examples for the industry.
- **Carbon Offsetting Initiatives** - E-commerce companies can invest in carbon offset programs to address their environmental impact. These initiatives compensate for emissions by funding projects that reduce carbon dioxide, such as reforestation and renewable energy projects. By supporting these programs, companies can contribute to global sustainability efforts.

(d) E-commerce companies significantly contribute to environmental pollution

E-commerce companies, due to their extensive logistics networks, packaging demands, and energy-intensive data centres, contribute significantly to environmental pollution. Here are some of the largest e-commerce companies that have substantial environmental impacts:

- **Amazon**
 - ✓ **Global Reach:** Amazon is the largest e-commerce company globally, with operations in numerous countries, contributing to substantial carbon emissions.
 - ✓ **Logistics and Delivery:** The company's extensive network of warehouses and delivery vehicles, especially focusing on fast shipping options like Prime, adds to its carbon footprint.
 - ✓ **Packaging Waste:** Amazon is known for excessive packaging, leading to significant amounts of plastic and cardboard waste.
- **Alibaba**
 - ✓ **Massive Scale:** As one of the largest e-commerce platforms in China, Alibaba handles a vast amount of goods, leading to high emissions from logistics and transportation.
 - ✓ **Energy Consumption:** Alibaba's numerous data centres to support its operations consume significant energy, contributing to its carbon footprint.
 - ✓ **Packaging and Waste:** The company's large volume of sales results in substantial packaging waste.
- **JD.com**
 - ✓ **Extensive Logistics:** JD.com, another major Chinese e-commerce giant, has an extensive logistics network with a high environmental impact.
 - ✓ **Energy Use:** Like Alibaba, JD.com's data centres and warehouse operations require significant energy.
 - ✓ **Packaging:** The volume of transactions on JD.com generates large packaging waste.
- **Walmart**
 - ✓ **Global Operations:** with its extensive online and offline presence, Walmart contributes to pollution through its vast logistics network.
 - ✓ **Packaging:** The company's online sales result in considerable packaging waste.
 - ✓ **Transportation:** Walmart's delivery truck fleet contributes to carbon emissions.

- **eBay**
 - ✓ Global Reach: While not a direct retailer, eBay facilitates a significant amount of global trade, indirectly contributing to emissions through shipping and packaging by its users.
 - ✓ Energy Consumption: The company's data centers require substantial energy to operate.
- **Rakuten**
 - ✓ Logistics: As a major e-commerce player in Japan, Rakuten has a substantial logistics and transportation network that contributes to its environmental impact.
 - ✓ Energy Use: The company's data centres and online operations consume considerable energy.
- **Flipkart**
 - ✓ Logistics and Delivery: Flipkart, a major e-commerce company in India, has a wide-reaching logistics network that contributes to carbon emissions.
 - ✓ Packaging: The company generates significant packaging waste through its sales operations.
 - ✓ Energy Consumption: The company's operations, including warehouses and data centres, require substantial energy.

IV ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

(a) Market Size and Growth of E-commerce Worldwide

Table:4.1
Distribution showing Market Size and Growth of E-commerce Worldwide

year	Retail e-commere sales (in \$ Trillion)
2019	3.361
2020	4.248
2021	4.938
2022	5.542
2023	6.151
2024	6.767
2025	7.391

Source: eMarketer (2022a)

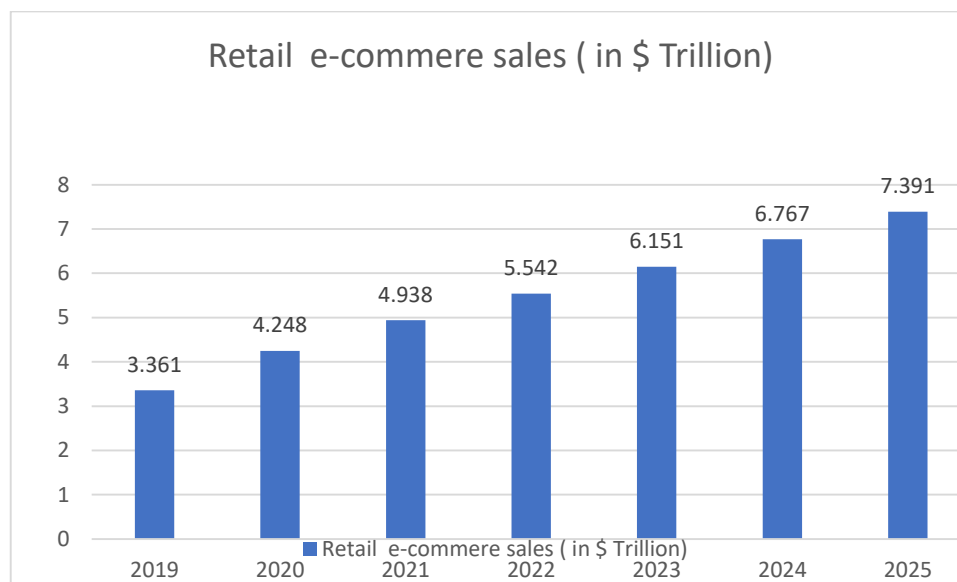


Fig. :4.1 Market Size and Growth of E-commerce Worldwide

Interpretation: E-commerce retail sales have consistently increased, with a significant increase in 2020 from 14.1% to 17.9%. As pandemic restrictions ease, the proportion is expected to continue increasing gradually, with a report from eMarketer (2022a) predicting a 23.6% increase by 2025.

(b) 10 Firms Produced A Third Of Global CO2 Emissions

Fig.:4.2 Distribution of 10 Firms Produced A Third Of Global CO2 Emissions

Country	Co2 Emission(billion Tons)
Saudi Aramco	59.26
Chevron	43.35
Gazprom	43.23
ExxonMobil	41.9
National Iranian Oil Co	35.66
BP	34.66
Royal Dutch Shell	31.95
Coal India	23.12
Pemex	22.65
Petros De Venezuela	15.75

Source: <https://www.statista.com/chart/19594/20-firms-produced-a-third-of-global-emissions/#:~:text=Between%201965%20and%202017%2C%20those,firms%20to%20state%2Downed%20companies.>

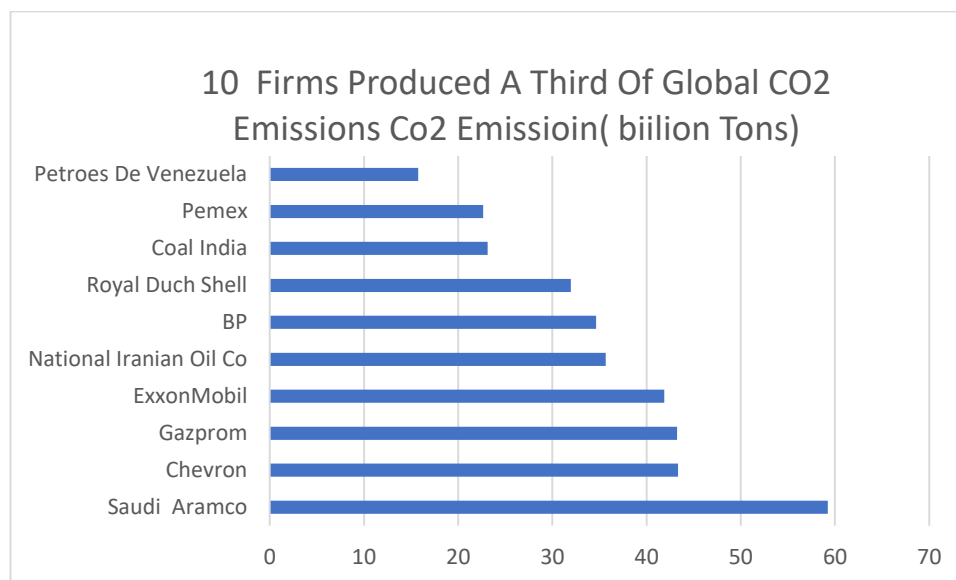


Fig.:4.2 Showing 10 Firms Produced A Third Of Global CO₂ Emissions

(c) Greenhouse gas emission by mode of transport

Packaging contributes to CO₂ emissions, pollution, and landfill waste. In 2020, China's courier handled 83 billion express parcels, generating 1.8 million tonnes of plastic and paper waste. In Hong Kong, 780 million pieces of packaging waste were generated. Companies like Alibaba are developing sustainable packaging to reverse the trend, while the Chinese government is regulating packaging standards.

Table 4.3
Distribution of Greenhouse gas emission by mode of transport

Type of Vehicle	Co ₂ Equivalent per passenger
Cruise Ship	250
Short -haul flight	246
Diesel Car	171
Petrol Car	170
Medium-haul flight	151
Long-haul flight	148
motor bike	114
Bus	97
Plug-in hybrid	68
Electric car	47
Domestic Train	35
Eurostar(international train)	4

Source: <https://www.statista.com/chart/32350/greenhouse-gas-emissions-by-mode-of-transport/>

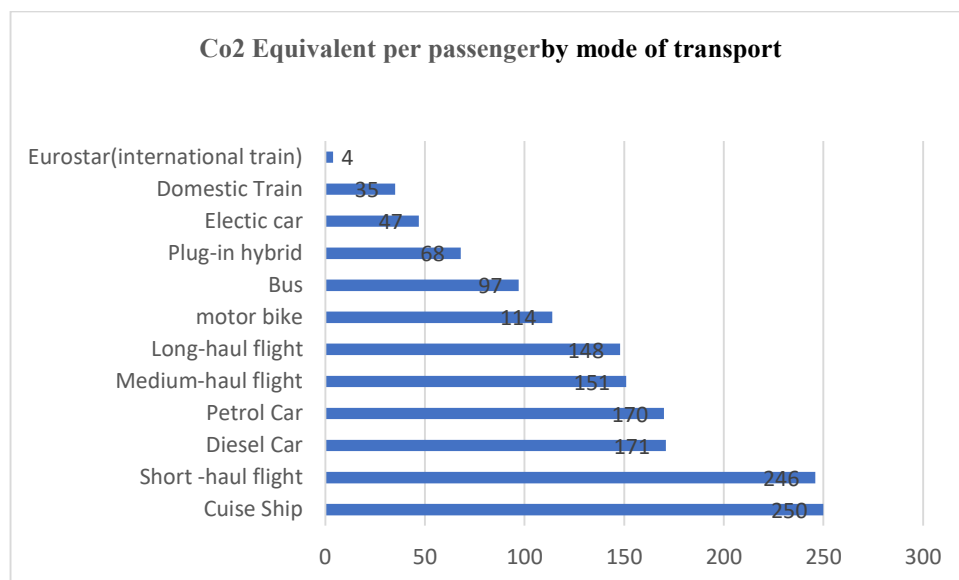


Fig. 4.3 Showing Greenhouse gas emission by mode of transport

Transportation contributes to nearly 25% of global carbon dioxide emissions, with cruise ship travel, domestic flights, and combustion-powered car journeys being the most carbon-intensive modes. Trains have the lowest emissions per passenger and distance travelled. The data varies by country, with electric cars having a lower carbon footprint over their lifetime, but their emissions depend on the country's electricity generation.

(d) Companies with Largest Plastic Footprint

Table: 4.4
Distribution of companies with largest plastic footprint

Company	Operating countries	Plastics footprints
Colocolo	51	13834
PepsiCo	43	5155
Nestle	37	8633
Uniliver	37	5558
Mondelez	34	1171
Mars	32	678
P&G	29	3535
Philip Morris International	28	2593
Colgate-Palmolive	24	5991
Perfetti	24	465

(Source: <https://www.statista.com/chart/23744/branded-plastic-waste-found-in-global-cleanups/>)

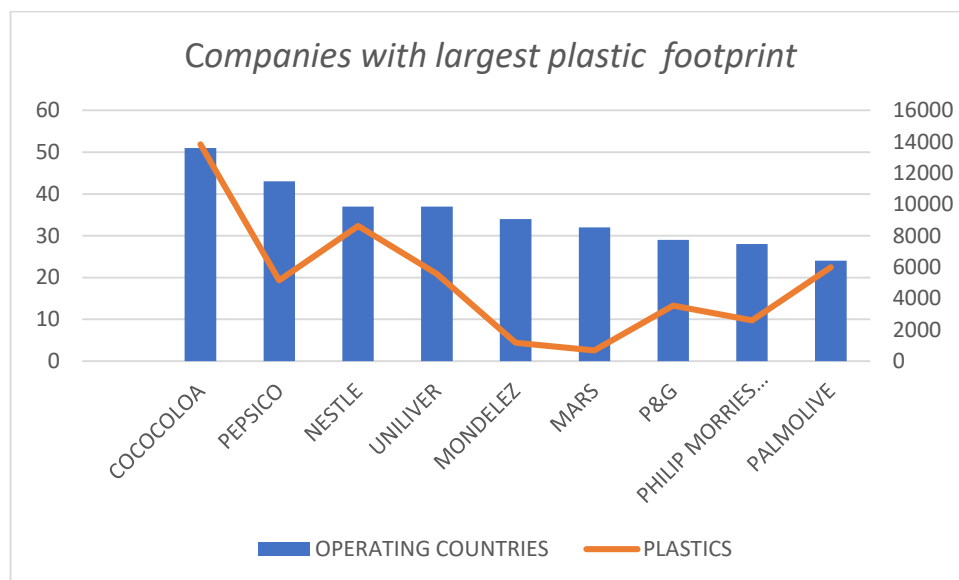


Fig. 4.4 Distribution of companies with largest plastic footprint

Interpretation: The Break Free From Plastic Movement has identified Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and Nestlé as the world's largest plastic polluters for 2023. The group audited 575 brands across 55 countries, collecting 346,000 pieces of plastic waste. Coca-Cola ranked first, with over 13,000 pieces analysed from 51 countries. PepsiCo and Nestlé followed closely with 5,000 and 8,000, respectively. Despite joining The New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, these companies ignore plastic pollution.

(e) Packaging waste generation

Table: 4.5
Distribution of companies with packaging waste generation (in tonnes)

Material	Packaging waste generated	Recycling in EU	Recycling in Other EU Member States	Recycling Outside the EU	Total recycling	Total recycling Rate	Total Energy Recovery	Total Energy and Other Recovery Rate	Packaging waste Total Recovery (incl recycling)
Plastic	3,72,819	26,048	47,929	30,216	1,04,193	28%	2,60,760	70%	98%
Wood (excl. wood repair)*	96,716	49,408		0	49,408	51%	43,501	45%	96%
Metals	Ferrous Metal	52,046	11,482		26,791	38,273	74%		74%
Aluminium Metal	33,834	1,067	4,032	6,760	11,859	35%	1,228		39%
Glass	1,73,378	1,37,717	4,349	2,899	1,44,965	84%	0		84%

Paper & Cardboard	5,09,339	0	1,63,142	2,07,635	3,70,776	73%	92,298	18%	91%
Other (textiles)	706	0	3	129	131	19%	542	77%	95%
Total	12,38,838	2,25,722	2,19,454	2,74,429	7,19,606	58.10%	3,98,329	32%	90%
*Total incl. wood repair	12,75,161				7,55,929	59.30%			91%

(Source: <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/waste/national-waste-statistics/packaging/>)

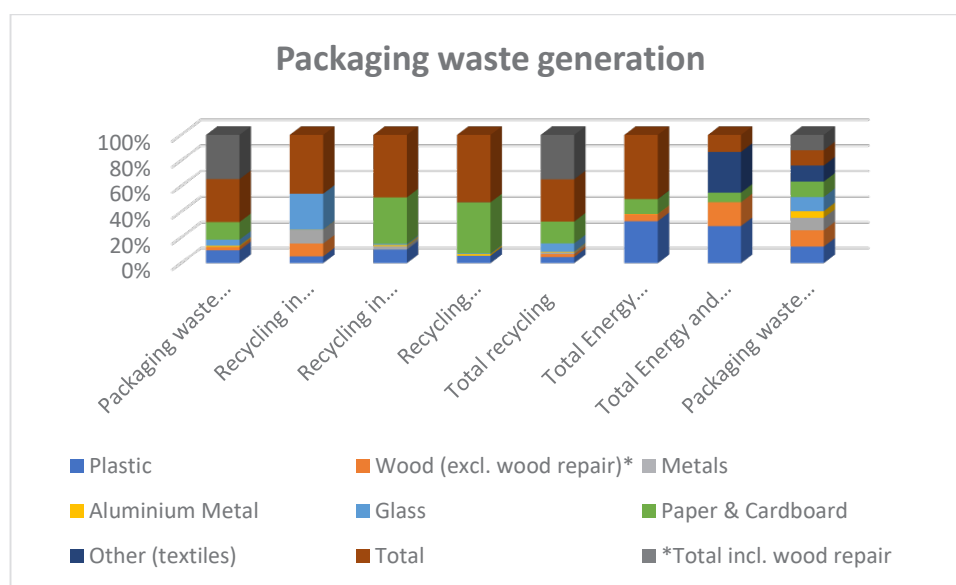


Fig. 4.5 Companies with packaging waste generation (in tonnes)

Interpretation: Packaging, which protects products during transport and provides product information, has become a significant source of waste. In 2021, Europe generated 1.2 million tonnes of packaging waste, with paper and cardboard being the largest components.

V FINDINGS

- In 2022, the United States emitted the highest global transportation emissions at 1.72 billion GtCO₂, with China being the second-largest contributor, despite its average person emitting only 0.62 metric tons.
- Transportation Emissions: Increased home deliveries and online shopping increase carbon emissions. Last-mile delivery is a major source of these emissions.
- Warehousing Emissions: E-commerce warehouses consume more energy due to their size and operational demands.
- Packaging Waste: E-commerce's growth has led to a surge in single-use packaging materials, contributing to global plastic pollution and landfill waste.

- Sustainable Packaging Solutions: Biodegradable plastics and reusable systems can reduce environmental impact, but widespread adoption faces challenges like higher costs and scalability issues.
- Resource Consumption: Data centres account for about 2% of global electricity consumption, highlighting the increasing energy demand associated with online shopping.
- Product Returns: High return rates in e-commerce lead to increased carbon emissions and resource use.
- Comparative Studies: E-commerce vs. Traditional Retail: E-commerce can be more sustainable due to centralised distribution but also has environmental costs.
- Mitigation Strategies: Green Logistics: Optimizing delivery routes, using electric vehicles, and implementing carbon offset programs can reduce the environmental footprint of e-commerce.
- Energy-Efficient Warehousing: Adopting technologies like LED lighting, smart HVAC systems, and renewable energy sources can save significant energy.
- Consumer Behavior: Educating consumers and promoting sustainable shopping practices can help reduce the environmental footprint of online shopping.
- E-commerce retail sales surged in 2020 from 14.1% to 17.9%, predicted to continue growing as pandemic restrictions ease, with a 23.6% increase predicted by 2025.
- Packaging contributes to CO2 emissions, pollution, and landfill waste, with China's courier handling 83 billion parcels in 2020, while companies like Alibaba develop sustainable packaging.
- Transportation accounts for 25% of global carbon dioxide emissions, with cruise ship travel, domestic flights, and combustion-powered car journeys being most carbon-intensive.
- Break Free From Plastic Movement audits 575 brands, revealing Coca-Cola, Pepsico, and Nestlé as world's largest plastic polluters in 2023, despite joining The New Plastics Economy Global Commitment.
- Packaging waste in Europe increased 25% since 2016, with paper and cardboard being the largest components. Recycling also increased, but at 8%.

VI SUGGESTIONS REFERENCES

Follow these recommendations to improve the e-commerce company's sustainability:

- (a) Revise brand ethos: A sustainable brand demonstrates principles and dedication to environmental sustainability. This message should be disseminated throughout the website, blog articles, social media platforms, and content.
- (b) Enforce sustainable shipping practices: As the demand for expedited shipping in the e-commerce industry grows, it is crucial to address the significant environmental consequences of shipping. By procuring boxes in larger dimensions and opting for environmentally friendly materials, your firm can take a proactive role in reducing packaging waste and minimising its ecological footprint, instilling a sense of responsibility and action in your team.
- (c) Reduce your return rate: Retail returns have a detrimental environmental effect, and the rate of retail returns will increase to 16.6% in 2021. To reduce the number of returns, ensuring that all product information is correct and current is crucial and fostering a sense of commitment to sustainability in your business.
- (d) Establish recycling protocols: Opt for sustainable packaging and environmentally friendly materials, such as recyclable cardboard boxes and mailers. Conducting an energy audit may pinpoint specific locations where energy consumption can be decreased.

- (e) Integrate sustainability-focused items: Incorporate environmentally friendly alternatives to current products or those that encourage sustainable lifestyles. This will expand the business's reach to an expanding customer demographic.
- (f) Implement a surcharge at checkout: Acquire carbon offsets to counterbalance environmental effects by investing in projects to diminish greenhouse gas emissions. Businesses can allocate a portion of their budget to offset investments, or they can give customers the choice to contribute by adding an optional offset charge.

VII CONCLUSION

While e-commerce has transformed the retail landscape and offers numerous conveniences, it also presents significant environmental challenges. Balancing the positive and negative impacts requires a concerted effort from e-commerce companies, policymakers, and consumers. By adopting sustainable practices, investing in green technologies, and encouraging responsible consumption, the e-commerce industry can pave the way for a more sustainable future. As consumers, making mindful choices about our online shopping habits can also contribute to a greener, more sustainable world.

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E-Payment Adoption and User Satisfaction: A Study on Digital Payment Trends

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid expansion of digital payment solutions, mobile payment applications have transformed the way consumers conduct financial transactions. Apps such as Google Pay, PhonePe, and Paytm have gained widespread adoption for Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions, offering users a seamless and efficient payment experience. The increasing availability of digital payment options has significantly boosted the number of users relying on these platforms for financial transactions. This study explores customer adoption, usage patterns, and satisfaction levels with e-payment applications. A descriptive research approach has been employed, gathering primary data from a sample of 100 online users. To analyze the collected data, simple percentage analysis has been applied, and findings are visually represented through graphs and pie charts. The study aims to provide valuable insights into user preferences and the overall impact of e-payment applications on digital transactions.

Keywords: E-payment applications, Digital transactions, Customer satisfaction, Mobile payment adoption, UPI transactions

I INTRODUCTION

The Digital India initiative, launched by the Government of India, aims to create a digitally empowered society and a knowledge-based economy. One of its primary objectives is to minimize the reliance on physical documentation and promote a cashless ecosystem where digital transactions replace traditional payment methods. The rise of digital payment systems has been particularly significant since India's demonetization drive, which acted as a catalyst for the widespread adoption of cashless transactions.

To encourage digital transactions, the government has actively promoted payment gateway services and provided various incentives for using digital payment channels. Additionally, the integration of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has revolutionized mobile-based transactions, enabling seamless financial interactions across multiple banking institutions. Even in the absence of an internet connection, users can conduct banking transactions using the Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) protocol, further enhancing financial inclusion.

Several government-led initiatives, such as UPI and BHIM, have played a crucial role in accelerating the shift toward digital payments. Consumers today have multiple options to complete transactions at the Point of Sale (POS) using credit cards, mobile banking applications, and online banking services. With the increasing penetration of the internet and smartphones, digital payment adoption has witnessed exponential growth, particularly in urban areas, where people prefer the convenience, speed, and security of e-payment solutions.

The rapid advancements in technology have further contributed to the popularity of online payment applications. These applications offer users a seamless, efficient, and secure payment experience, significantly reducing the time spent on banking activities. While urban consumers have widely embraced this digital shift, the awareness and adoption of e-payment applications among rural populations remain relatively low. Bridging this digital divide is essential to ensuring inclusive financial growth and empowering all sections of society with the benefits of digital transactions.

II METHODS OF E-PAYMENT

Online customers utilize various digital payment methods to conduct secure and efficient transactions. Some of the widely used e-payment methods are as follows:

- (a) **Credit Card and Debit Card Payments:** Card-based transactions are among the most commonly used and globally accepted digital payment methods. When making a payment, users are required to enter their card number, CVV, and expiration date as part of a security protocol. The CVV helps verify the authenticity of the transaction by matching it with the user's details. While credit cards provide a flexible spending limit, debit cards remain the preferred choice for individuals who wish to manage their expenses within their available bank balance.
- (b) **Bank Transfers:** Bank transfers, facilitated through internet banking, are considered one of the most reliable e-payment methods. This process requires users to authenticate transactions through multiple security layers, including authorization and approval. Widely used in e-commerce and online retail, bank transfers offer a secure and direct way to complete transactions without the need for a credit card.
- (c) **E-Wallet Payments:** E-wallets, also known as digital wallets or virtual wallets, require both the buyer and seller to register and link their bank accounts to a digital wallet application. These wallets allow users to store money digitally and conduct transactions seamlessly via mobile devices or computers. Funds can be added to or withdrawn from an e-wallet with minimal effort, making it a convenient option for cashless payments.
- (d) **Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT):** Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) enables the transfer of funds between different bank accounts through computerized systems, eliminating the need for manual handling of cash. EFT transactions can occur within the same bank or between different banks, ensuring faster and more efficient fund transfers.
- (e) **Internet Banking (Wi-Fi Banking):** Often referred to as online banking, this method allows users to access their bank accounts via the internet to conduct transactions, pay bills, or make purchases. By utilizing the funds directly from their bank accounts, customers can complete online transactions securely and conveniently, making internet banking a widely preferred digital payment method.

III LITERATURE REVIEW

Kaur et al. (2020) conducted a study on the increasing trend of mobile wallets and their role in digital transactions. The study highlighted that while mobile wallets provide ease of use, secure payment options, and faster transaction processing, they have not yet penetrated all markets. The authors pointed out that factors such as lack of awareness, trust issues, and resistance to change continue to hinder the widespread adoption of mobile wallets, especially in rural and less developed regions.

Ghosh (2021) emphasized the transformative impact of digitalization on modern payment systems. The study noted that advancements in information and communication technology (ICT), particularly the widespread adoption of smartphones and improved internet access, have significantly contributed to the growth of digital payments. By eliminating the need for cash transactions and physical banking, digital payment solutions have simplified everyday financial activities for consumers, enabling seamless and efficient transactions.

Vinitha and Vasantha (2018) explored how digital transformation has altered consumer behavior in financial transactions. Their research highlighted that with the increasing accessibility of internet banking and mobile payment applications, consumers are gradually shifting from traditional cash-based transactions to digital platforms. The study further emphasized that user-friendly interfaces, ease of access,

and round-the-clock availability of these platforms have contributed to improved customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

Pillai et al. (2019) investigated consumer preferences regarding digital payments, particularly during periods of cash shortages. Their study revealed that when cash was less available—such as during the demonetization phase in India—consumers preferred using mobile wallets and UPI-based payments for even small transactions. However, the authors also noted that concerns over the security of online transactions acted as a deterrent. Users were particularly skeptical about the safety of their personal and financial information, leading to hesitancy in fully transitioning to digital payment solutions.

Maindola et al. (2018) analyzed the significant developments in the digital payment landscape following India's demonetization policy. Their study highlighted that government initiatives promoting a cashless economy, along with technological advancements, have encouraged many non-banking players to enter the payment industry. The emergence of fintech companies offering innovative payment solutions has further accelerated the adoption of e-payment applications. However, the study pointed out that while urban areas have embraced digital transactions, rural areas still lag due to a lack of financial literacy and trust in online payment systems.

Mishra and Swain (2018) examined the increasing popularity of mobile payment solutions and identified key factors that contribute to their adoption. Their study attributed the growing trend to improved smartphone penetration, affordable high-speed internet, and the demand for faster transaction processing. However, despite these advantages, the study found that a significant portion of the population remains reluctant to adopt digital payments due to concerns related to security, fraud, and the complexity of some payment platforms. The study suggested that increased digital literacy programs and awareness campaigns could help bridge this gap.

Gupta and Arora (2020) applied the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to examine the relationship between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and the intention to adopt mobile payment systems. Their study found a strong positive correlation between ease of use and user acceptance. When users found digital payment platforms easy to navigate and beneficial for transactions, they were more likely to integrate them into their daily financial activities. The study also highlighted that attitudes toward mobile payments significantly influence adoption rates, suggesting that fintech companies should focus on user-friendly designs and seamless transaction experiences.

Mishra (2020) explored how advancements in wireless technology have transformed the digital payment landscape. The study highlighted that businesses are increasingly integrating e-payment solutions to enhance brand differentiation, improve customer satisfaction, and drive sales. The research further revealed that digital payment platforms have expanded beyond traditional banking and finance to include sectors such as telecommunications, retail, and IT services. A key takeaway from the study was the exponential growth of Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM), which witnessed a threefold increase in transaction volume within a single financial year (2019–2020). This growth indicated a rising trust in government-backed digital payment solutions.

Singh (2020) investigated the impact of technological advancements on mobile commerce and online shopping behavior. The study emphasized that mobile payment systems have made online shopping more convenient, leading to increased consumer adoption. However, the study pointed out that while initial adoption rates were high, user engagement after the first few transactions declined due to concerns related to transaction security, payment failures, and lack of personalized user experience. This highlighted the need for service providers to focus on post-adoption user engagement strategies to ensure long-term usage.

Pal et al. (2020) examined the trade-off between the convenience of mobile payments and the risks associated with online transactions. The study found that while users appreciated the speed and ease of digital transactions, concerns over cybersecurity threats, financial fraud, and unauthorized access to sensitive information created hesitation. The authors stressed that for mobile payment platforms to achieve sustained adoption, service providers must strengthen security measures, such as two-factor authentication, biometric verification, and end-to-end encryption, to build consumer trust.

IV OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (i) To explore the key factors influencing customers to adopt online payment applications.
 - (ii) To identify the most commonly used digital payment platforms among consumers.
 - (iii) To analyze the demographic trends, particularly the age groups, that exhibit the highest usage of online payment applications.
- (a) **Need for the Study-** The rapid digital transformation of the financial sector has led to widespread adoption of online banking applications, fundamentally altering how consumers engage with financial services. While these platforms offer enhanced convenience, security, and efficiency, they also present challenges related to user experience, cybersecurity concerns, and transaction reliability. Understanding customer perceptions of online banking applications is crucial for financial institutions, policymakers, and technology developers to optimize digital banking solutions and address user concerns effectively. This study is essential in identifying key factors influencing user satisfaction, trust, and adoption of digital banking services, thereby contributing to strategic improvements in the sector.
- (b) **Scope of the Study-** This research focuses on analyzing customer perceptions of online banking applications in Hyderabad and Secunderabad. It examines the advantages and challenges faced by users, providing insights into factors such as ease of use, security concerns, transaction success rates, and overall user satisfaction. The study is designed to offer valuable inputs for banking institutions, fintech companies, and regulatory bodies in refining their digital strategies and enhancing user engagement. Furthermore, the findings contribute to academic literature on digital banking adoption, offering a foundation for future research in the evolving landscape of financial technology.
- (c) **Research Methodology-** This study was conducted in Hyderabad and Secunderabad, focusing on customer perceptions of online banking applications. The primary objective was to evaluate both the advantages and challenges associated with these platforms. A structured research methodology was employed to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.

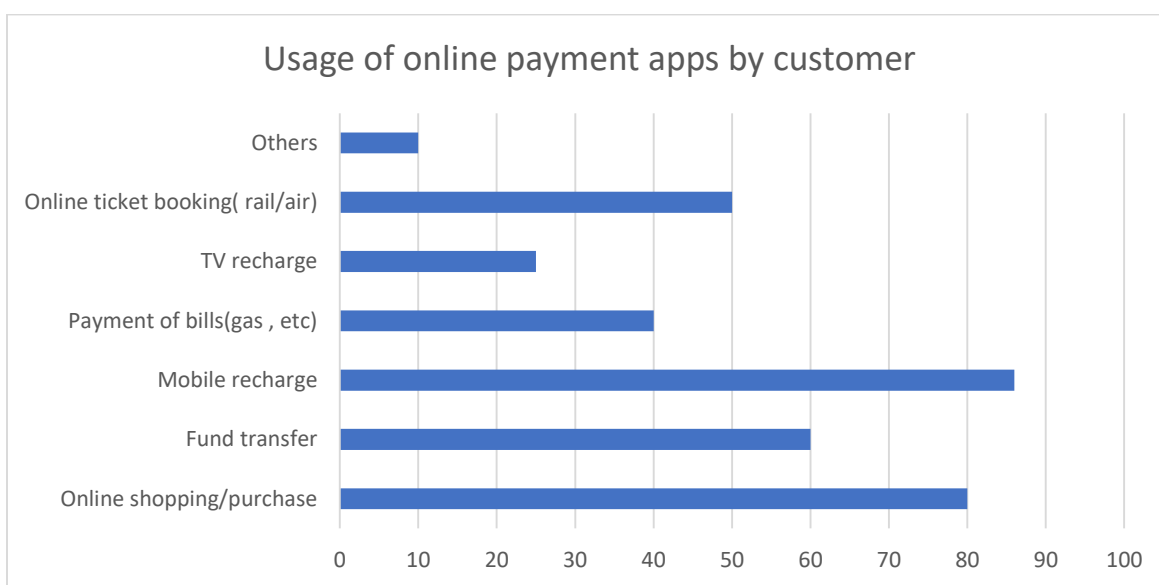
A total of 100 respondents were selected as the study sample. The sampling technique adopted was random selection, allowing researchers to gather unbiased insights from users within the defined geographical area. The data collection process involved obtaining direct feedback from customers regarding their experiences with online banking applications. The study further examined user sentiments to assess the statistical significance of the observed trends.

By analyzing consumer responses, the research aimed to provide meaningful insights into the adoption, usability, and concerns associated with online banking applications. The findings contribute to a broader understanding of digital financial services and their impact on user behavior.

V DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1
Usage of Online Payment

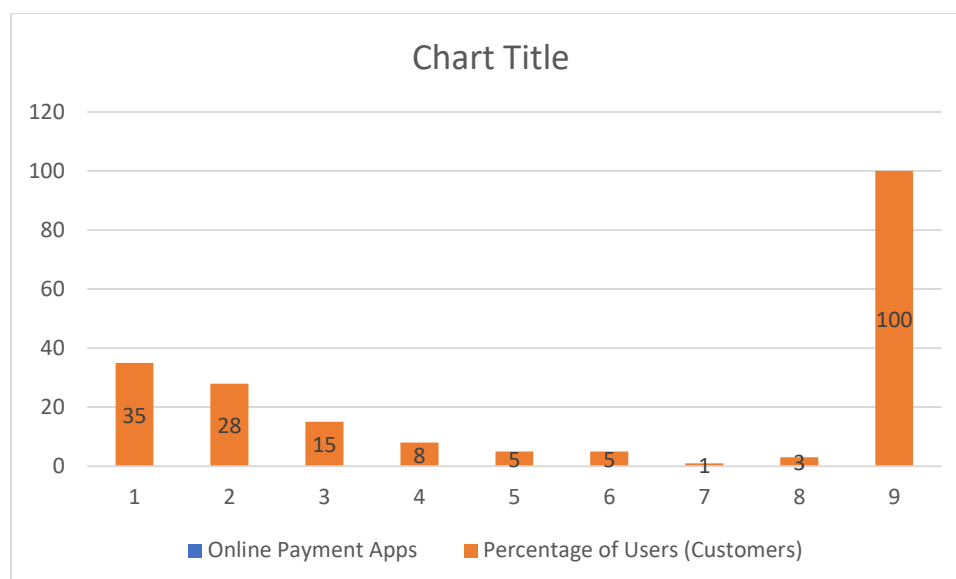
Cause for using online payment apps	Percentage of respondents
Online Shopping/Purchase	80
Fund Transfer	60
Mobile Recharge	86
Payment of Bills(Gas , etc)	40
TV Recharge	25
Online Ticket Booking(Rail/Air)	50
Others	10



- Interpretation-**The data indicates that mobile recharges (86%) and online shopping (80%) are the most common uses of online payment apps, highlighting their convenience for frequent transactions. Fund transfers (60%) and online ticket bookings (50%) also see significant adoption, reflecting a shift towards digital financial services. Utility bill payments (40%) and TV recharges (25%) have moderate usage, while only 10% use these apps for other purposes. The findings suggest that consumers prefer online payments for speed, accessibility, and ease of use. As digital transactions grow, their adoption across diverse financial activities is expected to increase.

Table – 2
Users of Digital Payment

Online Payment Apps	Percentage of Users (Customers)
Google pay	35
PhonePe	28
Debit card	15
Paytm	8
UPI transaction	5
Internet banking	5
BHIM app	1
Credit Card	3
	100



- **Interpretation-** The data highlights that Google Pay (35%) and PhonePe (28%) are the most widely used digital payment platforms, indicating their strong market presence and user preference for seamless transactions. Debit cards (15%) remain a significant mode of payment, reflecting continued reliance on traditional banking methods. Paytm (8%), UPI transactions (5%), and internet banking (5%) have moderate adoption, showing a gradual transition towards digital payments. Credit cards (3%) and the BHIM app (1%) have lower usage, suggesting limited penetration among users. Overall, the findings emphasize the dominance of app-based transactions and the growing acceptance of digital payment solutions.

VI FINDINGS

- The majority of respondents actively use online payment apps, with mobile recharges (86%) and online shopping (80%) being the most common transactions, demonstrating the increasing reliance on digital platforms for daily financial activities.
- Google Pay (35%) and PhonePe (28%) are the most preferred digital payment platforms, highlighting their strong market penetration and user-friendly interfaces.

- (c) Debit cards (15%) and internet banking (5%) continue to play a role in digital transactions, but their usage is lower compared to app-based payment solutions.
- (d) Platforms like Paytm (8%), credit cards (3%), and BHIM app (1%) show comparatively lower adoption rates, indicating potential gaps in market penetration and consumer trust.
- (e) With UPI transactions accounting for 5%, the data suggests a shift towards real-time, seamless payment methods facilitated by Unified Payments Interface technology.

VII SUGGESTIONS

- (a) As digital payment adoption grows, financial institutions and service providers should focus on strengthening security measures and conducting awareness campaigns to build trust and prevent cyber fraud.
- (b) Lower adoption of certain platforms, such as BHIM (1%) and credit cards (3%), suggests a need for targeted promotional strategies and simplified onboarding processes to encourage wider use.
- (c) Digital payment providers should introduce innovative features, such as reward-based transactions and personalized financial services, to enhance user engagement and retention.
- (d) Efforts should be made to expand digital payment adoption in rural areas through financial literacy programs and localized support services to ensure inclusivity.
- (e) Seamless integration between different payment modes (e.g., UPI, cards, and wallets) will improve the overall efficiency and user convenience, driving further adoption of digital transactions.

VIII CONCLUSION

The transition from cash-based transactions to digital payment platforms such as Paytm, BHIM, and PhonePe signifies a fundamental shift in consumer payment behavior. The increasing adoption of mobile banking and online shopping has significantly reduced reliance on physical currency, with digital transactions becoming the preferred mode of payment for both in-person and online purchases. This study has examined the key concerns associated with online payment systems and the evolving consumer acceptance of e-commerce-based financial transactions.

Technological advancements have played a pivotal role in enhancing the efficiency, transparency, and convenience of digital payments, thereby fostering greater consumer confidence. The findings indicate a clear trend toward digitalization in banking, retail, and mobile commerce, reflecting a broader movement away from traditional payment methods. As digital payment systems continue to evolve, their widespread adoption is expected to persist, driven by an increasing number of consumers engaging in online transactions.

However, the rapid expansion of digital payment technologies presents both opportunities and challenges. Ensuring the security and reliability of these systems remains a critical concern, especially with the integration of emerging technologies. Addressing these challenges will be essential for sustaining consumer trust and facilitating the continued growth of secure and efficient online payment ecosystems.

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Comprehensive Study on the Interplay Between Promotional Expenditure, Sales, and Profitability in Indian Public Sector Enterprises

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I INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced and competitive business environment, success is often defined by an organization's ability to adapt, innovate, and invest wisely. Among the key elements influencing business performance are promotional expenditure, sales, and profit—three interlinked components that shape strategic decision-making. This dynamic relationship is particularly significant for **Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs)** in India, which play a pivotal role in the nation's economic framework. Tasked with delivering essential services and driving socio-economic development, PSEs must also maintain financial sustainability and efficiency.

As the business landscape continues to evolve—driven by shifting consumer preferences, rapid technological advancements, and volatile market trends—Indian PSEs face increasing pressure to optimize their promotional strategies. Understanding how promotional spending translates into sales growth and impacts profitability is vital for ensuring long-term competitiveness. This study focuses on analyzing that intricate balance, offering insights into how Indian PSEs can strategically align their marketing efforts with organizational goals.

Promotional activities, encompassing advertising, brand building, and customer engagement initiatives, are no longer considered mere operational costs. Instead, they are **strategic investments** that influence public perception, market reach, and financial outcomes. The effectiveness of these initiatives can determine not only short-term sales performance but also long-term brand equity and market positioning. By examining select Indian PSEs, this research aims to uncover the underlying patterns and strategic imperatives guiding promotional decision-making. It seeks to explore how these entities leverage promotional spending to enhance sales and sustain profitability in an increasingly competitive market. Ultimately, the study aspires to contribute valuable insights that can support data-driven, performance-oriented strategies within the public sector.

II BALANCING ACT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) function within a distinct framework where financial performance is closely tied to public responsibility and accountability. Unlike private firms, their operations are not solely driven by profit but also by the mandate to serve national interests and uphold public trust. This creates a unique challenge—balancing the need for financial efficiency with the obligation to maintain transparency and credibility.

This study highlights the importance of promotional strategies in helping PSEs strike that balance. Far from being mere marketing tools, effective promotions can play a vital role in shaping public awareness, building trust, and enhancing the reputation of these institutions. When used thoughtfully, promotional efforts contribute to long-term financial sustainability by strengthening stakeholder confidence and encouraging public engagement.

These insights not only inform marketing practices but also reflect the broader dynamics of public sector resilience, reputation management, and institutional stability. In doing so, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of how promotional initiatives, when aligned with public expectations, can reinforce both economic and social outcomes in the public sector landscape.

III RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study aims to explore the intricate relationship between promotional expenditure, sales performance, and overall profitability in selected Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs). The core objective is to develop a comprehensive understanding of how marketing investments influence financial outcomes, enabling PSEs to make informed, strategic decisions.

By integrating **quantitative analysis** of financial data with **qualitative insights** from key stakeholders, the research seeks to uncover patterns, challenges, and opportunities in the current promotional approaches of PSEs. This dual methodology allows for a balanced perspective—grounded in data but enriched by real-world experiences and organizational contexts.

The ultimate goal is to provide **actionable insights** that support PSE leadership in refining promotional strategies, optimizing marketing budgets, and aligning promotional efforts with long-term institutional goals. Rather than serving purely academic interests, this research is intended as a practical guide for navigating the complexities of the public sector's promotional landscape.

As PSEs continue to evolve within an increasingly competitive environment, understanding the link between marketing spend and financial performance becomes crucial. This study aspires to serve as a strategic tool, helping these organizations enhance visibility, build public trust, and achieve sustained profitability through effective promotional planning.

IV METHODOLOGY

To capture the complexities of the relationship between promotional expenditure, sales performance, and profitability in Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs), this study adopted a **mixed-method research approach**, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods for comprehensive insights.

- (a) **Quantitative Analysis:** The research involved a detailed examination of financial records spanning multiple years. Using statistical tools and data analytics, the study analyzed promotional spending patterns in relation to sales and profitability. This helped uncover correlations and trends, providing measurable insights into the effectiveness of promotional investments.
- (b) **Qualitative Insights:** To complement the data-driven analysis, qualitative insights were gathered through interviews with key stakeholders, including PSE executives, marketing managers, and operational staff. These discussions offered an in-depth understanding of strategic decisions, organizational goals, and real-world challenges associated with promotional activities.
- (c) **Stakeholder Surveys:** Surveys were conducted among consumers, industry experts, and internal stakeholders to gain diverse perspectives. These responses helped assess the external impact of promotional strategies and offered valuable feedback on public perception and market responsiveness.
- (d) **Integrated Approach:** By combining numerical data with stakeholder perspectives, the study ensured a **holistic and robust methodology**—enabling a deeper, more accurate exploration of how promotional efforts influence sales outcomes and long-term profitability in PSEs.

V FINDINGS

This study highlights the complex relationship between promotional expenditure, sales performance, and profitability in Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs). The analysis indicates that while increased promotional spending often contributes to a rise in sales, its direct influence on profitability is not always straightforward.

A detailed case study of a leading Indian PSE illustrates this dynamic. Enhanced promotional efforts significantly boosted brand visibility and resulted in higher sales volumes. However, the corresponding impact on profit margins varied, shaped by external factors such as market volatility, operational costs, and competitive responses.

These findings emphasize that promotional success cannot be solely measured by sales growth. Instead, the effectiveness of such investments must be evaluated within a broader strategic context—taking into account market conditions, pricing strategies, cost structures, and long-term brand positioning.

The study, therefore, advocates for a **more nuanced and data-driven approach** to promotional planning within PSEs. Decision-makers should go beyond surface-level metrics and adopt comprehensive performance assessments to determine true return on investment (ROI). This will help in crafting targeted promotional strategies that not only drive sales but also contribute meaningfully to sustainable profitability.

VI CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) operate in a dynamic environment marked by evolving consumer expectations, intense competition, and stringent budget constraints. These challenges demand strategic agility and resourceful planning, especially when it comes to promotional activities. While such obstacles are significant, they also present opportunities for innovation and smarter resource utilization.

A key finding of this study is that even within limited budgets, PSEs can drive substantial impact by aligning promotions with consumer behavior, market timing, and sector-specific trends. Several caselets illustrate how strategic shifts have translated into measurable results across different sectors.

(a) Caselet 1:

- **Telecom PSE's Targeted Campaigns :** A major telecom PSE transitioned from broad-based advertising to focused campaigns emphasizing specific service benefits. This shift led to increased sales and stronger customer retention, highlighting the effectiveness of tailored messaging.

(b) Caselet 2:

- **Energy Sector Peak-Time Promotions:** Faced with budgetary limitations, an energy sector PSE timed its promotions around peak energy usage periods. This approach maximized visibility and sales impact without additional spending, showcasing smart resource alignment.

(c) Caselet 3:

- **Retail PSE's Loyalty Program:** A retail-focused PSE introduced a loyalty initiative offering exclusive deals to repeat customers. The program not only boosted customer retention but also drove significant increases in sales and profitability.

(d) Caselet 4:

- **Health Sector PSE's Community Engagement:** A health-focused PSE launched outreach initiatives promoting wellness and discounted services. These efforts enhanced public perception and increased footfall, proving the value of socially driven promotions.

VII IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT

The findings of this study offer valuable guidance for Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) management in enhancing the effectiveness of promotional strategies. By analyzing the link between promotional expenditure, sales, and profitability, executives are better positioned to allocate marketing budgets more efficiently and align promotional efforts with long-term organizational objectives.

A key implication is the importance of strategic focus—moving beyond broad messaging to more targeted, outcome-driven campaigns. For instance, a leading telecom PSE successfully transitioned from generic brand advertising to promotions emphasizing specific service benefits. This strategic adjustment led to a measurable rise in both sales and customer loyalty, demonstrating how focused messaging can yield tangible results.

Ultimately, the study encourages PSE leaders to adopt a data-driven, performance-oriented approach to marketing—where promotional initiatives are continuously evaluated, refined, and aligned with evolving market conditions and enterprise goals.

VIII CONCLUSION

This study provides meaningful and practical insights into the intricate relationship between promotional expenditure, sales performance, and profitability within Indian Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs). Through a combination of data analysis and stakeholder perspectives, the research highlights how strategic promotional planning can serve as a critical lever for driving both visibility and financial performance.

As PSEs operate in a landscape marked by rapid change, regulatory oversight, and public accountability, the ability to align promotional strategies with broader organizational goals becomes essential. The findings emphasize that increased promotional spending does not automatically translate into higher profits. Instead, success lies in targeted, well-timed, and data-driven campaigns that respond to market demands and organizational capacity.

The study ultimately encourages PSEs to move beyond conventional approaches and embrace a more adaptive, insight-led marketing strategy. By doing so, they can optimize resource use, enhance public engagement, and foster long-term sustainability. In an increasingly competitive environment, these insights offer a roadmap for PSEs to not only overcome current challenges but also seize emerging opportunities, ensuring resilience and relevance in the years ahead.

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Dating and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA): Navigating Privacy in India's Digital Romance Landscape

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ABSTRACT

*With the rapid digitalization of interpersonal relationships, dating apps have emerged as dominant platforms for romantic engagement, particularly among younger populations in urban India. These platforms collect and process a vast range of sensitive personal data, including sexual preferences, religious views, and location information. The **Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA), 2023**, marks a significant shift in India's approach to data privacy and regulation, imposing stricter compliance requirements on data fiduciaries. This paper explores the implications of the DPDPA for dating apps operating in India, examining the intersection of personal autonomy, data protection, and corporate responsibility. It also identifies key challenges and proposes policy recommendations for ensuring both privacy and user trust in this evolving space.*

I INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, India has witnessed a cultural shift in how relationships are initiated and maintained. With over 700 million internet users, dating apps like Tinder, Bumble, Hinge, and local platforms like Aisle and TrulyMadly have penetrated urban and semi-urban markets, reshaping the courtship process. However, these platforms often operate in a legal grey zone regarding data protection, especially concerning highly sensitive personal information.

The **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDPA)**, India's landmark privacy legislation, came into force to create a regulatory framework for the processing of digital personal data. This paper explores how the DPDPA impacts the operations of dating platforms, the rights of users, and the responsibilities of companies under the new law.

II OVERVIEW OF THE DPDPA, 2023

The DPDPA establishes a comprehensive regime for personal data protection, with key features including:

- **Consent-based data processing:** Personal data can be processed only for lawful purposes upon obtaining the consent of the individual (data principal).
- **Purpose limitation:** Data must be used only for the stated purpose for which it was collected.
- **Data fiduciary obligations:** Entities collecting data must ensure transparency, security, and accountability.
- **Children's data protection:** Special provisions apply to processing data of individuals under 18.
- **Data Protection Board:** An independent board oversees compliance and grievance redressal.

These provisions signal a significant departure from previous fragmented regulations and bring India in line with global data protection frameworks such as the GDPR.

III DATING APPS AND PERSONAL DATA: A RISK MATRIX

Dating apps typically process a wide spectrum of personal and sensitive data, including:

- Profile details (name, age, gender, sexual orientation, interests)
- Photographs and videos
- Location data (real-time and historical)
- In-app messages and behavioral data
- Payment information (for premium services)

This puts dating platforms squarely in the category of "**Significant Data Fiduciaries**" under the DPDPA, especially those with large user bases or handling sensitive personal data.

IV KEY CHALLENGES UNDER THE DPDPA

- Informed Consent**- Obtaining informed and specific consent from users is a major challenge. Dating apps typically use broad Terms of Service and Privacy Policies. Under the DPDPA, consent must be granular, transparent, and revocable.
- Data Minimization and Purpose Limitation**- Dating apps often collect excess data to train algorithms for better matchmaking or ad targeting. The DPDPA restricts this practice unless explicitly consented to and justified.
- Children's Data** - Dating platforms must verify age and avoid profiling or nudging minors toward inappropriate content. Non-compliance could result in heavy penalties.
- Cross-border Data Transfers** - Several dating apps operate globally and host data on international servers. The DPDPA's provisions around cross-border data flows (to be notified via government whitelist) may create compliance friction.
- Data Breaches and Penalties** - Dating apps are prime targets for data breaches. The DPDPA imposes significant penalties (up to ₹250 crore) for failure to implement reasonable security safeguards.

V CASE STUDIES AND PRECEDENTS

- The Tinder Location Controversy** - In 2022, concerns were raised around Tinder storing precise user location data for long periods, raising red flags under "purpose limitation" and "storage limitation" principles.
- Truly Madly's Identity Verification** - As a privacy-first feature, TrulyMadly implemented an Aadhaar-based ID verification to reduce fake profiles. Under DPDPA, such initiatives must balance verification with proportionality and purpose specification.
- Bumble's "Women First" Design** - Bumble's model, which gives women control over initiating conversations, aligns with privacy-by-design principles encouraged under the DPDPA, especially for vulnerable groups.

VI POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Granular Consent Management Tools**: Implement layered, context-specific consent options for different categories of data.
- Age Verification without Surveillance**: Use AI-driven age estimation or parental consent models without infringing on teen users' autonomy.
- Transparency Reports**: Dating apps should publish transparency reports on data processing, grievance redressal, and third-party data sharing.
- On-shore Data Localization**: Encourage hosting data in India or within government-approved jurisdictions for faster compliance.

- (e) **Ethical AI in Matchmaking:** Ensure that AI/ML systems used for matchmaking do not discriminate or manipulate based on caste, religion, or sexual orientation.

VII CONCLUSION

The DPDPA presents a new chapter for data privacy in India, especially in sensitive sectors like online dating. While compliance may require technical, legal, and operational restructuring, the long-term benefits include enhanced user trust, reduced litigation risk, and alignment with global best practices. For dating apps, the road ahead must focus not only on romance but on responsible data stewardship.

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Bridging Realities: Augmented Learning for Inclusive Education

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ABSTRACT

In many nations, inclusive expansion in the education sector is still a major concern, especially in light of restricted access to technology and internet connectivity. It is projected that augmented reality, or AR, will revolutionize education by creating new avenues for inclusivity. With an emphasis on Tanzania and India, this article seeks to explore the potential of augmented reality (AR) to support equitable growth in education while outlining the major obstacles. A comprehensive study of the literature was carried out, utilizing books, journal articles, and conference proceedings. Descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation, and content analysis were used in the analysis. The results indicate that strong digital infrastructure, widespread internet connectivity, and citizen digital literacy are necessary for AR to be applied successfully. Among the major issues are the scarcity of qualified teachers in AR and students' desire for hands-on, project-based learning. These results shed light on how educators and policymakers might support inclusive education in developing nations by utilizing augmented reality in the classroom.

Keywords: Augmented reality, inclusive education, digital infrastructure, India, Tanzania, educational technology, higher education, digital literacy

I INTRODUCTION

Through enhancing productivity, expanding job opportunities, and providing individuals with skill sets, higher education is essential for promoting equitable growth. The goal of inclusive growth is to empower people via employment, skill development, eradicating poverty, modernizing the labor market, and providing social protection. While Parvin (2018, p. 473) sees it as guaranteeing equitable chances from an economic aspect, Sakamoto (2019, p. 69) highlights the necessity of skills development to achieve inclusive growth. Similarly, new programs incorporating critical skills for India should be a part of inclusive expansion in education, according to Maclean et al. (2017, p. 42). Adeniyi et al. (2021, p. 163) stress the significance of quality in policy design in West Africa in order to promote inclusive growth in education. Technology is essential to the advancement of education, but it poses difficulties as well. Language learning could be advanced by generative artificial intelligence, like ChatGPT, according to Bozkurt (2023, p. 200). Koutromanos et al. (2023), p. 1, talk on how future educators' perceptions of the fun and utility of mobile augmented reality (AR) would affect their acceptance of it. Further study on the effects of augmented reality on education is recommended by Rachman et al. (2024, p. 170). This study investigates how augmented reality (AR) might improve open and remote learning (ODL) environments with a particular focus on ODL institutions.

AR increases ODL by incorporating virtual aspects into educational activities, enabling dynamic and immersive learning environments for remote learners. Studies by Altinpulluk et al. (2020, p. 303) suggest more investigation into AR use in ODL establishments. This study intends to extend current literature by evaluating AR's function in supporting inclusive growth in education and addressing related difficulties, in light of the obstacles posed by technology, concerns about

inclusive growth, and the evolving influence of AR. This article, which draws on social constructionist theory, examines the application of augmented reality (AR) in education and the difficulties associated with inclusive growth in Tanzania and India. It is anticipated that the results will assist educators in incorporating AR to support inclusive development in these nations.

II AUGMENTED REALITY (AR)

Definitions of AR have been offered by several academics. It is defined as a technique that superimposes digital items on the physical world by Avila-Garzon et al. (2021, p. 2). According to Mayilyan (2019, p. 1), augmented reality (AR) is the process of augmenting reality with virtual information, such as multimedia content, to create new educational opportunities. Mkwizu (2023, p. 45) emphasizes how augmented reality (AR) combines the virtual and physical worlds via mobile devices. This work uses the definition provided by Mayilyan (2019, p. 1).

III INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN EDUCATION

Fair opportunities and connections between macro- and microeconomic elements promoting economic growth are referred to as inclusive growth (Parvin, 2018, p. 473). Three essential components are included in inclusive growth, according to Cerra (2021, p. 8): robust economic growth, inclusion, and sustainability. There are advantages and disadvantages to integrating technology, especially augmented reality, into higher education. Al-Ansi et al. (2023), for example, draw attention to problems including scalability, accessibility, and high implementation costs of technology. On the other hand, Hajirasouli and Banihashemi (2022, p. 1) demonstrate the usefulness of AR in the teaching of architecture and construction. Research shows that AR increases students' academic self-efficacy (O'Connor and Mahony, 2023, p. 1), and Rios et al. (2023, p. 343) discovered that AR games encourage self-learning and active learning involvement of students. Still, there isn't much study on augmented reality in higher education (Rachman et al., 2024, p. 170). The use of augmented reality (AR) and other technology in the classroom requires that teachers and students be adept at using these resources. In light of the difficulties in putting AR into practice that Al-Ansi et al. (2023, p. 8) have pointed out, this paper sees inclusive growth in education as the capacity to employ AR in higher education.

IV THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

Social constructionist theory, proposed by Berger and Luckman in 1991, explains how people construct their daily interactions through participation and communication (Zhao, 2020, p. 98). Higher education needs to keep using technology into its teaching and learning in order to achieve inclusive growth and augmented reality. AR has the potential to be socially engineered to promote inclusive educational advancement. This research applies the theory to investigate the use of augmented reality (AR) and its challenges in encouraging inclusive growth in education, whereas Phillips (2023, p. 174) adapted it to examine particular knowledge systems. Through a variety of communication channels, educational communities aid in the expansion of higher education; nevertheless, greater use of AR is required for inclusive growth. According to academics such as Rapp and Corral-Granados (2021, p. 427), the comprehension of inclusive

education can be framed by the theory of social construction. This research applies the theory to inclusive growth and education, with a focus on the use of augmented reality and the persistent digital inequities.

Social constructionist theory has been applied in numerous investigations. For instance, Akpan et al. (2020, p. 49) investigated the interactions between students, instructors, and other components of the teaching-learning process. This research builds on Akpan et al. (2020, p. 49) by examining AR use and the obstacles to inclusive expansion in higher education with a focus on Tanzania and India using social constructionist theory.

V AR AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH CHALLENGES IN INDIA AND TANZANIA

R in education has been researched worldwide. For example, Taskiran (2021, p. 25) discovered that mobile augmented reality produced favorable academic results in Turkish higher education. Similarly, Batra (2021, p. 29) contends that augmenting reality with education improves learning outcomes and efficacy. Hajirasouli and Banihashemi (2022, p. 1) draw attention to the fact that there is still a dearth of research on AR in higher education. This paper expands on the literature in response to the need for more research by examining the role that augmented reality (AR) can play in promoting inclusive growth in education and highlighting the related difficulties in Tanzania and India.

VI AUGMENTED REALITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA

Augmented reality (AR) is becoming more and more popular in India, particularly in the retail sector, but more has to be done to consider how it may be used to support inclusive education, notably open and distance learning (ODL). In India, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) are emerging as critical technologies to hasten the digital transition. This tendency is reflected in the increasing use of gadgets like head-mounted displays (HMDs) in a variety of industries, especially gaming and entertainment. The growth of AR and VR markets in India is anticipated to be propelled by rising levels of digitization and investments in these fields. In addition, it is expected that the increasing number of smartphones would increase demand for AR and VR solutions. India is also advancing artificial intelligence (AI) through the establishment of research laboratories devoted to AI applications in oncology, genomics, drug discovery, and healthcare delivery, among other areas.

The nation must overcome several obstacles before completely adopting a technology-driven learning environment. India's widespread lack of digital literacy is a major barrier to the country's digitization efforts. In order to advance technology, Pappu Rajan (2021) emphasized the significance of broad engagement in the digital economy. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are becoming more and more common in Indian colleges' curricula, yet obstacles including inadequate IT infrastructure, poor internet connectivity, and sparse Wi-Fi facilities still exist. The nation lags in ICT adoption despite government initiatives like Start-up India, Digital India, and Skill India intended to promote digitization. Productivity is further hampered by the scarcity of technology institutions and outmoded practices. Therefore, for India to progress technologically, there needs to be greater engagement in the digital economy.

VII AUGMENTED REALITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TANZANIA

In Tanzania, the field of education has not yet fully explored augmented reality. While research on virtual reality (VR) in education has been the focus of studies like Mkwizu (2022a), augmented reality (AR) has not yet gotten much attention. When Raphael (2022) looked at digital transformation in higher education, he discovered that students in Tanzanian institutions are not as familiar with AR, VR, and AI as they may be. According to his research, just 59% of students have access to AR and VR, 75% to AI, and 50% to the Internet of Things. This indicates that the majority of students have limited access to these technologies. To gain a better understanding of the prospects for integrating these technologies into higher education, Raphael suggested conducting additional research on digital transformation. Furthermore, Mkwizu and Bordoloi (2022) emphasized the use of AR in education, although they concentrated on how it could be used for girls in schools.

VIII THE ROLE OF AR FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN EDUCATION IN INDIA AND TANZANIA

In Tanzania as much as India, AR is essential to fostering inclusive growth in higher education. By offering immersive, interactive learning experiences that captivate students and support the development of transferable skills, it can improve ODL. The COVID-19 pandemic served as an example of how technology can keep learning going even in difficult situations. Following this, websites like as SWAYAM in India have made high-quality online education accessible to students all over the world, achieving the objectives of quality, equity, and accessibility that the Indian Ministry of Education has long espoused. In a similar vein, by boosting engagement and producing fruitful learning results for both students and teachers, augmented reality (AR) may prove crucial in realizing equitable growth in education.

Augmented reality (AR) technologies can promote inclusive growth by providing a variety of experiences that improve decision-making and cultivate positive attitudes. According to Sirakaya & Sirakaya (2018), head-mounted displays are not the only gadgets that can be used to implement augmented reality (AR). Computers and mobile phones are also viable options. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in education may also be accomplished with the use of augmented reality (AR). The potential of augmented reality (AR) to support inclusive growth in higher education in both nations is highlighted in this paper; however, further research is required to completely examine its effects.

IX METHODOLOGY

A systematic literature review (SLR) methodology was employed in this study to examine pertinent publications from conferences and journals. According to Kraus et al. (2020), the systematic literature review (SLR) technique entails a transparent and reproducible methodical review of the available literature to ensure objectivity in the analysis of findings. When there is a dearth of literature, every source that is accessible needs to be carefully studied. This study used

SLR to examine how AR affects inclusive growth in education and to pinpoint associated difficulties. It concentrated on research that was published between 2021 and 2023.

X SEARCH, SCREENING, SELECTION, AND DATA EXTRACTION

Planning, locating, evaluating literature, and reporting findings were all steps in the SLR process. What obstacles does augmented reality provide to inclusive growth in higher education? was the main issue posed by the review. Four journals—the Asian Journal of Distance Education (AsianJDE), the Journal of Adult Education in Tanzania (JAET), the Journal of Issues and Practice in Education (JIPE), and the International Journal of Open Schooling (IJOS)—were found through a Google search to be pertinent to education in Tanzania and India. Furthermore, three international virtual reality conferences were chosen with an emphasis on augmented reality in education between 2021 and 2023. Papers were screened using inclusion and exclusion criteria based on keywords such as "augmented reality," "inclusive growth," "higher education," "India," and "Tanzania." After a search of 245 papers, 14 were considered appropriate for study. Author information, study titles, nations, methodologies, and important conclusions were all extracted from the data. This methodical methodology made it possible to analyze AR's contribution to inclusive educational advancement in a targeted manner.

XI ANALYSIS OF DATA

Descriptive analysis and cross-tabulation were used in the literature study to group the examined studies according to authors, nations, methodologies, and conclusions. In order to aid efficient data extraction and coding from the literature, a content analysis approach was also used. Researchers such as Heiser (2022) have employed this methodology to methodically arrange concepts and determine quality indicators in studies related to education. Compiling the report and evaluating the results constituted the last step.

XII FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

A descriptive study showed that co-authors produced the majority of publications (57.1%), suggesting a trend of collaborative research. Tanzania made for 21.4% of the articles, but India accounted for 78.6% of the total geographical distribution. This implies that total academic research on augmented reality (AR) in higher education is still lacking, despite the disparities in output between the two nations, confirming the necessity for more investigation as mentioned by Rachman et al. (2024). The literature review approach was used most often (64.3%), which is consistent with its popularity among the reviewed authors. This is in contrast to the findings of Sirakaya and Sirakaya (2018), who observed that educational AR studies tended to favor quantitative methodologies.

In Tanzania, solo authors predominated (33.3%), but in India, co-authors made up the bulk of authors (87.5%). In terms of approach, India (66.7%) employed the literature review more often than Tanzania (33.3%). This disparity draws attention to the fact that Tanzanian research use less literature review techniques, which may be explained by the country's greater rate of single authorship. While most studies advocate for its introduction, augmented reality (AR) is still rarely used in Indian classrooms. For instance, Garcha (2021) underlined the value of

cooperative learning based on augmented reality through games, suggesting that sufficient digital infrastructure is required for the successful integration of augmented reality into higher education. This supports Angelina's. et al. (2019) stating that augmented reality can improve interactive learning. While several studies, such as Punia (2022) and Chander (2021), acknowledged AR, their primary focus was on elementary education and athletics. Chander (2021) emphasized the advantages of augmented reality (AR) in sports coaching and alluded to its potential for digital empowerment in related fields.

Even with AR's potential for teacher education, there are still a lot of obstacles to overcome. Batra (2021) noted that infrastructural and internet access constraints, in particular, make it difficult to deploy augmented reality (AR) effectively in higher education. Hooda and Kumari (2022) and Rajeswari and Madhusudan (2022) are two recent studies that support the need for more research on augmented reality in education. Moreover, Soumya and Madhusudan (2022) looked at technology in open and distance learning (ODL), although they mostly focused on virtual reality (VR), which emphasizes the need for greater research on augmented reality.

As Sharma and Gupta (2023) point out, there are obstacles to equitable expansion in higher education, such as the underutilized use of augmented reality and skill shortages among teachers. Attri and Dahiya (2022) talked about VR instead of AR when they discussed inclusive education. Hooda and Kumari's (2022) results showed that 80.6% of teachers and students had not taken part in any augmented reality (AR) training, and Gope et al. (2021) saw a change in student preferences toward hands-on, project-based learning after the epidemic. This highlights a number of obstacles to inclusive educational expansion, such as the requirement for qualified teachers, the accessibility of resources, efficient teaching strategies, and a predilection for hands-on learning opportunities.

Similarly, there is a dearth of research in **Tanzania** about the contribution of AR to inclusive education. Studies already conducted primarily on augmented reality in tourism point to a lack of applications in education. Mkwizu (2022b, 2023) examined AR in tourism settings and emphasized the necessity for additional research in the field of education. Students' poor use of digital technology, such as artificial intelligence (AI) (75%), virtual reality (VR and AR) (59%), and the Internet of Things (50%) was noted by Raphael (2022), indicating major obstacles to digital infrastructure and empowerment. This is consistent with research by Rachman et al. (2024), which emphasizes the need for additional studies on augmented reality in higher education.

XIII SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR INDIA AND TANZANIA

in conclusion, the reviews of AR's application and the difficulties in attaining inclusive growth in education from Tanzania and India show a minimal use of AR and draw attention to obstacles like a lack of resources, a preference for experiential learning, and a shortage of properly trained teachers. This finding is consistent with social constructionist theory, which helps explain why AR in higher education is such a hurdle. In both countries, the adoption of AR and VR in educational contexts is further hampered by difficulties related to accessibility, geographical differences, and infrastructure deficiencies.

Theoretical implications show that the literature evaluation emphasizes a socially constructed perception of the limitations of augmented reality in inclusive education and the difficulties that come with it. These difficulties, which include a shortage of qualified instructors, a lack of

funding, and the requirement for hands-on curriculum, support the application of social constructionist theory to the investigation of AR's application and obstacles to inclusive expansion in these environments in higher education. Its practical consequences highlight the necessity for educational stakeholders to give augmented reality (AR) top priority in order to promote inclusive educational growth. Education professionals should take advantage of AR's potential and make sure teachers have the abilities needed to use it in conjunction with AI and VR. It is also important to create training programs for teachers so they can feel more comfortable using technology pedagogies. To guarantee equal access to AR, AI, and VR in Tanzania as well as India, policymakers must enact strong laws and policies that encourage AR inclusion in education.

XIV CONCLUSION

The results of this study point to a substantial research vacuum on the use of augmented reality (AR) to advance inclusive growth in Tanzanian and Indian education. Studies that already exist, especially in the field of open and distant learning (ODL), mostly focus on virtual reality (VR). According to the report, there is a noteworthy lack of digital empowerment among residents in India, combined with inadequate digital infrastructure and restricted access to broadband or the internet in general. Similar difficulties exist in Tanzania, such as the lack of possibilities for pupils to use augmented reality (AR) devices in the classroom. These findings imply that it is critical to give increasing technology usage top priority when upgrading curricula in ODL institutions. This may be achieved by making sure that sufficient digital infrastructure is in place to support augmented reality (AR) technologies, which have the potential to greatly improve learning outcomes.

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Tribal Areas of India: An Overview of Socio-Economic and Cultural Dynamics

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ABSTRACT

India is home to one of the largest and most diverse tribal populations in the world, with over 705 officially recognized Scheduled Tribes (STs), according to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. These tribal communities account for approximately 8.6% of the total population, as per the 2011 Census. They are spread across nearly every state and union territory, though their concentration varies significantly by region. States such as Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, and parts of the Northeastern region—including Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Mizoram—are home to some of the largest tribal populations. These areas are often characterized by hilly terrain, dense forests, and remote rural settings that have allowed many tribal groups to maintain their traditional ways of life for centuries. The tribal communities of India are not homogenous; they represent a wide range of cultures, languages, traditions, and belief systems. Some tribes, like the Gonds, Bhils, and Santhals, are among the most populous and widespread, while others like the Chenchus, Todas, and Onges are relatively small and isolated. These groups often have their own dialects, customs, rituals, and systems of social organization. In many cases, tribal societies are governed by their own traditional leaders and councils, which play a crucial role in conflict resolution, resource management, and the preservation of cultural identity. Most tribes traditionally rely on subsistence agriculture, hunting, gathering, and fishing for their livelihoods, and many depend on forest produce such as honey, tendu leaves, and medicinal herbs. Despite this close relationship with nature, modern development has led to the gradual erosion of traditional practices and displacement from ancestral lands. Over the years, many tribal communities have experienced land alienation due to mining, infrastructure projects, and commercial agriculture. These disruptions have not only affected their economic stability but have also contributed to the loss of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge systems. Tribal populations often face acute socio-economic disadvantages compared to other social groups in India. Issues such as illiteracy, malnutrition, inadequate healthcare, lack of access to quality education, and unemployment are more pronounced in tribal areas. Additionally, tribal communities are frequently marginalized from political and economic decision-making processes. Recognizing these challenges, the Indian government has introduced several constitutional provisions and welfare schemes aimed at protecting and uplifting Scheduled Tribes. Key legislations include the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution, the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA), and the Forest Rights Act, 2006. Despite the presence of well-intentioned policies and programs, the implementation of tribal welfare schemes has often been inconsistent and marred by bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, and a lack of community participation. As a result, significant gaps remain in achieving inclusive and sustainable development in tribal areas. This paper seeks to explore the multifaceted realities of tribal life in India—ranging from geographic distribution and cultural identity to socio-economic conditions and governance challenges—while also critically examining the effectiveness of existing government interventions aimed at tribal development.

I INTRODUCTION

Tribal communities in India constitute a significant segment of the nation's demographic mosaic, comprising approximately 8.6% of the total population, as recorded in the Census of 2011 (Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, 2011). These communities, officially categorized as Scheduled Tribes (STs), are dispersed across a wide spectrum of ecological and geographical zones, reflecting their deep-rooted diversity and regional uniqueness. From the mountainous terrains of the Northeast—such as Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh—to the dense forests of Central India in states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh, and the dry, arid landscapes of Rajasthan and Gujarat in the west, tribal populations have adapted to and thrived within distinct environmental contexts.

A defining feature of India's tribal communities is their historically harmonious and sustainable relationship with nature. Living in close proximity to forests, rivers, and hills, many tribes have developed lifestyles and livelihoods centered around natural resources. Activities like shifting cultivation, foraging for medicinal herbs, collecting minor forest produce, and traditional farming are still prevalent in many tribal areas. This connection to nature is not merely economic, but also deeply spiritual and cultural, with nature worship forming a core part of their belief systems.

Furthermore, tribal societies often possess rich cultural heritages marked by unique dialects, oral traditions, music, dance, and art. Unlike mainstream Indian society, many tribes function with their own customary laws and systems of governance, such as village councils or tribal panchayats, which play a key role in decision-making, conflict resolution, and the preservation of cultural norms. Despite external influences and developmental pressures, these traditional structures remain integral to tribal identity and cohesion, underlining their resilience and continuity through centuries of change.

II GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

The tribal population in India is distributed unevenly across the country, reflecting the diversity of ecosystems and historical settlement patterns. While tribal communities are present in nearly all Indian states and union territories, their concentration is particularly high in specific regions, often referred to as tribal belts. These belts are characterized by unique ecological features—such as forests, hills, and remote terrain—that have historically offered isolation and protection, enabling tribes to preserve their distinct cultural identities and traditional lifestyles.

Central India is home to the largest concentration of tribal populations. States such as **Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha** together account for nearly 55% of the total Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in India. This region includes major tribal groups like the Gonds, Oraons, Mundas, and Santhals. Rich in forest resources and mineral wealth, Central India has also witnessed significant development-induced displacement, leading to socio-economic disruptions in tribal lives.

Northeast India represents a unique tribal zone where in several states, tribal communities form the majority. States such as **Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh** are home to numerous indigenous groups with distinct languages, customs, and traditional governance systems. This region enjoys special constitutional status under the Sixth Schedule, allowing tribal communities a degree of autonomy through autonomous district councils.

In **Western India**, particularly **Rajasthan and Gujarat**, tribal groups such as the Bhils and Garasias are predominantly located in hilly and forested districts. These areas, while close to urban centers, still struggle with socio-economic backwardness and land alienation issues.

Southern India also contributes significantly to the tribal demographic, with communities like the Todas in Tamil Nadu, the Chenchus in Andhra Pradesh, and the Paniyas in Kerala. Though smaller in population, these tribes are rich in cultural heritage and have unique socio-ecological systems. (Planning Commission, 2014)

III CULTURAL IDENTITY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Tribal groups in India, such as the **Gonds, Santhals, Bhils, and Nagas**, are known for their vibrant and diverse cultural heritage, which has been preserved over centuries through oral traditions, community rituals, and daily practices. These communities possess rich **indigenous knowledge systems**, developed through a deep, long-standing interaction with their natural environment. This knowledge spans a wide range of fields, including traditional medicine, sustainable agriculture, forestry, and ecological conservation. For example, many tribal groups have an intricate understanding of local flora and fauna, using plants not only for food but also for healing and ritualistic purposes.

Central to their belief systems is **animism**, where natural elements such as rivers, mountains, trees, and animals are revered as sacred. Many tribes worship spirits believed to inhabit these elements, often organizing festivals and rituals to honor them. While some tribal groups have adopted mainstream religions like Hinduism or Christianity, a strong undercurrent of traditional animistic practices still persists, particularly in more isolated regions.

Dance, music, and storytelling form the lifeblood of tribal cultural expression. Folk songs and dances are not merely for entertainment—they are mediums to pass down history, celebrate harvests, mark life-cycle events, and honor deities. Each tribe has its own unique styles, instruments, and costumes, making tribal art forms a vital part of India's intangible cultural heritage.

Socially, many tribal communities follow **egalitarian principles**, where resources are shared and decisions are made collectively. Hierarchies based on wealth or caste are minimal or non-existent in most tribes. Governance is traditionally carried out through **village councils or headmen**, who mediate disputes, oversee rituals, and ensure harmony within the group. These institutions, though informal, play a central role in maintaining community cohesion and upholding traditional norms and values.

IV ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Most tribes depend on agriculture, forest produce, and handicrafts for livelihood. However, they face economic marginalization due to poor infrastructure, limited access to markets, and land alienation.

A report by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (2020) highlights that tribal areas lag behind national averages in health, education, and income indicators. For instance, the literacy rate among STs was 59% compared to the national average of 74% (Census 2011).

V GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The **Indian Constitution** contains several important provisions aimed at the **protection, empowerment, and development of tribal communities**, recognizing their unique socio-cultural identity and historical marginalization. These legal and policy frameworks were designed not only to safeguard tribal lands and culture but also to promote **self-governance** and equitable development.

The **Fifth Schedule** of the Constitution applies to **Scheduled Areas** in most parts of the country, particularly in Central and Western India. It provides for the establishment of **Tribal Advisory Councils (TACs)** in each state having Scheduled Areas, which advise the Governor on matters related to the welfare and advancement of Scheduled Tribes. The Governor also holds **special responsibilities**, including the power to modify or repeal laws passed by the state legislature in Scheduled Areas if they are deemed detrimental to tribal interests.

The **Sixth Schedule**, on the other hand, is exclusive to the **Northeastern states** like Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram. It allows for the creation of **Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)**, which have the authority to legislate on matters like land, forests, village administration, and inheritance. This framework acknowledges the distinct political and cultural context of tribal communities in the Northeast. The **Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996**, is another landmark law that empowers **Gram Sabhas** (village assemblies) in Scheduled Areas to govern local resources and make decisions on matters such as land acquisition and development projects, thereby promoting grassroots democracy.

Additionally, the **Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006** recognizes the **individual and community rights** of forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes over forest land and resources, aiming to correct historical injustices. However, despite these progressive laws, **implementation remains a major challenge**. Bureaucratic inertia, lack of awareness among tribal populations, and opposition from powerful vested interests often undermine the spirit and effectiveness of these legal protections (Xaxa, 2005).

VI CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Tribal areas in India face a complex web of interrelated challenges that hinder their social, economic, and political development. Despite constitutional protections and targeted schemes, many tribal communities continue to be marginalized in critical aspects of life.

One of the most pressing issues is **land alienation**, often resulting from large-scale development projects such as mining, dam construction, and industrial expansion. These projects frequently lead to the **displacement of tribal families** from their ancestral lands, severing their ties to traditional livelihoods and cultural practices. In many cases, rehabilitation and compensation are either inadequate or delayed, pushing affected communities into deeper poverty and social dislocation.

Healthcare access in tribal areas is alarmingly poor. These regions typically lack sufficient primary health centers, trained medical staff, and essential medicines. This results in **high infant and maternal mortality rates**, widespread **malnutrition**, and poor control of preventable diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis. The lack of culturally sensitive healthcare and traditional mistrust of modern systems further complicates outreach efforts.

In the sphere of **education**, tribal children face numerous obstacles. **Language barriers**—since most schools use regional or national languages instead of tribal dialects—lead to alienation and reduced comprehension. Combined with **poor infrastructure**, long travel distances to schools, and economic pressure to contribute to family income, these factors result in **high dropout rates** among tribal students, especially girls.

Additionally, tribal communities continue to face **systemic social exclusion**. They are **under-represented in policymaking, governance, and mainstream political discourse**, which limits their ability to advocate for their rights and needs effectively. Stereotypes, discrimination, and lack of political voice further isolate these communities from the benefits of national development. Addressing these challenges

requires not just policy reform, but also **inclusive, participatory governance** that respects tribal autonomy and cultural identity.
(Narayan, 2010)

VII GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND THEIR IMPACT

The Government of India has introduced several **targeted schemes and programs** to promote the welfare and development of tribal communities, recognizing the historical disadvantages they face. Among these, the **Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana (VKY)** is a flagship initiative launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to ensure holistic development of tribal areas. It focuses on multiple sectors including education, health, livelihood, housing, and access to basic amenities. The program is designed to bring tribal regions at par with the rest of the country through infrastructure development and service delivery.

Another notable initiative is the **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)**, which aims to provide **quality education to tribal children** in remote areas. These schools are modeled on the lines of Navodaya Vidyalayas and seek to bridge the educational gap by offering free lodging, schooling, and extracurricular development. EMRS institutions play a crucial role in enhancing literacy and skill development among tribal youth, thereby improving their long-term employment prospects.

The **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation (TRIFED)** works to promote the **economic empowerment of tribal artisans and producers**. It facilitates the marketing of tribal products through its "TRIBES India" outlets and organizes training programs to enhance product quality and market readiness. TRIFED also supports the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme for Minor Forest Produce, ensuring fair compensation to tribal gatherers.

Despite the potential of these initiatives, their **effectiveness is often undermined by top-down planning and limited community involvement**. Programs are frequently designed and implemented without adequate consultation with tribal stakeholders, resulting in a mismatch between policy objectives and ground realities. The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs (2020)** has acknowledged that **bureaucratic inefficiencies, lack of local ownership, and poor monitoring** continue to be major roadblocks. For these schemes to achieve lasting impact, greater **community participation, transparency, and culturally sensitive approaches** are essential.

VIII CONCLUSION

India has undertaken several **legislative and policy measures** aimed at the protection and socio-economic advancement of tribal communities. Constitutional safeguards such as the **Fifth and Sixth Schedules**, along with landmark legislations like the **Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA)** and the **Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA)**, reflect the state's commitment to preserving tribal rights and promoting inclusive governance. In addition, targeted development programs—covering sectors such as education, health, livelihood, and infrastructure—have been introduced to bridge the developmental divide between tribal and non-tribal populations.

However, **despite these efforts, significant challenges persist**. Tribal regions continue to lag behind national averages in key human development indicators such as literacy, nutrition, maternal and child health, and income. Structural issues like **land alienation, displacement due to development projects, and poor access to basic services** remain widespread. Moreover, the **top-down implementation** of welfare programs, often without adequate involvement of tribal communities, results in a disconnect between policy intent and grassroots realities.

To ensure **equitable and sustainable development**, a shift toward a **culturally sensitive, participatory, and decentralized approach** is essential. This means recognizing and integrating **tribal knowledge systems, governance structures, and value systems** into the planning and implementation process. Empowering **Gram Sabhas**, strengthening local institutions, and enhancing representation of tribal voices in decision-making bodies are key to ensuring accountability and relevance of development efforts.

Furthermore, development must be **context-specific**, acknowledging the diverse needs and aspirations of different tribal groups across regions. Respect for **tribal identity, land, language, and customs** must form the cornerstone of any intervention. Only through such an inclusive model—rooted in **dialogue, respect, and partnership**—can the true spirit of tribal empowerment be realized and the long-standing disparities be addressed effectively.

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उच्च शिक्षा में प्रभावी ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के लिए तकनीकी संरचना और समर्थन प्रणाली

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सारांश

उच्च शिक्षा में ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का समावेश शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में एक महत्वपूर्ण परिवर्तन है। यह पद्धति पारंपरिक कक्षा शिक्षण के साथ-साथ ऑनलाइन संसाधनों का समन्वय करती है, जिससे शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया अधिक प्रभावी, लचीला और समावेशी बनती है। ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग विद्यार्थियों को अपनी सुविधा और समय के अनुसार सीखने का अवसर देती है, जिससे उनके समय प्रबंधन और आत्म-नियंत्रण कौशल में वृद्धि होती है। यह पद्धति व्यक्तिगत सीखने के अनुभव को बढ़ावा देती है, तकनीकी साक्षरता में वृद्धि करती है और विभिन्न स्रोतों से ज्ञान प्राप्त करने की सुविधा प्रदान करती है। शिक्षक-विद्यार्थी इंटरैक्शन में वृद्धि भी ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का एक प्रमुख लाभ है, जो शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया को अधिक प्रभावी बनाता है। हालांकि, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के साथ कुछ चुनौतियाँ भी जुड़ी हुई हैं, जैसे तकनीकी सीमाएँ, स्व-अनुशासन की आवश्यकता, और प्रशिक्षण की आवश्यकता। इन चुनौतियों के बावजूद, उचित रणनीतियों और संसाधनों के माध्यम से इन पर काबू पाया जा सकता है। इस शोध पत्र में ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के विभिन्न लाभों और चुनौतियों पर चर्चा की गई है और उच्च शिक्षा में इसके प्रभाव का विश्लेषण किया गया है। भविष्य में, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में और भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएगी, जिससे शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया में निरंतर सुधार होगा। इसके लिए आवश्यक है कि शिक्षण संस्थान और सरकारें इस पद्धति को अपनाने के लिए आवश्यक संसाधन और प्रशिक्षण प्रदान करें। कुल मिलाकर, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग उच्च शिक्षा में शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया को अधिक प्रभावी, लचीला और समावेशी बनाती है, और भविष्य में शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएगी।

मुख्य शब्दः— उच्च शिक्षा, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग, शिक्षण, अधिगम, डिजिटल शिक्षा।

I भूमिका

तकनीकी प्रगति और इंटरनेट की व्यापक पहुँच ने शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में एक क्रांति ला दी है। विशेष रूप से उच्च शिक्षा में, पारंपरिक शिक्षण पद्धतियाँ और आधुनिक डिजिटल संसाधनों का संयोजन एक नई दिशा प्रदान कर रहा है, जिसे ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के नाम से जाना जाता है। यह शिक्षण पद्धति विद्यार्थियों को अधिक लचीलापन, संसाधनों की व्यापकता और व्यक्तिगत अनुभव प्रदान करती है। ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग में पारंपरिक कक्षा शिक्षण और ऑनलाइन शिक्षण सामग्री का एकीकरण शामिल होता है, जो विद्यार्थियों को एक समग्र और समावेशी सीखने का अनुभव प्रदान करता है। ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का उद्देश्य शिक्षण और अधिगम के तरीकों को अधिक प्रभावी, समावेशी और आकर्षक बनाना है। यह पद्धति विद्यार्थियों को न केवल कक्षा में बल्कि कक्षा के बाहर भी शिक्षण सामग्री तक पहुँचने की सुविधा प्रदान करती है। इस प्रकार, वे अपनी गति और सुविधा के अनुसार सीख सकते हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग विद्यार्थियों को तकनीकी उपकरणों और ऑनलाइन संसाधनों का उपयोग करना सिखाती है, जिससे वे डिजिटल युग की मांगों को पूरा करने में सक्षम होते हैं।

ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के प्रमुख लाभों में से एक यह है कि यह विद्यार्थियों को अपनी शिक्षा के प्रति अधिक उत्तरदायी बनाता है। उन्हें स्वतंत्र रूप से सीखने का अवसर मिलता है, जिससे उनकी आत्म-नियंत्रण और समय प्रबंधन कौशल में वृद्धि होती है। इसके अलावा, यह पद्धति विद्यार्थियों को विभिन्न स्रोतों से जानकारी प्राप्त करने और उसे समझने की क्षमता प्रदान करती है। वे अपने अध्ययन के लिए आवश्यक सामग्री को ऑनलाइन खोज सकते हैं और उसे अपने अध्ययन के साथ समन्वयित कर सकते हैं। इस पद्धति में शिक्षक और विद्यार्थी के बीच संवाद और सहयोग भी बढ़ता है। ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से शिक्षक और विद्यार्थी के बीच अधिक संवाद संभव होता है, जिससे शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया अधिक प्रभावी होती है। शिक्षक विद्यार्थियों के प्रश्नों का समाधान त्वरित रूप से कर सकते हैं और उन्हें आवश्यक मार्गदर्शन प्रदान कर सकते हैं। इस प्रकार, विद्यार्थी अपने अध्ययन में आने वाली समस्याओं का समाधान आसानी से प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

हालाँकि, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के साथ कुछ चुनौतियाँ भी जुड़ी हुई हैं। तकनीकी सीमाएँ, जैसे कि इंटरनेट की उपलब्धता और डिजिटल उपकरणों तक पहुँच, एक प्रमुख चुनौती है। सभी विद्यार्थी और शिक्षक समान रूप से इन संसाधनों का उपयोग नहीं कर सकते, जिससे डिजिटल विभाजन का खतरा बना रहता है। इसके अलावा, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग में सफल होने के लिए स्व-अनुशासन और आत्म-नियंत्रण की आवश्यकता होती है, जो सभी विद्यार्थियों के लिए आसान नहीं होता। प्रशिक्षण भी एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू है। शिक्षकों और विद्यार्थियों दोनों को इस नई पद्धति के साथ समायोजित होने के लिए प्रशिक्षण की आवश्यकता होती है। शिक्षकों को ऑनलाइन शिक्षण के तरीकों और उपकरणों का ज्ञान होना चाहिए, जबकि विद्यार्थियों को इन संसाधनों का उपयोग करने में दक्ष होना चाहिए। इसके अलावा, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग में मूल्यांकन प्रक्रियाएँ जटिल हो सकती हैं, क्योंकि इसमें ऑनलाइन और ऑफलाइन दोनों मोड शामिल होते हैं। मूल्यांकन में निष्पक्षता और पारदर्शिता बनाए रखना एक चुनौती हो सकती है।

इन सभी चुनौतियों के बावजूद, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग ने उच्च शिक्षा में शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया को अधिक प्रभावी और समावेशी बना दिया है। यह पद्धति विद्यार्थियों को उनकी शिक्षा के प्रति अधिक उत्तरदायी बनाती है और उन्हें वास्तविक जीवन की चुनौतियों के लिए तैयार करती है। इसके अतिरिक्त, यह शिक्षकों को शिक्षण में नवीनतम तकनीकों का उपयोग करने के लिए प्रेरित करती है, जिससे शिक्षण की गुणवत्ता में सुधार होता है। भविष्य में, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में और भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएगी, जिससे शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया में निरंतर सुधार होगा।

II ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का परिचय

ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग एक शिक्षण पद्धति है जिसमें पारंपरिक कक्षा शिक्षण के साथ-साथ ऑनलाइन शिक्षण सामग्री और संसाधनों का समन्वय होता है। इस पद्धति में विद्यार्थी कक्षा में उपस्थित रहकर शिक्षक से मार्गदर्शन प्राप्त करते हैं, साथ ही वे स्वतंत्र रूप से ऑनलाइन सामग्री का उपयोग करके अपनी गति से सीखते हैं।

III ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के लाभ

(क) **लचीलापन:** विद्यार्थी अपने समय और सुविधा के अनुसार सीख सकते हैं। इससे उनके समय प्रबंधन और आत्म-नियंत्रण कौशल में वृद्धि होती है।

(ख) **व्यक्तिगत सीखने का अनुभव:** ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग विद्यार्थियों को अपनी क्षमता और रुचि के अनुसार सीखने का अवसर प्रदान करती है। वे अपने अनुसार गति और सामग्री चुन सकते हैं।

(ग) **तकनीकी साक्षरता में वृद्धि:** इस पद्धति से विद्यार्थी तकनीकी उपकरणों और ऑनलाइन संसाधनों का उपयोग करना सीखते हैं, जो उनके भविष्य के कैरियर के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है।

(घ) **संसाधनों की व्यापकता:** ऑनलाइन संसाधनों की विविधता विद्यार्थियों को अधिक जानकारी और सामग्री तक पहुंच प्रदान करती है।

(च) **शिक्षक-विद्यार्थी इंटरैक्शन में वृद्धि:** शिक्षक और विद्यार्थी के बीच ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से अधिक संवाद और सहयोग संभव होता है।

IV ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग की चुनौतियाँ

(क) **तकनीकी सीमाएँ:** सभी विद्यार्थी और शिक्षक इंटरनेट और डिजिटल उपकरणों तक समान पहुँच नहीं रखते। यह डिजिटल विभाजन का कारण बन सकता है।

(ख) **स्व-अनुशासन की आवश्यकता:** ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग में सफल होने के लिए विद्यार्थियों को आत्म-नियंत्रण और स्व-अनुशासन की आवश्यकता होती है।

(ग) प्रशिक्षण की आवश्यकता: शिक्षकों और विद्यार्थियों दोनों को इस नई पद्धति के साथ समायोजित होने के लिए प्रशिक्षण की आवश्यकता होती है।

(घ) मूल्यांकन की जटिलता: ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग में मूल्यांकन प्रक्रियाएँ जटिल हो सकती हैं, क्योंकि इसमें ऑनलाइन और ऑफलाइन दोनों मोड शामिल होते हैं।

V उच्च शिक्षा में ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का प्रभाव

ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग ने उच्च शिक्षा में शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया को अधिक प्रभावी और समावेशी बना दिया है। यह विद्यार्थियों को अपनी शिक्षा के प्रति अधिक उत्तरदायी बनाता है और उन्हें वास्तविक जीवन की चुनौतियों के लिए तैयार करता है। इसके अतिरिक्त, यह शिक्षकों को शिक्षण में नवीनतम तकनीकों का उपयोग करने के लिए प्रेरित करता है, जिससे शिक्षण की गुणवत्ता में सुधार होता है।

VI सुझाव

(क) तकनीकी अवसंरचना में सुधार: उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों को अपनी तकनीकी अवसंरचना में सुधार करना चाहिए। इसके लिए उच्च गति के इंटरनेट, कंप्यूटर लैप्स और अन्य डिजिटल उपकरणों की उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित करनी चाहिए ताकि सभी विद्यार्थी और शिक्षक ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का पूर्ण लाभ उठा सकें।

(ख) शिक्षकों का प्रशिक्षण: शिक्षकों को ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के उपयोग और ऑनलाइन शिक्षण उपकरणों के प्रभावी उपयोग के लिए नियमित प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रमों में भाग लेने के लिए प्रेरित किया जाना चाहिए। इससे वे इस नई पद्धति को बेहतर ढंग से समझ सकेंगे और विद्यार्थियों को अधिक प्रभावी ढंग से सिखा सकेंगे।

(ग) विद्यार्थियों का प्रशिक्षण: विद्यार्थियों को भी डिजिटल उपकरणों और ऑनलाइन संसाधनों का उपयोग करने में दक्ष बनाने के लिए प्रशिक्षण दिया जाना चाहिए। इससे वे अपनी पढ़ाई को अधिक प्रभावी ढंग से प्रबंधित कर सकेंगे और स्व-अनुशासन विकसित कर सकेंगे।

(घ) डिजिटल विभाजन को कम करना: सरकार और शिक्षण संस्थानों को यह सुनिश्चित करना चाहिए कि सभी विद्यार्थियों को डिजिटल उपकरणों और इंटरनेट की समान पहुंच हो। इसके लिए आवश्यकतानुसार मुफ्त या सब्सिडी वाले उपकरण और इंटरनेट सुविधाएं प्रदान की जानी चाहिए।

(च) मूल्यांकन की नई विधियाँ: ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के मूल्यांकन के लिए नई और प्रभावी विधियाँ विकसित की जानी चाहिए। ऑनलाइन और ऑफलाइन दोनों मोड को ध्यान में रखते हुए निष्पक्ष और पारदर्शी मूल्यांकन प्रणाली स्थापित करनी चाहिए।

(छ) समर्थन प्रणाली: विद्यार्थियों और शिक्षकों के लिए एक मजबूत समर्थन प्रणाली विकसित करनी चाहिए, जिसमें तकनीकी सहायता, मेंटरिंग, और परामर्श सेवाएँ शामिल हों। इससे वे ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग में आने वाली समस्याओं का समाधान पा सकेंगे।

(ज) सामाजिक और भावनात्मक सहायता: ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग में विद्यार्थियों की सामाजिक और भावनात्मक आवश्यकताओं का भी ध्यान रखना चाहिए। इसके लिए ऑनलाइन समुदाय, चर्चा समूह और अन्य सामाजिक इंटरैक्शन के अवसर प्रदान किए जाने चाहिए।

(झ) फीडबैक और सुधार: ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग कार्यक्रमों की नियमित समीक्षा और मूल्यांकन करना चाहिए। विद्यार्थियों और शिक्षकों से फीडबैक लेकर सुधारात्मक कदम उठाने चाहिए, ताकि शिक्षण और अधिगम की गुणवत्ता में निरंतर सुधार हो सके।

(ट) नवाचार और अनुसंधान: उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों को ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग में नवाचार और अनुसंधान को प्रोत्साहित करना चाहिए। नई तकनीकों और तरीकों की खोज और परीक्षण करने से ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग की प्रभावशीलता में वृद्धि होगी।

(ठ) नीतिगत समर्थन: सरकारों को ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग को बढ़ावा देने के लिए नीतिगत समर्थन प्रदान करना चाहिए। इसके तहत आवश्यक वित्तीय सहायता, संसाधनों का वितरण और नीतिगत ढांचे का विकास शामिल होना चाहिए।

VII निष्कर्ष

उच्च शिक्षा में ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का समावेश शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में एक महत्वपूर्ण परिवर्तन है, जो शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया को अधिक प्रभावी, लचीला और समावेशी बनाता है। यह पद्धति विद्यार्थियों को पारंपरिक कक्षा शिक्षण के साथ-साथ ऑनलाइन संसाधनों का लाभ उठाने का अवसर प्रदान करती है, जिससे उनकी सीखने की क्षमता में वृद्धि होती है। ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का प्रमुख लाभ इसका लचीलापन है, जो विद्यार्थियों को अपनी सुविधा और समय के अनुसार सीखने का अवसर देता है। इसके अलावा, यह व्यक्तिगत सीखने के अनुभव को बढ़ावा देती है, तकनीकी साक्षरता में वृद्धि करती है और विभिन्न स्रोतों से ज्ञान प्राप्त करने की सुविधा प्रदान करती है। शिक्षक-विद्यार्थी इंटरैक्शन में वृद्धि भी ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग का एक प्रमुख लाभ है, जो शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया को अधिक प्रभावी बनाता है। हालांकि, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग के साथ कुछ चुनौतियाँ भी जुड़ी हुई हैं, जैसे तकनीकी सीमाएँ, स्व-अनुशासन की आवश्यकता, और प्रशिक्षण की आवश्यकता। इन चुनौतियों के बावजूद, उचित रणनीतियों और संसाधनों के माध्यम से इन पर काबू पाया जा सकता है। भविष्य में, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में और भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएगी, जिससे शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया में निरंतर सुधार होगा और विद्यार्थियों को उच्च गुणवत्ता वाली शिक्षा प्राप्त होगी। इसके लिए आवश्यक है कि शिक्षण संस्थान और सरकारें इस पद्धति को अपनाने के लिए आवश्यक संसाधन और प्रशिक्षण प्रदान करें। कुल मिलाकर, ब्लेंडेड लर्निंग उच्च शिक्षा में शिक्षण और अधिगम की प्रक्रिया को अधिक प्रभावी, लचीला और समावेशी बनाती है, और भविष्य में शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएगी।

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विश्व स्त्री विमर्श में महादेवी को क्यों नहीं मिला सिमोन-सा स्थान ?

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I प्रस्तावना

वीर भारत तलवार कहते हैं कि स्त्री विमर्श से अधिक दयनीय विमर्श हिंदी में कोई दूसरा नहीं है। आधी आबादी के जीवन से जुड़ा इतना महत्वपूर्ण विमर्श हिंदी साहित्य की मुख्य धारा में इस रूप में कैसे और कब पहुंच गया ? क्या वाकई स्त्री विमर्श की गंभीरता इस समय में कम हुई है जबकि इस समय हिंदी में न सिर्फ सर्वाधिक संख्या में लेखिकाएं लिख रही हैं बल्कि सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण लेखन भी उन्हीं के खाते में है और इस काल को लेखिकाओं का ही काल कहा जा रहा है। तब वास्तविकता क्या है और क्यों स्त्री विमर्श को कम से कम हिंदी साहित्य के इस वर्तमान दौर में तो जरूर ही अनेकानेक आरोपों को झेलना पड़ रहा है। बतौर लेखिका अगर मैं ही जवाब देने लग जाऊं इन सवालियों के कि इस दौर की लेखिकाएं स्त्री विमर्श की लेखिकायें नहीं हैं बल्कि मानवीय मूल्यों की लेखक हैं और जो सबसे सरलीकृत आरोप उछाला जाता रहा है इधर कि खाई-अघाई मध्यवर्गीय स्त्रियों के विवाहेतर अवैध संबंधों और वाइन पीने वाली महिलाओं का कुल यह विमर्श है तो इन सतही आरोपों को जाने दीजिये, विश्व स्त्री विमर्श में भारतीय लेखन का, हिंदी साहित्य का क्या योगदान है, इस पर बात करते हैं,

II स्त्री विमर्श की अवधारणा और इतिहास

एक स्त्री के मनुष्य के तौर पर सम्मानजनक जीवन जीने के हक की लड़ाई को ही स्त्री विमर्श या फेमिनिज्म कहा जाता है। यह विशुद्ध रूप से एक राजनीतिक आन्दोलन था जो बाद में साहित्य में आया। फर्स्ट वेव फेमिनिज्म २०वीं शती में पाश्चात्य जगत में चला एक व्यापक आन्दोलन था। मार्था लियर ने (द न्यूयॉर्क टाइम्स में लिखे अपने आलेख में) सर्वप्रथम 'फर्स्ट वेव फेमिनिज्म' और 'सेकंड वेव फेमिनिज्म' शब्दों का प्रयोग किया। फर्स्ट वेव फेमिनिज्म स्त्रियों को मतदान का अधिकार दिलाने का आंदोलन था और सेकंड वेव फेमिनिज्म जीवन में स्त्री के साथ हो वाले भेदभाव के विरुद्ध चलाया गया आंदोलन था। ब्रिटेन की मेरी वोल्स्टोनक्राफ्ट को फर्स्ट वेव फेमिनिज्म का अगुआ माना जाता है। साहित्य की दुनिया में कई एक नाम हैं जिनको हम यह श्रेय दे सकते हैं कि उन्होंने बीसवीं शती में स्त्री विमर्श को तेज धार प्रदान की। अव्वल तो वर्जिनिया वुल्फ के लम्बे लेख 'ए रूम ऑफ वन्स ओन' (जो वास्तव में उनका एक व्याख्यान था और बाद में पुस्तक रूप में आया) को जाता है। और फिर सिमोन द बोउवार की अति प्रसिद्ध पुस्तक 'द सेकंड सेक्स' जो कि १९४६ में प्रकाशित हुई। महादेवी वर्मा की 'श्रृंखला की कड़ियाँ' इससे पहले १९४२ में प्रकाशित हुई और यदि दोनों किताबों में तुलनात्मक अध्ययन करें तो हम पाते हैं कि महादेवी जी की पुस्तक एक अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण दस्तावेज है स्त्री विमर्श का। अफसोस कि इस पुस्तक को वो अंतरराष्ट्रीय ख्याति नहीं मिली जिसकी यह हकदार थी और इसका सबसे बड़ा एक कारण यह भी रहा है कि हिन्दी में स्ट्रीम के पुरुष आलोचकों ने इस पुस्तक का स्वागत नहीं किया और सशक्त महिला आलोचक तो हिंदी में आज तक नहीं हैं जैसा कि मैत्रेयी पुष्पा कहती हैं, "जब तक महिला आलोचक रचनाओं को लेकर अपने नये से नये विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत नहीं करेंगी, साहित्य में उनकी स्थिति ऐसी ही बनी रहेगी जैसी कि अब है। अब तक कोई महिला आलोचक अपने विश्लेषण से किसी स्त्री रचनाकार को नये मुकाम पर खड़ी नहीं कर पाई। कारण यही है कि वे इधर उधर से उधार के विचार जुटाने में लगी रहती हैं और डंके की चोट पर उन विचारों को अपना कहकर आलोचना के क्षेत्र में डटे रहने का भ्रम पाले हुए हैं। ...जो आप कह रही हैं वह तो लेखक और पाठक पहले ही पढ़ चुके हैं।" 1

यही और इसी सब की पड़ताल हम इस आलेख में करेंगे।

III द सेकंड सेक्स में क्या कहती हैं सिमोन

सिमोन द बोउवार अपनी किताब द सेकंड सेक्स में बात आरम्भ करती हैं स्त्री की जैविक स्थिति से। वे कहती हैं, "औरत जन्म से ही औरत नहीं होती बल्कि बढ़कर औरत बनती है।" 2

स्त्री की जैविक स्थिति पर बात वे आरम्भ करती हैं इससे कि जीवन की कई प्रजातियों में प्रजनन के लिए 'नर' का होना अनिवार्य नहीं है और ये अनेक छोटे जीवों और पानी में रहने वाले उद्भिज्ज में होता है। आगे वे कही हैं कि जन्म के समय स्त्री और पुरुष एक समान होते हैं और हर शिशु का बर्ताव एक-सा होता है। और ये तो आसपास के लोग होते हैं जो कि एक लड़की में ये हीन भावना भरते हैं की वह एक स्त्री है और इस कारण पुरुष की अधीनस्थ है। वे लिखती हैं,

"स्त्री और पुरुष की परिस्थितियों में विवाह के कारण कोई समानता नहीं देखने में आती। समाज में लड़की के लिए विवाह का अर्थ हुआ समाज से एकात्म होना। परित्यक्ता लड़की समाज में एक निकृष्ट पदार्थ के रूप में ही देखी जाती है।" 3

इस तरह वे तथ्यों और मिथकों से होते हुए अंत में आधुनिक कामकाजी स्त्री के प्रति समाज के नजरिये की बात करती हैं,

"वरिष्ठ जन स्त्री की योग्यता के प्रति आदरभाव रखते हुए भी इतना तो कहेंगे ही कि इस जगह पर स्त्री का होना कोई दोष या त्रुटि तो नहीं किंतु एक अजूबा जरूर है।" 4

इस तरह इस किताब में सिमोन द बोउवार स्त्री के जन्म से लेकर उसके सफलतम कैरियर में समाज का उसके प्रति विद्वेषपूर्ण दृष्टिकोण और उसको कमतर आंकने, पुरुष के सामने हीन साबित करने की लगातार कोशिशों के बारे में लिखती हैं जिस कारण स्त्री भले ही अपना कैरियर बना ले लेकिन जीवन में कोई महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि अर्जित नहीं कर पाती।

इस पुस्तक की महत्ता कालातीत है। वैश्विक स्त्री विमर्श में यह पुस्तक एक प्रस्थान बिंदु है और सदैव रहेगी।

IV श्रृंखला की कड़ियाँ : पुरुषवादी मानसिकता की शिकार एक महान पुस्तक

सिमोन द बोउवार की पुस्तक द सेकंड सेक्स से भी पहले महादेवी वर्मा ने अपने निबंधों में स्त्री की पराधीनता पर विस्तार से लिखा है। और देखा जाये तो श्रृंखला की कड़ियाँ ही विश्व स्त्री विमर्श में प्रारंभिक सबसे महत्वपूर्ण पुस्तक है। ये अलग बात है कि उनकी इस पुस्तक को वो वैश्विक ख्याति नहीं मिली जिसकी यह हकदार है सदैव ही। इस पुस्तक के निबंध न सिर्फ भारत के अधिकांश शिक्षण संस्थानों में पढ़ाये जाते हैं बल्कि इस किताब के खाते में पर अनगिनत शोध कार्य भी दर्ज हैं। इस पुस्तक में महादेवी जी के जो निबंध हैं वे १९३१ से १९३७ तक लिखे गये थे। इस तरह हम कह सकते हैं कि महादेवी जी विश्व स्त्री विमर्श की पुरोधा हैं जो १९३१ में स्त्री की दायम दर्जे की स्थिति पर बात कर रही थीं वो भी भारत जैसे देश में जहाँ आज सन् २०२० तक भी सभी स्त्रियाँ और पुरुष पूरी तरह से शिक्षित नहीं हुए हैं। अधिकांश स्त्री-पुरुष आज भी या तो अशिक्षित हैं या अर्ध शिक्षित और जो शिक्षित भी हैं उनकी दिमागी कंडीशनिंग ऐसी हुई है कि वे स्त्री विरोधी हैं यहाँ तक कि कुछ स्त्रियाँ भी पुरुष सत्ता के टूल के तौर पर काम करती दिख जाती हैं और वे दूसरी स्त्रियों को किसी न किसी तरह प्रताड़ित करने में शामिल होती हैं। जबकि आज के आधुनिक युग में ये हालात हैं हमारे समाज के तब हम कल्पना ही कर सकते हैं कि तीस के दशक में हालात कितने खराब रहे होंगे और हम समझ सकते हैं कि क्यों पुरुष समीक्षकों ने इस पुस्तक का स्वागत नहीं किया महिला समीक्षक तो खैर आज तक हिंदी मुख्य धारा में न बहुत प्रभावी स्थान पा सकी हैं और न ही ट्रेंड सेटर हो सकी हैं। यदि महादेवी जी की यह पुस्तक पुरुषवादी मानसिकता की शिकार न

हुई होती और इसकी समीक्षाएं, अनुवाद इत्यादि हुए होते तो निसंदेह इसने विश्व साहित्य में अधिक ख्याति प्राप्त की होती।

V श्रृंखला की कड़ियाँ और स्त्री की कालातीत पराधीनता

इस पुस्तक में महादेवी जी के कुल ग्यारह निबंध हैं। प्रथम निबंध 'हमारी श्रृंखला की कड़ियाँ' से वे अपनी बात आरम्भ करती हैं कि स्त्री को या तो देवी या फिर दासी का स्थान दिया है। एक मनुष्य की तरह उसको न अधिकार यहाँ बराबर मिले हैं और न ही वे समाज की एक सम्माननीय सदस्य मानी जाती हैं। वे घर के एक सामान से अधिक कुछ नहीं समझी जातीं। महादेवी जी प्राचीन समय का उदाहरण देती हैं जब स्त्री पुरुष की सहधर्मिणी थी, अनुचरी नहीं। यही बात सिमोन अपनी पुस्तक में कहती हैं और यही बात स्त्री विमर्श की तकरीबन प्रत्येक पुस्तक में कही जाती रही है सदैव कि आदिकाल में स्त्री पुरुष की न अनुचरी थी न ही उसके स्वामित्व की वस्तु तुल्य। ये तो समय के साथ पुरुष सत्ता की साजिश सफल रही कि उसने स्त्री की शारीरिक कमजोरी का फायदा उठाया और स्त्री की कोमल भावनाओं का भी। आज समाज में कितनी वीभत्स स्थिति है ! आये दिन हम अखबारों में स्त्रियों के साथ होने वाले अपराधों के बारे में पढ़ते रहते हैं। जन्म से लेकर मृत्यु तक स्त्री आज यदि बलात्कार, एसिड अटैक, मारपीट और अन्य तरह की यौन हिंसा से सुरक्षित नहीं है तो इसके लिए समाज की पुरुषवादी, वर्चस्ववादी मानसिकता जिम्मेदार है जो कि स्त्री को इस्तेमाल की वस्तु समझती है न कि समान मनुष्य और यही समानता का सवाल महादेवी जी तीस के दशक में उठाती हैं। तब से अब तक कितने बरस बीत गए कितने असंख्य अपराध इस बीच भारतीय स्त्री और विश्व की स्त्री जाति के साथ हुए और जो लगातार वीभत्स से वीभत्सतम होते जा रहे हैं। इस तरह ये किताब अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण स्थान रखती है स्त्री विमर्श में और हाँ, स्त्री विमर्श भी एक अति आवश्यक विमर्श है क्योंकि स्त्री के प्रति हो रहे अपराधों को केवल कानून की सहायता से यदि रोका जा सकता होता तो कब का रोक लिया गया होता। जब तक समाज नहीं बदलेगा, समाज की सोच नहीं बदलेगी तब तक ये पाशविक अपराध नहीं रुकेंगे। और समाज की सोच को बदलने का विमर्श ही तो स्त्री विमर्श है जिसकी पुरोधा महादेवी वर्मा हैं जिनके निबंधों में स्त्री की दारुण स्थिति का वर्णन है और कविताओं में भी। उनकी प्रसिद्ध कविता 'मे नीर भरी दुःख की बदली' की पंक्तियाँ हैं,

विस्तृत नभ का कोई कोना
मेरा न कभी अपना होना,
परिचय इतना, इतिहास यही—
उमड़ी कल थी, मिट आज चली !

स्त्री की भी यही स्थिति है या अधिक व्यावहारिक शब्दों में कहें तो इससे बहुत बदतर क्योंकि स्त्री एक जीवित मनुष्य है और एक पूरा जीवन अपमानित होते हुए या दोयम दर्जे का नागरिक होकर कैसे जिया जा सकता है। परवीन शाकिर का एक शेर मुझे याद आता है,

वो तो खुशबू है फजाओं में बिखर जायेगा,
मसला फूल का है, फूल किधर जायेगा ।

तमाम आधुनिकता के बावजूद हम अंततः ऐसे समाज में जी रहे हैं जो अपनी हर समस्या के मूल में एक स्त्री को खोज लेता है। बेटी पैदा हुई तो माँ जिम्मेदार, घर में गरीबी है तो अधिक बेटियाँ जिम्मेदार, विवाह नहीं हो पा रहा तो लड़की की कम सुन्दरता से लेकर अशिक्षा तक जिम्मेदार, पति को पसंद न आई तो पत्नी जिम्मेदार, ससुरालवालों के मनमाफिक नहीं तो बहू जिम्मेदार, और फिर पुत्र न जन सकी तो भी वही जिम्मेदार और विधवा हो गई तब तो उसकी दुर्गत न पूछिए। कुटुंब के पुरुषों के लिये दैहिक और स्त्रियों के लिये मानसिक-शारीरिक शोषण की वस्तु जिसका सबसे बड़ा दोष ये है कि वो अपने पति को खा गई —इस तरह दोषारोपण का एक अनंत चक्र है जिसमें कोल्हू के बैल की तरह स्त्री जुती हुई है।

‘नारीत्व का अभिशाप’ उनका एक अद्भुत निबंध है जिसमें उन्होंने स्त्री के साथ समाज द्वारा किये जाने वाले भेदभाव और प्रताड़ना का मार्मिक वर्णन किया है। जिस घर ने कन्या रूप में वह जन्म लेती है वहां भी उसकी स्थिति सेविका और भिक्षुणी से अधिक कुछ नहीं होती है। उसको पराया धन समझा जाता है और एक तरह से उसका उस घर में न कोई स्थान है और न ही कोई अधिकार जिस घर में उसने जन्म लिया और युवा होने तक अपनी पूरी आयु दी, सेवाएं और स्नेह दिया। उसको तो बस बाहर धकेल ही दिया जाना है किसी न किसी दिन और उसके लिए फिर पितृ गृह के दरवाजे वापसी में सम्मानजनक ढंग से कभी नहीं खुलते हैं। पति के घर में चाहे उसके साथ जो बर्ताव होता रहे उसको बचाने या साथ देने को पितृ गृह से कोई नहीं आता। यदि पति पढ़ा लिखा है, विद्वान है और पत्नी नहीं है या पति की पसंद के अनुसार वह रूपसी नहीं है या संतान के रूप में पुत्रों को जन्म नहीं दे सकी है तो उसका स्थान किसी और को दे दिया जाता है और समाज भी पति के साथ ही खड़ा दिखाई देता है। इसी तरह यदि वह दुर्भाग्य से विधवा हो जाये तब तो ये समाज उसका जीवन नरक बना देता है। एक तरह से पूरा समाज ही उनके दासत्व की, अपमान की व्यवस्था करने को सदैव तत्पर रहता है, ऐसी दारुण स्थिति समाज ने उस स्त्री की कर रखी है जिसके बिना उसका काम भी नहीं चलता।

‘हिन्दू स्त्री का पत्नीत्व’ निबंध तो स्त्री विमर्श की ऊँचाइयों को स्पर्श करता है वहां तक बाद के स्त्री विमर्शकर्ताओं की कोई रचना कदाचित ही पहुँच पाई है। महादेवी जी कहती हैं कि समाज ने स्त्री के जीवनयापन के लिए सिवाय इसके कोई और इंतजाम नहीं किया की वह किसी की पत्नी बनकर उसके बच्चों की माँ बने। भले ही तन या मन से लड़की का मन विवाह के लिए तैयार न हो लेकिन समाज उसको विवाह व्यवस्था में धकेल ही देता है। बजाय इसके यदि लड़की को शिक्षित किया जाये, स्वावलंबी बनाया जाये और तब वो अपने अनुरूप साथी का चयन करे तो क्या समाज का अधिक विकास न होगा ? देखिए, वे कितने सुंदर शब्दों में स्त्री के लोकतान्त्रिक अधिकारों की बात करते हुए समाज को चेताती हैं,

“यदि हम गृह के महत्त्व को बनाये रखना चाहते हैं तो हमें ऐसी गृहणियों की आवश्यकता होगी जो अपने उत्तरदायित्व को समझ-बूझकर स्वेच्छा से, प्रसन्नतापूर्वक स्वीकार करें, केवल जीविका के लिए विवश होकर या अपनी रक्षा में असमर्थ होकर नहीं।” 5

यह प्रश्न तीस के दशक में जितना प्रासंगिक था, आज भी उतना ही है। सारी आधुनिकता एक छद्म है, समाज की वास्तविकता आज भी यही है कि अधिकांश लड़कियाँ अपना वैवाहिक जीवन एक दासी की तरह जी रही हैं और अनेक तरह से उनका शोषण हो रहा है। उनके साथ अपराध हो रहे हैं जिन्हें सहन करने को वे विवश हैं क्योंकि उन्हें न तो पूरी तरह से शिक्षित किया गया है और न ही आत्मनिर्भर बनाया गया है। बहुत सारे अपराधों के मूल में यह कारण होता है कि स्त्री आर्थिक रूप से आत्मनिर्भर नहीं होती और इस कारण न सिर्फ पति बल्कि ससुराल पक्ष के अन्य लोग भी उसका दैहिक और मानसिक शोषण करते हैं।

इस पुस्तक के अन्य निबंध ‘जीवन का व्यवसाय’, ‘स्त्री के अर्थ-स्वातंत्र्य का प्रश्न’, ‘हमारी समस्याएँ’, ‘समाज और व्यक्ति’, ‘जीने की कला’ इत्यादि में वे जीवन के विविध पहलुओं पर बात करती हैं जो अंततः इस समस्या से जुड़ते हैं कि स्त्री के प्रति ये समाज ऐसा नजरिया रखता है कि उसका शोषण भी करना चाहता है और उसको सम्मानजनक दृष्टि से भी नहीं देखता। समय, समाज और स्त्री की स्थिति का कितना सूक्ष्म ज्ञान उन्हें हैय उनसे अधिक सच एक कामकाजी स्त्री के आर्थिक अधिकारों के बारे में कोई आज तक नहीं लिख सका है।

“समाज ने स्त्री के सम्बन्ध में अर्थ का ऐसा विषम विभाजन किया है कि साधारण श्रमजीवी से लेकर संपन्न वर्ग की स्त्रियों तक की स्थिति दयनीय ही कही जाने योग्य है। वह केवल उत्तराधिकार से ही वंचित नहीं है, वरन अर्थ के सम्बन्ध में सभी क्षेत्रों में एक प्रकार की विवशता के बंधन में बंधी हुई है।” 6

इतिहास गवाह है कि जिस देश, समाज, संस्कृति ने अपनी स्त्रियों को सम्मानजनक स्थान नहीं दिया वह पिछड़ी और बर्बर रही हैं और दुनिया की तरक्की में पीछे छूट गई है। किसी भी देश का विकास उसकी आधी आबादी को छोड़ देने से कभी हो ही नहीं सकता। अफसोस कि समाज प्रकृति के इस मूलभूत सिद्धांत को नहीं समझ पाता और

अपनी स्त्रियों का शोषण कर, एक तरह से खुद की ही तरक्की रोकता है। पीड़ित, पददलित माँओं से आप कैसे महान संतानों की आशा कर सकते हैं ??

VI उपसंहार

स्त्री विमर्श पर भारत में इस पुस्तक के बाद अनेक पुस्तकें लिखी गईं लेकिन इस पुस्तक—सी ऊंचाई किसी में न थी। उपनिवेश में स्त्री (प्रभा खेतान), बाधाओं के बावजूद औरत (आशारानी बोहरा), खुली खिड़कियाँ (मैत्रेयी पुष्पा), हिंदी साहित्य का आधा इतिहास (सुमन राजे) इत्यादि इस सन्दर्भ में महत्वपूर्ण पुस्तकें हैं। और वर्तमान समय हिंदी साहित्य में स्त्री—लेखकों का ही समय है लेकिन ये महत्वपूर्ण प्रस्थान बिंदु है कि स्त्री जब लिखती है तो मानवता का विमर्श करती है न की सिर्फ स्त्रियों की स्थिति का। मैत्रेयी पुष्पा लिखती हैं,

“हम तो समाज विमर्श कर रहे हैं, आप इसे स्त्री विमर्श का नाम देते हैं।”

संदर्भ

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निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन भूले बिसरे मंदिरों का ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक अध्ययन

देवास उईके

सहायक प्राध्यापक, इतिहास विभाग, डॉ.सी वी रामन विश्वविद्यालय, खंडवा (म.प्र.) भारत

सारांश

निमाड़ क्षेत्र, जो मध्य भारत का एक ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक रूप से समृद्ध क्षेत्र है, अपने प्राचीन मंदिरों के लिए जाना जाता है। ये मंदिर न केवल धार्मिक महत्व रखते हैं, बल्कि इनकी वास्तुकला, मूर्तिकला और ऐतिहासिक विरासत भी अद्वितीय है। हालांकि, समय के साथ कई मंदिर उपेक्षित हो गए हैं और उनका ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्व धूमिल हो गया है। इस शोध का उद्देश्य निमाड़ क्षेत्र के ऐसे ही प्राचीन और भूले-बिसरे मंदिरों का ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक दृष्टिकोण से अध्ययन करना है। इस शोध में निमाड़ क्षेत्र के विभिन्न प्राचीन मंदिरों का सर्वेक्षण किया गया है, जिनमें उनकी वास्तुकला, मूर्तिकला, शिलालेख और धार्मिक परंपराओं का विस्तृत विश्लेषण शामिल है। शोध के लिए प्राथमिक और द्वितीयक स्रोतों का उपयोग किया गया है, जिसमें पुरातात्विक साक्ष्य, ऐतिहासिक दस्तावेज, स्थानीय साहित्य और मौखिक इतिहास शामिल हैं। इसके अलावा, स्थानीय समुदायों के साथ साक्षात्कार और फील्ड सर्वेक्षण भी किए गए हैं। शोध के निष्कर्ष बताते हैं कि निमाड़ के ये मंदिर न केवल धार्मिक स्थल हैं, बल्कि ये क्षेत्र की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक और ऐतिहासिक विरासत के प्रतीक भी हैं। इन मंदिरों की वास्तुकला में स्थानीय और राजवंशीय शैलियों का मिश्रण देखा जा सकता है। साथ ही, इन मंदिरों से जुड़ी लोककथाएँ और धार्मिक परंपराएँ स्थानीय समाज के सांस्कृतिक ताने-बाने को दर्शाती हैं। हालांकि, इन मंदिरों के संरक्षण की दिशा में अभी और प्रयासों की आवश्यकता है। इस शोध का महत्व इस तथ्य में निहित है कि यह निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन मंदिरों के ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक पहलुओं को उजागर करता है और उनके संरक्षण की आवश्यकता पर बल देता है। यह शोध भविष्य के शोधार्थियों और इतिहासकारों के लिए एक संदर्भ के रूप में कार्य कर सकता है।

मुख्य शब्दः— निमाड़, प्राचीन मंदिर, ऐतिहासिक अध्ययन, सांस्कृतिक विरासत, वास्तुकला, मूर्तिकला, पुरातत्व, संरक्षण।

I प्रस्तावना

निमाड़ क्षेत्र, जो मध्य भारत के मध्य प्रदेश और महाराष्ट्र राज्यों में फैला हुआ है, अपनी समृद्ध ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक विरासत के लिए जाना जाता है। यह क्षेत्र प्राचीन काल से ही धार्मिक, सांस्कृतिक और व्यापारिक गतिविधियों का केंद्र रहा है। निमाड़ की भूमि पर अनेक प्राचीन मंदिरों का निर्माण हुआ, जो न केवल धार्मिक आस्था के प्रतीक हैं, बल्कि उनकी वास्तुकला, मूर्तिकला और ऐतिहासिक महत्व भी उल्लेखनीय है। हालांकि, समय के साथ कई मंदिर उपेक्षित हो गए हैं और उनका ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्व धूमिल हो गया है। इन मंदिरों का अध्ययन न केवल हमें अतीत की झलक दिखाता है, बल्कि स्थानीय समाज और संस्कृति को समझने में भी मदद करता है।

इस शोध का मुख्य उद्देश्य निमाड़ क्षेत्र के उन प्राचीन और भूले-बिसरे मंदिरों का ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक दृष्टिकोण से अध्ययन करना है, जो समय की धूल में खो गए हैं। ये मंदिर न केवल धार्मिक महत्व रखते हैं, बल्कि उनकी वास्तुकला, मूर्तिकला और शिलालेख स्थानीय इतिहास और संस्कृति के बारे में महत्वपूर्ण जानकारी प्रदान करते हैं। इस शोध के माध्यम से इन मंदिरों के ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ, उनकी वास्तुकला, धार्मिक परंपराओं और सांस्कृतिक प्रभाव का विस्तृत विश्लेषण किया जाएगा।

शोध का महत्व इस तथ्य में निहित है कि यह निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन मंदिरों के बारे में नई जानकारी प्रदान करता है और उनके संरक्षण की आवश्यकता को रेखांकित करता है। यह अध्ययन न केवल इतिहासकारों और पुरातत्वविदों के लिए उपयोगी होगा, बल्कि स्थानीय समाज और पर्यटन के लिए भी महत्वपूर्ण साबित हो सकता है। इस शोध के माध्यम से हम निमाड़ क्षेत्र की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक विरासत को पुनर्जीवित करने और उसे भविष्य की पीढ़ियों के लिए सुरक्षित रखने का प्रयास करेंगे।

II साहित्य समीक्षा

निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन मंदिरों पर अब तक कई शोध और अध्ययन हुए हैं, जिनमें इन मंदिरों के ऐतिहासिक, सांस्कृतिक और वास्तुकला संबंधी पहलुओं को विस्तार से समझाने का प्रयास किया गया है। निम्नलिखित खंडों में पूर्व शोधों का विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत किया गया है:

(क) ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि

डॉ. रामचंद्र नागर (2010) ने अपने शोध में निमाड़ क्षेत्र के ऐतिहासिक विकास और उस पर विभिन्न राजवंशों के प्रभाव का विस्तृत अध्ययन किया है। उनके अनुसार, निमाड़ क्षेत्र पर परमार, होल्कर और मुगल साम्राज्य का प्रभाव रहा है, जिसने यहाँ के मंदिरों की वास्तुकला और धार्मिक परंपराओं को आकार दिया।

शर्मा और गुप्ता (2015) ने अपने अध्ययन में निमाड़ के मंदिरों के निर्माण काल और उनके ऐतिहासिक संदर्भों का विश्लेषण किया है। उन्होंने बताया कि ये मंदिर 8वीं से 12वीं शताब्दी के बीच बने थे और इनमें स्थानीय और राजवंशीय शैलियों का मिश्रण देखा जा सकता है।

(ख) वास्तुकला और मूर्तिकला

डॉ. मीना देशमुख (2018) ने निमाड़ क्षेत्र के मंदिरों की वास्तुकला पर एक विस्तृत अध्ययन प्रस्तुत किया है। उनके अनुसार, इन मंदिरों में नागर और द्रविड़ शैली का अनूठा संगम देखने को मिलता है। उन्होंने विशेष रूप से नावदा टोला और कुकड़ेश्वर मंदिर की वास्तुकला का विश्लेषण किया है।

पटेल (2020) ने अपने शोध में निमाड़ के मंदिरों की मूर्तिकला और उनके धार्मिक महत्व पर प्रकाश डाला है। उनके अनुसार, इन मंदिरों में देवी-देवताओं की मूर्तियाँ स्थानीय कला और धार्मिक मान्यताओं को दर्शाती हैं।

(ग) सांस्कृतिक और धार्मिक महत्व

डॉ. अंजली जोशी (2017) ने निमाड़ क्षेत्र के मंदिरों के सांस्कृतिक और धार्मिक महत्व का अध्ययन किया है। उनके अनुसार, ये मंदिर न केवल धार्मिक स्थल हैं, बल्कि स्थानीय समाज के सांस्कृतिक ताने-बाने को भी दर्शाते हैं। उन्होंने मंदिरों से जुड़ी लोककथाओं और परंपराओं का भी विश्लेषण किया है।

सिंह और यादव (2019) ने अपने शोध में निमाड़ के मंदिरों के धार्मिक अनुष्ठानों और त्योहारों का अध्ययन किया है। उनके अनुसार, इन मंदिरों में आयोजित होने वाले त्योहार स्थानीय समाज के एकीकरण का महत्वपूर्ण साधन हैं।

(घ) पुरातात्विक अध्ययन

डॉ. राजेश्वर प्रसाद (2016) ने निमाड़ क्षेत्र के मंदिरों का पुरातात्विक दृष्टिकोण से अध्ययन किया है। उन्होंने मंदिरों में पाए गए शिलालेखों और पुरातात्विक साक्ष्यों का विश्लेषण करके उनके ऐतिहासिक महत्व को उजागर किया है। मिश्रा (2021) ने अपने शोध में निमाड़ के मंदिरों के आसपास के क्षेत्र में हुई पुरातात्विक खोजों का विवरण प्रस्तुत किया है। उनके अनुसार, ये खोजें मंदिरों के निर्माण काल और उनके धार्मिक महत्व को समझने में मदद करती हैं।

(ड) संरक्षण और चुनौतियाँ

डॉ. प्रीति वर्मा (2022) ने निमाड़ क्षेत्र के मंदिरों के संरक्षण की वर्तमान स्थिति और चुनौतियों का अध्ययन किया है। उनके अनुसार, इन मंदिरों के संरक्षण के लिए सरकारी और गैर-सरकारी स्तर पर और प्रयासों की आवश्यकता है। गौतम (2023) ने अपने शोध में मंदिरों के संरक्षण में स्थानीय समुदाय की भूमिका का विश्लेषण किया है। उन्होंने बताया कि स्थानीय समुदाय के सहयोग से इन मंदिरों को बेहतर ढंग से संरक्षित किया जा सकता है।

III शोध का उद्देश्य

इस शोध का प्राथमिक उद्देश्य निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन और भूले-बिसरे मंदिरों का ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक दृष्टिकोण से अध्ययन करना है। यह शोध निम्नलिखित उद्देश्यों को पूरा करने के लिए किया गया है:

(क) ऐतिहासिक महत्व का अध्ययन:

- निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन मंदिरों के ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ और उनके निर्माण काल का विश्लेषण करना।
- इन मंदिरों के निर्माण में विभिन्न राजवंशों और सांस्कृतिक प्रभावों की भूमिका को समझना।

(ख) सांस्कृतिक विरासत का अध्ययन:

- मंदिरों से जुड़ी धार्मिक परंपराओं, लोककथाओं और सांस्कृतिक प्रथाओं का विश्लेषण करना।
- इन मंदिरों का स्थानीय समाज और संस्कृति पर प्रभाव का अध्ययन करना।

(ग) पुरातात्विक और ऐतिहासिक साक्ष्यों का अध्ययन:

- मंदिरों में पाए गए शिलालेखों, मूर्तियों और अन्य पुरातात्विक साक्ष्यों का विश्लेषण करना।
- इन साक्ष्यों के आधार पर मंदिरों के ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्व को उजागर करना।

(घ) संरक्षण और चुनौतियों का अध्ययन:

- मंदिरों की वर्तमान स्थिति और उनके संरक्षण की आवश्यकता का मूल्यांकन करना।
- मंदिरों के संरक्षण में स्थानीय समुदाय और सरकारी एजेंसियों की भूमिका का अध्ययन करना।

(ङ) स्थानीय समुदाय और पर्यटन को प्रोत्साहित करना:

- इन मंदिरों के ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्व को उजागर करके स्थानीय समुदाय और पर्यटन को प्रोत्साहित करना।
- इन मंदिरों के संरक्षण और विकास के लिए सुझाव प्रदान करना।

IV शोध अंतराल

पूर्व में हुए शोधों से यह स्पष्ट है कि निमाड़ क्षेत्र के मंदिरों के ऐतिहासिक, सांस्कृतिक और वास्तुकला संबंधी पहलुओं पर काफी काम हुआ है। हालांकि, अभी भी कई मंदिर ऐसे हैं जो शोधकर्ताओं की नजर से दूर हैं और उनका व्यापक अध्ययन नहीं हुआ है। इसके अलावा, इन मंदिरों के संरक्षण और उनसे जुड़ी स्थानीय परंपराओं पर और गहन शोध की आवश्यकता है। इस शोध का उद्देश्य इन अंतरालों को भरना और निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन मंदिरों के बारे में नई जानकारी प्रदान करना है।

V अध्ययन क्षेत्र और पद्धति

निमाड़ क्षेत्र, जो मध्य भारत के मध्य प्रदेश और महाराष्ट्र राज्यों में फैला हुआ है, अपनी समृद्ध ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक विरासत के लिए जाना जाता है। यह क्षेत्र नर्मदा नदी के किनारे स्थित है और प्राचीन काल से ही

धार्मिक, सांस्कृतिक और व्यापारिक गतिविधियों का केंद्र रहा है। इस शोध में निमाड क्षेत्र के विभिन्न प्राचीन मंदिरों को शामिल किया गया है, जो ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक दृष्टि से महत्वपूर्ण हैं, लेकिन समय के साथ उपेक्षित हो गए हैं। इन मंदिरों में नावदा टोला, कुकड़ेश्वर, और अन्य कई छोटे-बड़े मंदिर शामिल हैं।

VI शोध पद्धति

इस शोध को व्यवस्थित और वैज्ञानिक ढंग से पूरा करने के लिए निम्नलिखित पद्धतियों का उपयोग किया गया है:

(क) डेटा संग्रह के स्रोत

✓ प्राथमिक स्रोत:

- स्थानीय समुदायों, पुजारियों और इतिहासकारों के साथ इंटरव्यू।
- सर्वे फॉर्म के माध्यम से स्थानीय लोगों से जानकारी एकत्रित करना।
- मंदिरों का प्रत्यक्ष अवलोकन और फोटोग्राफी।

✓ द्वितीयक स्रोत:

- ऐतिहासिक दस्तावेज, पुरातात्विक रिपोर्ट और शोध पत्र।
- स्थानीय साहित्य, लोककथाएँ और मौखिक इतिहास।
- इंटरनेट और डिजिटल संसाधनों से प्राप्त जानकारी।



VII डेटा संग्रह की पद्धति

(क) इंटरव्यू:

स्थानीय समुदाय के सदस्यों, पुजारियों और इतिहासकारों के साथ गहन इंटरव्यू किए गए। इन इंटरव्यू में मंदिरों के ऐतिहासिक महत्व, धार्मिक परंपराओं और सांस्कृतिक प्रभाव के बारे में जानकारी एकत्रित की गई।

इंटरव्यू के लिए एक प्रश्नावली (फनमेजपवददंपतम) तैयार की गई, जिसमें मंदिरों के इतिहास, वास्तुकला और सांस्कृतिक महत्व से संबंधित प्रश्न शामिल थे।

(ख) सर्वे फॉर्म:

स्थानीय लोगों से जानकारी एकत्रित करने के लिए एक सर्वे फॉर्म तैयार किया गया। इस फॉर्म में मंदिरों के बारे में सामान्य जानकारी, उनसे जुड़ी लोककथाएँ और धार्मिक परंपराओं से संबंधित प्रश्न शामिल थे।

सर्वे फॉर्म को ऑनलाइन और ऑफलाइन दोनों माध्यमों से वितरित किया गया।

(ग) प्रत्यक्ष अवलोकन:

मंदिरों का प्रत्यक्ष अवलोकन करके उनकी वास्तुकला, मूर्तिकला और स्थिति का विवरण तैयार किया गया।

मंदिरों की फोटोग्राफी और वीडियो रिकॉर्डिंग की गई, ताकि उनकी वर्तमान स्थिति को दस्तावेजीकृत किया जा सके।





स.क	मंदिर का नाम	मंदिर जिस देवता को समर्पित है	स्थान	विकास खंड	जिला
1.	प्राचीन गुप्तेश्वर शिव मंदिर	भगवान महादेव	रुस्तमपुर	पंधाना	खंडवा
2.	सात माता बागेश्वरी मंदिर	माता बागेश्वरी देवी	भामरारी	पंधाना	खंडवा
3.	देवझीरी	भूतेश्वर महादेव	भोज्यखेड़ी	छैगांव माखन	खंडवा
4.	भीमकुंड	भगवान महादेव	खंडवा	खंडवा	खंडवा
5.	ब्रह्मगिरि महाराज धाम	ब्रह्मगिरि महाराज	अमलपुरा	खंडवा	खंडवा
6.	प्राचीन शिव मंदिर	शिव मंदिर	भानगढ़	खंडवा	खंडवा
7.	भवानी माता मंदिर	भवानी माता	बलवाड़ा	पंधाना	खंडवा
8.	प्राचीन शिव मंदिर	बारह लिंगी महादेव	जसवाड़ी	खंडवा	खंडवा
9.	प्राचीन हनुमान मंदिर	श्री हनुमान	सिहाड़ा	खंडवा	खंडवा
10.	श्री बुखार दास बाबा	श्री बुखार दास बाबा	मूंदी	मूंदी	खंडवा
11.	माँ काली मंदिर	माँ काली	अवलिया	खालवा	खंडवा
12.	माँ आशा देवी	माँ आशा देवी	आशापुर	हरसूद	खंडवा
13.	सूरजकुंड	शिव मंदिर	खंडवा	खंडवा	खंडवा
14.	पदम कुंड	शिव मंदिर	खंडवा	खंडवा	खंडवा
15.	रामेश्वर कुंड	श्री गुप्तेश्वर महादेव	खंडवा	खंडवा	खंडवा

VIII शोध की सीमाएँ

कुछ मंदिर दुर्गम स्थानों पर स्थित हैं, जहाँ पहुँचना मुश्किल था।

स्थानीय लोगों से प्राप्त जानकारी कभी-कभी असंगत या अधूरी थी।

पुरातात्विक साक्ष्यों और ऐतिहासिक दस्तावेजों की कमी के कारण कुछ तथ्यों की पुष्टि करना मुश्किल था।

IX शोध का महत्व

इस शोध का महत्व इस तथ्य में निहित है कि यह निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन और भूले-बिसरे मंदिरों के बारे में नई जानकारी प्रदान करता है। यह अध्ययन न केवल इतिहासकारों और पुरातत्वविदों के लिए उपयोगी होगा, बल्कि स्थानीय समाज और पर्यटन के लिए भी महत्वपूर्ण साबित हो सकता है। इस शोध के माध्यम से हम निमाड़ क्षेत्र की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक विरासत को पुनर्जीवित करने और उसे भविष्य की पीढ़ियों के लिए सुरक्षित रखने का प्रयास करेंगे।

X विश्लेषण और चर्चा

एकत्रित डेटा का विश्लेषण गुणात्मक (फनंसपजंजपअम) और मात्रात्मक (फनंदजपजंजपअम) दोनों तरीकों से किया गया।

इंटरव्यू और सर्वे फॉर्म से प्राप्त जानकारी को वर्गीकृत (बंजमहवतप्रम) करके उनका विश्लेषण किया गया।

मंदिरों की वास्तुकला और मूर्तिकला का विश्लेषण करने के लिए तस्वीरों और वीडियो का उपयोग किया गया।

XI निष्कर्ष

निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन और भूले-बिसरे मंदिरों का यह अध्ययन उनके ऐतिहासिक, सांस्कृतिक और वास्तुकला संबंधी पहलुओं को समझने का एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रयास है। इस शोध के माध्यम से यह स्पष्ट हुआ है कि निमाड़ क्षेत्र के ये मंदिर न केवल धार्मिक आस्था के प्रतीक हैं, बल्कि ये क्षेत्र की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक और ऐतिहासिक विरासत के भी प्रतीक हैं। इन मंदिरों की वास्तुकला में स्थानीय और राजवंशीय शैलियों का अनूठा संगम देखने को मिलता है, जो उनके निर्माण काल की कलात्मक और तकनीकी उत्कृष्टता को दर्शाता है।

शोध के निष्कर्ष बताते हैं कि इन मंदिरों का सांस्कृतिक महत्व केवल धार्मिक अनुष्ठानों तक ही सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि ये स्थानीय समाज के सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक ताने-बाने को भी दर्शाते हैं। मंदिरों से जुड़ी लोककथाएँ, परंपराएँ और त्योहार स्थानीय समुदाय के लिए एकता और पहचान का स्रोत हैं। हालांकि, समय के साथ कई मंदिर उपेक्षित हो गए हैं और उनका ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्व धूमिल हो गया है।

इस शोध का महत्व इस तथ्य में निहित है कि यह निमाड़ क्षेत्र के प्राचीन मंदिरों के बारे में नई जानकारी प्रदान करता है और उनके संरक्षण की आवश्यकता पर बल देता है। इन मंदिरों के संरक्षण के लिए सरकारी और गैर-सरकारी स्तर पर और प्रयासों की आवश्यकता है। स्थानीय समुदाय की भागीदारी और जागरूकता इन मंदिरों को भविष्य की पीढ़ियों के लिए सुरक्षित रखने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा सकती है।

इस शोध के माध्यम से निमाड़ क्षेत्र की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक विरासत को पुनर्जीवित करने का प्रयास किया गया है। यह अध्ययन न केवल इतिहासकारों और पुरातत्वविदों के लिए उपयोगी होगा, बल्कि स्थानीय समाज और पर्यटन के लिए भी महत्वपूर्ण साबित हो सकता है। भविष्य में इन मंदिरों के और गहन अध्ययन और संरक्षण की दिशा में कार्य किए जाने की आवश्यकता है।

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- [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.

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