

# **ATISHAY KALIT**

**Peer Reviewed and Referred International Bilingual Research  
Journal of Humanities, Social Science & Fine-Arts**

**ROSE (January-June) Vol. 13, Pt. A, Sr. No. 23, Year 2026**

ISSN 2277-419X  
RNI-RAJBIL01578/2011-TC

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## Editor Writes

20 April, 2026

Dear Friends,

**A VERY HAPPY 2026**, with great zeal, I am glad to inform you that Atishay Kalit has completed its Journey of 15 years.

I am really thankful to all scholars and Academicians for their support and trust in the most admired popular journal.

As usual we have followed Peer Review and Strict Plagiarism check before its publication. An undertaking is also taken. We have Journal's website: <https://www.atishaykalit.in> where updated information like submission guidelines and preview publications can be seen.

I hope the scholars would be highly benefitted from this **ROSE (January to June, 2026)** issue.

For the forthcoming issue **LOTUS (July to December, 2026)** articles will be invited by September 2026.

With best wishes.

—**Dr. Rita Pratap**  
(Editor)  
Atishay Kalit

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# Digital Connectivity and Cultural Transformation: Post-COVID Lifestyle and Food Habit Changes Among Rural Women in India (A Secondary Data Study)

Dr. Shashi Goel

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## Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital penetration across rural India, fundamentally transforming socio-cultural dynamics. This study examines how increased digital connectivity has influenced lifestyle patterns, food habits, and identity formation among rural women using **secondary data sources**. Drawing from national datasets, peer-reviewed studies, and digital adoption reports, the research synthesizes trends and applies modeled statistical interpretation to assess relationships between internet usage and behavioural change. Findings indicate a strong association between digital exposure and dietary transition toward processed foods, increased online engagement, and evolving perceptions of modernity. The study proposes the concept of **Digital-Induced Cultural Hybridization**, highlighting the coexistence of traditional and digitally mediated lifestyles. This research contributes to interdisciplinary scholarship on gender, technology, and cultural transformation in emerging economies.

## Introduction

India experienced a rapid expansion in internet connectivity during and after COVID-19, particularly in rural regions. According to the Internet and Mobile Association of India and Kantar (2023), rural India accounts for over **50% of internet users**, with women representing one of the fastest-growing segments.

This transformation is especially significant because rural women have historically faced:

- Limited mobility
- Restricted access to information
- Socio-cultural constraints

Post-pandemic digital inclusion has altered:

- Consumption behaviors
- Food practices
- Social interaction patterns
- Identity construction

However, most existing research isolates either **digital adoption** or **dietary change**, without integrating them within a **gendered rural context**.

## Literature Review

### 1. Digital Expansion in Rural India

Reports from TRAI (2022) and IAMAI (2023) show:

- Rural internet users: ~399 million
- Growth rate higher than urban areas
- Increased smartphone affordability post-COVID

Chakraborty & Garg (2024) demonstrate that mobile phone adoption among rural women increased significantly during the pandemic, enabling new forms of participation and agency.

### 2. Lifestyle Changes During COVID-19

Studies such as Chopra et al. (2020) and Rawat et al. (2021) show:

- Increased sedentary behavior
- Higher screen time
- Reduced physical activity

These shifts are strongly linked to digital engagement.

### 3. Dietary Transitions

Madan et al. (2021) and Gavaravarapu et al. (2022) report:

- Increased consumption of packaged and processed foods
- Exposure to new recipes via digital platforms
- Influence of social media on food choices

## 4. Gender and Digital Behaviour

Parthiban et al. (2022) highlight that digital access among women:

- Improves awareness and autonomy
- Alters consumption patterns
- Reshapes social identity

## 5. Research Gap

No study integrates:

- Rural women
- Post-COVID digital expansion
- Combined lifestyle + dietary + identity transformation

This study addresses this gap using **secondary data synthesis**.

## Methodology

### 1. Research Design

Secondary data analysis with **quantitative synthesis and modelled statistical interpretation**.

### 2. Data Sources

This study draws from:

- IMAI Internet Reports (2022–2023)
- TRAI telecom statistics
- Peer-reviewed journals (Nutrients, PLOS ONE, etc.)
- National surveys and COVID lifestyle studies

### 3. Analytical Approach

Since raw datasets were not directly accessible, the study uses:

- **Data triangulation**
- **Meta-synthesis of reported statistics**
- **Modeled SPSS-style tables based on aggregated findings**

This approach is widely used in secondary research and systematic reviews.

## Data Analysis (Secondary Data Synthesis)

### 1. Internet Usage Trends

Based on IMAI (2023) and TRAI (2022):

Indicator	Pre-COVID	Post-COVID
Avg daily internet usage	~0.8 hrs	~3–4 hrs
Smartphone penetration (rural women)	~45%	~70–80%

Indicates a **3–4x increase in digital engagement**

## 2. Dietary Changes (Synthesized Evidence)

Variable	Observed Trend	Source
Traditional diet reliance	Decrease	Madan et al. (2021)
Packaged food consumption	Increase	Gavaravarapu et al. (2022)
Online recipe adoption	Increase	Patgiri (2022)

## 3. Modelled Correlation Interpretation

Based on cross-study synthesis:

Variables	Relationship
Internet use ↔ food change	Strong positive
Internet use ↔ lifestyle change	Strong positive
Social media ↔ aspiration	Moderate–strong

Consistent across multiple studies

## 4. Modelled Regression Insight

Synthesized interpretation from literature suggests:

- Digital exposure is the **primary predictor** of lifestyle change
- Social media acts as a **secondary mediator**
- Education has a **moderating effect**

## Results

### 1. Digital Exposure

- Rural women's internet usage increased significantly post-COVID
- Smartphone adoption expanded rapidly

### 2. Food Habit Transformation

- Shift toward **hybrid diets** (traditional + modern)
- Increased reliance on packaged and convenience foods

### 3. Lifestyle Changes

- Increased screen time

- Reduced physical interaction
- Greater exposure to external cultural influences

#### 4. Identity Transformation

- Women increasingly associate digital participation with “modernity”
- Social media creates aspirational lifestyles

#### Discussion

The findings confirm that digital connectivity functions as a **structural and cultural catalyst**.

#### Key Mechanism:

Digital Access → Exposure → Aspiration → Behavioral Change

#### Theoretical Contribution

##### **Digital-Induced Cultural Hybridization**

A framework describing how:

- Traditional rural practices persist
- Digital influences introduce modern behaviours
- Both merge into hybrid socio-cultural identities

#### Conclusion

Secondary data analysis confirms that post-COVID digital expansion:

- Transformed lifestyle patterns
- Altered dietary behaviours
- Influenced identity formation among rural women

This represents a **systemic socio-cultural shift**, not just a temporary adaptation.

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# **International Approaches to Heritage Protection and Their Relevance to India**

## **Legal and Policy Frameworks for Archaeological Heritage**

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### **Abstract**

*The present paper proposes a reform agenda for the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (AMASR) and the 2010 Amendment and Validation framework, with particular attention to operational lacunae identified in audit findings, definitional inconsistencies across allied legislation, and the practical stresses produced by uniform, distance-led regulation. Drawing on comparative governance instruments from the United Kingdom (scheduled monument consent and risk registers), France (the 500m protection logic and design-review mechanisms), and the United States (consultative impact-assessment under Section 106), the paper synthesises regulatory measures that have demonstrably improved compliance, public participation, and conservation outcomes. The core recommendation is a shift from a largely uniform, perimeter-based control model to a risk-calibrated, heritage-significance-led system that strengthens enforceability, accelerates heritage by-law completion, rationalises decision rights between ASI/NMA/competent authority, and embeds transparent consultation and monitoring as routine administrative practice.*

### **Keywords**

AMASR Act, 1958; AMASR Amendment Act, 2010; heritage regulation; prohibited and regulated areas; antiquity and monument definitions; heritage by-laws; archaeological governance; encroachment control; heritage impact assessment; risk-based conservation; monument setting; public participation; sustainable heritage tourism; comparative heritage legislation; ASI and NMA implementation framework.

## Introduction

AMASR was designed to secure protection for monuments and archaeological sites of national importance, but the enforcement environment has changed substantially: accelerated urbanisation, rising visitor pressures, infrastructure expansion, and a growing expectation of participatory governance. The 2010 Amendment institutionalised spatial regulation through prohibited and regulated areas around protected monuments and introduced a decision pipeline requiring permissions/clearances, with the objective of balancing development and heritage conservation. The performance-audit evidence, however, shows persistent implementation gaps, including slow completion of heritage bye-laws (HBLs) and the absence of a coherent strategy/roadmap for ASI's mandate (notably, HBLs notified for only a small fraction of centrally protected monuments).

A fundamental structural issue is that Indian heritage protection is distributed across multiple statutes and administrative silos. Definitional divergences are not a merely academic problem; they shape enforcement thresholds, jurisdictional claims, export-control decisions, registration systems, and prosecution viability. For example, the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 defines "antiquity" with a 100-year threshold for objects (and 75 years for manuscripts/documents). In contrast, state legislation may frame "antiquity" primarily through cultural/archaeological value and explicit exclusion/overlap rules vis-à-vis the central act, producing interpretive friction in the field.

Internationally, the trend is not towards deregulation; rather, it is towards better-targeted regulation: (a) clear consent regimes that treat unauthorised works as serious offences, (b) risk registers and condition-led prioritisation, (c) structured consultation and public voice in project review, and (d) design-review mechanisms in protected settings that integrate heritage, planning, and tourism management. Scheduled monument consent regimes (UK) treat unauthorised works as offences within an explicit legal/consent architecture. France's approach combines monument designation with a controlled setting of protection and prior authorisation, including expert oversight (Architecte des Bâtiments de France) for works in protected surroundings. The present paper process institutionalises consultation so that agencies, stakeholders, and the public can weigh in on effects before final decisions. These comparative measures are valuable not as templates to copy verbatim, but as instruments that can be adapted to India's statutory structure and administrative realities.

## Methodology

The study employs a doctrinal and policy-synthesis methodology. First, it maps regulatory design features and operational mechanisms in the AMASR system

as visible through audit observations and legislative provisions: the prohibited/regulated zone logic, the role of the competent authority and NMA, and the status of heritage bye-laws and site-plans. Second, it identifies definitional and jurisdictional inconsistencies by comparing the central antiquities statute (AAT Act, 1972) with at least one state statute (Rajasthan, 1961) to illustrate the practical implications of divergence and exclusion clauses. Third, it undertakes comparative “mechanism scanning” of selected jurisdictions (UK/France/USA) focusing on instruments that directly address common Indian pain points: permissions and offences, buffer-setting and design control, consultation, monitoring, prioritisation, and public engagement. The comparative component is deliberately instrument-centric rather than country-centric: the goal is to identify governance tools that can be transplanted or hybridised within AMASR’s constitutional and institutional framework.

### **Concept**

The AMASR 2010 model is best described as a uniform, distance-led regulatory perimeter system superimposed on a heterogeneous archaeological landscape. The perimeter model’s strength is clarity (100m prohibited, 200m regulated, with potential extension based on classification), but its weakness is that it is comparatively insensitive to site context, settlement morphology, and variability in heritage significance and vulnerability. The 2010 amendment codifies regulated area extension logic linked to classification. In practice, uniform distance limits can create (a) high transaction burdens for low-impact settings and (b) insufficient control where threats are non-linear (visual corridors, hydrology, vibration, visitor pressure, or cumulative urban impacts).

A second conceptual issue is governance fragmentation: regulatory functions and enforcement actions are distributed between the Central Government, ASI, NMA, and district administration. Audit evidence recognises the centrality of heritage bye-laws to impact assessment and consistent decision-making, while also documenting delays and low coverage. The consequence is predictable: where detailed site-specific rules are absent, decision-making becomes ad hoc, enforcement becomes contestable, and field staff face high discretionary burdens without robust procedural shields.

A third issue is definitional drift across the “heritage law stack”. Antiquity, monument, protected area, and associated categories are not uniformly defined across central and state acts; even where exclusions are stated, the practical boundary between “monument” and “antiquity” has been shown to be inconsistently applied in administrative practice, with audit observations noting instances of items treated as monuments that do not constitute monuments under the Act’s definition. This is not merely semantic: classification determines which powers (seizure, custody,

access control, conservation funding, visitor management, offences) are triggered and which agency becomes the lead.

## Hypothesis

If AMASR's perimeter-based controls are recalibrated into a risk- and significance-led regulatory architecture, supported by definitions across central and state heritage legislation, (ii) a mandatory and time-bound system for heritage by-laws/site plans for every centrally protected monument, (iii) a transparent consultation and impact-assessment pathway modelled on proven international instruments, and (iv) a national condition-and-risk register to prioritise conservation and enforcement, then compliance will increase, litigation and discretionary conflict will reduce, and conservation outcomes will improve without weakening legitimate public needs (access, livelihoods, tourism).

## International Instruments and Their Indian Application

**1. Consent regimes with enforceable offences:** A key operational strength in the UK framework is the clarity of consent expectations and the seriousness of unauthorised works. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 provides for scheduled monument consent, and guidance in the UK heritage system explicitly treats unauthorised works on a scheduled monument as a criminal offence. India's AMASR already contains prohibitions and punishment logic around unauthorised construction within protected/prohibited/regulated areas. The reform requirement is therefore not to invent "consent", but to convert permission processes into a more predictable, standardised, evidence-based consent architecture with enforceable timelines, standard application contents, and clear compliance pathways.

A practical reform would be to codify a uniform "heritage consent dossier" for works in regulated areas and for permissible repairs/renovations in prohibited areas, with standard minimum documentation (measured drawings, heritage impact statement, photo-log, materials/method statement, vibration and drainage notes where relevant, and visitor-safety plan for public-facing works). This reduces arbitrariness and strengthens enforceability because non-compliant dossiers can be rejected on objective grounds.

**2. Risk registers and prioritisation:** Historic England's Heritage at Risk programme is explicitly designed to identify and record heritage assets "at risk of loss through neglect, decay or development", with annual updates to provide a dynamic picture for prioritisation. India's audit record similarly highlights the absence of strategic roadmaps and the ad hoc nature of conservation planning in practice. A risk register is therefore a directly relevant governance tool: it converts diffuse concerns (encroachment, decay, vandalism, waterlogging, uncontrolled

tourism) into a ranked, visible administrative agenda that can drive resource allocation and enforcement prioritisation.

A “National Heritage at Risk Register” for centrally protected monuments can be instituted through rules/administrative orders under the existing framework, with public-facing summaries and internal technical annexures. It should include: condition grading, threat typology (encroachment, drainage, vegetation, visitor impact, structural movement), enforcement status (pending demolition, court stay, NMA decision stage), and a time-bound action plan. This would also create an auditable trail, improving accountability and reducing repeated “rediscovery” of the same chronic issues during inspections.

**3. Setting-based control and design review in protected surroundings :** France’s heritage system treats the surroundings of protected monuments as a controlled space where works are subject to prior authorisation and expert review, and it operates with a protection perimeter logic (often referenced as 500m “abords”), with formal oversight mechanisms described by official sources. India’s 100m/200m system is conceptually similar in that it regulates spatial surroundings, but reforms are needed to (a) embed setting/visual and cumulative-impact considerations in decision criteria, and (b) clarify the technical role of conservation expertise so that decisions are defensible as heritage judgments rather than mere administrative approvals.

Within AMASR’s existing structure, NMA recommendations and competent authority decisions can be made more setting-sensitive by requiring a “setting impact assessment” for regulated area proposals in visually sensitive sites, ridge lines, riverine monuments, and fort landscapes. In high-tourism monuments, setting-based criteria should explicitly include pedestrian circulation, vendor management, emergency access, and signage/visual clutter control, so that “tourism infrastructure” does not become a proxy route for intrusive construction.

**4. Consultation and public voice in project review:** The U.S. Section 106 framework emphasises taking account of effects on historic properties and provides structured opportunities for interested parties and the public to participate before final decisions are made. India’s AMASR decisions in regulated areas often intersect with livelihoods, municipal services, and public works; the lack of a credible participation pathway can externalise conflict into litigation, political escalation, or non-compliance.

A consultation protocol can be added through rules/guidelines for regulated-area permissions: (i) public notice for significant proposals, (ii) time-bound receipt of objections, (iii) disclosure of a non-technical summary of the heritage impact statement, and (iv) reasoned orders that respond to material points. This is not

bureaucratic ornamentation; it improves legitimacy and reduces post-decision contestation.

### **Core reform propositions for AMASR 1958/2010**

**(A) Harmonise definitions and thresholds across the heritage law stack:** the definitional mismatch problem should be addressed systematically. The AAT Act defines “antiquity” with explicit age thresholds and includes manuscripts/documents at a 75-year threshold. State law definitions (Rajasthan) may emphasise value categories and explicitly exclude what falls under the central act, but this does not resolve field ambiguity in borderline cases.

Reforms should aim for a uniform definitional schedule across AMASR rules and relevant state acts, supported by interpretive guidance notes for field application. Audit observations about incorrect categorisation in practice indicate that classification clarity is not optional. A single consolidated definitional annexure may be suggested as recommended outcome, adopted by reference in AMASR Rules and recommended to states as a model schedule, with an interpretive circular explaining treatment of detached architectural members, sculptures, cannons, moveable heritage in situ, and “site museum” custody categories.

**(B) Time-bound completion and statutory status for heritage bye-laws and site plans:** The HBL gap is a central operational weakness. The follow-up performance audit notes that HBLs were notified for only a very small number of monuments, with many at various stages, causing substantial delay. The earlier audit also frames HBLs as essential for assessing impacts of construction, particularly large-scale projects.

A statutory timeline for HBL/site plan finalisation for every centrally protected monument (prioritised by risk/urban pressure) may be recommended outcome, with default interim bye-laws where finalisation is pending. Interim bye-laws can set minimum standards on heights, setbacks, materials, signage, lighting, drainage discharge, and vibration-producing activity.

**(C) Replace uniform perimeter logic with a tiered, risk-calibrated regulation model:** while retaining legal clarity. The 2010 system already permits a regulated area beyond 200m linked to classification. The reform is to operationalise classification into differentiated decision rules. A fort in a dense living city, a rural mound under cultivation, and a rock-cut inscription in a forest edge cannot be regulated through identical procedural burdens.

A three-tier monument setting classification, embedded into bye-laws may be recommended: Tier 1: high-urban-pressure and high-visitor sites (enhanced setting controls, strict signage/vending and traffic protocols) Tier 2: moderate pressure

(standard regulated-area consent with simplified repairs) Tier 3: low pressure (light-touch controls, focus on site integrity, agriculture/hydrology, and monitoring)

**(D) Strengthen enforcement architecture with measurable compliance pathways:** Audit summaries of statutory provisions clarify the prohibited (100m) and regulated (200m) logic and punishability for construction without permission. Yet enforcement is frequently weakened by unclear workflows, inter-agency diffusion, and absence of a transparent escalation ladder.

A standard enforcement protocol may be recommended: identification (geo-tag, photo log), immediate stop-work notice, demarcation verification, reasoned determination of category (repair/renovation vs new construction), referral to competent authority/NMA pathway where applicable, and a weekly review dashboard at Circle level. This should be tied to the proposed risk register so that encroachments and unauthorised works become visible, prioritised items rather than dispersed field burdens.

**(E) Embed consultation and disclosure as routine practice for regulated-area decisions:** Borrowing the logic of consultation-based decision-making from U.S. Section 106, India can standardise public voice for high-impact proposals. A “heritage impact and consultation” may be recommended for defined categories: high-rise proposals within sightlines, infrastructure trenching near foundations, major road-widening, large lighting/signage schemes, and tourism infrastructure expansions. Output should be a reasoned order that can withstand judicial review.

**(F) Treat tourism as a regulated conservation variable, not merely an economic add-on:** International practice increasingly treats visitor pressure as a material risk factor. The Heritage at Risk model includes inappropriate development and neglect/decay as risk drivers, which, in Indian conditions, must be extended to visitor load and unmanaged commerce.

Mandatory carrying-capacity and visitor-flow assessments should be carried out for Tier 1 sites, linked to ticketing/footfall recording and conservation maintenance plans. This responds to audit concerns about systemic management weaknesses (strategy and uniform procedures).

**(G) Modernise antiquities governance and align with international standards:** The performance audit records the absence of comprehensive policy and standards for antiquities management and notes that international standards (ICOM/UNESCO-related best practices) were not adopted. It also notes that registration with private individuals was not mandatory, creating documentation and recovery problems for stolen antiquities.

A mandatory, digitised registration ecosystem should be created for private holdings (with appropriate privacy protections), standardised accessioning and

storage protocols for ASI repositories and site museums, and a disaster-preparedness standard for museums and site stores, aligned with international conservation practice.

## Conclusion

Reform of AMASR 1958/2010 should not be approached as an abstract legal exercise, but as a redesign of a living governance system operating under severe contemporary pressures. The Indian statutory framework already contains key building blocks: protected monument declarations, zoning logic, offences, and an institutional pathway via NMA and competent authorities. The persistent gap lies in operationalisation: incomplete site-specific bye-laws, inconsistent classification practices, weak strategic planning, and a regulatory design that is too uniform to be context-intelligent.

International synthesis indicates that better outcomes are achieved when (i) consent regimes are predictable and enforceable, (ii) risk and condition monitoring guide prioritisation, (iii) setting-based controls are explicit and technically grounded, and (iv) consultation is structured so that public voice is integrated before decisions are final. The hypothesis advanced here is that India can retain the clarity of the 100m/200m zoning while transforming its practical effect through tiered classification, time-bound bye-laws, harmonised definitions, and transparent decision protocols. This reform direction does not dilute protection; it increases legitimacy, reduces avoidable conflict, and improves conservation effectiveness while permitting genuinely necessary public works and sustainable tourism in a controlled, evidence-led manner.

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# Impact of Mobile Banking on Banking Customers

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## **Abstract**

*The innovative technology in the banking sector has been consistently advancing. Innovative technology driven initiatives in banking allow clients to access financial services from the convenience of their own residences. It improves domestic financial transactions, including the transfer of funds. Moreover, clients are not required to visit the bank for every transaction. Various banking mobile applications are periodically introducing new features. There are apps that can be effortlessly installed on mobile devices to offer services and conveniences to users. Today, the mobile applications provided by banks serve as a financial marketplace. Many banks provide paperless and cardless transactions through mobile applications. Nevertheless, customers are not fully taking advantage of mobile banking applications. The current research examines the effects of mobile banking in the mahendergarh district of Haryana.*

**Keywords:** Mobile app, Mobile banking and Technology

## **Introduction**

Technological progress is essential across all sectors of the banking industry, leading them to embrace technological changes to thrive and succeed in their field. The banking industry is transitioning from conventional to contemporary banking practices. In India, a majority of banks are integrating modern banking services such as online banking, automated deposit machines, automated passbook entry machines and mobile banking. Mobile Banking is a key component of contemporary banking services. Mobile Banking refers to conducting banking activities via mobile devices.

Mobile Banking services include functionalities such as balance inquiry, m-passbook, m-statement and fund transfers and payment of utility bills, ATM finder and SMS services. Currently, the majority of people in India utilize smartphones for managing bank transactions. Nevertheless, the number of people in banks and the duration of visits for banking services remain unchanged; mobile banking is linked to its consumers and, concurrently, to other companies engaged in electronic commerce. It offers efficient financial solutions to its clients. In India, the use of mobile phones is increasing rapidly. Banks have been investigating the viability of utilizing mobile phones as a different means for offering banking services.

### **Review of Literature**

Gupta, Haejung Yun, Heng Xu and Hee-Woong Kim (2017). “An exploratory study on mobile banking uptake in Indian metropolitan and urban regions: a scenario-driven experiment.” This paper aims to examine how varying security levels influence perceived risk and control, ultimately impacting the adoption of mobile banking by Indian consumers. This study further analyzed the moderating effect of city type on the connection between security levels and the perceived risks of adopting mobile banking. Data was collected through an online survey. The dataset comprised 176 responses (70 metropolitan; 106 urban). The results indicate that perceived risk and control affect customers’ willingness to embrace mobile banking. In addition, in city regions Perceived risk and control had a major impact, while among urban customers, only perceived control significantly affected mobile banking usage.

Iman E and Emhamad E (2017), “Dynamics Influencing Libyan Customers to Embrace Mobile Banking in Libya” The research aims to explore several elements affecting the adoption of mobile banking in Libya. The researcher has employed an expanded Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) for the analysis. A study was conducted involving 100 Libyan bank clients, revealing that customers engage in m-banking transactions, with perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and perceived credibility identified as the key factors positively influencing the intention to adopt mobile banking in Libya.

While slightly dated, research from India (e.g., Khot, 2019) continues to shape contemporary discussions by demonstrating how mobile banking simplifies financial transactions for users, enhances accessibility (even in rural/isolated regions) and leads to greater customer satisfaction.

Samartha et al. (2022) examined the adoption of mobile banking in India through the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework. The study revealed that perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust, self-efficacy and subjective norms have a significant impact on customers’ intention to

embrace mobile banking services, emphasizing behavioral factors pertinent to Indian users.

Pandey (2025) examined digitalization in Indian banking and determined that the embrace of mobile banking and various digital technologies enhances customer experience, boosts operational efficiency and increases overall satisfaction. The research also highlighted the significance of security and trust in encouraging customer acceptance of mobile services.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Innovation is a key factor that influences the operations of every nation. In the modern world, every sector is functioning as a recipient of innovation. Mobile banking could emerge as a significant advancement in the developing world. The profitability of the banking sector relies on improved customer relationships. Currently, consumers' needs are becoming more intricate and the demand for innovative products is on the rise. Consequently, banks have launched a lucrative technology known as mobile banking. Indian banking has experienced significant transformation, with numerous banks implementing cutting-edge technology. Mobile banking represents one of the latest advancements brought forth by the banking sector. In today's society, every individual owns a mobile device instead of having a computer at home. Even individuals in rural areas possess mobile phones. Mobile banking (also referred to as M-banking or SMS-banking) is a term that describes conducting balance inquiries, account transactions, payments, etc., using a mobile device like a smartphone. M-banking is a service offered by banks for customers to access anytime they require. M-banking is referred to as "banking anytime, anywhere." M-banking can assist in lowering expenses and conserving time. It is advantageous for both clients and financial institutions as well. This research primarily examines the effects of mobile banking services in the mahendergarh district of Haryana.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The data needed for this research has been gathered from primary as well as secondary sources. The main data was gathered from the customers of mobile banking. A carefully designed questionnaire was created to gather primary data from the clients. This research employs the Stratified Random Sampling technique. A group of 100 participants has been chosen for this research. The secondary data was gathered from related research outputs in books, newspapers, journals and reports relevant to the selected topic.

### **Objectives**

- To evaluate the impact of mobile banking adoption.

- To analyze the primary benefits of mobile banking for users.
- To investigate the challenges and barriers encountered by customers utilizing mobile banking services.

## SCOPE OF STUDY

This research examined the level of Mobile Banking usage by customers of both public and private banks as well as the public's awareness of mobile banking. The research also explored the customer's views on Mobile Banking. Therefore, this research will contribute to

- Developing policies that foster a favourable perception of m-banking, thereby enhancing its uptake.
- Advancing technology in the banking sector
- Raising public awareness for more accessible banking services.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### Advantages of Mobile Banking

M-Banking offers customers multiple advantages. The four key advantages chosen are quick transactions, time savings, convenient service and no necessity to visit a physical branch, which were utilized in the data analysis.

**Table 1**  
**Primary Benefits of Mobile Banking**

Benefits	Percentage (%)	Rank
Speed of Transactions	61.80	IV
Time Saving	74.20	I
Easy to Use	69.50	II
No Need of Visiting Physical Branch	66.30	III

**Source:** Primary data

Table No. 1 illustrates the perceived advantages of mobile banking for customers in the Mahendergarh District of Haryana. The results show that time savings are the greatest advantage, with 74.20 percent of participants indicating it, highlighting the ease of performing banking operations promptly. Ease of use comes in second place (69.50 per cent), indicating an increasing level of digital familiarity among customers in the area. The advantage of not needing to go to a physical bank branch comes in third place (66.30 percent), showing less reliance on conventional banking methods, although branch banking still holds significance in semi-rural regions. Rapid transactions, which ranked fourth (61.80 percent), garnered relatively

fewer responses, likely due to problems linked to internet connectivity and network stability. In general, the findings indicate that mobile banking is gaining higher appreciation in Mahendergarh due to its convenience and time-saving benefits.

### **PROBLEMS FACED BY THE CUSTOMERS IN MOBILE BANKING**

In m-banking, several issues impact the customers. Logging in and signing out can be difficult, posing risks from hackers, while viruses can attack mobile banking applications. Outdated applications often indicate outdated security and poor connectivity results in weak security. The weighted average ranking approach has been employed to examine the issues encountered by the customers.

**Table 2**  
**Barriers Encountered by Customers Utilizing Mobile Banking Services**

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Total Score</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. Login / Sign out are not easy	352	3.52	II
2. Risk of hackers	268	2.68	V
3. Virus attacks on mobile banking apps	301	3.01	IV
4. Outdated apps leading to security issues	327	3.27	III
5. Poor connectivity leading to security risk	368	3.68	I

**Source:** Primary Data

Table No. 2 displays the key issues encountered by customers while utilizing mobile banking in Mahendergarh District of Haryana. The results indicate that inadequate connectivity resulting in security threats is the primary issue (mean score = 3.68), highlighting infrastructural constraints in the region. Challenges in logging in and signing off are rated second (mean score = 3.52), suggesting usability issues for customers with restricted digital skills. Problems associated with outdated mobile banking apps and virus attacks come in third and fourth places, respectively, emphasizing worries about system updates and application security. The risk posed by hackers ranks the lowest (mean score = 2.68), indicating a relatively lower level of awareness or experience regarding cyber threats among users. In general, the findings suggest that technical problems and connectivity issues present more significant obstacles than security threats in the efficient use of mobile banking in the researched region.

### **Findings of the study**

- The research indicates that customers in Mahendergarh District of Haryana widely view mobile banking as a convenient and time-efficient service, with time-saving identified as the most important advantage.

- Simplicity and less necessity to go to physical bank locations are key motivating factors, showing a slow transition from conventional branch banking to digital platforms even in semi-rural regions.
- Even with the benefits, inadequate internet connectivity is recognized as the biggest issue impacting mobile banking usage, emphasizing infrastructural limitations in the area.
- Complicated login and logout processes create usability issues, especially for users with low digital literacy.
- Concerns regarding security, like obsolete applications and malware attacks, have a moderate impact on customer trust, whereas the perceived threat from hackers remains quite low.
- The results indicate that although the adoption of mobile banking in Mahendergarh is on the rise, technical challenges and connectivity constraints still impact customer experience and efficient usage.

This study outlines the effects of mobile banking on clients in Mahendergarh District of Haryana, emphasizing both conventional and contemporary banking services. The results show that consumers are becoming more attracted to contemporary mobile banking services because of their efficiency, convenience and user-friendliness, as highlighted by the advantages noted in the research. Most respondents in the district utilize mobile banking services, indicating a satisfactory degree of acceptance despite the semi-rural environment. The research highlights the key advantages of mobile banking, especially time savings, transaction convenience and decreased reliance on physical bank locations. Simultaneously, it highlights major issues encountered by users, including inadequate internet access, complicated sign-in processes and worries regarding app updates and security. Banks must implement suitable corrective actions, such as enhancing technical assistance, making mobile applications more user-friendly and raising awareness about mobile banking technologies, to boost customer satisfaction and encourage broader usage in the district.

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# Threads of Legacy: Women Weaving Heritage in Rural India

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## Abstract

*Women have played a pivotal role in India's economic development. Understanding the link between gender and the economy is therefore vital to gaining deeper insights into Indian society. The extensive range of women's economic activities has garnered considerable attention from scholars. Their collective research has not only expanded our understanding of the types of work women engage in but has also emphasized the widespread and consistent presence of women in India's economic landscape. The handloom sector, one of the oldest manufacturing industries, has historically anchored rural industrialization and continues to serve both domestic and international clothing needs. Modern textile industries have evolved from this sector, adopting mechanization while retaining the foundational principles established by traditional handloom weaving. Remarkably, the handloom industry endures alongside advanced textile machinery, maintaining its relevance today. Women have been deeply involved in this sector, often working alongside men in both handloom and power loom operations. However, studies indicate that women workers receive little recognition. Based on fieldwork conducted in several blocks of Meerut district, it was found that women in this sector often endure harsh socio-economic conditions—working 12 to 16 hours daily, with young girls also engaged in the labor. Despite their efforts, compensation remains minimal. There is a pressing need to examine the challenges and opportunities faced by women in the handloom industry. Such an investigation would provide clarity about their living and working conditions and could inform policies and programs aimed at improving their circumstances. The study aimed to: 1. Explore the socio-economic backgrounds of female handloom workers. 2. Identify the major problems confronting*

*these women. 3. Examine potential opportunities for their advancement. Meerut district was selected for this study. Administratively divided into 12 blocks with 676 villages, the region is known for its handloom production, recognized both nationally and internationally. The rural population is significantly involved in this work. This research was based on both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected directly from women workers across different blocks using structured interview schedules. Field observations, case studies, and group discussions complemented this data collection. Secondary sources included government reports, books, journals, newspapers, and publications from governmental and non-governmental organizations. Findings from the study reveal that many women continue traditional handloom work without any support from their spouses or assistance from NGOs or the government. Despite their skill and labor, they receive low wages and struggle with marketing their products. Women in the handloom sector face numerous challenges that deserve urgent attention.*

**Keywords:** Unorganized Sector, Textile Industry, Handloom Industry, Powerlooms, Weavers, Mahajans, Master Weaver and Women.

## **Introduction**

India ranks as the sixth-largest exporter of textiles and apparel globally. In the fiscal year 2023–24, textiles and apparel—including handicrafts—accounted for 8.21% of the country's total exports. India holds a 3.91% share in the global textile and apparel trade. The United States and the European Union remain India's key export destinations, together making up approximately 47% of the sector's total exports.

Beyond trade, the textile and apparel industry is a crucial source of employment. It directly employs over 45 million people and indirectly supports the livelihoods of more than 100 million individuals, many of whom are women and members of rural communities. The sector strongly aligns with major government initiatives such as Make in India, Skill India, Women Empowerment, and Rural Youth Employment.

Handloom sector is unique in India. It has been the most popular manufacturing sector in the previous centuries, and has been the mainstay of rural industrialization in India. Handloom sector has been catering to the clothing needs of India, and various other countries for centuries altogether. In fact, The Handloom Sector of India is one of the largest unorganized economic activities and it constitutes an integral part of the rural and semi-rural livelihood engaging over 35 lakh persons. The sector engages over 25 lakh female weavers and allied workers which makes it an important source of economic empowerment of women.

The handloom sector serves as a crucial source of livelihood for women and significantly contributes to their socio-economic empowerment. As one of the most vivid and enduring symbols of India's cultural identity, handloom weaving is characterized by its low capital input, minimal dependence on electricity, and eco-friendly techniques. Its strength lies in the ability to support small-scale operations, embrace innovation, and remain responsive to shifting market needs.

The modern textile industry owes its existence to the foundational work of traditional handloom artisans, having evolved through processes of mechanization and technological advancement. Yet, unlike many other industries, the handloom sector persists alongside sophisticated textile machinery, highlighting its enduring relevance. This resilience stems from several key factors, foremost among them being its status as a family-based occupation, passed down through generations. Women hold a central position in this tradition, often serving as the backbone of the sector during times of hardship. Uniquely, the handloom industry is marked by a substantial number of women artisans creating garments primarily for female consumers—an exceptional example of women producing for women.

The constraints and possibilities that govern women's lives were created within the system of decentralized authority that had historically characterized Indian society. Women workers in patriarchal societies often face deeply entrenched social and structural barriers that limit their economic participation and autonomy. While men tend to dominate decision-making roles in both public and private spheres, women are frequently confined to undervalued, low-paying jobs—particularly in the informal sector—due to rigid cultural norms. Even when employed, they bear the double burden of paid labor and unpaid domestic responsibilities, creating physical and emotional strain. Moreover, gender-based wage disparities and exploitative conditions are common, especially in sectors like textiles, domestic work, and agriculture.

Cultural and familial expectations can further restrict women's mobility and autonomy, reinforcing their subordinate position. Yet, despite these challenges, women demonstrate resilience by organizing through unions, cooperatives, and grassroots movements—asserting their rights and gradually transforming oppressive norms from within. The cultural logic embedded in Indian society has historically resisted the concentration of absolute power at any level—whether in governance, familial structures, or gender dynamics. Rather than fostering rigid hierarchies, Indian social and legal traditions have long been shaped by a system of decentralized authority. This decentralization has, in many contexts, afforded women considerable influence over economic and social assets, enabling their active participation in public and domestic spheres alike.

This cultural framework provides a vital lens for examining women's engagement in India's handloom sector. Research reveals that women in this industry often navigate their economic roles with relative autonomy and encounter comparatively fewer gender-specific impediments. Moreover, their marital status—whether single, married, or widowed—has not played a decisive role in determining their involvement in productive activities. This finding underscores the flexibility and inclusivity of women's economic participation across diverse life circumstances.

The multifaceted nature of labor, investment, and production strategies adopted by women from different socio-economic backgrounds highlights not only their indispensable contribution to national economic development but also the cultural affirmation of their roles. Far from being marginal figures, women in handloom enterprises have historically occupied central positions, both as producers and as custodians of artisanal knowledge passed down through generations.

### **Review of Literature**

While many feminist scholars continue to interpret women's experiences through a patriarchal paradigm—emphasizing systems of male dominance—the social organization within handloom weaver communities challenges this view. In these households, authority is more diffused, and women's economic significance often disrupts the establishment of strictly patriarchal control. This is not to suggest that women in the handloom sector enjoyed full emancipation. However, the evidence indicates that where subordination did occur, it was not solely a function of culturally essentialized gender norms. Instead, it must be understood in relation to broader structural and economic factors that intersect with—but are not wholly defined by—patriarchal ideology.

According to D. Narasimha Reddy's study published by CHIP (2006: pp.1–7), nearly 32% of women in the handloom sector experience inadequate access to food, both in terms of quantity and regularity—highlighting hunger as a critical issue affecting women and children in several regions. Health conditions are equally alarming, with 97% of women reportedly suffering from a range of ailments—from severe illnesses like tuberculosis and asthma to chronic reproductive health issues, anemia, visual impairments, diabetes, and hypertension. Despite women constituting 65% of the handloom workforce, a figure officially recognized by the government, not a single targeted scheme or program has been implemented in over a century to support this demographic. Alarming, 81% of women remain unaware of any existing or past government initiatives related to the handloom sector. Debt is another pervasive problem, with 96% of households burdened by loans, predominantly borrowed from private moneylenders, microfinance agencies, and master weavers. Women are listed as the primary borrowers in about 27% of these cases, yet single

women, widows, and female-headed households are almost entirely excluded from formal, bank-based credit systems. Furthermore, educational disadvantages persist—62% of women in the sector are illiterate, compounding their vulnerability and limiting their access to better opportunities.

Padma has analyzed that the handloom industry which has been the largest employer of women after agriculture and livestock suffered serious setbacks in the 1990s and is slowly being replaced by the *beedi* industry as the largest employer. The working conditions are dreadful with workers earning Rs 500 a week on piece rate system. Most of the workers are bonded with the owner by the advance they received. Women workers face other challenges with the Government of Tamil Nadu barring several lakh ration card holders from getting rations. In addition, there have been attacks on the impoverished by way of hikes in electricity prices and school fees.

Pranabang, Nag (2007:52-67) studied the process of accumulation of capital in the informal sector in Nadia district in South Bengal. The data have been collected from weavers (producers) by snowball sampling. Producers are classified in the category independent and under Mahajans. The independent weavers purchase yarn from the local market and the weavers under Mahajan with the *dadan* system collect yam from the master-weaver. A weaver purchases yarn from the merchant against *rukka* which he obtains from his Mahajan and to whom he would supply the cloth after weaving. The independent producers sell the products usually in the local market and under Mahajans producers sell their product to their Mahajans. 42 weavers started their production with one loom and 58 weavers started their more than one loom. But only 57 weavers increase their looms. Mostly weavers lost their independent status. They were transformed into dependent weavers and started to produce under Mahajans. The earning capacity of independent weavers is greater than the earning capacity of a weaver who produces under Mahajans. The medium and big weavers may be divided in two groups. The first is the group of the independent producers who did not enter into bondage with the merchant and usury capital and could accumulate the surplus for the reinvestment in weaving sector itself.

In the second group there are loom owners who produced surplus had been siphoned off from the weaving sector due to the intervention of the merchant and usury capital.

Ali, Merima and Peerlings, Jack (2007:1241-1260) analyzed the importance of ethnic ties in trade relationships of small-scale producers in the handloom sector in Ethiopia. In this present data collected on handloom producers by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in collaboration with the Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI). The data have collected from 486 handloom

producers in nine cluster, three of which are found in the capital city, Addis Ababa, and the rest in the Gamo zone in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) region. 60% handloom producers are from rural areas and 40% are from urban areas. Those producers setting their product in the open market are more likely to be ethnically tied as expected and those transacting on contractual basis are also more likely to be ethnically tied. Although the probability is much lower compared to those selling in open market. Producers sell their output in open markets have significantly lower profit and producers that are members of producer's cooperatives have significantly higher profit. Recent immigrants and less experienced are more likely to be ethnically ties. Ethnic ties in remote area may help to reduce risks associated with marketing and facilitate trust in long distance trades. Ethnic ties can positively impact business outcome by reducing transaction costs and facilitating access to various resources. The loss in profit due to ethnic ties is found to be even higher for immigrant producers. The loss in profit from ethnic ties can be considered as a show price of transacting with outsiders.

Haynes, Douglas E. (1999: 141-168) has explored one kind of 'discourse' formulated by workers about their industrial environment: their representations of the past. The essay is an effort to understand the answers to questions I posed to workers, factory owners, and labour leaders about the relations of production in two of India's leading textile centers, Surat in Gujarat and Bhiwandi in Maharashtra. The most interesting responses almost consistently came to one particular question: 'How were relations between workers and employers in those days. Original purpose in this research was to reconstruct the history of the handloom and powerloom industries in these two towns during the late colonial period. it became clear that many workers were fearful of the consequences for their jobs if their remarks made their way back to employers; to talk about earlier times was thus safer than to discuss current conditions.

Most respondents did, however, furnish general comments about contemporary employer-employee relations, providing strong indications of their feelings about the present even if they avoided discussing their own individual situations. It is clear that owners, workers and labour advocates do fashion quite distinctive pasts from each other. Rival characterizations often came down to a struggle over who was responsible for the current state of affairs which, virtually everyone agrees, is marked by the virtual absence of any genuine social harmony. For workers the contention that a previous family-like environment had broken down because of owners' behavior, or alternatively, that owners had never held sincere feelings of affection or respect for workers, were both in effect arguments that the current arrangements in industry are unjust and demeaning ones brought about by the employers' selfishness. It is also found that only very limited evidence of workers

who championed collective activity as a means of addressing current injustices and even these offered no suggestions for where such activity might originate. This perspective shaped the perception of past struggles.

Sobhan, Rehman (1989: 157-174) has studied seeks to place the development of the handloom industry in a wider social context within which an appropriate set of interventions can be designed. The discussion identifies the continuing importance of the industry in meeting the clothing needs of the country notwithstanding the growth of alternative sources of supply. The paper argues that the continuing importance of the handloom industry is however not just an economic issue. Thus, to the extent that the industry is the second largest source of non-agricultural employment in the rural economy the earnings of over three quarters of a million people is tied up in the fate of the industry. Through an ongoing process of structural adjustment, the handloom industry has maintained its economic competitiveness against imports and managed to remain both absolutely and at the margin the main source of cloth supply to the domestic market. This suggests that any strategy for promoting the development of the industry would satisfactorily reconcile the objectives of cost-effectively clothing the population of Bangladesh with the improvement in the incomes of a large number of relatively impoverished households. If, however, the goals of growth and equity are indeed to be reconciled within a common policy format it is important to recognise the social dualism which has characterized the growth of the industry.

The dynamism and resilience which has characterized the industry, as indicated in the paper by Chowdhury (1989) would appear to have been confined to the large enterprises and/or those which made a technological transition from PF looms to CR looms. The technological dualism of the industry is thus both the cause and effect of the social dualism which has kept 51% of households in the industry mired in poverty. This co-existence of poverty within the industry with rapid growth in other segments of the industry reflects the fact that some 55% of the units in the industry are made up of 1-2 loom household enterprises of which four fifths still use pit looms. These enterprises have shared neither in the growth or the technological upgradation which has characterized the industry. Their technological backwardness has contributed to the poverty of the household which in turn has meant that a sufficient re-investible surplus could not be generated to underwrite a programme of modernization. In the absence of access to economic sources of term financing such enterprises are thus bound to a cycle of stagnation and poverty. The specific conditions of social and technological dualism which characterize the industry thus suggests that at the margin, any public intervention may be appropriately addressed to promoting the technological upgradation of the 1-2 loom household enterprises. Here underutilized household labour can be readily absorbed

in augmenting household production and incomes through conversion or replacement of PF looms with CR looms.

A programme with supporting institutional adjustments, to affect a planned upgradation of technology and market interventions in support of the 1-2 loom enterprise would be the most cost-effective vehicle to promote the identified goals of poverty alleviation, upgradation of technology and market interventions for the 1-2 loom enterprises and also ensure sectoral growth. This strategy would be without prejudice to the continued growth of the larger enterprises within the industry who have already demonstrated an autonomous capacity for growth and structural change which has over the years come to characterize the handloom industry.

Goswami, Omkar (1990: 2496-2506) has examined the current state of India's textile industry. The first part of the article examines the patterns and determinants of household demand for clothing. If the government feels the need to increase per capita purchase of textiles, then there is a strong case for altering relative prices of man-made fibers through a systematic reduction in tariffs. Part II looks at four important issues: powerlooms versus mills; powerlooms versus hand looms; rationalizing the workforce in the mill sector; and the myth of modernization. The data compels the conclusion that there is very little hope for most of the composite mills, especially the nationalized ones, in the face of competition from powerlooms. The options that exist are closely linked to rationalizing the labour force which, in turn, requires a definite policy decision by the government backed up by an attractive voluntary retirement package—things that the government has chosen to ignore to the further detriment of the sector. Similarly, without heavy doses of subsidies, the share of the handloom sector is bound to shrink over time. The only winners seem to be the powerloom sector, with its striking cost advantages. There has been an overall stagnation in per capita demand for textiles, measured in meters. This has been accompanied by a steady decline in per capita purchase of cotton textiles. This has occurred in rural as well as in urban areas, despite cottons being, on an average, three and half to four times cheaper than comparable cloth manufactured out of man-made fiber. The fall in per capita demand for cottons has occurred across virtually all income and expenditure classes. Simultaneously, there has been a significant growth in per capita demand for pure synthetic and blended cloth, which has taken place in villages as well as in urban areas. Further, in absolute as well as in relative -terms, the switch is evident across all income classes. In constant value, there has been an increase in per capita purchase, which reflects the switch to higher unit value synthetics and blends. Elasticities estimated through the Deaton-Muellbauer system show that a textile as a whole is highly elastic to changes in its own price. Moreover, overall expenditure elasticity is greater than unity. Simulation exercises suggest that a progressive reduction in the prices of synthetics and blended

cloth would contribute to a growth in per capita demand for textiles. If this is accompanied by a slight increase in money expenditure, the growth would be greater still. Most of the composite mill sector especially units producing low value cloth, consists of sick mills that are being constantly out-competed by powerlooms. A certain percentage of these units have to exit from the industry. Powerlooms outcompete mills in most varieties, irrespective of whether these are cotton, synthetic, or blended sorts. As long as there exists differentials in wage costs and overheads, powerlooms will continue to be the major supplier of fabrics in India, with mills coming a poor second and handlooms a distant third. Handlooms are outcompeted by powerlooms across comparable sorts. They survive because of product specialization and massive subsidies on inputs as well as on output. Any reduction in these subsidies would only accelerate the decline of this sector. 'Finally, one shall probably see the growth of many organized financing-cum-trading houses-the 'putter-outers' of the 20th century-having links with spinning mills, powerlooms, and the cloth markets, moving inputs from the first, organizing production in the second and selling output in the third.

Many of these trends exist in other Asian textile producing and exporting countries, and show all signs of manifesting themselves in India by the turn of the century. And, with the singular exception of the poorer weavers in handlooms, such an outcome may not be that bad after all.

Jaforullah, Mohammad (1999:437-438) studied the technology of production, substitution possibilities between factors of production and technical efficiency of the handloom textile industry of Bangladesh. The results from the estimation of the trans log frontier production models lead to a number of conclusions about the technical efficiency and the production technology of the Bangladesh handloom textile industry. First, there is a great scope for the industry to improve its technical efficiency in producing cloth. Its present technical efficiency in producing cloth is only about 41%. Note that when the top three technically efficient regions were dropped from the sample, the technical efficiency of the industry improved to only 46%. Second, the industry should increase its male/female labour ratio and yarn/capital ratio and decrease its hired/family labour ratio and labour/capital ratio in production if it wants to improve its efficiency. Third, with the production technology of the industry exhibiting constant returns to scale in production, any government policies providing growth incentives to the industry should not discriminate against small handloom establishments.

Wood, Jalif M.F. (2013:1-17) compares the relative success of two lower-class occupational groups in Varanasi, boatmen and handloom weavers, in forming associations that are durable, widely recognized, and specifically focused on their own occupational interests. The handloom weavers' struggles in particular became

evident during research for a study of associations and mobilization among six different occupational groups at different class levels in Varanasi. In that study, boatmen and handloom weavers represented lower-class groups, while teachers, traders, lawyers, and doctors represented middle- to upper-middle-class groups. This study found a striking disparity in the organizational modes of the two lower-class groups in Varanasi city. In this regard, the cases of the handloom weavers and the boatmen are profoundly different. Factors such as group size and physical work environment might be important to some extent, but a more sensitive comparison of these two groups must take into account both external marginalization and the economic and social structural transformations. The contraction and transformation of the weaving industry has widened class divisions in the Ansari community, which has contributed to a decline of the *Tanzim* system and left the increasingly impoverished handloom weavers in disarray. These factors have posed obstacles to handloom weavers' mobilization, the likes of which the boatmen have not recently encountered. Their marginalization from broader society—their identification with a group that is not only socially excluded and physically separated from the dominant society, but even demonized as disloyal to the Indian state—may create incentives to retain elements of an otherwise ineffective *Tanzim* system and this further complicates independent mobilization. The boatmen, on the other hand, while marginalized as a low-caste community and labeled a 'criminal' caste during the colonial era, have managed to reassert their position in broader 'Hindu' society. Their community appears to be less stratified as well; while there are elite *Mallah*'s, they do not form a dominant class within the community or play any role in community governance. The advent of motorized boats has introduced new economic divisions between the boatmen, some of whom have moved up in the boating business, but the disparities between them do not appear nearly as stark as those between handloom weavers and the power-loom weaving and/or trading Ansari elite.

Srinivasulu, K. (1994:2331-2333) has studied numerous weaver's colonies in and around the prosperous commercial town of Chirala in Prakasham district in Andhra Pradesh. In the predominantly weaver, town of Mangalagiri (in Krishna district) on the Vijayawada-Guntur highway, emaciated weavers may be found working in the work sheds resembling godown-like structures tiled with asbestos sheets and crowded with dozens of pit looms which, with their monotonous noise and clouds of dust raised by the regular and simultaneous pick-beating, evoke images of historically not-so-distant labour camps. Chirala town and Mangalagiri were in news for the starvation deaths of weavers in 1991 when crisis loomed large over the handloom sector following the sudden spurt in the prices of cotton yarn and chemical dyes, throwing thousands of weavers into unemployment, starvation, disease and

death. The severity of the crisis was evident in the fact that between September and November 1991 around 110 weavers were identified to have either committed suicide or died of starvation. Within three years the handloom industry is once again caught in a crisis that is even more severe in intensity, with cotton yarn prices shooting up by 23 to 55 per cent between December 1993 and May 1994, compared to a 20 to 38 per cent increase after the presentation of the budget in 1991. What is being witnessed in the weavers' colonies is stoppage of weaving activity and helplessness and despair among the weavers. The migrant weavers from Khammam and Karimnagar districts found in Koyalagudem, an important export varieties production centre in Nalgonda district, or the weavers from east and west Godavari and Srikakulam in Mangalagiri, a major handloom centre in Krishna district, are testimony to the large-scale displacement of self-employed weavers due to the unequal competition from the proliferating powerlooms. In the urban areas where the availability of alternative sources of livelihood is relatively better, low wages and continual insecurity in the handloom sector has forced the youth to abandon their family vocation. For instance, in the predominantly weaver colonies of Karawan, Katedan, Hussainialam and Sultanshahi in the old city of Hyderabad we find only the late middle-aged men and women still continuing to eke out a livelihood from weaving while the younger generation has settled as shop assistants, autorickshaw drivers and construction laborers where average daily earnings are much higher. With the marginalization of weavers' co-operatives and the decline of independent weavers, the master-weaver system has become the dominant mode accounting for three-fourths of the total handloom production in the state. Two kinds of practices can be identified here on the basis of the conditions of work and nature and extent of dependence. One, where the weaver gets the raw materials to his house, which is both his living and working place, prepares the warp and spins the cloth on his own loom as per specifications. In this all members of the weaver's family are involved. Here the wages are paid piecewise, in addition to a payment for the preparation of the warp, bobbins and other accessories. Though this practice is generally declining, it can still be found in handloom centers like Pochampally (in Nalgonda) and Gadwal (in Mehabub Nagar) where specialized tie and dye and Zari varieties are produced. Second is the practice that it is found in centers like Mangalagiri and Koyalagudem where there is a high presence of migrant labour. These homeless and 'loom-less' migrant weavers work for the master-weavers in their work sheds, each accommodating a dozen or two pit looms, and live in one-room tenements rented out by the latter.

Zhang, Xiaobo, Moorman, Lisa and Afelem, Gezahegn (2011:1869-1886) have examined the mechanism and performance of clustering in Ethiopia. The authors find out that handloom weaving is one of the most important nonagricultural

sources of income in Ethiopia. Representing 23 per cent of the total number of cottage and handicraft enterprises, with almost 55 per cent of these located in rural areas.

This industry accounts for 23 per cent of the total employment in the cottage and handicraft manufacturing industries, and 20 per cent of rural employment in the cottage and handicraft manufacturing industries. Weaving enterprises make up 73.2 per cent of the textile industry in number of establishments. The present study shows that cluster activities can survive even in harsh environments with weak formal institutions and limited infrastructure. Further, clustered activities like handloom weaving can serve as gateways to entrepreneurship and industrial development. Entrepreneurs are able to seek new production structures to circumvent the constraints they face. With the lower cost of entry inherent in the clustering mode of production, as shown by the relatively small capital investment required by handloom weaving enterprises in this study, many potential entrepreneurs with limited financial resources can engage in productive nonfarm activities that add to overall household income.

The use of trade credit helps entrepreneurs ease the constraints of operating capital necessary to run their business. Despite the high degree of adaptability inherent in the organizational structure of clusters, improvements in infrastructure can further boost labour productivity. Clusters with access to electricity can work longer hours, increasing labour productivity. Electricity enables many poor producers who otherwise could not afford to participate in the marketplace to share workspace with access to light at rather low cost and work longer hours. Even after controlling for other factors, it is evident that access to electricity greatly contributes to higher labour productivity for those with limited financial assets. Within the African context, the promotion of less-capital-intensive production systems can be extremely useful when capital markets are less developed and most entrepreneurs have limited financial resources. The clustering production structure provides a way for potential entrepreneurs to participate in nonfarm activities, particularly in the rural sector. Further research is needed to examine the origins and evolution of clusters as well as ways to facilitate their growth.

### **Stakeholders**

India's handloom weaving industry involves a diverse network of stakeholders across the value chain, from production to markets, supporting over 35 lakh rural workers.

As we know, in both handloom and powerloom weaving, a critical preparatory step is *warping*—the process of organizing warp yarns (lengthwise threads) in a specific sequence and under controlled tension to ready them for weaving on the

loom. This is done by the primary stakeholders in the area under study and include weavers and master weavers. The natural progression from weaver to master weaver underscores the organic and interdependent relationships that exist within the cluster. Their evolution illustrates how the cluster's development has opened pathways for weavers to rise through the ranks and take on more entrepreneurial roles.

**Master Weavers:** Initially engaged solely in weaving, master weavers have now transitioned into roles that encompass broader responsibilities. They procure raw materials, design patterns, pay wages to grassroots-level weavers, and manage the supply chain by delivering finished sarees to Mahajans. In addition to earnings from their own loom, they generate profit margins from the output produced by the Laborers they employ.

**Mahajans:** Mahajans contribute to the cluster by offering guidance on design and color schemes and ensuring better price realization for the final products. However, their dealings are typically credit-based, which can create financial dependency among the master weavers.

**Weavers:** In a notable departure from traditional gender norms, women in this cluster are actively involved in the actual weaving process, particularly using Jacquard looms. While in other regions women often handle preparatory tasks such as hank separation, sizing, and pirn winding, here they are skilled artisans contributing directly to the production of sarees.

**Dyers:** Dyeing is carried out in dedicated units, categorized into large, medium, and small based on capacity. About 60% of yarn is sold in dyed form, while the remaining 40% is sold as grey yarn. Large and medium-scale units typically cater to yarn traders, whereas small-scale dyeing units offer job work services mainly for master weavers.

**Designers:** Designers within the cluster work primarily from their own creativity and traditional knowledge, as they often lack formal training or access to updated design tools. Their role revolves around cost estimation for master weavers and supplying Jacquard punch cards. However, limited exposure and formal learning opportunities have constrained their ability to innovate beyond customary practices.

## Types of Weavers

There are three types of weavers in Handloom Sector:

- Type I (**Entrepreneur weavers**): They buy raw material on their own, work on their own designs and then market their product through a variety of local channels, traders etc.
- Type II (**Labourer weavers**): These weavers are linked to master weavers, who receive the raw material and design brief from the master

weaver and pass on the final product to them and receive their weaving wages in return.

- **Type III (Cooperative fold weavers):** These weavers are linked to the primary cooperative societies which procure raw material, pass it on to the attached weavers and pay them wages.

## Process of Weaving

The following section delineates the step-by-step processes involved in handloom weaving, underscoring the roles of gender, community transmission, and material culture.

**1. Yarn Formation and Preparation:** The process begins with the selection of raw material, primarily cotton or silk, depending on the regional textile tradition. Fibers are spun into yarn using spinning wheels (charkha) or mechanized tools. Once spun, the yarn is collected into skeins for subsequent stages.

**2. Dyeing of Yarn:** Natural or synthetic dyes are applied to yarn according to the design scheme. Artisans often use hank dyeing, immersing loops of yarn into dye vats, followed by air drying on bamboo racks—an open-air process that’s both functional and communal.

**3. Sizing of Warp Yarn:** The warp yarns (threads running lengthwise on the loom) are treated with a starch-based sizing solution to strengthen them and minimize breakage. This is typically made from wheat or rice starch. Sizing ensures smoother weaving and improved tensile strength.

**4. Warping:** A pivotal preparatory process, warping involves systematically arranging warp threads in specific lengths, order, and tension. Using a warping frame or drum, artisans align hundreds of yarns precisely. Any error at this stage disturbs the balance of the entire fabric structure.

### 5. Drafting and Denting:

- **Drafting:** Each warp thread is passed through heddles on a shaft according to the desired weave pattern. Heddles are metal or string loops that lift specific threads during weaving. After this comes Denting.
- **Denting** i.e. threads are next inserted into the spaces (dents) of a reed, ensuring equal distribution and maintaining the fabric’s width. This highly technical phase determines the texture, strength, and symmetry of the weave.

**6. Pirn Winding and Shuttle Loading:** The weft yarn (which passes horizontally) is wound onto a pirn—a slender bobbin—which is then placed inside a wooden shuttle. The shuttle traverses the shed (the opening formed by separated warp threads), inserting weft yarn in rhythmic cycles.

**7. Weaving Process:** The weaving cycle consists of:

- **Shedding:** Foot-operated treadles lift heddles, creating a path (shed).
- **Picking:** The shuttle is thrown through the shed, carrying the weft yarn.
- **Beating:** A reed combs the newly inserted thread into place.

Each step requires balance, timing, and manual coordination. This phase is accompanied by the characteristic clatter of wooden looms and the graceful gestures of seasoned weavers.

**8. Fabric Finishing:** Once the fabric roll is completed, it undergoes:

- Cutting and washing to remove any residual starch or dye.
- Drying and pressing to improve texture and sheen.
- Inspection where fabrics are checked for irregularities and defects.

### **Area of Study and Methodology**

As the handloom industry expands across Uttar Pradesh, the pattern of production varies by district. While traditionally known for items such as sarees, dhotis, gamchas, towels, and lungies, there has been a recent shift towards manufacturing higher-quality products like stoles and scarves aimed specifically at the premium export market. Meerut district was selected as the focus of the present study. Administratively, the district is divided into 12 blocks comprising a total of 676 villages. Among these, three blocks—Daurala, Sardhana, and Lawar—are particularly renowned for their handloom production, with a reputation that extends beyond national boundaries to the international market. A significant portion of the rural population is involved in handloom weaving, with women playing a central role in this sector. In addition to their work on handlooms, they assist their male counterparts operating powerlooms by managing the warp and weft setup.

**Women as Custodians of Craft:** In Mahalka, as in many handloom clusters across India, the craft is gendered in practice: women are custodians of handloom weaving, while men tend to operate mechanized powerlooms. The women's domain includes not just weaving, but sorting, warping, and preparing yarn—tasks that require acute spatial intelligence and fine motor skills. Often, this knowledge is passed from mothers to daughters, preserving design heritage and sustaining livelihoods. Therefore, the village of Mahalka, located in the *Lawar* block, was selected as the site for this study. The Muslim community in this village is predominantly engaged in both handloom and powerloom weaving. While men are largely involved in powerloom operations, women exclusively handle handloom weaving. For the purpose of primary data collection, all 60 women and girls (18 years and above) from the village engaged in this craft were selected as respondents

by systematic random sampling method. Data was gathered through interview schedules and personal interviews. Handloom weaving remains a cornerstone of India's indigenous textile tradition, practiced widely across rural and semi-urban pockets. In the context of Meerut district's Mahalka village, this craft is deeply rooted in community identity—particularly among Muslim families—where women uphold a legacy of artisanry that fuses technical expertise with cultural heritage.

## Results and Findings

### *Socio-economic background of the female workers engaged in handloom*

This section outlines the socio-economic profile of the selected women respondents. Key variables considered in assessing their background include age, marital status, caste, religion, family structure and size, income level, and educational attainment. The detailed findings related to each of these aspects are discussed below.

**Table-1**  
**Age of the Women Respondents in Meerut**

Age Groups (Years)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
18-30	22	36.7
31-43	31	51.7
44-56	07	11.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The data shows that 51.7% of respondents fall within the 31–43-year age group, followed by 36.7% in the 18–30-year range. Only 11.6% of respondents belong to the senior age bracket of 44–56 years. These figures highlight that the majority of participants (51.7%) are in the middle-age category, whereas a comparatively small proportion (11%) represent the older age group.

**Table-2**  
**Marital Status of the Women Respondents in Meerut**

Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1. Un-married	17	28.3
2. Married	40	66.7
3. Widow/Divorcee	03	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

The data indicate that 28.3% of the respondents are unmarried, while 66.7% are married. A small fraction—only 5.0%—are widowed or divorced. These figures

underscore that the majority of respondents (66.7%) are currently married, with a relatively minor proportion (5%) falling into the widow/divorcee category.

**Table-3**  
**Education of the Women Respondents in Meerut**

Education Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1. Illiterate	28	46.7
2. Up to Class 8 <sup>th</sup>	17	28.3
3. 9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	11	18.3
4. Graduate	4	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The data indicate that 46.7% of the respondents are illiterate, while 28.3% have received education up to 8<sup>th</sup> standard. Additionally, 18.3% have studied between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standards, and only 6.7% have attained a graduate-level education. These figures highlight that the largest proportion of respondents (46.7%) lack basic literacy, whereas a very small minority (6.7%) have completed higher education.

**Table-4**  
**Family Type of the Women Respondents in Meerut**

Family Type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1. Nuclear	44	73.3
2. Joint	16	26.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The data reflect the family structure of the respondents, revealing that 73.3% belong to nuclear families, while the remaining 26.7% are part of joint families. This indicates a clear predominance of nuclear family systems (73.3%) among the participants. The findings suggest that even within rural settings, the traditional joint family model is gradually diminishing, giving way to more nuclear household arrangements.

**Table-5**  
**Income of the Women Respondents in Meerut**

Income	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1. Up to Rs. 8000	26	43.3
2. Rs. 8001-15,000	25	41.7
3. Rs. 15,001 and above	09	15.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The data reveal that a significant portion of the women respondents earn modest incomes: 43.3% have a monthly income of up to ₹ 8,000, while 41.7% fall within the ₹ 8,001–15,000 range. Only 15.0% report earning above ₹ 15,001. These figures highlight the overall low-income levels of the respondents, which are especially concerning in the context of rising inflation and current market conditions. Despite their consistent hard work, the women continue to face economic hardship and precarious living standards.

**Table-6**  
**Motivational factors for female workers of handloom**

Motivational factor(s)	Yes	No	Total
1. To Earn Money	42(70.0%)	18(30.0%)	60(100%)
2. To be Self Dependent	37(61.7%)	23(38.3%)	60(100%)
3. To Utilize their Skills and Talents	29(48.3%)	31(51.7%)	60(100%)
4. No other option	49(81.7%)	11(18.3%)	60(100%)
5. Traditional work	43(71.7%)	17(28.3%)	60(100%)

A range of motivational factors influence women to engage in handloom weaving. The data reveals that 70.0% (42 respondents) undertake this work to earn an income, while 61.7% (37 respondents) cite the desire for self-reliance. Additionally, 48.3% (29 respondents) are motivated by the opportunity to utilize their inherent skills and talents. Notably, 81.7% (49 respondents) report that the lack of education and limited awareness leave them with no viable employment alternatives. Furthermore, 71.7% (43 respondents) attribute their participation in handloom work to tradition, as weaving has been a part of their familial and community heritage. For many women, weaving is not merely a livelihood but a continuation of a generational occupation passed down over time.

### Key Observations

- Predominantly survival-driven: The highest responses (81.7% and 70.0%) reflect economic compulsion rather than aspirational goals.
- Tradition remains a strong influence, but it coexists with practical economic needs.
- Skill recognition is moderate, possibly hinting at the need for training and capacity building.
- Lack of alternatives underscores the importance of expanding education and employment access for rural women.

**Table-7**  
**Personal Problems facing by the female workers of handloom**

<b>Personal Problem(s)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Work-Home Conflict	49(81.7%)	11(18.3%)	60(100.0%)
2. Lack of Business ideas	41(68.3%)	19(31.7%)	60(100.0%)
3. Lack of systematic knowledge	39(65.0%)	21(35.0%)	60(100.0%)
4. Lack of confidence / Shyness	35(58.3%)	25(41.7%)	60(100.0%)
5. Lack of Education	46(76.7%)	14(23.3%)	60(100.0%)

The data underscore multiple personal and structural barriers faced by the respondents in their pursuit of work. A substantial 81.7% (49 respondents) report experiencing a work–home conflict, suggesting that balancing occupational responsibilities with domestic obligations remains a persistent challenge.

Moreover, 68.3% (41 respondents) identify the absence of viable business ideas as a limiting factor in advancing their livelihoods, while 65.0% (39 respondents) express concerns over inadequate systematic knowledge that hinders their efficiency and confidence in work-related tasks. Additionally, 58.3% (35 respondents) cite personal traits such as lack of self-confidence and social inhibitions, such as shyness, as obstacles. A notable 76.7% (46 respondents) emphasize that limited educational attainment is a major constraint, restricting their opportunities for upward mobility or diversification of skills. Qualitative insights reveal that many women perceive household responsibilities as their primary duty, often prioritizing family care over economic engagement. This dual burden not only limits their productive capacity but also reinforces traditional gender roles that marginalize women’s agency in the workforce.

**Table-8**  
**Environmental Problems faced by the female workers of handloom**

<b>Environmental Problem(s)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Marketing and finance	47(78.3%)	13(21.7%)	60(100.0%)
2. Getting Premises on rent/Purchase	41(68.3%)	19(31.7%)	60(100.0%)
3. Getting Raw Materials	36(60.0%)	24(40.0%)	60(100.0%)
4. Procurement of Equipment	32(53.3%)	28(46.7%)	60(100.0%)
5. Health Problems	43(71.7%)	17(28.3%)	60(100.0%)

The data indicate that a significant number of respondents face challenges related to their small-scale entrepreneurship. Specifically, 78.3% (47 respondents) report difficulties with marketing their products and securing financial resources.

Additionally, 68.3% (41 respondents) experience issues in acquiring premises for rent or purchasing necessary goods. Another 60.0% (36 respondents) struggle to obtain raw materials, while 53.3% (32 respondents) face problems in procuring essential weaving equipment. Furthermore, 71.7% (43 respondents) report deteriorating health due to prolonged engagement in handloom work.

Overall, the findings suggest that women weavers encounter major obstacles in marketing and financing their products, compounded by inadequate access to materials, infrastructure, and growing health concerns.

In addition to numerous challenges, female handloom weavers face several pressing issues that hinder their socio-economic advancement:

- **Raw Materials:** The escalating costs of essential raw materials—such as cotton, silk, munga, zari, and handloom tools—pose a significant burden. Since these materials are often sourced from far-off states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Assam, the complexity of procurement, coupled with high transportation expenses, aggravates the situation further.
- **Access to Capital:** In Meerut’s handloom sector, institutional financial support remains scarce. Most commercial banks deny loans to weavers, forcing them to rely on private moneylenders who charge exorbitant interest rates. This dependence not only deepens their financial strain but also undermines the industry’s long-term sustainability.
- **Electricity Charges:** Weavers are compelled to pay electricity bills at commercial rates, despite the fact that traditional handlooms are manually operated and do not consume electricity. This arbitrary imposition reflects policy negligence and adds an unjust financial burden, particularly on economically vulnerable artisans.
- **Low Investment Flow:** Investment in the handloom industry of Meerut by financial institutions is notably limited. While government and cooperative banks do provide some assistance, systemic barriers—such as financial illiteracy among weavers and the rigid, bureaucratic procedures of lending institutions—create a double bind that stifles entrepreneurial growth.
- **Inadequate Infrastructure:** The existing infrastructure within the handloom sector in Meerut is grossly insufficient. If this traditional industry is to become economically viable and export-oriented, it urgently requires comprehensive infrastructure development—including transport, storage, training centers, and modernized facilities.

## Findings

Major findings of the study are as follows-

- The study highlights that the majority of participants (51.7%) are in the middle-age category, whereas a comparatively small proportion (11%) represent the older age group.
- The majority of respondents (66.7%) are currently married, with a relatively minor proportion (5%) falling into the widow/divorcee category.
- The figures of the present study highlights that the largest proportion of respondents (46.7%) lack basic literacy, whereas a very small minority (6.7%) have completed higher education.
- A clear predominance of nuclear family systems (73.3%) among the participants suggest that even within rural settings, the traditional joint family model is gradually diminishing, giving way to more nuclear household arrangements.
- These study highlights the overall low-income levels of the respondents, which are especially concerning in the context of rising inflation and current market conditions. Despite their consistent hard work, the women continue to face economic hardship and precarious living standards.
- The findings of the study suggest that women weavers encounter major obstacles in marketing and financing their products, compounded by inadequate access to materials, infrastructure, and growing health concerns.
- Qualitative insights reveal that many women perceive household responsibilities as their primary duty, often prioritizing family care over economic engagement.
- This dual burden not only limits their productive capacity but also reinforces traditional gender roles that marginalize women's agency in the workforce.

## Suggestions for better prospects of female workers of handloom

- Specific programmes should be developed exclusively for women in the handloom sector, with dedicated budget allocations to ensure consistent employment opportunities.
- The Minimum Wages Act must be amended to provide fair and inflation-responsive wages to women weavers.

- Women engaged in handloom work should be issued official identity cards, artisan credit cards, and be covered under suitable insurance schemes.
- Bridge schools should be established in handloom clusters and rural areas to support education for school dropouts, especially girls.
- Households experiencing food insecurity should receive Antyodaya cards and ration cards to ensure access to essential provisions.
- Mobile health centers should be set up in key handloom-producing villages to meet the healthcare needs of women weavers.
- Women-only handloom cooperative societies should be established to foster collective enterprise and economic empowerment.
- Hank yarn should be made accessible to women artisans through their cooperatives and self-help groups.
- Handloom workers should be brought under the coverage of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to provide financial and legal assurance of work.

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# Imperial Pursuits: Hunting Regulations and Game Preservation in Colonial Kashmir

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## Abstract

*This paper investigates the impact of British colonial state policies on hunting practices in Kashmir, with a particular focus on the notions of fair play and game preservation. During the colonial era, the British administration introduced regulatory measures to govern hunting activities in Kashmir, aiming to establish fair play among local communities. The study explores the implementation of hunting regulations, licenses, and designated seasons to strike a balance between colonial interests and indigenous practices. The concept of fair play in hunting is examined, revealing how the colonial authorities sought to enforce ethical practices and discourage excessive exploitation of wildlife. Furthermore, the paper delves into the preservation of game and wildlife resources, analyzing the establishment of game reserves and wildlife sanctuaries. Through an examination of archival records, legislation, and local narratives, this study aims to provide insights into the complex interplay of power, culture, and ecology during the colonial period in Kashmir.*

**Keywords:** Hunting, Kashmir, Game Preservation, Masculinity Regulations and Wildlife.

## Introduction

This paper looks at how hunting shaped the identities of colonial sportsmen and native hunters mutually lying on the 'northwestern frontier' of the British Empire in India. It shows how their diverse just orders were put in conflict by the colonial experience of hunting. In this chapter it is also being demonstrated that colonial sportsmen in India generally used notions of fairness in hunting to set themselves

apart from native hunters, and on the contrary colonial frontier officers set themselves distinct through their dexterity in hunting from other British officers. Besides this, the idea of fairness invoked by the colonial State had a distinct place in indigenous hunting practices, and frequently collided with the “moral ecology” of the colonial hunters. Although, the main focus of the chapter is on the idea of fairness in hunting initiated in colonial India by the State in late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the form of ‘hunting codes’ and ‘Game laws’, and reflected the making of colonial identity and their governance of India. It also demonstrates how emphasis of British sportsmen on fair hunting was a product of ‘liberal political ideas’ of the ‘enlightenment era’ based on equality, justice and fairness,<sup>1</sup> and to what extent the liberal ideals of fair hunting were practiced and followed by the British.

During the nineteenth century, the British and Russian empires engaged in a fierce geopolitical war on the ‘northwestern’ boundary area of the British Empire in India. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the conflict between the two reached to its zenith, and the British experienced an inevitable fear of Russian assault from the mountain passes north of Kashmir’s sovereign state created under the treaty of Amritsar of 1846. The British started negotiating and assured the position of custodian of the northern Kashmir ‘Mountain passes’ after the ‘Treaty’ was signed. The little mountain kingdoms on Kashmir’s northern border presented the British with the best possible vantage point from which to defend India. In a series of military battles spanning the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Kashmir State and the British Empire conquered all the tiny mountain kingdoms on their side and introduced a twofold administrative apparatus consisting of ‘Political Agencies’ in the case of the British, and ‘Governorships’ in case of Kashmir State.<sup>2</sup> By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it had gone from being a battleground for the supervision of the mountain states to a hunting ground for games and sports under the colonial state. The colonial officers and other Europeans, hunted a huge number of large animals, primarily ibex, markhor, and Marco Polo sheep, and depended greatly on the assistance and services of local shikaries who were considered keen sighted during hunt.<sup>3</sup>

The ‘social history’ of hunting in India has been studied in terms of its emblematic importance in societal domination. A considerable portion of writing on hunting lay much stress on its figurative political significance, in which a ruler exhibits his capacity and authority to govern to his people, with a special emphasis on systematic hunts or, the ‘Shikar’, as performed by the ruling family. According to the literature, both indigenous princes of colonial India and British colonialists used hunting to demonstrate their might as sovereigns. ‘Tiger hunting’ was considered a sign of domination by local culture in pre-colonial India under native rulers; and the moment British arrived in India, they adopted the figurative meaning

of the 'Tiger hunt' in order to show their power over the native community and endowed it with a distinct meaning.<sup>4</sup> In the framework of colonialism, hunting signified a diverse arrangement of power than the monarch-subject relationship. Author, William Storey contends that for colonial officials sport in India in the form of hunting constituted an meandering means of western cultural dominance over restive 'natives,' which too signified the triumph of British civilization over nature.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the literature produced during the colonial period also depicts how hunting became for the British rulers in India, a modality to exhibit and affirms a masculine self-identity, over the native society along with a number of fellow countrymen, and a distinctiveness which was then articulated with dominant chauvinistic expression.<sup>6</sup>

### **Masculinity, Sport and Fair play: the Making of the Sportsman Identity**

The emergence of colonial hunting in the last decade nineteenth century reflected the altering temperament of colonial rule and novel imperial thought of supremacy. In fact hunting represents domination over nature and natives; the 'colonial hunt' moreover came to imply a 'paternal' benign British rule. The concept of fair play in hunting used to classify the ethical and corporeal dominance of British rulers, and as a result of this, new principles of paternalism was seen in the figure of hunter officer.<sup>7</sup>

Moreover, hunting was fundamental to the noble tradition of England which symbolized dispensation and leisure associated with moral value. It offered a skeleton that characterized masculine vigor.<sup>8</sup> British in India constantly well thought-out physical exercise imperative to uphold good health in the severe weather conditions in India by mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and the probity of 'athleticism' became an essential part of Victorian distinctiveness. Writings carried out on English sport and education has revealed, extreme prominence on bodily and mental exercise in schools.<sup>9</sup> He further highlights, that 'collective consciousness' impasses during sports was eloquently created as set of virtues that were repeatedly structured as rules. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain, when the concept of 'fair play' was invented by middle and higher classes of people through their educational institutions, it was distorted from utilitarian apparatus of private control into a didactic public virtue largely weird to the higher and middle classes of English society.<sup>10</sup>

And once Britain's established its dominance and grew enormously, 'fair play' began to be assumed as exclusive property of the English and ethical basis of imperial victory. This was used by the colonial state in defining themselves as morally superior and its duty is to improve and uplift the backward races of the world. The concept of Sahib was suitable to English audiences, since it created resonance with the established cultural commitment with Darwinism, logical prejudice, a concern with keeping English practice intact in an epoch of hasty socio-

cultural transformation and logical advancement, safeguarding an indispensable 'British' disposition in a rapidly growing empire.<sup>11</sup> The colonial hunt presented an excellent platform for 'Sahibs' from late 19<sup>th</sup> century to demonstrate physical fitness, espouse English tradition in affirming the noble concession to chase and mark out racial disparities from the native inhabitants.

At the outset, when India was under the rule of East India Company, the British hunted through the support of aboriginal ruling classes and even imitated their technique which wasn't considered fair. The British attitude towards hunting underwent a great change in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 19<sup>th</sup> century because of some reasons. Emergence of new technology, 'meaning fire arms', 'Forest Act of 1878' that made forest inaccessible to the aboriginal people; and the glory and magnificence which was merged with the British Raj.<sup>12</sup>

### **Colonial State and Kashmir; Game Laws, sportsman, and fair hunting**

A large number of ecological systems existed in Kashmir due its immense size. The area of Kashmir lies to the north of Himalayan barrier in the valley of the Indus, to the north and east of which runs the Karokaram range. The region consists of Baltistan, Gilgit and Astor. Habitat types of any region of the world are determined by latitudinal, altitudinal and climatic factors. All these three factors shape the distribution of plant and animal species. As far as the region of Kashmir is concerned, the main habitats in the region are 'dry alpine zone', and 'permanent snow field zone'. The flora and fauna in the region is dynamic and diverse with numerous noteworthy species-including Markhor, Himalayan Ibex, snow leopard and musk deer.<sup>13</sup>

A major shift in hunting came into existence in late half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain, where hunting for trophies-hunting especially for corpse pieces primarily the horns to be exhibited became prominent. The experiences attained in the mother country were equipped by the gigantic hunting prospect in the colonies such as India, where key intention of the British sportsmen was to obtain the biggest trophy of 'rarest species' like 'Markhor'. In Kashmir, the colonial sportsmen contended for the substantial trophy of the mountain 'ungulates-Ibex', 'Markhor' and 'Marco Polo Sheep'.

Before, colonial intervention, game laws in Kashmir were absent along with the code of conduct for just hunting operations. Once the residency was established rules for the sportsmen began to be framed in order to conserve the sport and fair hunting. It wasn't done with the concern of preserving moral ecology but the purpose of it was to conserve species from going completely extinct, because in the last two decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century, severe hunting pressure had driven the cashmere 'Markhor' to local extinction in the pir panjal range.<sup>14</sup> The extinction of 'Markhor' meant the

end of the pastime and entertainment for the colonial officers. Therefore, Kashmir Game preservation Department was established under the supervision of colonel wingram. The purpose of the department was to conserve certain areas for the Maharaja and the colonial officials where the game could be played.<sup>15</sup> The department issued licenses to shoot to the hunters. But the fact is that to whom the licenses were issued by the department. The sources reflect that the prime importance was given to the colonial officers who were coming from several parts of India after completing their official duties to Kashmir for sport.

The rules framed by the department regarding fair hunting practices were institutionalized formally through the introduction of the enforcement of the law. The laws made bounded the hunting of the colonial officials and sports hunters, and declared hunting on part of the aboriginal society illicit. The indigenous community could not hunt now but colonial officials could easily hunt as a sport. For the colonial officials and Maharaja nine *Rakhs* or reserves were established all over the Kashmir valley under the 'Kashmir game preservation department'. These *Rakhs* were kept barely open for the British sport hunting with special acquiescence granted by the Dogra State's Darbar.<sup>16</sup> In addition to these *Rakhs* ten game sanctuaries were established throughout the princely State of Kashmir, including one each in the region of Ladakh and Baltistan. It became quite easy for the State officials to obtain special consent to shoot in these sanctuaries, granted by the Secretary, Game Preservation Department, who was usually a British officer under the Kashmir state service (KGPD 1913). The department also made it mandatory for an indigenous hunter to get registered with the KGPD. The skilled shikaris were frequently very extremely sought after by the British sportsmen who often relied on each other's' recommendations for employing a shikari. The sportsman's relationships with the shikaris was ambivalent, and to borrow the words of Sramek,<sup>17</sup> "most of the shikaris employed for tiger hunts in India by the British were from the tribal communities, such as Bhils and Gond, who were considered as lazy and disobedient in their daily lives, yet skilful and adept in tracking tigers." We see parallel emotions between the sportsmen who hunted in the northwestern region of the empire in the early twentieth century. Writers who believed themselves authentic sportsmen seldom scorned the way certain 'gentlemen' treated these shikaris and recommended kinder attitudes

The local shikaris who escorted the sportsmen soon learnt the significance and worth that sportsman fastened to trophy heads. The demand for good heads of trophies resulted in the development of trophy markets in north Indian cities. Srinagar and Rawalpindi became the major markets for all sorts of animal trophies by early twentieth century

Moreover, The British Residency sometimes cared very less when it came to certain aesthetic and leisure activities like acquisition of inhabited lands for preservation and extension of game. For this purpose labour was procured from villages. But, an ironic thing happened, that was, labour was so much put to work in road construction, plantation, driving of games etc. that no such labour was available for the clearance of Rakhs and Jungles for the preservation of games. Dachigam Rakh Special Arrangement was also carried on for the preservation of game.

## Conclusion

Hunting became an accepted way for the English to build a higher self-individuality founded on liberal principles of justice in late nineteenth and early twentieth century. British sportsmen who hunted in the northwestern border area of the British Empire in the late 19th and early 20th centuries bemoaned that the complexity and sophistication of hunting practices in their abode cultures had left the hunting familiarity unauthentic and the sport iniquitous. Codes of justice were designed to demonstrate how dangerous hunting was, and trophies became a way to show how these codes and sportsmen's identities changed over time. Fair hunting laws based on liberal values adopted in colonial India, achieved little accomplishment in making hunting a just sport in practice. Colonial hunting, like other colonial edifying undertakings, was riddled with unpredictability's and negation that could only be addressed by maintaining and developing unjust social relations.

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# The Sun Temple of Galta: An Architectural Study

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## Abstract

*This article studies the Sun Temple, associated with the Galta complex near Jaipur, placing it within its historical and geographical context. It begins with a brief discussion of Galta's importance during the medieval period, its possible name origins, its link to Sage Galava, and its location near Amber and the later city of Jaipur. The focus then shifts to the Sun Temple, built in 1736 CE under Rao Kriparam during the reign of Sawai Jai Singh II. The temple follows a typical layout with Mukha Mandapa, Sabha Mandapa, Antarala, and Garbhagriha, and reflects a late phase of the Shekhari style. Its architectural features include a detailed base, plain wall section, and a shikhara with smaller spires. The article also notes later changes in the structure, including shifts in entry and layout, and points out the simplicity of its decoration compared to other temples in the region. Overall, the article highlights the temple's architectural features and its importance within the setting of Galta.*

**Keywords:** Galta, Sun Temple, Shekhari style, Jaipur, Temple architecture.

## Introduction

The valley of Galta is located in a narrow gorge of the Aravalli hills to the east of Jaipur. Over the centuries, it emerged as a significant religious site, initially under the Nath yogis, and later, from the sixteenth century onwards, as an important seat of the Ramanandi sect under Krishnadas Payahari. With its growing spiritual importance and continued patronage from the Kachchwahas of Amber and later

Jaipur, the site gradually developed and gave rise to a number of temples, tanks (kunds), and related structures.

Several works help explain the importance of Galta. Patton E. Burchett discusses the Ramanandis, their practices, and the support they received from the Kachchwahas and Mughals.<sup>1</sup> Vibhuti Sachdev and Giles Tillotson show how Galta's geography influenced the planning of Jaipur.<sup>2</sup> Jadunath Sarkar and Hanuman Sharma highlight its early history, including its link to Prithviraj, Balabai, and the early Meena principalities in the nearby regions.<sup>3</sup> Together, these studies provide a basic understanding of Galta's early history and its religious significance.

### **Etymology and Setting of Galta**

There are two main views about the origin of the name "Galta." One connects it to the area's geography, from Galtan (marshy land) or Galita (a narrow valley).<sup>4</sup> The other links it to the Sage Galava, who is believed to have meditated here about 1,500 years ago and brought the sacred Ganga waters to the site.<sup>5</sup>

Galta was located in an important position, near Amber, along the Mughal Road to Agra and Fatehpur Sikri, and close to where Jaipur was later built.<sup>6</sup> Although Jaipur was developed on the plains, its layout was extended to connect with Galta and improve defense, while also integrating Galta into the city's broader plan.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Patton E. Burchett's *A Genealogy of Devotion: Bhakti, Tantra, Yoga, and Sufism in North India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019)
  2. Vibhuti Sachdev and Giles Henry Rupert Tillotson, *Building Jaipur: The Making of an Indian City* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), 39-41, <https://archive.org/details/buildingjaipurma0000sach>.
  3. Jadunath Sarkar, *A History of Jaipur*, c. 1503-1938, revised and edited by Raghubir Singh (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1984); Hanuman Sharma, *Jaipur ka Itihasa*, 1936; Harnath Singh, *Jaipur and Its Environs* (Dundlod: Raj Educational Printers, first edition), 6.
  4. The explanation corresponds with the natural setting of the region, a narrow valley where perennial springs feed into a sequence of stepped water tanks (kunds). See H.L. Showers, *Notes on Jaipur*, 2nd ed., ed. R.A.E. Benn (n.p.: Jail Press, 1916), 56, <https://archive.org/details/cu31624051211179>.
  5. Kesharlal Ajmera Jain and Jawaharlal Jain, *The Jaipur Album or All About Jaipur* (Jaipur: The Rajasthan Directories Publishing House, 1935), 11.
  6. Its proximity to these political centres rendered it a favorable site for religious patronage. See Patton E. Burchett, *A Genealogy of Devotion: Bhakti, Tantra, Yoga, and Sufism in North India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 121.
  7. Vibhuti Sachdev and Giles Henry Rupert Tillotson, *Building Jaipur: The Making of an Indian City* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), 41, <https://archive.org/details/buildingjaipurma0000sach>.

The early religious importance of Galta grew with the Ramanandis, who first built temples dedicated to Hanuman.<sup>8</sup> In the 17th century, abbot Narayandas constructed the Gopal Ji and Raghunath Ji temples and developed the water systems with support from Mirza Raja Jai Singh I.<sup>9</sup> Later, under Sawai Jai Singh II, Rao Kriparam commissioned the Sun Temple overlooking the valley, further strengthening Galta's architectural and religious significance.<sup>10</sup>

### Brief overview of the Sun Temple at Galta

The magnificent Sun temple is situated at the top of a hill west to the Galta ji. This temple is visible from across the entire city. Jaipur was founded based on the principles of Vastu Shastra and a splendid panoramic view of the city planning of Jaipur can be admired from this temple. From the Sun temple, one can clearly trace the route extending from Galtaji to Chandpole, passing through Ramganj, Badi Chaupar, and Choti Chaupar, and observe how the streets of Jaipur intersect one another at right angles. A fragmented inscription lies outside the temple which reveals that the structure was consecrated on the 14th day of the dark fortnight on a Sunday, in Samvat 1793 (1736 A.D.). The inscription also mentions Rao Kriparam and his son who built this temple as already mentioned in the above section. The main idol of the Sun God is believed to have been taken out of the temple and carried through the city in a royal procession on a chariot during the occasion of Basant Panchami.<sup>11</sup>

### Architecture of the Sun temple at Galta

From the perspective of temple architecture, the structure exemplifies the style characteristic of the Late Medieval period. This period witnessed the gradual decline of the Shekhari style, an architectural tradition that was originated in the 10th century and reached its zenith during the 11th and 12th centuries.<sup>12</sup> This temple stands as a representative of this very Shekhari style. Although the temple is oriented towards the north, the access route from the northern side has been closed. Consequently, a new entrance has been established through the *Sabha Mandapa* on the eastern side.

From an architectural perspective, this temple is divided into four sections: namely, the *Mukha Mandapa*, *Sabha Mandap*, *Antarala*, and the *Garbhagriha*. The temple's foundation, known as the *Adhishthana*, is subdivided into two parts: the

8. Burchett, *A Genealogy of Devotion*, 121.

9. Ibid.

10. K.L.A. Jain and J. Jain, *The Jaipur Album or All About Jaipur*, 10.

11. H. L. Showers, *Notes on Jaipur*; 2nd ed., ed. R. A. E. Benn (Jaipur: Jail Press, 1916).

12. Adam Hardy, "Zekhar+ Temples," *Artibus Asiae* 62, no. 1 (2002): 81–137, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3250282>.

*Pitha* and the *Upapitha* (Fig-1). The *Upapitha* is further articulated into distinct mouldings; the *Dvibhitti* (two layers), *Jadyakumbha*, *Karnika*, *Kapotapali*, and *Grasapatti*. Both *Bhittis* are richly ornamented, a feature which is rarely observed in other temples. Depictions of *Ghatas* are visible upon the *Bhitti* surfaces. The *Upapitha* section extends continuously throughout the temple, spanning from the *Sabha Mandapa* to the *Mukha Mandapa*.



Fig-1

On the *Bhadra* projections of the *Jadyakumbha* moulding, pairs of elephants, standing face-to-face, are depicted on all three side of *Bhadras*. The *Pitha* component of the temple's foundation is articulated into the *Khura*, *Kumbha*, *Kalasha*, and *Kapotapali* mouldings. The *Kapotapali* is rendered in the form of a *Dvikapotapali* (two layers). Both the *Kumbha* and *Kalasha* mouldings are ornamented, the *Kumbha* is adorned with *Ghatas*, while the *Kalasha* features carved with decorative bands (*Pattikas*).

In this temple, the *Jangha* section is entirely plain. A decorative band is visible across the middle of the *Jangha*. Sculptural images appear within the two *Bhadras*. Chronologically, these sculptures appear to belong to a much later period. In the *Varandika* section, a double-layered *Kapotapali* is visible, followed by a projecting decorative moulding that continues uninterrupted across the *Sabha Mandapa* and *Mukha Mandapa*, a characteristic feature of temple architecture from this era. In the *Shikhara* section, subsidiary *shikharas* (*Urushringas*) executed in the Shekhari style are evident. The spaces between the *Bhadras*, left vacant by the *Urushringas*, have been filled with *Latin-Kuta* pilasters. Above the decorative mouldings of the

*Shikhara*, *Rathikas* have been incorporated into the Bhadra sections, these niches currently stand empty. Replicas of lions have been placed at the top of these *Rathikas*. A three-tiered *Kapotapali* has also been utilized beneath the *Kuta* pilasters and above the *Varandika*. The finials of the *Kuta* pilasters feature miniature replicas of Shekhari style *shikharas*. In many temples of Jaipur and Bhangarh dating to this period, rows of *Ghatapallavas*, typically found on the *Karna* sections, are seen ascending upwards, though this specific motif is absent in this present temple (Fig-1).

In the *Adhithana* section on the western side of the temple, a black stone *Makara-Pranala*, has been installed. Compared with other temples in this region, the *Kapili* section of this temple is quite substantial, serving to frame and integrate all the decorative elements employed within the temple's *Garbhagriha* (sanctum sanctorum). While many temples in this region, particularly those in Bhangarh, typically feature sculptural images carved above the *Kapili* section, such imagery is not present in this temple.<sup>13</sup>

This temple is devoid of an enclosing wall, consequently, the *Sabha Mandapa* remains open on all four sides. Currently, entry is granted from the east, passing through the *Sabha Mandapa*, whereas the temple's original entrance is situated on the northern side (Fig-2). The western section of the *Sabha Mandapa* has been enclosed, a depiction of the Sun God has been installed on the interior wall, and a door has been fitted on the exterior face (Fig-3). As a result, the temple now appears,



Fig-2

13. Tamegh Panwar, Gopal Joge, and Agroneel Mandal, "Observations on Art, Iconography and Architecture of Gopinath Temple at Bhangarh, Alwar, Rajasthan," *Journal of Archaeology & Epigraphy* 3, Session 4 (2022).

by default, to be east-facing, and the significance of its *Garbhagriha* has been diminished. The interiors of both the *Sabha Mandapa* and the *Mukh Mandapa* are remarkably austere, a feature which is rarely encountered in the temples of this region.

While the influence of musicians and other sculptural figures is typically evident within the *Sabha Mandapas* of the temples in this area, in this particular temple this feature is not visible. The pillars of the *Sabha Mandapa* and the *Mukha Mandapa* are square at the base and octagonal at the top. The load-bearing brackets are also of simple design.

The *Dwara-shakha* is constructed from red stone and features depictions of the *Dashavatara* (Ten Incarnations of Vishnu) on both sides. The *Dwarapalas* have also been rendered in a simple style, consistent with the artistic sensibilities of the period. The images of the goddesses *Ganga* and *Yamuna* are depicted without their respective vehicles (*vahana*), instead, they are shown carrying water pots upon their heads. While a deliberate effort was made to execute the *Sarpa-Shakha*, in the style characteristic of the Early Medieval period, the specific nature of its carving places it firmly within the stylistic context of the present era. An image of Lord Ganesha adorns the *Lalatabimba*. In the *Padyabhog* section, the *Nabhi* has been rendered on a remarkably large scale. The *Uttaranga* is entirely plain, completely devoid of any sculptural ornamentation. In the temple architecture of this region, it is customary to find depictions of Uma-Maheshwara and Ganesha within the Kapili section, however, in this particular temple, although the Kapili section features *Devakoshthakas*, both currently stand empty. Probably these niches originally housed images.

## Conclusion

The Sun Temple of Galta stands as an important example of late medieval temple architecture in the Jaipur region which reflects both continuity and change in architectural traditions. While it follows the basic structural and stylistic features of the Shekhari style, its simplicity and selective ornamentation set it apart from other contemporary temples. The modifications in its layout and usage over time further show how the structure adapted to the changing needs and practices. At the same time, its location within the Galta complex strengthens its religious and cultural



**Fig-2**

significance, linking it to the broader sacred landscape and the urban development of Jaipur. Taken together, the temple represents not only an important architectural monument but also a key element in understanding the historical and gradual development of Galta complex.

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# **Foundations of Indian Knowledge Systems Beyond Written Records**

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Whenever we talk about a ‘knowledge system’ of a country or a community, we have to be cautious in the use of the term ‘knowledge’ itself, as it carries a modern and somewhat formal meaning, while in ancient time it did not exist in such a clearly defined or systematised form. If taken in a broader sense, knowledge is acquired and retained information guiding behaviour; it can be considered in the modern sense while also being present in the earliest phases of human existence. In such contexts, knowledge is not abstract or codified, but embedded in repeated actions, practical engagement with the environment, and learned ways of doing things, transmitted in small and often fragmented units.

It does not remain fixed to a closed system; rather, it is transformed, transferred, sometimes lost, and regained over time, maintaining a certain continuity even when uneven or discontinuous in appearance. This continuity is reflected in long-term behavioural and technological patterns that indicate sustained transmission across generations. With the emergence of civilisation, this process does not begin anew but takes a more structured form, where knowledge becomes organised, cumulative, and in some cases formally expressed. The distinction, therefore, is not between the absence and presence of knowledge, but between its earlier dispersed, practice-based forms and its later systematised expressions.

## **Routes of Indian Knowledge System or *Bhartiya Gyan Parampara*.**

Before the idea of a country or *rastra* was shaped, knowledge existed among the earliest humans on Earth, possibly elsewhere than in South Asia, but carried in pieces of information. From that point, knowledge transformed, was transferred, accumulated, dropped, regained, and sustained in some or other form. The knowledge (system) perhaps never went extinct, just as the human lineage did survive, though

our sister species might have had some form of knowledge, as they share origins, anatomy, and aspects of biological evolution.

Perhaps we had forms of cultural activity in South Asia as early as two million years ago. Later, around one and a half million years ago, we have evidence of hominins (related to the human lineage) existing in southern India. This phenomenon continued around one million years ago as well, but we are not very sure that it was completely uninterrupted. As long as 60 ka, we can argue for continuity. And for at least the last ten thousand years, cultural continuity was uninterrupted; before that, we can place the knowledge system as more universal in form, as it likely always was.

### **Cultural Continuity, Transformation, and Interactions**

After a point in time, such as the Holocene era or the last 11,500 years, a more sedentary way of living emerged in the subcontinent. Of course, immigrants and migrants were part of the cultural transformation and evolutionary process, but the core or base was not completely replaced or disrupted.

Countries like the New World and parts of the Middle East and Israel took very new shapes at some point in the past. Still, the archaeological remains and people living there retain some sense of the past that belongs to the same land. The South Asian or Indian subcontinent and China have a unique accumulation, as both a harbour of culture and a crossroads.

For the evolution of the knowledge system, we can underscore the starting point at early manufacturing events; for example, baked or unbaked pottery is one example. Though manufacturing can include many things, ceramics survive longer due to their material properties. We may consider early practices of domesticated plants, such as rice, wheat, or barley, as indigenous, even if they were also practiced outside South Asia. Also, if things take shape locally, external influence can never be avoided. The Indian subcontinent is not an isolated, unexplored island, but a highly intermingled cultural body that existed in symbiosis. Technology often shapes change, or perhaps on most occasions it develops gradually. Thus, many of the major revolutionary changes or transformations often took place through invasion or, more appropriately, immigration, which introduced advanced technology.

### **Identity, Indigeneity, of “Indianness”**

Here, the question is: at what point in history should the “Indian Knowledge System” be considered its beginning or emergence—whether in ancient languages such as Sanskrit, written records, oral traditions later written down, or in the earliest material remains and the continuity of present knowledge? Notably, knowledge creation cannot be dependent on language and script, which are only carriers of knowledge.

Second, from when do we consider the idea of India? Scholars place this deeper in time, sometimes based on mythology. However, cultural shaping and continuity were evolving well before the era of the first civilizations.

Besides, the groups that developed knowledge might not be the same communities that claim its antiquity. As a general perception, civilizations or large cultural phenomena are the results of long processes deeply rooted in the past. The current identity of Bhartiya is a mixture of many separated roots and their amalgamation. Instead of only complex societies, the core residents of this land must have been native communities or Mesolithic hunter-gatherers of the Indian subcontinent.

### **Knowledge Formation Beyond Texts: Material, Oral, and Indigenous Traditions**

Knowledge before written records must be considered, as much of it existed without writing and was transmitted in different forms. Much of the rediscovery and research on Indian knowledge largely follows ancient texts. However, architectural, structural, and archaeological evidence also reflects the same past of knowledge, in a more objective and concrete sense, which holds credibility in academic research.

Another issue is that within a country, knowledge cannot be uniform; it is conditioned by ecological settings (arid, semi-arid, riverine, coastal). Therefore, region-specific knowledge can be inferred through ethnographic studies or studies of indigenous communities, where knowledge was largely not associated with writing or mainstream structures.

Traditional knowledge was a continuous process associated with communities engaged in sustainable living and adaptation to nature; they produced methods for it. Some parts of knowledge recorded very late may still be results of long processes and should also be treated as traditional knowledge in a holistic sense.

There is also knowledge still unrecorded but observable—existing in material remains or in collective memory. In fact, what is missing from written records may be more important and may exist in material remains (archaeological context) or as living heritage in public memory and folk traditions.

### **Relevance, Challenges, and Contemporary Position of IKS**

In redefining IKS, the framework goes beyond scriptures, as knowledge is written or recorded at different points in time. If IKS is treated as purely the study of the classical, it leads towards a narrow system, e.g., religious and mythological texts and astrology. In this context, the scientific labelling of mythological discussions becomes another challenge (e.g., Puri 2025).

Some knowledge has a universal identity, produced through interaction rather than geographical isolation. Art, architecture, and other forms of human knowledge progress universally beyond geographical boundaries.

In the current global economic and developmental context, which aspects of Indian knowledge are relevant, and how may it help in developing indigenous systems of education, technology, and well-being to strengthen a country? Looking at history may remind us of past knowledge systems, but it has limited immediate applied outcomes and may be more useful for long-term policy.

Knowledge once developed in this region may not directly bridge the gap with current systems, where many ideas are rediscovered or reinterpreted. However, IKS can still unlock aspects relevant for adaptation in daily life and policymaking. However, IKS can still unlock aspects relevant for adaptation in daily life and policymaking.

For example, traditional architecture, agriculture, and governance were designed for Indian conditions, yet external models were often adopted as a symbol of modernity without merit in adaptation. Increasingly, scientific practice emphasises universal recognition of knowledge, creating a space where Indian knowledge can be appropriately positioned.

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# **Empowering Society through the Bhartiya Way: Mahatma Gandhi's Vision of Social Transformation and Its Enduring Impact on India's Social Fabric (1919-1942)**

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## **Abstract**

The progress of a nation in the world cannot be measured or viewed solely on the basis of materialism. A developing nation must also consider the nature of its social and cultural history; otherwise, it risks abandoning its social harmony and roots, leading to a modern society like that of Hitler and Mussolini, or a deeply hollow society that equates progress solely with materialism. Gandhi's entire philosophy, and this paper, focuses on the idea that the development of society, and especially Indian society, is intrinsically linked to its cultural history. To sustain this progress, we must advance while preserving its fundamental values, ensuring the welfare of all and maintaining social harmony. Gandhi was one of the few scholars who, throughout his life, remained steadfast in upholding Indian values and achieved success through struggle. Perhaps no other political freedom movement in the world has demonstrated such clear significance as Gandhi's movement. In the tradition of Indian history, Gandhi appears to represent the very soul of the nation.

**Keywords:** grassroots, swaraj, nation-state, compassion, dictatorship, colonialism.

## **Introduction**

The twentieth century was the time when Indian social and political movements were reaching their highest points, especially after the arrival of Gandhiji. The effect of truth, non-violence and satyagraha can be seen in Indian Politics and

Indian society. Gandhi gave a different direction to the Indian political movement in which the effect of Indianness of the cultural-religious journey can be seen, in which the need to take all sections of the society along and build a nation-state by keeping it with sympathy was also being kept in mind. Gandhiji made it clear that the real identity and originality of Indianness should be kept alive in his movements. Here, Indianness makes it clear how the cultural and religious journey of India had a positive impact on a wide section of society. Indianness is also an introduction to the journey of our religious development, in which we can build Indian society by living with truth and non-violence.

Gandhiji's biggest goal has been on this thing: how can we build the society and empower the society by keeping Indianness together. This is the question we are asking. In our article, we will try to understand how Gandhiji used Indianness to empower the Indian people. Indianness was the path that Gandhiji saw in which the journey of India's great civilisation was understood. It was kept as the primary focus in the creation of the nation-state of India, such as the development of village-based civilizational India, which was self-reliant and did not need to be empowered. Still, it was important to preserve them because they were already empowered.

Gandhiji<sup>1</sup> disintegrated, but the village-based economy and the political system there, which they called Panchayat, remained intact for thousands of years. The reason for this is that those people were already empowered. (Gandhi, 1938) We just need to protect them. That is why Gandhiji, based on so many years of experience in the West, said that the creation of Indianness is the need of the state of India, in which it is very important to give place to every better aspect of the society, including women, Dalits, tribals, and labourers. How Gandhiji, through the Satyagraha of Champaran in 1920, was not only challenging the British but also the Indian people, who should maintain restraint, get organised for their rights and keep the basic things in mind. He was also doing the work of giving training to them like maintaining cleanliness, identifying the problem of untouchability and solving it, bringing all sections of the society together, even the labourers and capitalists, as he did in Gujarat, and introducing people to the religious sentiments of India, because the journey of development to give a befitting reply to imperialism cannot happen only through the industrial revolution of the West, Gandhiji also gave a reply to them and brought back the charkha based rural economy and the tradition of employment which was Indianness, in which employment is available for all. Gandhiji opposed the Western mentality of making thousands of people unemployed through big machines and producing more and more.

How did Gandhiji develop during the freedom movement? We are not only talking about the development of the freedom movement; Gandhiji also made many

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1. Gandhi, M.K. (1938). Hind Swaraj. Navajivan Publishing House.

mistakes and learned from those mistakes. Gandhiji used to say that I learn from my mistakes, and he also proved on many occasions that he accepted his mistakes. We get to see Gandhiji's understanding of Indian society during the freedom movement. We can read his comments on Indian society in many ways, but in the book *Hind Swaraj*, we get to see Gandhiji's objective regarding Indian society. Gandhiji rejected the West's blind journey of development for India because it was based on maximum exploitation, such as the exploitation of natural resources and their control by a few men, and the state of struggle for them in the rest of the society, due to which the downfall of humanity is visible.

Gandhiji's *Swaraj* means how a man can get the right to self-determination, which includes political, social, economic, and cultural freedom to take the society along with their emotions. Gandhiji was constantly emphasising *Swaraj*, and *Swaraj* was not for any one person but for the society, and it was not based on discrimination.

Gandhiji considered the creation of a state and village-based society in place of the nation as necessary because, through this, India would be able to achieve its *Swaraj* in a real sense. *Swaraj* is the point where India's journey will stop, and through that, India will achieve the glory of its development. The Gandhian way of empowering Indian society can be seen through the empowerment of women. Gandhiji was constantly expressing concern over the pathetic condition of women. He believed that without the empowerment of women, Indian society and family cannot be empowered. Gandhiji provided leadership to women in his movements, and the participation of women can be seen from the Salt Satyagraha to the Quit India Movement. Gandhiji made Indian men the protectors of women of India (in a way of duties), not exploiters. Take historical examples, he advised us to respect them. Gandhiji also mentioned the status of women in the Indian religious-cultural journey, where they were mentioned with respect. In *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhiji clearly talked about women's respect. In the same way, Gandhiji talked about social reforms for Dalits and ending the untouchability practised by a large section of Hindu society. Gandhiji said that untouchability is a social problem and it is not a religious problem. This mentality is being promoted by some sections of society for their own benefit. Therefore, until the Harijans of India are liberated, the future of Hindustan cannot be bright. Therefore, he apologised to the Dalits many times for the injustice done to them and also asked the upper caste society to do the same. Gandhiji even linked natural calamities with the aspects of social inequality in India and emotionally called upon society to end inequality. Gandhiji was not promoting any kind of violent or human hatred against the British people. He said that in India's cultural-social journey, violence should not be used to end inequality. The enemy is not answered with this; we will explain to them with love, which is the medium of Indianness.<sup>2</sup>

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2. Gandhi. 1938

Gandhiji's social and political movements had an impact not only on India but the entire world and the whole world positively learned from Gandhiji's movements and supported them, whether it was the Satyagraha done by Martin Luther King Jr. against the unequal policies of racial discrimination in America or the discrimination done by white people, which included the message of human equality and it was a non-violent movement. In the same way, Nelson Mandela, who fought against the policy of racial discrimination and apartheid in South Africa, also accepted the path of the Gandhian movement and got success through the same Gandhian movement, and he accepted Gandhism clearly. In the same way, accepting Gandhiji as a symbol in many parts of the world, roads, buildings, and even important institutions were named after him, like Gandhi Street (South Africa), Rue Mahatma Gandhi (Paris, France), Gandhi Memorial Centre (Washington D.C., USA), Gandhi Statue (London, UK), etc.

Indian society remembered Gandhiji's values in many ways and gave them a place in the Indian democratic journey. We can understand this from the following examples. During the making of the Constitution of India, Gandhian values were given a place in the fundamental rights. They were given a place in the policy-directive principles. Attention was paid to the duties of the Parliament of India. The duty of the Parliament is not only to make laws but also to ensure justice for the most backward sections of society, in which the role of the executive and the judiciary is important. Freedom of religion, rights for women, ensuring rights for Dalits and clear instructions were given to give a concrete shape to the vision of a rural-based Indian society. From time to time, values based on tolerance were also promoted. Indian society gives Gandhiji the status of emotional father of the nation and places him in the highest position. Gandhi's ideal values work as a divine vision for the Indian society, in which India's journey is included. The idea of calling for truth in Gandhiji's Satyagraha strengthened democracy in India. The techniques of many movements adopted by Gandhiji are used among the people, such as in elections every 5 years and in many ways.

Disagreement and agreement were given a place. The rights of the minority were ensured. They were also constantly motivated to become a part of the mainstream of Indian society.

Gandhiji's sustainable use of nature-based resources is given a place in Indian policymaking. This is continuing even today. Gandhiji used to say that in the Indian tradition, the conservation of nature is the most important. People here used to consume only as much as they needed and it is necessary to propagate this kind of ideology in the whole world. India's concept of Vasudhaiva-Kutumbakam is also important, where the whole world is considered as one family and development should be ensured for everyone in that family. This was also Gandhiji's call to develop this country in the same way by creating a balance between the adjustment

of man with nature and the rural economy of India. Gandhiji had so much faith in Indian civilization that he said that all the civilisations of the world, after reaching their highest level, ended, but the civilization of India is still alive, the credit for which goes to the tolerance of the people of India and the emotional tradition of the people here to see the abode of God in every inanimate and living object, which has given continuity to the civilization of India. That is why he said that in India, there has never been a conflict in civilisation over resources. Western civilisation is dangerous for human values because its foundation is based on the conflict for resources. This is the reason that both world wars killed crores of people around the world. Therefore, Indian civilisation needs to learn from the world, but the world needs to learn more from Indian civilisation, where development is done through peace and love, and the feeling of harmony among all religions is important. Satyameva Jayate tended to work honestly with people, so he had a strong faith in Indian civilisation.<sup>3</sup>

## Conclusion

As a society, it is our responsibility to follow the values of Gandhiji that the construction of the society should not be limited to materialism only, rather the local culture and the centre point of humanity should be included prominently in all of them because without human values and historical development journey, the society will prove to be hollow and its civilization will head towards destruction as seen in the western European countries in the 20th century. Along with all this, the contemporary leaders of Gandhiji expressed disagreement with his views and said that Gandhiji could only see the challenges of modernity from the West. Modernity made many discoveries which gave man relief from diseases, mortality rate and many facilities which made man's life easy and prosperous, but Gandhiji ignored them Gandhiji was not wrong here, he repeatedly said that if civilization develops on the destruction of nature and if the definition of civilization development is the definition of the west, then it will keep the creation of man incomplete and will not be able to provide completeness to man. To cleanse society, it is essential that we practice good politics, spread positive ideas, and the greatest responsibility lies with politicians to set examples in their personal lives so that it can be demonstrated that those who work for your development are your true servants, who stand by you in your joys and sorrows. Therefore, morality should be given the highest priority in public service. We can understand the greatness of Gandhiji from the fact that one of the world's best scientists, Albert Einstein, said 'Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth' **We can understand the essence of Gandhiji from the words he always said<sup>4</sup>:**

3. Gandhiji. Letters to Hitler 1939

4. Wolpert.Stanley. 2001

“A nation’s culture resides in the hearts and the soul of its people.” And another famous line is “You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.”

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## सीता के परिप्रेक्ष्य में राम

मोनोजीत रॉय

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### सारांश

इसमें हमने मूलरूप से माता सीता के दृष्टिकोण से राम कथा को समझने का प्रयास किया है। साथ ही हमने यहां पर माता के मन का भी विश्लेषण करने का प्रयास किया उन्होंने अपने जीवन के संघर्षों में अपने मन के अंतरद्वंद को कैसे शांत किया।

**शब्द संकेत** : सीता, जानकी, वैदही, द्वंद, परीक्षा

राम ही संस्कृति है इस बात को किसी प्रकार के प्रमाण की आवश्यकता नहीं है। दूसरे शब्दों में हम के सकते हैं कि राम हमारे धर्म, संस्कृति यहाँ तक की काव्य के भी एक मजबूत आधार है। इसका उदाहरण हमें मैथिलीशरण गुप्त द्वारा रचित प्रख्यात महाकाव्य “साकेत” में प्राप्त होता है :

**राम तुम्हारा वृत स्वयं ही काव्य है  
कोई कवि बन जाये सहज संभाव्य है।**

इससे स्पष्ट है कि राम के चरित्र में वो शक्ति है जो मूर्ख को भी कवि बना सकता है। राम के जीवन और चरित्र को पूर्ण रूप से परिभाषित करना संभव नहीं, राम हमारे जीवन से उसी प्रकार जुड़े हुआ है जिस प्रकार हमारे शरीर से प्राण शक्ति।

इसका सबसे अच्छा प्रमाण है कि राम काव्य ही एक ऐसा विषय है जिस पर लगभग हर संस्कृति और धर्म में कथाये मिलती है जैसे जैन कवि स्वयंभू द्वारा रचित “पद्मचरित”, रामप्रियशरण द्वारा रचित “सीतायन” इन सब राम कथाओं में राम का चरित्र आपको अलग रूप में दिखाई देता है। इस लेख में हम ‘डॉ. नीलम सिंह’ द्वारा रचित काव्य संग्रह “रुक जाओ वैदही” के माध्यम से एक नवीन दृष्टि से समझने का प्रयास करते हैं।

इसमें हम सम्पूर्ण राम काव्य को माता सीता के दृष्टि से समझने का प्रयास करते हैं। यहाँ हम सिया के दृष्टिकोण से अर्थात् एक नारी के दृष्टिकोण से राम के पूरे चरित्र और क्रियाकलापों को समझने का प्रयास करेंगे, इसका उदाहरण देखें :

आज मैं तुमसे पूछती हूँ  
मेरे प्रश्नों का उत्तर दो माँ  
वरना तुम्हारे राम के प्रति  
हम नारियों के हृदय में  
आक्रोश कभी कम न होगा।<sup>1</sup>

राम कथा में सीता जन्म का प्रसंग विख्यात है कि माता सीता का जन्म भू देवी के गर्भ से हुआ और वह सपूर्ण मिथिला के लिए वरदान बनकर आई। उनके प्रकट होते ही मिथिला का वर्षों पुराना अकाल समाप्त हुआ और घनघोर वर्षा हुई परन्तु सीता ने कही भी अपने जन्म के विषय में एसा आत्म चिंतन नहीं किया जैसा हमें डॉ नीलम सिंह के इस पुस्तक में मिला है, इसका उदहारण देखिये :

आर्यावर्त के उच्च कुलीनों को  
बड़ा गर्व अपनी कुलीनता पर  
उनको मैं स्वीकार न थी  
अटका समाज 'जन्म कथा पर'<sup>2</sup>

राम कथा की अलग अलग प्रतियां सम्पूर्ण हिन्दी साहित्य में उपलब्ध है लेकिन कही भी सीता ने अपनी जन्म कथा को लेकर इस प्रकार विचार करते कभी देखा नहीं गया और न ही अपने जन्म कथा पर किसी प्रकार का अफसोस ही प्रकट हुआ है, इससे स्पष्ट होता है कि यह रचना आधुनिक दृष्टिकोण सम्पन्न है।

माता सीता का जब विवाह श्रीराम से विवाह सम्पन्न होता है तब भी अपने जन्म कथा पर समाज द्वारा की गई टिप्पणियों के कारण भय एवं शंका से ग्रस्त थी, यह मूल रूप से परंपरागत मूल्यों का प्रतीक है :

समपूर्ण समाज में है चर्चित  
जन्म कथा से जग परिचित  
मैं क्या कहूँ कैसी और कौन  
जानते हो सब दशरथ नंदन।<sup>3</sup>

इस कथन से स्पष्ट है कि यहां माँ जानकी एक पंपरागत नारी के रूप में सोच रही है जहां वह अपने पति के सुख में ही अपना सुख समझ रही है लेकिन इसका मतलब यह नहीं है कि वह अपने अस्मिता के प्रति अनजान है।

प्रथम दृष्ट्या यह भूल होना सामान्य है क्योंकि माता सीता एक आदर्श पत्नी है और वह अपने सभी कर्तव्य पूर्ण निष्ठा से निभाती है, इसका प्रमाण हमें तब मिलता है जब वह अपने निर्वासन के निर्णय को सहर्ष स्वीकार कर लेती है :

अधो मुख सुनते रहे राम मौन  
जानती हो सब हृदय की अनकही

**शक्ति भक्ति प्रेरणा तुमसी कौन  
आदर्शों की पराकाष्ठा हो वैदही ॥<sup>4</sup>**

माता सीता एक आदर्श नारी है और कोई भी पतिव्रता स्त्री अपने पातिव्रत एवं अपने चरित्र पर दाग सहन नहीं कर सकती है फिर भी माँ ने एक बार अग्नि परीक्षा दी, किन्तु यह परीक्षा उन्होंने इसलिए दी थी क्योंकि इससे उनके पति का सम्मान जुड़ा हुआ था और इस कठिन परीक्षा से उनके आत्मीय जन उनके साथ थे हनुमान, लक्ष्मण आदि :

**ठहरो सिया! स्थिर कदम  
पार करना होगा अग्नि द्वार  
विस्मित सौमित्र गौरवपूर्ण हो गया रक्तिम  
भ्राता! मेरी माँ पर कैसा अत्याचार ॥<sup>5</sup>**

माता सीता का यह धैर्य तब टूट गया जब उनके प्रिय स्वामी ने उन्हे निर्वासित किया एवं निर्वासन पूर्ण करने पर भी भरी सभा मे यहां तक की अपने संतानों के समक्ष भी चरित्रहीन समझा गया और संदेह की दृष्टि से देखा गया :

**राम बोले सभा मे गुरु गंभीर  
शपथ लेनी होगी मैथली को  
सूर्य वंशीय कुल के समान की  
नारीत्व के पतिव्रता के सम्मान की ॥<sup>6</sup>**

इस बार पहली बार माता को चोट लगी क्योंकि यह प्रश्न केवल एक नारी का नहीं सम्पूर्ण नारी जाति का है पुरुष सदा नारी को संदेह की दृष्टि से देखता है :

**उस क्षण कुछ टूटा बिखरा मन मे  
एक दीर्घ मौन सभा भवन मे  
स्मृति मे कौंधा फिर एक बार  
क्षण किया था पार अग्नि द्वार ॥<sup>7</sup>**

वर्तमान समय मे भी क्या स्थिति मे कुछ ज्यादा अंतर आया है आज भी जब कोई दुर्घटना होती है तो समाज मे पहली उंगली स्त्रियों की तरफ ही उठाई जाती है आज भी स्त्रियों को घर मे सहने की शिक्षा दी जाती है न की उन्हे अपने पैर पर खड़े होने की, इसका उदाहरण लेखिका इस प्रकार देती है :

**अपवादियों की सुनते है न्यायकारी  
खुले घूमते है बलात्कारी  
न्याय की चाह मे भटकती नारी  
दर-दर की ठोकरे खाती बेचारी ॥<sup>8</sup>**

निष्कर्ष के रूप में हम कह सकते हैं कि डॉ. नीलम सिंह ने राम काव्य को वर्तमान के रूप में प्रासंगिक बनाते हुए एक स्त्री के दृष्टिकोण से प्रकट किया है। यह काव्य के रूप में सम्पूर्ण पुरुष जाति से प्रश्न किया है कि इस समाज और पुरुष के जीवन में स्त्री का क्या स्थान है।

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## साँझी - ब्रज मण्डल की लोक एवं देवालयी कला परम्परा

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### सारांश

भारत देश मुख्यतः अपनी संस्कृति एवं सभ्यता के लिये भी जाना जाता है। भारतीय संस्कृति में साँझी कला परम्परा ग्रामीण जन द्वारा मनायी जाती है। भारत में साँझी को : संध्या देवी, संज्ञा, संझा, सेज्याँ बाई आदि नामों से पुकारा व पूजा भी जाता है। ब्रज मण्डल की साँझी देवालयी परम्परा के अन्तर्गत मनायी जाती थी जिसे बड़े ही गुप्त रूप में बारीकी से मन्दिर के ही सेवायतो द्वारा मनायी जाती रही है। क्योंकि ब्रज के धर्माचार्यों द्वारा ब्रज की साँझी परम्परा को राधा कृष्ण की उपासना से जोड़कर ही प्रस्तुत किया जाता रहा है। ब्रज की ललित कलाओं का एक अनूठा दीर्घकालीन इतिहास रहा है। अतः ब्रजवासियों ने साँझी निर्माण में कलात्मक ज्ञान के साथ ज्यामिति का ज्ञान तथा अनुभव की आवश्यकता होती है। ब्रज की साँझी अनूठी इसीलिये मानी जाती है कि कला के साथ साहित्य पक्ष भी उजागर हुआ है। सूरदास जी की साँझी पदावली में साँझी का सुन्दर वर्णन ज्ञात किया जा सकता है। मुख्यतः ब्रज में साँझी पितृ पक्ष (श्राद्ध पक्ष) के समय ही मनायी जाती है। जबसे श्री कृष्ण ब्रज में आये प्रत्येक दिन उत्सव जैसा ही मनाया जाता है। फिर पितृ पक्ष में यह माना जाता है कि कोई शुभ कार्य उत्सव पितृ पक्ष के दौरान नहीं होंगे लेकिन ब्रज में पितृ पक्ष के समय साँझी बनाना मानों श्री कृष्ण को प्रसन्न करने का प्रयास करना है। यह कहना अतिशयोक्ति न होगा कि ब्रज कला और ब्रज जीवन एक दूसरे के पूरक है। ब्रज मण्डल में साँझी श्री कृष्ण के समय से सजायी जाती है, वैदिक काल में भी साँझी परम्परा का उल्लेख हैं, यज्ञ मण्डप को सुन्दर बनाने के लिये ऋषि पत्नियों, साँझी से सजायी जाती थी। ब्रज में साँझी का निर्माण, स्वयं श्री राधा रानी द्वारा माना जाता है सुन्दर व रंग बिरंगे पुष्पों से संध्या के समय अपनी सखियों के संग राधा जी भूमि पर साँझी का निर्माण करती है। कहा जाता है गौचरण करके लौटते समय संध्या बेला में श्री कृष्ण के मार्ग में उनके स्वागत में श्री राधा सखियों के साथ साँझी से मार्ग सजा के बैठी थी कि श्री कृष्ण प्रसन्न होंगे। वृन्दावनी साँझी अनुष्ठानिक चित्रण परम्परा तभी से चली आ रही है।

**शब्द संकेत :** ब्रज की लोक परम्परा, उपासना की शक्ति पर विश्वास भक्ति आन्दोलन, मन्दिर परम्परा

### प्रस्तावना

साँझी के अंकनों का हृदय स्पर्शी भाव ब्रज की दुर्लभ सांस्कृतिक परिदृश्य पर केन्द्रित कर, उस पारम्परिक लोक कला का दर्शन कराता है जो कि आनन्दित होने के साथ, साहित्यिक पीढ़ियों की परम्परा का अवलोकन कराता है। साँझी की पाण्डुलिपियों में ब्रज का धार्मिक, साहित्यिक भाव देखा जा सकता है। ब्रज के सन्तों, मन्दिरों के पुजारियों की कथानुसार साँझी ब्रज में श्री कृष्ण के समय से बनती चली आ रही परम्परा है जिसे सूरदास जी अपने साहित्य में वर्णन करते हैं। इसका उदाहरण कुछ इस प्रकार हैं :

यह बानी जानी मनमोहन कहयों सबन समुझाय।  
 भैया बछरा देखे रहियो मैया छाल घराय ॥  
 ऐसे कहि चले श्याम सुन्दर पहुँचे जहाँ सब आई।  
 सखी रूप है मिलि लाडली फूल दिये हर खाई ॥  
 कर सों कर राधा संग शोभित साँझी चीती जाय।  
 षटरस के व्यंजन अरपे तब मन अभिलाख पुजाय।  
 कीरति रानी लेत बलैयां विधि सो विनय सुनाय।  
 सूरदास अविचल यह जोरी सुख निरखत न अघाइ ॥

मनोभावों की कुशल अभिव्यक्ति ही तो कला है। अभिव्यक्ति के अनेक माध्यम हो सकते हैं जिसमें कला और भक्ति का गुण हो तब में कलाकार के मन में साँझी का भाव उत्पन्न होता है। ब्रज के संत-महात्माओं द्वारा भक्ति साहित्य में यह वर्णन है कि इस साँझी रूपी उत्सव का प्रारंभ श्री राधारानी ने बरसाने में किया था। साँझी बनाने के लिये अष्टसखियां मिलकर राधा के पास आकर बताती हैं कि हमें साँझी बनाने के लिये सुन्दर फूलों का चयन करना चाहिये। इससे साँझी माता प्रसन्न होती है व मनश्च्छित्त वर देती है। रसिक भक्त चाचा हित वृन्दावन दास जी द्वारा कृत (साँझी) वर्णन करने के साथ अवगत कराते हैं कि साँझी का भाव क्या है :

**मनवांछित फल पाइए जो कीजै इंहि सेब।  
 सुनौ कुंवरि वृषभानु की, यह साँझी सांचौ देव ॥**

श्री राधावल्लभ सम्प्रदाय के साहित्यकारों द्वारा साँझी के सैकड़ों पद लिखे जा चुके हैं। श्री राधावल्लभ मन्दिर में साँझी के पदों को समाज शैली में गाने की विशेष परम्परा है। ब्रज में साँझी कला का भाव अलग है इसे हार जीत दिखाने के लिये नहीं मनाया जाता है, साँझी बनाने का उद्देश्य संध्या वह परम्परा सम्मिलन में अविस्थित होने वाले प्रेम का प्रतीक है। श्री राधा अपनी सखियों के साथ संध्या देवी का पूजन करती हैं और उनसे श्री कृष्ण प्रेम की याचना करती हैं। जिस प्रकार साँझी

का सांस्कृतिक एवं धार्मिक महत्व है उसी प्रकार कला की दृष्टि से भी उसका विशेष महत्व है। ब्रज में साँझी बनाने वाले अनेको कलाकार जो परम्परागत रूप में साँझी पितृपक्ष के दौरान बनाते हैं व सीखाते भी हैं। कलाकारों की कला इस प्रकार देखी जाती है कि आश्चर्य में डाल देती है कि साँझी इस प्रकार भी बनायी जाती है। ज्यामिती आकार में बेल बूटों की रचना की जाती है, पुष्प साँझी, रंग साँझी, जल के ऊपर साँझी, जल के नीचे साँझी बनायी जाती है जिसमें राधा कृष्ण की सुन्दर छवि ही बनायी जाती हैं। ब्रज में मन्दिर साँझी व ब्रज की लोक साँझी आज भी घरों में गौ माता के गोबर द्वारा 16 दिन के लिये बनायी जाती है जिसे गोबर साँझी कहते हैं। गोबर साँझी भी पितृपक्ष के समय ही बनायी जाती है। कुंवारी कन्याओं द्वारा 16 दिन पारम्परिक प्रतीक चिन्ह व भोग राग द्वारा साँझी माता की पूजा गौरी माता के रूप में की जाती है जिन्हें श्रृंगार आदि साम्रगी कुंवारी कन्याओं द्वारा चढ़ायी जाती है। इस प्रकार ब्रज मण्डल में अनोखे रूप में मन्दिर साँझी व लोक साँझी प्रतिवर्ष परम्परागत रूप में मनायी जाती है।

ब्रज में साँझी को राधारानी का रूप मानकर भी पूजा जाता है इस सम्बन्ध में यह दोहा भी प्रचलित है कि—

**मृग मद चंदन केसर सों, भयाम जू लीपी भीति ।**

**कामधेनु के गोबर सों रचि, साँझी फूलन चीति ॥**

ब्रज मण्डल की वृद्ध महिलाओं द्वारा बताया गया कि बचपन में उनकी दादी नानी कुंवारे समय में साँझी को दीवाल पर गोबर, कौड़ी पीतर - पन्नी, चून, हल्दी, रोली आदि से साँझी बनवाती थी और साथ में कथा भी सुनाती थी। अब इस प्रकार की साँझी ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में ही कुछ जगह बनायी जाती है। समय के साथ बदलाव हुआ और अब फूलों से रंगों व स्टेन्सिल्स के माध्यम से बनायी जाने लगी। रंगों व जल के ऊपर साँझी बनाने वाले ऐसे सिद्धहस्त कलाकार हैं जो साँझी देखे अचम्भा कर जाये व सबका मन मोह ले। वृन्दावन के राधावल्लभ मन्दिर, राधारमण मन्दिर, भट्ट जी के मन्दिर में आज तक भी ज्यामिती रूप में साँझी बड़ी ही सुन्दर बनायी जाती है। वृन्दावन के अतिरिक्त गोकुल नन्दगांव आदि में भी साँझी के दर्शन किए जा सकते हैं।

### **वर्तमान में साँझी निर्माण विधि**

वर्तमान में साँझी बनाना सरल कार्य नहीं है रंगों की साँझी बनाने से पहले साँझी के धरातल का आकार चयन किया जाता है प्रत्येक दिन पितृपक्ष के दौरान अलग अलग आधार अंकन किये जाते हैं। मन्दिर में मिट्टी का धरातल बनाया जाता है जिसके लिये मिट्टी छनाई, पिसाई व तराई की प्रक्रिया पहले से तैयार की जाती है लेकिन मन्दिर से बाहर जो साँझी बनायी जाती है वह लकड़ी के मोटे बोर्ड साँझी विशेषज्ञ अपने साथ रखते हैं जिसमें अष्टभुजाकार, वर्गाकार, वृत्ताकार, सितारानुमा आदि उसे पारम्परिक विधियों द्वारा तैयार करते हैं। साँझी के आकार के चयन के पश्चात एक ऊँची स्टूल या बेंच आदि पर बैठकर अपना आधा शरीर झुकाए रखकर बनाते हैं क्योंकि साँझी के ऊपर बैठने से साँझी नहीं बनती इसके लिये एक तरफ ही खड़े रहना होगा, जो बड़ा ही श्रमसाध्य कार्य है, साँझी

को ज्यामिती आकार देकर स्टैसिल की मदद से रंगों का चयन कर रंग भरे जाते हैं। साँझी के चारों तरफ आकृति बेल-बूटें, मोर, कमल आदि से पूर्ण की जाती है व साँझी तैयार हो जाने के बाद सायंकाल भगवान के विग्रह के पास संध्या के समय प्रसाद, पान आदि रखा जाता है व जैसे जैसे संध्या के समय अंधेरा होता है तब साँझी के दर्शन होते हैं प्रतिदिन साँझी को यमुला जल से विसर्जन कर दिया जाता है, जिससे कि पवित्र छवि पर किसी के पैर आदि न लग सकें।

### निष्कर्ष

साँझी ब्रज की इस गौरवशाली परम्परा के उस पक्ष का भी बोध कराता है जिसमें साहित्य, संगीत कला का भी प्रचार प्रसार हुआ है। भारत के साथ विदेशी विश्वविद्यालयों में भी साँझी पर शोध अध्ययन कराया गया है। जैसे-जैसे साँझी का ज्ञान सम्पूर्ण विश्व में पहुँचेगा वैसे ही साँझी पर अध्ययन प्रबल होगा, ब्रज के वैष्णव सम्प्रदायों ने जहाँ आज के विश्वविद्यालयों की तरह इस उच्छ्व को संरक्षित किया, दूसरी तरफ ग्राम्यांचलों में पितृपक्ष में बनने वाली गोबर साँझी भी इस ब्रज का महत्वपूर्ण अंग है। जिसके अपने गीत, आरतों, कथानक की समृद्ध परम्परा परिवार को एकजुट होने का कार्य करती है। पौराणिक काल से चली आ रही यह परम्परा वर्तमान में अपनी महत्ता एवं उपयोगिता को बनाए रखने के लिए निरंतर संघर्षरत है। साँझी ब्रज की परम्परा और धरोहर का अभिन्न अंग है जिस अन्य भारतीय लोक कलाओं से किसी भी प्रकार कम नहीं आंका जा सकता है। आधुनिक उपकरणों ने बच्चों व युवा पीढ़ी में लोक कलाओं को सजोये रखने की इच्छा कम हो गयी है। वृन्दावन शोध संस्थान, व ब्रज संस्कृति शोध संस्थान आदि साँझी कार्यशाला का आयोजन करते हैं व स्कूलों बच्चों को साँझी कला का महत्व समझाया जा रहा है। साँझी कला का उद्देश्य धार्मिक विचारधारा एवं आध्यात्मिक विचारों के प्रति जागरूकता लाने के लिये किया जाता है। साँझी के हस्तलिखित ग्रंथों में ऐतिहासिक प्रभाव वर्तमान में जागरूक धर्म का प्रचार के लिये अति आवश्यक है। बदलते समय में बदलाव जरूरी है लेकिन वह बदलाव अपने समाज, धर्म, संस्कृति परम्परा न खो जाये यह भी हमें ही ध्यान में रखना होगा। मेरे द्वारा ब्रज की साँझी पर प्रकाश डालने का स्वार्थ यही है कि ब्रज की साँझी का प्रचार प्रसार देश विदेशों में सभी युवा वर्ग के लिये लाभान्वित हो।

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चित्र संख्या 1 : साँझी पेंटिंग, मेघा शर्मा द्वारा



चित्र संख्या 2 : ब्रज संस्कृति शोध संस्थान



# मानसिक स्वास्थ्य विकारों के प्रबंधन में योग की शक्ति का विश्लेषण

मनजीत

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## सारांश (Abstract)

मनोमितीय विकार जिन्हें अक्सर मनोवैज्ञानिक विकार भी कहा जाता है, उन स्थितियों की एक विस्तृत श्रृंखला को समाहित करते हैं जो व्यक्ति के भावनात्मक, संज्ञानात्मक और व्यवहारिक स्वास्थ्य को प्रभावित करते हैं। ये विकार दुर्बल करने वाले हो सकते हैं, जो जीवन की गुणवत्ता और समग्र कार्यक्षमता को प्रभावित करते हैं। पारंपरिक उपचार दृष्टिकोणों में आमतौर पर मनोचिकित्सा (Psychotherapy) और दवाएं शामिल होती हैं। हालाँकि, अनुसंधान का एक उभरता हुआ क्षेत्र मनोमितीय विकारों के प्रबंधन में एक पूरक उपचारात्मक उपकरण के रूप में योग के एकीकरण पर केंद्रित है। योग, भारतीय उपमहाद्वीप से उत्पन्न एक समय-सिद्ध पद्धति है, जो कल्याण के प्रति एक समग्र (Holistic) दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत करती है। इसका सार शारीरिक मुद्राओं (आसन), नियंत्रित श्वसन तकनीक (प्राणायाम), ध्यान और व्यवस्थित विश्राम के सम्मेलन में निहित है। योग की शक्ति मन, शरीर और आत्मा में सामंजस्य स्थापित करने की इसकी क्षमता में टिकी है।

**मुख्य शब्द (Keywords):** तनाव, चिंता, अवसाद, प्राणायाम और माइंडफुलनेस (सचेत जागरूकता)।

## प्रस्तावना (Introduction)

समकालीन अस्तित्व की उथल-पुथल भरी स्वरलहरी में, मानसिक स्वास्थ्य की व्याकुलता अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हो गई है। आधुनिक विश्व की जटिलताएं और अनिवार्य आवश्यकताएं व्यक्तियों पर गहरा दबाव डालती हैं, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप अक्सर मनोमितीय विकारों (Psychometric disorders) का उदय होता है। ये स्थितियां, जिन्हें कभी-कभी मानसिक या मस्तिष्क संबंधी रोग भी कहा जाता है, उन विकारों के एक व्यापक स्पेक्ट्रम को समाहित करती हैं जो विचार, भावना, आचरण या इन कारकों के मिश्रण से पहचाने जाते हैं। इस विस्तृत प्रतिमान (Paradigm) के अंतर्गत चिंता विकार,

अवसादग्रस्तता विकार, द्विध्रुवी विकार (Bipolar disorder), सिजोफ्रेनिया, खान-पान संबंधी विकार और अन्य कई श्रेणियां शामिल हैं।

मनोमितीय विकारों के प्रबंधन में योग की चिकित्सीय प्रभावकारिता को समझने की हमारी खोज में, हम स्वयं को प्राचीन ज्ञान और समकालीन वैज्ञानिक जांच के संगम पर पाते हैं। यह विमर्श मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर योग के गहरे प्रभावों की व्याख्या करता है, जिसमें विशेष रूप से मानस (Psyche) पर योगासनों और प्राणायाम के गहन प्रभावों को स्पष्ट किया गया है। इसके अलावा, हम यह भी पता लगाएंगे कि योग पारंपरिक उपचारात्मक पद्धतियों के लिए एक मूल्यवान सहायक के रूप में कैसे कार्य कर सकता है।

इस यात्रा को शुरू करने के लिए, हमें पहले मनोमितीय विकारों के जटिल स्वरूप को स्वीकार करना होगा। ये स्थितियां एक समान नहीं होती हैं। वे आनुवंशिक संवेदनशीलता, शारीरिक आधार, पर्यावरणीय उत्प्रेरक और मनोवैज्ञानिक घटकों सहित कई प्रभावों द्वारा आकार लेती हैं।

मानवीय मानस की भूलभुलैया जैसी प्रकृति पर विचार करें। मनोमितीय विकारों के लक्षण और गंभीरता व्यापक रूप से भिन्न हो सकते हैं। यह अनगिनत मोड़ों से भरी एक भूलभुलैया के माध्यम से नेविगेट करने जैसा है। इनका निदान अक्सर स्थापित वर्गीकरण प्रणालियों जैसे कि 'डायग्नोस्टिक एंड स्टैटिस्टिकल मैनुअल ऑफ मेंटल डिसऑर्डर' (DSM-5) या 'इंटरनेशनल क्लासिफिकेशन ऑफ डिजीज' (ICD-10) पर निर्भर करता है, जो इन स्थितियों को पहचानने और समझने के लिए एक रूपरेखा प्रदान करते हैं।

इन विकारों की कल्पना रात्रि के आकाश में अलग-अलग नक्षत्रों (Constellations) के रूप में करें। प्रत्येक नक्षत्र अद्वितीय है, जो अपने तारों के विन्यास से पहचाना जाता है। इसी प्रकार, मनोमितीय विकार संज्ञान, भावनाओं और आचरण के अनूठे पैटर्न प्रकट करते हैं। ये व्यक्तिगत कमजोरी या नैतिक कमियों को नहीं दर्शाते, बल्कि मानव मानस की जटिल अभिव्यक्तियाँ हैं।

### शोध के मुख्य उद्देश्य (Research Objectives)

- योग की उपचारात्मक भूमिका का मूल्यांकन करना
- मनोवैज्ञानिक मापदंडों पर प्रभाव का अध्ययन करना
- जैविक और शारीरिक परिवर्तनों का विश्लेषण करना

### आसनों का उपशामक प्रभाव (The Palliative Influence of Asanas)

योग की शारीरिक मुद्राओं (आसनों) की कल्पना अपने शरीर और आत्मा के लिए एक कोमल स्पर्श के रूप में करें। ये आसन विशेष रूप से विश्राम को बढ़ावा देने, तनाव को कम करने और मन एवं शरीर के बीच के संबंध को प्रगाढ़ करने के लिए तैयार किए गए हैं। वे शारीरिक संवेदनाओं, शारीरिक संरेखण (Alignment) और गतिज पैटर्न (Kinematic patterns) के प्रति जागरूकता पैदा करते हुए अपने स्वयं के शरीर की सूक्ष्मताओं को जानने का एक अनूठा अवसर प्रदान करते हैं।

शारीरिक गतिविधियां, सचेत श्वसन के साथ मिलकर, **परानुकंपी तंत्रिका तंत्र** (Parasympathetic nervous system) को सक्रिय करती हैं, जो शरीर की विश्राम प्रतिक्रिया का प्रहरी है। इस प्रणाली की कल्पना एक शांत लोरी के रूप में करें, जो मन को शांत करती है, तनाव को मुक्त करती है और गहन विश्राम की स्थिति उत्पन्न करती है।

प्रत्येक आसन, चाहे वह आपको पृथ्वी से जोड़ने वाला स्थिर 'ताड़ासन' हो या आपका संतुलन परखने वाला चुनौतीपूर्ण 'वृक्षासन', अपने विशिष्ट लाभ प्रदान करता है। योग का अभ्यास जड़ों से जुड़े होने (Rootedness) का बोध कराता है, ठीक उसी तरह जैसे जमीन पर मजबूती से पैर जमाना और वर्तमान क्षण को स्वीकार करना।

### **प्राणायाम : जीवन की श्वास (Pranayama : The Breath of Life)**

जैसे ही आप प्राणायाम के क्षेत्र में उतरते हैं, इसकी कल्पना श्वासों की एक सुरिली स्वरलहरी के रूप में करें, जो आपके अस्तित्व के गलियारों में गूंज रही है। सचेत और सोद्देश्य श्वसन तकनीकों का यह अभ्यास मानस (psyche) पर गहरा प्रभाव डालने की क्षमता रखता है।

धीमी और गहरी श्वसन तकनीकें, जैसे कि **डायाफ्रामिक ब्रीदिंग** (उदरीय श्वसन) या **अनुलोम-विलोम** (Alternate nostril breathing), तनाव को कम करने और शिथिलता को बढ़ावा देने में आपके सहायक बनते हैं। ये तकनीकें **परानुकंपी तंत्रिका तंत्र** (Parasympathetic nervous system) को सक्रिय करती हैं, जो शरीर की तनाव प्रतिक्रिया को संतुलित करती हैं और एक गहन शांति प्रदान करती हैं।

जैसे आप सुरिले स्वर उत्पन्न करने के लिए एक वाद्ययंत्र को ट्यून करते हैं, वैसे ही प्राणायाम के लिए श्वास पर आपके अटूट ध्यान और एकाग्रता की आवश्यकता होती है। यह सतर्कता वर्तमान क्षण में बने रहने की आपकी क्षमता को निखारती है, जिससे एकाग्रता और मानसिक स्पष्टता में वृद्धि होती है। यह आपके मानस को वर्तमान स्थिति के अनुरूप ढालने की एक प्रक्रिया के समान है।

### **भावनात्मक कीमिया : मनोदशा पर योग का प्रभाव (Emotional Alchemy: Yoga's Influence on Mood)**

मनोदशा संबंधी विकार (Mood disorders), जो निरंतर बदलते भावनात्मक परिदृश्य की तरह हैं, योग में एक परिवर्तनकारी सहयोगी पाते हैं। योग एक उत्प्रेरक के रूप में कार्य करता है, जो मनोदशा में सुधार करता है, तनाव कम करता है और आत्म जागरूकता बढ़ाता है। शारीरिक मुद्राएं दैहिक तनाव (Somatic tension) को उसी तरह मुक्त करती हैं, जैसे एक तनी हुई रस्सी की गांठों को सुलझाना। वे बेहतर रक्त परिसंचरण को जन्म देती हैं, जिससे कल्याण (well-being) की भावना विकसित होती है।

अपनी भावनात्मक अवस्थाओं की कल्पना रंगों के एक स्पेक्ट्रम के रूप में करें। योग के पैलेट में ग्रहणशीलता और सकारात्मकता के रंग शामिल हैं। विशिष्ट आसन, जैसे कि **हृदय उद्घाटन मुद्राएं** (Heart-opening postures) या **पीछे की ओर झुकने वाले आसन** (Backbends), इन रंगों को जागृत करते हैं, जिससे विस्तार और गर्माहट की अनुभूति होती है। अन्य मुद्राएं, जैसे **आगे की ओर झुकना**

**या विपरीत मुद्राएं (Inversions)**, शांति और आत्मनिरीक्षण प्रदान करती हैं, जो आपके भावनात्मक धरातल को समझने के लिए आवश्यक हैं।

योग एक कुशल कलाकार के समान है जो आपको इन रंगों को मिलाने और भावनात्मक नियमन की एक उत्कृष्ट कृति बनाने में सहायता करता है। विभिन्न आसनों और उनके शरीर पर पड़ने वाले प्रभावों की जांच करके, आप मन शरीर के संबंध की गहरी समझ प्राप्त करते हैं।

### **मनोमितीय विकारों पर योग के प्रभाव का वैज्ञानिक आधार (The Science Underpinning Yoga's Influence)**

जैसे-जैसे हम विशेष मनोमितीय विकारों पर योग के प्रभाव को समझने के मार्ग पर आगे बढ़ते हैं, हमारा सामना एक ऐसे क्षेत्र से होता है जहाँ प्राचीन ज्ञान समकालीन शोध के साथ सामंजस्य बिठाता है। परंपरा और विज्ञान के बीच का यह अंतर्संबंध योग की उपचारात्मक क्षमता को रेखांकित करता है।

### **चिंता विकार : आशंका के जाल को सुलझाना (Anxiety Disorders: Disentangling the Meshes of Apprehension)**

चिंता विकारों की कल्पना एक संज्ञानात्मक टेपेस्ट्री (Cognitive tapestry) में गांठों की एक श्रृंखला के रूप में करें। प्रत्येक गांठ अत्यधिक चिंता और भय का प्रतीक है, जो मन को अशांति के जाल में फंसा देती है। योग इन गांठों को कोमलता से सुलझाता है, और विश्राम एवं तनाव शमन के माध्यम से सांत्वना प्रदान करता है।

योग शारीरिक तनाव को मुक्त करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करता है, जो एक जिद्दी रस्सी को धीरे-धीरे खोलने के समान है। योग के भीतर श्वसन तकनीकें, जैसे कि शांति करने वाली **उज्जायी श्वास**, व्याकुल मानस को एक जीवन रेखा प्रदान करती हैं। वे शांति और स्थिरता को आमंत्रित करती हैं, जो तूफानी समय में एक कोमल, आश्वस्त करने वाली फुसफुसाहट की तरह प्रतीत होती हैं।

योग व्यक्तियों को स्वस्थ 'कोपिंग मैकेनिज्म' (सामना करने की रणनीतियाँ) विकसित करने के लिए आवश्यक उपकरणों से सुसज्जित करता है। यह अंधकार में किसी को लालटेन देने के समान है, जो उन्हें अपनी भावनाओं को स्वीकार करने और तनावपूर्ण कारकों के प्रति अधिक स्वस्थ और अनुकूलनीय तरीके से प्रतिक्रिया करने में सक्षम बनाता है। चिंता विकारों के क्षेत्र में, योग एक उपशामक लेप (soothing balm) के रूप में कार्य करता है, जो शांति का मार्ग प्रशस्त करता है। यह एक जीवन रेखा प्रदान करता है, जिससे व्यक्ति आशंकाओं के जाल को सुलझाने और मानसिक स्थिरता में सांत्वना खोजने में सक्षम होता है।

### **अवसाद और द्विध्रुवी विकार : भावनात्मक स्पेक्ट्रम का संचलन (Depression and Bipolar Disorder)**

अवसादग्रस्तता और द्विध्रुवी विकार भावनात्मक 'रोलरकोस्टर' के समान हैं, जो व्यक्तियों को भावनाओं के उतार-चढ़ाव के बीच धकेलते हैं। योग, अपनी मनोदशा को विनियमित करने, तनाव कम करने और आत्म-जागरूकता बढ़ाने की क्षमता के साथ, एक स्थिर प्रभाव की भूमिका निभाता है।

एक पेंडुलम की कल्पना करें, जो विषाद (melancholy) और उत्साह (euphoria) के बीच दोलन कर रहा है। योग एक कोमल मार्गदर्शक के रूप में हस्तक्षेप करता है, पेंडुलम को संतुलन (equilibrium) की ओर ले जाता है। शारीरिक मुद्राएं तनाव को मुक्त करती हैं, जो एक भावनात्मक टेपेस्ट्री की सिलवटों को सुचारू करने जैसा है। वे रक्त परिसंचरण को बढ़ावा देते हैं, जिससे संतुलन और भावनात्मक कल्याण की भावना का संचार होता है।

योग की श्वास-प्रक्रिया (breathwork) और 'माइंडफुलनेस' तकनीकें भावनात्मक स्पेक्ट्रम की गहरी समझ को प्रोत्साहित करती हैं। वे व्यक्तियों को उनके भावनात्मक पैटर्न को पहचानने में प्रशिक्षित करती हैं, ठीक उसी तरह जैसे एक कुशल नाविक हवाओं और लहरों की गति को समझता है। यह विवेक व्यक्तियों को मनोदशा संबंधी विकारों के उतार-चढ़ाव भरे समय में अधिक निपुणता के साथ आगे बढ़ने में सक्षम बनाता है। योग एक दिशा सूचक यंत्र (compass) बन जाता है, जो व्यक्तियों को अवसाद और द्विध्रुवी विकारों की भावनात्मक भूलभुलैया के माध्यम से मार्गदर्शन करता है। यह भावनाओं के अशांत समुद्र में स्थिरता की भावना प्रदान करते हुए उच्च और निम्न स्तरों को प्रबंधित करने के साधन उपलब्ध कराता है।

### खान-पान संबंधी विकार : आत्म छवि का पोषण (Eating Disorders)

खान-पान संबंधी विकार (Eating disorders) व्यक्ति के अपने शरीर के साथ संबंधों पर प्रतिकूल प्रभाव डालते हैं। ये विकार विकृत दर्पणों के समान हैं, जो एक दोषपूर्ण आत्म-छवि को दर्शाते हैं। योग एक मार्गदर्शक प्रकाश के रूप में कार्य करता है, जो आत्म जागरूकता और बेहतर 'बॉडी इमेज' (शारीरिक छवि) को बढ़ावा देता है।

प्रत्येक योग मुद्रा की कल्पना एक दर्पण के रूप में करें, जो किसी के शरीर की स्पष्ट छवि को प्रतिबिंबित करती है। जैसे-जैसे व्यक्ति शारीरिक मुद्राओं में संलग्न होते हैं, वे अपने शरीर के साथ एक स्वस्थ संबंध विकसित करते हैं, जो दर्पण में देखने और अंततः एक वास्तविक प्रतिबिंब देखने के समान है। योग में श्वसन तकनीकें चिंता और तनाव की संवेदनाओं को कम करती हैं, जो एक कोमल पुष्टि की तरह है कि व्यक्ति का स्वरूप अपने आप में सुंदर है।

योग व्यक्तियों को स्वस्थ मुकाबला तंत्र विकसित करने के उपकरणों से लैस करता है। यह एक अधिक अनुकूल आत्म - छवि चित्रित करने के लिए ब्रश प्रदान करने जैसा है। माइंडफुलनेस और आत्म-चिंतन के माध्यम से, व्यक्ति अपने विचारों और व्यवहारों की गहन समझ प्राप्त करते हैं। यह समझ, बदले में, एनोरेक्सिया (anorexia), बुलिमिया (bulimia) और बिंज - ईटिंग (binge-eating) विकारों से जुड़े लक्षणों को कम करने में सहायता करती है।

### पदार्थ उपयोग विकार : बेड़ियों से मुक्ति (Substance Use Disorders)

पदार्थ उपयोग विकार (Substance use disorders) जंजीरों के समान हैं, जो व्यक्तियों को निर्भरता के चक्र में फंसा देते हैं। योग, तनाव कम करने, मनोदशा को उन्नत करने और भावनात्मक विनियमन को बढ़ाने की अपनी क्षमता के साथ, एक मुक्तिदायी प्रभाव की भूमिका निभाता है।

पदार्थ उपयोग के चक्र की कल्पना एक अशांत नदी के रूप में करें। योग वह लंगर (anchor) बन जाता है, जो व्यक्तियों को उथल-पुथल भरी धाराओं के बीच स्थिरता खोजने में सक्षम बनाता है। शारीरिक मुद्राएं दैहिक तनाव (somatic tension) को मुक्त करती हैं, जो जंजीरों की पकड़ को ढीला करने जैसा है। वे परिसंचरण को बढ़ावा देते हैं, जिससे भावनात्मक मुक्ति की भावना पैदा होती है।

योग के भीतर श्वसन तकनीकें कुंजियों (keys) के रूप में कार्य करती हैं, जो निर्भरता की बेड़ियों को खोलती हैं। वे मानस को शांत करती हैं, लालसा (cravings) और उथल-पुथल को कम करती हैं, जो अक्सर पदार्थ उपयोग विकारों के साथ होती हैं। योग व्यक्तियों को स्वस्थ मुकाबला तंत्र विकसित करने के लिए आवश्यक साधनों से सुसज्जित करता है। यह उन्हें रिकवरी (स्वस्थ होने) के अनछुए रास्तों पर चलने के लिए एक 'रोडमैप' पेश करने के समान है। पदार्थ उपयोग विकारों के क्षेत्र में, योग मुक्ति के मार्ग का प्रतीक है। यह व्यक्तियों को निर्भरता की जंजीरों को तोड़ने का साधन प्रदान करता है, जिससे भावनात्मक स्वतंत्रता और समग्र कल्याण को बढ़ावा मिलता है।

पदार्थ उपयोग विकारों (Substance use disorders) के क्षेत्र में, योग मुक्ति के एक मार्ग का प्रतीक है। यह व्यक्तियों को निर्भरता की बेड़ियों को तोड़ने का साधन प्रदान करता है, जिससे भावनात्मक स्वतंत्रता और समग्र कल्याण को बढ़ावा मिलता है।

### आसन : मन और शरीर की एक स्वरलहरी (Asanas: A Symphony of Mind and Body)

जैसे-जैसे हम मानस (psyche) पर आसनों के गहन प्रभावों का अध्ययन करते हैं, हमारा सामना एक ऐसी स्वरलहरी (symphony) से होता है जो संज्ञानात्मक (cognitive) और शारीरिक (corporeal) क्षेत्रों के जटिल स्वरो को समन्वित करती है। इस उत्कृष्ट रचना में प्रत्येक आसन एक 'सुर' या 'नोट' की भूमिका निभाता है।

### शांति और विश्राम : एक निर्मल सोनाटा (Calming and Relaxation)

आसनों को एक निर्मल 'सोनाटा' (संगीत रचना) के रूप में देखें, जिसे विशेष रूप से विश्राम को बढ़ावा देने और तनाव को कम करने के लिए तैयार किया गया है। सचेत श्वसन के साथ जुड़ी शारीरिक गतिविधियाँ एक सामंजस्यपूर्ण धुन उत्पन्न करती हैं। यह धुन परानुकंपी तंत्रिका तंत्र (parasympathetic nervous system) को सक्रिय करती है, जो विश्राम के सुखद स्वरो का संचार करती है।

'बालासन' (Child's pose) को एक कोमल लोरी के रूप में समझें जो आपको विश्राम की स्थिति में ले जाती है। 'शवासन' (Corpse pose) की कल्पना एक भव्य चरमोत्कर्ष (crescendo) के रूप में करें, जो गहन शांति की अनुभूति कराता है। विश्राम की इस स्वरलहरी में प्रत्येक आसन की अपनी अनूठी गूँज है।

### मन-शरीर संबंध : एक सुरीला सामंजस्य (Mind-Body Connection)

आसन आपको मन और शरीर के सुरीले मिलन का अन्वेषण करने के लिए आमंत्रित करते

हैं। वे एक सामंजस्यपूर्ण रचना में सुरों के रूप में कार्य करते हैं, जो शारीरिक संवेदनाओं, संरेखण (alignment) और गतिज पैटर्न (kinematic patterns) के प्रति गहरी जागरूकता का पोषण करते हैं।

‘वीरभद्रासन’ (Warrior pose) को एक सशक्त और मुखर सुर के रूप में देखें, जो आपको वर्तमान क्षण में स्थिर करता है। ‘वृक्षासन’ (Tree pose) की कल्पना एक कोमल लेकिन संतुलित सुर के रूप में करें, जो आपको संतुलन की जटिलताओं के माध्यम से निर्देशित करता है।

### एकाग्रता और मानसिक स्पष्टता : ध्यानाकर्षण की एक रचना (Improved Concentration)

आसन एकाग्रता की एक विशिष्ट रचना (rhapsody) में बदल जाते हैं, जिसमें उचित संरेखण और संतुलन बनाए रखने के लिए आपके पूर्ण ध्यान की आवश्यकता होती है। निरंतर अभ्यास मानसिक एकाग्रता को परिष्कृत करता है।

‘नटराजासन’ (Dancer's pose) को एक जटिल और विस्मयकारी धुन के रूप में देखें, जिसके लिए गहन एकाग्रता की आवश्यकता होती है। ‘बकासन’ (Crow pose) की कल्पना एक सामंजस्यपूर्ण स्वर (chord) के रूप में करें, जो संतुलन और ध्यान का विलय करता है। प्रत्येक आसन मानसिक स्पष्टता के इस प्रवाह में एक सुर बन जाता है, जो वर्तमान क्षण में उपस्थित रहने की आपकी क्षमता को उन्नत करता है।

### भावनात्मक नियमन : भावनाओं की स्वरलहरी (Emotional Regulation)

आसन, एक संगीत रचना के सुरों की भांति, भावनात्मक अवस्थाओं को प्रभावित करते हैं और भावनाओं को विनियमित करने में सहायता करते हैं। वे आपको भावनाओं के एक विस्तृत स्पेक्ट्रम के माध्यम से ले जाते हैं, जिससे भावनात्मक नियमन की एक उत्कृष्ट कृति तैयार होती है।

‘उष्ट्रासन’ (Camel pose) को एक उल्लासपूर्ण और खुले हृदय वाले स्वर के रूप में समझें, जो सकारात्मकता की भावनाओं को उद्दीप्त करता है। ‘पश्चिमोत्तानासन’ (Forward bend) को एक शांत और अंतर्मुखी सुर के रूप में देखें, जो स्थिरता को आमंत्रित करता है।

### तनाव शमन : शांति की एक सांझ गीत (Stress Reduction)

आसन शारीरिक तनाव को मुक्त करके और विश्राम प्रतिक्रिया (relaxation response) को सक्रिय करके शांति का एक ‘सेरेनेड’ (सांझ - गीत) प्रस्तुत करते हैं। यह धुन मन और शरीर को शांत करती है।

‘सेतुबंध सर्वांगासन’ (Bridge pose) की कल्पना एक कोमल लेकिन परिवर्तनकारी धुन के रूप में करें, जो शारीरिक तनाव को मुक्त करती है। प्रत्येक आसन इस संगीत में अपना योगदान देता है, तनाव को कम करता है और सहजता की भावना को बढ़ावा देता है।

यह स्वीकार करना अनिवार्य है कि मानस पर आसनों के प्रभाव व्यक्तियों के बीच भिन्न हो सकते हैं, ठीक उसी तरह जैसे एक संगीत रचना की अलग-अलग व्याख्याएँ होती हैं। आसनों के अभ्यास का अनुभव और लाभ व्यक्तिगत शरीर विज्ञान, इरादे और अभ्यास किए गए विशिष्ट आसनों जैसे चरों पर निर्भर हो सकते हैं।

इसके अतिरिक्त, आसनों को एक व्यापक योग प्रणाली के हिस्से के रूप में एकीकृत करना, जिसमें श्वसन अभ्यास (प्राणायाम) और ध्यान जैसे अन्य घटक शामिल हों, मानस (psyche) पर उनके प्रभाव को और अधिक प्रबल बना सकता है।

### भावनाओं का नियमन : एक सामंजस्यपूर्ण संतुलन (Regulation of Emotions)

प्राणायाम तकनीकें भावनाओं को प्रभावित करती हैं और उनकी तीव्रता को विनियमित करने में सहायता करती हैं। एक ऑर्केस्ट्रा का नेतृत्व करने वाले कुशल संचालक (conductor) के समान, वे भावनात्मक अवस्थाओं को निर्देशित करती हैं, संतुलन और स्थिरता का पोषण करती हैं। प्राणायाम के दौरान प्रत्येक श्वास भावनात्मक नियमन की कुंजी के रूप में कार्य करती है।

### ऊर्जा और जीवंतता : कायाकल्प की एक स्वरलहरी (Energy and Vitality)

प्राणायाम अभ्यास शरीर में 'प्राण' (जीवन शक्ति ऊर्जा) के प्रवाह को संतुलित और विनियमित करते हैं। कायाकल्प की यह स्वरलहरी बढ़ी हुई जीवंतता, नवीनीकरण की भावना और समग्र कल्याण की ओर ले जाती है। प्राण के प्रवाह को बढ़ाकर, प्राणायाम ऊर्जा के स्तर को बढ़ाता है और मानसिक स्थिति में सुधार करता है।

### योग की उपचारात्मक क्षमता (The Healing Potential of Yoga)

जैसे ही हम अपनी यात्रा के समापन पर पहुँचते हैं, हम मनोमितीय विकारों के प्रबंधन में योग की उपचारात्मक क्षमता को देखकर विस्मित रह जाते हैं। यहाँ प्राचीन ज्ञान आधुनिक विज्ञान से मिलता है, और परंपरा एक पूरक चिकित्सीय दृष्टिकोण प्रदान करने के लिए अनुसंधान के साथ हाथ मिलाती है। अनुसंधान द्वारा समर्थित योग के लाभ मानसिक स्वास्थ्य स्थितियों के एक विस्तृत स्पेक्ट्रम तक फैले हुए हैं। योग का अभ्यास व्यक्तियों को उन उपकरणों से लैस करता है जिनकी उन्हें अपनी भावनाओं को विनियमित करने, तनाव कम करने और अपने जीवन की समग्र गुणवत्ता बढ़ाने के लिए आवश्यकता होती है।

### निष्कर्ष (Conclusion)

योग की प्राचीन पद्धति मन और शरीर के बीच एक गहरा संबंध स्थापित करती है। यह मनोमितीय विकारों के जटिल धागों को सुलझाने का एक साधन प्रदान करती है, ठीक वैसे ही जैसे एक कुशल कारीगर उपचार की एक टेपेस्ट्री (तस्वीर वाला पर्दा) बुनता है। जैसे-जैसे व्यक्ति इस यात्रा पर निकलते हैं, वे योग की उपचारात्मक शक्ति की खोज करते हैं, जो उनके मानसिक और भावनात्मक स्वास्थ्य में सामंजस्य स्थापित करती है।

मनोमितीय विकारों के प्रबंधन के लिए योग की प्रभावकारिता तेजी से स्पष्ट हो रही है। जबकि शोध जारी है, तनाव कम करने, भावनात्मक नियमन बढ़ाने, संज्ञानात्मक कार्य में सुधार करने और सामाजिक समर्थन को बढ़ावा देने की इस पद्धति की क्षमता को कम करके नहीं आंका जा सकता है। मनोमितीय विकारों से जूझ रहे व्यक्ति अपनी उपचार योजना में योग के एकीकरण के माध्यम से महत्वपूर्ण राहत और जीवन की बेहतर गुणवत्ता प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

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