CHAPTER 2

ANTHROPOLGY

Doctoral Theses

01. HAZARIKA (Dreeti)
Negotiating the Margins: Dynamics of Cultural Identity and Ethnic Politics Among the Misings of Assam.
Supervisor: Prof. R.P.Mitra
Th 29329

Abstract

The present doctoral thesis explores the cultural and political dynamics relationship between cultural identity and ethnic politics among the Misings of Assam, with specific attention to how marginality is negotiated within contemporary governance structures. The study conceptualises marginality as a relational and political condition shaped through administrative categorisations in this study, marginality is conceptualized as a relational and political condition produced through administrative categorization, differential citizenship, and uneven autonomy arrangements. The Misings are asserting for political autonomy through the Sixth Schedule since four decades. Despite being recognized as the second largest plain tribe of Assam and a Scheduled Tribe (Plains), the Misings are still demanding for inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution thus positioning them within a distinctive structure of limited autonomy mediated through the Mising Autonomous Council. The central argument of this thesis posits that Mising identity is historically constructed, contextually enacted, and strategically mobilised within the council governance electoral politics, student activism and grassroots political processes. The Misings are continuously reshaping their position within the political order of Assam through everyday engagements with State institutions, development schemes, local governance bodies, and ethnic organizations. Ethnic politics, therefore, emerges as a process through which cultural identity is translated into institutional demands, autonomy aspirations, and claims to recognition. Therefore, the study examines how cultural identity, as revealed through language, rituals, festivals, and collective memory serves as a symbolic and strategic strength in the pursuit of political representation and autonomy by conducting multi-sited ethnography across politically active and Mising majority areas and also attempts to explore the debates on subnational and political autonomy, politics of identity of the community by foregrounding negotiation as its central analytic category. It attempts to shows that marginality is not simply endured but is actively contested and reconfigured through cultural assertion and political engagement.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Fieldwork and Methodology 3. Situating the Field 4. Identity and Structural Foundation of Mising Society 5. Cultural Belonging To Political Assertion:The Articulation Of The Mising Identity 6. Everyday Politics of Community by The Kébangs,The Soy Jatiya Sangathan 7. Role of State Administrative Entities 8. Lived Realities and Aspirations of The Misings 9. Summary and Conclusions. References. Glossary. Annexures.

02. LOHAGAN (Anushikha)
Anthropological Study of Variation in Gestational Glucose Metabolism and Its Influences on Maternal and Child Health.
Supervisor: Dr. Vipin Gupta
Th 28943

Abstract

Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is recognized as a major determinant of adverse maternal and perinatal outcomes in India, where the coexistence of undernutrition and rising overweight presents a dual burden (Seshiah et al., 2008; Anjana et al., 2017). The Hyperglycemia and Adverse Pregnancy Outcome (HAPO) study demonstrated continuous associations between maternal glycemia less overt than GDM and pregnancy complications (Metzger et al., 2008). This study is a prospective cohort of 300 pregnant women-offspring recruited at a tertiary care hospital in Bikaner, Rajasthan, India within the Gestational Route to Healthy Birth (GaRBH) Cohort. Maternal sociodemographic, anthropometric, obstetric and disease history, physical activity, tobacco and smoking status, socio-economic position data was collected. Data on fetal biometry was collected at all trimesters. Neonatal anthropometry was performed at birth. Fasting plasma glucose was measured at all trimesters and a 75 g oral glucose tolerance test was performed in the second trimester. Group-based trajectory modeling was applied to identify longitudinal patterns of maternal glycemia, and mixed-effects regression models were used to examine associations with maternal, fetal, neonatal, and birth outcomes. The analysis identified heterogeneous glycemic trajectories across pregnancy, with approximately 60% of women meeting IADPSG thresholds for GDM in the second trimester. Women in higher glycemic trajectories more frequently exhibited elevated BMI and family history of diabetes. Adverse outcomes were common 21% of neonates were classified as low birthweight, 33% as small-for-gestational-age, and 11% as large-for-gestational-age. Neonatal adiposity, measured by skinfold thickness, was increased among infants of women in higher glycemic trajectories, and the frequency of cesarean delivery was also elevated in these groups. This study provides longitudinal evidence from North India, demonstrating that maternal glycemia trajectories are strongly associated with maternal characteristics and adverse outcomes. The findings underscore the need for strengthening GDM screening for timely diagnosis and management, to mitigate intergenerational risks.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Aim and Objectives 3. Review of Literature 4. Material and Methods 5. Results 6. Discussion 7. Summary and Conclusion. References. Annexure: Ethical Clearance and List of Publications.

03. RAVINDER
Study of Prehistoric Culture in South Bihar with Special Reference to The Kharagpur Hills.
Supervisor: Prof. Manoj Kumar Singh
Th 28945

Abstract

This study highlights the archaeological significance of the Kharagpur Hills of Bihar as an important prehistoric landscape in eastern India. Eleven new open-air prehistoric sites have been identified through systematic, multi-phase field investigations, with artefacts largely preserved in primary contexts and exposed through erosion. Their spatial distribution near water sources and foothill zones suggests strategic locations,

reflecting access to water, raw materials, and diverse ecological resources. Across these sites, a total of ~14,300 lithic artefacts were recorded, with flakes (57%), followed by cores (26%) and tools (17%), indicating an emphasis on flake production supported by flexible core reduction strategies. The notable presence of cores is consistent with primary reduction activities, while inter-site variability likely reflects differences in occupation intensity, duration, and resource access. Within the handaxe and cleaver component, including their variants, handaxes show a moderate predominance, situating the assemblage within broader regional patterns of Acheulian variability in India. Morpho-technological analysis reveals variability in morphology and reduction strategies. The coexistence of bifacial, Levallois, and blade elements is broadly consistent with a Late Acheulian techno-complex. Microliths and iron slag, along with structural remains at Gurmaha-1, may reflect later activity at the site. Low-frequency artefacts, such as ring stone fragments and a celt, reported from selected sites are likely to represent intrusive elements. Ethnoarchaeological observations of the Koda tribe indicate that subsistence practices are organised within an integrated system involving hunting, gathering, fishing, agriculture, and animal husbandry. These practices involve flexible tool use and detailed ecological knowledge, and provide cautious analogical insights into prehistoric behaviour. Clay-mineral analysis indicates warm, humid monsoonal conditions with climatic fluctuations, reflecting alternating monsoon phases from the Middle to Late Pleistocene into the Early Holocene. Keywords: Kharagpur Hills, Late Acheulian, Lithic Analysis, Ethnoarchaeology, Palaeoenvironment, Bihar.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Review of Literature 3. Description of Prehistoric Sites and Quaternary Stratigraphy 4. Techno-Morphological Analysis of Lithic Artefacts from the Newly Reported Sites 5. Ethnoarchaeological Insights from the Koda Tribe of the Kharagpur Hills: Subsistence Practices and Ecological Knowledge 6. Discussion7. Summary and Conclusion. References.

04. SARUNGBAM (Ayuk)
Epidemiological Burden of Substance Abuse Amongst the Youth of Manipur.
Supervisor: Dr. Vipin Gupta
Th 28946

Abstract

Substance use remains a major public-health concern in Northeast India, particularly in Manipur, where geographical proximity to the Golden Triangle, socioeconomic instability, and high community exposure contribute to elevated risk. This thesis examines the epidemiological burden of substance use among treatment-seeking males in rehabilitation centres across Imphal, focusing on five domains: exposure patterns, affordability–availability–accessibility (AAA), injury outcomes, mental-health correlates, and relapse or readmission. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 424 male participants, recruited from five rehabilitation centres. Data were collected using a structured NFHS-adapted questionnaire, the WHO-ASSIST, socioeconomic assessment, an injury classification module, and validated mental-health instruments (CTQ, PHQ-9, GAD-10). Supplementary case-interviews documented relapse trajectories. Descriptive and multivariable analyses examined associations between substance types, socioeconomic factors, mental-health symptoms, harm experiences, and treatment outcomes. Findings indicate that peer influence (≈90%) and early exposure are central drivers of substance initiation. Opioids, particularly heroin, remain the dominant primary substance, while alcohol and sedatives contribute significantly to acute episodes and behavioural harms. AAA

factors showed varied influence across substance categories, with affordability and access shaping patterns of regular use. Injury assessments revealed that substance involvement was associated with both intentional and unintentional harms, while mental-health screenings demonstrated substantial burdens of trauma, depression, and anxiety. Relapse analyses highlighted the role of social instability, limited support systems, and psychological distress in repeated treatment episodes. The study offers one of the first multi-dimensional datasets from Manipur's rehabilitation settings, illustrating how substance use is shaped by a combination of social ecology, border-driven supply chains, and structural vulnerabilities. These findings underscore the need for integrated screening, strengthened mental-health support, context-specific rehabilitation models, and improved continuity of care to reduce harm and enhance recovery outcomes.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Review of Literature 3. Methodology 4. Results 5. Discussion. References. Appendices and List of Publication.

05. SHARMA (Shivani)
Development of Hand Orthotic Device for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS).
Supervisor: Dr. Meenal Dhall
Th 29330

Abstract

Development of Hand Orthotic Device for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) Abstract: Background: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a common peripheral nerve disorder caused by compression of the median nerve within the carpal tunnel. Repetitive computer typing, prolonged wrist extension, ulnar deviation, and inappropriate wrist–hand posture may contribute to increased carpal tunnel pressure and aggravation of symptoms. Aim: To develop a wrist–hand orthotic device specifically designed to support functional wrist–hand alignment during computer typing and to address biomechanical factors associated with CTS. Objectives: 1) To develop a wrist–hand orthosis that reduces wrist hyperextension, maintains the palmar arch, and reduces MCP hyperextension during typing 2) To analyse electromyography activity of finger extensors and thumb abductors during typing with and without the DWHO 3) To analyse the effect of the DWHO on wrist and hand posture using flex and load sensors during typing in participants with CTS 4) To determine the association between somatometric measurements and the effect of the DWHO in CTS Methods: The orthosis was developed using an anthropometric and biomechanical approach. Hand and wrist dimensions, including hand length, hand breadth, wrist girth, and palmar arch characteristics, were considered during the design process. The device was fabricated using low-temperature thermoplastic material and incorporated a wrist support, palmar arch component, thumb loop, and cushioning elements. The developed orthosis was subsequently evaluated during computer typing using biomechanical assessment techniques, including flex sensors and surface electromyography (EMG). Results: The developed orthosis provided integrated support to the wrist and hand while allowing functional finger movements required for typing. Its design addressed multiple biomechanical factors simultaneously rather than focusing solely on wrist immobilization. The device demonstrated potential for maintaining appropriate wrist–hand posture and reducing undesirable movements during typing. The developed wrist-hand orthosis is better than the commercial wrist-hand orthosis. Conclusion: The developed wrist–hand orthotic device represents an ergonomically and biomechanically informed approach to CTS management. The device may provide improved functional support

during repetitive computer activities and has potential for preventive and rehabilitative applications in individuals at risk of or experiencing CTS.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Materials and methods 3. Results 4. Discussion 5. Summary and Conclusion 6. References. Annexures. List of publications, Conferences and Patents.

06. YADAV (Krishna Kant)
Urban Adivasis: An Ethnography of the Bhils of Vdaipur, Rajasthan.
Supervisors: Dr. Chakraverti Mahajan
Th 28948

Abstract

Adivasis, constitutionally recognised as Scheduled Tribes, constitute 8.6 per cent of India's population. Of the total 10.42 crore Adivasis, about 1.04 crore (9.98 per cent) now live in urban areas. What does it mean for communities historically represented as forest-dwelling and rural to inhabit the city How do Adivasis experience and negotiate urbanization, and in what ways do they articulate citizenship in spaces that have long imagined them as outsiders This thesis addresses these questions by locating the Adivasi question within the urban, focusing on the Bhils of Udaipur, Rajasthan. By examining land, labour, and livelihood and their intersections with legal regimes of urban planning and development, it uses the city as a vantage point to interrogate contemporary modalities of tribal citizenship and belonging in Southern Rajasthan. Structured across six chapters, the study explores Bhil Adivasis' relationship with the city. Chapter one traces the historical emergence and spatial distribution of Bhil settlements in Udaipur, linking colonial ethnography, land regimes, and postcolonial urban development to enduring marginalities. Chapter two examines the precarity of wage labour and the moral worlds shaped by informality, mobility and temporality of Adivasis in the city spaces. Chapter three moves beyond these spaces to explore the alternative ways of life and livelihoods across rural, peri-urban, and urban areas. Chapter four analyses the politics of land, documenting dispossession and the erosion of both individual and common land under urban expansion. Chapter five extends this by problematizing legal overlaps in urban governance in tribal areas and showing how planning regimes exclude marginal communities. Chapter six traces how Bhils negotiates challenges discussed earlier, seeking belonging and claiming the city. The study concludes that Adivasis are not passive recipients of urban change but active agents claiming citizenship and belonging as urban Adivasis.

Contents

1. Introduction: Rethinking the 'Adivasi Question' 2. Adivasis in the City: Tracing Past and Mapping Present 3. Moving for Work, Waiting for Wages: Lives at Labour Chowks and Beyond 4. From Forest to Factory: Tracing Lives across Shifting Landscapes 5. On Losing Grounds: Between State, Market, and Land Alienation 6. Seen and Unseen: Expansion of City through Law and its Absence 7. Claiming the City: Negotiating Culture, Politics and Belonging. Conclusion - Urban Adivasis: Towards a New Understanding. References.