CHAPTER 49

SOCIAL WORK

Doctoral Theses

01. ALOK KUMAR
Social Networking and its Impact on Students of Higher Educational Institutions.
Supervisors: Prof. Atul Pratap Singh
Th 29264

Abstract

This present study aims to develop a conceptual and empirically grounded understanding of the expanding role of social networking sites (SNSs) in the contemporary digital age, with particular focus on youth and higher education students in India. Social networking sites are widely used worldwide, with young individuals among the most active users. In the age of rapid technological advancement and digital platforms, internet-based communication has transformed patterns of interaction, learning, and engagement. A substantial proportion of global social media users falls within the 18-34 age group, underscoring the importance of examining its influence on youth. The study adopts an exploratory and descriptive-correlational mixed-methods design to investigate social media usage patterns among students in higher education institutions in the National Capital Region (NCR) of India, specifically within the 18-29 age group. By integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches, the research captures both measurable trends and behavioural insights. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire, complemented by Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Success Story Guide. The findings indicate that social media use among students is highly mobile-driven, habitual, and embedded in daily life. These platforms serve functions such as academic collaboration, information access, professional networking, and social interaction. At the same time, excessive usage is associated with adverse outcomes, including distraction, dependency, cognitive overload, and psychological strain, affecting academic performance and well-being. The study highlights a paradox: while social media enables connectivity, inclusivity, and learning, it also contributes to overuse and emotional vulnerability. Overall, social networking sites emerge as a transformative yet complex force in higher education, emphasising the need for balanced and responsible engagement to support holistic student development.

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1. Social Networking: An Introduction 2. Literature Review 3. Research Design and Methodology 4. Profile of Respondents 5. Accessibility and Exposure of Social Media Among the Students 6. Addiction, Academic Performance and Social Media Among the Students 7. Success Story, Major Findings and Policy Recommendations. References. Annexures.

02. ASHWINI KIRTI
Women and Sustainable Development Goals: A Study of Social Exclusion of Dalit Women in Bihar.
Supervisors: Prof. Atul Pratap Singh
Th 29265

Abstract

Gender-based exclusion is a significant aspect of social inequality, perpetuated by power relations that marginalise women`s resources, rights, and decision-making. This exclusion is exacerbated for Dalit women in India, where the intersection of gender, caste, and class leads to intensified structural marginalisation. This dissertation explores the complex and multifaceted aspects of social exclusion faced by Dalit women in Bihar, with a particular focus on the gender-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG 5 concerning gender equality. The study examines how caste, gender, class, and spatial location converge to shape the daily realities of marginalisation, deprivation, and restricted access to opportunities. The study employs a descriptive research design that integrates a mixed-methods approach, featuring a quantitative interview schedule along with qualitative insights from focus group discussions and case studies conducted across three districts of Bihar, each reflecting varied socio-geographical contexts. The findings indicate that Dalit women remain subjected to ongoing exclusion in various social, economic, political, and institutional spheres. The constraints imposed by restricted access to education, precarious livelihoods, limited involvement in decision-making processes, insufficient healthcare, and persistent gender-based discrimination profoundly diminish their overall well-being and autonomy. The research further emphasises how deeply rooted patriarchal norms and caste hierarchies perpetuate exclusion, consequently undermining the intended effects of gender-oriented development initiatives. By analysing empirical evidence within wider constitutional, legal, and policy contexts, the thesis assesses the extent to which existing interventions tackle structural inequalities. The research enhances scholarly dialogue by highlighting the perspectives and experiences of Dalit women while situating the implementation of the SDGs within local socio-cultural contexts. The study proposed a tailored social work intervention and a comprehensive action plan that aimed to strengthen inclusive policy design and address issues such as gender equality and exclusion.

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03. BOSE (Prasenjit)
Patriarchal Oppression amongst Socially Normative Men: A case study of Delhi.
Supervisors: Prof. Sangeeta Dhaor
Th 29371

Abstract

The question of understanding and mapping masculinity has become increasingly significant in gender studies. While many men have power and often get to do what they want, there are also a great number of men who feel quite powerless and have been damaged by harsh masculine socialization. Most males are encouraged from an early age to suppress certain emotions such as vulnerability, love, hope, gratitude,

hatred or pity. Emotional constriction may lead to a variety of psychological, physical, and social problems. The purpose of studying men from a gender aware perspective is not to further oppress women, but to address quality of life issues for men. Carl Jung believed that everybody came into the world with both masculine and feminine qualities. Men are the physical embodiment of the masculine, yet they all have the feminine archetype within them, known as the anima. And women are the physical embodiment of the feminine, yet they have the masculine archetype within them, called the animus. With these two forces at play within us, we all have the potential to be happy, balanced, and whole in our time on Earth. Criticizing masculinity doesn't mean pitting males against females. Masculinity is usually associated with competition, logic, rational thinking, boldness, action and strength and it is only a problem when it's operating in excess. Feminist scholars have long made the important and valid critique that nearly all knowledge production not explicitly labeled feminist has implicitly studied men. Nonetheless, feminist scholars and activists are increasingly recognizing the importance of explicitly investigating men as gendered beings. My research argues that gender-aware studies of men and masculinities are in fact necessary for an intersectional analysis of gender relations, and that a better understanding of masculinity is necessary to reduce men's perpetration of violence and increase support for gender justice.

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1. Introduction 2. Review of Literature 3. Research Methodology 4. Research Analysis and Findings 5. Discussion, Interpretation, and Implications for Social Work Practice and Policy 6. Conclusion and Recommendations. Bibliography. Annexures.

04. JENA (Ajit Kumar)
Study on Skill Development Training and IT's Effectiveness on the Rural Youth of Barak Valley, Assam.
Supervisors: Prof. Sanjoy Roy
Th 29372

Abstract

The Youth of our nation are the backbone of our Country, Globally India is the most Populated Country with 147 crores, Youth Population is approximately 65% in our country. The main issues of the Youth are unemployment, Poverty, education, lack of awareness, skills etc. Youth development through skilling is the main objective of our government. It aims to upskill 4.1 crore youths. The current study has focused on Skill development training, Upskilling of the youth towards sustainable livelihood generation opportunity. The study was carried in the North-East India, specially in the state of Assam in the Barak Valley. The main objective of the study is to identify the employment and livelihood opportunities for the youth who are unskilled. This is a descriptive study with a mixture of both Qualitative and Quantitative methods. The total sample size is 250 youths. Primary data were collected with the help of Interview Schedule, Interview Guide, Visiting Skill Training centres, FGDs, Home Visits etc. Probability sampling method was used. The findings indicate that the highest proportion of respondents were OBC youths with 33.6 % and the lowest were Scheduled Tribe youths with 13.6%. At least 45.6 % Youth are from poor family. 63.2 % youths are high school passed and 2.4% were graduated. 64.4% were from Hindu community and 29.2% were from Muslim Community. Lack of job opportunities, social barriers, gender discrimination were found to be the major problems and migration constraints were always found in the study. 65% of them were happy and satisfied with the quality of the training. Majority of them 64% are into Retail, automotive, hospitality, Textile industries. The Researchers has

developed a Model of Sustainable livelihood generation for the Youths which shall be helpful in making them more empowered. Key Words- Youth, Rural, Skill, Training, Sustainable, Livelihood

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1. Introducing Skill Development in India and the Rural Youth 2. Review of Literature 3. Research Methodology 4. Data Analysis and Interpretation 5. Qualitative Data Analysis 6. Findings, Discussions, Social work intervention and Policy Implication. References. Appendices.

05. KAJAL
Acid Attack Survivors: A Study of Their Struggle and Challenges.
Supervisors: Prof. Pamela Singla
Th 29373

Abstract

Acid attacks against women represent one of the most severe manifestations of gender-based violence, targeting women's bodies, identities, and social existence. This study explores the lived experiences of acid attack survivors, focusing on their struggle for and challenges in various contexts. Using a qualitative research approach, the study draws on in-depth interviews of 18 acid attack survivors. The analysis employs postmodern feminist theory, routine activity theory and socio-ecological model lens, understand how social institutions family, community, healthcare, and justice systems collectively perpetuate or challenge survivors' marginalisation. Findings reveal that survivors experience multi-layered victimisation such as medical negligence and insensitive treatment exacerbate their trauma; community stigma and victim-blaming attitudes deepen their alienation; familial abandonment erodes emotional resilience; and systemic inefficiencies within legal mechanisms obstruct their pursuit of justice. Their narratives reveals that how social intersections transcends the act of the attack, manifesting in the form of social exclusion, economic deprivation, and psychological distress. Yet, amid these layers of adversity, the study also captures survivors' resilience and their efforts to reclaim agency and rebuild identity. Their narratives challenge dominant notions of victimhood, illustrating courage, hope, and the will to redefine selfhood beyond societal stigma. The study concludes that addressing acid attacks requires more than punitive legal measures, it demands a transformative approach that redefines justice through gender sensitivity, community awareness, and survivor-centred rehabilitation. The study recommends comprehensive legal, medical, community, and rehabilitation reforms. Through the exploration of the lived experiences of acid attack survivors, this study tried to contribute to the border discourse on gender-based violence, violence against women, human rights, social justice, and social change. The findings of this study will help in framing more inclusive research, policy, and programs for the empowerment and rehabilitation of acid attack survivors, and contribute to designing more solution-oriented interventions.

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1. Introduction 2. Conceptual and Theoretical Perspective of Acid Attacks 3. Review of Literature 4. Research Methodology 5. Data Analysis and Discussion 6. Conclusion and Recommendations. References. Annexures.

06. MENON (Gayatri)
Child Marriages and the Todas - An Ethnographic Study.
Supervisors: Prof. Archana Kaushik
Th 29267

Abstract

The study is centered around the Toda tribes, a particularly vulnerable tribal group in the Nilgiris Hills of Tamil Nadu. Though there are several colonial ethnographies that talk about the rituals followed by Toda communities, particularly about marriage, there is not concrete documentation about their lives after marriage. This study examines the Toda rituals from a critical ethnographic lens trying to understand their daily lives and the influence of these systems in it. This study broadly takes a narrative approach to allow cultural and community meaning to cumulate organically. Drawing on the one and half years of field engagement, participant observation, life histories, in-depth interviews, and Focused group discussion the study centers Toda voices, particularly those of women, to understand lived experiences of marriage, childhood, and transition. The sample of the study were those women and men who were engaged in child marriages. The study brought out that a Toda girl shall marry at puberty, which ideally engages them in child marriage. They provide more emphasis on fertility than on age. There is a socially sanctioned cycle of marriage, which includes engagement, marriage, cohabitation and bow and arrow ceremony (the lineage identification ceremony). The research locates child marriage not merely as an isolated practice but as embedded within interlinked domains of land, buffalo pastoralism, sacred institutions and kinship that leads to the preservation of the tribe. It further examines the impacts of child marriage on education, health, aspirations, livelihood, gender roles, and family dynamics. Through a critical lens, the study looks at how external narratives of protection intersect with indigenous values, producing transformations. By documenting definitions of childhood and marriage from the Toda viewpoint, the study tries to bring a parallel explanation to the universalized understandings of various practices that ultimately contributes to culturally grounded knowledge in social work and human rights discourse. The study ultimately argues for context-sensitive approaches to cases of child marriage that respect indigenous worldviews while safeguarding human rights.

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07. SHAMIM (Shaista)
Study on Quality Education for Girls in Saran District Bihar: Issues, Gaps, and Progress.
Supervisor: Dr. Veda Yumnam
Th 29268

Abstract

Despite years of independence, and initiation of RTE ,2009 Bihar and its districts continues to dealing with. In spite of policy interventions, gender disparity in literacy persists. As per the 2011 Census, women in Bihar were 20 percentage points less literate (51.5%) than men (71.5%). Secondary education remains largely inaccessible only 2% of schools in Bihar offer education at the secondary level, compared to 12.5% in Kerala and the national figure of 9.8% Thus, the current study has four specific objectives. First, it has critically analysed the existing schemes for girls` school education at the national and state levels. Second, it has studied the state of quality education and the existing problems. Third, it has examined the various factors that

contribute to quality education for girls, the barriers and facilitators. The research study has covered the secondary school education concerning infrastructure, the socio-economic background of the child especially girls, parental involvement in education, availability of instructional materials, both teaching and non-teaching staff, dynamics within schools and classrooms, teacher performance, the attitude of teachers towards enhancing learning skills, and community engagement. Within the social work lens it has also understood the school social work intervention.

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08. SNIGDHAA
Community Well-Being: Indigenous Perspectives from Himachal Pradesh.
Supervisor: Prof. A. Malathi
Th 29269

Abstract

As understandings of development have evolved, there has been a shift away from economic indicators towards more holistic approaches that centre the lived experiences and collective realities of communities, bringing community well-being to the forefront of inquiry. This study is situated in Himachal Pradesh, a mountainous state in northern India, and focuses on semi-rural communities in Kangra district, particularly with Gaddi (traditionally pastoralist) and Pahari (primarily agrarian) communities. Grounded in a decolonising methodological framework (Smith, 2012), the research adopts a participatory ethnographic approach, involving long-term engagement and co-creation of knowledge throughout the research process. Methods included community understanding circles, participant observation, informal conversations, and life histories. It also involved focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and community dialogue supported through arts-based techniques that enabled deeper reflection, particularly on sensitive issues. The study is guided by five objectives: to elicit community meanings of well-being; to develop a culturally grounded understanding; to identify key influences shaping well-being; and to suggest community-driven social work and macro-level policy interventions. Findings highlight that community well-being in this mountain context is deeply embedded in ecological settings, livelihoods such as agriculture and pastoralism, diverse income sources including state employment and migration, and public infrastructure such as health, education, and transport. Cultural practices, including dham (collective feasts), naati (folk dance), and dhaja (folk theatre), traditional practices such as weaving, knitting, and food processing, and local language expressions, serve as key sites through which meanings of well-being are articulated. A central insight is that well-being is fundamentally relational, emerging through interconnected relationships between self, family, community, nature, and spiritual systems. While these relations foster resilience, joy, and meaning, they are also shaped by structural and natural challenges, including climate change, livelihood precarity, migration, and caste- and gender-based inequalities. The research identifies community-driven pathways for change and argues for contextually grounded, participatory, and culturally responsive approaches to social work practice and policy in Indigenous Mountain contexts.
Keywords: Community well-being; Indigenous methodology; Ethnography; Participatory research; Relational well-being

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09. SONAL SHUBHAM

Being a Transgender: Understanding the Process of Identity Formation and the Struggle for Social Acceptance.

Supervisors: Prof. Beena Antony Reji

Th 29270

Abstract

This study examines the multifaceted process of transgender identity formation within India's socio-cultural, institutional, and digital contexts. Drawing from psychological, sociological, and intersectional frameworks, it analyses how gender and sexual identities are shaped through an interplay of personal experiences, societal expectations, and structural inequalities. The research situates identity as a dynamic, performative, and evolving construct influenced by multiple social institutions, family, education, religion, law, healthcare, and media, that both shape and restrict self-expression. The study integrates key theoretical perspectives, including Erikson's psychosocial theory, Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory, and Devor's model of transgender identity development, to understand how transgender individuals navigate self-affirmation amid stigma, discrimination, and systemic exclusion. Special focus is placed on the Hijra toli system, exploring its historical roots, ritual significance, and changing socio-economic structures within modern India. The research also investigates the role of digital spaces in providing transgender individuals opportunities for self-expression, community building, and activism, while simultaneously exposing them to new forms of surveillance and online transphobia. Using qualitative methodologies and thematic content analysis of narratives from both rural and urban participants, the study highlights how intersections of caste, class, geography, and gender shape distinct identity trajectories. Findings reveal that identity formation among transgender individuals is a continuous process of negotiation between self-recognition and societal validation. The research underscores the urgent need for intersectional policy frameworks, inclusive educational reforms, and gender-sensitive social work practices that affirm diverse identities and dismantle stigma. By amplifying lived experiences and locating identity within the broader struggle for justice and human dignity, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of gender fluidity, social inclusion, and the evolving discourse on transgender rights in contemporary India.

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Reflections: Mapping Identity Formation and Social Navigation in Transgender Communities 11. Way Forward towards Inclusion, Equity and Belongingness: Policy and Practice Recommendations for Transgender Empowerment. References. Annexures.

10. TYAGI (Ragini)
Study of Techno-Socialization and Dynamics of Parent-Child Relation in an Urban Setting.
Supervisors: Prof. Archana Kaushik
Th 29271

Abstract

The rapid increase of digital technologies has significantly transformed the processes of socialization within families, reshaping parent-child relationships, parenting practices, and everyday interactions. Adolescents today grow up in digitally mediated environments where learning, communication, identity formation, and emotional expression are increasingly influenced by technology. The present study examines techno-socialization and its impact on parent-child relationship dynamics in an urban context, with particular emphasis on teenager`s and parental perceptions, parenting styles, and emerging patterns of digital parenting. Adopting an exploratory mixed-methods research design, the study was conducted among 462 respondents, comprising 155 parents and 307 adolescents, selected from the urban setting. Quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires. Qualitative data were generated through in-depth interviews of 20 teenagers and 10 parents of teenagers. The findings reveal that technology plays a dual role in parent-child relationships, functioning both as a facilitator of connection and a source of relational strain. Adolescents reported increased access to information, connectivity, and autonomy, alongside concerns related to distraction, parental control, emotional withdrawal, and techno-dependence. From the parent's perspective, technology-enhanced communication, safety monitoring, and learning opportunities, but also contributed to reduced quality family time, behavioural changes among children, emotional distancing, and parental stress. The study found authoritative parenting to be the most prevalent traditional style, followed by authoritarian parenting. Correspondingly, integrative digital parenting emerged as the dominant digital parenting pattern, reflecting warmth, dialogue, and co-learning, while restrictive digital parenting highlighted control-oriented mediation driven by safety concerns. Additionally, emergent dimensions such as sharenting, technoference, i-family dynamics, media consumption patterns, and children's digital socialization were identified as critical factors reshaping contemporary family life. The study proposes a social work intervention model aimed at promoting balanced digital engagement, strengthening parent-child communication, enhancing digital literacy, and reducing techno-conflict at family, school, and community levels.

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11. UPADHYAY (Shivi)
Women's Political Representation in Uttar Pradesh: A Feminist Analysis of Voice, Identity & Inclusivity.
Supervisors: Prof. Manoj Kumar Jha
Th 29272

Abstract

This thesis is going critically to analyze the issue of gender representation in Uttar Pradesh political representation through the feminist lens with a particular focus on the interrelated nature of voice, identity, and inclusivity. Women in Uttar Pradesh continue to be seriously underrepresented in political institutions, especially in higher-order legislative bodies, despite constitutional guarantees of equality and positive actions like the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments. The study acknowledges that the matter of numerical inclusion involving quotas is not followed by substantive empowerment, as patriarchal norms, caste order, socio-economic disparities, and institutional biases still limit the agency of women and their opportunities to make decisions. Based on feminist theoretical concepts intersectionality, feminist institutionalism, and standpoint theory the study takes a mixed-method approach which incorporates both quantitative survey analysis and qualitative interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies of women political actors on local, state, and national levels. The results indicate that the political participation of women is heavily influenced by the interplay of identities like caste, class, and religion, which creates marginalisation in layers, especially to Dalit and Muslim women. Although, there has been an increase in electoral participation of women, their political voice is mostly limited or confined or co-opted into the male dominated party system and social-cultural norms. The study also underscores the contradiction existing between descriptive and substantive representation wherein having women in political space does not necessarily translate into influence on policy or governance outcomes. Structural exclusion is supported by such phenomena as proxy representation, inability to access resources, and violence based on gender. Simultaneously, the research also reveals the forms of resistance and agency as women negotiate around these phobias through grassroots mobilisation, community networks, and every day practices of politics. Locating Uttar Pradesh within the wider Global South feminist discourses, the research paper contributes to conceptualizing political representation in terms of numbers, yet with more analytical thrust on voice as well as recognition and inclusive participation. It proposes systemic changes such as gender sensitive political training, intersectional policy models and institutional restructuring to build truly inclusive politics. In the end the research highlights the fact that successful democratic change not only involves an increase in the representation of women but also allows women and their genuine voice and identity to influence political processes and outcomes.

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