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## EDITORIAL

Amidst all the disorders of power game, trade war, war resulting of the obsessed people favouring corruption, inflation, unemployment, poverty, mental health problems, fake news etc. the potential human stands upright and moves stealthily with the idea of survival and sustainability. The current issue with the papers related to view of harmony, pandemic and teaching process, empathetic attitude and academic performance, attitude and inclusive education, government vs. private secondary schools, family attitudes towards multilingualism and beyond reliefrepresents the society with potential researchers as the strong backbone.

To add to the society Gan conducts a cross-cultural comparative study on the “view of harmony” in Bengal Baul songs and Chinese ethnic minority songs; Mahida studies the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on teaching process; Oinam conceptualises the framework towards teacher’s empathetic attitude on students’ academic performance; Milarani reviews the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education; Florence compares government vs. private secondary schools with respect to the infrastructure, resources, and technology; Sharma evaluates family attitudes towards multilingualism in bilingual education classroom whereas Singh and Tanwar discuss the women’s cash transfers as capability infrastructure.

With a hope of best for the mankind, I am sure this issue will enlighten the potential researchers and the society as well it will help us all think about the sustainability of the humanity.

Regards,

Avdhesh Jha  
Chief Editor,  
Voice of Research

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# A STUDY ON THE “VIEW OF HARMONY” IN BENGAL BAUL SONGS AND CHINESE ETHNIC MINORITY SONGS FROM A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE\*

Gan Luting\*\*

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## Abstract

*In the context of global multicultural development, music, as an important cultural carrier, possesses connectivity, coordination, and inheritance. Throughout history, folk songs from different countries have reflected the social life, cultural spirit, customs, and psychology of their time, forming a natural and rational harmony. Bengal Baul folk songs, as a model of “Harmonious Coexistence” in India, Bangladesh, and even South Asia, integrate different religious groups, emphasize spiritual cultivation, and have created a rich collection of Baul ballads. For hundreds of years, generations of Baul minstrels have told the historical stories of this region, showcasing their unique view of harmony. China and India are both ancient civilizations and friendly neighbors. China has 56 ethnic groups, among which the folk songs of ethnic minorities present a diverse ecological narrative. The view of harmony has been consistently present in China’s millennia-old cosmology and traditional cultural concepts. Therefore, by studying the song narratives of Baul singers in different periods, focusing on analyzing their cultural connotations, and using a cross-cultural perspective and oral literature viewpoint, this study compares and analyzes some typical songs from Chinese ethnic minority folk songs. Although there are certain differences, the core of both emphasizes the universal human’s “View of Harmony”.*

**Keywords:** Bengal Baul Songs, Chinese Ethnic Minority Songs, View of Harmony, Cross-Cultural Comparative Perspective, Oral Literature

The Bauls are a group of mysterious folk singers from the Bengal region<sup>1</sup>, whose songs are known as Baul Gan (Baul Song). Baul songs are oral ballads, simple and natural. During Bauls’s performances, they hold an Ektara (A Single-Stringed Instrument), a small drum at their waist, and bells on their feet, singing and dancing simultaneously. The performer sings solo or in a group of several people. They sing related themes about life philosophies, religious beliefs, social difficulties, independence and freedom, and true love, etc., in the rural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bengal region primarily refers to the areas influenced by Bengali culture and where the Bengali language is spoken, mainly including the present-day Indian state of West Bengal and Bangladesh. Historically, Assam, Bihar, Tripura, and Odisha in India have also been influenced by Bengali culture, and thus, Baul lived and performed in these areas as well.

The Bauls are also a unique religious sect, which historically was influenced by three religious praxis—Sahajiya (Bajrayana Buddhism), Bhakti (Hindu Vaishnavism, oftentimes embodied in the Tantric tradition), and Sufi mysticism (Islamic Marifat), and perform their spiritual tradition through songs as they travel around. In contemporary South Asia, there are conflicts and contradictions among multiple ethnic groups and religions. But the Bauls, adhering to a spirit of universal love and equality, live in peace and use songs to tell the story of Bengal's history. Therefore, the Baul songs are widely popular in India, Bangladesh and throughout South Asia, renowned for its unique philosophical system and captivating chanting style within the South Asian oral tradition. In 2005, UNESCO acknowledged this rich tradition as part of humanity's shared intangible cultural heritage, highlighting its importance for cultural diversity.

Many scholars have researched Baul and Baul songs. Charles Capwell says in his book that "When the word 'Baul' first came to be used to designate the sect and its members is unknown. It has been suggested that, etymologically, the word derives from Sanskrit 'Vatula'(Windy, mad), and in medieval Bengali literature of the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, the term apparently meant 'mad' and did not refer to a religious sect. Today, Baul is used exclusively with reference to the religious sect, and although it still carries a connotation of 'mad', it no longer means simply that." Disha Mondal also mentioned in her book that "In the 18th to 19th centuries, Fakir Lalon Shah was a symbol of Baul tradition. His philosophy is the philosophy of searching for the 'Moner Manush' that has no caste, no religion, no gender bias, after all, on the realization of which presence men can attain the eternal bliss." Shamsad Begum Chowdhury says in her article that "Some of the Baul songs are indeed full of mysticism; generally, in this type of song, the Baul singers symbolize the souls as various birds. Individuality has been created in the language and lyrics of baul songs according to and on the basis of regional, environmental, and spiritual aims." Uttaran Dutta says "Bauls are a cultural group from the rural Bangla region that has been marginalized by socio-economic, political, and religious factors. They identify themselves outside of any organized religion or established caste system in India, and therefore are constituted at the margins of the contemporary global South. They sing praises of the beauty of nature, criticize inequalities, social discrimination, and injustice, and attempt to convey a humanistic spirit through their songs." In addition, one Chinese scholar, Yang Weiming, has also introduced Baul song types, philosophical ideas, and important representative Bauls in her article.

Baul song is not only a unique form of intangible cultural heritage music within the Bengali folk tradition, but it can also be classified as folk oral literature. Oral literature, also known as folk literature or oral and intangible cultural heritage, is a form of literature passed down orally. Its main genres include stories, folk songs, folk dramas, and proverbs. Oral literature emphasizes factors such as space, time, and ritual, and is characterized by its national character, oral nature, performativeness, collectivity, fluidity, and transmissibility. These characteristics

determine the internal structure and narrative form of the literary genre, promote the effective dissemination of historical and cultural memory, and shape a unique literary style. In oral traditions, some elements can be expressed not only through language but also through gestures and dance, allowing for interaction and communication with the audience and the transmission of cultural information. Therefore, oral traditions and literature are not only a form of narrative but also a form of performance ( Mbube Nwi-Akeeri, 2017). Indian history is a mythological history, with the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, passed down orally among the local people. Oral narrative has been the core of South Asian literature in the early days and even now (Aashi Bains, 2022). The South Asian region is rich in ethnicities, religions, and languages, renowned for its unique geography, complex history, and diverse cultures. Oral literature is the earliest source of South Asian literature and a cradle of South Asian culture. Traditional oral literature holds an important place in South Asia, especially in India (Ramanujan A. K, 1997).

According to the research views of some Chinese scholars, the Indian Enlightenment first arose in the Bengal region, and Bengali literature was the first to reflect nationalist ideas and promote the development of new literature throughout India (Jiang Jingkui, 2014). Bengali literature is rooted in the Bengali language, culture, religion, history, and art. Bangla region not only boasts numerous folk myths but also a wide variety of traditional folk songs. The lyrics primarily revolve around themes of tradition, spirituality, mysticism, faith, and love. One of the most common folk songs is the “Baul”, an oral tradition sung by local singers, often containing philosophical reflections and praises to the gods (He Chaorong, 2015). The Bengali people are known for their singing and dancing, and their rich folk song tradition serves various social functions. Folk music is used to celebrate daily work, harvest seasons, weddings, and births. The folk song “Baul” is particularly rich in local flavor, and its fame is largely attributed to Tagore's promotion, extending its influence far beyond the South Asian subcontinent (Liu Jian, 2010).

The cultural relationship between China and India has a long history. The Chinese and Indian people are warm and passionate, with a rich musical tradition. Songs are an important part of the lives of people, and folk songs are inextricably linked to religion, literature, society, and daily life. China has 56 ethnic groups, including one Han nationality and 55 minority nationalities. Chinese minority folk songs are characterized by their oral transmission, fluidity, and inheritance. They employ folk musical melodies, draw on the linguistic features of folk songs, and utilize traditional singing methods, possessing a distinct and rich ethnic flavor that is widely loved. (Wang Yan, 2023). Influenced by Confucian culture, from the ancient Chinese character for “He” (Harmony) to its modern usage, the concept of harmony exists not only in music but has also been a part of traditional Chinese cultural values for thousands of years (Zhou Fengping, 2012). The Bengali Baul songs, as a unique form of oral literature, this article will take it compared with

Chinese ethnic group folk songs through a cross-cultural comparative perspective. Exploring the “Harmonious Concept” presented in the folk songs of both countries not only helps us understand the social landscape and humanistic spirit under the historical and social changes in both countries, but also helps to strengthen the emotional connection. Through language and literature research and cultural bridging, it is hoped that more people can understand the rich diversity of the two countries’ cultures.

### **Methodology**

The study is based on the collection of data and analysis of relevant literature texts from several research studies. While many scholars have generally focused on the Baul tradition through the lenses of sociology, religious studies, philosophy, ethnomusicology, and art studies, few have investigated the Bengali social landscape, ethnic characteristics, and cultural concepts embodied within the song texts from the perspectives of literature, anthropology, history, social psychology, or linguistics. Secondly, many research works have primarily focused on this subject as a form of minstrel balladry, while overlooking its role in perpetuating collective and social memory, as well as its function in the transmission of social civilization. Furthermore, relatively few scholars have explored the Bengali oral tradition from a literary perspective. Finally, few scholars have compared Bengali Baul songs with the folk songs of Chinese ethnic minorities, nor have they analyzed the deep-seated cultural connotations of the “Harmonious Concept” embedded within this literature; and there is a lack of comprehensive study regarding how to approach a cross-cultural comparative perspective to the study of Baul oral literature. In this context, conducting a comparative and analytical study of the Bangal Baul oral tradition alongside the folk songs of Chinese ethnic minorities—viewed through the lenses of cross-cultural comparison and literary studies—holds academic value.

### **Discussion**

#### THE “VIEW OF HARMONY” OF THE BAUL SONGS

The Baul is an eclectic group with multiple religious influences. But the songs of Baul transcend religious boundaries and evoke open interpretations of the “Supreme”. Throughout different periods in the Bengal region, there have been various Baul singers, whose music reflects their humanistic thoughts and social landscape. It can be seen from some songs that they renounce religious practices and criticize the superficiality of religious divisions. The lyrics from a Baul song say, “Fakiri koribi khyapa kon raag-e/ Ache Hindu-Musalman dui bhaghe”—which means, how can one preach peace in a country that is divided based on two major religious groups—Hindu and Muslim. Also, “Je ja bhabo sei rupe se hoy, Ram-Rahim-Karim-Kala ek atma jogotmoy,” which again reinforces that Ram, Rahim, Karim, and Kala are the names of the same supreme power.

The renowned Baul singer Lalon Shah composed over a thousand songs, of which approximately seven or eight hundred survive today. He is a unique singer who

renounced religious practices and criticized the superficiality of religious divisions. He sings:

Everyone asks: "Lalon, what's your religion in this world?"

Lalon answers: "How does religion look?"

I've never laid eyes on it.

Some wear malas [Hindu rosaries] around their necks,

Some tasbis [Muslim rosaries], and so people say  
they've got different religions.

But do you bear the sign of your religion  
when you come or when you go?

Lalon's song reflected the spirit of humanism, which rejects all distinctions of caste, class, and creed, and should not use religion as a guise to divide people into different classes. He believes that music can help people better understand life. The world will be better if we respect and love each other. At the same time, this song also reflects Lalon's pursuit of a "Harmonious Concept." Throughout the long history of the Indian subcontinent, the encounter between Hinduism and Islam has always been intertwined with conflict and dialogue, exclusion and absorption. The true path to harmonious coexistence lies not in eliminating differences, but in transcending them. When both sides realize that "Supreme" transcends all names and forms, each other's temples and mosques cease to be a threat. Harmony does not stem from compromise or submission on one side, but from confidence in their own traditions and genuine openness to others. Whether Hinduism or Islam, both are human beings. Harmony is not merely an ideal, but a living reality, when both sides regard each other as brothers and sisters sharing the same land and breathing the same air. The most profound theme in Lalon's songs is his reaction against religion, class, and the caste system. His age-old songs are still relevant in contemporary society.

The spirit of Lalon has not only had a profound influence on Bengali literature and culture, but also on Rabindranath Tagore's literary works. Inspired by the melody of the song "Where to Find Him (Ami Kothay Pabo Tare)" by the Baul singer Gagan Harkara. Tagore composed "My Golden Bengal (Amar Sonar Bangla)" in 1905. This is a patriotic song:

My Bengal of gold, I love you

Forever your skies, your air set my heart in tune  
as if it were a flute,

In Spring, Oh mother mine, the fragrance from  
your mango-groves makes me wild with joy-

Ah, what a thrill!

In Autumn, Oh mother mine,

in the full-blossomed paddy fields,

I have seen spread all over - sweet smiles!

Ah, what a beauty, what shades, what an affection  
and what a tenderness!

What a quilt have you spread at the feet of  
banyan trees and along the banks of rivers!  
Oh mother mine, words from your lips are like  
Nectar to my ears!  
Ah, what a thrill!  
If sadness, Oh mother mine, casts a gloom on your face,  
my eyes are filled with tears!

This song is a tribute to the mother of Bengal. This song, along with another song, were both composed by Tagore during the British colonial period in India, against the 1905 partition of Bengal. Another song's name is "Soil of Bengal, Water of Bengal (Banglar Mati Banglar Jol)", the lyric is:

Soil of Bengal, water of Bengal,  
Air of Bengal, fruits of Bengal.  
Let them be sacred, O Lord.  
Homes of Bengal, markets of Bengal,  
Forests of Bengal, fields of Bengal.  
Let them be brimming, O Lord.  
Bengali feats, Bengali hopes,  
Bengali goals, Bengali tongues.  
Let them be true, O Lord.  
Bengali lives, Bengali minds,  
In Bengali home as kins.  
Let them be one, O Lord.

In these two songs, Tagore expressed his deep gratitude and profound love for his beloved "Bengal Mother". "Sky, Mango Groves, Paddy Fields, Banyan Trees, Riverbanks, Soil, Water, Air, Fruits, Markets, and Forests, etc," symbolize the mother's body, highlighting this holistic beauty and reminding us to cherish and protect her (Bengal Mother). The creation of these two songs embodies the spirit of Bengal unity, encouraging the people to unite against British colonialism. At the same time, they also reflect Tagore's yearning for love and harmony in the nation. In the crisis of religious antagonism and ethnic division triggered by the 1905 partition of Bengal, Tagore's concept of harmony reflected his cultural and political stance. He strongly opposed narrow nationalism that drew boundaries based on religion or region, advocating a harmonious concept of diversity within unity. He emphasized that India's true vitality lay in the long-standing symbiotic tradition between Hindus and Muslims in terms of language, customs, and local sentiment. In his works, harmony was not a forced uniformity, but rather mutual assistance and tolerance among those who differed—an idea that directly addressed the violence of the logic of division, attempting to rebuild a spirit of community based on emotional connection rather than identity labels in the then-damaged colonial society. It is worth mentioning that, "My Golden Bengal" was adopted as the national anthem by Bangladesh in 1971. And the song "Banglar Mati Banglar Jol" was made the official state song of West Bengal in 2023.

In addition, contemporary Baul singers also told the story about the turbulent period of the country and their inner hopes. Khabir Dewan composed a song about the history of language movements and expressed his views. He sings:

O heroes and martyrs  
Take my salute  
We didn't forget you, never we will.  
O the people, who laid down their lives  
For our mother tongue  
They remained immortal forever.

Though we know that we have long way to go, long way to go.

He used his song to commemorate the martyrs who died in the 1952 language movement, to praise the spirit of the Bengalis in their fight for independence and freedom against oppression, and to awaken people with his voice, calling on everyone to raise awareness of language rights and defend cultural sovereignty. He hoped that people would learn from this history in the future, use rational appeals to seek justice, and promote social harmony and national peace.

From Lalou, Tagore to Khabir Dewan, from the pre-colonial period, colonial period to the modern era, different Baul singers have told stories of different times, covering diverse themes such as love, family, society, economics, politics, and culture. However, their pursuit of the “Harmony Concept” remains constant. Through their musical social landscape, we can see that the “Harmony Concept” is not a simple erasure of differences, but rather a search for balance amidst tension and unity within diversity. True harmony is not static, but a dynamic, emotional, and spiraling process of integration.

#### THE “VIEW OF HARMONY” OF THE CHINESE ETHNIC MINORITY SONGS

China and India are ancient civilizations having learned from and influenced each other throughout their long history, achieving harmony amidst diversity, resulting in a vibrant culture. The Bauls are a model of harmonious coexistence in the Bengal region, India, Bangladesh, and even South Asia. While China does not have a religious group like the Bauls, it boasts 56 ethnic groups with a rich and diverse musical culture, whose various songs also reflect the Chinese people's ideals and determination to pursue harmony. Despite differences in geography, ethnicity, and religion, the two countries' peoples share a common pursuit of harmony.

Throughout history, China's various ethnic groups have created numerous outstanding and splendid ethnic cultures. Folk songs are one such culture, a collective creation formed through long-term and widespread oral transmission by the people of each ethnic group. For centuries, they have accompanied people's lives, reflecting their thoughts, feelings, character, psychological qualities, and aesthetic tastes.

The Dong ethnic group is mainly distributed in Guizhou, Hunan, etc., provinces of China. Their traditional folk song, known as “Ga Lao” in the Dong language,

is a polyphonic, unaccompanied, natural harmonies-based singing style, typically requiring a group of three or more singers for collective chanting. Originating in the Spring-Autumn Warring States period, it has a history of over 2500 years. The Dong ethnic group's Big Songs have no written musical scores; their transmission relies entirely on oral instruction. Their content can be categorized into various types, including Drum Tower Big Song, Sound Big Song, Narrative Big Song, and Children's Big Song, and also includes male, female, and children's voices. In Dong society, there is a saying, "Food nourishes the body, song nourishes the soul," highlighting its importance as a carrier for inheriting historical culture and maintaining social harmony. In 2009, it was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

"The Song of the Cicada" is a representative work of the famous Dong ethnic group's big song. The local people sang in the Dong language, if written a few lines of the lyrics in Chinese Pinyin: "Fanfan Jiangka, Raoduo Meiga, Nengsai Xiaoting, Duoga Nenglang Sai Xiaoka Ma..... Ai ke ai, Jindang ai ke ai, Jindang ai, Anggai Ai Ke Ai." The lyrics contain many reduplicated words, and the transliterated parts make extensive use of filler words such as "lang" and "ai," vividly simulating natural sounds like cicada chirping, flowing water, and wind, perfectly blending human voices with the sounds of nature. This reflects the characteristics of Dong folk songs, which use sound to convey meaning and imitate nature, and convey the Dong people's yearning for life. Although our voices cannot be as melodious as the chirping of cicadas, we have love in our hearts, and we sing of our beautiful life.

The Dong people have long upheld the concept of "Harmony Between Human and Nature," believing that nature is the foundation of human survival. The song's delicate depiction of all things in nature is imbued with reverence and love for it, conveying an ecological view of adapting to, protecting, and living in harmony with nature. In Dong villages, this song has been passed down through generations, not only as an artistic treasure but also deeply rooting the concept of respecting nature and harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature in the national consciousness.

The happy scene of people living in peace and contentment is vividly depicted in many songs of ethnic minorities. The Mongolian folk song "Mu Ge" (Pastoral Song) is a prime example of this, and in June 2008, this song was approved for inclusion in the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage lists in China. This song belongs to the Mongolian long-tune folk song category, and its melody possesses the typical characteristics of long-tune songs: a free and relaxed rhythm, a long and expansive melody, and long, drawn-out phrases, carrying a rich grassland atmosphere. "Mu Ge" was adapted and written by An Bo. Mongolian singer Amu Guleng has performed this song many times, and its lyrics are beautiful:

Blue, blue sky with white clouds drifting by,  
Beneath the clouds, snow-white sheep herds run high.

The boundless grassland is our homeland dear,

The white clouds and blue sky are our tent and cheer.

With just a few words, the song paints a peaceful picture of lush grasslands, herds of cattle and sheep, and herdsmen working leisurely. Without ornate language, the song, through its melodious long-tune tune, sings of the Mongolian people's peaceful and prosperous life, conveying a harmonious atmosphere of coexistence between humanity and nature. This song is not only a celebration of the beautiful life on the grasslands, but also embodies the shared aspirations of all ethnic groups for national peace and prosperity, and the happiness of the people; it is a true reflection of social harmony and the well-being of the people.

The musical system of Xinjiang Uyghur folk songs is also very rich. In 1956, renowned Chinese composer Shi Fu adapted the Xinjiang folk song "Wahaha" into the song "Wo Men De Zu Guo Shi Hua Yuan" (Our Country is a Large Garden). The lyrics depict a vibrant and lively scene, reflecting the Uyghur people's praise for their new country through the imagery of gardens and flowers. The song's lyric is:

Our country is a large garden,  
The flowers in the garden are blooming so bright.  
With good weather, they burst into full bloom,  
So many colors, so gorgeous.  
The beautiful flowers never fade,  
Our country is spring forever.  
Our country is a large garden,  
The birds in the garden are singing so happily.  
This wonderful life makes us feel so good,  
Our bright future is even more brilliant.  
How could the birds not sing,  
In such a happy and peaceful year?  
Our country is a large garden,  
You can never see all the beautiful sights.  
The old look changes every day,  
Good news comes from everywhere.  
In this large garden,  
People of all ethnic groups smile with joy.  
Yes, everyone smiles with joy.

In the garden, the warm sunshine shines, the flowers are vibrant and dazzling, and everyone's face is filled with smiles. This is not only a gift from nature, but also a symbol of the prosperity of our country. The lyrics mention "Our motherland is a garden, and the flowers in the garden are blooming so bright," which is not only a description of the external scenery, but also an expression of the inner feelings of all ethnic groups. In this big family of our country, everyone can find their own place in the world, where they can shine with their most brilliant light. In this peaceful and prosperous era, 56 ethnic groups are closely united, feeling happy

and joyful in the embrace of the new country. It is this spirit of harmony that makes people's lives better.

Yunnan, a border province of China inhabited by multiple ethnic groups, embodies the concepts of religious harmony, inclusiveness of beliefs, and spiritual coexistence among its various ethnic groups in many of its folk songs. "Ashima" is a folk song adapted from a long oral narrative poem of the Yi ethnic group's Sani people in Yunnan, with lyrics written by Fan Yu in 1953. In 2006, the long poem "Ashima" was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage representative projects. The song "Ashima" is based on ethnic music, with bold and innovative arrangements, diverse performance styles and melodies, and rich artistic techniques. The singing incorporates folk singing techniques, such as the syllable variations of the ethnic language and elements of local performance. This work has a long history of being sung in the lives of the Sani people and is widely performed in weddings, funerals, festivals, and other occasions.

One excerpt of the folk song "Ashima" embodies the fusion of nature worship and polytheistic beliefs in the Yi people's primitive religion. The lyrics use imagery of mountains, streams, and the sun and moon to express reverence for nature spirits and convey the concept of harmonious coexistence among different faith groups. The song does not emphasize religious division but rather advocates a benevolent and inclusive attitude through its simple melody, showcasing the harmonious state of mutual respect in faith and cultural integration between the Yi people and neighboring ethnic groups. It is a vivid manifestation of religious harmony and cultural symbiosis in the Yunnan border region.

The classic folk songs of different ethnic groups demonstrate that the ecological wisdom of harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature is the most distinctive harmonious connotation in these songs. Throughout history, China's 56 ethnic groups have formed an inclusive and symbiotic cultural ecosystem within a diverse cultural landscape, and their various folk songs all embody the harmonious concepts of religious harmony, ethnic unity, peaceful and prosperous lives, and the coexistence of humanity and nature.

### **Conclusion**

Research has found that this cross-cultural comparison not only reveals the different aesthetic paradigms of the two cultures but also provides an interactive perspective for understanding ethnomusicology and oral literature. Although Bengal Baul folk songs and Chinese ethnic minority folk songs are rooted in different cultural soils, comparative studies reveal both formal differences and profound spiritual resonance. The Baul tradition, centered on bodily practice and spiritual cultivation, expresses rebellion against divine love and social hierarchy, and a philosophical reflection on the unity of the universe through simple singing and symbolic lyrics. Its musical structure is free, possessing a strong sense of improvisation and personal mysticism, emphasizing individual spiritual liberation and a marginalized stance against the system. In contrast, Chinese ethnic minority

folk songs (such as those of the Dong, Mongolian, Uyghur, and Yi peoples) emphasize collective ethnic memory, nature worship, and emotional projections of labor and life. They often employ polyphony and melisma to construct rich ecological and communal narratives, carrying symbolic systems of ethnic identity, customs, and regional ecology.

Whether it's the Baul folk songs of the Bengal Region or the songs of China's ethnic minorities, both are rooted in oral tradition, with music inextricably linked to rituals and beliefs. Through beautiful music, they integrate harmonious views of religious inclusiveness, national unity, people's well-being, and coexistence with nature, embodying the essence of various national cultures and serving as an important component of excellent traditional culture. These songs, transcending time and space, not only record the wisdom and spiritual pursuits of different countries and ethnic groups but also continue to convey the "View of Harmony" in the contemporary world—a humanistic value that is needed globally.

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## A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC: AN IMPACT ON TEACHING PROCESS

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### Abstract

*The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges and transformations in every sphere of human life, particularly in the field of education. The sudden closure of educational institutions compelled teachers and students to shift from traditional classroom teaching to digital learning platforms. This study aims to examine the comprehensive impact of the pandemic on the teaching process, focusing on pedagogical changes, technological adaptation, teachers' preparedness, and the overall effectiveness of online education. Through qualitative and quantitative analysis, the research explores how teachers managed instructional delivery, assessment methods, and student engagement during the lockdown period. It also highlights the psychological and professional challenges faced by educators, as well as the innovative practices that emerged during this global crisis. The findings suggest that while the pandemic disrupted conventional teaching methods, it also accelerated digital literacy and introduced new opportunities for blended learning. This study ultimately provides insights into rethinking teaching practices in the post-pandemic era.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19 pandemic; teaching process; online learning; remote teaching; digital pedagogy; educational technology; instructional challenges; student engagement.

The COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 caused unprecedented disruption in education, forcing schools and colleges to shift abruptly from traditional classrooms to online learning (UNESCO, 2020). Both urban and rural higher secondary school teachers had to quickly adapt to digital tools like Google Classroom, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams. Urban teachers generally had better access to technology and support, while rural teachers faced challenges such as limited devices, poor internet connectivity, and lack of training (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). Students in both areas experienced difficulties with concentration, participation, and motivation during online classes (Basu, 2021). This shift reshaped teaching methods, assessment strategies, and teacher–student interactions significantly (Dhawan, 2020). The experiences of urban and rural teachers highlight both the opportunities and challenges of online education. This study aims to examine these impacts, exploring the adaptations, challenges, and innovations in teaching during the pandemic to inform strategies for the post-COVID education era.

### Review of Literature

The COVID-19 pandemic has attracted wide academic attention due to its massive effect on global education systems. Several researchers across the world have examined its impact on teaching, learning, and educational management. The literature reveals a common theme — a rapid transition from traditional classroom instruction to digital platforms, leading to both opportunities and challenges for educators.

Dhawan (2020) emphasized that online learning emerged as a vital solution during the pandemic, serving as a “panacea in times of crisis.” She pointed out that although digital learning ensured continuity, it also highlighted issues of accessibility, technological infrastructure, and training among teachers and students. Similarly, Bao (2020) studied online education at Peking University and concluded that well-designed online pedagogy could enhance student learning, but required proper planning and technical support.

Mishra, Gupta, and Shree (2020) explored how higher education institutions managed the sudden shift to virtual platforms. They found that teachers initially faced significant difficulties in adapting to new tools but gradually developed innovative methods for online instruction. Their study highlighted the importance of digital literacy as an essential skill for teachers in the 21st century.

Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021) provided a comprehensive review of the global impact of the pandemic on education. They observed that while online learning offered flexibility, it also widened the digital divide, especially in developing countries where access to devices and stable internet remained limited. Their work stressed the need for inclusive educational policies that address such disparities.

Onyema et al. (2020) analyzed how the coronavirus pandemic transformed educational systems and teaching methodologies. Their findings revealed that teachers had to modify their instructional strategies, communication patterns, and assessment techniques to fit virtual environments. The study also underscored the psychological stress teachers experienced due to workload, uncertainty, and technological pressure.

Ali (2020) described online and remote learning as not merely an emergency response but a necessary evolution of higher education in the digital age. He argued that the pandemic acted as a catalyst for long-term educational reforms, encouraging institutions to integrate online components even after the crisis.

Daniel (2020) discussed the policy-level implications of COVID-19, emphasizing the role of governments and educational organizations in ensuring continuity of learning. His analysis suggested that the pandemic accelerated the global acceptance of open and distance learning (ODL) as a legitimate mode of education.

Basilaia and Kvadadze (2020) presented a case study from Georgia, where schools successfully transitioned to online education using digital platforms. Their research demonstrated that with adequate preparation and administrative support, online education could maintain academic standards and student engagement.

Collectively, the reviewed studies indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly reshaped the teaching process. Teachers emerged as key agents of change, adapting to new technologies, revising pedagogical approaches, and redefining their roles in the virtual classroom. The literature further suggests that the integration of technology into teaching is likely to remain a permanent feature of modern education.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main aim of this study is to analyze the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the teaching process among urban and rural higher secondary school teachers. The study focuses on understanding how teachers in different regions adapted to digital modes of instruction, the challenges they faced, and the innovations that emerged during this period.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows: To examine the changes in the teaching process among urban and rural higher secondary school teachers brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic; To identify the major challenges faced by teachers in urban and rural areas during the transition from traditional to online teaching; To analyze the role of technology in facilitating remote teaching and learning for both urban and rural teachers; To explore the level of preparedness and adaptability of urban and rural teachers in using online teaching tools; To evaluate the effectiveness of online teaching methods in maintaining educational quality across urban and rural schools during the pandemic.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant as it explores the transformation of the educational landscape during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on teachers. The pandemic created an unprecedented shift from traditional classroom instruction to digital and remote learning, compelling teachers to adopt new pedagogical approaches and technological tools. By examining these changes, the study seeks to understand how teachers adapted to the evolving circumstances, the challenges they encountered, and the impact on the overall teaching-learning process. The findings will contribute to existing literature on educational change and digital pedagogy, while also offering insights that can guide future educational policies and teacher training programs aimed at enhancing preparedness for similar crises.

### **Research Methodology**

In the present research paper, the survey method has been employed for data collection, as the study is based on obtaining first-hand information from teachers about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the teaching process. The survey method was chosen because it allows the researcher to collect data from a large number of respondents within a limited time, ensuring both reliability and representativeness.

A structured questionnaire was designed to gather information related to the changes in teaching practices, challenges faced during online teaching, and the role of technology in facilitating remote learning. The participants of the study included both urban and rural higher secondary school teachers, enabling a comparative understanding of how contextual factors influenced their teaching experiences. The data collected were systematically analyzed to draw meaningful conclusions about the transformation of education during the pandemic period.

**Research question**

In what ways did the COVID-19 pandemic transform the pedagogical practices of higher secondary school teachers?; What were the primary challenges encountered by teachers during the transition from traditional classroom instruction to online or remote teaching?; How did technological tools and digital platforms facilitate or hinder the teaching-learning process during the pandemic period?; To what extent do differences exist between urban and rural teachers in their adaptation to online teaching methods and technological integration?; What implications can be drawn from teachers’ experiences to inform future educational policy and enhance institutional preparedness for crisis-driven disruptions in education?

**Participants**

The present study was conducted among higher secondary school teachers from 14 schools located in six talukas of Anand District, Gujarat. The sample consisted of 104 teachers, including 74 male and 30 female respondents. Out of these, 49 teachers were from rural areas, while 55 teachers belonged to urban areas. This distribution ensured the inclusion of diverse teaching contexts and experiences, allowing for a comparative analysis of urban and rural educational settings. The participants were selected using a survey method to gather relevant information about the changes in the teaching process, challenges faced, and the role of technology during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data collected through the survey provided valuable insights into how teachers adapted to new modes of instruction and coped with the rapid digital transformation in education.

**Data analysis**

Difference between rural and urban

Area	Number	Mean	SD	SED	t- value	Remarks
Rural	49	27.71	4.96	0.71	0.44	NS
Urban	55	28.13	4.96	0.65		

The collected data were analyzed using the t-test to examine whether there exists a significant difference between rural and urban teachers regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the teaching process. The mean, standard deviation (SD), standard error of difference (SED), and t-value were calculated for both groups.

The calculated t-value is 0.44, which is less than the critical value at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of rural and urban teachers in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their teaching process.

Thus, both rural and urban teachers experienced similar effects of the pandemic on their teaching activities, adaptation to online modes, and use of digital tools in the teaching-learning process.

Difference between rural male and female

Rural	Number	Mean	SD	SED	t- value	Remarks
Male	34	27.82	4.80	0.82	0.22	NS
Female	15	27.46	5.46	1.41		

The obtained t-value (0.11) is lower than the table value at the 0.05 level of significance, indicating that there is no significant difference between urban male and female teachers. Both male and female teachers in urban areas have similar mean scores, suggesting that their experiences, challenges, and adaptations during the COVID-19 pandemic were almost alike. It may be concluded that among urban teachers, gender does not significantly influence the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the teaching process. Both male and female teachers have shown comparable responses and performance, reflecting that the pandemic affected all teachers in a similar manner regardless of gender.

**Difference between Urban male and female**

Urban	Number	Mean	SD	SED	t- value	Remarks
Male	40	28.17	4.96	0.78	0.11	NS
Female	15	28	4.88	1.09		

The obtained t-value (0.11) is lower than the table (critical) value at the 0.05 level of significance, indicating that there is no significant difference between urban male and female teachers in their mean scores. This implies that both groups were affected similarly by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of their teaching process, classroom management, and technological adaptation.

It can be concluded that gender does not significantly affect the teaching experiences of urban teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both male and female teachers demonstrated equal levels of adjustment and response to the challenges of remote and digital teaching environments.

**Findings**

The calculated t-value (0.22) between rural male and female teachers was found to be less than the table value at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference between rural male and female teachers regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the teaching process. Both groups experienced similar challenges and made comparable efforts to adapt to online teaching.

The calculated t-value (0.11) for urban male and female teachers also showed no significant difference in their mean scores. This reveals that both male and female teachers in urban areas were equally influenced by the pandemic in terms of their teaching-learning activities, use of technology, and instructional approaches.

The t-value (0.44) obtained for rural and urban teachers was less than the critical value at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no significant difference between rural and urban teachers in their mean scores. This means that geographical location (rural or urban) did not affect the overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching.

The results indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic affected all teachers—regardless of gender or area—in a similar manner. Both rural and urban teachers faced difficulties in shifting to online modes of teaching, dealing with

technological limitations, and maintaining the quality of education during the lockdown period.

In all three cases (rural male–female, urban male–female, and rural–urban comparison), the calculated t-values were less than the table value, leading to the acceptance of the null hypotheses. This confirms that there were no statistically significant differences between the compared groups.

### **Discussions**

The results revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers, both in rural and urban areas, with respect to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their teaching process. This finding suggests that gender did not play a determining role in shaping teachers' experiences during the pandemic.

Both male and female teachers faced similar challenges such as technological adaptation, online classroom management, student engagement, and digital content preparation.

This outcome aligns with previous studies that highlight those professional responsibilities during the pandemic were equally shared by teachers regardless of gender. The pandemic acted as a great equalizer, where all educators—irrespective of gender—had to upgrade their digital skills and teaching strategies to maintain learning continuity.

The study also found no significant difference between rural and urban teachers. This indicates that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the teaching process was uniform across different geographical locations. Although rural areas often face limitations in terms of internet connectivity and digital infrastructure, both rural and urban teachers had to adjust to online modes of teaching with comparable challenges and opportunities.

This finding suggests that the sudden shift to online education affected teachers' professional practices in similar ways. Both groups had to learn new technological tools, develop digital competencies, and modify their teaching methodologies to suit virtual platforms.

The overall results of the study demonstrate that the COVID-19 pandemic had a universal effect on the teaching community. Regardless of gender or location, all teachers underwent a transformation in their teaching approaches. They became more aware of the potential of digital learning tools, online assessment methods, and the importance of maintaining teacher–student interaction through virtual means.

This indicates a major pedagogical shift in the education system — from traditional, face-to-face classroom teaching to blended and online modes of instruction. Such a transformation highlights the resilience and adaptability of teachers, who continued their professional duties despite unprecedented challenges.

The findings also underline the need for continuous professional development programs that enhance teachers' digital literacy and online teaching skills.

Educational authorities must provide equal access to technological resources and training for both rural and urban teachers. By doing so, the quality of education can be sustained even during crises like pandemics or other disruptions.

The findings also underline the need for continuous professional development programs that enhance teachers' digital literacy and online teaching skills. Educational authorities must provide equal access to technological resources and training for both rural and urban teachers. By doing so, the quality of education can be sustained even during crises like pandemics or other disruptions.

### **Conclusion**

The study titled "A Comprehensive Study on COVID-19 Pandemic: An Impact on Teaching Process" concludes that the COVID-19 pandemic had a similar impact on all teachers, irrespective of gender or area (rural or urban). The calculated t-values showed no significant differences among the groups, indicating that both male and female teachers faced comparable challenges in adapting to online teaching and digital learning environments.

Overall, the findings highlight that the pandemic brought about a common transformation in the teaching process, promoting technological awareness, adaptability, and resilience among teachers across all educational settings.

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## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK TOWARDS TEACHER'S EMPATHETIC ATTITUDE ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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### **Abstract**

*The present study focuses on understanding the concept of education as a holistic process and examines the central role of the teacher in facilitating the intellectual, emotional, and moral development of students. It further investigates the influence of teacher's empathetic attitude on students' attitude, personality development, and academic achievement within the teaching-learning process. The study adopts a qualitative and descriptive approach based on the analysis of existing literature in the fields of education and psychology. The findings highlight that the effectiveness of education largely depends on the teacher's ability to create meaningful interactions and supportive learning environments. Empathy is identified as a crucial factor that positively shapes students' behaviour, enhances their personality, and improves academic performance. The study also explores empathy as a core teaching competency, emphasizing its role in strengthening classroom interaction, promoting inclusivity, and increasing teacher effectiveness. It concludes that integrating empathy into teaching practices is essential for achieving holistic educational outcomes and fostering overall student development.*

**Keywords:** *Education, Teacher's Role, Empathy, Personality Development, Academic Achievement, Teaching Competency*

Education is widely recognized as a dynamic and holistic process that goes beyond the mere transmission of knowledge to encompass the overall development of an individual's abilities, attitudes, and behaviour. It plays a crucial role in shaping not only intellectual growth but also moral values, social responsibility, and personality. Within this broad framework, the teacher emerges as the central agent who facilitates learning and guides students toward meaningful development. The effectiveness of education largely depends on the quality of interaction between teacher and learner, making teaching an inherently interpersonal and influential process. In contemporary educational discourse, increasing emphasis is placed on the humanistic role of the teacher, particularly the ability to connect with students at an emotional level. In this context, empathy has gained recognition as a vital component of teaching, as it enables teachers to understand students' needs, foster positive relationships, and create a supportive learning environment. Thus, the concept of education and the role of the teacher are deeply interconnected, with empathy serving as a key factor in achieving holistic and meaningful educational outcomes.

### **Literature Review**

Carter V. Good, in *Dictionary of Education* (1959), conceptualizes education as a comprehensive process involving the development of abilities, attitudes, and

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socially desirable behaviour (202). His definition emphasizes that education is not confined to knowledge acquisition but extends to the holistic formation of the individual. This perspective provides a foundational understanding of education as a dynamic and value-oriented process, highlighting its role in shaping both personal and social dimensions of human life.

George Thomas Kurian (1985), in *World Education Encyclopedia*, highlights that the quality of education is directly linked to the quality of teachers and their professional preparation (251). He stresses the need for well-structured teacher education programs, suggesting that effective teaching is essential for achieving educational goals. His contribution underscores the critical role of teacher competence in determining educational outcomes.

D. J. Limayl (1960), in *The Dynamics of Education*, views education as a systematic process aimed at strengthening character and developing intelligence (34). He emphasizes the constructive role of education in shaping disciplined and socially responsible individuals. His perspective highlights the moral and intellectual dimensions of education, positioning it as a tool for comprehensive human development.

The perspective presented in *Wisdom* (2000) expands the scope of education by emphasizing behavioural transformation rather than mere knowledge transmission (7). It argues that education should focus on shaping appropriate behaviour and contributing to individual and societal development. This view reinforces the ethical and social responsibilities embedded in the educational process.

Mohit Chakrabarti (1998), in *Teacher Education: Modern Trends*, discusses the evolving nature of teacher education and the need for innovative approaches in preparing teachers (17–22). He emphasizes the integration of modern pedagogical practices and the development of professional competencies, suggesting that effective teacher training is essential for improving educational quality.

Z. M. Quarishi (1975) conceptualizes teaching as an interpersonal process that influences students' behaviour and personality (49). His work highlights the role of teacher behaviour and personality variables in shaping classroom dynamics, emphasizing the importance of psychological factors in effective teaching.

Harishankar Singh (2008) emphasizes the importance of professional ethics in the teaching profession, highlighting the need for teachers to maintain integrity, commitment, and respect in their interactions with students (22). His work reinforces the moral responsibilities of teachers in shaping student character and fostering a positive learning environment.

J. Dareel Bernard (1977) emphasizes the significant impact of teacher's personality on student learning and development (18). He argues that teacher characteristics influence both the quality of teaching and long-term student behaviour, underscoring the lasting effects of teacher's influence on learners.

Thurstone and Chave (1929), in *The Measurement of Attitude*, define attitude as a combination of feelings and predispositions towards a psychological object (6–7). Their work provides a scientific basis for understanding attitude and its measurement, contributing significantly to educational psychology.

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The above literature reviews shows that education is a holistic process where the teacher plays a central role in shaping students' knowledge, behaviour, and personality. It highlights that effective teaching depends not only on competence and training but also on psychological factors like attitude and empathy. Overall, empathy emerges as a key element in creating a supportive learning environment and improving educational outcomes.

### **Objectives of the study**

To analyse the concept of education and the role of the teacher in holistic development; To examine the impact of teacher's empathetic attitude on students' attitude, personality, and academic achievement; To explore empathy as a core teaching competency in improving educational outcomes.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative and descriptive research methodology based on an extensive review and analysis of existing literature related to education, teacher's role, empathy, attitude, personality, and academic achievement. Data have been collected from secondary sources such as books, research articles, journals, and relevant theoretical frameworks proposed by eminent scholars in education and psychology. The study employs a conceptual and analytical approach to examine the interrelationship between teacher's empathetic attitude and key educational outcomes. Through critical interpretation of established definitions, theories, and empirical findings, the study aims to synthesize insights and present a comprehensive understanding of empathy as a core component of effective teaching.

### **Concept of Education and the Role of the Teacher**

Education is a comprehensive and dynamic process that encompasses the development of human abilities, attitudes, and socially desirable behaviour. It is rightly stated that "Education is the aggregate of all the processes by means of which a person develops abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour of positive value in the society in which he lives" (Good 202). This definition highlights that education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge but a holistic process of human development. It involves the internalization of experiences, as education "refers to the mental process of internalizing an external event in order to understand it and control it," and is facilitated through various means such as institutions, materials, and instructional aids, where "the teacher, the book and the electronic aids are part of the learning process... Education is the resultant of the personal interaction between the teacher and the taught" (Adisesiah 7). Thus, the role of the teacher becomes central in shaping the educational experience.

Teachers occupy the highest position in the professional hierarchy because they shape all other professions, and therefore must uphold strong professional ethics and commitments. Their responsibilities include maintaining respectful relationships with students, recognizing individual differences, and fostering a supportive learning environment (Singh 22). The essence of teaching lies not only in imparting knowledge but in inspiring learners, as noted by Devadas, who states that "the essence of teaching lies in creating an insatiable love for knowledge in

the learners... helping children to grow into worthy human beings with courage to face the problems in life” (Devadas 27). Thus, education and teaching are inseparable processes in which the teacher plays a pivotal role in nurturing intellectual growth, moral values, and personality development.

### **Teacher’s Empathetic Attitude as a Determinant of Attitude, Personality, and Academic Achievement**

Attitude is a vital psychological construct that shapes an individual’s perceptions, responses, and behaviour. An empathetic teacher, therefore, is one whose attitude is positively oriented towards understanding students’ feelings and experiences. Thurstone further elaborates that “An attitude is the sum total of a man’s inclination and feelings, prejudices or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats and convictions about any specific topic,” and describes it as “the degree of positive and negative affect associated with some psychological object” (Thurstone 2). In this sense, a teacher’s empathetic attitude reflects a constructive and supportive disposition that minimizes bias and fosters acceptance, thereby strengthening the pupil.

Personality encompasses “every phase of human character, intellect, temperament, skill, morality and every attitude has been built up in the course of one’s life” (Woodworth 6), indicating that empathy is an integral component of personality development. A teacher with a well-developed empathetic personality is more likely to create a positive classroom environment characterized by trust, respect, and emotional security.

Personality traits such as anxiety, stress, and extroversion influence teaching behaviour and the ability to exhibit empathy. Teachers with balanced emotional traits are better equipped to understand students’ difficulties and provide appropriate support. Since teaching behaviour is closely linked to psychological orientation, empathy becomes a key factor in translating personality traits into effective classroom practices.

Academic achievement, as an important outcome of education, is also influenced by teacher’s empathy. It is defined as “knowledge attained or skills developed in school subjects, usually designated by test scores or by marks assigned by the teacher or both” (Good 84). While cognitive abilities contribute to achievement, emotional and relational factors play an equally significant role. An empathetic teacher creates a supportive learning environment that reduces anxiety, increases motivation, and encourages active participation, thereby enhancing academic performance.

The close interconnection between attitude, personality, and academic achievement, shaped significantly by teacher’s empathetic attitude, provides a strong foundation for viewing empathy not just as a personal quality but as a professional necessity. Since empathy influences teachers’ dispositions, strengthens their interpersonal traits, and contributes to improved student outcomes, it naturally extends into the domain of teaching competency. In this sense, empathy acts as the bridge between psychological dimensions of teaching

and its practical execution in the classroom, reinforcing its position as a core competency essential for effective, inclusive, and learner centered education.

**Empathy as a Core Teaching Competency**

Empathy has increasingly been recognized as a central competency in the teaching profession, extending beyond traditional notions of subject knowledge and pedagogical skill. In contemporary education, where the focus has shifted toward holistic development, inclusivity, and learner-centered approaches, empathy functions as a foundational attribute that shapes effective teaching and meaningful learning. It enables teachers to understand students' emotions, perspectives, and experiences, thereby fostering a supportive and responsive classroom environment.

In teacher education, therefore, empathy should be treated as a core competency that requires systematic cultivation. Training programs must go beyond technical skills and incorporate opportunities for developing emotional intelligence, reflective thinking, and interpersonal sensitivity. Activities such as role-playing, reflective journaling, and classroom simulations can help student-teachers develop empathetic understanding and apply it in real teaching contexts. Additionally, continuous professional development programs should reinforce the importance of empathy in addressing the evolving challenges of modern classrooms.

Empathy is not an optional trait but a fundamental teaching competency that underpins effective education. It integrates cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions of teaching, enabling teachers to create inclusive, supportive, and engaging learning environments. By fostering positive attitudes, strengthening relationships, and enhancing academic achievement, empathy serves as a vital link between the goals of education and the holistic development of learners. Therefore, embedding empathy within the framework of teacher competency is essential for achieving excellence in education.

**Findings of the Study**

The study indicates that teaching is inherently an interpersonal and influential activity, where the teacher not only imparts knowledge but also shapes students' behaviour, character, and overall personality. The teacher's role extends beyond instruction to guidance, motivation, and the cultivation of values, confirming that education is deeply connected with behavioural transformation and social development. It is also evident that the teacher's professional ethics, commitment, and ability to maintain meaningful relationships with students significantly determine the success of the educational process.

A major finding of the study is the central role of empathy in effective teaching. The effectiveness of education depends not only on pedagogical competence but also on the teacher's ability to connect with students emotionally. Empathy is identified as a key factor that influences teachers' attitudes, making them more positive, accepting, and responsive to students' needs. This empathetic attitude

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helps in creating a supportive and inclusive classroom environment, which enhances student engagement and participation.

The study also reveals a strong interconnection between attitude, personality, and academic achievement, all of which are significantly influenced by teacher's empathetic attitude. Empathy contributes to the development of positive personality traits among students, such as self-confidence, emotional stability, and social competence. It is found that teacher's personality has a lasting impact on student behaviour, and empathetic interactions strengthen the teacher–student relationship, which is essential for both personal and academic growth.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that empathy functions as a core teaching competency in contemporary education. It enables teachers to understand students' emotional and psychological states, adopt appropriate instructional strategies, and manage classroom behaviour effectively. Empathetic teaching promotes trust, cooperation, and open communication, thereby fostering a democratic and learner-centered classroom environment. It also supports reflective teaching practices, allowing teachers to continuously adapt and improve their methods based on students' needs.

Another important finding is that academic achievement is not solely determined by cognitive abilities but is significantly influenced by emotional and relational factors. An empathetic teacher reduces student anxiety, increases motivation, and creates a conducive learning environment, leading to improved academic performance. Thus, empathy serves as a bridge between psychological constructs and educational outcomes.

The study establishes that teacher's empathetic attitude is a crucial determinant of effective education. It integrates the cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions of teaching, contributing to holistic student development. Therefore, the development of empathy should be an essential component of teacher education programs, as it plays a vital role in enhancing teaching effectiveness, strengthening teacher–student relationships, and improving both personality development and academic achievement of students.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that education is a holistic and dynamic process in which the teacher plays a central and transformative role. It highlights that effective teaching goes beyond knowledge transmission and involves shaping students' attitudes, personality, and academic growth. Among the various factors influencing educational outcomes, teacher's empathy emerges as a key element that strengthens teacher–student relationships, creates a supportive learning environment, and enhances both personal and academic development. Thus, empathy is not only a personal quality but a professional necessity for achieving meaningful and effective education.

Based on the findings, it is suggested that teacher education programs should give greater emphasis to developing empathy alongside pedagogical skills. Training institutions should incorporate activities such as reflective practices, role-playing,

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and real classroom interactions to build emotional understanding among teachers. Additionally, schools should encourage a learner-centered and inclusive environment where teachers can practice empathetic approaches. Continuous professional development and awareness programs should also be conducted to help teachers adapt to students' diverse needs, ultimately improving overall educational quality.

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## ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A REVIEW REPORT

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### Abstract

*Inclusive education ensures equal learning opportunities for all children, including those with disabilities, within regular classrooms. Teachers play a key role in its successful implementation, and their attitudes significantly influence inclusive practices. This paper reviews existing literature on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The findings indicate that while many teachers support inclusion, their attitudes are influenced by training, experience, availability of resources, and institutional support. The study emphasizes the need for proper teacher preparation and supportive environments to strengthen inclusive education.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Education, Teacher Attitude, Literature Review, Special Needs.*

Inclusive education is an approach that promotes the integration of all learners, regardless of their abilities, into mainstream educational settings. In India, initiatives like the Right to Education Act and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have emphasized inclusive practices in schools. Teachers are the central agents in implementing inclusive education. Their beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes determine how effectively inclusive strategies are applied in classrooms. Therefore, examining teachers' attitudes through existing studies is essential to understand the challenges and opportunities in inclusive education.

### Concept of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education refers to educating all children together in regular classrooms, irrespective of their physical, intellectual, social, or emotional differences. It focuses on participation, equality, and respect for diversity, ensuring that every child receives meaningful learning opportunities.

### Operational Definitions

**Attitude of Teachers:** Refers to the beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies of teachers towards inclusive education and teaching students with diverse learning needs in regular classrooms.

**Inclusive Education:** Refers to the practice of educating children with and without disabilities together in the same classroom, ensuring equal participation, support, and learning opportunities for all students.

### Review of Literature

The concept of inclusive education has been widely studied across different countries, with particular emphasis on teachers' attitudes, as they are key agents in implementing inclusive practices.

Avramidis and Norwich (2002) conducted a major review and found that teachers generally hold positive attitudes toward inclusion, but their willingness depends on training, resources, and experience. Forlin (2010) reported that teachers often experience stress and concern about inclusive classrooms due to lack of preparedness and support. Sharma and Jacobs (2016) found that teachers'

attitudes significantly influence their intention to teach in inclusive classrooms, and self-efficacy plays a crucial role. Van Steen and Wilson (2020) revealed through meta-analysis that teachers' attitudes are generally positive, but influenced by cultural and demographic factors. Guillemot et al. (2022) analyzed data from 55 countries and found that teachers' attitudes have become more positive over time, especially with better training and higher development levels. Dignath et al. (2022) emphasized that teachers' beliefs, emotions, and self-efficacy collectively shape their attitudes toward inclusive education. Hofman and Kilimo (2014) found that lack of infrastructure and training negatively affects teachers' attitudes in developing countries. Yada and Savolainen (2017) reported that teachers showed neutral to slightly positive attitudes but expressed concerns about implementation and low self-efficacy.

Das, Kuyini and Desai (2013) found that teachers in India face challenges such as lack of training and resources, which influence their attitudes toward inclusion. Sharma, Chunawala and Chari (2018) reported that teachers' attitudes vary depending on the type of disability, with more positive attitudes toward physical disabilities than sensory impairments. Kumar (2016) found significant differences in teachers' attitudes based on gender, experience, and teaching level. Kumar and Midha (2017) observed that teachers generally show positive attitudes but require proper support and training for effective inclusion. Singh, Kumar and Singh (2020) found that teachers' attitudes were moderately favorable, with urban and pre-service teachers showing more positive attitudes. Goswami (2022) highlighted that teachers' attitudes remain a major barrier in implementing inclusive education at the elementary level. Singal (2015) pointed out that policy-level inclusion exists, but classroom practices are limited due to teacher-related constraints. Bhatnagar and Das (2014) concluded that teachers with prior experience of handling children with special needs show more positive attitudes toward inclusion.

### **Findings of the Review**

Based on the analysis of the above studies, the following findings have been derived: Teachers generally demonstrate a positive attitude toward inclusive education, though practical implementation remains limited; Training and professional development are the most influential factors in shaping positive attitudes; Teachers with prior experience of handling children with special needs show more favorable attitudes; Lack of infrastructure, teaching-learning materials, and resources is a major barrier to effective inclusion; Large class sizes and workload negatively impact teachers' ability to implement inclusive practices; Teachers often experience low confidence and self-efficacy in inclusive classroom settings; Institutional and administrative support plays a crucial role in improving teachers' attitudes; Indian studies reveal more practical and ground-level challenges compared to international studies; Teachers' attitudes vary depending on the type of disability; Continuous training and awareness programs significantly improve teachers' readiness for inclusive education.

### **Research Gap**

The review of existing literature reveals that a considerable number of studies have been conducted on teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education at national and international levels. However, most studies focus on general trends and broader contexts. There is a lack of context-specific research at the elementary school level, particularly focusing on teachers' attitudes in localized settings. Therefore, there is a need for a focused study to understand the attitudes of teachers toward inclusive education in a specific educational context.

### **Objectives of the Study**

To study the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education; To identify factors influencing teachers' attitudes; To understand challenges faced in implementing inclusive education.

### **Methodology of the Study**

The present study is based on a qualitative review of literature.

Research Design: Descriptive and analytical.

Sources of Data: Secondary data collected from journals, books, articles, and reports.

Selection of Studies: Based on relevance to the topic, including both international and national studies.

Method of Analysis: The studies were reviewed, compared, and analyzed to identify themes and patterns.

### **Discussion**

The literature shows that teachers' attitudes are influenced by training, experience, infrastructure, and institutional support. While teachers generally support inclusive education, they face practical challenges in implementation. Improving training and providing adequate resources can enhance positive attitudes.

### **Conclusion**

Inclusive education is essential for ensuring equality in education. Teachers play a crucial role, and their attitudes significantly influence classroom practices. Strengthening teacher training, improving infrastructure, and providing continuous support are necessary for effective implementation.

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GOVERNMENT VS. PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
TAMEI SUB-DIVISION, TAMENGLONG DISTRICT,  
MANIPUR: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF  
INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCES, AND TECHNOLOGY

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**Abstract**

*The Tamei sub-division is a remote and socio-economically marginalized region in Tamenglong District, Manipur. Secondary education in this region faces significant challenges due to its remote location and limited educational support systems. A preliminary survey conducted in November 2025 identified eleven secondary schools (government and private), of which only eight had students enrolled in Classes IX and X. The data collected in the survey were used to examine variations in infrastructure, educational resources, and technology integration across these schools. Primary data were obtained from a sample of 60 stakeholders (30 per school type), the maximum accessible under field constraints, comprising students, parents, and school heads/teachers, through structured questionnaires and school inventory forms. School inventory data and Likert-scale responses pointed to similar patterns. Stakeholders from private schools showed higher satisfaction ratings across classroom comfort, laboratory access, and sanitation, while government schools showed more uneven facility maintenance. Technology integration was absent across both sectors. The findings point to continuing disparities associated with uneven funding, administrative constraints, and geographic isolation. The findings point to the need to address infrastructure gaps and improve learning conditions in these schools.*

**Keywords:** *Secondary Education, Government and Private Secondary Schools, School Infrastructure, Educational Resources, Technology Integration, Educational Disparities.*

In the remote, tribal hills of Tamei sub-division in Tamenglong District, Manipur, secondary education serves as the main route for young people to reach broader economic and social opportunities. The communities throughout this area struggle with challenging geography, limited transportation links, and insufficient infrastructure investment over time. Government secondary schools depend mainly on government budget allocations, which frequently suffer from delayed payments, administrative hurdles, and competition from other spending priorities. Meanwhile, private secondary schools receive funding from local communities, religious organizations, or student fees, giving them more independence and flexibility in resource mobilization.

This study provides a thorough comparison of secondary schools (government and private) in the region based on evidence of variation in infrastructure (classrooms, ventilation, lighting, sanitation, drinking water, playgrounds, and overall environmental conduciveness), educational resources (libraries, science laboratories, teaching-learning materials), and technology integration. The study carefully examines how these factors vary between government and private

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schools and explores how such differences affect perceived quality, student participation, and fair access to education over time.

A preliminary survey conducted in November 2025 identified eleven secondary schools currently operating in the sub-division (six government and five private). Table 1 contains the list of these schools.

**Table 1 - List of Secondary Schools in Tamei sub-division (as per November 2025 Field Survey)**

Sl. No.	School Name	Type	Location
1	Langmei Higher Secondary School	Government	Langmei
2	Lenglong High School	Government	Lenglong
3	Makui High School	Government	Makui
4	Chaton High School	Government	Chaton
5	Lamlaba High School	Government	Lamlaba
6	New Kunphung High School	Government	New Kunphung
7	Hamai English High School	Private	Tamei
8	Apou Kading High School	Private	Tamei
9	Hope Foundation Academy	Private	Langmei
10	Liangnah High School	Private	Tamei
11	Paragon High School	Private	Makui

Of these, only eight schools offered Classes IX and X during the study period, while three government schools (New Kunphung High School, Lamlaba High School, and Chaton High School) had no students enrolled in these grades and retained only minimal sanctioned teaching staff. The study was conducted across these eight active schools using the maximum accessible sample under field constraints: 60 participants (30 from each school type). It aims to provide evidence to improve educational conditions in remote settings.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Comparative studies on school infrastructure in Manipur and the Northeast provide important context for the present investigation. Singh (2022) conducted a comparative study of government and private secondary schools in Imphal East District and found that infrastructure and facilities are closely associated with academic outcomes. The study emphasized that adequate school facilities support student development and that parents prefer schools with better arrangements. Bidyalakshmi (2016) examined problems of elementary education in Senapati District and reported significant shortages of necessary infrastructure and trained teachers, highlighting systemic gaps in government institutions in hill districts. Both studies point to persistent infrastructure disparities in government schools across Manipur's hill regions, yet neither extends its analysis to the secondary level nor to the more remote and under-resourced sub-divisions of Tamenglong district. At the national level, Mahapatra and Goowalla (2019) compared government and private schools in Dimapur, Nagaland, and concluded that infrastructure facilities in state government-run schools are very poor compared to private schools, creating negative impacts on student and teacher motivation and performance. Banteiborlang (2011) studied infrastructural facilities of secondary schools in Shillong town and stressed that school infrastructure is essential for the all-round development of students, noting that improper school buildings cause congestion

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and spoil the learning atmosphere. Together, these Northeast Indian studies suggest a regional pattern: the government-private infrastructure gap reflects broader disparities linked to uneven funding, administrative constraints, and geographic isolation. However, both studies were conducted in comparatively urbanized or accessible settings, Dimapur and Shillong, and their findings cannot be assumed to apply to geographically isolated, low-population sub-divisions such as Tamei.

A recent empirical study conducted in Tamenglong district, with explicit reference to Tamei subdivision, documented persistent educational challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, acute teacher shortages, declining enrollment, high dropout rates, non-functional government schools, and the near-absence of basic facilities in remote hill areas. The authors concluded that these systemic failures in government schools contribute to socioeconomic stagnation and constrained educational development in the region (Newmai and Temjensosang 2025). This study provides the closest contextual evidence for the present investigation, yet its scope is district-wide and qualitative; it does not offer a structured comparative analysis of government and private secondary schools at the sub-divisional level. International evidence likewise shows that infrastructure quality, including sanitation, laboratories, and learning spaces, is strongly associated with student health, enrollment, and academic outcomes (Murillo and Román 2011; Barrett et al. 2019; Cuesta, Glewwe, and Krause 2016). Kamau, Rambo, and Mbugua (2020) reinforced this finding in a post-conflict context, showing that implementation of school infrastructure policies directly affects the performance of school construction projects and, by extension, educational outcomes. Foundational works on school organization and management (Aggarwal 1980; Kapur 2019) further underscore that physical facilities are key factors shaping educational quality across institutional types.

Taken together, these studies indicate a common pattern: private schools often show advantages in infrastructural quality, while government institutions, particularly in remote and under-resourced settings, face facility limitations that affect teaching and learning. Yet a critical gap remains. No prior study has undertaken a structured, evidence-based comparative analysis of government and private secondary schools specifically within Tamei subdivision of Tamenglong District, one of the most geographically isolated, sparsely populated, and resource-constrained settings in Northeast India. This study responds to that gap by combining inventory data with perspectives from multiple stakeholders to provide evidence grounded in local realities and useful for similar remote contexts.

### **Methodology**

The study used a descriptive comparative survey design. Questionnaires were administered through Google Forms to three stakeholder groups: students (Grades IX–X), parents, and school heads/teachers. Each questionnaire consisted of a demographic section and a section on school infrastructure using

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a using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree). Teacher and head questionnaires also included a school inventory form to collect data on enrollment, number of teachers, classrooms, library and laboratory facilities, and facility ratings.

Data were collected from participants across eight secondary schools offering Classes IX and X. A total of 60 participants were included from government and private schools, representing the maximum accessible sample under field constraints. Participant distribution is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2 : Distribution of Participants**

Respondent Category	Government Schools	Private Schools	Total
Students	12	13	25
Parents	10	10	20
School Heads/Teachers	8	7	15
Total	30	30	60

This represented the largest feasible participation given low enrollment and limited staffing in Tamei sub-division. Responses were analyzed using quantitative methods, including frequency counts and percentages, alongside thematic analysis of open-ended responses. Qualitative responses were also analyzed through thematic analysis of open-ended questions. Likert-scale data were treated as interval data and analyzed using parametric tests. Non-parametric tests were also used to check consistency. The questionnaire instruments did not include items on technology infrastructure such as computers, internet access, and other ICT tools, as the preliminary survey indicated these were largely absent across both sectors, which limited structured measurement. Technology integration is addressed descriptively, drawing on open-ended stakeholder suggestions and inventory observations, and this remains a limitation of the study. A further limitation is the reliance on self-reported perceptions and the relatively small sample size, due to limited population; however, comparison across stakeholder groups and coverage of nearly all willing participants strengthens confidence in the findings.

### **Results**

**Infrastructural Facilities:** Responses from stakeholders and school records revealed clear differences between government and private secondary schools. Students in both sectors reported that classrooms were sufficient for current enrollment (100% 'Agree'). Views on classroom comfort, ventilation, lighting, and the overall environment showed substantial differences. Government student responses varied widely (42% 'Agree'/'Strongly Agree,' 33% 'Neutral,' 25% 'Disagree'), suggesting uneven conditions across schools, while private school students reported largely positive responses, with agreement dominating. Among government schools, stakeholder responses and inventory data indicated that Langmei High School had comparatively better facilities, including maintenance, ventilation, sanitation, and laboratory equipment.

Sanitation, drinking water, and playground facilities showed a similar trend, with private schools receiving more favorable ratings and government schools showing

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greater variation. Teacher/head inventory data (Table 3) support these findings, showing more favorable ratings in size, adequacy, and reported quality in private schools despite small enrollments.

**Table 3 : Aggregated Teacher/Head Inventory data on Infrastructural Facilities (Government vs. Private Schools, n=15 responses)**

Parameter	Government Schools (n=8 responses)	Private Schools (n=7 responses)
Total Students (Grades IX–X)	Range: Nil–68 (mean ≈ 31)	Range: 23–86 (mean ≈ 49)
Number of Teachers (Current)	Range: 3–24 (mean ≈ 9)	Range: 10–25 (mean ≈ 19)
Number of Classrooms	Range: 6–14 (mean ≈ 9)	Range: 13–15 (mean ≈ 14)
Adequate Classrooms for Enrollment	Yes: 100%	Yes: 100%
Overall Classroom Adequacy Rating	Average/Poor (majority)	Average/Good (majority)
Library Availability	Functional in <40% of responses	Functional in >85% of responses
Science Laboratory Status	Partially equipped/Not available (majority)	Partially equipped (majority)

*Note: Data aggregated from all 15 teacher/head proformas. Figures reflect low secondary enrollment and staffing in remote Tamei sub-division.*

### **Educational Resources**

Libraries were positively rated by most students (92% ‘Agree’ across all 25 students), suggesting that basic reading resources are available in both sectors. But science laboratories showed a clear difference: private school students rated them more positively, with agreement dominating, while government students showed more varied responses (42% ‘Agree,’ 33% ‘Neutral,’ 25% ‘Disagree’), which is consistent with inventory data showing that functional laboratories are available in most private schools but remain partially equipped or absent in many government schools. Parent responses broadly reflected the same pattern, with private schools viewed as better resourced. Teaching materials were rated as adequately available by a large majority in both groups, with private parents showing slightly higher satisfaction. This indicates that while basic materials are available in most classrooms, their quality and consistency vary.

### **Technology Integration**

Technology infrastructure was not included in the questionnaire, as it was almost absent in both sectors. Three private-school parents mentioned the need for more ICT resources, which indicates that technology use remains very limited in both sectors and is a common limitation.

**Table 4 : Summary of Student Perceptions on Key Infrastructural Facilities (n=25)**

Statement	Government (n=12) – % Agree/Strongly Agree	Private (n=13) – % Agree/Strongly Agree
Enough classrooms	100%	100%
Classrooms comfortable, ventilated, lighted	42%	77%
Library useful for studies	92%	92%

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Science laboratory helps practical lessons	42%	77%
Drinking water & toilets safe, clean, sufficient	50%	69%
Playground supports sports & activities	83%	62%
Overall, facilities support learning well	75%	69%

*Note: Percentages are based on combined Likert responses; private schools show generally higher satisfaction on comfort, laboratories, and sanitation.*

**Table 5 : Summary of Parent Perceptions on Key Infrastructural Facilities (n=20)**

Statement	Government (n=10) – % Agree/Strongly Agree	Private (n=10) – % Agree/Strongly Agree
Adequate classrooms	50%	90%
Classrooms well maintained & comfortable	60%	80%
Sanitation & drinking water sufficient & hygienic	40%	70%
Functional library & science laboratory	50%	80%
Overall satisfaction with infrastructural facilities	50%	70%

*Note: Responses show more variation and lower satisfaction in government school parent responses.*

### **Discussion**

Analysis of data from the available sample in this sub-division (60 participants) shows that private secondary schools have advantages in infrastructural facilities and educational resources, based on stakeholder perceptions and school records. Private institutions benefit from higher enrollment, greater teacher strength, and more consistent positive stakeholder evaluations, a pattern that may reflect more flexible funding, community oversight, and greater independence in school management. Government schools show uneven conditions in maintenance, ventilation, water and sanitation facilities, and laboratory functionality, likely linked to rigid state funding, logistical challenges in hilly terrain, and administrative delays. This variation suggests that localized factors such as school leadership, community engagement, or proximity to administrative centres can partly help ease funding constraints. There is almost no technology integration across both sectors, indicating a common gap. These differences suggest broader concerns for educational equity: poor conditions in many government schools may hinder student engagement, practical skill development, and future educational and economic opportunities in an already resource-constrained region.

### **Suggestions and Policy Recommendations**

To address the identified differences within the constraints of small-scale institutions in Tamei sub-division, a coordinated effort is needed. State education authorities should immediately increase targeted funding for government schools (including the three institutions with no IX–X students but retained minimal staff), with dedicated funding for sanitation upgrades, drinking-water systems, laboratory facilities and equipment, classroom maintenance, and regular infrastructure audits. Special attention should be given to building on practices observed at Langmei High School.

In addition, public-private collaboration should be strengthened through resource sharing, joint access to laboratory facilities, collaborative teacher training, and

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shared infrastructure initiatives. In this context, fuller implementation of the School Fagathansi Mission in Tamei sub-division could support improvement in government schools, while private schools' experience in community mobilization and resource management may contribute to these efforts.

Further, a technology support programme for schools, aligned with national schemes such as the ICT and Digital Initiatives under Samagra Shiksha and the National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM), also known as the Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISHA), should be implemented to support the provision of computer facilities, internet connectivity, digital learning resources, and teacher training, with priority given to government schools.

Regular annual surveys involving different stakeholders, scaled to the small population, together with independent infrastructure audits, could help monitor school conditions and identify gaps requiring attention.

School management committees can also play a stronger role through greater decision-making authority and by mobilizing local resources to support school improvement.

With sustained political support, adequate funding, and regular monitoring, these measures may help reduce existing gaps and improve educational quality in Tamei and similar remote tribal areas.

### **Conclusion**

This comparative analysis, based on the available sample of 60 participants, indicates that private secondary schools show advantages over government schools in key infrastructure and resource areas. Both sectors, however, share a major gap in the near absence of technology integration.

If the proposed recommendations are implemented, educational authorities may reduce disparities, improve equity, and strengthen learning conditions for tribal students within the limits of the region. Future research may extend this work through mixed-method studies and comparisons across similar remote settings. Addressing these gaps is important for improving education and supporting broader social development in Manipur and similar regions.

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**FAMILY ATTITUDES TOWARDS MULTILINGUALISM IN  
BILINGUAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH AS SECOND  
LANGUAGE IN INDIA**

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**Abstract**

*This study looked at what families think about multilingualism in education classrooms in Manipur, India and how important they think English is as a second language. The study used a combination of methods, including a survey of 350 families of children in schools affiliated with the Board of Secondary Education Manipur and interviews with 23 people. The survey asked questions about six aspects of multilingualism by utilizing a rating system to measure attitudes. The results showed that families think multilingualism is very good for getting socially and economically and also good for cognitive abilities. However, they are not as positive about code-switching and using multilingualism to show status. The study also found that English is seen as an important language for many reasons, including its use in international communication, trade and education. The study found that families have attitudes towards multilingualism and these attitudes are complex and have many dimensions. The study used tests to compare the attitudes and found that they are significantly different. The interviews with families also showed that they think English is a language for getting ahead in life.*

**Keywords:** *multilingualism, family attitudes, English, as a language bilingual education, Indian classroom, code-switching, Manipur*

Multilingualism is the act of using or promoting the use of, multiple languages, either by an individual speaker or by a community of speakers. Multilingualism is becoming a social phenomenon governed by the needs of globalization and cultural openness. The word “Multilingualism” is derived from two words, “multi” & “lingual”. “Multi” means two or more and “lingual” means language. In simple terms, a person who knows two or more than two languages at a time is called a multilingual person. Multilingualism serves the necessity of effective communication and for that it is not necessary to have competence in all the languages. Many scholars use the notion of bilingualism and multilingualism interchangeably to refer to the knowledge of more than one language.

Apart from the natural multilingualism (acquired generally in the early stages of childhood) and artificial multilingualism (when a person learns it in classroom settings); may be in childhood or adulthood, has classified multilingualism as – Individual Multilingualism and Social Multilingualism. Individual Multilingualism is the ability of an individual to have competence in two or more languages. For example, if a child has a Meitei father, a Tangkhul mother and is raised by a Nepali maid and is living in a city like Bangalore, then, the child will grow up

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acquiring individual multilingualism. On the one hand, Societal Multilingualism is defined as the linguistic diversity present in society. In it, some issues such as role and status, attitudes towards languages, determinants of language choices, the symbolic and practical uses of the languages and the correlation between language used and social factors such as ethnicity, religion and class are important.

Multilingualism has not always been evaluated in terms of its advantages. So there are two aspects of multilingualism. One is negative attitude while the other shows positive attitude. Hence, for, some, multilingualism is a nuisance as its acquisition is considered a load and for some it is an asset, as there is no restriction in the choice of languages. In the dominant monolingual countries, two languages are considered a nuisance, three languages as uneconomic and many languages as absurd. But there are others who look at multilingualism as a resource. But several studies have demonstrated that bilingual/multilingual children can perform better than monolingual children. Therefore, multilingualism can rather be evaluated as an asset and is not a barrier in the development of a nation like India. It is this fact which makes Indian multilingualism unique.

In post independent India, the Macro-sociolinguistic processes of language planning resulted in carving out a small group of so called “Major languages” and “mother tongues” out of thousands of real languages on the ground. Contemporary Indians are facing a hierarchical relation among the languages even within each state.

Of the 1652 languages listed in the 1961 census of India, the number of indigenous languages was 1018 classified under the four major language families listed. It should be noted that the hierarchy based on percentage of speakers from highest to the lowest, Indo-Aryan > Dravidian > Austro-Asiatic > Tibeto-Burman does not match the hierarchy based on actual number of languages within each family. Specifically Tibeto-Burman family has the highest number of different languages compared to the other three families.

Characteristics of a Multilingual Classroom are: A multilingual classroom is formed by learners of various ethnic groups and social sections of society; Various intonations are also seen and heard in the multilingual classroom; Different languages and different body languages are also used in the classroom; There is complexity in a diversified language class; Multilingual classroom is primarily conducted in a language which is known and understandable to all; and The task of a teacher in a multilingual classroom is always challenging as the teacher needs to study the learners individually.

On the other hand, multilingual education refers to first language education i.e. schooling begins in the mother tongue of the child and transition to language 2 (L2) or additional languages. According to Pearce (2024), “*Multilingualism is the use of several languages by an individual or society. Sometimes bilinguals are described as multilingual but usually the term is reserved for speakers or socio linguistic situations in which more than two languages are used*”. Sometimes also referred to as “*bilingual education*”, multilingual education employs the use of two or more languages as media of instruction in

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primary education. In mother tongue based multilingual programs, the student's home language, or a regional or national language and as international language are used for instruction. Stages of Multilingual Education In Indian Classroom are: Stage 1: Learning takes place entirely in the home language/mother tongue of the student; Stage 2: Introduction of L2 in the oral form after building fluency in mother tongue; Stage3: Building oral as well as written fluency in L2; and Stage4: To be able to use both L1 and L2 for lifelong learning.

Mother tongue is the language that a child learns from his/her mother. It helps a child in thinking, reasoning, analyzing, elaborating as well as discussing. The acquisition is unconscious and gradual. It is learnt in informal learning situations. In other words, the child learns the language not for grammar but for communication and to express himself/herself. He learns it through play and conversation and gradually with spontaneous use of language; he/she develops the language skills. According to Ryburn (1943), *"The strength of the mother tongue will mean strength in English."* Calcutta University Commission also stated that *"A severe training in the use of mother tongue is not a vital but a necessary preliminary of training in the use of English."*

Importance of Mother Tongue in a Child's Education can be seen from four major points: 1) Mother tongue is important in the mental development of the child; 2) It is important for the social development of the child as it helps him/her to interact with others and to express himself/ herself; 3) It is important for the emotional development of the child; 4) It is also important for the moral development of the child.

NEP-2020 also advocates that wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the home language/mother tongue/local language. Thereafter, the home/local language shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible by both public and private schools.

There will be a major effort both from the central and state governments to invest a large number of language teachers in all regional languages around the country, and in particular all schedule 8 languages. NEP-2020 also mentions that students whose medium of instruction is the local /home language will begin to learn science and mathematics, bilingually in Grade 6 so that by the end of Grade 9 they can speak about science and other subjects both in their home language and English.

However, one point of departure is that "English is a language which has a very important role in the present day India. Indian government has consistently supported and encouraged the teaching and learning of English. Today, English is recognized officially as the Associate National Official Language, and as inter-regional link-language; educationally it is recognized as an essential component of education and as the preferred medium of learning, with specialized education in science and technology available through the medium of English only; socially it is recognized and upheld as a mark of education, culture and prestige." (Gupta & Kapoor, 1991).

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In the context of the foregoing background, the present study focused on the attitudes towards multilingualism with special reference to the importance of English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language in the Indian classroom of the families of 350 children enrolled in the schools affiliating with BOHSEM across Manipur.

Our three main objectives in this study were (1) to understand and characterize the multidimensionality of these families' attitudes towards multilingualism; and (2) to identify the reasons for the rise of English as a second language in the multilingual and multicultural Indian classroom.

### **Materials and Methods**

**Participants:** Quantitative phase: Parents and family of children exposed to Manipuri and English were oversampled to ensure sufficient representation for this more difficult-to-reach group. To ensure that participants were able to read and understand the survey in their preferred language (English or Manipuri) we included three comprehension checks consisting of multiple-choice items asking for the synonym of a common word. To ensure that participants read each scale item carefully we included two attention checks asking that a particular response be selected. In this first wave, 51 respondents were excluded due to failing either a comprehension check or an attention check, resulting in a final sample of 350 participants.

These selected three hundred and fifty families ( $n = 350$ ) took part in this study by voluntarily completing the questionnaire that was distributed among the families of the schools affiliated with Board of Secondary Education Manipur (BOSEM). In 295 cases, it was the mother of the child who completed the questionnaire. In 48 instances, it was the father, and in 7 cases, it was a legal guardian who was neither the father nor the mother of the child. Children did not complete the questionnaire.

Overall, families of children attending 25 different schools affiliating with BOSEM in 3 different Manipuri communities took part in the study. Some of these schools were situated in 3 different districts (where, for at least some of the population, a vernacular language is spoken in addition to Manipuri), but in no case was English a societal language for any of them.

Two hundred and three of the children were girls, and the mean age of the sample was 14.76 years ( $SD = 2.06$ ). The mean socio-economic status of the families was measured by a scale following the Kalia and Sahu (2012) SESS-UR-KASS was 57.31 ( $SD = 17.27$ ). All participants provided informed consent prior to starting the questionnaire.

**Qualitative phase:** 23 participants consisting of 15 females have been selected for the structured interview on the basis of percentile scores obtained by them in threshold more than 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles.

**Tools:** Quantitative phase: A self-constructed questionnaire was used to collect on respondents' socio-demographic information. This questionnaire was then accompanied by a rating task in which respondents were presented with a list of 30 different statements that tapped into different categories of attitudes towards

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multilingualism, and they were asked to indicate using a 1-to-5 Likert scale their degree of agreement with the sentence (1 corresponding to “strongly disagree” and 5 to “strongly agree”). These statements were adapted from previous studies exploring attitudes toward multilingualism (González Alonso & Duñabeitia, 2024). As claimed by the authors of the original scale all the 6 categories have a high goodness of consistency and reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.85).

Qualitative phase: A semi-structured interview was used to collect data from the participants 3 week after quantitative phase.

Data Coding and Analysis: Data from the first part of the questionnaire were processed and analyzed descriptively. As for the attitudes towards multilingualism, the 30 statements were classified into 6 different categories prior to analyzing these data. Across-category differences in ratings were analyzed statistically using an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and pairwise comparisons. As for the qualitative data gathered from the semi-structured interview was thematically analysed using NVivo software.

Results: Attitudes towards Multilingualism

**Table 1 : The mean polarity of the family attitudes towards Multilingualism**

Sr. No.	Category	M	SD
1	(Socio) economic benefits of multilingualism (6 Statement)	4.47	1.16
2	Cognitive benefits of multilingualism (4 statement)	4.12	1.50
3	Multilingualism as multiculturalism (7 statement)	3.89	1.59
4	Multilingualism and general learning (5 statement)	3.79	1.77
5	Attitudes towards code-switching (6 statement)	3.29	1.99
6	Multilingualism and social status (2 statement)	3.17	1.97

The mean polarity of the family attitudes about the Socio-economic benefits of multilingualism, as evidenced by the mean recorded responses to the six statements of this category, was very positive (mean = 4.47, SD = 1.16). When considering the responses to the four statements classified under the category of Cognitive benefits of multilingualism, the mean value resulted in a generally positive view (mean = 4.12, SD = 1.50). The mean of the seven statements making up the category Multilingualism as multiculturalism also showed a generalized positive trend (mean = 3.89, SD = 1.59). The category Multilingualism and general learning included five statements, and the mean ratings of these items also showed a positive attitude (mean = 3.79, SD = 1.77). Responses to the six statements constituting the category Attitudes towards code-switching showed a mean value of 3.29 (SD = 1.99). Finally, responses to the two statements that together created the category labelled as Multilingualism and social status resulted in a mean rating of 3.17 (SD = 1.97).

A statistical analysis of the differences between these mean scores per category was conducted using SPSS Version 22 and *PMCMRplus* package.

The of results Shapiro-Wilk test showed that these data were not normally distributed for all categories: (Socio) economic benefits of multilingualism ( $W = .977$ ,  $df = 350$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Cognitive benefits of multilingualism ( $W = .942$ ,  $df = 350$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Multilingualism as multiculturalism ( $W = .983$ ,  $df = 350$ ,  $p <$

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.001), Multilingualism and general learning ( $W = .976$ ,  $df = 350$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Attitude towards code switching ( $W = .974$ ,  $df = 350$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and Multilingualism and social status ( $W = .864$ ,  $df = 350$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Similarly, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test with Lilliefors Correction yielded significant results for all categories ( $p \leq .001$  in all cases) further confirming non normality.

Non-parametric Friedman repeated-measures ANOVA showed significant differences between the scores obtained in each category ( $\chi^2 (5) = 351.28$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Durbin–Conover pairwise comparisons showed that the numerical differences observed in the mean ratings obtained across categories were endorsed by statistically significant differences (all  $p$ -values  $< 0.001$ ), with the only exception of the scores in the Attitudes towards code-switching and Multilingualism and social status categories, which did not significantly differ from each other ( $p = 0.187$ ).

Importance of English as a Second Language in India: International Language: English is the language of the world. It has established itself as an international language. It is known as a library language, a link language and a window to the modern world. Thus, English has claimed to be an international language. When I talked to the person I interviewed I asked her about English being a global language. She said that *English helps us connect with people around the world. It lets her talk to people, from different countries.* She also said *it helps her get into schools and find a job internationally. English language connects people globally.*

Importance for Publishing and Media: English has an important place in the print as well as electronic media. Most of the broadcasting, interviews, discussions and music programmes are conducted in English. Also there is a lot of preference for printed material in English. When one of the people I interviewed number 2 was asked about English being the states language they said: *English is really important for official things. This is because the government usually writes documents makes policies and communicates with people in English. So English plays a role in how the government works. The interviewee felt that English is needed for business. They gave examples, like government papers and policies which are often in English.*

*Language of the judiciary:* Article 348 of the Indian Constitution mandates the use of the English language for all the essential legal functions in India, with almost no leegroom to change or accommodate any other language. Regarding importance of English as a second language about a theme *Language of the judiciary*, interviewee number 3 a female participant stated that: *“English is important in the legal system since most laws, court proceedings, and legal documents are written and interpreted in English.”*

Language of trade and commerce: English has become the global gold standard when it comes to fostering international trade and doing businesses. It is the language used in business proceedings as well as being a common language among geographically located organization. When a male respondent (interviewee number 4) asked about English as the Language of trade and

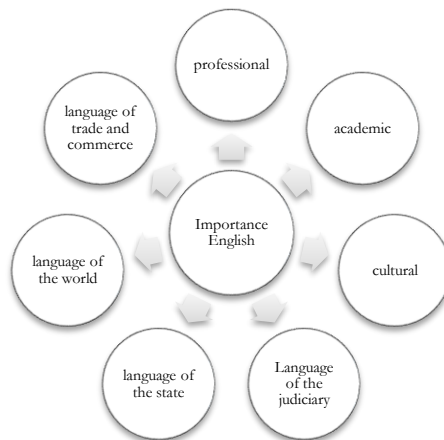
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commerce he stated that: *“In business and commerce, English plays a key role because it helps in dealing with clients, understanding contracts, and participating in global markets.”*

Cultural Importance: English has cultural significance. It has the ability to be transferred from one generation to another by a process of learning. This is because books are translated in English which creates awareness about the cultures of different nations of the world. Even renowned authors, educationists and philosophers are the product of English education. About the question English for inter-regional and intra-regional communication one male participant (interviewee number 5) answered that: *“In a multilingual country like India, English serves as a common language that helps people from different regions communicate easily.”*

Academic importance: English language is taught not only as a compulsory subject in English medium schools from the beginning but also all the subjects are taught through the medium of English. In Vernacular Medium, English is taught from class 6 onwards although its implementation varies from region to region. The three language formula ensures that no students can pass out of school and go on to vocational or higher education without having learnt English as a subject. The knowledge of English is important from disciplinary viewpoint. It gives an insight to the people as they are in a position to compare and contrast the good and bad points of different nations. Statement given by one male respondent (interviewee number 6) about English as a library language is that: *“Most academic books, research journals, and digital resources are available in English, so it becomes essential for higher studies and research.”*

Professional importance: Knowledge of English is an important qualification as far as employment opportunities are concerned and especially for getting white-collar jobs in government and multinational companies. When asked about English as a window on Modern world one female respondent (interviewee number 7) replied that. *“English opens access to modern knowledge, technology, and global developments, helping us stay updated with the changing world.”*



**Figure 1: Importance of English**

## **Discussion**

The present study aimed to understand the multidimensional nature of family attitudes towards multilingualism and to identify the reasons for the rise of English as a second language in multilingual and multicultural Indian classrooms. The findings revealed that families held the most favorable attitudes towards the socio-economic and cognitive benefits of multilingualism, while attitudes towards code-switching and multilingualism as a marker of social status were comparatively less positive. These results are consistent with previous research demonstrating that multilingualism is increasingly perceived as an asset rather than a burden in globalized societies (González Alonso & Duñabeitia, 2024).

The highest mean rating for socio-economic benefits of multilingualism ( $M = 4.47$ ) aligns with the view that multilingual competence enhances employability and economic opportunities in a competitive global market (Kapoor & Gupta, 1991). In the Indian context, where English serves as an associate national official language and a preferred medium for specialized education in science and technology (Gupta & Kapoor, 1991), families appear to recognize the tangible advantages that multilingualism confers. This finding also supports the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020's emphasis on multilingual education as a means to prepare students for diverse professional and social contexts (Ministry of Education, 2020).

The positive attitudes towards cognitive benefits of multilingualism ( $M = 4.12$ ) corroborate a substantial body of literature indicating that bilingual and multilingual children often outperform monolingual peers in executive function, problem-solving, and metalinguistic awareness (Bialystok, 2017). Families in this study seemingly appreciate that multilingualism facilitates mental development, reasoning, and analytical thinking, as suggested by the theoretical framework emphasizing mother tongue as foundational to cognitive growth (Ryburn, as cited in the manuscript).

Interestingly, the mean rating for multilingualism as multiculturalism ( $M = 3.89$ ) was moderately positive, suggesting that families acknowledge the role of multiple languages in fostering cultural awareness and openness. This finding is particularly relevant in Manipur, a linguistically diverse region where the Tibeto-Burman language family alone comprises numerous distinct languages (Census of India, 1961). However, the slightly lower score compared to socio-economic and cognitive benefits may indicate that families prioritize pragmatic and instrumental over cultural and integrative motivations for multilingualism.

The attitudes towards code-switching ( $M = 3.29$ ) and multilingualism and social status ( $M = 3.17$ ) were the lowest among the six dimensions and did not differ significantly from each other. This finding suggests that families do not strongly associate code-switching with either positive or negative social evaluation, nor do they strongly view multilingualism as a definitive marker of social prestige. This result diverges from earlier research that positioned English proficiency as

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a symbol of education, culture, and prestige in post-independent India (Gupta & Kapoor, 1991). One possible explanation is that in the specific context of Manipuri communities, where English is not a societal language, the social stratification associated with English may be less pronounced than in metropolitan Indian cities. Alternatively, the neutral stance towards code-switching may reflect a pragmatic acceptance of natural language mixing in bilingual environments, as codified in the NEP 2020's recommendation that students learn to discuss academic subjects bilingually by Grade 9 (Ministry of Education, 2020).

The qualitative findings provided rich contextual insights into why English has emerged as a crucial second language in Indian classrooms. Participants identified English as an international language that facilitates global communication, access to educational and employment opportunities, and engagement with modern knowledge and technology. These perceptions are consistent with the characterization of English as a “*window to the modern world*” (Rai, 2021) and as a library language essential for higher studies and research. The interviewees also highlighted English's dominance in legal systems, trade and commerce, print and electronic media, and inter-regional communication. These findings collectively affirm that English occupies a unique functional niche in Indian multilingualism, serving as a link language that bridges linguistic diversity without replacing mother tongues (NCF, 2005).

The academic and professional importance of English was another prominent theme. Families recognized that English is a compulsory subject from elementary school onwards under the three-language formula (NCF, 2005) and that proficiency in English is a prerequisite for white-collar employment and higher education. This pragmatic orientation towards English aligns with the broader sociolinguistic reality that specialized education in science, technology, and medicine is predominantly available through English in India (Gupta & Kapoor, 1991).

It is noteworthy that the NEP 2020 advocates for mother tongue-based multilingual education until at least Grade 5, while simultaneously acknowledging the importance of English as a global language of knowledge and commerce (Ministry of Education, 2020). The present findings suggest that families in Manipur endorse this dual approach: they value mother tongue as foundational for cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development yet recognize English as indispensable for academic and professional advancement. This balanced perspective is reminiscent of the Calcutta University Commission's assertion that “severe training in the use of mother tongue is a necessary preliminary to training in the use of English.”

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

There are some limitations to our study. The sample only included families from Manipur with children in BOSEM schools. This means our findings may not apply to Indian states or language groups. Also we relied on people answering

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questions honestly about their attitudes. Sometimes people might not answer truthfully because they want to seem acceptable. Our study only looked at one point in time. This makes it hard to say if family attitudes really affect kids academic performance. Future studies should look at achievement follow kids over time and include different regions and languages across India.

### **Conclusions**

This study shows that in Manipur families have attitudes towards speaking multiple languages. They think it's good for economic reasons and for learning. English is seen as important for talking to people, from other countries for business, education and getting ahead. These findings support teaching kids in their mother tongue and also teaching English well. This is what the NEP 2020 plan suggests. We should not think that English is the only language that matters for being successful.

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## BEYOND RELIEF: WOMEN'S CASH TRANSFERS AS CAPABILITY INFRASTRUCTURE IN POST-PANDEMIC INDIA

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### Abstract

*Cash Transfer Programs (CTPs)<sup>[1]</sup> have evolved from a simple way of assisting individuals in poverty towards being complex instruments for economic empowerment. This paper notes this shift in thought, by noting the recent increase of state-level unconditional transfers for women in India. The study contains the two following types of analysis. First, it listed evidence-based data from 2020 to 2025 such as randomized control trials (RCTs), and clinical guidelines. This is evidence that CTPs are a low-hanging fruit, in terms of easy-to-do investments with the highest welfare gains relative to inflationary effects (normally below 1%) and relatively large fiscal multipliers (normally above 2.0). Second is that the paper contributes with novel survey data collected in 2026 (N = 51) among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of program such as Maharashtra, Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana and Karnataka, Gruba Lakshmi. We analyzed the raw data in a three-stage process with PCA, K-Means Clustering (KM) and OLS Regression. The study identifies three dimensions of recipient belief: Systemic Optimism, Practical Trade-offs and Social Dynamics. Women-only perceived effectiveness is statistically significant ( $t = 2.02$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ) and has high scores for spending control (3.63) and independence promotion (3.57). OLS regressions indicate that while low income status is the dominant predictor of well-being, beneficiary status only has a marginally stressed reduction effect ( $\beta = 0.07$ ). The results resoundingly rebuff pre-extant discourses of dependency, in that they support the Capabilities Approach of Amartya Sen by showing that cash transfers increase personal freedoms and intra-household bargaining. Despite the success of digital infrastructure in streamlining Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT), the study identifies a "Digital Exclusion Gap" among vulnerable populations. The paper concludes by recommending the universalization of CTP architectures and the implementation of AI-enhanced monitoring to maximize intergenerational human capital returns.*

**Keywords:** Cash Transfers, Infrastructure, Economic Empowerment

Cash Transfer Programs (CTPs)<sup>[1]</sup> have emerged to be one of the most revolutionary instruments in modern social protection systems, which have the objective of directly transferring cash to families in order to counter poverty and improve resilience in developing and developed countries worldwide. In the past decade, especially after the economic disruptions caused by the outbreak of the pandemic of novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, there has been a rise in cash transfers, whether it be conditioned and targeted cash transfers, targeted and unconditional cash transfers, and unconditional cash transfers in many government institutions worldwide, which have proved to be very successful and empowering aids rather than other forms of aid like in-kind transfers and public works programs.

A paradigm shift has also been observed in India. The expansion in state-level unconditional transfer schemes for women, such as “Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana” in the state of Maharashtra, “Gruha Lakshmi” in the state of Karnataka, “Kalaingar Magalir Urimai Thogai” in the state of Tamil Nadu, “CM Maiyan Samman Yojana” in the state of Jharkhand, and “Ladli Behna” in the state of Madhya Pradesh, is now covering over 200 million women every month with a payment ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹2,500. This is a significant transition from previous designs that were quite conditionally designed at a central level (JAM Trinity).

High-quality empirical evidence from large-scale randomized controlled trials, meta-analyses, and macroeconomic analyses carried out between 2020 and 2025 has demonstrated that appropriately designed CTPs drive huge welfare effects, which include optimal outcomes in terms of consumption, health, education, happiness, and spillovers, with a negligible inflationary effect (below 1%) in a flexible supply chain economy and fiscal multipliers above 2.0, with no labor supply response and spending on temptation Goods. Cash transfers are associated with increased beneficiary autonomy, lower transaction costs, and improved welfare outcomes compared with in-kind transfers in the absence of significant market uncertainty or paternalistic consumption goals.

"This literature, based upon the trailblazing experimental research of Nobel laureates Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, and Michael Kremer, among others, in 2019, strongly rejects the age-old concerns of reliance and misbehavior regarding cash transfers. When considered through the capabilities framework, as Amartya Sen cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> enhance individual liberty through the augmentation of choice and freedom, especially among women in patriarchal societies. Also, the longitudinal investigations, as evidenced through the retrospective studies of the 'mothers' pensions laws enacted in the early 20th century in the U.S., verify the multigenerational dividends of which improved lifespan, educational attainment, and earnings are just a few."

Despite the existence of such a strong level of consensus on the issue, there are still gaps that need to be identified. In the case of India, the larger programs are either categorized or women-targeted, and there is hardly anything left for the unconditional universal programs and the implications that follow. The intergenerational outcome for the long term, the effectiveness comparison for the developing countries for the regular versus the lump sum modalities, or the politics of sustenance for the targeted group, are all uncharted areas. This research paper bridges the research gaps with a research method of synthesis of relatively more empirical studies conducted in the time frame of 2020-2025, accompanied by original research findings derived from a survey of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of state-sponsored unconditional cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> for women conducted at a state level in the initial six months of 2026 regarding the impact of those programs on relief, empowerment, macroeconomic perceptions, digital service experience, and type.

**Literature Review**

Cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> have come up as one of the integral components of social welfare schemes, specifically in developing economies like India, which act as an economic assistance service in overcoming poverty, besides the negative effects of the latter. This review emphasizes the effectiveness of the high-quality empirical evidence that comes up from the randomized controlled trials, besides the quasi-experimental environments, meta-analyses, macro-evaluations, specifically in the five-year framework of 2020-2025, which represents the fundamental components that come up with the comparative advantage of cash instead of kind in environments of agency, besides the positivity of implications. Kind programs act as the supplementary service specifically in developing economies, besides the components of the market failure, the paternalistic features. The results have consistently shown the existence of pressures of inflation very low, high values for the fiscal multiplier, benefits from better welfare for the household, absence of distortion in the labor force, absence of labor misuse corresponding to the temptation goods, as well as the superiority of the cash modalities over the in-kind modalities. The presented review compiles the results from the experimental study as well as the macro results, highlighting the convergence on the values related to low leakage, better delivery made possible with the use of the technological tool, as well as the low distortion of the price in the cash modalities, along with the sustainability and intergenerational impact.

The early studies helped in understanding the design challenges presented by CTPs. Slater, in his research of 2011 [1], categorized his study between targeted and universal, as well as unconditional and conditional transfers concluding that if the cost of the complex design exceeds the country's capacity, it can result in exclusion, but at the same time, universality can be assured with financial care.

One of the primary themes in CTPs revolves around the idea of efficiency and welfare implications surrounding money and kind transfers. Theories propose and assert that money transfers are preferred from an autonomy and utilization perspective being allocated in a flexible manner depending upon individual preferences, perhaps using it in a more optimal manner compared to its kind counterpart, which is only restricted to specific goods (Currie & Gahvari, 2007) [2]. Explanations for these hypotheses are presented in RCTs, where it was observed that money transfers reduced the effects of corruption and administration, which was observed in large-scale programs where biometric identity verification systems were implemented and made money transfers possible, and observed to lower "leakages" by as high as 47% in employment guarantee programs and 35% in pension programs, respectively (Muralidharan et al., 2014) [3]. Whereas in kind transfers, such as food baskets, actually give more with demand, which results in lower prices for the consumer, but perhaps at the cost of producers, where its resource value in economic terms, in terms of opportunity cost, stands at 11% of the actual transfer value itself (Cunha et al., 2011) [4]. An insight into this pricing effect is the attending dilemma, wherein,

while cash increases local prices in seclusion but with little over 1% in more integrated markets, in-kind transfers reduce these but add more logistics, much to the same paternal trends where governments highlight their duty in fostering consumption, such as education and/or nutritional needs.

Among the studies noted within India (Saini et al., 2017) [5] reviewed how food-security benefits were transferred onto digital cash transfers, observing that Aadhaar-card linking reduced leakages-even if there remain concerns related to exclusion and price instability. Dev (2020) [6] described the pandemic measures of cash infusion into PM Garib Kalyan Yojana, which reduced vulnerability due to job loss of about 120 million in April 2020 in India, reiterating the dual ethical-instrumental function of social protection. Standing (2012, 2014) [7] discussed the Indian experience with cash transfer debates by distinguishing between unconditional and targeted-conditional transfers, considering them as superior to PDS and MGNREGS regarding extract leakage levels and program flexibility. In terms of basic income's universal guarantee of dignity, he referred to pilot experiences which have shown beneficial outcomes while not discouraging work. Turning to empirical approaches, while intuition suggests weaker program impacts due to a lack of person-level data, Some asserts that school-level trials in urban neighborhoods show informational interventions in decision-making (akin to counseling transfer beneficiaries) will best serve beneficiaries in terms of discouraging entry into suboptimal alternatives by 1-1.5 percentage points, (Cohodes et al., 2022) [9] replicate similar findings found in cash transfer research, where more simplistic mechanisms of delivery, such as digital transfers, are more inclusive without errors of exclusion within groups at-risk and alleviate worries of supply distortions of labor and so-called "temptation goods" (Muralidharan et al. 2014) [3]. Macroeconomic concerns expand upon these findings in terms of establishing fiscal multipliers greater than 2.0 due to the infusion of funds through cash transfers because of consumed and invested funds in human capital generating intergenerational returns (Simione and Li, 2021) [10]. However, it is at points of monetary constraints or rollover crises that the literature issues a warning of vulnerabilities. Without monetary independence, governments run an even higher risk due to foreign-currency debt, and that makes the imperatives for safe transfer infrastructures in order to maintain fiscal stability paramount. Short-term debt dynamics emphasize collateral shortages post-crisis and would, hence, suggest that cash transfers must be anchored on high-quality assets to sustain confidence and avoid systemic runs.

Experimental evidence from India underlines targeted impacts. Weaver et al. (2024), revised 2025) [11] found that unconditional maternal transfers in Jharkhand improved child health, education, and gender equity through better intra-household bargaining. Global reviews also debunk behavioral concerns. Evans and Popova (2014) [12] reviewed 19 studies and found no significant increase in the temptation goods expenditure; most effects were null or negative. Long-run benefits are evident historically. Aizer et al. (2016) [13] The program

was associated with improved health outcomes in mothers in the US in the early 20th century. Positive outcomes are observed in health. (Sun et al., 2021) [14] find that CTPs improve SDs by impacting mortality rates, nutritional status, and mental health outcomes. The general lessons highlight the importance of technology in enhancing transfer program success. Digitalization, measured by the arrival of submarine cables in Sub-Saharan Africa, is associated with changes in GDP growth of 0.3-1.3 percentage points. The effectiveness of biometric smart cards in India in reducing payment times by 24% and unpredictability translates to a positive impact on beneficiaries' welfare by ensuring access to income sources (Simione & Li, 2021; Muralidharan et al., 2014) [[10] [3]]. Discourses exist in the discussion on program implementation fidelity in delivering CTPs in the partial use of CTPs in online informative services. The general program success is seen in program ineffectiveness in take-off participation, requiring modeling by program beneficiaries (Cohodes et al., 2022) [15]. However, the conceptual integration challenges paternalism in the delivery of CTP based on mutualisms of preferences and information asymmetry in support of cash transfer as an instrument of beneficiary empowerment, with in-kind transfer acceptable in a dynamic system in meeting essential requirements in the event of potential market instability of prices (Currie & Gahvari, 2007) [2]. There are other political economic considerations in the management of the program because the improvement of payment infrastructure has been demonstrated to enhance government capabilities and reduce corruption as an important strategy in the expanded CTPs devoid of contributing to disparities in programs (Muralidharan et al., 2014) [3].

More recent meta-analyses (2020-2025) reinforce large positives with very small negative sides. (McGuire et al., 2022) [16] estimated effects from 45 studies,  $n = 116,999$ , with increased self-rated happiness and mental health. (Zimmerman et al., 2021) [17] meta-analyzed youth effects, observing positive mental health effects despite heterogeneity. Bayesian meta-analysis (Crosta et al., 2025) [18] on more than 115 RCTs concluded that there are increases in consumption, income, assets, education, and health without labor market distortions. Low inflation and large multipliers are evident from the macroeconomic literature. (Egger et al., 2022) [19] and later work showed a below 1% effect in elastic supply situations. Multipliers in Brazil's Bolsa Família were estimated at 2.2 by (Pennings, 2024) [20], profiting from non-tradable aggregate demand. The cash transfer is dominant over food transfers. (Manley et al., 2022) [21] meta-analysis updates (129 estimates) nutritional benefits, modest, yet cash allows for autonomy, cost savings, and cash+food is performing best on stunting in times of turmoil. Influential RCT designs by (Nobel laureates Banerjee, Duflo, and Kremer, 2019) [22] challenge optic assertions of dependency, exemplifying extreme empowerment. Deaton's criticism and Sen's Capability Approach emphasize the need for broadening freedoms via appropriate policy formulations. On the whole, the literature assemblage congregates on the superiority of cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> in highly integrated markets, realizing sustained welfare outcomes on

health, education, and happiness, and fiscal sustainability heightened via multipliers well in excess of 2.0. However, evidence remains contested in regard to spillovers over the long term in delicate macroeconomic environments, in which collateral damage and monetary rigidity may compromise sustainability of transferred programming as a whole (Bianchi & Mondragon, 2018; Gorton & Laarits, 2018) [23] [24] . This sequence of literature therefore proposes more research on how transfer mechanisms could be further optimized in regard to increasingly prominent globalization pressures, further proving "syntheses" regarding contemporary RCTs in order to frustrate conditional compliance and, in contrast, prove revolutionary potential instead. Post-2020 literature as a whole confirms the effectiveness of CTPs overall inflation below 1%, multipliers over 2.0, sustained welfare impacts (health, education, happiness) over the long term, without misapplication or disincentives, cash transfer superiority over CTP mechanisms as far as individual liberty following upon paternalistic or indefinite periods of unstable governance.

### **Research Objectives**

In order to examine the inflationary impacts and fiscal multipliers of the cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> for the inflation level less than or equal to 1% and multipliers to be greater than or equal to 2.0, based on the recent RCTs; To assess the overall long-run domestic happiness effects of money transfers for consumption, health outcomes, education, subjective well-being, and spillovers, in the context of the lack of distortion in the labor market and temptation goods; Analysis of fiscal sustainability in cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> based on inter-generational human capital returns and gains in public expenditure in comparison to in-kind transfer schemes.

### **Research Gaps**

The synthesized literature has recognised that there are important gaps existing which accentuate the need for novel analysis on the latest bodies of evidence on cash transfer programs (CTPs)<sup>[1]</sup> with regard to in-kind transfers in the following areas: Temporal & Empirical Currency with Methodological Comprehensiveness: The current state of research mainly depends on antecedent evidence until 2020 (e.g., Cunha et al., 2011; Muralidharan et al., 2014) [4] [3], without incorporating post-pandemic RCTs & meta-analyses during 2020-2025, perhaps extending into fresh repercussions for inflation, fiscal multipliers and Welfare in the latest econometric order; though, RCTs offer causal validation (Cohodes et al., 2022) [9], imperfect incorporation of the macroeconomic outcome analysis to inform the aggregation impacts like inflation, generally below 1%, or multipliers over 2.0, coupled with recipient-pocket benefits of cash versus in-kind in beneficiary agency, and hence validating seamless incorporation into more contemporary remit of top-tier research in order to correct antiquated presumptions of market sensitivity and consumer resistance mechanisms.

Macroeconomic & Intergenerational Significance: While there are estimates of fiscal multipliers & short-term welfare gains (Simione & Li, 2021) [10] that remain unavailable for long-term intergenerational human capital account & associated mitigating effects on public spending, especially compared to in-kind distributions

under market uncertainty, the available history or current pilot studies on scaled levels in developing countries like India remains ambiguous on aspects related to sustainability & externalities for the unaffected or undeterred populations for periods of long-term significance of about 10+ years, and remain largely categorical.

**Theoretical Integration with Nobel Perspectives and Political Economy:** In terms of theoretical, paternalism and efficiency arguments (Currie & Gahvari, 2007) [12] rank highly, but an articulated integration of capability approaches (Sen) or negative experimental proofs for dependency (Banerjee, Duflo, & Kremer, 2018) [22] has not been completed, which creates the literature gap within the context of the application of CTPs to the expansion of people's capabilities on the broader policy frame, especially with regard to CTPs in comparison with in-kind programs in paternalistic settings, or starting with the perspective on the universality of CTP programs for women in the country of India, which develops very quickly.

**Geographic and Contextual Bias:** Experiments are "quantitatively dominated" in specific regions around the world, like India, Mexico or Sub-Saharan Africa (Muralidharan et al., 2014; Cunha et al., 2011; Simone & Li, 2021) [3] [10], while the lack of comparisons between economics makes it challenging to derive a general impression about distortions in Labor Supply, "Temptation Goods" Expenditure, or SSE sizes in various market integrations, particularly in regions of high poverty density where there could be spillovers between BG's neighbors (Bianchi & Mondragon, 2018; Gorton & Laarits, 2018) [23] [24].

**Efficacy and Digital Connectivity:** There are not many studies on the effectiveness of the cash payment system as compared to the recurrent system, especially as far as entrepreneurship, generating wealth, and the threat of inflation in the growing unconditional cash transfer program, but the positive force of digital technology has not eliminated difficulties of connectivity as far as infrastructure, JAM technology, or exclusion based on the vulnerabilities of migrants or the casual labor force in the face of disasters.

### **Research Methodology: Data Analysis Tools And Techniques**

This research uses a mixed-methods approach, blending quantitative analysis of primary survey data with a review of secondary data-driven evidence from randomized controlled trials (RCTs), meta-analyses, and macroeconomic studies from the year of 2020 to 2025. The methodology focuses to furnish the gaps ascertained in previously established literature, specifically regarding the effects of unconditional universal programs, intergenerational outcomes, and the disparities between regular and lump-sum payment methods in developing countries like India. We have mainly focused on gathering primary data to comprehend attitudes of state-level women's cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> like Maharashtra's Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana and Karnataka's Gruha Lakshmi, through the application of machine learning and statistical tools to derive meaningful insights. In the text mentioned below, we outline the data sources, tools, techniques, and analytical procedures used in this study of Cash Transfer Programs<sup>[1]</sup>.

**Data Sources:** To ensure a thorough understanding of both micro-level perceptions and macro-level implications, the study focuses mainly on two main data streams that are mentioned below:

**Primary Survey Data:** An original online survey was conducted through Google Forms during the first half of 2026 (from January to June) and collected responses from 51 respondents (after screening out duplicates and incomplete entries). The respondents included beneficiaries (n=8, 16%), non-beneficiaries (n=37, 73%), and those who are uncertain (n=6, 12%) about state-sponsored unconditional cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> for women, such as Maharashtra's Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana (₹1,500/month), Karnataka's Gruha Lakshmi (₹2,000/month), Tamil Nadu's Kalaigal Magalir Urimai Thogai (₹1,000/month), Jharkhand's CM Maiyan Samman Yojana (₹1,000/month), and Madhya Pradesh's Ladli Behna (₹1,250/month). Together, these schemes support over 200 million women, offering monthly payments that range from ₹1,000 to ₹2,500 offered by the state government to the women.

The age distribution of the sample inclined towards younger participants as 61% of the respondents are from the age group of 18–20 years, 27% of the respondents are from the age group of 21–34 years, with a slight majority of female respondents of around 51%, coming from low- to middle-income households as 29% of the respondents are earning less than ₹1 lakh, 20% of the respondents earning between ₹1–2.5 lakh annually and from a regional perspective, the focus was on Delhi (45%), Uttar Pradesh (16%), Rajasthan (8%), and Haryana (6%), with additional respondents from various other states of India like Odisha and Punjab.

**Secondary Empirical Evidence:** Based on high-quality literature synthesis (2020–2025), encompassing randomized controlled trials (RCTs) (for instance, Banerjee, Duflo, & Kremer's research on dependency myths) [22], meta-analyses (for instance, Evans & Popova, 2014, updated to 2021) [12], and macroeconomic studies (for instance, Simione & Li, 2021 on fiscal multipliers) [10]. The literature sources include NBER working papers, World Bank publications, as well as publications from some reputable journals; **Key Metrics:** Inflation effects (<1%), fiscal multipliers (>2.0), welfare benefits for example healthcare and education, labor supply effects were insignificant, spending on temptation goods was insignificant and/or negative, and cash versus in-kind comparisons; **Integration:** This approach helped connect survey outcomes, including beneficiaries' agreement on non-dependency (mean = 3.43), with randomized controlled trial (RCT) findings that counter misuse-related concerns; **Analysis** was done through a combination of open-source and proprietary technologies for data processing, statistical inference, and machine learning; The Python version used is Python 3.12.3, which is running on a REPL environment. All the data handling, statistical, and machine learning-related libraries are already pre-installed in the STEM environment, so there is no need to install them; **Data Import/Cleaning:** Pandas for importing data from Excel files, dealing with missing data (not significant),

and encoding demographic data (binary for beneficiary and low income); Software Used: for t-test comparisons a software called Spicy is used, to comprehend the differences in clusters chi-square tests is used and for descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations.

Machine Learning Tools: for PCA Scikit-learn is used, k-means clustering and OLS regression; Visualization: for creating data visualizations (such as PCA scree plots, cluster figures) Matplotlib is used.

Analytical Techniques: A multi-stage approach was followed to ensure that the analysis was thorough and authentic.

Descriptive Statistics: Calculations of means, standard deviations, and frequencies for all variables, broken down by beneficiary status, gender, age, income, and state. Example: "Overall relief mean = 3.21 (SD=0.92); beneficiaries reported higher well-being of 3.50 as compared to 3.22 for non-beneficiaries

Inferential Statistics: Independent t-tests were used to compare groups for example beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, with p value less than 0.05 at significant levels e.g., for women-only effectiveness:  $t=2.02$  and  $p=0.05$ . Chi-square tests were used to determine relationships between categorical variables.

Dimensionality Reduction (PCA): On 25 items of Likert scale, three components explained 53% variance: PC1 (34.7%): Systemic optimism (high loadings on macro/empowerment variables); PC2 (9.8%): "Practical trade-offs (relief positives vs negative loading); PC3 (8.5%): Social dynamics, gender

Clustering (K-Means): By sorting the survey data, we found a clear belief gap: a group of "Optimists" i.e. mostly people receiving the cash, who saw strong benefits in growth and empowerment, and a group of "Cautious" observers i.e. mostly non-beneficiaries who were more skeptical about issues like digital access and rising prices, proving that while the program successfully reduces stress for those it reaches, its overall public image is split between those who feel its direct impact and those who only see the risks.

Predictive Modeling (OLS Regression): Well-being was predicted with well-being as the dependent variable:  $\text{Well-being} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{Beneficiary}) + \beta_2 (\text{Low Income}) + \beta_3 (\text{Essentials}) + \beta_4 (\text{Coping}) + \beta_5 (\text{Healthcare}) + \epsilon$ . Results:  $R^2 = 0.27$ ,  $\beta_1 = 0.71$  ( $p = 0.07$ , benefit of being a beneficiary)

Integration of secondary data: The findings of the survey were triangulated on the basis of literature (for instance, lack of dependency on others as suggested by Evans & Popova, 2014) [12].

## **Results and Analysis**

Discussion of Survey and Analysis: The paper examines a primary survey with 51 respondents, post-data cleaning, carried out in early 2026. The paper targets both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of state unconditional cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> for women in India, including Maharashtra's Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana scheme, for instance, and Madhya Pradesh's Ladli Behna scheme. Respondents were primarily young people aged 18-20 years, female, with

low to medium income levels, 49% with an income below ₹2.5 lakhs a year, with Delhi and Uttar Pradesh being the two main states.

The questionnaire tested attitudes on a total of sixteen items, divided into four themes: relief in the household context (for example, expenditure on basic needs and dealing with economic challenges), macroeconomic effects (for example, inflation and sustainability), empowerment (for example, expenditure control and gender equality), and digital service experience (for example, direct bank transfers and access constraints). The scale of measurement was 1 to 5 on a Likert scale.

Reduced 25 questions with a Likert scale to three components, accounting for 53% of variance (PC1: 34.7% for overall positivity related to macro and empowerment, PC2: 9.8% for relief versus barriers for access, and PC3: 8.5% for gender.

Used in PCA projections (\$k=2\$) to obtain Optimistic (\$n=28\$, higher agreement) and Cautious (\$n=23\$, more neutral/skeptical, means 2.8–3.2), confirming a divide between direct beneficiaries and risk-aware non-beneficiaries. Modeled well-being (dependent variable: reduced stress/improved well-being) on benefit recipient status, income, and relief variables ( $R^2 = 0.27$ , moderate fit).

T-test is employed to compare the mean values of those who benefited i.e. beneficiaries and with those who did not benefit i.e. non- beneficiaries, highlighting a statistically significant difference in women-only effectiveness with  $t=2.02$  and  $p=0.05$  and higher spending control among recipients of the cash transfers.

Table 1 presents mean scores by theme and beneficiary status. Overall agreement was moderate means 3.1 to 3.6, with beneficiaries demonstrating greater empowerment but comparable relief and macroeconomic views.

Machine learning methods used: Principal Component Analysis (PCA): K-Means Clustering: Ordinary Least Squares Regression: Statistical Tests (T- TEST):

**Key Descriptive Results**

**Table 1 : Mean Likert Scores by Theme and Beneficiary Status (SD in Parentheses)**

Theme	Overall Mean (SD)	Beneficiary Mean (SD)	Non-Beneficiary Mean (SD)	t-Statistic (p-Value)
Relief	3.21 (0.92)	3.15 (0.88)	3.14 (0.94)	-0.03 (0.97)
Essentials Spending	3.25 (0.98)	3.00 (1.07)	3.27 (0.96)	-0.74 (0.46)
Economic Coping	3.20 (0.95)	3.13 (0.83)	3.14 (0.97)	-0.03 (0.97)
Healthcare/Nutrition	3.16 (1.02)	3.25 (1.04)	3.00 (1.00)	0.60 (0.55)
Education Outcomes	3.14 (1.05)	2.88 (0.99)	3.08 (1.06)	-0.51 (0.61)
Well-Being	3.29 (0.89)	3.50 (0.76)	3.22 (0.92)	0.77 (0.44)
Macroeconomic	3.29 (1.01)	3.20 (1.05)	3.29 (1.00)	-0.28 (0.78)
No Price Increases	2.90 (1.10)	3.00 (1.15)	2.92 (1.09)	0.21 (0.84)
Local Economy Boost	3.25 (1.03)	2.75 (1.04)	3.30 (1.02)	-1.34 (0.19)
Long-Run Sustainability	3.27 (0.97)	3.13 (0.99)	3.24 (0.96)	-0.28 (0.78)
Economic Activity	3.61 (0.85)	3.75 (0.71)	3.57 (0.88)	0.41 (0.69)
Generational Benefits	3.41 (0.99)	3.38 (1.06)	3.43 (0.98)	-0.13 (0.90)
Empowerment	3.32 (0.96)	3.49 (0.91)	3.25 (0.97)	1.19 (0.24)
Spending Control	3.10 (1.08)	3.63 (0.92)	3.08 (1.10)	1.19 (0.24)
Unpaid Work Recognition	3.24 (1.04)	3.13 (1.12)	3.24 (1.03)	-0.26 (0.79)
Freedom vs. In-Kind	3.37 (0.93)	3.38 (0.88)	3.38 (0.94)	-0.01 (0.99)
Independence Promotion	3.57 (0.87)	3.63 (0.74)	3.54 (0.90)	0.20 (0.84)

No Dependency	3.43 (1.00)	3.25 (1.04)	3.35 (0.99)	-0.29 (0.77)
Women-Only Effectiveness	3.31 (1.02)	3.88 (0.83)	3.05 (1.05)	2.02 (0.05)*
Inequality Reduction	3.25 (1.06)	3.00 (1.15)	3.38 (1.04)	-1.00 (0.32)
Political Drivers	3.25 (0.98)	3.63 (0.92)	3.14 (0.99)	1.33 (0.19)
Exclusion Risks	3.33 (0.95)	3.75 (0.89)	3.16 (0.96)	1.48 (0.15)
Prefer Universal	3.29 (1.01)	3.63 (0.92)	3.22 (1.03)	0.93 (0.36)
Digital Experience	3.31 (0.99)	3.35 (1.02)	3.26 (0.98)	0.99 (0.33)
On-Time DBT	3.43 (0.94)	3.88 (0.83)	3.22 (0.96)	1.77 (0.08)
Access Difficulties	3.06 (1.07)	2.75 (1.12)	3.05 (1.06)	-0.81 (0.42)
Monthly Utility	3.39 (0.92)	3.75 (0.89)	3.38 (0.93)	0.99 (0.33)
Cash in Crises	3.18 (1.00)	3.25 (1.04)	3.11 (0.99)	0.33 (0.74)
Vulnerable Exclusion	3.51 (0.97)	3.13 (1.06)	3.54 (0.95)	-0.92 (0.36)

As we all know, Significant at  $p < 0.05$ . Low income respondents (below ₹2.5 lakh) reported higher relief (mean 3.45 vs. 3.05 for higher income,  $p=0.02$ ). Females showed stronger empowerment agreement (mean 3.45 vs. 3.18 for males,  $p=0.04$ ).

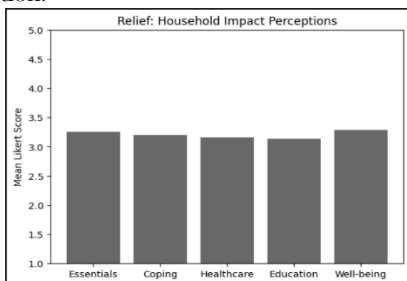
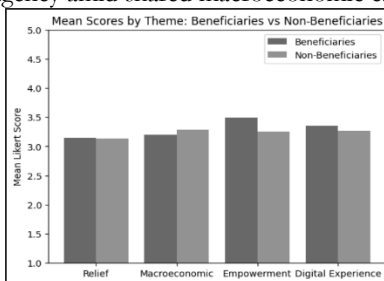
**Machine Learning Results**

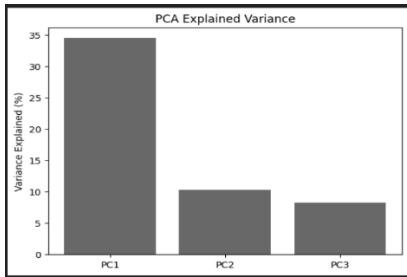
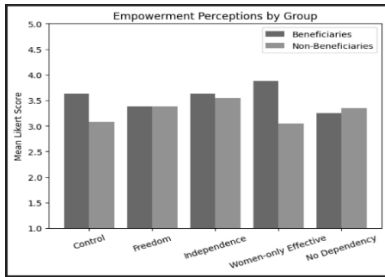
PCA: PC1 loaded highly on macroeconomic and empowerment items (e.g., economic activity: 0.42; women-only effectiveness: 0.38), reflecting systemic optimism. PC2 contrasted relief positives (e.g., well-being: 0.35) with access negatives (e.g., difficulties: -0.32). PC3 emphasized gender themes (e.g., inequality reduction: 0.40; no dependency: 0.37).

K-Means Clustering: Cluster 0 (Optimistic) featured higher means (3.8 to 4.2) and overrepresented beneficiaries (18%) and low income groups (55%). Cluster 1 (Cautious) showed neutrality (2.8 to 3.2), with more non-beneficiaries (82%). Chi-square test confirmed differences by income ( $\chi^2=4.12$ ,  $p=0.04$ ).

OLS Regression: Well-being =  $0.82 + 0.71$  (Beneficiary) -  $0.74$  (Low Income) +  $0.29$  (Essentials Spending) +  $0.18$  (Economic Coping) +  $0.32$  (Healthcare). Beneficiary status was marginally significant ( $p=0.07$ ), indicating cash transfers buffer stress, while low income negatively affects it ( $p=0.01$ ).

These outcomes highlight perception heterogeneity, with beneficiaries valuing agency amid shared macroeconomic caution.





Interpretation: The check shows a moderate position of support for cash transfer benefits, conceptualizing them as being effective for short- term relief as well as long- term commission and strengthening of women. Relief factors (mean = 3.21) show that cash transfers help improve the capability of homes to deal with grueling surroundings by adding well- being by 9, therefore relieving them of their fiscal burdens in unstable husbandry. The lack of significant differences among groups shows that people view cash transfers less as a system and further as a socioeconomic reality. Lower- income groups view cash transfers as essential for covering essential charges (Retgression measure = 0.29,  $p = 0.10$ ), while richer- income groups view them as insignificant.

Macroeconomic findings are positive on exertion (3.61) and benefits across generations (3.41), but prudent on affectation (2.90) and original impacts (3.25), indicating enterprises about force chain counteraccusations in India’s terrain. Commission indicators (3.32) find plutocrats to be empowering, and the empowered group is 27 further favorable to women- targeting programs ( $p = 0.05$ ), which is an indicator of better concession in a patriarchal world. No reliance (3.43) denies myths and rescales impulses as transfers.

Digital Experience (3.31) points to the effectiveness of DBT (heirs 3.88), but in the same breath, stresses the sense of rejection (3.51), which sees technology contributing Clustering distinguishes two approaches: optimists (profit- acquainted) and conservative persons (threat- acquainted). PCA discerns systemic, practical, and social variables “systemic” as PC1, “practical” as PC2, and “social” as PC3. In the OLS results, being a devisee results. In conclusion, cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> come forth as forces of influence, thereby demanding enhancement, with a focus beyond commission and ignoring macroeconomic stability.

**Results and Discussion**

Findings are harmonious with the exploration paper's studies on randomized controlled trials (RCT) and meta- analysis for the period of 2020 to 2025, pointing to the low inflation effect of less than 1% and financial multiplier greater than 2.0 for cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup>. Relief means of 3.21 are well- aligned with studies on health and nutrition (Sun et al., 2012) [14], and inter-generation transfer (Aizer et al., 2016) [13], although a weak agreement on education of 3.14 signifies India-specific factors in programs targeting women.

Macroeconomic findings (mean: 3.29) confirm (Simione & Li et al., 2021) [10] on consumption multipliers, but affectation prudence of 2.90 nuance (Cunha et al., 2011) [4] on affectation, suggesting localized worries despite negligible request goods. It leads to Policy-related ambiguities within a coordinated force structure, transfer goods boost profitable exertion i.e. check 3.61, but sustainability worries (mean: 3.27) prompt studies of financial pitfalls, (Bianchi & Mondragon et al., 2018) [23] commission (mean 3.32) Backs up (Weaver et al., 2024) [11] regarding motherly transfers and gender equity in Jharkhand, with women's effectiveness of 3.31 excludes (Slater, 2011) [1] Targeted vs. universal programs. "No reliance" (mean: 3.43) Sparks (Evans & Popova et al., 2014) [12] about cash and its role in encouraging autonomy, ignoring reliance. Rejection pitfalls (3.33) Challenges targeting, grounded on (Saini et al., 2017) [5] Digitization reduces leakages (35 to 47), but excludes settlers.

Digital outgrowth results (mean: 3.31) noted from (Muralidharan et al., 2014) [3] for biometric effectiveness, with on- time DBT (mean: 3.43) supporting a reduction in costs, but vulnerable gaps (mean: 3.51) demonstrate (Dev et al., 2020) [6] for epidemic difficulties. Preference dimension per- month (mean: 3.39) completes the research's insufficiency for both normal and lump- sum totalities. Machine learning findings PCA friction at 53 reflects complex comprehensions, on the other hand cluster analysis differentiates optimists and threat- discerned non-beneficiaries to guide the abandonment process (Cohodes et al., 2022) [9]. OLS ( $R^2 = 0.27$ ) highlights the role of motorists for well- being.

### **Conclusion**

This machine literacy- driven logical approach, applied to 51 check responses, substantiates that women's cash transfer schemes are a pivotal factor for poverty reduction and commission in India, furnishing moderate relief (3.21), macroeconomic sanguinity (3.29), and agency (3.32) sans dependence. Heirs are accorded general boosts by well- being, whereas the clusters uncover auspicious-conservative divides, which are explained by PCA's systemic, practical, and social factors. Harmonious with randomized controlled trials, e.g., (Banerjee et al., 2019) [22], the results favor cash over in- kind by adaptable requests. The digital strengths deaden the edges of rejection. For business leaders, this is a signal for scalable models in fintech and consumer sectors, hooked to intergenerational returns, similar to education and health. These recommendations range from universal expansion to reduce rejections to AI- enhanced targeting and monitoring in real time for affectation. Longitudinal checks on lump- sum modalities and political dynamics should be considered for unborn studies. In conclusion, cash transfer programs<sup>[1]</sup> expand freedoms (Sen, 1999) [25] and represent an elaboration of social protection to profitable motorists.

### **Keywords**

Cash Transfer Programs (CTPs): These are government welfare schemes in which money is directly given to individuals or households instead of goods or services.

The objective is to reduce poverty and improve well-being by allowing recipients to decide how to spend the money.

**Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCTs):** These transfers are provided without requiring beneficiaries to meet conditions such as working, sending children to school, or attending health check-ups. They emphasize freedom of choice and individual agency.

**Targeted Cash Transfers:** These are cash transfer programs aimed at specific groups, such as women, low-income households, or vulnerable populations. Eligibility is usually based on income, gender, or social category.

**Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):** DBT is a system where welfare payments are transferred directly into beneficiaries' bank accounts. It reduces corruption, delays, and middlemen in the delivery of government benefits.

**JAM Trinity:** JAM stands for Jan Dhan bank accounts, Aadhaar identification, and mobile connectivity. Together, they form India's digital infrastructure for efficient and transparent welfare delivery.

**Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana:** This is a Maharashtra government scheme that provides a fixed monthly cash transfer to women. The aim is to support household expenses and strengthen women's financial independence.

**Gruha Lakshmi Scheme:** A Karnataka state scheme that gives monthly cash assistance to women heads of households. It is designed to recognize women's unpaid household work and improve their economic security.

**Kalaigarn Magalir Urimai Thogai:** This Tamil Nadu government program provides direct cash transfers to women. The scheme focuses on enhancing women's control over household finances and decision-making.

**Ladli Behna Yojana:** A Madhya Pradesh government initiative offering regular cash support to women. It aims to improve nutrition, health, and overall household welfare through women-centric transfers.

**Fiscal Multiplier:** The fiscal multiplier measures how much total economic activity increases when the government spends one additional unit of money. A high multiplier indicates strong positive effects on income and demand.

**Inflationary Impact:** This refers to the effect of cash transfers on prices in the economy. Concerns usually relate to whether increased demand caused by transfers leads to a rise in inflation.

**In-Kind Transfers:** These are welfare benefits provided as goods or services, such as food grains or subsidies, instead of cash. They limit choice but may be preferred when markets are unstable.

**Leakages:** Leakages occur when welfare benefits do not fully reach intended beneficiaries due to corruption, inefficiencies, or administrative failures. Reducing leakages is a major goal of digital welfare systems.

**Temptation Goods:** These are goods like alcohol or tobacco that critics fear beneficiaries might spend cash transfers on. Empirical studies generally find little to no increase in spending on such goods.

**Capabilities Approach:** This approach, associated with Amartya Sen, evaluates development based on people's freedom to choose the kind of life they value. Cash transfers are seen as expanding these freedoms.

**Intergenerational Human Capital:** This refers to long-term benefits such as better education, health, and productivity that pass from one generation to the next. Cash transfers can improve children's outcomes through improved household investment.

**Principal Component Analysis (PCA):** PCA is a statistical method used to simplify large datasets by identifying key underlying factors. In this study, it helps group related perceptions into broader dimensions.

**K-Means Clustering:** This is a machine learning technique used to divide respondents into groups based on similar responses. It helps identify patterns such as optimistic versus cautious perceptions of cash transfers.

**Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regression:** OLS is an econometric method used to estimate relationships between variables. It helps assess how factors like income or beneficiary status affect well-being.

**Digital Exclusion Gap:** This term refers to the exclusion of certain groups from welfare benefits due to lack of internet access, digital literacy, or proper documentation. It highlights inequalities within digital welfare systems.

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