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- **Contribute to building a new social order based on human dignity and social justice.**
- **Work with a preferential option for the vulnerable and exploited, both locally and globally.**
- **Build cadre of young, competent professionals having a global perspective and a strong value base of compassion, personal integrity, moderation, tolerance and self-respect.**

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Chief Editors

Dr. Lidwin Dias, Principal, College of Social Work (Autonomous), Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai
Contact details: cswnnprincipal@gmail.com/ Tel: 022-2209- 3778

Dr. Geeta Balakrishnan, Former Principal, College of Social Work (Autonomous), Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai Contact details: geeta.balakrishnan@gmail.com/ Tel: 022-2200-2615

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Contents

Editorial

1. Anxiety, Depression And Social Support Among Persons With Muscular Dystrophy 01
-Ubaidulla K. V, Dr. Laxmi , & Jayachandran M R

2. Radical Phase Of Dalit Politics: Tryst With Radical Rhetoric 19
-Dr. Amandeep

3. Menstrual Hygiene Management At The Bottom Of The Pyramid: A Corporate Social Responsibility Approach 33
-Dr. Anup Raj & Dr. Kavita Kulkarni

4. Vulnerabilities Of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups In India 52
- Dr. Minaketan Behera

5. Gender-based Violence In Public Spaces And Its Effects On Women's Mobility 67
- Dr. Rashmi Jain & Anamika Priyadarshani

6. Impact Of Group-based Microfinance Programme On Women's Empowerment: An Exploratory Study From The District Of West Bengal 83
- Dr. Avijit Brahmachary

7. Impact Of Kashmir Unrest On Elderly People In Kashmir: A Qualitative Study 102
-Shahida Akhtar & Dr. Wakar Amin

8. The Effect Of Religious Tourism On The Sustainable Development Of Tribal Communities: A Case Study Of Kondha Tribes 113
-Dr. Poonam Painuly & Kolluru Laxmi Goutami

9. The Study Of Gender Audit To Measures Gender Biases In State Universities In Rajasthan 130
-Gyana Ranjan Panda, Jagdish Ullas Jadhav & Madhu Bala

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EDITORIAL

The current issue of Perspectives in Social Work includes empirical research and literature review articles echoing the challenges faced in the realization of the sustainable development goals for gender equality, reduced inequalities, climate action and peace justice, and strong institutions. The article foregrounds its perspectives and recommendations based on the lived realities and voices of the people. From a paradigm of critical perspective, the authors address intersectional factors of gender, caste, disability, and vulnerability and recommend the need for inclusive practice and welfare measures.

The research article *Anxiety, Depression, and Social Support among Persons with Muscular Dystrophy* by Ubaidulla K. V, Dr. Laxmi, and Jayachandran M R highlight the mental health concerns of persons living with muscular dystrophy with specific reference to anxiety and depression. The researcher provides a statistical overview of the magnitude of people living with disability in India and with Muscular Dystrophy in Kerala. The research found that 70% of the respondents suffered from a moderate level of anxiety and 35% had one or another form of depression. The researcher also found an association between social-economic factors such as employment and marital status and the level of anxiety and depression among respondents. Most of the respondents (67.5%) had social support, as an important factor for the effective rehabilitation of persons living with muscular dystrophy. Important social work interventions such as generating awareness on muscular dystrophy, welfare provisions by the government, types of treatment approaches, and psychosocial support to the persons and their families were recommended.

The article *Radical phase of Dalit politics: Tryst with Radical Rhetoric* by Dr. Amandeep critically reviews the significance of Dalit Literature and political mobilization of Dalits through the

Dalit Panther drawn from the legacy of Ambedkar's Movement against caste. Dalit literature foregrounds voices of dissensus, protest, and rage against social exclusion and marginalization determined by caste identities. The Dalit Panthers inspired by the Black Panthers championed the cause of the upliftment of Dalits, concientised Dalit youth to their socio-economic and political realities, and promoted the need to redefine the *Self* beyond the framework of caste and class. The author discusses the struggles of the Dalit Movement post-Abedkarite in striving to balance the need for self-aggrandizement or representing the Dalit standpoint and their lived realities.

The research article *Menstrual hygiene management at the bottom of the pyramid: A Corporate Social Responsibility approach* by Dr. Anup Raj and Dr. Kavita Kulkarni discusses the findings of a qualitative study with twenty-seven interviews of Community Health Workers in Uttar Pradesh in India. The findings endorsed the importance of five factors: gender, identity, resource availability and training, interaction/collaboration with other stakeholders, and innovative community engagement practices in the promotion of menstrual hygiene practices by Community Health workers sponsored by Corporate Social Responsibility Projects.

The social exclusion and marginalization of 72 particularly vulnerable tribal groups are the focus of the article *Vulnerabilities of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in India* by Dr. Minaketan Behera based on an extensive review of secondary literature. Important concerns of the groups such as exclusion from statistical enumeration, declining populations; contextual understanding of the needs and concerns; unequal resource distribution due to among the PVGTs; and threats to livelihoods due to climate change, exploitative market structures, and working conditions including bonded labour; forest and development policies of the state causing eviction, displacement, isolation, stigma, low literacy attributed to availability and accessibility of infrastructure and educational facilities; and

implementation of mainstream education without culturally sensitive pedagogical approaches. The author draws attention to the health status among the various group of PVTGs, their vulnerabilities to endemics, and socioeconomic factors and state policies detrimental to their overall health and wellbeing. The author strongly recommends state support for the implementation of schemes, welfare programmes, community-based learning, and community health approaches for the inclusion of *Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in India*

The research article *Gender-Based Violence in public spaces and its effects on women's mobility* by Dr. Rashmi Jain and Anamika Priyadarshani examines how gendered segregation of private and public spaces, with men asserting their dominance over public spaces leads to the spatial expression of patriarchy. The study explores how gendered perceptions and prescriptive norms impact women's decisions in claiming public spaces affecting all aspects of life. Fear of gender-based violence, preoccupation with the dress, male gaze, being blamed for provoking attention in public spaces, or being unaccompanied by male members were concerns expressed by the respondents.

The research article *The Impact of Group-based Microfinance Programme on Women's Empowerment: An exploratory study from the district of West Bengal* by Dr. Avjit Brahmachary through an extensive inferential statistical analysis critically examines how microfinance transcends from being an economic development approach to an empowerment approach. With a specific focus on women respondents, the researcher explores the concientisation process that women participants of microfinance initiatives obtain. A change in perception of the role of women participants of microfinance, increase in involvement in decision making in household matters, and ability to cope and confront gender-based violence were identified as important social indicators in the study.

An inevitable outcome of armed conflict has been the long-term physical and psychological impact on the lives of civilians. Societies destroyed by armed conflicts have borne the toll in terms of loss of human life and economic, political, and social disintegration. The widespread insecurity and hopelessness and trauma caused by the aftermath of the armed conflict leave populations especially the most vulnerable grappling with a sense of hopelessness and helplessness. The research article *the impact of Kashmir unrest on elderly people in Kashmir: A Qualitative Study by* Shahida Akhtar and Dr. Wakar Amin provides first-hand accounts of the testimonies of the elderly as secondary victims. The double jeopardy of dealing with the developmental challenges of late adulthood and taking "charge" of their broken lives due to the loss of a loved one is sensitively addressed by the researcher.

The research article *The effect of Religious Tourism on Sustainable Development of Tribal Communities: A case study of Kondha Tribes* by Dr. Poonam Painuly and Kolluru Laxmi Goutami juxtapositions the impact of religious tourism from the paradigm of economic development and prosperity of the communities on one side and the impact on environmental degradation on the other. The author while acknowledging the lived realities of the respondents representing the Kondha communities on how religious tourism has impacted their lives both in terms of promoting sustainable livelihood options and promotion and visibilisation of ethnic and native identities and cultures, endorses the need for urgent measures to mitigate the impact of religious tourism through sustainable development.

Institutions of Higher Education can be important stakeholders in the promotion of gender equality and inclusivity. The research article *Gender Audit to measures Gender Biases in State* Universities in Rajasthan Gyana Ranjan Panda, Jagdish Ullas Jadhav and Madhu Bala examines the gender mainstreaming initiatives undertaken by *selected eight state universities of Rajasthan through the methodological tool of Gender Audit*

methodological tool Gender audit as a management and planning tool evaluates the institutional culture and how well it integrates the gender perspective into its work. The findings of the study are presented in terms of the socio-economic context and its association with the participation of women in education. Low female enrollment in courses offered, fewer women occupying decision-making positions, absence of gender-sensitive infrastructure arrangements, and welfare schemes and policies in the Universities were some of the issues of concern found in the study. The researcher suggests the need to promote the importance of moving beyond tokenism through concrete measures in the promotion of gender equality endorsed by the Sustainable Development Goal 5.

Sonia Rodrigues

College of Social Work (Empowered Autonomous)

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38, New Marine Lines, Mumbai- 400 020. Tel: +91-22-2200 2615, 2206 7345
Email: colsocwk@gmail.com / nn@cswnn.edu.in
Website: http://www.cswnn.edu.in