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- 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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EDITORIAL

This issue of *Perspectives in Social Work* brings together eight scholarly articles that critically engage with diverse dimensions of women's lives and broader gender concerns in contemporary society. Collectively, the contributions foreground how gender is shaped by structural inequalities, social institutions, and everyday lived experiences. The articles address a wide thematic range. Some focus on the experiences of spouses of migrants, highlighting the emotional, social, and economic vulnerabilities faced by women in translocal and transnational family arrangements. Others examine gendered experiences in urban transport systems, revealing how mobility, safety, and access to public spaces are deeply influenced by gender norms and power relations. The issue also includes critical explorations of suppressed masculinities, drawing attention to how rigid gender expectations marginalize men who do not conform to dominant ideals of masculinity. Further, studies on youth perceptions of domestic violence shed light on how young people understand, normalize, or challenge violence within intimate and familial relationships, underscoring the importance of early gender socialization. In addition, the exclusion and marginalization of LGBTQ communities are examined, emphasizing how heteronormativity and binary gender frameworks limit access to rights, services, and social acceptance. Overall, this issue contributes to ongoing feminist and social work debates by advocating for inclusive, rights-based, and transformative approaches to practice, policy, and research on women and gender issues.

The first article by Ms. Bhumika and Dr. Sanjeev Kumar examines the theoretical framework and evolution of eco feminism, focusing not just on women's involvement in local and global environmental initiatives but also on current global issues including social inequality, climate change and biodiversity loss. Ecofeminism is a resilient theoretical framework that has adapted its methodologies while maintaining its core commitment to

exposing the structural connections between gender-based oppression and ecological degradation. The article offers holistic solutions that integrate environmental justice with gender parity and reimagine human relationships with nature with reciprocity, care, and mutual interdependence rather than domination and exploitation.

The second article by Arul Vinnarasi and Dr. Essac Raphel focuses on the impact of increasing transnational migration on family structures and cross-border marriages. Unlike the migrants who may experience upward mobility abroad, their partners frequently experience prolonged separation, increased household responsibilities and social expectations in their home communities, with financial benefits but at emotional costs. The article assesses the role of social networks, community engagement and digital communication in mitigating stress and promoting resilience.

The third article by Monika Rajak and Dr. Minara Yeasmin aims to uncover the gaps in the existing literature on the psychological empowerment of women from 1994 to 2024. Once these gaps are identified, a future research agenda is proposed with focus on developing theories and tools along with qualitative, mixed and multi methods to measure women's psychological empowerment. The framework for the psychological empowerment of women suggested in this article provides intrapersonal, interactional and behavioral components.

The fourth article by Anu Rani is about understanding and reimagining gender in Delhi's urban transport planning. The article critically examines how national transport policies and successive Master Plans have only narrowly understood and addressed women commuters from a lens of safety, ignoring the structural, socio-cultural, and institutional barriers they face as service users as well as employees of the transport workforce. The article posits that a gender-inclusive policy must acknowledge the diverse roles of women, not merely as commuters, but as active

participants in transport planning and the workforce to ensure urban mobility is equitable and sustainable.

Jhimli Chatterjee and Dr. Pritha Roy's article compares psychosocial stress and its determinants between a cross-section of childless and childbearing women in Eastern India. The results show significantly higher anxiety, depression and hopelessness; with poorer marital adjustment, social support, overall quality of life, coping skills and lower self-esteem among infertile women. The article proposes that a state of infertility cannot be defined as merely a medical condition, but includes a deeply social and psychological experience, shaped by gender norms, cultural expectations, and interpersonal dynamics.

The sixth article by Meghna Vesvikar is on the experiences of masculinity of slum youth in Mumbai. The article proposes a need for creating non-Eurocentric subtypes of masculinities that relate to uniquely Indian circumstances such as caste. The article suggests the outlines of media to be used to interact with slum dwelling youth and generate awareness among them as well as partnership with the youth and CSOs/NGOs in this content creation.

Rushila Rebello's article focuses on the perception and attitude of youth towards domestic violence against married women in the slums of Mumbai. The article offers interesting insights such as the impact of gender and education on not just the perception of domestic violence but also its frequency and intensity. The article outlines the family, educational institute and community level interventions as well as those at broader societal and legal levels such as media and religious and cultural institutions.

The last article is by Dr. Sangeeta Krishna on the politics of LGBTQ exclusion from a human rights perspective. According to the article, most LGBTQ individuals are still hesitant to disclose their identity to others because of social stigma, homophobia and discriminatory laws. Academic institutions, businesses, schools,

and colleges must promote conversations about sexuality and raise awareness about discrimination against members of this community. Instead of a duality of theory and ground realities, there needs to be a synthesis of academic knowledge and LGBTQ persons' socio- cultural reality.

We hope this edition brings you valuable field-based knowledge that is relevant to social work education and practice. The insights presented in these articles aim to strengthen critical understanding of gender issues and enhance reflexive, rights-based interventions. It is our hope that this issue will contribute meaningfully to socially just and inclusive social work engagements.

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