SYMBOLIC APPROPRIATION OF *PARAI* AS A TOOL OF RESISTANCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON HEALTH BEHAVIOURS AND COPING MECHANISMS AMONG *PARAI* DRUMMERS IN TAMILNADU.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled ***"Symbolic appropriation of Parai as a tool of resistance and its implications on health behaviours and coping mechanisms among Parai drummers in Tamilnadu."*** is a bonafide record of my original research work. This dissertation has not been submitted, either in part or in full, to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. All sources of information, including published and unpublished works of other authors, have been appropriately cited and acknowledged within the text.



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certified that the dissertation entitled ***"Symbolic appropriation of Parai as a tool of resistance and its implications on health behaviours and coping mechanisms among Parai drummers in Tamilnadu."*** is a Bonafide record of the research work carried out by ***Dr. Shriram A*** under my guidance and supervision.

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the ***Master of Public Health*** degree.



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In the memory of Reddiyur Pandiyan, Rohith Vemula,

and all Martyrs of the Anti-Caste struggle....

I dedicate this work....

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GLOSSARY

Abbreviations

- **AMC**: Alternative Media Centre. (Federation of Folk Artists in Tamil Nadu)
- **NEET**: National Eligibility cum Entrance Test
- **BC**: Backward Class.
- **CM**: Chief Minister.
- **Caste-Hindus**: Ambedkarist Term used to refer Dominant or upper castes in the Hindu hierarchy.
- **Dalit**: An Assertive Political term used to represent Oppressed caste communities.
- **EPF**: Emancipatory Power Framework.
- **G20**: The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier intergovernmental forum for international economic cooperation
- **IDI**: In-depth Interview.
- **LPF**: Limiting Power Framework
- **MLA**: Member of Legislative Assembly.
- **NGO**: Non-Governmental Organization.
- **PALA**: People's Art and Literary Association (*Makkal Kalai Ilakkiya Kazhagam*) is an organization associated with left-wing political organizations, in particular the New Democratic Labor Front.
- **SC**: Scheduled Castes.
- **ST**: Scheduled Tribes.
- **VAO**: Village Administrative Officer

- **WHO**: World Health Organization

Meaning for Tamil words Used

- **Chennai Sangamam**: Tamil cultural festival held in Chennai.
- **Kalaimamani**: Tamil Nadu government award for artistic excellence.
- **Kalai Kuzhu**: Cultural or folk performance troupe.
- **Kizhvenmani**: Site of the 1968 Dalit massacre in Tamil Nadu.
- **Maatukombaattam**: Folk art related to cattle grazing.
- **Melavalavu**: Village where Dalit leaders were assasinated in 1997.
- **Naadhaswaram**: South Indian classical wind instrument. (Considered now as an auspicious instrument)
- **Paadai**: A Funeral Bier used to carry the body of a deceased person.
- **Panjami land**: Land allocated to Dalits under colonial rule.
- **Patta**: Legal land ownership document.
- **Puliyangudi**: Tamil Nadu town noted in caste conflict contexts.
- **Sudarmani**: Artistic Award in Tamil Nadu.
- **Tavil**: South Indian percussion instrument. (Now considered to be an auspicious instrument)
- **Thondu Velai**: Compulsory caste bound slave works performed by Dalits to Caste Hindus.
- **Veedhi Virudhu Vizha**: Street-based public felicitation festival.

ABSTRACT

Background: This study looks at how Parai drumming which was once considered a caste-based duty tied to funerals and rituals, is being transformed by Dalit communities in Tamil Nadu into a powerful symbol of resistance, pride, and self-expression. Historically marked by stigma, the *Parai* is now being reclaimed in new ways through cultural performance, community building, and political action. It also looks at how this change affects the identity, coping mechanisms, and health of Parai drummers and what it reveals about empowerment among marginalized communities.

Methodology: This qualitative research is based on in-depth interviews and Photo elicitation with 20 Parai drummers from different districts across Tamil Nadu. The participants recruited fall under three broad performance contexts: drummers who play mainly for funerals, those who perform in artistic or commercial settings, and those who use Parai for political reasons. The data collected was then analysed to identify recurring themes and patterns. Throughout the study, I reflected on my own position and worked along with my guide to check and refine the interpretations.

Results: The findings show a clear shift in how *Parai* is understood and used. Drummers who were tied to caste-based funeral performances described experiences of humiliation and limited control. However, drummers who play in activist and artistic settings mentioned *Parai* as a source of healing, dignity, and collective strength. Six major themes, ranging from surviving oppression to asserting identity, surfaced among these three groups. These changes were linked to better mental health, stronger social relationships, and a growing sense of purpose and self-

worth. These changes also map onto the various dimensions of community empowerment discussed in the health promotion literature.

Conclusions: Parai is no longer just a drum; it has become a symbol of resistance and dignity. This study shows that when communities resist oppression by reclaiming and reshaping the cultural symbols, it can lead to real improvements in health and well-being. It calls for public health efforts to recognize and support such strong bottom-up, culture-based forms of empowerment as meaningful ways to address inequity and to promote social justice.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Dalits in India experience considerable health inequities due to socio-economic disadvantages and systemic caste-based discrimination (Ramaiah, 2015). On average, Dalit people's life expectancy is 4-5 years shorter than Caste-Hindus, along with higher infant mortality rates, which are mainly driven by factors such as poverty, malnutrition, and limited healthcare access (Kumari and Mohanty, 2020). Discrimination in healthcare institutions exacerbates these challenges (Sreekumar, 2023; Thorat and Joshi, 2015). Determinants of health, such as poor living conditions, lack of clean water, and inadequate sanitation, heighten the prevalence of communicable diseases, while delayed diagnoses and inadequate treatment worsen outcomes for chronic diseases, including diabetes. The studies have shown how the caste system, with its associated social and economic disadvantages, plays a crucial role in affecting the health status of Dalits. The *Lancet* Series on racism, xenophobia, discrimination, and health points out that Discrimination affects health through chronic stress, increasing the allostatic load, and resulting in diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular conditions (Devakumar et al., 2022).

Mental health impacts, including depression and anxiety, drive maladaptive behaviours such as substance abuse as a coping mechanism (Selvarajah et al., 2022). Adaptive coping strategies include community support, where individuals rely on social networks to buffer the negative effects of discrimination (Selvarajah et al., 2022). Amid this discrimination and marginalization, the concept of resistance becomes crucial. Resistance by subordinated and

marginalised communities against the oppressive social structures acts as an active response that helps to reclaim their dignity, identity, and well-being. Nancy Krieger's Eco-social theory emphasizes the importance of these resistance strategies, as they are essential in shaping health outcomes of the communities (Krieger, 2001). According to Krieger, resistance is not merely a reaction to injustice but an integral process that shapes both individual and community resilience, aiding in the protection of physical and mental health by reducing the impacts of chronic stress from discrimination. The coping strategies employed by marginalized groups often include forms of resistance that are not only social but also cultural. In Tamil Nadu, cultural reappropriation has led to new forms of resistance through the creation of anti-caste music and performance practices (Natrajan, 2018; Sherinian, 2009, 2014).

1.2 Rationale

Nancy Krieger argues that any epidemiological study that focuses on health inequity must examine both the mechanisms by which marginalized communities are more unhealthy and also the study of resistance to oppression to completely understand the determinants of health (Krieger, 1999, 2012). She emphasizes that analysis of health disparities focusing only on the oppressive aspects of social determinants, such as racism and poverty, without considering how individuals and communities resist these forces inherently carries the risk of portraying affected populations as passive victims. This perspective not only undermines the agency of these communities but also obscures the protective effects that resistance can have on health outcomes. Hence, understanding these dynamics is critical for fully grasping the health implications of cultural resistance. Historically associated with a Dalit community in Tamil Nadu, *Parai* drumming was marked by systemic discrimination, including harassment and

abuse, with drummers being ostracized, which symbolized their alienation from the very rituals they contributed to (Clark-Decès, 2006). Over time, *Parai,* the drum, once regarded as a symbol of impurity, has been re-signified through efforts to reclaim and celebrate it as a symbol of Dalit identity and resistance, challenging entrenched caste norms (C Arun, 2007). With limited research on the health implications of acts of resistance, Krieger, through her research, highlights the need to consider how acts of resistance, such as the symbolic appropriation of *Parai*, might not only serve as a means of asserting identity and dignity but also could buffer against the negative health impacts of discrimination. Through this study, I attempt to explore such processes of resistance. In the first instance, I thus propose to explore the symbolic reappropriation of Parai and identify the various correlates that emerge in this process that can be linked to resistance and community empowerment.

1.3 Research Question

How does the symbolic appropriation of *Parai* as a tool of resistance influence the health behaviours and coping mechanisms among *parai* drummers in Tamil Nadu?

1.4 Objectives

- To document lived experiences of *parai* drummers that are indicative of caste-based discrimination.

- To understand how the responses to caste-based discrimination shape their health behaviours.

- To explore how *Parai* drumming as a symbol of resistance influences drummers' health and well-being.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Literature Search Strategy

To develop the literature review for this thesis, an extensive search was carried out using academic databases such as Google Scholar, Web of Science, SAGE Journals and other relevant sources. The search focused on key terms including “caste”, “discrimination”, “Parai”, “Dalit art”, “mental health”, “coping mechanisms”, “community empowerment”, “Resistance” and “health inequities”. Articles which explored the intersections of caste-based discrimination, symbolic resistance, structural determinants of health, and the role of art in community well-being were included. Studies that focused only on the biomedical aspects of mental health without socio-cultural framing were excluded. Additional sources were identified based on references from the books, recommendations by the guide, and manual searches, ensuring conceptual depth and relevance to the themes of caste, cultural assertion, and empowerment through *Parai*.

2.2 Caste

Definitions of caste within the literature are very heterogeneous, with debates centering on Indian specificity versus universal generalizability, its features, and even its hierarchical nature. While some scholars focus on local histories of caste and its distinctions in India, others tend to compare it to similar oppressive concepts like race, class, or ethnicity in other contexts. The scholarly exploration of caste began with British colonial rule. In 1816, Dubois, in his work, *Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies*, first employed the term "Caste” (Dirks,

1992). The need for this exploration on caste particularly arose from the need to control and understand their colonial subjects. Even in the 1901 Census British formalised a bureaucratic approach that intertwined caste with race through methods like anthropometry (Dirks, 1992). The colonial definition and classification of caste seem to have represented and thereby augmented Brahmanical perspectives, even as they shaped the dynamics of caste-based respectability and exclusion (Soneji, 2019).

The conceptualization of caste as a *varna* system thus began to outweigh all other epistemologies of caste: *the varna* system, as outlined in the ancient Hindu scripture *Manu Dharma*, organizes society into a four-tiered hierarchy determined by birth, with Brahmins at the top, followed by Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras (Larbeer, 2003; Rajawat, 2004). *Panchamars*(Dalits and tribal peoples) fall outside this system and are often considered "unborn" according to the *Manu Dharma*, leading to their treatment as less than human (Rajawat, 2004). This structure justified occupational stratification, ritual purity, and the exclusion of Dalits through untouchability.

In the early twentieth century, studies identified caste as a social hierarchy deemed to be particular to Indian society since it was understood to have been established by Brahminical Hinduism, and therefore unlike, even if somewhat reminiscent of, class. Caste is seen in relation to the very nature of Brahminical Hinduism(Weber, 1916). Occupation and hereditary specialization were identified as the main features contributing to the social reproduction of caste (Senart, 1930). Structural features such as endogamy, commensality, and spatial segregation became markers of caste identity and marginalization.

By the mid-20th century, scholars like Marriott (1958) and Srinivas (1962) challenged scriptural and racial interpretations. They emphasized localized *jati* hierarchies, jajmani mode of production and socioeconomic power, ritual honour, and power dynamics over static notions of purity. Marriott's interactional model influenced ethnographic approaches, though it was later critiqued for reproducing traditional views (Fuller, 1996).

With these varying academic and scholarly definitions of caste, the later Subaltern scholars and the contemporary Indian political debates have increasingly challenged both holistic and traditional definitions, seeking to address caste's evolving role in postcolonial India, with its sociopolitical context.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was a pivotal voice against caste, calling for its complete dismantling in **Annihilation of Caste** (Ambedkar, 1936). He argued for dismantling the caste system and even advocated for a separate electorate for Dalits to address systemic injustices. He popularized the term "Dalit" ("dal," meaning crushed or oppressed, reflecting their socio-political reality) (Azariah, 2000), a bold declaration of the oppressed status originally coined by social reformer Jyoti Rao Phule, as a unifying identity for oppressed castes in their fight against caste-based discrimination (Dangle, 2016; Kannan and Gros, 2002).

In contrast, Gandhi advocated reform within varna, calling Dalits *"Harijans",* a term critiqued as patronizing (Zelliot, 2001). Their ideological clash culminated in the 1932 Poona Pact, shaping India's caste politics (Jaffrelot, 2005). The debates between Gandhi and Ambedkar on caste reform significantly influenced India's modern approach to caste issues, continuing to shape contemporary discussions on caste, affirmative action, and the rights of marginalized communities in India (Radhakrishnan, 1996).

Caste continues to affect occupational segregation, economic deprivation, and social exclusion. Despite constitutional prohibitions against caste discrimination and untouchability (Assembly, 1950)Discrimination against Dalits persists, as evidenced by frequent reports of violence, socio-economic challenges, and exclusions (Chakraborty, 2017). These realities point to caste as a form of hidden apartheid, contradicting constitutional promises of equality, liberty, and justice (Khobragade, 2023).

2.3 Caste and Health

According to the 2011 Census of India, Scheduled Castes (SCs) make up 16.6% of the total population, or approximately 170 million people, while Scheduled Tribes (STs) account for 8.6%, about 80 million. Tamil Nadu has the third-largest population of SCs in India(Census India, 2011).

Caste continues to be a critical determinant of negative health outcomes in India, operating along structural, social, and economic axes to perpetuate disparities. Historically rooted in the Brahmanical hierarchical order, caste has entrenched occupational segregation, economic deprivation, and spatial exclusion, translating into tangible barriers to health equity (Rajawat, 2004; Subramaniam, 2017). Despite constitutional promises of equality, caste-based discrimination persists, reflected in poorer health indicators among Dalits and Adivasis. Research shows that Dalit children have significantly lower rates of full immunization compared to their Caste-hindu counterparts, even after controlling for economic variables, underscoring that caste, independent of class, influences access to preventive healthcare (Subramaniam, 2017).

Caste-based stratification exposes marginalized communities to a cluster of social determinants of ill-health, including lower educational attainment, poor housing conditions, occupational hazards, and food insecurity (Subramaniam, 2017). The impact is starkly visible in higher rates of maternal mortality, undernutrition, anaemia, and child mortality among Dalits and Adivasis, who experience structural barriers across the healthcare continuum. These disparities are not simply a legacy of the past but are actively reproduced through discriminatory practices within healthcare systems themselves. Discriminatory behaviours by health providers, ranging from subtle neglect to overt denial of services, further alienate Dalits from accessing timely and quality care, reinforcing patterns of health disadvantage (Subramaniam, 2017).

Moreover, cultural norms of spatial segregation and stigma continue to shape interactions with health systems. Fear of humiliation, internalized stigma, and social exclusion deter Dalit communities from early and preventive healthcare-seeking, compounding delays and resulting in worsened outcomes. Even within public health schemes theoretically designed to reduce inequities, utilization gaps remain pronounced along caste lines, suggesting that technocratic solutions alone cannot address deeply embedded social hierarchies (Subramaniam, 2017).

Thus, caste functions not merely as a background factor but as an active axis of health oppression, operating independently and intersecting with poverty, gender, and geography. Recognizing the caste-health link demands more than programmatic adjustments; it necessitates addressing the underlying power relations that structure health disadvantage. Understanding caste as a structural determinant of health is essential for designing equitable public health policies capable of dismantling systemic barriers rather than merely compensating for their effects.

Discrimination based on caste functions similarly to racial discrimination, creating cumulative disadvantages that manifest across the life course and intergenerationally (Selvarajah et al., 2022). Crucially, Krieger (2001, 2021) argues that an adequate understanding of health inequities demands attention not only to oppression but also to how marginalized communities resist subjugation. Resistance, whether through collective organization, cultural affirmation, or political action, becomes a crucial counterforce to the structural violence of caste, disrupting the internalization of inferiority and enabling pathways toward improved health and social justice. Thus, moving beyond a solely victim-centric model, it is vital to centre the interplay between oppression and resistance in analyses of caste-based health disparities, recognizing that health outcomes are shaped as much by struggles against inequity as by exposures to it (Krieger, 2021).

2.4 Caste Discrimination and Negative Health Outcomes

Caste-based discrimination exists as a chronic social stressor. Discrimination is perpetuated through social exclusion/Rejection, Devaluation, systemic marginalization, perceived lack of control, and powerlessness, which have been shown to generate psychological stress and physiological responses over time (Schmitt et al., 2014).

The lack of control can lead to the adoption of maladaptive coping strategies, such as emotional withdrawal or unhealthy behaviours, which perpetuates the ill-health cycle again.(Krieger, 1999)

Williams & Mohammed (2009), explains that the direct psychological aspects of discrimination are anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion. Also, there are indirect effects such as social withdrawal and avoidance of health-promoting behaviours. Indirectly,

discrimination fosters avoidance behaviours, including delayed or foregone healthcare, which exacerbate existing conditions and contribute to disease vulnerability (Selvarajah et al., 2022). The stress responses triggered by these experiences activate cognitive, emotional, and behavioural pathways, leading to allostatic load, the physiological wear and tear caused by chronic stress exposure (Pascoe and Smart Richman, 2009; Selvarajah et al., 2022). Over time, this biological burden results in deteriorating health outcomes.

2.5 Adaptive and Maladaptive Strategies as Coping Mechanisms

Coping mechanisms adopted in response to discrimination can be either adaptive or maladaptive. Maladaptive strategies, such as substance use or social withdrawal, provide temporary relief against this psychological stress but ultimately worsen physical and mental health. According to Selvarajah et al. (2022) and Pascoe & Smart Richman (2009), individuals facing persistent discrimination often resort to these maladaptive strategies as a way to cope with the negative emotions of their experiences.

In parallel, adaptive coping mechanisms act as a buffer to the negative health impacts of discrimination by providing an outlet for emotional expression and social support.

Popay et al. (2021) emphasise that only adaptive coping strategies have the potential to transform internal resilience into externalized collective power, enabling transitions from "power within" to "power with" and "power to". Maladaptive responses, such as internalized casteism, emotional withdrawal, or substance use, not only perpetuate psychological stress but also foreclose possibilities for externalized collective action. When caste oppression is internalized through maladaptive coping, individuals are trapped within cycles of self-blame and isolation, disabling the processes necessary for broader structural resistance (Ponsford et

al., 2021). Thus, following Popay's call to move beyond merely inward psycho-social changes, positive coping mechanisms like collective solidarity, cultural pride, and activism are essential for externalizing the struggle and building emancipatory forms of power critical for achieving social and health equity (Powell et al., 2021). Meyer (2003) also, in the Minority Stress Model, emphasizes that collective cultural practices foster resilience and community solidarity, which are crucial in mitigating the effects of discrimination. In response to chronic stress, individuals adopt either internalizing or externalizing behaviours (Krieger, 1999). Internalizing responses include self-blame, shame, and withdrawal, internalized stigma, resulting in diminished self-worth and feelings of hopelessness, which cycle again through whole mediators(Schmitt et al., 2014). Krieger(2014), emphasizes that such internalized discrimination is one of the key mediators through which psychological stress is translated into poor health. This internalization can again get embodied at long term, leading to negative health outcomes (Krieger 1999). On the other hand, externalizing behaviours include substance abuse, smoking, aggression, and engaging in risky behaviours, which again lead to negative health outcomes. Krieger mentions active resistance against the source of discrimination as one adaptive form of externalizing behaviour that could potentially have health-protecting effects(Krieger, 2001, 2021).

2.6 Community cohesion, cultural pride, and collective activism

Pascoe & Smart Richman (2009) note that collective action can buffer against the psychological harm of discrimination, not only by fostering solidarity but by helping to effect social change. They further highlight that collective practices can foster both individual and community resilience, as they allow individuals to connect with others who share similar

struggles and resistances, thus improving their mental health and promoting long-term empowerment.

Schmitt et al. (2014) argue that maintaining a positive sense of self in the face of discrimination is critical for mental health. Community support also plays a crucial role. As noted by Paradies et al. (2015) and Krieger (1999), Social networks provide emotional and practical support, which helps individuals cope with the stresses of discrimination again fostering social solidarity and reinforcing cultural identity, which are essential for emotional well-being. Adaptive coping strategies include community support, where individuals rely on social networks to buffer the negative effects of discrimination. Community cohesion, cultural pride, and collective activism provide marginalized individuals with emotional support and a sense of purpose, helping them navigate the challenges posed by systemic oppression (Selvarajah et al., 2022).

The Insights from this literature review, especially into the Mental and Physical health tolls of discrimination and response to discrimination by which in one way can lead to maladaptive coping behaviours that worsen health, or can be mitigated by adaptive coping strategies, are developed into a preliminary conceptual framework(Figure 1) that guided my research design. The balance between vulnerability and resilience is a key theme in this framework, with the assumption that the symbolic reappropriation of *parai* may act as a protective factor that buffers the harmful effects of caste-based discrimination.

2.7 Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is an important strategy for the attainment of health equity, as propounded in foundational declarations such as the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion

(World Health Organization, 1986). The WHO emphasizes that enabling communities to increase control over the determinants of their health is essential in improving health outcomes and reducing inequities (World Health Organization, 2013). Empowerment is thus largely understood as a process or a set of processes whereby the communities, defined by shared place or interest, develop the capabilities to exercise collective control over the social, economic, and environmental conditions affecting their lives (Popay et al., 2021)

Recent research has shifted its emphasis from individual-level autonomy to community empowerment. According to this perspective, empowerment is seen as the capacity of groups to influence structures, policies, and decisions in addition to individual agency (Ponsford et al., 2021)

Importantly, these dynamics play out in what the literature describes as "participatory spaces," which are settings where communities engage in formal and informal dialogue, decision-making, and local action. Building trust, creating shared narratives, and opposing institutional power that undermines community agency all depend on these kinds of spaces(Powell et al., 2021). The depoliticization of community empowerment is also criticized in the literature. Instead of concentrating on structural change and power redistribution, several efforts concentrate on behavioural change and psychosocial resilience of communities as empowerment. By pushing communities to adapt to their marginalized condition rather than to confront the structures that create it, this inward gaze can reinforce inequalities (Popay et al., 2021). Therefore, reclaiming the political dimensions of empowerment is essential to advancing agendas for transformative health equity.

2.8 Cultural Capital

The idea of cultural capital, as proposed by Bourdieu, provides a potent analytical tool for understanding the social patterns of health. Knowledge, values, language styles, and normative behaviours are examples of the symbolic, informational, and operational resources that people acquire through socialization (Abel, 2008; Bourdieu, 1986)

The idea of cultural capital, as proposed by Bourdieu, provides a powerful analytical tool to understand the social patterning of health. It refers to Knowledge, values, language styles, and normative behaviours, which are examples of the symbolic, informational, and operational resources that people acquire through socialization (Abel, 2008; Bourdieu, 1986). These resources are unequally distributed across social strata, profoundly influencing health behaviour, access to care, and lifestyle choices.

Abel (2008) proposes that cultural capital operates alongside economic and social capital to structure people's "health chances and choices." Health-relevant cultural capital exists in three forms:

• Incorporated (e.g., health literacy, behavioural norms),

• Objectivised (e.g., books, exercise equipment),

• Institutionalised (e.g., education credentials).

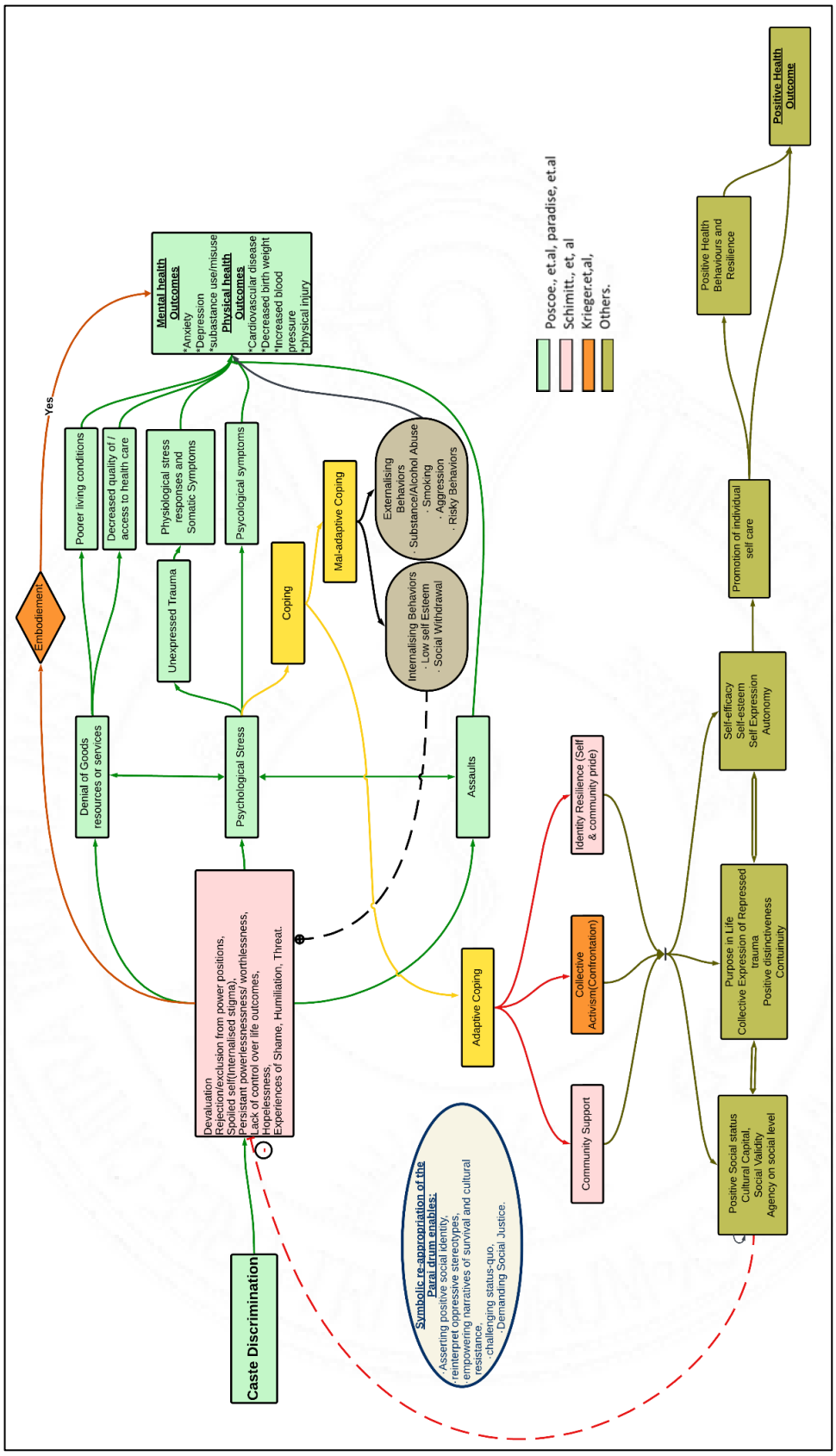


Figure 1 : Conceptual framework Linking Caste Discrimination, Coping Mechanisms and Health.

The interplay between cultural, economic, and social capital also enables “capital conversion,” which refers to how one form of capital is used to enhance another. This indicates that the cultural capital plays an important role in the health domain, not only in terms of individual choices but also in the broader reproduction of social inequality through health behaviours and lifestyle practices. Recent studies have shown that the Lack of cultural capital can lead to miscommunication, reduced compliance, and poorer health outcomes, especially for marginalized groups(Abel, 2008).

So, the cultural capital is both a mechanism and a medium through which social stratification is translated into health disparities. Incorporating cultural capital into public health frameworks helps to bridge behavioural and structural approaches, providing a richer understanding of why inequalities persist despite access-oriented reforms.

2.9 *Parai*

The *Parai* is a flat, circular drum made from a wooden or metal frame covered by a calf-skin or goat-skin drumhead. Traditionally, this drum is played by people from the Dalit community, mostly during funerals and village festivals. Linked as it is with death and lower castes, there is a stigmatization that surrounds the art form. This stigmatization and low position in the arts parallels the pollution–purity dichotomization that characterizes the caste system. Despite its stigmatization, Hindus also believe in the spiritual power of the *Parai's* sound, which is thought to bring about possession by a deity and facilitate the soul’s journey to its next reincarnation by driving away the evil spirits (C Arun, 2007; Lillelund, 2009).

The word "*parai* " means "to speak" or "to announce," which reflects its historical use in Tamil courts for proclaiming royal messages as early as the Sangam period. Ancient Tamil

literature, such as the *Paripadal* and the *Silappatikaaram*, mentions various types of *Parai* drums, including the *kanapparai*, *siruparai*, and *perumparai* (Ceyalaṭcumi, 2003; Ramanathan, 1979).

Parai was initially a generic term used to denote leather instruments. *Parai,* which is considered the mother of all leather musical instruments, was later associated with the notion of untouchability. The people who played the *Parai* were also known as *Paraiyar, Kodiyar, Thudiyar,* and *Valluvar* (Valarmathi, 2009). The drum, or its variations, is known by different names across India: *paraimelam*, *kottu*, *tappu* in Tamil, *daff* in Marathi, and *dappu* in Telugu (*Firstpost*, 2020)

Historically, the *Parai* was not only used in funeral ceremonies but also during annual village Hindu festivals, to announce news about festivals, weddings, meetings, warning people of impending war, announcing victory or defeat, and summoning villagers for agricultural work and other significant events. The *Parai*, with its distinctive *"adi"(*beats or genre-based rhythmic pattern) for specific occasions, can be aurally recognized by villagers even from great distances (Arun, 2007, McGilvray 1983: 101). But its association with death has overshadowed its other functions, leading to the marginalization of the drummers.

For ritual purposes, *parai* is mostly played by men, although there is evidence from literature that women also played it inthe Sangam period (Inoue, 2021).

2.10 *Parai* and Caste

Art forms in India, including *Parai* drumming, were stratified based on notions of purity and pollution, reinforcing caste-based stigma under the rubric of Sanskritization (Sathyavarshini and Kousika, 2020). Despite being integral to cultural and religious

occasions, such as funerals and religious processions, *Parai* drummers face systemic discrimination, even extended to the level of harassment and abuse. They have been prohibited from entering temples and ostracized from places considered 'pure,' symbolizing their alienation from the very rituals they contributed to.

Historically, the Paraiyar, a Dalit community, held diverse roles, including drumming *parai* in rituals, announcing proclamations, and even leading armies during the battles; most of them were even agricultural workers. The term "Paraiyar" is considered to be derived from the *Parai* drum. However, there is debate about this origin. Oppert (1893)argued that it is more logical that the drum took its name from the Paraiyar, rather than the other way around. He suggested that the Paraiyars were originally mountaineers and part of the ancient Dravidian population. Despite the ambiguity surrounding the term's origin, "Paraiyar" has long represented a strong ethnic and ritualistic identity (CJ Arun, 2007; Oppert, 1893). Over time, their association with death rituals and organic pollution cemented their untouchable status, which associated the drum and its performers with the pollution of death (Inoue, 2021). Despite being indispensable in ritual contexts, the community remains marginalized. Their roles reinforce their low status in a caste-hierarchy. The Caste-Hindus, who controlled land and power, also shaped dominant ideologies across religion, law, art, and politics, which justified and perpetuated their supremacy, dominance, and the subjugation of Dalits. This contradiction highlights the complex interplay of Paraiyars' cultural significance and systemic exclusion in Tamil Nadu (C Arun, 2007; Ramachandran and Hashim, 2014).

The Dalits' Anti-caste struggle, particularly for social status, started by the late nineteenth century, led by figures like Ayothee Dasa Pandithar and Rettaimalai Sreenivasan. Ayothee Dasa Pandithar converted to Buddhism, which he considered to be the original religion of

the Paraiyars, and he also initiated an anti-caste movement. He established the Sakya Buddhist Society, the Indian Buddhist Association in 1898, encouraging Paraiyars to get converted and to adopt the term "*Adi Dravidar*" as an alternative to their caste identity (Basu, 2011; Inoue, 2021).

2.11 Symbolic Appropriation of *Parai* Drum

In the past two decades, the *Parai* drum in Tamil Nadu has evolved into a potential symbol of resistance and cultural identity. This transformation happened mainly due to the broader socio-political and cultural movement among Dalit communities (discussed above), in the process seeking to reclaim and revalorize symbols of their oppression.

The shift in the perception of the *Parai* can be traced back to social movements that emerged in the late nineteenth century. Inspired partly by the US Civil Rights Movement, the 1970s saw a surge in Dalit literature, poetry, and arts reflecting a sense of pride and cultural affirmation (Eleanor, 1996). Especially since the Ambedkar centenary celebrations in 1990, the Dalit movement gained momentum, leading to the revalorization of the *Parai* as a political symbol of caste liberation, leading to its widespread performance at political gatherings, in educational settings, and recognition of its significant aspect in Dalit political and cultural movements. Arts festivals across Tamil Nadu have incorporated *Parai* drumming as a form of resistance against caste discrimination. The use of the term "*parai*" instead of the stigmatized *"thappu"* reflects this newfound pride in the instrument(Inoue, 2021).

For some Dalit communities, this has meant rejecting the hereditary labor of *Parai* drumming, while others have reimagined the drum as an instrument of protest and social transformation (Gauthaman, 2012; Sherinian, 2014).

This transformation of *Parai* drumming from a symbol of oppression to one of resistance and liberation is a multifaceted process, marked by various positions taken by Dalit communities in relation to their instruments, genres, and social status. Sherinian (2009) outlines four primary approaches adopted by these communities: (i) discontinuance and rejection, (ii) replacement, (iii) maintenance of performance while rejecting caste or community duties, and (iv) reclamation of music and identity as positive symbols. This evolution reflects a broader trend where the arts, including the *Parai*, play a crucial role in transforming discourse (Sherinian, 2014).

As Arun (2007) discusses, the Paraiyars have sought to reconstruct their identity by resignifying symbols of pollution, such as the *Parai* drum, into positive markers of their culture. This process, according to Arun, involves three phases: conflict, symbolic reversal, and identification. Through conflict with higher castes, the Paraiyars became aware that their low status was a social construct imposed by others. They then focused on deconstructing the negative connotations of the *Parai* and other symbols, ultimately embracing them as emblems of a new, positive identity (C Arun, 2007).

This reinterpretation has its extensions even in domains of religion, where figures like Reverend James Theophilus Appavoo incorporated the *Parai* into Christian worship to critique social inequality due to caste through Tamil folk music(Sherinian, 2014).

Similarly, initiatives like the Sakthi Folk Cultural Centre have used the *Parai* to challenge caste, gender, and class discrimination, with persons such as Sister Chandra, who formed the all-women folk team Sakthi Kalaikuzhu, employing it to empower young Dalit women (Bathran, 2012). This re-significance is pushing parai as a legitimate and respected art form as affirmed when Parai artist Velu *Aasan* was conferred the Padma Shri award in 2025(The New Indian Express, 2025).

The drum's use in political spaces, particularly by groups in political party meetings and cultural activists like Manimaaran of Buddhar Kalaikuzhu, underscores its evolution into a tool of political liberation. Most of these groups have sought to dignify the art form, denying to play for funerals and temple festivals, and even promising not to consume alcohol while playing to create a space for artistic and political resistance(Inoue, 2021).

Nonetheless, groups like PALA, affiliated with revolutionary cultural movements, politicizing people for greater change, and Dalit drummers who continue to advocate for fair compensation and respect, portray the enduring resilience of the *Parai* as a symbol of Dalit identity and resistance (Arun, 2007; Inoue, 2021).

According to Pandey(2006) Dalits experience a type of internal colonialism that strips them of their history and culture. Overcoming these symbols of oppression is crucial for their quest for full citizenship (Pandey, 2006)

Claims about culture, identity, and community are central to political activities. In modern Indian politics, Dalit politics has become increasingly prominent and warrants detailed analysis, especially in terms of its forms and strategies of resistance (Natrajan, 2018).

Despite these transformative efforts, the *Parai* continues to grapple with historical stigma, as its association with caste-based rituals persists. Dalit activists and organizations like the Dalit Resource Centre argue that such stigma reflects the systematic undermining of Dalit skills and identities by Brahmanical dominance (Larbeer and Alexandar, 2000). While younger generations have redefined traditional practices through professional bands or selective performances at events like weddings (Clark-Decès, 2006; Lillelund, 2009), some Dalits still abandon drumming altogether in pursuit of middle-class respectability (Mcgilvray, 1983). This journey, from degradation to empowerment, captures the broader

struggle of Dalit communities to reclaim their cultural heritage and challenge caste-based oppression.

2.12 Resistance, Resilience, and Arts

Resistance as a concept emerges through the interplay between the power and the actions of individuals or groups. Resistance requires necessarily the preoccupation of oppressive power structures, oppressive ideas, and through the process, resistance challenges them, fostering the change. It gets manifested through collective political events and individual acts of defiance

Foucault explains Resistance as an inherent part and inalienable outcome of power dynamics; its emerging conditions of possibility lie within the power structure itself, rather than something external to it (Douzinas, 2023). Resistance in the process can create new subjectivities and strong identities, fostering a sense of community among those who oppose the status quo(Douzinas, 2023).

Resilience is an important psychological construct that focuses on an individual's ability to adapt to and move on from adversity and to survive through life adversities by developing the relevant skills, mindset, and emotional strength (Nijs and Nicolaou, 2021). It is influenced by the interplay of protective factors, both internal and external. Internal factors may include traits such as self-control, emotional regulation, motivation, self-esteem, and a sense of agency, which would enable that individual to take control over and manage emotions, achieve goals, and develop a positive self-concept (Nijs and Nicolaou, 2021). External factors include functioning social networks, family members, peers, and mentors, whose proximity enables an individual to avail themselves of opportunities for community

involvement, offering technical, emotional support, a sense of belongingness, and coping models (Nijs and Nicolaou, 2021).

Historically, art and music have been the vital tools of resistance and social change for the oppressed. Art challenges discrimination, it helps to promote social justice, and can empower disenfranchised groups. Art serves as a medium for making people aware and challenging systemic injustices. Thus, it has been fundamentally interwoven into many social movements (Singh, 2016). Rose(1994) explores how hip-hop articulates the lived experiences of these communities, challenging negative mainstream narratives.

In America, socially and politically conscious (SPC) hip-hop emerged from the civil rights movement and the Black Freedom Struggle (Alridge and Stewart, 2005). Hip-hop music emerged in the 1970s from marginalized Bronx communities as a potent medium for cultural resistance. It gave an alternative space for the assertion of identity and social status to the African American, Puerto Rican, and Caribbean youth. It provided a platform to challenge societal norms and assert their identities. It supports them to build coalitions and mobilize communities, to envision a liberated future (Roychoudhury and Gardner, 2014).

It is transformed into a very influential form to voice protest against systemic issues such as poverty and police brutality. Worgs(2006) interprets violent literature and music by African Americans as symbolic of broader liberation struggles. Despite the limitations of its broad emancipatory impact, Gosa(2015) asserts that hip-hop's beats, rhymes, dance, and politics continue to empower oppressed communities globally, underscoring its relevance as a tool for resistance.

"Pan-African culture of resistance" in Africa reflects a socio-political paradigm that highlights both continuity and transformation in African culture by emphasizing cultural roots at the same time adapting to contemporary challenges. This paradigm helps in

bringing together the African diasporic communities in their ongoing struggle for empowerment and justice. It is similar to the role of rap music as a tool for protest, identity reclamation, and collective resilience. Pan African Culture of Resistance underscores the importance of cultural appropriations in resisting oppression and fostering empowerment (Kirby, 2009).

Arora (2006) argues that music actively shapes social structures through the framework of beliefs, symbols, and values with which individuals interpret their world and express their feelings. This capacity underscores music's potential for liberation.

Resilience-building can be approached through Community work, which addresses broader societal challenges by fostering collective resilience through group activities and social support networks. In particular, interventions that involve the community collectively through music-making and movement have been seen to enhance resilience-building efforts as they invite emotional and physical engagement whilst fostering a sense of community and shared purpose (Nijs and Nicolaou, 2021).

Music is a powerful tool that aids in emotional expression, boosts self-esteem, instills a sense of agency, and develops social ties, all of which are building blocks of resilience.

Music, particularly Hip-Hop and Rap, and other expressive arts play a significant role in fostering well-being, nurturing self-esteem, identity formation, resilience, and empowerment among youth. Art mirrors the conditions in society and instigates change, opposing the status quo and altering social realities. It allows artists to channel negative emotions into empowering narratives of survival and cultural resistance.

Dalit folk music, particularly *Parai* drumming, has emerged as a powerful tool in addressing the subjective and internal aspects of caste-based oppression. Scholars like

Dana(2007) and Clark-Decès(2006) note how the drum, traditionally tied to caste-based oppression, has been reimagined to signify liberation and community solidarity, serving as a tool of resistance against the Caste dominance.

Sherinian(2002) argues that before Dalits can organize for structural and socio-political change, they must first overcome psychological barriers, a process in which folk music plays a vital role. This aligns with the views of Cameron and Gibson(2005), who suggest that focusing on the skills possessed by oppressed communities, rather than their deficiencies, can foster a sense of agency and belief in the efficacy of action. This approach contrasts with needs-based development, which often perpetuates a negative self-image among oppressed peoples, maintaining their sense of helplessness, a phenomenon Dalton(2008) refers to as the 'wounded psyche.' Addressing this wounded psyche through asset-based development empowers Dalits to become active subjects rather than passive objects in their struggle for liberation. This logical thread links *parai* and its symbolic re-appropriation with processes of community empowerment as a key step in the move towards a more equitable society, including in health.

2.13 Summary

This literature review has underscored that caste functions as a powerful structural determinant of health, which profoundly shapes health outcomes across generations by influencing access to resources, opportunities, and dignity. Addressing these historical inequities requires community empowerment and intersectoral action, as emphasized by the WHO's Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (World Health Organization, 1986) Community empowerment is a collective process that enhances a community's capacity to gain control and agency over the determinants of health.

The efforts towards empowerment must also create pathways for structural change by targeting the hierarchies and systems that perpetuate discrimination. A central element of such empowerment is fostering positive coping strategies in response to discrimination. This enables communities to resist internalized oppression and reclaim agency.

Struggles for identity, including symbolic acts of reappropriation, are vital components of this process, allowing historically stigmatized symbols to become powerful tools of assertion and pride. Art and artistic expressions have long served as crucial spaces for these struggles, where oppressed communities articulate resistance, collective memory, and political mobilization.

In this context, the *Parai* drum has undergone the transition from a stigma of caste into an exemplary symbol of cultural and political empowerment. This study focuses on tracing the diverse contexts in which *Parai* is played today, analysing how they correspond to various stages of community empowerment, from initial assertion to broader collective transformation.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Type

This is a qualitative study using in-depth interviews with "*parai*" drummers in Tamil Nadu.

3.2 Study Setting

- **Contexts of *Parai* drumming**

To understand the relevance of the symbolic re-appropriation of *parai*, and its potential links with health, it is important to understand the socio-political and historical setting in which this study is embedded.

The geographical design of Feudal villages in Tamil Nadu: In general, villages in Tamil Nadu have an *"Ur"* and a "*Cheri"*. The *Ur* is where the dominant castes among the caste Hindus live, while the Dalits usually are ghettoed in the *Cheri* portion of a village. Usually, *Cheris* are located on the outskirts of the village, spatially separated from the main village due to caste-based notions of purity and Pollution.

Dalits from the *Cheri* of the respective village are bound to serve the Caste Hindus of the Village through Compulsory Feudal Ties *"Thondu velai"*.

Drumming is also one of the compulsory caste duties performed by Dalits for the Funerals of Caste-Hindus and village temple processions. As per traditional caste restrictions, a drummer from one Cheri cannot go to drum in the nearby village, unless it is the wish of the Caste-Hindus to call, because of territorial restrictions of the slave work.

Historically, in Tamil Nadu, Strong Social Justice and Dalit Movements have made Influential changes in the Educational and Socioeconomic conditions of Dalits, described in more detail in the literature review chapter. In the 90s, there were movements to stop caste-based degrading jobs. These movements were inspired by or followed the process of conscientization that Paulo Freire explains, as the development of a critical understanding of one's own socio-political reality. This is reflected in the fact that after the 90s, we can see an increase in caste conflicts in villages all over Tamil Nadu (CJSE, 2024).

These political movements struggle to stop the caste oppression of centuries. With a combination of increasing educational attainment, and urbanization, backed by processes of conscientization, the feudal ties of drumming and territorial restrictions weaken, and drummers start going to other villages to perform by continuously trying to form new drumming "sets" (sets is the colloquial term to refer to troupes formed by drummers which can be hired to perform in a range of settings). This may be considered to reflect a shift from feudal relations and moving towards localised and more modern market-oriented relationships within drumming.

In addition, the declining importance of Agricultural work and increasing market-oriented work relations may have contributed.

By the early 2000s, the re-appropriated symbol of *parai* as a tool for liberation was taken forward with the Dalit and social Justice movements in Tamil Nadu. While the initial moves to symbolic reappropriations occurred in the context of social movements, this probably acted as an important influence in the village-level changes that occurred, as individuals and groups began giving up playing *parai* for purely feudal compulsions and began taking it up for commercial and other reasons. It is in this dynamic and unstable socio-political context that the study was conceived and undertaken.

The study was conducted in multiple villages spread across Pudukkottai, Perambalur, Chennai, Tiruvannamalai, Villupuram, Dindigul, and Coimbatore Districts of Tamil Nadu. The study involved *Parai* drummers who played *Parai* as individuals in traditional groups tied to feudal contexts, individuals who were part of "Sets," which are more modern troupes that play *parai* in non-feudal and non-traditional settings, as well as those who are part of troupes who play purely in activist and political settings. As noted, the diverse locations, involving individual *parai* drummers from included North, West, Middle East, and Southern districts of Tamil Nadu. The initial contacts were established through friends and existing networks, and further referrals within the drumming community allowed access to participants across different categories.

All those involved in the feudal mode of playing came from rural settings in which the hold of caste was still quite prominent; they were landless and were tied to various forms of traditional bonded labor to varying extents. Those involved in "sets" and artistic groups had more diverse locations, with some living in villages and others in small towns. All those involved in activist and protest forms of the art lived in urban areas.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

This Study draws on three frameworks. One developed from literature capturing adaptive and maladaptive ways of coping with psychological stress due to discrimination, and presented at the end of the literature review section (Figure 1). And the other two focus on Identity formation and community empowerment.

3.3.1 Identity Formation

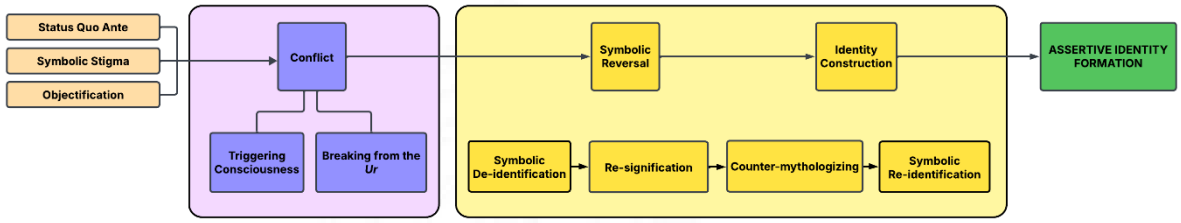


Figure 2 : Conceptual Framework on Identity Formation. (Source: Developed by PI from Arun, 2007)

According to Arun (2007), Identity formation is a dynamic process that takes place in three interlinked phases: conflict, symbolic reversal, and re-identification. The process begins with conflict, which disrupts imposed identities and generates self-consciousness. This process can also be seen as what Paulo Freire refers to as Conscientization (Freire, 2020). This leads to de-identification, where a marginalized group seeks to reject externally assigned meanings of symbols that were historically used to stigmatize them. Rather than discarding the symbols themselves, they reinterpret them through counter-myths, a process of symbolic reversal that alters the symbols' meanings. Through this discursive re-signification, the community then proceeds to re-identify with these symbols in a positive and empowering manner. This transformation is facilitated by symbolic interactionism, the process by which the meanings are created through social interaction and interpretation (Blumer, 1986). The process in the construction of a new identity is based on cultural differentiation and challenging the dominant structures by asserting subjectivity and agency, thus demonstrating that identity is socially constructed, contingent, and capable of transformation.

3.3.2 Community Empowerment Analysis

Community Empowerment Analysis is a way of understanding how power operates in people's lives, not just the power that limits them, but the power they build together to

resist, reclaim, and transform their realities (Popay et al., 2021). It goes beyond individual behaviour change to look at collective processes, cultural identity, and political voice. This uses two key frameworks: the Emancipatory Power Framework (EPF) and the Limiting Power Framework (LPF). They conceptualize empowerment as the development of collective capabilities required for communities to exercise meaningful control over the decisions and structures that impact their health and lives, rather not merely as an individual psycho-social attribute.

The Empowerment analysis is grounded on the Capability approach (Sen, 1999), which shifts attention from what people have to what they can accomplish and become. According to this method, empowerment in communities refers to building the group's capabilities needed for self-determination and confronting oppressive structures.

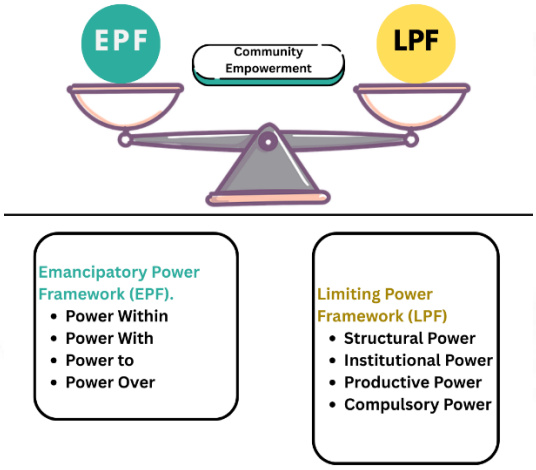


Figure 3 : Conceptual Framework on Community Empowerment Analysis (Source: Developed by PI with ideas from Ponsford et al., 2021; Popay et al., 2021; Powell et al., 2021)

- **<u>Emancipatory Power Framework (EPF)</u>**

The EPF identifies three primary positive forms of power and one contextual form of strategic power that communities may employ:

- **Power Within:** This explains the community's internal recognition of shared identity, values, and belief in its collective agency
- **Power With:** This explains the capacity to form alliances and collaborate with other communities or institutions to achieve common goals
- **Power To:** This explains the capability to establish participatory structures and processes and to enact collective decisions.
- **Power Over:** This explains the scenarios where communities exert power over others. This may be strategic or exclusionary and needs ethical scrutiny.

These dimensions are dynamic and interrelated. For instance, exercising power to make improvements can reinforce power within by enhancing group confidence (Popay et al., 2021).

- **<u>Limiting Power Framework (LPF)</u>**

The LPF identifies four negative forms of power that hinder the development or exercise of collective control that people exercise

- **Compulsory Power:** It is enforced through visible authority, rules, and laws
- **Institutional Power:** It is manifested through organizational norms, procedures, and information control.
- **Structural Power:** These are hierarchical oppressive powers such as caste, gender, class, and race that operate invisibly through institutions
- **Productive Power:** It operates through normalised social discourses, which are defined as acceptable knowledge, identities, and practices.

These forms of power are not mutually exclusive and often function simultaneously within participatory spaces, influencing decision-making, participation, and the legitimacy of various types of information.

Theoretically, these frameworks offer a critical lens to understand empowerment as a relational and political process. Analytically, they provide tools to analyse empowerment or disempowerment and participatory spaces, both governance spaces (e.g., formal decision-making) and sense-making spaces (e.g., informal community discussions), to assess how empowerment unfolds or is constrained (Ponsford et al., 2021; Popay et al., 2021; Powell et al., 2021).

What I derive from both these frameworks are:

1. The iterative and dynamic processes of empowerment.
2. The possibility of identifying characteristics of these various stages of both individual-level and collective empowerment.
3. The criticality of the process of empowerment goes beyond changes within the individual (which are probably psychological changes) to enable a collective getting together to enable structural changes.
4. Thus, I identified various forms/contexts in which *parai* was played, and sought to explore the various individual and group-level correlates of these. I also attempted to explore the various psychological and mental health-related aspects that may be related to these different forms. In the results section, I will detail the outcomes of this research using these frameworks to arrange the findings.

3.4 Sampling Technique

This study employed purposive sampling for initial enrollment of participants with the help of friends and existing networks and followed by a snowball sampling technique to find other participants. At first, a mapping of the various contexts in which *Parai* was played was mapped with various *parai* artists, and it was decided to categorise them into three. These include,

- Drummers who play for funerals and other functions,
- Drummers who avoid funerals but play for commercial/artistic reasons.
- Drummers who exclusively play for political reasons

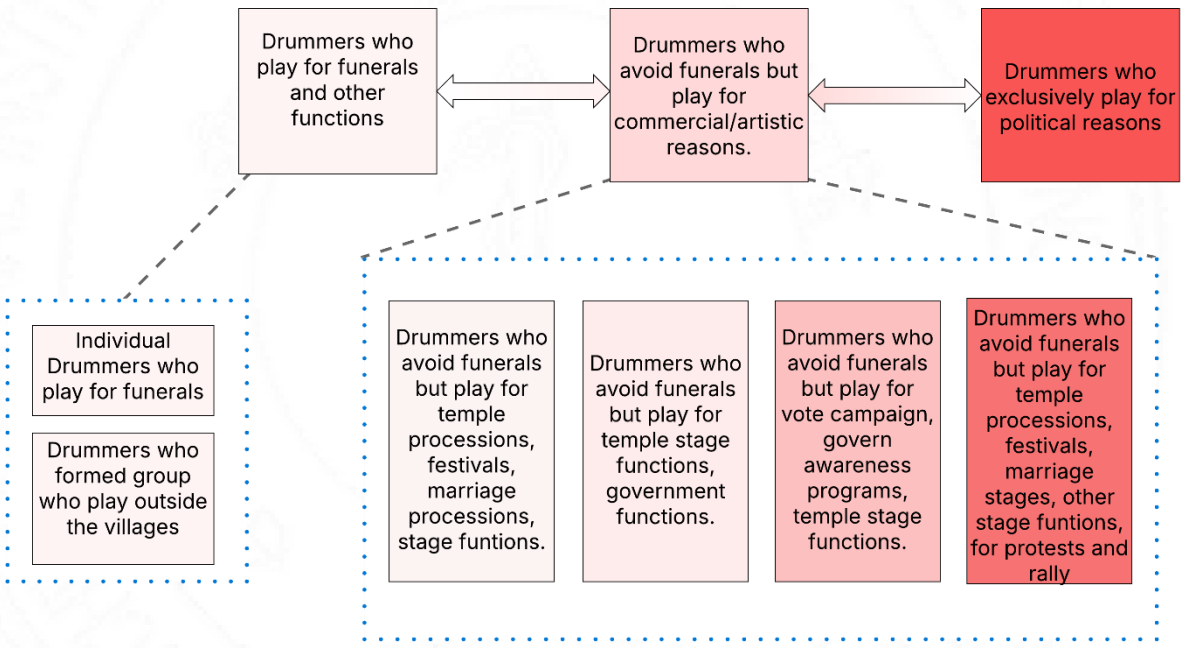


Figure 4 : Contextual categories of Drummers

When I went to the field, the categories of different contextual drumming that I was expecting had some overlaps, so from the essence of the categorical contexts and the field findings, I tried forming these three categories. And these categories are also abstract,

where the Contextual drumming actually exists as a spectrum from one extreme of drummers playing for funerals, to the other extreme of drummers playing mainly for political reasons. In between exist the wide range of players who avoid funerals but may or may not play in temple processions, government awareness campaigns, protests, and rallies, etc. (Figure 4).

Sample selection:

Inclusion Criteria:

- Men and women *Parai* drummers.
- *Parai* drummers who belong to the Dalit community.
- *Parai* drummers who have been drumming for at least 3 years.

Exclusion Criteria:

- *Parai* drummers who belong to the Caste-Hindu communities

Number of Interviews:

A total of 20 Interviews were conducted in different sub-groups of *parai* drummers according to the sampling criteria, till information saturation was achieved.

a) Drummers who play for funerals and other functions,

   Drummers who avoid funerals but play for commercial/artistic reasons

   Drummers who only play for political reasons

b) Men and women *Parai* drummers.

c) Drummers from younger and older age groups.

d) Drummers who have and have not completed a Graduate education.

Participants were recruited from various age groups in each category, ranging from 17 to 73, with varied educational backgrounds in each category, and those with experience across multiple drumming contexts, ensuring diversity in perspectives.

Two interviews were conducted with the local leaders who are retired *Parai* drummers and have now taken on leadership roles within their communities.

3.5 Number of participants, category-wise

Table 3.1 Number of participants in Gender

Sl. No	Subcategory	Number of participants
1.	Men	17
2.	Women	03

Table 3.2 Number of participants by Context

Sl. No	Subcategory	Number of participants
1.	Drummers who play for funerals and other functions	10
2.	Drummers who avoid funerals but play for commercial/artistic reasons	7
3.	Drummers who only play for political reasons	3

Table 3.3 No of participants by level of education

Sl. No	Subcategory	Number of participants
1.	Not Graduated	11
2.	Graduated	9

Table 3.4 Number of participants by Age category

Sl. No	Subcategory	Number of participants
1.	Older	11
2.	Younger	9

3.6 Study tool

The principal investigator conducted in-depth interviews as the primary qualitative data collection method, and Photo elicitation using an IDI guide and Photos. An IDI guide was developed based on the objectives of the study as well as the developed framework, and also allowing for flexibility to explore emerging themes from interviews. (See Annexure 5)

The guide mostly included open-ended questions and probes for the participants to narrate their own stories with the investigator facilitating rather than dominating the conversation.

The IDI guide was translated into Tamil, and the interviews were conducted in Tamil.

The IDI guide included the questions regarding their Lived Experiences of Caste-Based Discrimination. Participants were asked to narrate their personal and professional journeys as *Parai* drummers. Questions regarding the societal perceptions of *Parai* drummers, their role in their identity, and daily life. Probes were included to pick up specific moments of

exclusion, judgment, or differential treatment, both within and outside performance contexts. Questions regarding their Health Behaviours and Coping Strategies, questions on their mental and physical well-being, their emotional responses to stress and stigma, and their day-to-day routines. It also included questions on coping mechanisms, questions on the meaning of *Parai* drumming in their lives, and about future plans for their life and *parai* drumming. Even though the interview guide offered a thematic structure, the interviews were not rigidly bound to it. Most conversations extended beyond the confines of prepared questions and often delved into the broader life experiences of participants.

Selected photos showing some moments of *Parai* drumming in different contexts, and public performances were shown to participants. These images served as cues to help participants recall their thoughts, memories, and emotions that could not have been verbally prompted. The Photo elicitation technique helped in establishing rapport with familiar photos and even allowed participants to articulate their experiences related to identity, discrimination, resistance, and well-being with greater nuance and personal meaning.

3.7 Data Collection Techniques

The principal investigator (PI) initially established contact with individuals through friends and pre-existing personal and professional networks. These initial contacts were either *Parai* drummers or otherwise the person who was closely associated with the drumming community. The PI now had access to other potential participants through referrals. Through these contacts, the PI was able to access additional potential participants through referrals, mainly through the snowballing process within the *Parai* drumming circles.

Some individuals referred by contacts were reluctant to participate. Some individuals were busy with continuous functions, as it was a festival season. Some participants refused to

refer others. In such instances, PI had to go back to the previous participants for referrals. Ultimately, the final study group consisted of participants from different categories, who not only initially expressed interest but also remained responsive admist of their busy schedules and were willing to engage throughout the research process. Some were active within drumming collectives or social initiatives with anti-caste cultural work, thus providing rich data regarding the intersections of art, resistance, and well-being. Two Interviews were conducted with the senior drummers who have stopped drumming but have taken leadership roles in their community.

Interviews were held at sites chosen based on participants' convenient and comfortable access. The sites included open community spaces, participants' homes, rehearsal grounds, temples, and churches, which were selected so that these spaces were familiar and meaningful to the participants, often tied to their drumming and everyday lives in organic ways. PI accompanied two drumming groups throughout their overnight function, participated in their rehearsal performances. In each occasion, the PI started with the contacts (See

Annexure 7) who were well known to him, who provided stays and further contacts, which enabled the PI to explore the field. During the data collection on the occasions where it became late to return, the PI stayed in local accommodations provided by the drumming groups, across different locations, which helped to have informal conversations and discussions to understand the contexts and patterns emerging. This helped to create a relaxed environment, allowing participants to speak more freely about sensitive topics. The consent form was provided in both English and Tamil. All the interviews were audio recorded; the duration of the interviews ranged from approximately 40 minutes to 2 hours, with an average of 1 hour.

The PI tried to cover different regions of Tamil Nadu for the diversity of regional contexts. Additional Participants who were in the same locations along with the interviewed participants (for example, father, brother, relatives, and friends of the participants) were engaged in informal discussions with the principal investigator, and notes were taken accordingly. These notes were not used directly in the analysis, but helped the investigator get a broader sense as well as the finer nuances of the context. In addition to this, field diaries and observation notes were maintained. Following each interview, the main points, new points were carefully noted. Saturation was confirmed when no new points emerged from interviews and similar types of experiences were repeatedly reported, in all categories.

3.8 Analysis

All interviews were audio recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim in Tamil. These transcripts were then translated into English for analysis. Care was taken during translation to retain the cultural and emotional depth of participants' narratives. The principal investigator (PI) reviewed all transcripts multiple times to become deeply familiar with the data. An inductive approach was used to code the data initially, allowing themes to emerge

organically from participants' own words and expressions rather than being pre-imposed, followed by deductive coding of the remaining transcripts. Coding was done using OpenCode 4.03 (OpenCode 4, 2015), a qualitative data analysis tool that supported the systematic organization and retrieval of codes from interview transcripts, observation notes, and field diaries.

The initial codes were generated by the PI and were subsequently discussed with the guide, who had independently coded the same interviews. In preparation, Different approaches to coding were discussed and clarified before coding proceeded. Codes that reflected similar ideas or patterns were grouped into broader categories. Thematic analysis was employed to identify emerging themes from the data. Regular discussions were held with the guide to address reflections, confusions, and to reflect on changing themes, and process the emotions or intellectual strain invoked by the narratives. Such conversations also helped manage analytical fatigue and kept the emerging themes grounded in data. Once I had a final set of codes, I explored the way they map onto frameworks of community empowerment (as described in the discussion on the conceptual framework). I present these final themes in the results section.

3.9 Expected outcome

Through this study, we expect a deeper understanding of some of the individual and group-level Psychological correlates of empowerment, and also probably the qualitative empirical markers for empowerment and disempowerment. This study will provide the foundations for further exploration of the importance of cultural processes of identity re-formation as key processes in community empowerment and in the study of community empowerment and Health Equity.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

This study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram (SCT/IEC/2341/DECEMBER/2024).

3.10.1 Confidentiality

The principal investigator ensured the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. Interviews were conducted at locations like participants' homes, temples, rehearsal areas, and other community spaces selected by the participants. All collected information was securely stored and shared only with the guide, in addition to the principal investigator, both during and after the interview. Data collected were stored on a password-protected computer to which only the Principal Investigator (PI) had access. Recordings of the interviews and transcripts were anonymized through unique identification codes, while any personal identifiers of the participants were excluded completely from the final data utilized for analysis.

3.10.2 Informed Consent

Before each interview, the principal investigator spoke with every participant to ensure their willingness to participate and provided them with the Participant Information sheet and a briefing about the study details. Consent for being interviewed and audio recording was obtained from every participant.

3.10.3 Minimizing Risk

Taking part in the study and discussing their personal experiences related to discrimination and mental health was, at times, emotionally demanding and could lead to feelings of unease or discomfort. Very few participants cried during interviews. The PI in this case has also obtained consent from a Mental Health Practitioner for counselling in these situations.

(See Annexure 8). During emotional outbursts of participants, the PI ensured that counseling services were available to them, although the situations encountered in the present study turned out to be self-manageable. Participants were reassured of their right to pause or discontinue the interview at any time without any consequences.

3.10.4 Positionality

As someone from the medical field and a person who has been and continues to be involved in Community-based Anti-Caste Movements and as an Informal *Parai* Drummer, PI's identity helped to build rapport with the participants, enabling them to understand and relate to the experiences participants shared. Also, it was easier for the PI to understand the finer nuances of the narrative and the metaphors used, as he was familiar with the art form.

CHAPTER 4

RESULT

This chapter presents the key findings of the study based on in-depth interviews and Photo elicitation with *Parai* drummers across three contexts, which I choose to label as feudal, artistic, and activist. The chapter describes in detail the different themes that have emerged inductively from the qualitative data. The analysis was guided by the codes developed inductively through iterative reading of the transcripts. Findings are organized into six major themes that emerged from the data.

This study included a total of 20 in-depth interviews with *Parai* drummers across Tamil Nadu, selected purposively to reflect diversity in age, gender, education, and performance contexts. Among the participants, 17 were men and 3 were women. In terms of educational background, 11 participants had not completed graduation, while 9 participants were graduates. The age range of participants varied from 17 to 73 years, with a relatively even distribution between younger (9 participants) and older (11 participants) drummers. Participants were classified into three main contextual groups based on their primary mode of *parai* drumming: those who primarily performed for funerals and other traditional functions (10 participants), those who avoided funeral performances and focused on artistic or commercial drumming (7 participants), and those who played exclusively for political and activist purposes (3 participants). This distribution allowed for capturing a broad range of experiences and perspectives linked to the social contexts of *Parai* drumming.

In the analysis, an inductive coding process initially generated a large number of open codes from the interview transcripts. Through iterative reading, discussion, and refinement, the

codes were consolidated into a final set of approximately 224 focused codes. These codes were then organized into broader thematic categories based on recurring patterns and shared meanings across the narratives.

The Results chapter is structured around six major themes that emerged from the data. Each theme corresponds to key processes or experiences that were central to the lives and drumming practices of the participants. Where relevant, connections are made between these themes and the broader socio-cultural and political environments in which participants operate.

In presenting the results, three primary contexts of *parai* drumming will be referred to consistently as "Feudal", "Artistic", and "Activistic" to anchor the narratives within the broader structural contexts of *parai* drumming.

- The **Feudal group** includes drummers who primarily perform for funerals and other functions, often under caste-bound expectations, both individually and in 'sets'.
- The **Artistic group** refers to those who avoid funerals but play for commercial/artistic reasons.
- The **Activistic group** consists of drummers who exclusively play for political reasons, actively participating in anti-caste movements and political mobilisation.

In this study, I refer to the first group as "Feudal Drummers". This term is used as an alternative to "Funeral Drummers", which would more directly reflect the main organizing principle for this group as they perform primarily for funerals, often as part of inherited caste duties. And the term "Funeral Drummers" captures the ground reality in a raw sense.

However, I chose to avoid the term “Funeral Drummer” in this thesis because it can be reductive and potentially stigmatizing, fixing individuals’ identities to a caste-marked and symbolically loaded event.

The alternative term “Feudal Drummer” is used because it perfectly captures all dimensions of their work, and it points to the caste-structured expectations that surround funeral performances. It allows me to discuss the group without reinforcing the same forms of symbolic reduction that the study seeks to critique. This is a terminological choice rooted in ethical reflexivity, and I acknowledge that the label has its limitations when understood in a literal contextual meaning. Because some drummers in this group have tried and even succeeded in forming independent groups, breaking feudal ties. I suggest that this term for this group should be understood as an analytical shorthand rather than its literal meaning.

The final set of themes that emerged are:

1. Surviving Structural Violence: Material Deprivation and Caste Oppression.
2. Finding Voice and Meaning: Cultural Identity and Spiritual Strength.
3. Mobilizing as a Collective: Alliances, Cooperation.
4. Entering Public Platforms: Institutional Navigation.
5. Counter-Power and Cultural Resistance: *Parai* as Political Tool.
6. Health, Healing, and Recovery: Empowerment and Well-being.

While each participant’s experience was unique, distinct patterns emerged in how the major themes related to the three contexts of *parai* drumming.

The theme of Surviving Structural Violence was described predominantly by participants from the Funeral group, where caste oppression and material deprivation were deeply entrenched. Although elements of structural violence were mentioned by others, the intense feeling of entrapment was a characteristic feature of funeral and traditional function drummers. Themes related to Finding Voice and Meaning, mobilizing as a Collective, and Entering Public Platforms were more pronounced among the Artistic group and Activistic group, where identity re-formation, artistic pride, and collective organization were common narratives. The themes of Counter-Power and Cultural Resistance and Health, Healing, and Recovery were most powerfully articulated by participants from the Activist group, who viewed *parai* drumming as a deliberate political act tied to community empowerment and well-being.

This mapping provides an interpretative anchor for understanding the results that follow, connecting individual experiences to the broader social transformations within each context of *parai* performance.

4.1 Theme 1: Surviving Structural Violence: Material Deprivation and Caste Oppression

This category brings together descriptions of everyday struggles that define the lives of many Dalits and especially *Parai* drummers. Most of the *parai* drummers step into drumming as a hereditary occupation, where drumming is considered as caste bound, Slave work that they have to do as traditional service to the caste Hindus of the village that their *"cheri"* is attached to.

"It's our duty. We have to go and drum. It's mandatory. When it's our turn, we have to go. There's no other way."

[Interview 6, Feudal Drummer, 68/Man]

In these accounts, drumming often appears more as an imposed role or inherited obligation rather than a chosen profession. Even for those who break these ties and move outside, the stigma of drumming *parai* as a polluted identity continues.

"They see us as izhivu (lowly)."

[Interview 4, Feudal Drummer, 21/Man]

"When we go to different places and they ask what instrument we play, if we say parai, their faces change. They see it as lowly."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

The above quotes are from both a funeral and an Artistic drummer, which explains the continuing stigma.

They are denied basic needs like water and places to stay wherever they perform, showing a complete disregard for their basic human needs.

A young *Feudal Drummer* shared his experience at a funeral space,

".....In death houses, because of caste issues. In BC (Backward Caste) streets, if we go to the toilet in between, they create problems.

They ask, 'Did you come for drumming or to use the toilet?' In other places, after drumming, we felt tired and sat down. They came and asked,

'Is the chair for us or for you drummers?' Once, I was sitting with my legs crossed, and a man came and asked, 'What do you drummers think of yourselves? Why are you sitting like that? In some places, if we ask for water, they say, 'Can't you drum without water?'"

[Interview 4, Feudal Drummer, 21/Man]

Spatial segregation during performances, ritualistic exclusions, and disrespect from Caste-hindus further reinforce their marginality.

"At funerals, some people say, 'Don't come here, go there. Don't play near us, move farther." They'll even say, "Take your parai away." They'll give water in a separate can, not let us use their glasses".

[Interview 16, Feudal Drummer, 28/Man]

Caste based hierarchies in musical instruments persist in performance spaces, where other instruments are meant for auspicious events, and *Parai* is meant for inauspicious events associated with pollution.

"Parai is seen low, and 'tavil' and' Nadhaswaram' will get the stage. Even in marriages, tavil and other instruments will be inside, and parai will be outside. Even in processions and in chariots. Tavil will come back along with God or the bride and groom, and Parai will go front little far away. Tavil players will be from different caste, parai drummers are from different castes.

We can go inside the temple and marriage functions, after the performance. After the function, we will go and see the god and will come back. We will go inside the temple and eat. But with parai, we cannot go inside."

[Interview 2, Feudal Drummer, 25/Man]

A Feudal Drummer, when asked about the other musicians, said,

“They won't beat parai, if they beat; their power is gone. They will think like that.

Even in a chariot, they will sit in the chariot and drum. We will drum in front of the chariot.

‘Their birth is like that, our birth is like this’ we will think.”

[Interview 1, Feudal Drummer, 72/Man]

In performance spaces, they face explicit discrimination, caste-based humiliations and shame, caste based verbal abuse, where others boss them to perform in the way they want. A Feudal Drummer describes his experience as

“Even in death functions, someone drunk will say, ‘Why are you sitting simply, take the drum and beat’. If we are beating, they will come and say, ‘There is no one to sing oppari? Sing oppari and beat’”

[Interview 2, Feudal Drummer, 25/Man]

Gendered aspects of marginalization also surface. Women face unique vulnerabilities, including a lack of safe spaces to change dresses, being judged more harshly, or being subject to harassment. Their presence in public performances becomes a negotiation of safety, dignity, and bodily autonomy. A woman artistic drummer, shared her humiliating experience in temple processions as,

“They wouldn’t even give us a place to change clothes. We had to eat outside; they wouldn’t invite us into their homes. They wouldn’t even give us water. During night processions, we’d cover 5–7 streets. Like the men, we can’t keep going without rest. We get tired, but we can’t rest. The group members would say, ‘Take a break,’ but some drunk people would say,

'They danced in front of that house. Why not ours? Call them and make them dance.'……In some places, they treat us badly. They splash water on us, throw juice bottles, pinch us, or even push us. We don't say anything because it could escalate into a bigger issue. We will talk among ourselves with the women in the group."

[Interview 12, Artistic Drummer, 42/Woman]

These experiences are layered with exploitative labour arrangements, where Drummers lack agency over their labour in choosing the performances and fixing the timings.

Most of them perform in unpredictable, harsh working conditions, like overnight performances, forced-prolonged events, continuous events for days, many times without proper sleep and diet.

"For the temple, we have to drum continuously. For a full procession, the whole night. For death houses, if they are planning to take the dead body soon, then it will be easy, but some others will wait for their relatives. For them, we have to wait till that, even till night 10 o'clock. They will wait. We will come after work, suddenly, there will be another death. As soon as. Then we have to go again."

[Interview 3, Feudal Drummer, 73/Man]

Livelihood is more precarious where they only have Irregular seasonal income, and most of them choose to supplement the income by doing additional work as part-time, which is also irregular.

Most of them are underpaid, often paid in kind of food and mainly alcohol, which perpetuates, structured dependence on both alcohol and caste Hindus.

"Apart from salary, they will give food and alcohol……. for the ones who are not drinking 100 rupees or the bottle will be given, they have to sell the alcohol and get money.

So most of them will have alcohol in hand, and it is difficult to sell, so we will drink"

[Interview 2, Feudal Drummer, 25/Man]

Even for drummers who step out of funeral drumming, the alcohol provision and coercion in terms of caste and money continue in different forms. Performance invites are now being provided by intermediary booking agents, which portrays economic exploitation in artistic spaces, too. Here is a quote from an artistic drummer saying about restraining from reacting to discrimination for survival.

"Sometimes, they ask for 15 or 20 people and specify a time limit, but the event extends by 4 or 5 hours. In those situations, we try to talk to them about timing because we might have other commitments. But we can't raise our voices because we only get paid at the end.

If we complain, they might reduce our payment or scold us. In some places, if we perform well, they give extra money, but in others, they find silly reasons to cut the payment."

[Interview 8, Artistic Drummer, 26/Man]

They go through a physical and mental toll because of discriminatory working conditions, lack of sleep, and poor diet patterns. Even some depend on alcohol and other drugs as a remedy and to cope.

"This (Alcohol) is the only medicine for our pain. There's no other way. When we have continuous performances lined up, this is the only way to manage……..... There's no alternative - this is the only painkiller we have."

[Interview 16, Feudal Drummer, 28/Man]

A young Feudal Drummer mentions his experience in funeral spaces as,

"A lot of people will be watching. It would be embarrassing if I were sober. If I'm in alcohol, I will mind nothing, I'll start beating as I wish."

[Interview 2, Feudal Drummer, 25/Man]

where alcohol is used as a tool to mute caste-based discomfort. Alcohol, in this context, becomes both a coping mechanism and a trap. The drummers' reluctant use of substances reflects not addiction in a clinical sense, but a survival strategy for enduring physical exhaustion and social humiliation.

Survival becomes the main motive here, and their responses to discrimination are often muted, expressed through silent endurance or mechanical detachment.

"They look down on us badly. They'll say, "Hey, parai player!" and call us by our caste names. What can we do? This is our livelihood. We have to listen and bear it to earn and survive. There's no other way……. We can't. If we argue, they'll cut our pay or replace us. Even if we answer back when they provoke us, next time they won't call us. They'll just hire someone else."

[Interview 16, Feudal Drummer, 28/Man]

The humiliations, overwork, and oppression are accepted and normalised, and internalised.

"We don't feel it as much because we're used to it, but for beginners, it's very hard. They won't even let us go to the restroom. They make us drum the whole night."

[Interview 8, Artistic Drummer, 26/Man]

“.....even if they are pushing, we will go peacefully. We will feel sad in such instances; it we can't do anything. We won't react to them, even in the future; it won't happen. We succeeded. Our minds got used to such things. We will go away if someone comes. We passed our lives like this.”

[Interview 1, Feudal Drummer, 72/Man]

In response to Photo Elicitation of ‘*Parai* Over the Face’(See Annexure 5 'Parai over face') Photo, a funeral *parai* drummer responds by,

"You are a parai drummer, that's what I feel is conveyed."

[Interview 4, Feudal Drummer, 21/Man]

*w*here the Identity of the *parai* drummer is reduced to caste stigma. Another Feudal Drummer responds to it as

"He is hiding his face (in a bad way)."

[Interview 16, Feudal Drummer, 28/Man]

which reflects his Internalized shame linked to caste identity.

At the core, this theme reflects not just financial hardship but a deeper resignation to caste-based dehumanization.

Yet within these constraints, subtle acts of reflection, occasional refusals, and emerging discontent begin to suggest the earliest tremors of change.

4.2 Theme 2: Finding Voice and Meaning: Cultural Identity, and Spiritual Strength

This category includes codes that describe moments where drummers begin to reframe their relationship to *Parai*, not as a burden or as something stigmatizing and thrust upon them, but as a more positive identity.

"Now, if anyone says my name, they know me only because of parai."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

In the narratives, these codes cover participants who describe their art as a source of inner strength, healing, and pride. Through performance, they not only express but also process the emotional toll of caste violence, humiliation, and exclusion.

This transformation is often sparked in newer spaces like urban collectives, student groups, and artistic gatherings, where *Parai* is appreciated without the burden of caste expectation and exploitation. For many *Parai* drummers, the breaking of feudal ties and validation from the newer artistic performance spaces promote their artistic identity.

"I feel very happy. It's like being a hero or a celebrity. When a celebrity steps out of their car, people watch them. That's how we feel. We, who drum parai, are also celebrities. They may have money and call themselves celebrities, but we don't. People decide we are celebrities because they feel happy hearing our performance. So, we feel like celebrities. We've never felt ashamed or shy. Every day, we are heroes. Everyone watches us."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

A woman drummer shared her validation experience as follows,

"When I go out, many people appreciate me. They say, 'You're a woman, yet you're so brave to come and speak about people's issues.' They shake my hand, give me books, and even wrap shawls to me."

[Interview 12, Artistic Drummer, 42/Woman]

Here, drumming continues more as a choice than as a forced obligation. The choice is being fuelled by a passion for artistic recognition. Their relationship to their instrument, once shaped by caste imposition, begins to deepen. *Parai* artists become their identity, and they begin to assert it over all the stigma it bears.

"The word parai in pure Tamil means 'to announce." We're boldly announcing, 'This is who we are.' It's an identity. Now, when people ask me, "What do you do for a living?" I confidently say, 'I'm a parai artist.'"

[Interview 14, Artistic Drummer, 32/Woman]

These affective experiences build a new sense of personhood, not marred by caste but centered around expressive strength. The act of drumming transforms from slave work to artistic self-expression. This shift aligns with a deeper politicization of identity that is at the core of many of the Dalit movements for social justice.

The responses from drummers regarding *parai* were very interesting, where some mentioned it as a tool for transcendence, a tool for self-realisation. Many drummers start to perform not just for the audience but to affirm themselves.

"I don't play for the audience.

I love playing the parai. I dance for myself, and the audience enjoys it a little."

[Interview 13, Artistic Drummer, 22/Man]

For women drummers, especially, this transformation is deeply empowering.

"I've started feeling like I'm someone in this society. Earlier, I wouldn't go out much, but now I walk home alone even at 2 AM. This confidence came from going out and interacting with people.

I've even travelled to Thailand alone. Before COVID, there was an annual cultural event in Thailand organized by our art department. I'd go there every year. In that group of 45 people, only two of us were women. Such experiences have given me a lot of exposure."

[Interview 14, Artistic Drummer, 32/Woman]

Their engagement with *parai* not only enables public visibility but also repositions them within their communities, from silence to voice, from margin to center. Performing in male-dominated spaces, traveling independently, and winning awards are not just accomplishments but acts of defiance against gendered and caste-based norms and expectations.

The spiritual connection with the art and their inner self being artists was very evident through responses from photo elicitation, which shows aestheticized self-conception.

An artistic drummer responded to the picture 'Parai Over Face' (See Annexure 5 'Parai over face') as,

"In this picture, I see a person kissing the drum. With love, a person is kissing the drum."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

which reflects his love for this art form. Another artistic drummer responded as

"The parai is his identity, everything else is hidden."

[Interview 8, Artistic Drummer, 26/Man]

This reflects artistic identity as central to his self-conception.

"There's a parai, and someone has hidden their face behind it. It feels like they're crying out their pain to the parai, as if they have no friends to talk to."

[Interview 12, Artistic Drummer, 42/Woman]

Here, the woman drummer could relate *parai* to a friend who helps her relieve all her worries.

Most of them responded in the sense that it is a proud identity, while a person could recall that the society is filled with caste biases, where an upper caste student feels shy to play *parai* in front of everyone. It reflects how the *parai* is seen as low in caste ridden society.

While being Feudal Drummers, but who have broken the feudal ties and formed drumming groups, two participants' (participant 4 and participant 15) responses signify the identity in transition.

"This is my soul and breath. That's what I said. I have this in front of me, this is my face, my identity. I could say more, but before that, we had hidden our faces. Now, art has become visible. This is my foundation. This is my livelihood. This is my identity."

[Interview 15, Feudal Drummer, 46/Man]

An activistic drummer responded by saying

"For me, it speaks of how Parai drummers are visible and invisible at the same time. People hear us, but don't see us. They praise the art but ignore the artist. The face hidden behind the drum is a metaphor how society loves the sound but not the caste behind it.

But there's also power here. The drum is not hiding the face it's protecting it.

When I see this, I think: I don't want to hide behind the drum. I want to stand with it, let it show my face, my name, my history."

[Interview 20, Activistic Drummer, 28/Woman]

This reflects her strong identity association and assertion.

Many drummers are determined to revive the art form, take it to the forefront, create new styles, and continue it by passing it on to others and their children.

"XXYY trained many artists in groups and NGOs. He selected good artists, including me, my wife, and some others from our street. Twenty-five people were selected, trained, and we attended Chennai Sangamam……Then, artists from many districts in Tamil Nadu came together. We thought of developing new art forms while keeping the traditional aspects intact.

In that process, Maatu Kombattam (a traditional bull-taming art form) was reinvented. We structured that art form, though it's not completely designed yet. We are still working on it and taking it forward for the future."

[Interview 11, Artistic Drummer, 48/Man]

Many groups' purposes remained in a common point of spreading the art form, as here a woman drummer explains her group's goal.

"The goal of our art group is to take this art to the next generation and spread it among more people. Through this, we also share progressive ideas with the public. Now, after us, our children should carry this forward. By "children," I don't just mean my son, but all in our group. They're all like my children."

[Interview 12, Artistic Drummer, 42/Woman]

Self-resilience and even identity assertions happen in discriminatory spaces. Demand for self-respect and dignity, and equal treatment comes from within. They maintain an optimistic mindset while continuously putting the negative perceptions aside. (This is much different from normalisation in terms of self-esteem they carry.)

"Negative things haven't happened to me. Even if they do, we shouldn't take them to heart. I don't consider them because they hinder our growth. I don't listen to negativity."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

Parai becomes a tool for self-discipline and salvation, where some start to change their health behaviour and dressing appearances in terms of their self-care, and also for demanding respect.

"In today's world, young people are at risk of addiction. Even those who drink casually can fall into bad habits. Through parai training, we teach them to avoid alcohol. In our team, the boys are disciplined.

They earn well and live responsibly.

We've decided how our team should be: no drinking, no misbehaviour with girls, and strict discipline."

[Interview 9, Artistic Drummer, 27/Man]

An artistic *parai* drummer explains how *parai* has changed his life,

"Yes, parai has become my identity. It has given me a place to sustain myself in life. If I didn't have parai, I might have been drinking and roaming around. It has disciplined me in many ways."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

The role of artistic recognition and validation from local, national, and international spaces in this process is very crucial in rebuilding their selves, chipping out the stigma and shame. They start to prefer money over alcohol, where alcohol turns out to be a dignity concern. What was once played for survival and caste ritual is now performed for meaning, Pride, self-affirmation, Identity assertion, and declaration. To the extent that it serves as a coping mechanism during difficult times. This shift was especially prominent among younger drummers and those part of urban collectives.

Their art becomes a medium through which shame is undone and self-respect cultivated. These are not just aesthetic shifts; they mark the slow unravelling of caste-imposed inferiority and the re-imagining of self through cultural expression.

4.3 Theme 3: Mobilizing as a Collective: Alliances, and cooperation

This category highlights the formation of troupes, networks, and peer support groups On one side, the breaking of feudal ties allows space for them to express their artistic identity,

where on the other side, when moving out, they form new independent troupes with formal rules and democratically decide the terms of performance.

"Now, some young people are forming groups and going to other towns to play the parai. That's their choice. It's the choice of those who want to do it. We can't question it. It's not mandatory."

[Interview 6, Feudal Drummer, 68/Man]

From interviews, we can see that many talk about are trials and failures in group formations, which clearly reflects this process. And here, many *Parai* drummers begin to look outward for allies, for solidarity, for networks, and peer support. Mobilising as collectives promotes their social mobility, hence an artistic drummer describes,

"I feel very proud of this identity. If I were a normal person, I wouldn't have met collectors, ministers, MLAs, or the Chief Minister. But now, I receive awards from them. Last month, the CM came, got out of his car, shook hands with us, took photos, and left. They even gave us extra money for that.

They know who I am, so I can approach them in the future. They recognize me. That's what parai has given me as an artist"

[Interview 8, Artistic Drummer, 26/Man]

Here, a young drummer shared his ally with a friend, which has enabled him to be aware of legal provisions to fight back in oppressive and discriminatory situations.

"I know some rules. I have a friend who is a district coordinator in the music cultural team. She guides me and says, 'If someone says something to you, talk back. We can even file a case against them.'

Some bus drivers and conductors don't allow me to travel with the parai. Once, the girl told me that this instrument doesn't require any luggage charges. That happened two years ago. After that, I started warning them that I would complain. Some allowed me after I spoke firmly. I have an ID card as a musician artist, and I have registered my set with the government"

[Interview 4, Feudal Drummer, 21/Man]

Drummers begin to share resources, train newcomers, and negotiate as collectives. emotional sharing with peers on facing caste abuse and structured reflection, sitting together after performances to talk, are the ways of processing shared trauma and crafting collective strategies.

We share everything with each other. Before a performance, we sit in a circle and discuss what needs to be done. After the performance, we talk about what went well and what could be improved. This strengthens our bond. There's no division like "you're different, and we're different" among us.

[Interview 12, Artistic Drummer, 42/Woman]

The emotional bonds within troupes extend beyond performance spaces. Artists mention pooling resources to help sick members. They conduct training sessions for young people and invest time and energy in fellow members' development. In doing so, they move from the fragmented vulnerability of isolated artists to the strength of an organized cultural front.

This brings emotional support, creative innovation, and mutual protection against exploitative practices. They come together to demand fairness and challenge discriminatory practices.

"…… There should be a permanent income source. That's our demand to the government. For folk artists, the government is not considering them properly.

There are many awards like Kalaimamani and Sudarmani, but for real artists, these are not accessible. The government should provide pensions for artists above 60 years of age, but no one is getting it….

We are organizing Veedhi Virudhu Vizha. … under the banner of Alternative Media Centre (AMC), a federation of all folk artists….

We are keeping these demands before the government…… Artists from all districts of Tamil Nadu, around 5000 groups, come together to form this AMC……. We are also demanding that the pension age be reduced from 60 to 50 years."

[Interview 11, Artistic Drummer, 48/Man]

At a structural level, collectives also play a significant role in resisting exploitation. They intervene in wage negotiations, standardize fair pay rates, and confront organizers who attempt to undercut or disrespect performers.

"After Pongal, all the parai drummers in xxx district came together to discuss and raise the salary. We, the owners of the sets, decided on the salary increase. For the past 2 years, we were getting the same salary, but now we've raised it. For example, for death ceremonies, it's ₹800–900 per person, and for night events, it's ₹1200 per person. They must pay this amount. If they don't, they don't need to call us."

[Interview 4, Feudal Drummer, 21/Man]

Some create new troupes that operate with formal rules and democratically decide the terms of performance, form alliances with anti-caste movements, NGOs, or cultural bodies. If a

troupe is asked to perform without dignity, they withdraw. When a village tries to restrict their presence, they return stronger, not alone. Such strong response to verbal caste based abused is explained by an artistic woman drummer.

"At first, we thought of stopping the performance. We even told the elders in the village about it. We stayed there and said, 'We won't leave this village until they admit they were wrong for calling us parai dogs.' Later, the village elders held a meeting and fined those who spoke badly about us. They admitted it was wrong. That incident filled me with rage. Now, I openly say, "I'm a parai artist," with pride.

We stayed in that village for two days without drinking water. We strongly condemn using caste names to humiliate people. Later, those women came and apologized, admitting they were wrong. It's a small village, but I can never forget that incident. It made me think, we need to show them that we're all equal."

[Interview 14, Artistic Drummer, 32/Woman]

Still, it isn't always easy that difficulties in forming a group prevail. But the willingness to keep building, despite these barriers, speaks to a profound shift, from coping in isolation to organizing in community, from performing under compulsion to performing together by choice and with voice. A senior local leader explains the lack of unity in forming independent troupes as,

"That is why XXXX and others have gone outside. We have called the boys and asked them to come. They used to go outside. For marriage, for death. They used to go for everything. Now boys don't have unity, one boy will come and one boy won't come. If 5-6 boys want to go Only 3 boys will go 3 boys won't come."

[Interview 3, Ex-Feudal Drummer, 73/Man]

In this theme presence of artistic camaraderie and collective learning marks a tangible move towards community and self-reliance.

4.4 Theme 4: Entering Public Platforms: Institutional Navigation

Parai drummers enter new public spaces, college cultural fests, district celebrations, award ceremonies, even television programs, government awareness programs, and national forums.

"Recently, I took 10 school children for the Republic Day parade. Not everyone can do it. They filter heavily before performing in Delhi, but I took 10 students to Delhi this time. Since I was announced for the National Award, I took 20 boys with me on a flight. I'm trying to do whatever I can to the maximum….. In the G20 event, the stage was big, and they provided a big hotel for artists. Nine teams were from the same art form, and only one native art form was represented—me, Parai Isai. That feels very big to me. I struggle for it."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

They are awarded, interviewed, filmed, and sometimes even invited to teach in institutions. These events gets them visibility and financial opportunity.

"The whole of XXX(district name) knows my set, and I have many fans, not just here but across Tamil Nadu, thanks to social media. I've travelled to almost all districts."

[Interview 4, Feudal Drummer, 21/Man]

Though this drummer drums for funerals, as he formed an independent 'set' and performs in other areas, so he gets validation and recognition from newer artistic spaces.

Here is a women drummer sharing about the recognition and visibility she got being as *parai* drummer

"I see it as a tool of liberation. It has liberated me in many ways.

Most women in our village stay at home, doing household chores or working in the fields. But I've travelled to other villages, Delhi, Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Chennai. This has been a great liberation for me. Many important people, including collectors and ministers, come to talk to me. Even local VAOs know me. Everyone knows me."

[Interview 12, Artistic Drummer, 42/Woman]

Parai drummers move from margins to mainstream, not just by invitation alone, but by claiming the spaces with confidence. Artists recount moments where respect must be demanded, not assumed. Organizers who issue instructions with casteist entitlement are rebuffed; contracts, logistics, and formal invitations are now prerequisites

"We should discuss all this with them before going there. If we discuss, everything will be given properly.

If there is no proper response, we can decide to ignore it and finish the work and come back. Or we can finish the work, tell them that we are leaving and return the advance. If there is no proper reception, no proper food, and they aren't treating us respectfully, we just return the advance and tell them we are leaving.

If we have already played, then I will not come back without the payment. I have to give everyone in my team right? We dont have the means to give them the money, if we had the means we could give. We dont, so we have to get the money from them and only give. If for any reason, they give less than what was agreed upon, say 4000 instead of 5000, I tell them

that I have travel expenses, wages for the members etc. For 5000, 10 of us go. 400 wage per head and 1000 for travel."

[Interview 15, Feudal Drummer, 46/Man]

With inner power and collective support, drummers begin to enter institutional spaces with agency, reflecting the transition from caste-based labourers to institutional actors. they begin to claim space on their terms. Legal awareness and registration as government-recognized artists further empower them. Having identity cards, understanding the rights associated with cultural labor, and invoking legal protections when harassed reflect a growing strategic sophistication

Some use these platforms to talk about caste and art openly, even when advised to "keep it cultural." They also learn to protect themselves, advocating for performer safety, better logistics, and formal contracts.

"Now, we talk to them. We say, "We've come to your village. You need to ensure our safety." We inform the event committee and tell them not to leave us alone. "

[Interview 12, Artistic Drummer, 42/Woman]

Drummers bring *parai* into institutional places, making a curriculum for it.

"……. I've already created a three-year curriculum. I've composed new pieces and documented the history of parai rhythms. I've also established many rules and shared them. I'm composing a lot within this framework…….The parai will transform into a classical art form. It will become classical music but will remain connected to the people. It will be systematized with grammar. This might happen soon, as gradual progress is already underway."

[Interview 18, Activistic Drummer, 37/Man]

While some feel conflicted by institutional co-optation, many see these opportunities as a means to expand their influence and legitimacy while staying grounded in community needs. Despite contradictions, feeling both seen and used, Drummers navigate through the system with the space they get with social mobility, legal awareness, and strategic confidence.

"I'll get the Kalaimamani soon. I'm waiting because that's the identity. It has given me many things. If I want to do something for it, I should get the Kalaimamani for parai isai. That's the respect I pay."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

What began as tokenistic invites became platforms of influence, spaces where they could speak, organize, and inspire. Some navigate these contradictions with calculated pragmatism using state platforms to spread awareness, while resisting attempts to sanitize or neutralize their message.

This theme reflects the evolution of *parai* drumming from a stigmatized tradition into a mode of cultural assertion that is increasingly institutionalized and publicly recognized. In other words, moving from individual level coping and resistance to a collective evolution of the artform itself.

4.5 Theme 5: Counter-Power and Cultural Resistance: *Parai* as Political Tool

This theme captures the transforming narratives of drummers from survival to resistance. Apart from asserting their presence while navigating within the system, here they start to

reshape the meaning of performance itself. *Parai* drummers begin to challenge dominant caste hierarchies directly. They reject demeaning caste rituals, they refuse to play in symbolically humiliating spaces like funerals, and they walk away from events that reinforce hierarchy.

"I won't play the parai for caste, gods, or deaths. I won't play without individual dignity. I won't play where parai is degraded for alcohol or money. I'll use parai for the people and society.

If I say I won't play for deaths, it's because there's a context where people are seen as untouchable during funerals. I won't play at caste events. Which caste? I won't play at events that oppress. I'll play at events where oppressed castes come together.

I won't play for money, alcohol, or power. Even if the government asks, I won't play. Who has the most power? The government?. If they ask, I won't play.

It's my self-respect. I don't agree with it"

[Interview 18, Activistic Drummer, 37/Man]

Instead, they assert that *Parai* belongs in celebratory, respected, and secular spaces; instead, they play in anti-caste protests, Ambedkar rallies, and as part of movements demanding rights. An artistic drummer tells his experience in social struggle,

"From the Panjami land issue to helping people get their house land patta(land deed), we have done protests. Under IAS officer YYYY, we did a big protest near xyxy(place). Around 100–150 houses didn't have a 'patta', and the authorities asked them to relocate. We asked people to join us., We stayed there, cooked there, and continued the protest until it ended. We were arrested, but the party people helped us.

As we have worked here, there is a problem with acquiring land for crematory grounds or the pathways to these grounds. Humans struggle throughout their lives, and even after death, they are not at peace. Even for six feet of land, there was a problem in many areas. So, we took these protests into our hands.

For these land issues, we protested by creating a paadai (a symbolic bier). A person would lie on it, and we would drum and march. From four directions, four paadais would come together, and at one point, we entered the ground and reclaimed the land."

[Interview 11, Artistic Drummer, 48/Man]

These acts aren't just symbolic—they're deeply political. Artists use *Parai* to question oppressive Brahminical norms. They assert their identity in turn breaking the caste hierarchies embedded in musical aesthetics.

"We perform at protests against caste violence, custodial deaths. Wherever there is an atrocity from power, either caste or money. We also do events to mark Ambedkar Jayanti, Periyar's birthday, and anniversaries of atrocities like Kilvenmani or Melavalavu. Sometimes we do college events, but only if they allow us to keep the political edge. We don't do wedding or funeral rituals."

[Interview 20, Activistic Drummer, 28/Woman]

They break the caste stereotypes in dressings, alcohol practice. They reproduce new norms, symbolic meanings, and rules based on equity. They take forward the symbolic change in *parai* as a deliberate political project.

"From the beginning, we have been taught that the parai is an instrument of liberation. We should not drum for funerals. This idea has been ingrained in us from the start."

[Interview 11, Artistic Drummer, 48/Man]

And disseminating the change through influencing the other groups. And assisting them in demanding dignity and self-respect.

"If we have to break oppression by drumming, we have to drum. When there's a need to drum, we have to drum…. For example, in this area, the land acquisition for the cremation ground is a problem. If just me and another person protest, nothing will happen. Even giving petitions to the taluk office or the collector's office won't help…….But if we do two functions and organize a protest, we can mobilize people……'This is our land, and it's in trouble. What do we have to do? We have to get it back.'…. This is how we motivate people to see the problem and protest. Through the parai, we are preparing our people for liberation……. We're not saying something impossible. We're telling them what's possible. If they come together, anything can happen……. We talk about what happened in Melavalavu, Puliyangudi, and the death of the girl Sengodi during the Sri Lankan issue in Kanchipuram. Who still remembers her? How many remember her death anniversary? All these things are important. In the Thamirabarani River, many people died. In Venmani, 41 people died. In Kumbakonam, 92 children died. We should remember these incidents and pass on the understanding to others. News disappears quickly. An accident happens, we share a post in a group, and soon we forget about it. But we have to use this for the liberation of our society."

[Interview 11, Artistic Drummer, 48/Man]

Some describe using drumming as a political weapon. Their performances are designed to disrupt, provoke, and educate. *Parai* becomes a drum of defiance, a sonic protest, a cultural manifesto. These artists imagine a new future that is not built on tolerance, but on equity. They don't wait for space to be given. They claim it. They name it. They redefine it.

"*Parai* should enter the temple sanctum."

[Interview 18, Activistic Drummer, 37/Man]

4.6 Theme 6: Health, Healing, and Recovery: Empowerment and Well being

Drummers playing *parai* for purely artistic or activist purposes seem to have better strategic sleep and diet patterns. Self-care is promoted by identity and self-esteem. Drummers speak of warming up before events, protecting their hands and shoulders, and managing their energy levels. They adjust their diet according to the demands of the performance, eat protein-rich food, apply balm, and plan their rest before and after events. This routine demonstrates a move from reactive to proactive health behaviours, guided by the recognition that *"our body is our capital."*

"We have to be in a good mood and state for any function. I rest whenever possible before an event and eat three proper meals. Food is very important—it's why we're struggling so much. So, I don't compromise on food. Even during functions, we eat on time. Sleeping beforehand keeps our minds fresh because we have to stay awake at night to drum. If we're tired, we can't perform well."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

Another Artistic drummer tells about his strategic sleep and diet pattern.

"If there's a function the next day, I prepare myself today. Sleep is the most important thing for a human, so we make sure to sleep extra hours the day before. We also eat energy-rich food to stay active.

During performances, leg pain is common, so we apply balm and ask our team members to manage for a while so we can rest. We make adjustments like this and never stop.

We also have to be careful with our hands and legs. If we lose our fingers, we can't drum the parai. Just like vocal singers protect their throats, we protect our hands and legs. Before a function, we prepare our bodies and avoid walking long distances.

Even if we're sick with a cold or fever, once we warm the drum and start drumming, the tiredness goes away. If we're mentally prepared, we'll be fine."

[Interview 9, Artistic Drummer, 27/Man]

While the last two groups, mainly political drummers, avoid or directly confront the discriminatory spaces, rather than internalising the humiliation, which can lead to mental stress.

Having a Purpose in life and improved self-esteem projects a positive mental health status among the artistic and activist groups. Women artists also speak of emotional strength gained through public performance, travel, and recognition.

Rejecting the alcohol based stereotypes, even to the extent of creating the group rules regarding avoiding alcohol consumption, is seen in political and in some artistic drumming groups. We can see better coping strategies in the political and artistic drumming groups.

"Alcohol. We don't allow this in our group. It should be strictly avoided. Many artists have lost their lives mainly because of this. There's a thought that artists should be like this, that they usually drink. Such thoughts need to change. As I said, we have to discipline ourselves. Particularly, alcohol is something that makes people look down on us."

[Interview 7, Artistic Drummer, 32/Man]

Feudal Drummer who formed the group tells about his view on alcohol,

"For example, drinking alcohol (bodhai), in many places we go to for functions, they will offer us. They will be celebrating or mourning. So when they are having, they will offer it to us as well...but if we start consuming it, then we will go down that path. If we keep all that aside, we can progress better."

[Interview 15, Feudal Drummer, 46/Man]

Even for some, drumming becomes a coping mechanism. As one drummer notes, when problems overwhelm him, drumming gives rise to "new ideas"—a sign that the *parai* is more than a tool; it's a source of mental regulation and renewal.

"When things are tough or problematic, I play the parai. That's when new ideas come.

When there's an overwhelming problem, something new emerges. When I play the parai, it boosts me……. I've set some things. When I have taken the parai on my shoulders, when I'm on stage, my physical flaws, mental issues, and environmental pressures disappear. They don't come in mind. Let's see when we come back. Performing arts are like that…. In Tamil, we call it 'Nigzhthu kalai'. Nigazh means present. They exist in the present. The musical form is in the present. It doesn't go to the future or the past. It keeps you in the present. That's the nature of art."

[Interview 18, Activistic Drummer, 37/Man]

This theme reveals that *parai* drumming is not only a form of cultural expression or resistance, but also a therapeutic practice that promotes physical, mental, and emotional well-being. For many drummers, especially those involved in political and artistic collectives, health becomes a deliberate concern. Their narratives show a conscious shift from neglect to nurture, from bodies worn down by caste labour to bodies actively preserved as instruments of dignity and performance.

Taken together, the findings reveal how the experience of *parai* drumming shifts across different contexts, from survival under feudal caste oppression, to self-expression and artistic pride, to political assertion and collective empowerment. Each major theme is deeply intertwined with the primary contexts of drumming: structural violence was most visible among the Feudal Drummers, and this can be mapped well to Limiting Power in the empowerment process. The other themes, Finding Voice and Meaning, Mobilizing as a Collective, Entering Public Platforms, were strongly expressed among the Artistic group. These can be mapped well to the Emancipatory powers of empowerment. These transitions in meaning and experience reflect different stages along the Empowerment Process that informs this study. While a detailed discussion of the mapping to EPF and LPF frameworks will be taken up in the next chapter, the findings here suggest clear processes of empowerment unfolding across the groups. Moreover, there is evidence of progressive improvement in psychological resilience, mental well-being, and physical health behaviours as participants moved from feudal drumming to artistic and activist modes of performance. The narratives show a tangible journey from coping in oppressive environments to proactively reshaping identity, community, and health. In the Discussion chapter, these results will be examined more closely as markers of community empowerment and health equity.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This study set out to explore how symbolic appropriation of the *Parai* drum functions as a tool of resistance among Dalit communities in Tamil Nadu and its implications on health behaviours and coping mechanisms. The main focus of this study is a focus on the social determinants of health, and the possible ways of reducing inequity with a particular focus on the concept of empowerment. Towards this, the symbolic reappropriation of *parai* was taken as an exemplar of a reflection of this struggle for empowerment. The study attempted to further delineate various empiric correlates of this process of empowerment. Anchored in the Community Empowerment Analysis Framework (Popay et al., 2021), the Identity Formation Model (Arun, 2007), and theories of adaptive/maladaptive coping (Meyer, 2003b; Schmitt et al., 2014), this discussion critically examines how marginalized groups reconstruct meanings, build agency, resist caste structures, and navigate health adversities through cultural transformation, all of which reflect critical steps/stages in the achievement of empowerment.

Rather than offering a simplistic account of empowerment, the findings reveal that empowerment is dynamic, iterative, fragmented, negotiated, and simultaneously creative and constrained.

This chapter critically engages with the findings of the study through the lens of empowerment theory and social determinants of health. It is organized thematically, following the progression of themes identified in the results section. The discussion begins by examining how limiting powers operate to constrain drummers' lives, and then explores

the emergence of emancipatory powers through identity transformation, collective action, and cultural resistance. This chapter concludes by highlighting the health implications of these empowerment processes and reflecting on the dynamic, iterative nature of empowerment itself.

5.2 Power – That Limits

The first theme, Surviving Structural Violence: Material Deprivation and Caste-Oppression, captures the structural, institutional, and compulsory forces that shape the lived experience of caste- based oppression of *Parai* drummers.

The Survival of these *parai* drummers in feudal and casteist contexts is defined structurally by extremely exploitative and demeaning working conditions, Caste based labour relations, along with caste based institutional norms like spatial segregation and denial of basic necessities, further perpetuates the exclusion. The drumming tradition itself is framed as a compulsory obligation of caste duty, where they are bossed to perform for others. This stigmatization is a product of the power of the elite discourse that defines what is polluting and what is pure. This gets lodged into their own subjectivity, leading to an internalisation of caste-based inferiority.

This resonates with Foucault's concept of subjectification: Power is most effective when it shapes desires, emotions, and self-perception, not merely external behaviour (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 2014).

Thus, the findings reveal that disempowerment is not just "outside" in structures, but "inside" the self, operating through deeply internalized symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1977).

It has been described in the literature (Popay et al., 2021; Powell et al., 2021) that these powers do not operate separately but reinforce each other, creating a "sticky web" of disempowerment where the physical and emotional toll faced by the drummers is because of the interplay of all limiting powers, and even the drummers' responses to the discriminatory situations are shaped by these powers. Responses like refraining from confrontation, a lack of collective resistance, normalising oppression, and using maladaptive coping strategies for mere survival further pull them into the whirlpool of structured oppression.

These conditions mirror the "zero-sum" power over dynamics. In terms of participatory spaces, with the absence or distortion of participatory spaces, drummers are often excluded or invited only tokenistically, limiting their agency and reinforcing their marginality.

These constraints reflect how the institutional, structural, and compulsory and productive powers operate, keeping disadvantaged communities exhausted, busy, and silent.

5.3 Power – That Emancipates.

The Second theme, Finding Voice and Meaning: Cultural Identity and Spiritual Strength, reflects transformative subjective change "within". Through drumming, performers rewrite narratives of shame into ones of pride, creating a cultural resistance that is both aesthetic and political. This shift doesn't come from a vacuum but from the empirical and symbolic conflicts arising from the political movements, socioeconomic struggles, and contradictions. Arun (2007) explains this process of identity formation as happening through conflicts leading to weakening of feudal ties, and reidentifying themselves with an artistic identity in newer performance spaces that temporarily suspend caste logics. These attempts at securing a more positive identity are further enhanced by validation from

performing in these newer sense-making spaces (newer artistic spaces), which allow drummers to express themselves freely, away from the constraints of invited spaces in local caste bound villages. The role of artistic recognition and validation from local, national, and international spaces in this process is very crucial in rebuilding their selves, chipping out the stigma and shame.

This process of identity formation by its nature, turns out to be resistance against the limiting powers described above, where stigma associated with *parai* and drumming turns into pride through re-constituting the stigmatized identity into an artistic identity.

This domain is the emotional and symbolic heart of empowerment, as described in the EPF, and is key to initiating the transformation and resistance against structural, institutional, and compulsory limiting powers.

This category embodies the emergence of 'power within'- the inner resources of confidence, collective identity, and meaning-making despite (or because of) their oppression, that allow communities to envision their potential and assertion of dignity through cultural identity. This is the inner revolution: the reconfiguration of self-worth and social identity through cultural assertion.

Further, some articulate a philosophy of discipline around their identity as artists. Cleanliness, sobriety, and respectful behaviour are framed not as morality, but as a strategy to counter stereotypes and demand respect. In rejecting alcohol, in choosing uniform dress, and in insisting on dignity in behaviour and language, they reconstruct the *parai* artist as a dignified, self-regulating subject. This is particularly important in the face of persistent stigma that associates *parai* with pollution, drunkenness, and impurity. They start to prefer money over alcohol, where alcohol turns out to be a dignity concern. The drummers' narratives show an optimistic mindset and promoted self-care and having purpose in life.

What was once played for survival and caste ritual is now performed for meaning, pride, self-affirmation, and identity assertion, and declaration. In the early and iterative stages, this also serves as a coping mechanism during difficult times.

The Third theme: Mobilizing as a Collective: Alliances and Cooperation, gathers codes that highlight solidarity, collective action, and networking, the ability to build relationships that extend influence and enable transformation.

Drummers form independent troupes initially as a necessity to perform under the constructed artistic identity, and contradicting humiliatory feudal spaces. Either they continue to perform in humiliating spaces with the new group formed, or reject the feudal spaces themselves. In the data, a whole range of responses were documented. This underlines the iterative, dynamic, and negotiated nature of empowerment. This reflects 'Power With' collective agency expressed through solidarity (Popay et al., 2021). This ‘power with’ manifests as collective resilience in former spaces and as collective resistance in later (where they reject to perform). The ‘Power with’, not necessarily being a resistance against the limiting powers, but it enhances ‘power to’ and ‘power over’, which in turn enables them to resist the limiting powers.

They build networks of dignity and resistance, form alliances with anti-caste movements, NGOs, or cultural bodies, to negotiate terms, and address shared challenges. This shift is probably representative of the first attempts at transforming psychological processes of empowerment into outward-looking processes that attempt to engage with structures of disempowerment (Popay et al., 2021). Further, these alliances are also crucial for the sustainability of empowerment, as it is not just internal, but social. When caste-oppressed groups act with other similar groups and others who are outside the feudal spaces (for

example, in more modernized and urbanized settings), building contacts with important people outside, they begin to reconfigure not only their roles but the structures around them.

The emancipatory capabilities, like horizontal networks of support, knowledge, and struggle, emerge in connection with others. This move from coping to organizing is a turning point in the empowerment arc.

Mobilizing as a group also allows demands to be voiced for better pay, respect, and policy changes. These organized refusals suggest the increasing labour consciousness among *parai* drummers, where drumming is no longer seen as unconditional service but as a contractual engagement demanding mutual respect.

Importantly, these new groups also create new ethical standards. Some groups enforce rules around alcohol consumption, public behaviour, and equal participation, especially of women. These internal codes help to reclaim the narrative around *parai* drummers and to directly counter the casteist and moralistic stereotypes of disorder and impurity.

Though structural challenges remain, group formation is still difficult, and economic coercion lingers, there is strength in collective creativity and mutual aid. In terms of participatory spaces, this manifests in both sense-making spaces and governance spaces (formalized troupes, artistic networks, political alliances).

The Fourth theme, Entering Public Platforms: Institutional Navigation, captures Drummers' transition from caste-based labourers to institutional actors.

Through Collective agency from ‘Power with’ drummers gain increased access to newer institutional spaces. They get social mobility, they lead cultural projects, gain national visibility, and enter formal participatory spaces. Drummers take leadership roles, bring *Parai* into national and international platforms, and leverage awards, films, and

government events for recognition. This feeds into 'Power to' among drummers, which helps them to resist institutional limiting powers while navigating within the oppressive system. Awards, media representation, and government performances are repurposed to assert dignity.

Drummers develop adaptive strategies to navigate institutional rules, co-opt support, and use systems to their advantage. It's not full resistance but strategic negotiation, where drummers work within the system to gain visibility, resources, or legitimacy. These codes show how *Parai* drummers enter and reshape invited spaces, often transforming them from tokenistic invitations into platforms of visibility and assertion, balancing caste resistance with institutional presence. They no longer merely receive invites, they negotiate terms, create visibility, and shift the power balance.

Still, this is not without contradiction. They navigate invited spaces where caste still lurks in subtle forms: *"symbolic exclusion"*, *"normalization of oppression"*, *"unequal profit distribution"*. But they use these very platforms to expose inequality and institutionalize dignity.

This reflects a positive engagement with formal institutions, but one that remains grounded in collective control, not assimilation. The "opening out" of participatory governance occurs when marginalized groups reshape structures from within.

Drummers are no longer waiting for space, they are crafting it, negotiating it, and occupying it with confidence.

The fifth theme, Counter-Power and Cultural Resistance: *Parai* as Political Tool, is where Resistance takes a sharper edge as *Parai* drummers begin to challenge dominant caste hierarchies directly.

These expressions mirror Foucault's productive counterpower (reshaping meaning, identity, values, and visions) (Foucault, 1998) and the "power over" dimension in the EPF (Popay et al., 2021).

This emerges as a resistance to all limiting powers by rejecting casteist performance requests, reclaiming public space, refusing to play in funeral spaces, disrupting Brahminical cultural norms, asserting Dalit identity, mobilizing for anti-caste political movements, using *parai* as tool for the change.

The rejection of caste-based rituals and the mobilising toward movements like Anti-NEET protests, land rights agitations, and Ambedkar commemorations portrays the deliberate ideological turn. This re-signification disrupts the symbolic order by which *parai* is framed as a stigmatised and degraded instrument.

The drummers' narratives also show a critical pedagogy at play. They see their work not just as performance but as education. In public rallies or on street corners, they use *parai* to raise awareness about atrocities, history, and the need for unity. This is a pedagogy from below, grounded in experience, resistance, and aimed at transformation.

Power over which is limiting is reframed as counter-power when drummers develop critical awareness to challenge the dominant narratives themselves.

Here, "Power Over" is not about domination but counter-hegemonic resistance. Drummers reclaim public space, assert Dalit identity, and disrupt caste musical hierarchies. Code terms like *"assertive negotiation"*, *"breaking caste barriers"*, *"rejecting spaces with disrespect"*, and *"political consciousness of drummers"* tell about the radical transformation of social roles.

Parai is no longer a symbol of servitude; it is a symbol of political rebellion and pride.

These ideas and processes are also similar to Gaventa's idea of "claimed spaces", where marginalized or powerless communities create their own spaces of expression, and demand that they are recognized under terms that are different from those imposed on them traditionally (Gaventa, 2003).

5.4 Identity Formation through Conflict and Symbolic Reversal

Arun's Identity Formation Model (CJ Arun, 2007) unfolds with remarkable clarity in participants' journeys. Participants initially internalized caste-based pollution narratives. Accepts *parai* as a stigmatized instrument. However, through conflict comes to conscious realization of caste-based humiliation, which Paulo Freire explains as conscientization.

For centuries, the *Parai* drum was cast as an emblem of death, impurity, and pollution. This construction secured cultural hegemony, as Antonio Gramsci (1971) described as the normalization of domination through common sense.

The findings show that this process of identity formation is fundamentally counter-hegemonic. They reclaim the drum not as pollution, but as ancestral art. They refuse the shame associated with their art form. They enter public spaces where they were once denied and assert the *Parai*'s aesthetic and political power. Similar to Foucault's view on resistance drummers employed the use of *Parai* as an instrument of resistance against casteist narratives. Thus, Cultural resistance becomes a potent act of reimagining individual and collective agency, breaking the caste hierarchies (Douzinas, 2023).

"I am a Parai artist," Says one of the drummers,

"Parai means literally 'to announce'. Through parai, we announce our existence."

This show that empowerment involves reclaiming not only resources but also meanings, as a counter-discursive process.

The health promotion literature on community empowerment (Popay et al., 2021) describes that building 'power with' and 'power to' requires not only resources but also constant work on collective meaning-making and ethical solidarity. With this symbolic reversal and re-identification, they reconstruct the *Parai* as a symbol of dignity and cultural pride.

5.5 Symbolic appropriation of *parai* and Community Empowerment

Thus the process of symbolic appropriation of *parai* in the way from the results is identified as the process of empowerment, and discussed above may seem to be a linear process, as an one-time event of "exit" from limiting power to emancipatory powers, but to emphasise, empowerment is a dynamic and iterative process where limiting and emancipatory powers are not opposites operating in separate domains rather, they interpenetrate the same spaces, the same performances, the same bodies.

The spatial segregation of drummers, the withholding of water and seating, are instances where institutional and structural power reinforce caste boundaries.
At the same time, the very act of breaking territorial restrictions (Performing in neighbouring villages, forming "sets") reflects the erosion of compulsory feudal control through emergent 'power to' and 'power with'.

This reflects what Douzinas (2023) called the simultaneity of domination and resistance; resistance itself emerges from within the fractures of oppression.

In funeral performances, we see the operation of limiting power where drumming is more a caste duty than an art. Yet even within the same context, tiny sparks of 'power within' survive in the choice of a particular beat, collective resilience, and passive resistance over

reclaiming the performance space. These tiny sparks are fuelled by validation from newer spaces, which ignites the transforming identity.

This is very evident from the findings where two Feudal Drummers (Interview 4 and Interview 15), even though they have formed independent groups, still drum also for funerals, they shared more artistic qualities, which came out well in photo elicitation.

The artistic identity they project can be mainly due to the formation of independent groups, which gives leverage to get validation from newer spaces. To put the 'power with' feeds into 'power within'. In a way, this 'power within' and 'power with' together in turn manifest as collective resilience in discriminatory spaces, as they still perform in humiliating spaces like funerals for survival.

Hence, the way I have presented the emancipatory powers captures the overall process of emancipation, through 'power within' -> 'power with' -> 'power to'-> 'power over', to explain with clarity. But as a note of emphasis, this process of power emancipations is also nonlinear, where any form of power could potentially feed into the development of the other forms, depending on the particular circumstances and historical moment, hence collectively bringing up emancipation in the process of empowerment.

To explain this further, 'power with' and 'power to' almost act on the same domain in similar ways, for example, 'power with' of drummers in forming newer contacts, alliances, political persons, and authorities, gives them social mobility and legal awareness ('power to') through which they navigate within the institutional system, which feeds again back to 'power with' in demanding their rights together, further promoting their collective agency. Hence, these two powers feed back into each other strongly and build up each other simultaneously.

Similarly, manifesting spaces of these powers, like governance spaces, meaning-making spaces, and claimed spaces, give access to each other in the process of emancipation.

The power over, which resists all limiting power by breaking feudal ties, breaking institutional norms, and stereotyped negative symbols, inherently encapsulates all other emancipating powers (‘power within’, ‘power with’, ‘power to’) within itself. And hence, not necessarily power over comes is the end process of emancipation, even if it can initiate the process. For example the political activist drummers aligned with ideological anti caste movements serve conflicts over symbols to initiate the process.

The findings portray that all the emancipatory powers are indispensable in empowerment. Without any power, the discussion of empowerment remains superficial. Hence, Empowerment becomes a recursive reworking process of powers at emotional, spatial, and symbolic levels.

The findings challenge romanticized notions of empowerment as top-down processes that can be brought about by purely expert-led interventions; rather, this study hopes to show how processes of symbolic re-appropriation, dismissed as purely cultural politics, is infact a critical core aspect of empowerment processes so important to reduce health inequity. Such processes are fluid and are themselves a site of struggle where internalized oppression, collective identity formation, and external structural constraints are in constant tension. Metaphorically, we can put it as balance, where in Feudal Contexts the limiting factors weigh more, and in activistic the emancipatory factors weigh more which gives the streamed overall process of Community empowerment, and In Artistic groups, the factors wiggles on both sides where it is a perpetual struggle for maintaining and expanding emancipation.

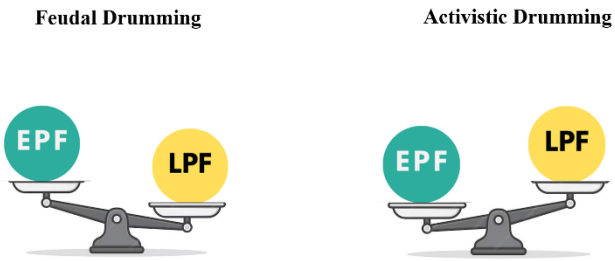


Figure 5 : Dynamicity of empowerment

5.6 Health, Healing, and Recovery: Empowerment and Well-being

Empowerment here emerges as a relational, embodied process strongly related to health and well-being, where Symbolic appropriation of drumming becomes both a coping mechanism and an empowerment process, which replaces alcohol, processes trauma, and fosters emotional regulation. It enables structured self-care, bodily preparation, etc.

The coping responses of participants align with models proposed by Schmitt et al. (2014) and Meyer (2003b). Maladaptive strategies, notably alcohol consumption as a coping mechanism against caste humiliation, were widespread among those who performed in feudalistic contexts. Simultaneously, adaptive strategies like cultural assertion, community solidarity, and artistic expression emerged as pathways for resilience and empowerment. Collective spaces (activist troupes, artistic performances) open up new spaces for healthier coping in which caste traumas of shame and humiliation can be processed, transformed, or witnessed.

Where solidarity spaces (sets, activist troupes) flourish, adaptive coping through pride, artistic mastery, emotional sharing, and public recognition becomes possible.

Where such spaces collapse, maladaptive coping (alcoholism, fatalism) proliferates. It is not because individuals are weak, but because the social affordances for hope are absent.

The interplay of these maladaptive survival strategies and adaptive empowerment strategies offers a nuanced definition of resilience.

Hence, the results reveal that coping is situational, relational, and shifting, not simply a personal trait, but shaped by available cultural scripts, networks, social, and political affordances. For example, from the results, some drummers abstain from harmful substances, and some do not. As Bourdieu (1986) explains, what distinguishes this difference is the community support, cultural capital, supportive values, and norms that make abstention possible.

Empowerment thus enhances health behaviours and resilience, as it enhances collective control and agency, which promote survival, recovery, and flourishing in the face of caste-based stress, addiction, and marginalization. Participants who experienced collective empowerment through drumming reported improved mental health outcomes.

This is witnessed through enhanced self-esteem, greater public confidence, reduced internalized shame, and having purpose in life. These outcomes align with evidence that community empowerment can mitigate the physiological and psychological impacts of chronic discrimination (Popay et al., 2021)

Physical self-care is framed as both a necessity and a form of empowerment. Drummers speak of warming up before events, protecting their hands and shoulders, and managing their energy levels. They adjust their diet according to the demands of the performance, eat protein-rich food, apply balm, and plan their rest before and after events. This shows a

move from reactive to proactive health behaviours, guided by the recognition that *"our body is our capital."*

Mental health also emerges as a space of struggle and resistance. While discrimination still causes emotional distress, many drummers say about getting resilience through meaning-making. As one drummer notes, when problems overwhelm him, drumming gives rise to "new ideas", which potrays that the *parai* is more than a tool; it's a source of mental regulation and renewal.

Group rules against alcohol, and shared reflections on performance experiences create an ecosystem of health and accountability. This is particularly striking in contrast to caste-based performance settings where alcohol is normalized, even expected, as part of compensation and control.

The rejection of alcohol and substances, especially among youth, is very symbolic. It is not just about personal health, but about rejecting the stigma that associates *parai* drumming with addiction, and irresponsibility. In rejecting this stereotype, artists reclaim the narrative around their profession and assert that health, discipline, and dignity are compatible with their identity.

The benefits of exposure to the outside world and recognition have also been spoken of by female artists in their discussions of emotional strength. Here, healing is understood not just as medicine or resting but as a matter of asserting their own control over bodies and their time.

Symbolic appropriation of *parai* serves to buffer against despair by offering a spiritual and present-centered space. The drummers speak of *parai* as a friend, a companion, and even

as meditation. This embodiment of "now," of being completely alive in the moment of performance, balances their emotions.

The narratives suggest an understanding of health and healing as not merely avoiding harm but rather fostering conditions for flourishing. Symbolic appropriation of *parai* helps to obtain that. It transforms survival into wellbeing, and wellbeing into power.

5.7 Trustworthiness

The strength of this study lies in the depth of engagement it was built. The relationships I developed with parai drummers across different regions and contexts enabled deep, layered conversations that showed both personal struggles and broader social patterns. My prior informal involvement in activist spaces and familiarity with the cultural world of *Parai* helped me listen with sensitivity and insight, while also reflecting critically on my position. Informal discussions, apart from in-depth interviews, added more insights around the nature of work, their caste based relations. Throughout the research process, I read widely across Dalit literatures, ethnographic studies, and critical theories, which helped me make sense of the narratives shared with me. During the analysis process was I went back to some participants to clarify emerging patterns and to hear how they perceived the interpretations that were taking shape. The coding of the first set of interviews was carried out independently by both my guide and me. These were later compared on the basis of resulting themes using an analytic framework to identify overlaps, contradictions, and new insights. The use of photo elicitation also helped in confirming and deepening the emerging interpretations, as participants reflected on their own performance contexts and visual symbols. Discussions with my guide throughout the study further sharpened my conceptual understanding. The field notes, personal reflections, and documentation of how meanings and themes evolved over time helped to preserve integrity of the process. All these add to

the overall trustworthiness of this study as the product of sustained attention, care, and commitment to represent the realities of the participants with honesty and depth.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion: Cultural Resistance and Health Equity

Empowerment Process is usually assumed as a top-down process, but what is documented here is that there are significant components of empowerment that are in fact bottom-up Process. These include those which are critical for identity formation and self-esteem, for example. This study demonstrates how the dehumanizing casteist narratives are turned into sources of collective pride, identity, and especially of health, through symbolic reappropriation and how Dalit communities challenge systemic oppression and reconstitute their social and psychological worlds, through cultural resistance and collective mobilization.

This study explored the diverse health and identity outcomes of *Parai* drummers across three contexts feudal, artistic, and activist and found clear evidence that the symbolic reappropriation of *Parai* has significant implications for both mental health and community empowerment.

In this transition, drummers experience changes in self-perception, participation, and health. This transformation maps closely onto the community empowerment process, where individual awakening develops into collective action, ultimately contributing to structural resistance and better health correlates, particularly lower substance use, increased emotional regulation, and resilience. The findings reinforce that Empowerment discourses must recognize that decolonizing the self is an ongoing labor, not a one-time event, and resilience must be theorized not as individual grit but as the capacity to access collective meanings, networks, and counter-narratives. Thus, there is a need to approach

empowerment as a dynamic, relational, and culturally situated process integral to promoting health equity. Hence, any health intervention must focus not only on "behaviour change" but on restructuring meaning, space, and belonging.

Drawing from the EPF and the LPF, the findings show that *Parai* drummers move from surviving oppressive structures to building cultural capital, forming peer networks, and confronting exclusionary power structures.

This study reveals that the symbolic re-appropriation of the *Parai* drum functions not merely as a cultural affirmation but as a deep site of political, emotional, and existential struggle; these processes have a profound impact on health, which emphasizes the importance of viewing identity development and cultural resistance as key components in addressing health inequities. By doing this, the study supports Nancy Krieger's claim that to fully study the social determinants of health, resistance must be examined alongside oppression because it is only resistance that changes the narrative from one of passive victimization to one of active participation and resilience.

6.2 Recommendations:

This study was exploratory in nature, aimed at looking into the symbolic reappropriation of the *Parai* and its implications on empowerment and health. Given the qualitative design and depth of contextual narratives, the study does not aim to propose immediate policy solutions. Instead, the recommendations here are meant to suggest future directions for research and practice. It is one of the major outcomes of this research to trigger a wider research agenda on bottom-up processes of community empowerment, emphasizing their crucial importance in addressing health inequities. One of the key outcomes of this research is to open up a broader research agenda on bottom-up processes of community

empowerment, emphasizing their critical role in efforts to reduce health inequities. The insights from this study provide a foundation for designing culturally grounded interventions and for recognizing the importance of symbolic and identity-based strategies in public health and social policy

For future research,

1. Recognize resistance and cultural processes, like symbolic reappropriation, as public health phenomena. Just as access to care is documented, the forms of resistance and cultural empowerment should be documented and supported as upstream interventions.
2. Include cultural indicators in health equity studies. Standard metrics of discrimination and access must be expanded to capture identity-based empowerment and community organizing.
3. To take up a strength-based approach along with gap gap-based approach in Health equity studies.

For Public Health Programs,

1. Reframe addiction interventions by acknowledging the role of cultural capital and collective identity. For example, we can conclude that substance use cannot be addressed through information alone; it requires meaningful shifts in identity, social roles, and community esteem.
2. Invest in spaces that allow marginalized groups to reflect, perform, and organize collectively, as these “sense-making spaces” are critical for transforming pain into power.

3. Ensure that policies do not only “include” marginalized voices, but also allow them to lead. Empowerment is not participation by invitation, but participation by self-definition.
4. Strengthen community structures that turn individual empowerment into collective change. True empowerment requires durability, social alliances, and visible cultural assertion.

It is important to recognize the inherent paradox at the heart of this discussion. Empowerment, by its very nature, is a bottom-up process. It cannot be engineered or delivered solely through top-down interventions. Although support structures and resources are necessary to facilitate these processes, genuine empowerment must emerge organically from within communities themselves. Therefore, perhaps the most tangible and meaningful recommendation at the policy level is for the state to create an enabling environment by actively refraining from suppressing people’s movements. Protecting the spaces where bottom-up resistance, cultural assertion, and collective agency can flourish is, in itself, a crucial act of advancing health equity and social justice.

6.3 Strengths

This study provides rich, context-specific insights into the relationship between symbolic appropriation, empowerment, and health among marginalized communities. By engaging deeply with participants’ lived experiences, the study was able to reveal the complex, dynamic, and iterative processes of empowerment at emotional, social, and political levels. The use of photo elicitation alongside in-depth interviews enriched the narratives and allowed participants to express layered meanings that might not have been captured through interviews alone.

A key strength of this study is the positionality of the principal investigator. Having prior involvement in community-based anti-caste movements and informal participation as a *Parai* drummer positioned the investigator in a unique way to build rapport, interpret finer nuances, and identify broader structural processes underlying the participants' narratives. This insider-outsider positionality allowed for deeper contextualization of the data while maintaining a critical distance necessary for analysis. The ability to connect micro-level stories with macro-level processes of caste oppression, resistance, and identity transformation substantially strengthened the study's analytical depth.

Furthermore, the study integrates frameworks from public health, sociology, and political theory, providing a multidisciplinary perspective that connects cultural assertion with health equity discourse.

6.4 Limitations

As an exploratory qualitative study, the findings are context-specific and not intended to be generalized to all Dalit or marginalized communities. The study focused solely on *Parai* drummers in Tamil Nadu, and thus, the experiences and empowerment trajectories in other regions, or those engaged with other marginalized cultural forms, were not captured. Future research could expand this inquiry into different states and among diverse caste-oppressed communities to explore variations in symbolic reappropriation and health outcomes.

Additionally, while the study illuminates psychological, social, and identity-related dimensions of health, it was not designed to make specific clinical or epidemiological assessments of physical health outcomes. Future studies could consider mixed-methods approaches to quantitatively explore the health impacts of cultural empowerment alongside

qualitative narratives, further exploring empirical qualitative markers for emancipatory and limiting powers.

The depth of engagement was also constrained by the field realities many interviews were conducted in open, shared community spaces, limiting privacy, and in some cases, participant candor. Longitudinal studies with extended participant observation could offer richer, more layered insights into evolving empowerment processes over time.

Despite these limitations, the study offers a foundational understanding of how cultural processes rooted in community agency can serve as critical pathways to health equity and social justice.

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ANNEXES

Annexure 1

Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies (AMCHSS)
Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST)
Trivandrum- 11

Participant Information Sheet

Greetings, I am Shriram A, a final-year Master of Public Health (MPH) student at the Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies (AMCHSS), Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum, Kerala. I am doing a study on "Symbolic Appropriation of Parai as a Tool of Resistance and its Implication on Health Behaviors and Coping Mechanisms among Parai Drummers in Tamil Nadu" as a part of my course work, under the guidance of Dr Rakhal Gaitonde, Professor at AMCHSS. You are invited to participate in this research study. Before you decide whether or not to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information sheet and the consent form carefully and feel free to ask for clarifications you may have, at any point during the study.

Purpose of the study

This study aims to document the lived experiences of Parai drummers and explore how caste-based discrimination impacts their health behaviors and coping mechanisms. Additionally, the study seeks to understand how Parai drumming functions as a tool of resistance, contributing to the well-being of drummers. The data will be analyzed to understand the key dimensions of Parai drummers' lived experiences that impact their health behaviors and well-being. The ultimate objective of this study is to document and amplify the voices of Parai drummers and highlight how drumming serves as a tool of resistance, contributing to improved health outcomes and social inclusion. The insights from this research aim to inform policies and practices that foster equity and well-being for drummers facing caste-based discrimination.

Procedure

If you agree to participate, you will be invited to take part in an in-depth interview, which will last approximately one hour to one and half hour. Privacy and confidentiality will be ensured during the interviews. You will be asked questions about your experiences with Parai drumming, social interactions, health behaviors, and personal reflections.
In addition to the interview, I will also show you some photographs related to the study's themes, such as Parai drumming, cultural events. These photos are meant to help us talk about your thoughts, feelings, and experiences in more detail. You can share what comes to your mind when you see these photos. If any questions or photos shown make you uncomfortable, you may skip them or stop the interview at any point. If you are a senior local leader, the interview will include questions specific to your experiences and perspectives, focusing on historical changes and the broader societal impact of Parai drumming. With your permission, the interview and your responses to the photos will be recorded to ensure that no key points are missed. These recordings will be used only for

analysis and stored securely. This study does not require any physical examinations or invasive procedures. If the information collected during the interview needs further clarification, I may contact you again at a later stage.

Potential risks and discomforts

There are no physical risks involved in this study. Taking part in the study and discussing your personal experiences and responding to photographs may at times be emotionally demanding and can lead to feelings of unease or discomfort, in such case you can take a break, or we can stop the interview. If you feel upset during or after the interview, I will connect you with a mental health practitioner who can help guide you on how to handle these feelings.

Possible benefits

While there may not be any direct benefits to you, your participation will provide valuable insights into the experiences and challenges of Parai drummers. These insights could inform recommendations to support the health and well-being of Parai drummers and foster positive change. A summary of the study findings will also be shared with participants.

Cost and financial benefit

There are no costs involved in participating, and no financial compensation or incentives will be provided.

Confidentiality

Information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential. A participant identification number will be assigned to each participant which will help to maintain the strict confidentiality of the data collected. Your name will not be used in reporting information in publications or reports.

Withdrawal from the study

Your participation in the study will be completely voluntary. You are free and have the right to withdraw during the study at any time. There will be no penalty for withdrawal or not participating in the study.

Contact information

If you have any study questions regarding this process or would like to verify my credentials, you may contact me or the member secretary of our institute's ethics committee.

Dr Shriram A
Principal Investigator,
MPH 2023, AMCHSS, SCTIMST
Contact Number: 9952388031
Email: kalaidasan23@gmail.com

Dr Srinivas G
Member Secretary
Institutional Ethics Committee
SCTIMST, TRIVANDRUM- 695011
Office: 04712524689
Email: iec.mem.sec@sctimst.ac.in

Thank you for considering participation in this study.

Sincerely,
Dr. Shriram A

Annexure 2

அச்சுத மேனன் சுகாதார அறிவியல் ஆய்வு மையம்(AMCHSS)

ஸ்ரீ சித்ரா திருநாள் மருத்துவ அறிவியல் மற்றும் தொழில்நுட்ப நிறுவனம் (SCTIMST)

திருவனந்தபுரம் - 11

பங்கேற்பாளர் தகவல் தாள்

வணக்கம், நான் மருத்துவர் அ. ஸ்ரீராம் , அச்சுத மேனன் ஹெல்த் சயின்சஸ் ஸ்டடீஸ் மையத்தில் முதுகலை பொது சுகாதாரப் பட்டப்படிப்பைப் படித்து வருகிறேன் .பேராசிரியர் டாக்டர் ராக்கால் கெய்டோண்டேவின் வழிகாட்டுதலின் கீழ், எனது கல்வி ஆராய்ச்சியின் ஒரு பகுதியாக, "பறையை எதிர்ப்புக்கான ஒரு கருவியாக அடையாள ஒதுக்கீடு செய்வதால் தமிழ்நாட்டில் உள்ள பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் சுகாதார நடத்தைகள் மற்றும் உளவியல் அழுத்தங்களை சமாளிக்கும் வழிமுறைகளில் ஏற்படும் தாக்கம்'' பற்றிய ஆய்வை நான் செய்து வருகிறேன். இந்த ஆய்வில் பங்கேற்க உங்களை அழைக்கிறேன். இந்த ஆய்வில் பங்கேற்கலாமா வேண்டாமா என்பதை நீங்கள் தீர்மானிப்பதற்கு முன், இந்த ஆய்வு ஏன் செய்யப்படுகிறது, அதில் என்ன உள்ளடங்கியுள்ளது என்பதை புரிந்துகொள்வது முக்கியம். ஆதலால் தகவல் தாளையும், ஒப்புதல் படிவத்தையும் கவனமாக படிக்கவும், மற்றும் ஆய்வின் எந்த நேரத்திலும் உங்களுக்கு தேவையான விளக்கங்களை கேட்க தயங்க வேண்டாம்.

ஆய்வின் நோக்கம்

இந்த ஆய்வு பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் அனுபவங்களை ஆவணப்படுத்துவதையும், சாதி அடிப்படையிலான பாகுபாடு அவர்களின் உடல்நலப் பழக்கவழக்கங்கள் மற்றும் சமாளிக்கும் வழிமுறைகளை எவ்வாறு பாதிக்கிறது என்பதை ஆராய்வதையும் நோக்கமாகக் கொண்டுள்ளது .மேலும், பறை எதிர்ப்பின் கருவியாக எவ்வாறு செயல்பட்டு கலைஞர்களின் நலனில் பங்காற்றுகிறது என்பதையும் ஆராய்கிறது . பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் வாழ்வியல் அனுபவங்களின் முக்கிய அம்சங்களை புரிந்துகொள்ள பெறப்பட்ட தரவு பகுப்பாய்வு செய்யப்படும்.

பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் குரல்களை பதிவு செய்து பெரிதும் வெளிப்படுத்துவதையும், பறையிசை எதிர்ப்பின் கருவியாக செயல்பட்டு , ஆரோக்கியம் மற்றும் சமூக ஒருங்கிணைப்பு ஆகியவற்றை மேம்படுத்துவதை எடுத்துக்காட்டுவதையும் இந்த ஆய்வு இறுதி நோக்கங்களாக கொண்டுள்ளது. இந்த ஆய்வின் முடிவுகள், சாதி அடிப்படையிலான பாகுபாட்டை எதிர்கொள்கின்ற பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் சமத்துவம் மற்றும் நல்வாழ்வை ஊக்குவிக்கும் சுகாதார கொள்கைகள் மற்றும் நடைமுறைகளுக்கு வழிகாட்டுவதை நோக்கமாக கொண்டுள்ளது.

செயல்முறை

நீங்கள் பங்கேற்க ஒப்புக்கொண்டால், சுமார் 1 மணி நேரம் முதல் ஒன்றறை மணி நேரம் வரை நீடிக்கும் ஆழ்ந்த நேர்காணலில் பங்கேற்க

அழைக்கப்படுவீர்கள் .நேர்காணலின் போது உங்களின் தனியுரிமை மற்றும் ரகசியம் பாதுகாக்கப்படும் .பறையிசை, சமூக தொடர்புகள், உடல்நலப் பழக்கவழக்கங்கள் மற்றும் தனிப்பட்ட எண்ணங்கள் குறித்து உங்களிடம் கேள்விகள் கேட்கப்படும். மேலும், இந்த நேர்காணலின் போது, ஆய்வுக்கான முக்கியமான கருப்பொருள்களைக் காட்டும் புகைப்படங்களை உங்களுக்கு காட்டுவேன், எடுத்துக்காட்டாக பறையிசை, கலாச்சார நிகழ்வுகள் போன்றவை . இந்த புகைப்படங்களை பார்த்து உங்களுக்கு தோன்றும் எண்ணங்களை, உணர்வுகளைப் பகிர்ந்து கொள்ளலாம். ஏதேனும் புகைப்படங்கள் அல்லது கேள்விகள் உங்களுக்கு சங்கடமாக இருந்தால், நீங்கள் அவற்றைத் தவிர்க்கலாம் அல்லது எந்த நேரத்திலும் நேர்காணலை நிறுத்தலாம். நீங்கள் ஒரு மூத்த உள்ளூர்த் தலைவராக இருந்தால், உங்களுக்கான நேர்காணலில், பரையிசையின் வரலாற்று மாற்றங்கள் மற்றும் அதன் சமூக தாக்கங்களைப் பற்றிய உங்கள் அனுபவங்கள் மற்றும் பார்வைகள் அடிப்படையில் உள்ள கேள்விகள் இடம் பெறும்.
உங்கள் அனுமதியுடன், முக்கிய அம்சங்கள் இழக்கப்படாமல் இருக்க நேர்காணலும் புகைப்படங்களைப் பற்றி உங்களுடைய கருத்துகளும் பதிவுசெய்யப்படும். இந்த பதிவுகள் பகுப்பாய்விற்கு மட்டுமே பயன்படுத்தப்படும் மற்றும் பாதுகாப்பாக சேமிக்கப்படும். இந்த ஆய்வில் எந்த உடல் பரிசோதனைகள் அல்லது உடலை ஊடுருருவும் செயல்முறைகள் இல்லை. நேர்காணலின் போது சேகரிக்கப்பட்ட தகவல்கள் தெளிவுபடுத்தப்பட வேண்டுமெனில், பின்னர் ஒரு கட்டத்தில், நான் உங்களை மீண்டும் தொடர்பு கொள்ள நேரிடலாம்.

சாத்தியமான ஆபத்துகள் மற்றும் அசௌகரியம்.

இந்த ஆய்வில் உடல் சம்பந்தப்பட்ட எந்த ஆபத்துகளும் இல்லை. உங்கள் தனிப்பட்ட அனுபவங்களைப் பகிர்வது அல்லது புகைப்படங்களைப் பற்றி பேசுவது உணர்ச்சிவசமாக இருந்தால் சில நேரங்களில் மன அசௌகரியம் ஏறபடக்கூடும், இது உங்களுக்கு அதிருப்தி ஏற்படுத்தக்கூடும் .இவ்வாறான சூழலில் நீங்கள் ஓய்வு எடுத்துக் கொள்ளலாம் அல்லது நாமும் நேர்காணலை நிறுத்திக்கொள்ளலாம்.
நேர்காணலின் போது அல்லது பிறகு உங்களுக்கு மனஉளைச்சல் ஏற்பட்டால், தேவை இருந்தால் மட்டும், நான் உங்களை ஒரு மனநல நிபுணரிடம் தொடர்பு கொள்ள பரிந்துரைப்பேன் அவர் உங்களுக்கு அந்த உணர்வுகளை சமாளிக்க . .உதவும் வழிகளை கூறுவார்

சாத்தியமான நன்மைகள்

உங்களுக்கு நேரடி நன்மைகள் கிடைக்காவிட்டாலும், உங்கள் பங்கேற்பு பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் அனுபவங்கள் மற்றும் சிக்கல்களைப் பற்றி முக்கியமான விளக்கங்களை வழங்கும். இந்த தகவல்கள், பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் உடல்நலம் மற்றும் நல்வாழ்வை ஆதரித்து, மாற்றங்களை ஏற்படுத்த உதவும்படி பரிந்துரைகளில் அடிப்படைத் தகவல்களாகப் பயன்படக்கூடும். ஆய்வு முடிவுகளின் சுருக்கமும் பங்கேற்பாளர்களுடன் பகிர்ந்து கொள்ளப்படும்.

செலவும் நிதியும்

இந்த ஆய்வில் பங்கேற்பதில் எந்தவித செலவும் இல்லை, மேலும் எவ்வித

நிதி இழப்பீடோ ஊக்கத்தொகையோ வழங்கப்படமாட்டாது.

இரகசியத்தன்மை

இந்த ஆய்வில் பெறப்படும் தகவல்கள் மிகுந்த ரகசியமாக வைக்கப்படும் . ஒவ்வொரு பங்கேற்பாளருக்கும் ஒரு அடையாள எண் வழங்கப்படும், இது சேகரிக்கப்பட்ட தரவின் ரகசியத்தை பாதுகாக்க உதவும். உங்களது பெயர் எந்த அறிக்கைகளிலும் அல்லது வெளியீடுகளிலும் பயன்படுத்தப்படமாட்டாது.

ஆய்விலிருந்து விலகுதல்

ஆய்வில் உங்கள் பங்கேற்பு முற்றிலும் உங்களின் சுயவிருப்பத்தன்மையாக இருக்கும் .நீங்கள் எப்போது வேண்டுமானாலும் ஆய்விலிருந்து விலகவும் அல்லது பங்கேற்காமலும் இருக்க உரிமை உங்களிடம் உள்ளது. விலகுதல் அல்லது பங்கேற்காததற்காக எவ்வித தண்டனையுமில்லை.

தகவல் தொடர்பு

இந்தப் படிநிலையைப் பற்றிய கேள்விகள் ஏதேனும் இருந்தால் அல்லது எனது சான்றுகளைச் சரிபார்க்க விரும்பினால், என்னை அல்லது எங்கள் நிறுவனத்தின் நெறிமுறைகள் குழுவின் உறுப்பினர் செயலாளரை தொடர்பு கொள்ளலாம்.

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இந்த ஆய்வில் பங்கேற்பதை கருத்தில் கொண்டதற்கு நன்றி.
உண்மையுள்ள,

டாக்டர் ஸ்ரீராம் அ

Annexure 3

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I confirm that I have read/ heard and understood the information regarding the study "Symbolic Appropriation of Parai as a Tool of Resistance and its Implication on Health Behaviors and Coping Mechanisms among Parai Drummers in Tamil Nadu." as provided in the participant information sheet. All of my questions concerning this study have been answered and all the possible harms, discomforts, and benefits (if any) of this study have been explained to me. I also understand that my identity and personal information will be kept confidential. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without consequences.
By signing this form, I agree to participate in this study**.**

- ☐ I agree to be interviewed
- ☐ I agree to be interviewed and recorded

A copy of this form has been given to me.

Date:
Place:

_____	_____
Name of the participant	Signature/Thumb impression
_____	_____
Principal Investigator	Signature

Annexure 4

ஒப்புதல் படிவம்

நான் ‘‘பறையை எதிர்ப்புக்கான ஒரு கருவியாக அடையாள ஒதுக்கீடு செய்வதால் தமிழ்நாட்டில் உள்ள பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் சுகாதார நடத்தைகள் மற்றும் உளவியல் அழுத்தங்களை சமாளிக்கும் வழிமுறைகளில் ஏற்படும் தாக்கம்’’ என்ற ஆய்விற்கான தகவல் தாளில் வழங்கப்பட்ட தகவல்களை படித்து/கேட்டு புரிந்துகொண்டேன் என்பதை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறேன். இந்த ஆய்வைச் சார்ந்த எனது கேள்விகள் அனைத்தும் பதிலளிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன, மேலும் இந்த ஆய்வின் சாத்தியமான அனைத்துச் சேதங்கள், அசௌகரியங்கள் மற்றும் நன்மைகள் (இருக்குமானால்) எனக்கு விளக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. எனது அடையாளமும் தனிப்பட்ட தகவல்களும் ரகசியமாக வைக்கப்படும் என்பதை நான் புரிந்துகொண்டேன். எனது பங்கேற்பு தன்னார்வமானது என்பதையும், எந்த நேரத்திலும் காரணம் கூறாமல், எந்த விளைவுகளும் இன்றி விலக எனக்கு சுதந்திரம் இருப்பதாகவும் புரிந்துகொண்டேன்.

இந்த படிவத்தில் கையொப்பமிடுவதன் மூலம், இந்த ஆய்வில் பங்கேற்க ஒப்புக்கொள்கிறேன்.

- நேர்காணலில் பங்கேற்க நான் ஒப்புக்கொள்கிறேன்
- நேர்காணலின் பேட்டியை பதிவு செய்யவும் நான் ஒப்புக்கொள்கிறேன்

இந்தப் படிவத்தின் நகல் எனக்கு வழங்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.

தேதி:
இடம்:

_____	_____
பங்கேற்பாளரின் பெயர்	பங்கேற்பாளரின் கையொப்பம்
_____	_____
ஆய்வாளரின் பெயர்.	ஆய்வாளரின் கையொப்பம்

Annexure 5

IDI GUIDE

Hello, I am Shriram. A, a final-year MPH student at AMCHSS, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology. I am currently conducting research on **"Symbolic appropriation of Parai as a tool of resistance and its implication on health behaviors and coping mechanisms among Parai drummers in Tamil Nadu"** as part of my academic program.

I am interested in understanding the lived experiences of Parai drummers, particularly in the context of caste-based discrimination, health, and coping mechanisms. Through this study, I aim to explore the significance of Parai drumming as a form of resistance and how it shapes the lives of those who perform it.

I assure you that all information shared during this study will be kept confidential, and no names of individuals, places, or institutions will be disclosed. Your willingness to share your experiences and insights would be invaluable to this research. If you could kindly spare some time to participate, it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you!

Photo Elicitation 1: Beginning with the first picture of Photo elicitation,

- Ask the individual to describe what they see and how the image makes them feel.



Picture 1: Parai drummers warming the drum and themselves before the performance.

It is the common first process for all parai drummers who use leather drum, so this picture will be used as a first picture to establish rapport and to begin initial interview questions about themselves and their background.

1. **Can you tell me a bit about yourself, your work?**

Probes:

- Ask where they are from, how long they've lived there, and about family—whether they live with them or separately - typical daily routine and what they enjoy doing in their free time.
- Ask what kind of work they do outside of drumming - family support to work and drumming. Ask how they would describe their relationship with the community.
- Whether their work or drumming supports their family. Inquire about their educational background, specifically if they have completed college, and how this might relate to their work and drumming activities.

2. **Can you share your journey of becoming a Parai drummer?**

Probes:

- Ask why they started drumming and what their first experience with Parai drumming was like, - who introduced them to drumming and how their family reacted. Ask how their first performance felt and whether their reasons for drumming have changed over time.
- What they feel the purpose of Parai drumming is for them and what it means to them personally - how drumming gives them a sense of pride or purpose and how they feel about their drumming now compared to when they started.

Photo Elicitation 2: Ask the individual to describe what elements they can see and how the image makes them feel.

Encourage to reflect on personal experiences what makes them to feel in such way.



Picture 2: Close up image of Parai being warmed by a group of drummers in well-lit fire.

3. How do you feel when you perform in front of an audience?

Probes:

➢ Ask whether they feel more confident or empowered when drumming, and explore how the audience's reaction influences their performance. Encourage them to recall a significant moment during a performance and reflect on the emotions they experience before, during, and after drumming- whether performing connects them to their identity or culture, helping them express their deeper sense of belonging.

Photo Elicitation 3:

- Ask the individual to identify the contexts in the following pictures in which parai is being used, confirm it with what is intended as the contests in given pictures and ask to choose the pictures among the five, in which settings they have drummed parai, or Ask to separate them into "relevant to me" and "Not-relevant to me".
- Remove all other pictures, and ask about their personal experiences in the settings they have selected.
- Ask to reflect on culture, tradition, and community, ideals as well as the participant's experiences of discrimination or inclusion within these settings.
- Then bring back the other photos that are not relevant to them and ask about participant's opinion about others, and reasons for continuing the in same, and not in others
- Ask the participant to compare between relative advantages and disadvantages of different groups.

(The following pictures depicts the spectrum of contextual settings in which parai drumming is involved, as mentioned in sampling criteria. This will bring out responses from parai drummers, of purpose of their drumming, benefits and harms.)



Picture 3: Parai drummers playing outside the temple in a feudal village setting.



Picture 4: Parai drummers playing in a funeral house in a feudal village setting.



Picture 5: Parai drummers from parai folk art group playing in a function.



Picture 6: Parai activist group playing in a political rally.



Picture 7: Parai used as a tool for politicising people.

4. For what events do you usually perform parai?

Probes:

- Ask about the traditional events or other events they regularly participate in as a drummer. Explore how they engage with others during performances and how it feels to share their music with an audience. Ask if they've ever faced opposition while drumming and how they feel when they remember those moments.

5. What are some of the biggest challenges you've faced as a Parai drummer?

Probes:

- Ask if they can share a particularly tough situation they've faced, especially challenges related to their caste background.- how they navigated these difficulties and how societal expectations impacted their role as a drummer.

- Ask how they feel after experiencing unfair treatment and what it was like growing up in their community-how their feelings about drumming shift during difficult times and what keeps them motivated to continue drumming, despite challenges.

6. How do people in general view Parai drummers, and how do these perceptions affect you?

Probes:

- Ask if they feel there's a difference in how Parai drummers are viewed compared to other musicians, especially when comparing Parai to other instruments. Explore how people from different communities react to their performances and how audience reactions vary across cultural and political events.
- Ask what influences these perceptions and if they have changed over time. Finally, discuss how these perceptions impact their personal and professional life.

Photo Elicitation 4: Ask the participant to describe what they can see and how the image makes them feel. Stimulate conversation around exclusion, caste-based discrimination, and to reflect from their experience.



Picture 8: Picture depicting double glass practice in Tamilnadu (prompting Social exclusion, Discrimination).

7. Can you describe an experience where you felt different or treated differently because of being a Parai drummer?

Probes:

- Ask them to recall a specific time when this happened, focusing on whether there are events where they feel more accepted or rejected - Whether caste played a role in how people treated them during performances.

- Ask how this experience impacted their confidence as a drummer and how they responded—did it change their approach to drumming?

8. Can you describe a situation where you felt judged or excluded because of your caste background (outside of being a Parai drummer)?

Probes:

Ask if there was a specific event or gathering where this happened, and how others around them behaved during that time - how they responded to the situation and what they did afterward.

9. Can you share examples when you felt particularly overwhelmed or stressed, and how you managed those emotions?

Probes:

- Ask them to describe a time when it was difficult to manage their emotions and what they did to cope in that moment.
- Ask what made the situations- so stressful. Explore whether they have a routine for managing overwhelming stress and how drumming helps during these moments.

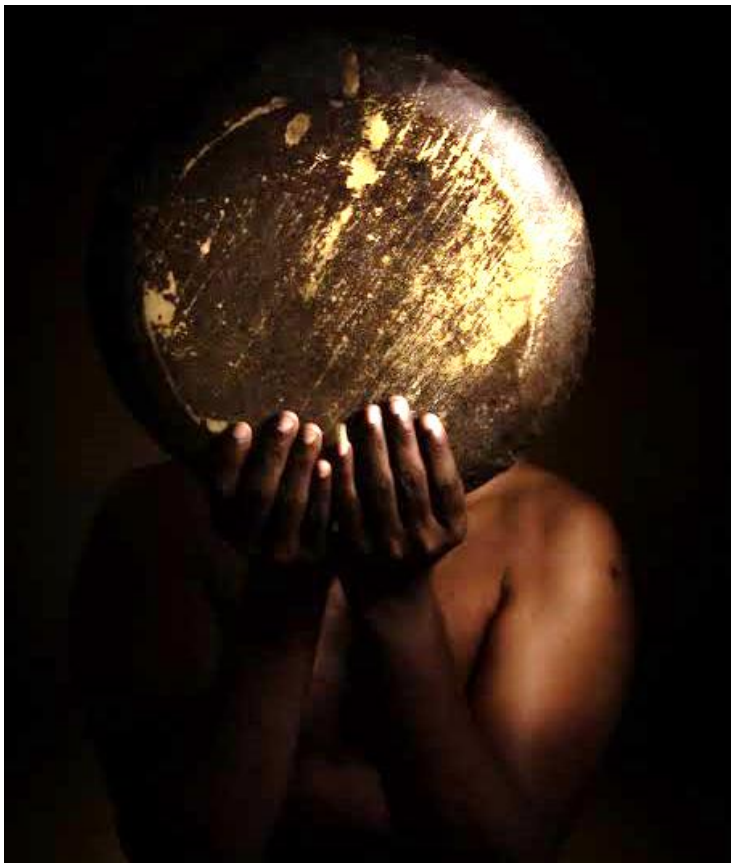
- Ask whether they rely on others for support or prefer to manage stress on their own - Specific activities or practices that help them relax, including any cultural or community practices they rely on.

10. Reflect on the ways in which challenges or difficulties you have faced have impacted on your life.

Probes:

- Materially, emotionally, mentally etc.,
- Ask How do they generally deal with difficult situations or feelings?
- Ask whether they have found any activities or practices that help you feel better emotionally or mentally?
- Ask whether these challenges affect their daily routines or the way of interaction with others in your life?

Photo Elicitation 5: Ask the participant what they see in the picture. How they can relate parai to them? How the society see them as a parai drummer?



Picture 9: An Individual holding parai in front of the face

(Prompting about Identity of the Parai drummer, Social expectations)

Photo elicitation a 'Parai over face'

11. How do you feel about yourself when reflecting on the challenges you've faced?

Probes:

- Ask whether their view of themselves has changed over time- How they see themselves in relation to others in their community and whether drumming plays a role in shaping how they feel about themselves. Ask how they feel about their place in society and whether their role as a drummer has changed how others see them

12. Can you describe a time when someone or a community supported you through difficult times?

Probes:

- Ask if there were specific people who helped them emotionally or practically during difficult times.
- Who them approached first when they faced difficult situation, due to discrimination, then explore how the drumming community supports one another, especially in facing caste-based discrimination.
- Ask how the support they've received has shaped their experience as a Parai drummer and whether being part of this community gives them strength and a sense of solidarity.

13. How would you describe the shared purpose or ideals among Parai drummers in your group?

Probes:

- **A**sk what values unite the drummers in their group- How being part of the group shapes their sense of purpose, and whether there are common goals or beliefs that they share. How these shared ideals influence their performances together.

14. Kindly reflect on how all Parai contributes to your life?

Probes:

- Ask what would be different in life without Parai? How would their life be different without Parai?
- Ask whether Parai helped with coping with any challenges?

15. How do your experiences as a Parai drummer shape your daily routines and overall well-being?

Probes:

- Ask about the practices they engage in to feel balanced and how these routines have changed over time. Explore what self-care looks like for them and whether they participate in activities outside of drumming to maintain their well-being. Then, ask about the importance of time away from drumming and how they recharge with family, friends, or nature. Ask about any activities they do to unwind or relax, and how their routines help them manage the physical and mental demands of drumming.

16. How do the demands of drumming influence your physical and mental health and how do you manage these challenges?

Probes:

- Ask if performing or practicing Parai causes physical strain, and how they manage that. Explore specific areas that feel strained or tired after performances, and how they prepare physically for performances and recover afterward. Ask if they've ever had to cancel or take a break from performing due to health problems, and how health issues impact their ability to practice or perform regularly- If their health has been influenced by their lifestyle as a Parai drummer or by stress from discrimination.
- Ask if they attribute any health challenges to societal treatment, how these affect their daily life, and whether they've had moments when they prioritized health over performing. Ask about how their overall health has changed over time and any specific concerns related to their health.

Photo Elicitation 5: As this is talked much related to parai drumming, I am showing this picture. What is seen in the picture and is this relevant to parai drumming or health? Ask the participant what they think? And to reflect from any incidents from daily life.



Picture 10: Alcohol to prompt about mal-adaptive coping behaviours

17. How would you describe your overall health today?

Probes:

- Ask how their health has changed over time, and whether there are specific aspects of their health they are particularly concerned about. Explore whether they think their health is influenced by their lifestyle as a Parai drummer and if they believe stress from discrimination has impacted their physical or mental health. Then, ask if they attribute any health challenges to the way they are treated by society and how these health issues affect their daily life.

18. What changes would you like to see in society for Parai drummers and future generations?

Probes:

- Ask if they see specific changes that are necessary to improve the situation for Parai drummers -What a more just society would look like for people in their position. Ask what they hope will change for young Parai drummers in the future, and whether there are challenges they face today that they hope the next generation won't have to experience.

19. How do you see yourself and your role as a Parai drummer evolving in the future, and is there anything else you'd like to share about your journey?

Probes:

- Ask if they see themselves continuing to drum in the same way in the coming years. Then, ask about any new opportunities or challenges they anticipate for the future and how they think their role as a drummer will influence future generations. Give them space to discuss any topics you haven't covered that they feel are important, and explore how they feel about sharing their journey with others. Finally, ask what they hope people will take away from their story.

20. How do you approach the themes of caste and social justice in your drumming?

Probes:

- Ask if there are any specific pieces that resonate with social issues, and how they feel their drumming can contribute to social awareness. Then, ask if they can share any specific performances or creations that have highlighted these themes.

Photos.	Sources
Picture 1	Prajwala Sangham, *The dappu drums are tuned by heating over a fire.* Open Access - Available at: https://www.newsindiatimes.com/dancing-to-the-beat-how-the-making-of-the-drum-defines-dalit-life-and-culture/ (accessed 28 October 2024).-
Picture 2	Madhuri Devi R, Tamil *folk musical instrument 'Parai'being tuned with heat from a makeshift bonfire by a team of performers just before staging their musical performance*. Open Access - Available at: https://stock.adobe.com/in/images/tamil-folk-musical-instrument-parai-being-tuned-with-heat-from-a-makeshift-bonfire-by-a-team-of-performers-just-before-staging-their-musical-performance/319540942?prev_url=detail (accessed 28 October 2024a).
Picture 3	Blackstar (2023), *NTK நையாண்டி மேளம் தப்பாட்ட கலை குழு* . Open Access - Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UozxotuOwfo (accessed 28 October 2024).

Picture 4	Taken from my mobile while meeting Parai Groups.
Picture 5	Circus thupakki (2020), *Storm like Beats, Thappatam @ Theru Vizha 2020*. Open Access - Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?si=TBJpB8WFhd-wo7Zt&v=lb0JxuO0iuI&feature=youtu.be (accessed 28 October 2024).
Picture 6	Taken from my mobile while meeting Parai groups drumming at rally.
Picture 7	Vinavu, *மகஇக மையக்கலைக்குழுவின் கலைநிகழ்ச்சி*. Open Access- Available at: https://www.vinavu.com/2014/06/11/virudhachalam-conference-against-privatization-of-education-report/#jp-carousel-51192 (accessed 28 October 2024).
Picture 8	Gnanavel murugan, *Dual glass practice*. Open Access - Available at: https://www.hindutamil.in/news/tamilnadu/224062-24.html (accessed 28 October 2024).
Picture 9	Madhuri Devi R, *The-Parai-Messenger*. Open Access - Available at: https://www.behance.net/gallery/73308697/The-Parai-Messenger (accessed 28 October 2024b).
Picture 10	Taken from my mobile.

Annexure 6

நேர்காணல் கையேடு

வணக்கம், நான் மருத்துவர் ஸ்ரீராம்.அ நான் ஸ்ரீ சித்ரா திருநாள் மருத்துவ அறிவியல் மற்றும் தொழில்நுட்ப நிறுவனம், *AMCHSS* இல் இறுதியாண்டு *MPH* மாணவராக இருக்கிறேன் நான் தற்போது ."பறையை எதிர்ப்புக்கான ஒரு கருவியாக அடையாள ஒதுக்கீடு செய்வதால் தமிழ்நாட்டில் உள்ள பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் சுகாதார நடத்தைகள் மற்றும் உளவியல் அழுத்தங்களை சமாளிக்கும் வழிமுறைகளில் ஏற்படும் தாக்கம்" பற்றிய ஆய்வை கல்வித்திட்டத்தின் ஒரு பகுதியாக மேற்கொண்டு வருகிறேன். பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் வாழ்வியல் அனுபவங்களை, குறிப்பாக சாதி அடிப்படையிலான பாகுபாடு, ஆரோக்கியம், சமாளிக்கும் வழிமுறைகள் போன்றவற்றின் பின்னணியில் புரிந்து கொள்ள ஆர்வமாக இருக்கிறேன்.

பறை எதிர்ப்பின் ஒரு வடிவமாக எவ்வாறு அமைகிறது மற்றும் பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் வாழ்க்கையை அது எவ்வாறு வடிவமைக்கிறது என்பதையும் ஆராய்வதே இந்த ஆய்வின் நோக்கமாகும்.

இந்த ஆய்வின் போது பகிரப்பட்ட அனைத்து தகவல்களும் ரகசியமாக வைக்கப்படும் என்பதை நான் உறுதி செய்கிறேன், மேலும் தனிநபர்கள், இடங்கள் அல்லது நிறுவனங்களின் பெயர்கள் எதுவும் வெளியிடப்படாது . உங்கள்அனுபவங்கள் மற்றும் பார்வைகளைப் பகிர்வதற்கான உங்கள் விருப்பம் இந்த ஆராய்ச்சிக்கு அளவிடமுடியாத முக்கியத்துவம் கொண்டது. பங்கேற்பதற்கு நீங்கள் கொஞ்சம் நேரம் ஒதுக்கக் கூடுமானால், அது பெரிதும் பாராட்டத்தக்கதாக அமையும் நன்றி!

புகைப்படத் தூண்டல் *1*: முதல் புகைப்படத்துடன் தொடங்குவோம்,

படத்தில் என்ன காண்கிறீர்கள் என்பதையும், இந்த படம் உங்களுக்கு என்ன உணர்வுகளை ஏற்படுத்துகிறது என்பதையும் விளக்கவும் .



***படம் 1**: பறையிசை கலைஞர்கள் நிகழ்ச்சிக்கு முன் அனலில் பறையை மற்றும் தங்களை சூடுபடுத்தி தயார் செய்து கொள்கின்றனர்.*

இது தோலால் செய்யப்பட்ட பறையை பயன்படுத்தும் பறையிசை கலைஞர்கள் அனைவரின் பொதுவான முதல் செயல்முறையாகும், ஆகையால் இந்தப் படத்தை அவர்களுடன் நெருக்கத்தை உருவாக்குவதற்கும் அவர்களின் பின்னணி மற்றும் தங்களைப் பற்றி தொடக்க கேள்விகளை கேட்கவும் இதைப் பயன்படுத்தலாம்.

1. உங்களைப் பற்றி, உங்கள் வேலையைப் பற்றி கொஞ்சம் சொல்ல முடியுமா?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

அவர்கள் எங்கிருந்து வருகிறார்கள், அவர்கள் அங்கு எவ்வளவு காலமாக வாழ்ந்து வருகிறார்கள், மற்றும் குடும்பத்தைப் பற்றி கேட்கவும், அவர்கள் குடும்பத்துடன் வாழ்கிறார்களா அல்லது தனியாக வாழ்கிறார்களா என்பதையும், வழக்கமான தினசரி வழக்கம் மற்றும் அவர்கள் ஓய்வு நேரத்தில் என்ன செய்வார்கள் என்றும் கேட்கவும் .

பறை வாசிப்பதைத் தவிர அவர்கள் வேறு என்ன வேலை செய்கிறார்கள் - தொழிலில் மற்றும் பறையிசையில் குடும்பம் கொடுக்கும் ஆதரவு பற்றி கேட்கவும்தன் . சமூகத்துடனான தங்கள் உறவை அவர்கள் எவ்வாறு விவரிப்பார்கள் என்றும் கேட்கவும்.

மற்றும் அவர்களின் வேலை அல்லது பறை வாசித்தல் அவர்களின் குடும்ப தேவைகளை தீர்க்கிறதா? – அவர்களின் கல்விப் பின்னணியை, குறிப்பாக அவர்கள் கல்லூரி முடித்திருக்கிறார்களா என்பதையும், இது அவர்களின் வேலை மற்றும் பறை வாசிப்பதில் எவ்வாறு தொடர்புடையது என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.

2. பறையிசை கலைஞராக உங்களுடைய வாழ்க்கை பயணத்தைப் பகிர முடியுமா?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

அவர்கள் பறையிசை வாசிப்பை ஏன் தொடங்கினார்கள்? அவர்களின் முதல் பறையிசை அனுபவம் எப்படி இருந்தது என்பதையும், பறையிசையை அறிமுகப்படுத்தியவர் யார் என்பதையும், அதை குடும்பம் எப்படி எதிர்கொண்டது என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.

அவர்களின் முதல் நிகழ்ச்சியின் அனுபவம் எப்படி இருந்தது, காலப்போக்கில் அவர்கள் பறையிசையில் ஈடுபடும் காரணங்கள் மாற்றம் அடைந்துள்ளனவா என்பதையும் கேட்கவும் .

அவர்களுக்கு பறையிசை வாசிப்பதன் நோக்கம் என்ன? அவர்களுக்கு பறையிசை என்ன வகையில் பிரத்தியேகமானது என்பதை கேட்கவும் - பறையிசை அவர்களின் பெருமையை அல்லது வாழ்வின் காரணத்தை உணரச்செய்கிறதா என்பதையும், பறையிசை வாசிப்பின் மீதான அவர்களின் உணர்வு தொடங்கியபோது இருந்ததைவிட தற்போது வேறுபடுகிறதா என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.

புகைப்படத் தூண்டல் 2: *பங்கேற்பாளரிடம் புகைப்படத்தில் அவர்களுக்கு தெரிவது என்ன, என்ன கூறுகளைக் காண முடிகிறது என்பதையும், படத்தை பார்த்ததும் அவர்கள் உணருவது என்ன என்பதையும் விளக்கக் கேட்கவும் அவ்வாறு .*
உணரச்செய்யும் அவர்களின் தனிப்பட்ட அனுபவங்களைப் பற்றி சிந்திக்க ஊக்குவிக்கவும்.



படம் 2: நன்றாக மூட்டபட்ட தீயில், பறையிசை கலைஞர்கள் குழுவாக தங்களது பறைகளை காய்ச்சும் படம்.

3. *நீங்கள் பார்வையாளர்கள் முன் பறை வாசிக்கும் போது எப்படி உணர்கிறீர்கள்?*

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

நீங்கள் பார்வையாளர்கள் முன் பறை வாசிக்கும் போது அதிகமாக தன்னம்பிக்கை அல்லது அதிகாரம் மிக்கவர்களாக உணர்கிறீர்களா என்று கேட்கவும், மேலும் பார்வையாளர்களின் எதிர்வினை அவர்களின் செயல்திறனை எவ்வாறு பாதிக்கிறது என்பதை ஆராயவும்.
ஒரு முக்கிய நிகழ்ச்சியை நினைவுகூரச் சொல்லி, அதற்கு முன், நிகழ்வின்போது, மற்றும் நிகழ்ச்சி முடிந்தபின் அவர்கள் உணர்ந்த உணர்வுகளைப் பற்றிச் சிந்திக்கச் சொல்லுங்கள் பறை வாசிப்பது அவர்களின் அடையாளம் அல்லது கலாச்சாரத்துடன் அவர்களை இணைக்கிறதா, அல்லது அவர்களின் ஆழமான உணர்வை வெளிப்படுத்த உதவுகிறதா என்று கேட்கவும் .

புகைப்படத் தூண்டல் 3:

- *பறையிசை பயன்படுத்தப்படும் சூழலைப் படம் மூலம் பங்கேற்பாளர் அடையாளம் காண சொல்லவும்; ஒவ்வொரு படத்திலும் காணப்படும் சூழலுக்கான நோக்கத்தை அவர்களிடம் உறுதிப்படுத்தவும். ஐந்து படங்களில் இருந்து அவர்கள் பறை இசைத்த சூழல்களைத் தேர்ந்தெடுக்க சொல்லவும். ''எனக்கு தொடர்பானது'' மற்றும் ''எனக்கு தொடர்பில்லாதது'' என பிரிக்கச் சொல்லவும்.*
- *மற்ற படங்களை நீக்கி, அவர்கள் ''எனக்கு தொடர்பானது'' என தேர்ந்தெடுத்த படங்களில் உள்ள சூழல்களில் தங்கள் தனிப்பட்ட அனுபவங்களைப் பற்றிச் சொல்லச் சொல்லவும்.*
- *கலாசாரம், பாரம்பரியம், சமூகப் பழக்கங்கள் மற்றும் இந்தச் சூழல்களில் இடம்பெற்ற பாகுபாடு அல்லது சேர்க்கைப் பற்றிய தங்களது அனுபவங்களைப் பற்றிச் சிந்திக்கச் செய்யவும்.*
- *பிற போக்குகளை மீண்டும் காண்பித்து, அவர்களுக்கு தொடர்பில்லாதவற்றைப் பற்றிய அவர்களின் கருத்துகளையும், ஏன் சிலவற்றைத் தொடருகிறார்கள் மற்றும் ஏன் மற்றவற்றில் ஈடுபடவில்லை என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.*
- *பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் பயன்கள் மற்றும் தடைகள் குறித்துப் பிற குழுக்களுடன் ஒப்பீடு செய்யக் கேட்கவும்.*

(இங்கு தரப்பட்டுள்ள படங்கள் பறையிசை பயணிக்கின்ற பல்வேறு சூழல்களை பிரதிபலிக்கின்றன, இது பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் பறையிசையின் நோக்கம், அதன் பயன்கள் மற்றும் தீமைகளைப் பற்றி அவர்களிடமிருந்து பதில்களை வெளிக்கொண்டு வர உதவும்.)



படம் 3: *ஒரு நிலப்பிரபுத்துவ கிராம சூழலில் கோயிலுக்கு வெளியே பறையிசை இசைக்கும் கலைஞர்கள்.*



***படம் 4**: ஒரு நிலப்பிரபுத்துவ கிராமச் சூழலில் இறப்புக்கு பறை இசைக்கும் கலைஞர்கள்.*



***படம் 5**: நிகழ்ச்சியில் பறை கிராமிய கலைக் குழுவைச் சேர்ந்த கலைஞர்கள் பறை இசைக்கும் காட்சி.*



***படம் 6**: ஒரு அரசியல் பேரணியில் பறை இயக்கக் குழுவினர் பறை இசைக்கும் காட்சி.*



***படம்** 7: மக்களை அரசியல்படுத்தும் கருவியாக பறையிசை பயன்படுத்தப்படும் காட்சி.*

4. *நீங்கள் வழக்கமாக எந்த நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் பறை வாசிக்கிறீர்கள்?*

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

பறையிசை கலைஞராக, நீங்கள் எந்தெந்த பாரம்பரிய அல்லது மற்ற நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் கலந்துகொள்கிறீர்கள் என்பதைப் பற்றி கேட்கவும், நிகழ்ச்சிகளின் போது அவர்கள் மற்றவர்களுடன் எவ்வாறு ஈடுபடுகிறார்கள் என்பதையும், பார்வையாளர்களுடன் தங்கள் இசையைப் பகிர்ந்து கொள்வது அவர்களுக்கு எப்படி உணர்கிறது என்பதையும், பறை வாசிக்கும் போது எப்போதாவது எதிர்ப்பை எதிர்கொண்டார்களா, அந்த தருணங்களை நினைவில் நினைவு கூரும்போது அவர்கள் எப்படி உணருகிறார்கள் என்று கேட்கவும் .

5. *ஒரு பறையிசை கலைஞராக நீங்கள் எதிர்கொண்ட மிகப்பெரிய சவால்கள் என்னவென்று கூற முடியுமா?*

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

அவர்கள் எதிர்கொண்ட எதிர்கொண்ட ஒரு கடினமான சூழலையைப், குறிப்பாக அவர்களின் சாதி பின்னணி தொடர்பான சவால்களைப் பகிர்ந்து கொள்ள முடியுமா என்று கேட்கவும். இந்த சிரமங்களை அவர்கள் எவ்வாறு சமாளித்தார்கள், மற்றும் பறையிசை கலைஞராக சமுதாயத்தின் எதிர்பார்ப்புகள் அவர்களை எவ்வாறு பாதித்தன.

அவர்கள் நியாயமற்ற முறையில் நடத்தப்பட்டபோது எவ்வாறு உணர்ந்தார்கள் மற்றும் அவர்களின் சமூகத்தில் வளர்ந்தபோது அது எவ்வாறு இருந்தது என்பதை கேட்கவும்.

கடினமான தருணங்களில் பறையைப் பற்றிய உங்கள் உணர்வுகள் எப்படி மாறின, சவால்களைத் தாண்டியும் பறை வாசிப்பதில் உங்களைத் தூண்டும் காரணம் என்ன என்பதை ஆராயவும்.

6. பொதுவாக மக்கள் பறை வாசிப்பவர்களை எப்படி பார்க்கிறார்கள், மற்றும் அவை உங்களை எவ்வாறு பாதிக்கின்றன?

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

மற்ற இசைக்கலைஞர்களுடன் ஒப்பிடும்போது பறையிசை கலைஞகள் எவ்வாறு பார்க்கப்படுகிறார்கள் என்பதில் வித்தியாசம் இருப்பதாக அவர்கள் உணர்கிறார்களா என்று கேட்கவும், (குறிப்பாக பறையை மற்ற கருவிகளுடன் ஒப்பிடும் போது.) வெவ்வேறு சமூகங்களைச் சேர்ந்தவர்கள் தங்கள் நிகழ்ச்சிகளின் போது எவ்வாறு நடந்துகொள்கிறார்கள். கலை மற்றும் அரசியல் நிகழ்வுகளில் பார்வையாளர்களின் எதிர்வினைகள் எவ்வாறு வேறுபடுகின்றன என்பதை ஆராயவும் .

இந்த எதிர்வினைகள் ஏன்? அவை காலப்போக்கில் மாறிவிட்டனவா என்று கேட்கவும். இறுதியாக இந்த உணர்வுகள் அவர்களின் தனிப்பட்ட மற்றும் தொழில் வாழ்க்கையை எவ்வாறு பாதிக்கின்றன என்பதைப் பற்றி விவாதிக்கவும் .

***புகைப்படத் தூண்டல் 4**: பங்கேற்பாளரிடம் படத்தில் அவர்கள் என்ன காண்கிறார்கள், அது அவர்களுக்கு எப்படி உணர்வளிக்கிறது என்பதைக் கேளுங்கள். தனிமைப்படுத்தல், சாதி அடிப்படையிலான பாகுபாடு ஆகியவற்றைச் சுற்றிய உரையாடலை ஊக்குவிக்கவும், அவர்களின் அனுபவங்களிலிருந்து சிந்திக்கவும் ஊக்குவிக்கவும்.*



***படம் 8**: தமிழ்நாட்டில் இரட்டை குவளை முறையைக் குறிக்கும் படம் (சமூகத் தனிமை, பாகுபாடு ஆகியவற்றைப் பற்றிய விவாதத்திற்கு தொடக்கம்)*

7. பறையிசை கலைஞராக இருப்பதால் நீங்கள் வித்தியாசமாக உணர்ந்த அல்லது வித்தியாசமாக நடத்தப்பட்ட ஒரு அனுபவத்தை விவரிக்க முடியுமா?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

இது நடந்த ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட தருணத்தை நினைவுகூரச் சொல்லுங்கள், குறிப்பாக நீங்கள் ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளப்பட்டதாக அல்லது நிராகரிக்கப்பட்டதாக உணர்ந்த நிகழ்வுகள் உள்ளனவா நிகழ்ச்சிகளின் போது மக்கள் அவர்களை எவ்வாறு நடத்தினார்கள் என்பதில் சாதி ஒரு பங்கைக் கொண்டிருந்ததா என்பதை ஆராயவும் .

இந்த அனுபவம் அவர்களின் தன்னம்பிக்கையை எவ்வாறு பாதித்தது மற்றும் அவர்கள் எப்படி சமாளித்தார்கள் என்பதை கேட்கவும். இது அவர்களின் பறை வாசிப்பின் அணுகுமுறையை மாற்றியதா? என்பதை கேட்கவும்.

8. உங்கள் சாதி பின்னணி காரணமாக நீங்கள் முன்முடிவுடன் அனுகப்பட்டதாக அல்லது விலக்கபட்டதாக உணர்ந்த அனுபவத்தை விவரிக்க முடியுமா?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

இது நடந்த ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட நிகழ்ச்சி அல்லது கூடுகையை நினைவுகூரச் சொல்லுங்கள், அந்த நேரத்தில் மற்றவர்கள் எவ்வாறு நடந்து கொண்டார்கள் என்பதை கேட்கவும்– அவர்கள் அந்த சூழ்நிலைக்கு எப்படி எதிர்வினை காட்டினார்கள், அதன் பின் நீங்கள் என்ன செய்தார்கள் என்பதைப் பற்றி கேட்கவும் .

9. நீங்கள் குறிப்பாக மிகுந்த மன அழுத்தம் அல்லது உளவியல் சிக்கல் கொண்டிருந்த தருணங்களைப் பகிர முடியுமா, மற்றும் அவற்றை எப்படி சமாளித்தீர்கள்?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

அவர்களின் உணர்ச்சிகளை நிர்வகிக்க கடினமாக இருந்த ஒரு தருணத்தை விவரிக்கச் சொல்லுங்கள், மற்றும் அந்த தருணத்தில் அவர்கள் என்ன செய்தார்கள் என்பதையும் விவரிக்க அவர்களிடம் கேட்கவும்.

இந்த சூழ்நிலைகள் ஏன் மிகுந்த அழுத்தமாக இருந்தன என்பதை கேட்கவும் .

உளவியல் ரீதியான சிரமத்தை சமாளிக்க அவர்களுக்கென ஏதேனும் பழக்கங்கள் உள்ளதா என்பதையும், இந்த தருணங்களில் பறை வாசிப்பது எவ்வாறு உதவுகிறது என்பதையும் ஆராயவும்.

இந்த தருணங்களில் அவர்கள் உதவிக்காக பிறரை நாடினார்களா அல்லது சிரமத்தை தனியாக சமாளிக்க விரும்புகிறார்களா என்பதை கேட்கவும் அவர்களுக்கு அமைதியடைய உதவும் குறிப்பிட்ட செயல்கள் அல்லது வழக்கங்கள் உள்ளனவா என்பதை பற்றியும் கேட்கவும் .

10. நீங்கள் சந்தித்த சவால்கள் அல்லது கஷ்டங்கள் உங்கள் வாழ்க்கையை எவ்வாறு பாதித்துள்ளன என்பதை விவரிக்கவும்.

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

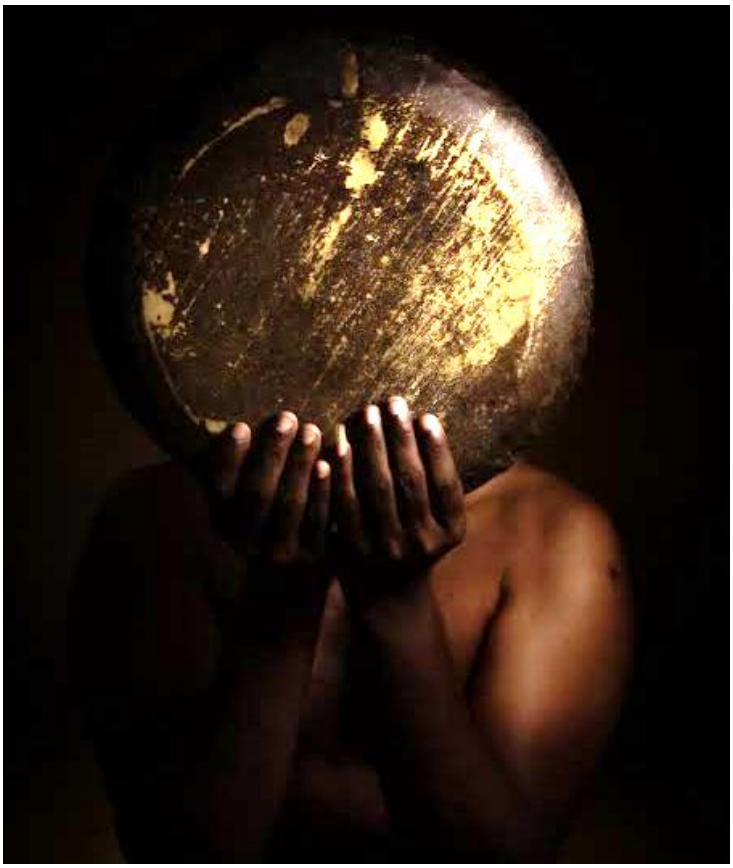
பொருளாதார ரீதியாக, உணர்ச்சிகரமாக, மனரீதியாக இது அவர்களுக்கு எவ்வாறு பாதிப்பு ஏற்படுத்தியது என கேட்கவும்.

அவர்களின் மன அமைதி அல்லது மனநலத்தை மேம்படுத்த உதவும் செயல்கள் அல்லது வழிமுறைகளை அவர்கள் கண்டுபிடித்திருக்கிறார்களா என கேட்கவும்.

இந்த சவால்கள் அவர்களின் தினசரி வழக்கங்களில் அல்லது பிறருடன் அவர்கள்

உறவுகளில் எவ்விதமான தாக்கத்தை ஏற்படுத்துகின்றன என கேட்கவும்.

***புகைப்படத் தூண்டல் 5**: பங்கேற்பாளரிடம் படத்தில் அவர்கள் என்ன காண்கிறார்கள் என்று கேட்கவும். பறையோடு தங்களை எவ்வாறு இணைக்கிறார்கள் என்று கேட்கவும். சமூகத்தில் பறையிசை கலைஞராக அவர்கள் எப்படி பார்க்கப்படுகிறார்கள் என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.*



***படம் 9**: ஒருவரின் முகம் முன் பறை பிடித்துக் கொண்டுள்ள படமொன்று (பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் அடையாளம் மற்றும் சமூக எதிர்பார்ப்புகளைப் பற்றி உரையாடுவதற்கான தொடக்கம்)*

11. *நீங்கள் சந்தித்த சவால்களைப் பற்றி சிந்திக்கும் போது உங்களைப் பற்றி எவ்வாறு உணர்கிறீர்கள்?*

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

காலப்போக்கில் தங்களைப் பற்றிய அவர்களது சொந்த பார்வை எவ்வாறு மாறியிருக்கிறது என்பதை கேட்கவும் அவர்கள் சமூகத்தில் உள்ள— மற்றவர்களுடன் அவர்கள் தங்களை ஒப்பிட்டு எவ்வாறு காண்கிறார்கள் என்பதையும்,

தங்களைப் பற்றி அவர்கள் எப்படி உணருகிறார்கள் என்பதை வடிவமைப்பதில் பறை அல்லது சாதி ஒரு பங்கைக் கொண்டிருக்கிறதா என்று கேட்கவும். அவர்களின் சமூகத்தில் தங்கள் இடத்தைப் பற்றி அவர்கள் எவ்வாறு உணர்கிறார்கள் மற்றும் பறையிசைக் கலைஞராக அவர்களின் பங்கு மற்றவர்களின் பார்வையில் மாற்றம் ஏற்படுத்தியதா என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.

12. ***கடினமான காலங்களில் யாராவது அல்லது ஒரு குழு உங்களுக்கு துணையாயிருந்த தருணத்தை விவரிக்க முடியுமா?***

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

நெருக்கடியான நேரங்களில் அவர்களுக்கு உணர்வு ரீதியாகவோ அல்லது நேரடியாகவோ உதவிய குறிப்பிட்ட நபர்கள் இருந்தார்களா என்று கேட்கவும் . பாகுபாடு காரணமாக, குறிப்பாக சாதி அடிப்படையிலான பாகுபாட்டை எதிர்கொள்வதில் கடினமான சூழ்நிலையை .எதிர்கொண்டபோது அவர்கள் முதலில் யாரை அணுகினார்கள், பின்னர் பறை குழுக்களில் ஒருவருக்கொருவர் எவ்வாறு ஆதரித்துக் கொள்கின்றனர் என்பதை ஆராயவும், பறையிசை கலைஞராக அவர்களின் அனுபவத்தில் பெற்ற ஆதரவு எவ்வாறு தாக்கத்தை ஏற்படுத்தியிருக்கிறது என்பதையும், இந்த குழுக்களில் இருக்கும்போது அவர்களுக்கு வலிமை மற்றும் ஒற்றுமை உணர்வை அளிக்கிறதா என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.

13. ***உங்கள் குழுவில் உள்ள பறையிசை கலைஞர்களிடையே பொதுவான நோக்கம் அல்லது இலட்சியங்களை எவ்வாறு விவரிப்பீர்கள்?***

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

தங்கள் குழுவில் உள்ள பறையிசை கலைஞர்களை ஒன்றிணைக்கும் கூறுகள் யாவை குழுவின் ஒரு பகுதியாக இருப்பது அவர்களின் நோக்கத்தை எவ்வாறு - வடிவமைக்கிறது, மேலும். இந்த பகிரப்பட்ட இலட்சியங்கள் அவர்களின் நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் என்ன தாக்கம் செலுத்துகின்றன

14. ***பறை உங்கள் வாழ்க்கையில் எவ்வாறு பங்களிக்கிறது என்பதை விவரமாக கூறவும்.***

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

பறை இல்லாமல் உங்கள் வாழ்க்கை என்னவாயிருக்கும்?
பறை நீங்கள் எதிர்கொண்ட சவால்களை சமாளிக்க உதவியதா?.

15. ***பறையிசை கலைஞராக உங்கள் அனுபவங்கள் உங்கள் அன்றாட நடைமுறைகளையும் ஒட்டுமொத்த நல்வாழ்வையும் எவ்வாறு வடிவமைக்கின்றன?***

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

மனதை அமைதியாக்க அவர்கள் ஈடுபடும் நடைமுறைகள் மற்றும் காலப்போக்கில் இந்த நடைமுறைகள் எவ்வாறு மாறிவிட்டன என்பதைப் பற்றி கேட்கவும்அவர்களுக்கு சுய . பராமரிப்பு என்ன நினைக்கிறார்கள் என்பதையும், அவர்களின் நல்வாழ்வைப் பராமரிக்க பறையிசை தவிர வேறு என்னவெல்லாம் செய்கிறார்கள் என்பதையும் கேட்கவும் உடல்நலம் மற்றும் மனச்சுமைகளை சமாளிக்க அவர்களின் பழக்கங்கள் எவ்வாறு உதவுகிறது என்பதையும் ஆராயவும்.

16. ***பறையிசை வாசிப்பின் தேவைகள் உங்கள் உடல் மற்றும் மன ஆரோக்கியத்தை எவ்வாறு பாதிக்கின்றன, இந்த சவால்களை எவ்வாறு சமாளிகிக்கிறீர்கள்?***

<u>தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:</u>

பறை வாசிப்பது அல்லது பயிற்சி செய்வது உடல் கஷ்டத்தை ஏற்படுத்துகிறதா, அதனை எவ்வாறு சமாளிக்கிறார்கள் என்பதையும் கேட்கவும் .

நிகழ்ச்சிகளுக்குப் பிறகு சோர்வாக இருக்கும் குறிப்பிட்ட உடற்பகுதிகள் யாவை? மற்றும் நிகழ்ச்சிக்கு எப்படி ஆயத்தமாகின்றனர் என்பதையும், அதன் பின்னர் எவ்வாறு மீளுகின்றனர் என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.
உடல்நலக்குறைவுகள் காரணமாக நிகழ்ச்சிகளை ரத்துசெய்ய வேண்டியிருந்திருக்கிறதா என்பதையும், பறையிசைக்கும்போது சிரமத்தால் உடல் நலத்திற்கு ஏற்படும் தாக்கம் அவர்களின் தினசரி வாழ்க்கையை எவ்வாறு பாதிக்கிறது என்பதையும் கேட்கவும் ஜாதிவெறுப்பு காரணமாக உடல் மற்றும் . மன நலத்தில் ஏதேனும் பாதிப்புகள் ஏற்பட்டுள்ளனவா என்பதையும் மேலும் அவர்கள் செயல்படுவதை விட ஆரோக்கி .கேட்கவும்யத்திற்கு முன்னுரிமை அளித்த தருணங்கள் அவர்களுக்கு ஏற்பட்டிருக்கிறதா என்று கேட்கவும்

***புகைப்படத் தூண்டல் 5**: இது பறையிசை தொடர்பாகப் பொதுவாக பேசப்படுவதால் இப்படத்தை காட்டுகிறேன். படத்தில் என்ன காணப்படுகிறது, மேலும் இது பறையிசை அல்லது ஆரோக்கியம் தொடர்பானதா?*

பங்கேற்பாளரின் கருத்து என்ன, அவர்கள் இதைப் பற்றி என்ன நினைக்கிறார்கள் என்பதையும் தினசரி வாழ்க்கையில் உள்ள சம்பவங்களைப் பற்றியும் சிந்திக்கச் சொல்லவும்.



***படம் 10**: தவறான சமாளிப்பு முறைகளைப் பற்றி விவாதிக்க மதுபுட்டியின் புகைப்படம்*

17. இன்று உங்கள் முழுமையான உடல் ஆரோக்கியத்தை எப்படி விவரிப்பீர்கள்?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

அவர்களின் ஆரோக்கியம் காலப்போக்கில் எவ்வாறு மாறியிருக்கிறது என்பதை கேட்கவும், அவர்கள் குறிப்பாக அக்கறை கொண்ட அவர்களின் ஆரோக்கியத்தின் குறிப்பிட்ட அம்சங்கள் உள்ளதா என்றும் கேட்கவும் . அவர்களின் வாழ்க்கை முறையால் அவர்களின் உடல்நலம் பாதிக்கப்படுவதாக அவர்கள் நினைக்கிறார்களா என்பதையும், பாகுபாட்டிலிருந்து வரும் மன அழுத்தம் அவர்களின் உடல் அல்லது மன ஆரோக்கியத்தை பாதித்ததாக அவர்கள் நம்புகிறார்களா என்பதையும் ஆராயவும்பின்னர் ., அவர்கள் சமூகத்தால் நடத்தப்படும் விதம் மற்றும் இந்த உடல்நலப் பிரச்சினைகள் அவர்களின் அன்றாட வாழ்க்கையை எவ்வாறு பாதிக்கின்றன என்பதற்கு ஏதேனும் சுகாதார சவால்களைக் கூறுகிறார்களா என்று கேட்கவும்.

18. பறையிசை கலைஞர்கள் மற்றும் எதிர்கால தலைமுறைகளுக்கான சமூகத்தில் நீங்கள் என்ன மாற்றங்களை காண விரும்புகிறீர்கள்?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் நிலையை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு தேவையான குறிப்பிட்ட மாற்றங்கள் என்ன என்பதையும் கேட்கவும். அவர்களின் நிலைக்கு ஏற்ற நியாயமான சமூகம் எப்படி இருக்கும், மேலும் அவர்களின் பறையிசை சமூக மாற்றத்தைக் கொண்டுவரும் ஆற்றலைக் கொண்டுள்ளது என்று அவர்கள் நம்புகிறார்களா என்பதையும் கேட்கவும், எதிர்காலத்தில் இளைஞர்களுக்கு மாற்றங்கள் ஏற்பட வேண்டும் என்ற நம்பிக்கை உள்ளதா என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்.

19. பறையிசை கலைஞராக உங்கள் பாதை எதிர்காலத்தில் எவ்வாறு மாறும் என்று நீங்கள் பார்க்கிறீர்களா? உங்கள் பயணத்தைப் பற்றி பகிர விரும்பும் ஏதேனும் கூடுதல் தகவல் உள்ளதா?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

எதிர்காலத்தில் அதே வழியில் பறையிசையில் தொடர்ந்து ஈடுபடுவீர்களா என்பதை கேட்கவும் எதிர்காலத்தில் புதிய வாய்ப்புகள் அல்லது சவால்கள் . உள்ளதா என்பதையும், பறையிசை கலைஞராக அவர்கள் எதிர்கால தலைமுறைகளின் மீது எவ்வாறு தாக்கத்தை ஏற்படுத்துவர் என்பதையும் கேட்கவும் முக்கியமானது என்று அவர்கள் உணரும் நீங்கள் உள்ளடக்காத . எந்தவொரு தலைப்புகளையும் விவாதிக்க அவர்களுக்கு இடம் கொடுங்கள், மேலும் தங்கள் பயணத்தை மற்றவர்களுடன் பகிர்ந்து கொள்வது பற்றி அவர்கள் எப்படி உணருகிறார்கள் என்பதை ஆராயவும்இறுதியாக ., மக்கள் தங்கள் அனுபவத்திலிருந்து எடுத்துக்கொள்ள வேண்டியது எது என்றுகேட்கவும்.

20. பறையிசை வாசிப்பில் ஜாதி மற்றும் சமூக நீதி பற்றிய கருத்துக்களை எவ்வாறு அணுகுகிறீர்கள்?

தூண்டுதல் கேள்விகள்:

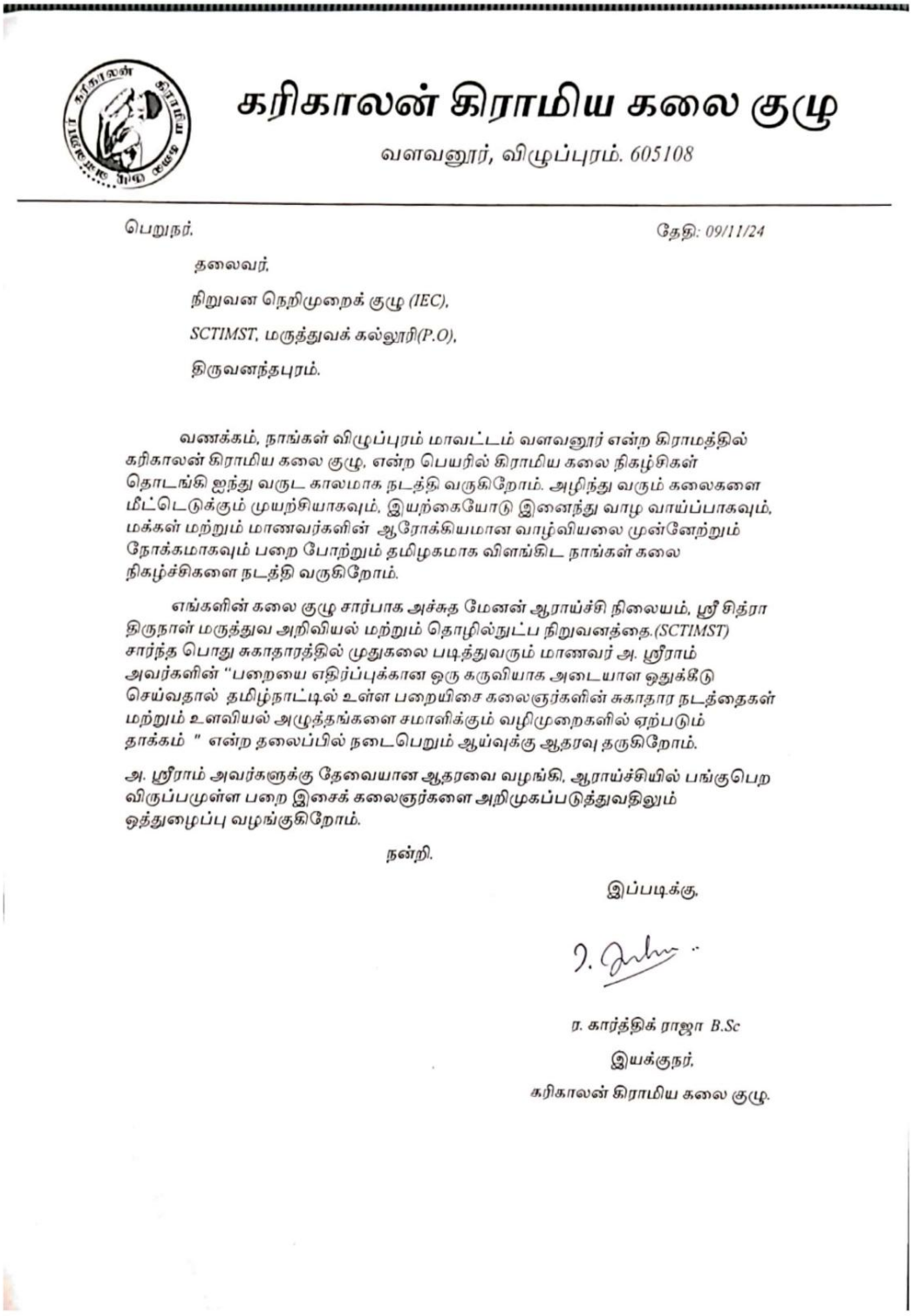
சமூகப் பிரச்சினைகளை எதிரொலிக்கும் ஏதேனும் குறிப்பிட்ட படைப்புகள்

உள்ளனவா என்பதையும், பறையிசை வாசிப்பின் மூலம் சமூக விழிப்புணர்வு ஏற்படுமா என்பதையும் கேட்கவும்பின்னர்., இந்த கருப்பொருள்களை முன்னிலைப்படுத்திய ஏதேனும் குறிப்பிட்ட நிகழ்ச்சிகளை, படைப்புகளை அவர்கள் பகிர்ந்து கொள்ள முடியுமா என்று கேட்கவும்.

படங்கள்	*மூலம்*
படம் 1	Prajwala Sangham, *The dappu drums are tuned by heating over a fire.* Open Access - Available at: https://www.newsindiatimes.com/dancing-to-the-beat-how-the-making-of-the-drum-defines-dalit-life-and-culture/ (accessed 28 October 2024).-
படம் 2	Madhuri Devi R, Tamil *folk musical instrument 'Parai' being tuned with heat from a makeshift bonfire by a team of performers just before staging their musical performance*. Open Access - Available at: https://stock.adobe.com/in/images/tamil-folk-musical-instrument-parai-being-tuned-with-heat-from-a-makeshift-bonfire-by-a-team-of-performers-just-before-staging-their-musical-performance/319540942?prev_url=detail (accessed 28 October 2024a).
படம் 3	Blackstar (2023), *NTK நையாண்டி மேளம் தப்பாட்ட கலை குழு* . Open Access - Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UozxotuOwfo (accessed 28 October 2024).
படம் 4	*பறை குழுக்களை சந்திக்கும் போது கைபேசியில் எடுக்கப்பட்டது*
படம் 5	Circus thupakki (2020), *Storm like Beats, Thappatam @ Theru Vizha 2020*. Open Access - Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?si=TBJpB8WFhd-wo7Zt&v=lb0JxuO0iuI&feature=youtu.be (accessed 28 October 2024).
படம் 6	*பறை குழுக்களை சந்திக்கும் போது கைபேசியில் எடுக்கப்பட்டது*
படம் 7	Vinavu, *மகஇக மையக்கலைக்குழுவின் கலைநிகழ்ச்சி*. Open Access- Available at: https://www.vinavu.com/2014/06/11/virudhachalam-conference-against-privatization-of-education-report/#jp-carousel-51192 (accessed 28 October 2024).
படம் 8	Gnanavel murugan, *Dual glass practice*. Open Access - Available at: https://www.hindutamil.in/news/tamilnadu/224062-24.html (accessed 28 October 2024).
படம் 9	Madhuri Devi R, *The-Parai-Messenger*. Open Access - Available at: https://www.behance.net/gallery/73308697/The-Parai-Messenger (accessed 28 October 2024b).
படம் 10	*கைபேசியில் எடுக்கப்பட்டது*

Annexure 7

Support letter obtained from Karikalan Gramiya kalai kuzhu.



கரிகாலன் கிராமிய கலை குழு

வளவனூர், விழுப்புரம். 605108

பெறுநர்,

தேதி: 09/11/24

தலைவர்,

நிறுவன நெறிமுறைக் குழு (IEC),

SCTIMST, மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி(P.O),

திருவனந்தபுரம்.

வணக்கம், நாங்கள் விழுப்புரம் மாவட்டம் வளவனூர் என்ற கிராமத்தில் கரிகாலன் கிராமிய கலை குழு, என்ற பெயரில் கிராமிய கலை நிகழ்சிகள் தொடங்கி ஐந்து வருட காலமாக நடத்தி வருகிறோம். அழிந்து வரும் கலைகளை மீட்டெடுக்கும் முயற்சியாகவும், இயற்கையோடு இனைந்து வாழ வாய்ப்பாகவும், மக்கள் மற்றும் மாணவர்களின் ஆரோக்கியமான வாழ்வியலை முன்னேற்றும் நோக்கமாகவும் பறை போற்றும் தமிழகமாக விளங்கிட நாங்கள் கலை நிகழ்ச்சிகளை நடத்தி வருகிறோம்.

எங்களின் கலை குழு சார்பாக அச்சுத மேனன் ஆராய்ச்சி நிலையம், ஸ்ரீ சித்ரா திருநாள் மருத்துவ அறிவியல் மற்றும் தொழில்நுட்ப நிறுவனத்தை.(SCTIMST) சார்ந்த பொது சுகாதாரத்தில் முதுகலை படித்துவரும் மாணவர் அ. ஸ்ரீராம் அவர்களின் "பறையை எதிர்ப்புக்கான ஒரு கருவியாக அடையாள ஒதுக்கீடு செய்வதால் தமிழ்நாட்டில் உள்ள பறையிசை கலைஞர்களின் சுகாதார நடத்தைகள் மற்றும் உளவியல் அழுத்தங்களை சமாளிக்கும் வழிமுறைகளில் ஏற்படும் தாக்கம் " என்ற தலைப்பில் நடைபெறும் ஆய்வுக்கு ஆதரவு தருகிறோம்.

அ. ஸ்ரீராம் அவர்களுக்கு தேவையான ஆதரவை வழங்கி, ஆராய்ச்சியில் பங்குபெற விருப்பமுள்ள பறை இசைக் கலைஞர்களை அறிமுகப்படுத்துவதிலும் ஒத்துழைப்பு வழங்குகிறோம்.

நன்றி.

இப்படிக்கு,

ர. கார்த்திக் ராஜா B.Sc

இயக்குநர்,

கரிகாலன் கிராமிய கலை குழு.

Support letter from Buddhar kalai kuzhu.



பெறுநர், தேதி: 26/11/24

தலைவர்,
நிறுவன நெறிமுறைக் குழு (IEC),
SCTIMST, மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி(P.O),
திருவனந்தபுரம்.

வணக்கம்,
புத்தர் கலைக்குழுவாக கடந்த 35, ஆண்டுகளாய்
- ஆட்டங்கள்
- நாடகங்கள்
- இசைக்கருவிகள்
- பாடல்கள்
- வெளியீடுகள் என கலை வழி கருத்தியல் களமாடுகின்றோம் நிகழ்ச்சி மற்றும் பயிற்சிகள்
என இயங்கி வருகின்றோம்.

SCTIMST மருத்துக்கல்லூரியில் முதுகலை படிப்புக்காக ஆய்வு மேற்கொள்ளும் தங்களின் மாணவர் அ. ஸ்ரீராம் அவர்களின் ஆய்வுக்கு எமது
புத்தர் கலைக்குழு கலைஞர்கள் துணையாக இருந்து முழு ஒத்துழைப்பு நல்குவோம்
மேலும் இவ் ஆராய்ச்சியானது பறை கலைஞர்களுக்கும், பறை கலைக்கும் பேருதவியாய் அமைந்திடும் எனவும் நம்புகின்றோம்.

இவண் ,
மணிமாறன் மகிழினி

● கலை ● கலைஞர்கள் ● களப்பணி ●

Annexure 8

Consent Letter from the counsellor.

Dr. Niranjana M
Department of Psychiatry
Sri Ramachandra Medical College
Porur, Chennai - 600116
08/20/2024.

To whom it may concern,

Subject: Consent to Provide Counseling Services for Research Participants

I, Dr. Niranjana M, resident in the Department of Psychiatry at Sri Ramachandra Medical College, hereby consent to provide mental health support and counseling services to the participants of the research study "Symbolic Appropriation of Parai as a Tool of Resistance and its Implication on Health Behaviors and Coping Mechanisms among Parai Drummers in Tamil Nadu."conducted by Dr. Shriram A, at Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum

As per the requirements of the study, I will be available to offer counseling to participants who experience emotional distress during the interview process. This will include providing psychological support and guiding participants through appropriate coping strategies, as necessary.

I am committed to ensuring the mental well-being of the study participants and am prepared to extend my counseling services to support this study. Please feel free to contact me at dr.niranjana6@gmail.com for further clarification or coordination.

Sincerely,



Dr. Niranjana M

Reg. no: 136651
Resident, Department of Psychiatry.
Sri Ramachandra Medical College.

Annexure 9

IEC Clearance

श्री चित्रा तिरुनाल आयुर्विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, त्रिवेन्द्रम
तिरुवनन्तपुरम - ६९५०११, केरल, इंडिया
SREE CHITRA TIRUNAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY, TRIVANDRUM
Thiruvananthapuram - 695 011, Kerala, India
(An Institute of National Importance under Govt. of India)
Grams : Chitramet, Phone : +91-471-2443152, Fax : +91-471-2550728 / 2446433, E-mail : sct@sctimst.ac.in, Website : www.sctimst.ac.in

Institutional Ethics Committee

CDSCO Registration No: ECR/189/Inst/KL/2013/RR-24
DHR Registration No:EC/NEW/INST/2022/2775

SCT/IEC/2341/DECEMBER/2024 17.01.2025

Dr. Shriram A
MPH Student, AMCHSS
SCTIMST, Thiruvananathapuram

Dear Dr. Shriram,

The Institutional Ethics Committee held on 30th December, 2024, reviewed and discussed your application to conduct the study titled "**SYMBOLIC APPROPRIATION OF PARAI AS A TOOL OF RESISTANCE AND ITS IMPLICATION ON HEALTH BEHAVIORS AND COPING MECHANISMS AMONG PARAI DRUMMERS IN TAMIL NADU" (IEC /2341) .**

Principal Investigator	Dr. Shriram A, MPH Student, AMCHSS, SCTIMST
Co-Principal Investigator(s)	Dr. Rakhal Gaitonde, Professor, AMCHSS, SCTIMST
Duration of the study	6 months

The following members of the Ethics Committee were present at the meeting held on 30th December, 2024

SL. No.	Member Name	Highest Degree	Gender	Scientific /Non Scientific	Affiliation with Institution(s)
1.	Dr. Manoj Murhekar	MD (Preventive & Social Medicine)	Male	Social Scientist	No
2.	Dr. Annapurna.Y	MD	Female	Basic Medical Scientist	No
3.	Adv. Priya Kaimal	LLM, MBL	Female	Legal Expert	No
4.	Dr. Indu PV	MBBS, DPM, MPhil, PhD	Female	Clinician	No
5.	Dr. Rejnish Kumar	MBBS,MD ,DNB	Male	Clinician	No
6.	Smt. Rekha Radhakrishnan	M.A (Eng.); B.Ed	Female	Lay person	No
7.	Dr. Biju Soman	MBBS,MD, DPH, MSc, DLSHTM	Male	Basic Medical Scientist	Yes
8.	Dr. Syam K	MBBS, MD, DM	Male	Clinician	Yes
9.	Dr. Srinivas G	PhD	Male	Basic Medical Scientist (Member Secretary)	Yes

The folicwing documents were reviewed:

Original submission

1. *IEC Application Form*
2. *Funding details and Budget*
3. *Covering letter addressed to the Chairperson, IEC, SCTIMST dated 10.12.2024 forwarded by HOD*
4. *Study tool in English and Tamil*
5. *Informed Consent Form in English and Tamil*
6. *Permission letter*
7. *Consent Letter from Dr. Niranjana M Department of Psychiatry Sri Ramachandra Medical College Porur, Chennai – dated 08/20/2024.*
8. *Participant Information Sheet in English and Tamil*
9. *Checklist Form*
10. *Proposal*
11. *Declaration Form*
12. *CV of PI and Co-PI*

Revised submission

1. *Covering letter addressed to the Member Secretary, IEC, SCTIMST dated 14.01.2025*
2. *Response to IEC comments*
3. *IEC recommendation letter dated 09.01.2025*
4. *Proposal*
5. *Study tool in English and Tamil*
6. *Participant Information Sheet in English and Tamil*
7. *Informed Consent Form in English and Tamil*
8. *Permission letters*
9. *Consent Letter from Dr. Niranjana M Department of Psychiatry Sri Ramachandra Medical College Porur, Chennai – dated 08/20/2024*

IEC Decision
The IEC approved the conduct of the study in the present form.

Remarks:
The Institutional Ethics Committee expects to be informed about the progress of the study, any SAE occurring in the course of the study, any changes in the protocol and patient information/informed consent and asks to be provided a copy of the final report.

There was no member of the study team / Guide who participated in voting / decision making process. The ethics committee is organized and operated according to the requirements of Good Clinical Practice and the requirements of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Sincerely,

Dr. G. Srinivas
Member Secretary, IEC

MEMBER SECRETARY
INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS COMMITTEE (IEC)
SCTIMST, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

SREE CHITRA TIRUNAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES & TECHNOLOGY
INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS COMMITTEE (IEC)
SCTIMST
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Annexure 10

Plagiarism Report

Document Viewer
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Full thesis without reference_Kalai

By: Shriram A

As of: Apr 28, 2025 9:02:39 PM
22,327 words - 32 matches - 19 sources

sources:

45 words / < 1% match - Crossref
Zoe Sherinian. "Religious Encounters: Empowerment through Tamil Outcaste Folk Drumming", Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology, 2016
32 words / < 1% match - Internet from 09-Aug-2024 12:00AM
academic.oup.com
8 words / < 1% match - Internet from 27-Jun-2021 12:00AM
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31 words / < 1% match - Crossref
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21 words / < 1% match - Internet from 17-Jan-2022 12:00AM
dspace.sctimst.ac.in
20 words / < 1% match - Internet
Nmadu, Awawu Grace. "Access and utilization of reproductive health services among adolescents in Kaduna North local governemnt, Kaduna State North-West, Nigeria", University of the Western Cape, 2017
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Jennie Popay, Margaret Whitehead, Ruth Ponsford, Matt Egan, Rebecca Mead. "Power, control, communities and health inequalities I: theories, concepts and analytical frameworks", Health Promotion International, 2021
15 words / < 1% match - ProQuest
Squire, Anne. "An Empowerment Evaluation Using a Critical Ethnographic Approach to Examine the Development of an Empowerment Education Programme in Romania", Bangor University (United Kingdom), 2023
15 words / < 1% match - Internet from 13-Mar-2025 12:00AM
www.bwhealthcareworld.com
13 words / < 1% match - Publications
Anand Teltumbde. "Dalits - Past, Present and Future", Routledge, 2020
13 words / < 1% match - Crossref
Stephanie Radziszewski, Janie Houle, Corentin Montiel, Jean-Marc Fontan et al. "Aiming for transformations in power: lessons from intersectoral CBPR with public housing tenants (Québec, Canada)", Health Promotion International, 2024
13 words / < 1% match - Crossref
T Abel. "Cultural capital and social inequality in health", Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health, 07/01/2008
11 words / < 1% match - Internet from 15-Oct-2018 12:00AM
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10 words / < 1% match - Crossref

Katie Powell, Amy Barnes, Rachel Anderson de Cuevas, Clare Bambra et al. "Power, control, communities and health inequalities III: participatory spaces—an English case", Health Promotion International, 2020
9 words / < 1% match - Crossref
Abel, T.. "Capitals and capabilities: Linking structure and agency to reduce health inequalities", Social Science & Medicine, 201201
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Thomas Abel. "Cultural Capital in Health Promotion", Health and Modernity, 2007