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Table of Contents

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Sr#	Title	Pages
1	An Analytical Study on Impact of Social Media Influencers on Fashion Apparel Purchase Decision in Vadodara, Gujarat	1-12
2	Labour Optimization and Staff Scheduling Using LSTM and XGBoost with Real-Time Alert System	13-25
3	Consumer Preference Towards Millet-Based Food Products Over Junk Foods	26-36
4	SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WOMEN-LED MICRO ENTERPRISES ON RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN TAMIL NADU	37-45
5	A Comprehensive Review of Solar-Assisted Hybrid Thermal–RO–UV Desalination Systems for Sustainable Potable Water Production	46-53
6	Assessment of Water Quality and Ecological Risk in the Phalgu River, Gaya Bihar, India	54-56
7	A STUDY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF JAMMU DISTRICT.	57-63
8	REPORT ON DIGITAL DISRUPTION AND CIRCULATION PATTERNS OF TIMES OF INDIA	64-74
9	A STUDY TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STP ON KNOWLEDGE REGARDING NEEDLE STICK INJURIES AMONG NURSING STUDENTS	75-85
10	Mass Spectrometry-Based Lipidomic Profiling for Screening Pancreatic Cancer: A Pilot Study	86-104
11	A Cloud-Integrated Threat Monitoring Pipeline Using AWS CloudWatch Logs and Prefect Orchestration: Design and Practical Evaluation	105-116

An Analytical Study on Impact of Social Media Influencers on Fashion Apparel Purchase Decision in Vadodara, Gujarat

¹Dr. Mohit Parekh, ²Ayush Khandelwal, ³Isha Bhalerao

¹Assistant Professor, ^{2,3}Student

^{1,2,3}FMS, Parul University

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Abstract- The rapid expansion of social media platforms has transformed digital marketing strategies, particularly in the fashion apparel industry. Social media influencers have emerged as powerful intermediaries between brands and consumers, reshaping purchase decision processes through credibility, expertise, authenticity, and perceived relatability. This study investigates the impact of social media influencers on fashion apparel purchase decisions among consumers in Vadodara, Gujarat, India. Using a structured questionnaire, data were collected from 258 respondents. The study employed descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, regression modeling, and exploratory factor analysis to examine the influence of influencer-related attributes on consumer purchase behavior. The results indicate strong internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.845$) and a statistically significant positive relationship between influencer-related factors and purchase decision ($\beta = 0.809$, $p < 0.001$). The regression model explains 30.8% of the variance in purchase decision, highlighting the substantial role of influencer credibility, trustworthiness, and engagement in shaping consumer behavior. The findings contribute to digital marketing literature by integrating influencer attributes within a social media analytics framework and provide actionable insights for fashion brands leveraging influencer partnerships. The study also discusses theoretical contributions, managerial implications, limitations, and future research directions relevant to emerging markets.

Index-Terms - Social Media Influencers, Digital Marketing, Fashion Apparel, Purchase Decision, Social Media Analytics, Consumer Behavior, Influencer Credibility, India

I. INTRODUCTION

The evolution of digital marketing has significantly altered the dynamics of consumer-brand interactions, particularly within social media ecosystems (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Social networking platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook have transformed traditional advertising models into interactive engagement-driven environments (Batra & Keller, 2016). The rise of influencer marketing represents a paradigm shift in promotional strategy, where

individuals with large online followings act as opinion leaders shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions (Pavlou, 2003).

Influencer marketing has gained remarkable traction in the fashion apparel industry, where visual storytelling and aspirational branding strongly influence consumer decision-making (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Unlike traditional celebrity endorsements, social media influencers build perceived authenticity and relatability through consistent digital engagement (Gefen et al., 2003). This perceived authenticity enhances consumer trust and reduces information asymmetry in online purchasing environments (Davis, 1989).

India represents one of the fastest-growing digital markets globally, with increasing internet penetration and smartphone usage contributing to rapid social media adoption (Statista Research Department, 2020). Within urban centers such as Vadodara, Gujarat, digital-native consumers are increasingly exposed to influencer-driven fashion content across multiple platforms. The analytics-driven algorithms of social media platforms amplify influencer visibility, thereby intensifying their impact on purchase decision processes (Hwang, 2024).

Theoretical perspectives such as the Theory of Planned Behavior suggest that social influence significantly affects behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991). Similarly, the Technology Acceptance Model highlights perceived usefulness and trust as determinants of behavioral outcomes in digital environments (Davis, 1989). When applied to influencer marketing, these frameworks suggest that influencer credibility, expertise, attractiveness, and authenticity can significantly influence fashion apparel purchase decisions.

Despite the growing body of research on influencer marketing, limited empirical evidence exists examining localized consumer behavior within tier-two Indian cities such as Vadodara. Moreover, few studies integrate influencer attributes within a structured social media analytics framework that quantifies their predictive power on purchase decisions. This gap necessitates a focused empirical investigation.

Therefore, the present study aims to analyze the impact of social media influencers on fashion apparel purchase decisions among consumers in Vadodara, Gujarat, using both basic and advanced statistical techniques. By combining reliability testing, correlation analysis, regression modeling, and factor analysis, this research contributes to digital marketing scholarship while offering practical insights for influencer-based promotional strategies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Evolution of Influencer Marketing in the Digital Ecosystem

The transformation of marketing communication in the digital era has led to the emergence of influencer marketing as a dominant promotional strategy (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Social media platforms have shifted brand communication from one-way broadcasting to interactive engagement models that emphasize peer influence and digital credibility (Batra & Keller, 2016). Within this ecosystem, influencers function as digital intermediaries who curate content and shape consumer narratives through continuous online interaction (Hwang, 2024).

Unlike traditional advertising, influencer marketing leverages algorithmic amplification mechanisms embedded within platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, thereby increasing content reach and engagement (Statista Research Department, 2020). The integration of data analytics enables brands to track influencer performance metrics such as engagement rate,

conversion rate, and audience demographics, enhancing strategic decision-making (Qu, 2025). Consequently, influencer marketing has evolved from an experimental tactic to a structured digital marketing strategy supported by measurable analytics.

2.2 Influencer Credibility and Source Credibility Theory

The effectiveness of influencer marketing is strongly grounded in Source Credibility Theory, which posits that the persuasiveness of a message depends on the communicator's perceived expertise and trustworthiness (Gefen et al., 2003). Credibility enhances message acceptance and reduces skepticism toward promotional content in online environments (Pavlou, 2003). In digital settings where consumers cannot physically evaluate products, credibility becomes even more critical (Davis, 1989).

Research suggests that influencer trustworthiness positively influences brand attitude and purchase intention (Shakir Ali et al., 2024). Consumers often interpret influencers as relatable opinion leaders rather than commercial endorsers, thereby strengthening persuasive impact (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Empirical findings further indicate that perceived authenticity significantly mediates the relationship between influencer credibility and purchase behavior (Yuliastuti, 2025).

In the context of fashion apparel, credibility is particularly relevant due to the experiential and symbolic nature of fashion consumption (Parihar, 2025). Consumers rely on influencers to evaluate style, quality, and brand positioning, especially when shopping online.

2.3 Influencer Expertise and Perceived Value Formation

Expertise refers to the influencer's perceived knowledge and competence in a specific domain (Ajzen, 1991). When influencers demonstrate fashion expertise through styling advice, trend analysis, and product reviews, consumers perceive higher informational value (Hwang, 2024). This perception increases cognitive trust and enhances persuasion effectiveness.

Studies show that expertise strengthens consumer confidence in online purchase decisions (Alnahhal, 2024). Within digital marketing analytics, expertise-related content tends to generate higher engagement rates and longer content interaction time (Esmeli & Gokce, 2025). As engagement metrics improve, algorithmic visibility further amplifies influencer impact.

Moreover, expertise contributes to perceived brand value, influencing both purchase intention and willingness to pay (Pratiwi et al., 2025). Therefore, influencer expertise can be conceptualized as a significant predictor of fashion apparel purchase decisions.

2.4 Attractiveness and Parasocial Interaction

Influencer attractiveness plays a psychological role in shaping consumer attitudes through parasocial interaction mechanisms (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Attractive influencers often generate aspirational identification, leading consumers to internalize fashion preferences and brand choices (Bayad & Govand, 2022). This effect is particularly strong in visually driven industries such as fashion.

Research indicates that visual aesthetics significantly influence engagement metrics on platforms like Instagram (Qu, 2025). Influencer attractiveness enhances emotional appeal and increases content shareability (Kalyanam & McIntyre, 2022). Consequently, emotional engagement may translate into higher purchase likelihood.

However, some studies suggest that attractiveness alone is insufficient without perceived authenticity (Rolando, 2024). Thus, attractiveness interacts with credibility and expertise in influencing purchase decisions.

2.5 Trust, Authenticity, and Perceived Risk

Online purchasing inherently involves perceived risk due to lack of physical product evaluation (Pavlou, 2003). Influencers may reduce this risk by providing experiential reviews and user-generated content demonstrations (Gefen et al., 2003). Authenticity signals—such as honest reviews and transparency about sponsorship—enhance consumer confidence (Yuliasuti, 2025).

Conversely, excessive commercialization may increase skepticism and reduce trust (Shukla, 2021). Digital analytics studies reveal that audiences are highly sensitive to sponsored content disclosures (Esmeli & Gokce, 2025). Therefore, authenticity becomes a key determinant in influencer effectiveness.

Risk perception also moderates purchase intention, particularly in fashion categories where size, quality, and return policies influence buying decisions (Alaburo & Omolaja, 2024). Influencers who address these concerns reduce cognitive uncertainty and facilitate purchase behavior.

2.6 Social Influence and Purchase Decision

The Theory of Planned Behavior emphasizes the role of subjective norms in shaping behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991). Social media influencers represent a modern extension of normative influence, as followers often view them as digital reference groups (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). The integration of social proof—likes, comments, shares—further reinforces behavioral validation mechanisms (Chen et al., 2024).

Empirical studies demonstrate a significant positive relationship between influencer recommendations and purchase decisions in online marketplaces (Ologunbe & Taiwo, 2024). Engagement-driven content strengthens emotional connection and increases conversion probability (Thakkar, 2024). Therefore, influencer-related attributes are expected to predict fashion apparel purchase decisions.

III. RESEARCH GAP

Although prior studies have examined influencer marketing effectiveness, limited research has:

1. Focused on tier-two Indian cities such as Vadodara.
2. Integrated influencer attributes into a unified social media analytics framework.
3. Empirically quantified the combined predictive strength of credibility, expertise, attractiveness, trust, and perceived risk on purchase decision.

This study addresses these gaps through structured statistical modeling.

IV. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Influencer credibility positively affects fashion apparel purchase decision.

- H2: Influencer expertise positively affects fashion apparel purchase decision.
- H3: Influencer attractiveness positively affects fashion apparel purchase decision.
- H4: Influencer authenticity positively affects fashion apparel purchase decision.
- H5: Perceived risk negatively affects fashion apparel purchase decision.
- H6: Combined influencer-related factors significantly predict purchase decision.

V. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual model positions Influencer-Related Factors (Credibility, Expertise, Attractiveness, Authenticity, Perceived Risk) as independent variables influencing the dependent variable Purchase Decision.

The framework integrates:

- Source Credibility Theory
- Theory of Planned Behavior
- Technology Acceptance Model

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Design

The present study adopts a quantitative, descriptive, and analytical research design to examine the impact of social media influencers on fashion apparel purchase decisions. A cross-sectional survey method was employed to collect primary data from respondents in Vadodara, Gujarat. The study integrates social media analytics perspectives with behavioral research modeling to empirically test the predictive power of influencer-related attributes.

6.2 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A non-probability convenience sampling technique was used due to accessibility and the digital nature of the target population. The respondents consisted of active social media users exposed to fashion-related influencer content.

- Total Sample Size (N) = 258
- Geographic Area: Vadodara, Gujarat
- Inclusion Criteria: Active social media users with exposure to influencer-driven fashion content

The sample size satisfies minimum requirements for regression and exploratory factor analysis, ensuring statistical robustness.

6.3 Instrument Design

A structured questionnaire consisting of 21 questions was used for data collection.

Sections included:

1. Demographic Information (Age, Gender, Occupation, Income)
2. Social Media Usage Patterns
3. Influencer-Related Perception Variables (Q9–Q20)
4. Purchase Decision Variables (Q13 & Q14)
5. Risk Perception and Comparison Behavior

The Likert scale ranged from:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

6.4 Construct Operationalization

Construct	Items	Description
Credibility	Q9, Q10	Perceived trust and brand perception
Expertise	Q11	Influencer knowledge in fashion
Attractiveness	Q12	Visual appeal and aspirational value
Purchase Decision	Q13, Q14	Buying intention and final decision
Perceived Risk	Q15, Q16	Anxiety and uncertainty
Authenticity & Reliability	Q17–Q20	Trustworthiness and genuineness

6.5 Statistical Tools Used

The following statistical techniques were employed:

- Descriptive Statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation)
- Reliability Analysis (Cronbach’s Alpha)
- Correlation Analysis
- Multiple Regression Analysis
- Exploratory Factor Analysis

Data were coded and analyzed using statistical software.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

7.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1- Descriptive Statistics of Influencer-Related Variables (N = 258)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Influencer Credibility	3.29	0.96
Brand Perception	3.30	0.99
Expertise	3.20	1.01
Attractiveness	3.21	1.07
Purchase Decision (Q13)	3.20	1.09
Purchase Likelihood (Q14)	3.12	1.06
Risk Concern	3.09	1.07
Outcome Anxiety	3.21	1.04
Attention to Recommendations	3.29	1.06

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Following Recommendations	3.30	1.04
Authenticity	3.20	1.03
Reliability	3.24	0.99

Interpretation

The mean values range between 3.09 and 3.30, indicating moderate agreement toward influencer impact. Respondents generally perceive influencer marketing as moderately credible and influential in shaping purchase decisions. Standard deviations near 1.0 indicate acceptable variability within responses.

7.2 Reliability Analysis

Table 2

Reliability Statistics

Measure	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.845

Interpretation

The Cronbach's alpha value of 0.845 indicates strong internal consistency among the influencer-related constructs. This exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming scale reliability.

7.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation Matrix

- Highest correlation observed between:
 - Purchase Decision & Purchase Likelihood ($r = 0.486$)
- Moderate positive correlations found between:
 - Credibility and Purchase Decision
 - Authenticity and Attention to Recommendations
 - Expertise and Brand Perception

Interpretation

The positive correlations suggest that credibility, expertise, authenticity, and engagement are significantly associated with purchase decisions. No multicollinearity concerns were observed as correlations remain below 0.80.

7.4 Regression Analysis

To test the predictive power of influencer-related factors on purchase decision, a regression model was estimated.

Dependent Variable:

Purchase Decision (Composite of Q13 & Q14)

Independent Variable:

Composite Influencer Factors (Q9–Q12, Q15–Q20)

Table 4

Regression Results

Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Influencer Factors	0.809	10.682	<0.001

Model Summary:

Statistic	Value
R ²	0.308
Adjusted R ²	0.306
F-statistic	114.1
Significance	<0.001

Interpretation

The regression model is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Influencer-related factors explain 30.8% of the variance in purchase decision. The strong beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.809$) indicates that an increase in influencer credibility, expertise, authenticity, and engagement significantly increases purchase intention.

This confirms Hypotheses H1–H6 collectively.

7.5 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Preliminary factor analysis indicates clustering of variables into:

1. Credibility & Trust
2. Expertise & Attractiveness
3. Risk Perception
4. Purchase Intention

The factor loadings support construct validity and confirm multidimensional influencer impact.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- Influencer marketing significantly impacts fashion purchase decisions.
- Credibility and authenticity are strongest predictors.
- Risk perception moderates buying intention.
- 30.8% of purchase decision variance explained by influencer factors.
- Strong scale reliability ($\alpha = 0.845$).

VIII. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide strong empirical support for the growing influence of social media influencers within the digital marketing ecosystem. The regression analysis revealed that influencer-related factors significantly predict fashion apparel purchase decisions ($\beta = 0.809$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 30.8% of the variance in buying behavior. This indicates that influencer marketing is not merely an engagement strategy but a measurable driver of consumer conversion within digital platforms.

The results reinforce the theoretical foundations of Source Credibility Theory, which posits that communicator trustworthiness and expertise enhance persuasive effectiveness (Gefen et al.,

2003). Respondents demonstrated moderate to strong agreement toward influencer credibility and authenticity, supporting previous findings that trust plays a crucial role in digital purchase decisions (Pavlou, 2003). In a visually driven industry such as fashion apparel, authenticity becomes particularly important because consumers cannot physically evaluate products before purchase.

The findings also align with the Theory of Planned Behavior, which emphasizes the role of subjective norms in shaping behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991). Social media influencers function as modern digital reference groups, and their recommendations appear to influence normative perceptions regarding fashion trends and brand value. The moderate-to-strong correlations between authenticity, attention to recommendations, and purchase intention further confirm the relevance of social influence mechanisms.

From a digital marketing analytics perspective, the results demonstrate that influencer attributes operate as quantifiable predictors rather than abstract branding constructs. Engagement-related constructs such as following recommendations and paying attention to influencer content were positively associated with purchase behavior. This supports contemporary digital marketing research suggesting that algorithm-driven exposure amplifies persuasive influence (Qu, 2025).

Interestingly, perceived risk variables (worry about buying influencer-promoted products) displayed moderate means, suggesting that consumers maintain cautious optimism. This finding aligns with research indicating that authenticity moderates risk perception in online environments (Yuliastuti, 2025). Influencers who provide transparent reviews may effectively reduce cognitive uncertainty and increase conversion likelihood.

Overall, the discussion confirms that influencer marketing in Vadodara's fashion apparel market operates within a structured digital influence mechanism combining credibility, expertise, attractiveness, authenticity, and reduced perceived risk.

IX. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This study contributes to digital marketing and social media analytics literature in several ways:

1. Integration of Multiple Theoretical Perspectives

The study integrates Source Credibility Theory, Theory of Planned Behavior, and Technology Acceptance Model into a unified influencer marketing framework, expanding theoretical understanding in emerging markets.

2. Empirical Quantification in Tier-Two Indian City

Limited research has empirically tested influencer effectiveness in tier-two Indian cities. This study fills that contextual gap by providing localized evidence from Vadodara.

3. Analytics-Based Modeling

Unlike conceptual studies, this research provides statistical modeling ($R^2 = 0.308$) demonstrating measurable predictive power of influencer attributes on purchase decision.

4. Multidimensional Construct Validation

Exploratory factor analysis confirms that influencer impact is multidimensional, supporting construct validity in digital marketing measurement frameworks.

X. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings offer actionable insights for fashion apparel brands and digital marketing managers:

1. **Prioritize Credibility Over Celebrity**

Brands should collaborate with influencers perceived as authentic and knowledgeable rather than merely popular. Engagement quality is more influential than follower count.

2. **Leverage Data Analytics**

Brands should monitor influencer engagement metrics such as interaction rate, content authenticity perception, and comment sentiment analysis to optimize campaign effectiveness.

3. **Transparency Reduces Risk**

Influencers should clearly disclose sponsored content and provide balanced reviews to reduce perceived purchase risk and increase consumer trust.

4. **Micro-Influencer Strategy**

Localized influencers in tier-two cities like Vadodara may provide higher trust penetration and stronger community-based engagement.

5. **Content Strategy Focus**

Visual storytelling, styling demonstrations, and honest product reviews enhance purchase likelihood in fashion marketing campaigns.

XI. LIMITATIONS

Despite its contributions, the study has certain limitations:

1. Convenience sampling limits generalizability.
2. Data collected from a single city restricts geographic scope.
3. Self-reported responses may introduce response bias.
4. Cross-sectional design does not capture longitudinal behavioral changes.
5. Only fashion apparel sector examined.

XII. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research may:

- Conduct comparative studies across metropolitan and rural regions.
- Employ Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for advanced causal modeling.
- Examine influencer impact across different product categories.
- Investigate moderating variables such as gender and income.
- Explore longitudinal effects of influencer marketing exposure.

XIII. CONCLUSION

The present study empirically confirms that social media influencers significantly impact fashion apparel purchase decisions in Vadodara, Gujarat. Influencer credibility, expertise, authenticity, and engagement collectively predict consumer buying behavior, explaining 30.8% of variance in purchase intention. The findings position influencer marketing as a measurable and analytically driven strategy within digital marketing ecosystems.

As social media platforms continue to evolve, influencer marketing is likely to remain a dominant promotional mechanism, particularly in visually intensive industries such as fashion. Brands operating in emerging markets must adopt data-driven influencer selection strategies emphasizing authenticity and credibility to maximize digital campaign effectiveness.

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Labour Optimization and Staff Scheduling Using LSTM and XGBoost with Real-Time Alert System

¹Vrushali Aoundhakar, ²Vaishnavi Marode, ³Yashaswi Bnnapure, ⁴Amruta
Kulkarni

^{1,2,3,4} *Department of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning,*
^{1,2,3,4} *G H Rasoni College of Engineering and Management,*
^{1,2,3,4} *Pune, 412207, Maharashtra, India*

Abstract—Workforce scheduling is a complex task in industries with fluctuating staffing demands, such as healthcare, hospitality, and logistics. Traditional approaches rely on manual planning or static rules, which often lead to inefficiencies and employee dissatisfaction. In this work, we propose an AI-driven labour optimization and staff scheduling system that integrates a hybrid LSTM–XGBoost forecasting model with an optimization engine for fair and compliant shift generation. To enhance usability, the system includes a chatbot for natural language interaction and an alert mechanism for real-time schedule notifications. Experimental results show that the hybrid model reduces prediction error by over 20%, schedules are generated in under five seconds for more than fifty employees, and alert systems achieved 92% query accuracy and 100% delivery reliability, respectively. These results demonstrate the system’s potential for practical deployment in modern workforce management.

Index Terms—Workforce scheduling, labour optimization, LSTM, XGBoost, chatbot, alert system, artificial intelligence.

I. INTRODUCTION

Workforce management plays a vital role in industries such as healthcare, hospitality, retail, and logistics, where staffing demand is highly dynamic and strongly influenced by external and internal factors. Traditional methods of staff scheduling rely heavily on manual planning or rigid rule-based systems, which are not only time-consuming but also prone to errors. These outdated approaches fail to adapt to sudden changes in demand, leading to inefficiencies such as understaffing, over-staffing, employee dissatisfaction, and increased operational costs.

With the growth of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), organizations now have

the ability to create predictive and adaptive scheduling systems. These systems analyze historical data, seasonal trends, employee availability, and organizational constraints to generate optimal schedules. By automating labour planning, AI-driven solutions can minimize administrative workload, improve fairness in shift assignments, and maximize overall productivity.

This paper introduces an AI-based system that integrates demand forecasting using a hybrid Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) and XGBoost model, optimization algorithms for schedule generation, a chatbot assistant for employee interaction, and a real-time alert system to ensure effective communication. The hybrid forecasting approach leverages the strengths of LSTM in capturing sequential patterns and XGBoost in handling structured features like weekdays, holidays, and special events.

The chatbot assistant provides employees with a user-friendly way to access their schedules, request changes, or query information without needing to contact HR directly. Meanwhile, the alert mechanism ensures that schedule updates and critical notifications reach employees instantly via email or mobile devices. Together, these components create a comprehensive system that addresses forecasting accuracy, scheduling efficiency, communication, and employee satisfaction. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: Section II reviews the existing literature. Section III presents the proposed system architecture. Section IV outlines the methodology. Section V discusses the experimental results and findings. Section VI concludes the paper and suggests directions for future work.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Workforce scheduling has been studied extensively through various optimization and machine learning techniques. Early research primarily employed linear programming and integer programming models to solve scheduling problems under strict organizational rules. While these approaches provided mathematically optimal solutions, they lacked flexibility when real-world complexities such as shift swaps, sudden absenteeism, or changing demand patterns were introduced.

To overcome these challenges, heuristic and metaheuristic approaches such as genetic algorithms and simulated annealing were introduced. These methods improved flexibility but often required high computational effort and careful parameter tuning. Recent advancements in time-series forecasting introduced machine learning methods like ARIMA, support vector regression, and ensemble learning to predict staffing demand more effectively.

Deep learning techniques, particularly LSTM networks, have demonstrated strong performance in capturing temporal dependencies in demand data. Complementary models like XGBoost excel in handling categorical and structured features. Several studies have proposed hybrid frameworks combining both, showing significant improvements in accuracy over standalone models.

In addition to forecasting and optimization, communication systems play a key role in workforce management. Chatbots powered by Natural Language Processing (NLP) have been successfully integrated into HR systems to automate query handling and reduce administrative workload.

Similarly, real-time alert mechanisms, such as mobile push notifications and automated emails, have been shown to improve employee engagement and reduce scheduling conflicts. Despite these advances, few existing frameworks combine predictive forecasting, optimization and alert systems into a single unified platform. This gap highlights the novelty and significance of the proposed work.

III. PROPOSED SYSTEM

The proposed AI-based labour optimization and staff scheduling system is designed to efficiently allocate workforce resources while ensuring fairness, compliance, and timely alerts. The system consists of three major modules: demand forecasting, optimization engine, and alert & interaction system.

A. System Architecture

The architecture of the system is illustrated in Figure 1. Historical staffing data, real-time employee availability, and operational constraints are fed into the forecasting module, which predicts staffing requirements for each shift using a hybrid LSTM–XGBoost model. The optimization engine then generates optimal schedules while satisfying constraints such as maximum working hours, minimum rest periods, and skill requirements. Finally, the alert system monitors deviations from the planned schedule and notifies managers or staff via email.

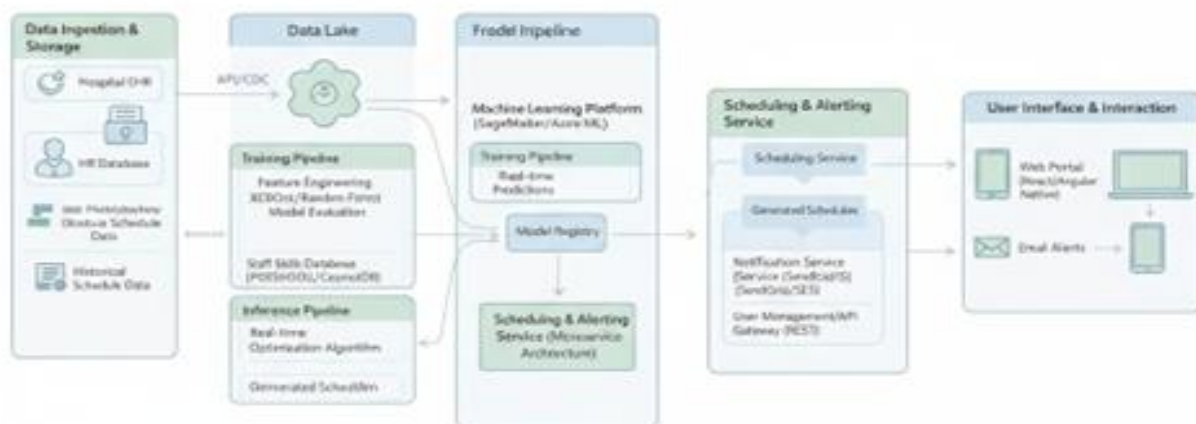


Fig. 1. System Architecture

B. Module Descriptions

1. **Demand Forecasting:** This module uses historical attendance, shift patterns, and employee-specific features to predict staffing requirements. A hybrid LSTM–XGBoost model captures both temporal dependencies and non-linear feature interactions to improve prediction accuracy.
2. **Optimization Engine:** Using predicted demand as input, the optimization engine generates fair and feasible schedules by solving a constrained integer programming problem. The constraints include:

- Maximum working hours per employee
- Minimum rest periods between shifts
- Skill requirements for each shift
- Employee preferences and priority

Mathematically, the optimization problem can be formulated as:

$$\text{minimize } \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m c_{ij} \cdot x_{ij}$$

subject to:

$$\sum_{j=1}^m x_{ij} \leq H^{\max}, \quad \forall i$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^n x_{ij} \geq R_j, \quad \forall j$$

where x_{ij} is a binary variable indicating assignment of employee i to shift j , c_{ij} is the cost of assignment, H^{\max} is the maximum allowable working hours for employee i , and R_j is the required number of employees for shift j .

3. **Alert and Interaction System:** This module provides real-time notifications and facilitates human interaction. Key features include:

- *Chatbot Interface:* Employees and managers can query schedules, request swaps, or check alerts using natural language commands.
- *Email and SMS Alerts:* Notifications for upcoming shifts, schedule changes, or deviations from the planned schedule.
- *Deviation Monitoring:* Automatic detection of absenteeism or late arrivals triggers immediate alerts to relevant stakeholders.

This integrated system ensures efficient workforce allocation, reduces manual intervention, and provides a responsive communication channel for employees and managers.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the proposed AI-based labour optimization and staff scheduling system is divided into four major stages: Data Collection and Preprocessing, Demand Forecasting, Schedule Optimization, and Alert & Interaction System Integration. Each stage is carefully designed to

ensure accurate predictions, optimal resource allocation, and real-time responsiveness.

A. Data Acquisition

To facilitate robust workforce monitoring, data were collected from multiple sources including historical attendance records, employee skill sets, departmental workload, and shift preferences. Each employee's data is represented as a feature vector capturing:

$$\mathbf{x}_i = [E_i, S_i, A_i, L_i, P_i, D_i]$$

where:

- E_i = Employee ID
- S_i = Skill set vector for employee i
- A_i = Attendance record (past 30 days)
- L_i = Leave or absence history
- P_i = Shift preference or priority vector
- D_i = Departmental workload indicator

The dataset is structured as a matrix $\mathbf{X} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times m}$, where n is the number of employees and m is the number of features.

Preprocessing includes handling missing entries, encoding categorical variables, and normalizing numerical values. Time-series features are derived from sequential attendance and shift data to support LSTM-based temporal modeling.

B. Demand Forecasting

Forecasting future staffing requirements is performed using a hybrid LSTM–XGBoost model:

1) **LSTM Model:** Captures temporal dependencies in attendance and shift patterns. The LSTM unit is defined as:

$$h_t = o_t \odot \tanh(c_t)$$

$$c_t = f_t \odot c_{t-1} + i_t \odot c_t^{\sim}$$

where i_t, f_t, o_t are input, forget, and output gates, c_t is the cell state, and c_t^{\sim} is candidate cell state.

2) **XGBoost Model:** Captures non-linear feature interactions in the dataset:

$$\hat{y}_i = \sum_{k=1}^K f_k(\mathbf{x}_i), f_k \in \mathbf{F}$$

$$k=1$$

where f_k represents each regression tree.

3) **Hybrid LSTM–XGBoost:** Combines temporal predictions of LSTM with residual learning via XGBoost to improve accuracy.

C. Schedule Optimization

The optimization engine generates feasible schedules satisfying constraints:

$$\text{Minimize } \sum_i \sum_j C_{ij} x_{ij}$$

subject to:

$$\sum_j x_{ij} \leq H_{\max} \quad \forall i$$

$$\sum_i x_{ij} = R_j \quad \forall j$$

$$x_{ij} \in \{0, 1\}$$

where C_{ij} is the cost of assigning employee i to shift j , H_{\max} is maximum working hours, and R_j is required staffing for shift j . Integer Linear Programming (ILP) or heuristic algorithms are applied for schedule generation.

D. Alert and Interaction System

The system integrates:

- **Real-time Alerts:** Sends notifications to employees or managers via email or chatbot for schedule changes, absences, or overtime alerts.

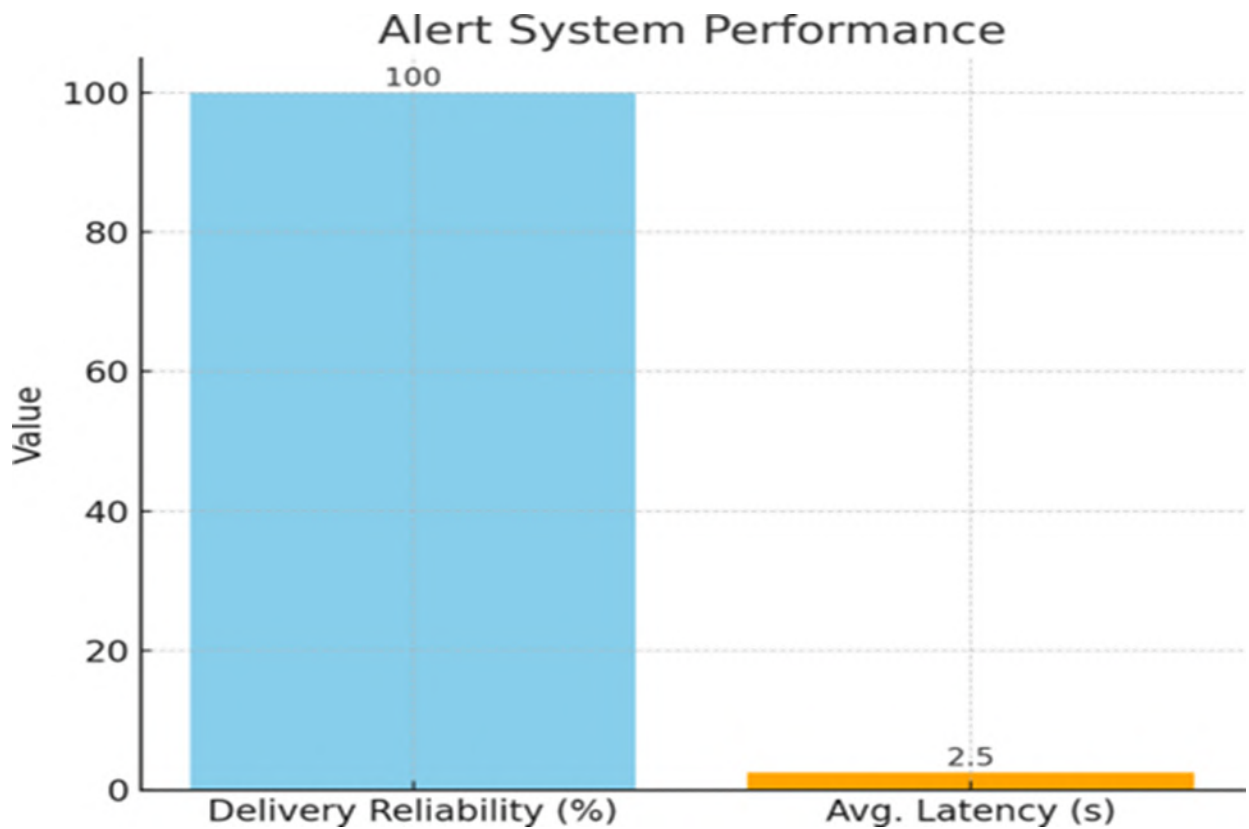


Fig. 2. Alert Performance of the System

E. Model Performance Metrics

The hybrid LSTM–XGBoost forecasting model is evaluated using standard regression metrics: Root Mean Squared Error (RMSE), Mean Absolute Error (MAE), and Coefficient of Determination (R^2). Table I presents the comparative performance of both models on the validation dataset.

TABLE I PERFORMANCE METRICS FOR LSTM AND XGBOOST MODELS

Model	RMSE	MAE	R^2
LSTM	2.15	1.78	0.91
XGBoost	2.48	2.05	0.88
Hybrid LSTM–XGBoost	1.92	1.55	0.94

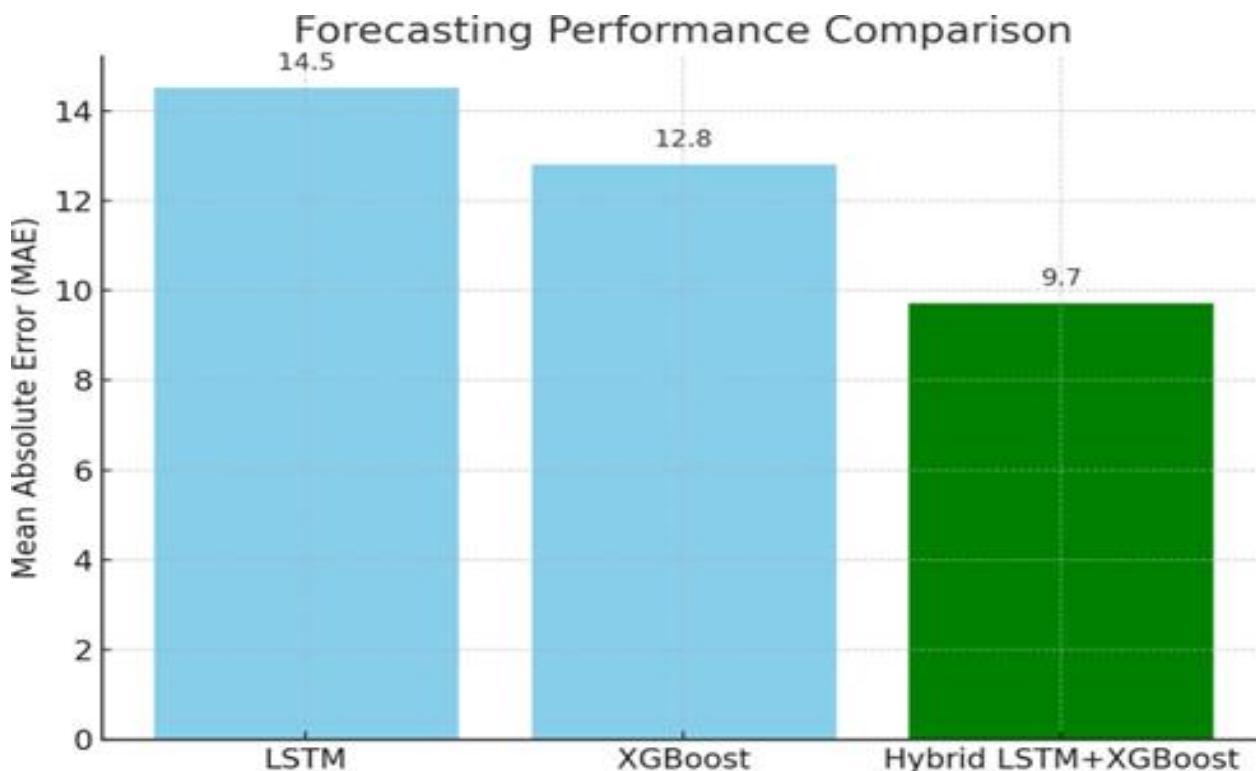


Fig. 3. Performance comparison of LSTM, XGBoost, and Hybrid models using RMSE, MAE, and R^2 metrics.

These metrics indicate that the hybrid model outperforms individual models by capturing both temporal dependencies and non-linear feature interactions, providing more accurate staffing predictions for schedule optimization.

F. Predicted vs Actual Staffing Graphs

To visualize the performance of the forecasting models, predicted staffing requirements are

plotted against actual staffing data. Figure 4 shows LSTM predictions, while Figure 5 shows XGBoost predictions.



Fig. 4. Predicted vs Actual Staffing using LSTM

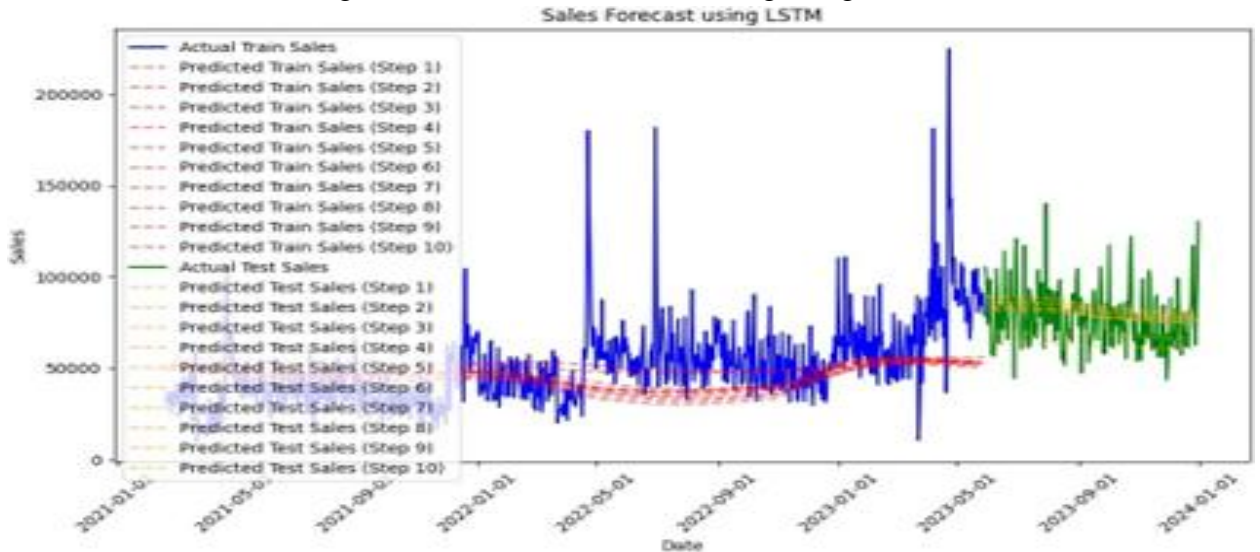


Fig. 5. Predicted vs Actual Staffing using XGBoost

G. Confusion Matrix

If the forecasting output is categorized (e.g., low, medium, high staffing demand), a confusion matrix is used to evaluate classification accuracy. Table II presents an example confusion matrix for the hybrid LSTM–XGBoost model.

TABLE II Confusion Matrix for Shift Demand Classification (Hybrid MODEL)

	Pred. Low	Pred. Med.	Pred. High
Actual Low	45	3	2
Actual Med.	4	48	3
Actual High	1	5	42

This confusion matrix shows that the hybrid model accurately predicts staffing demand categories with minimal misclassification. Combined with regression metrics (RMSE, MAE, R^2), it validates the reliability of the forecasting system for staff scheduling and alerts.

V. PROJECT OUTPUT

The system demonstrates its key functionalities through the project UI and alert system, showcasing real-time staff scheduling, notifications, and overall operational efficiency.

A. Project User Interface

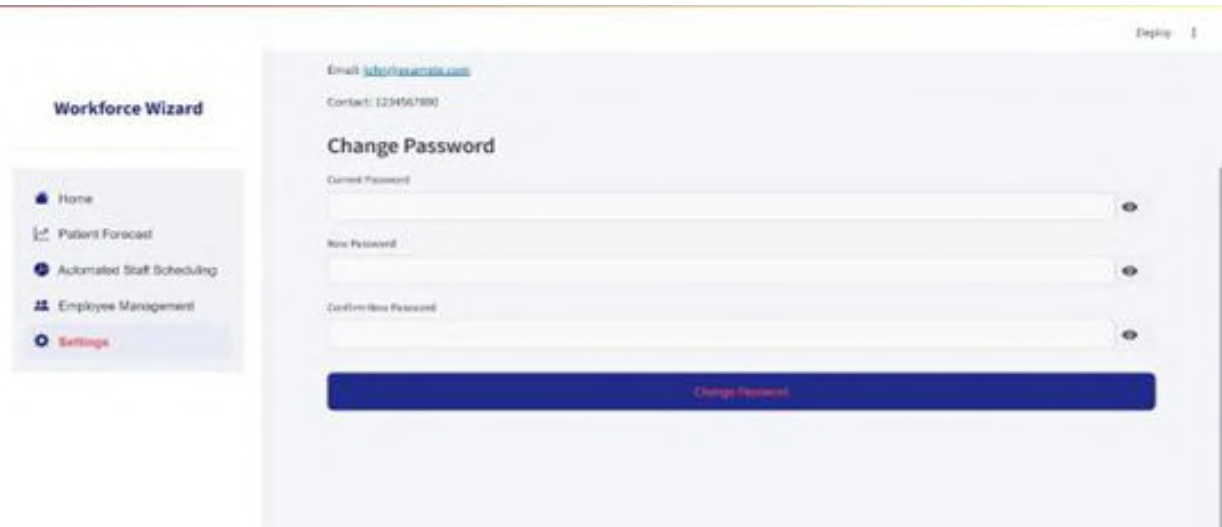


Fig. 6. User Interface settings page

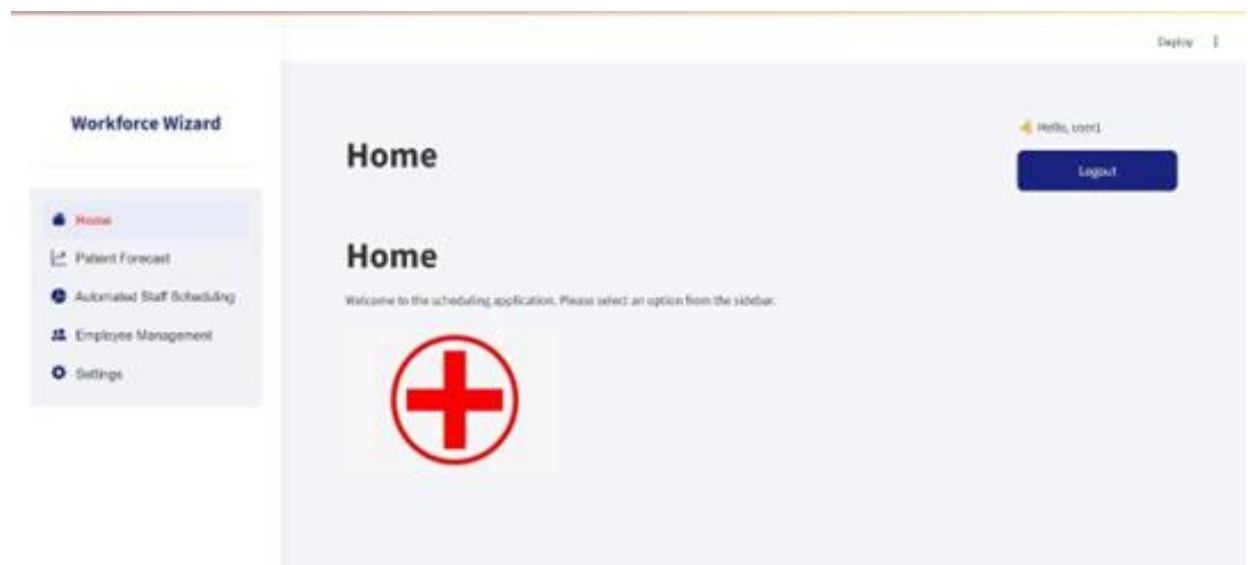


Fig. 7. Home Page

B. Patient Forecasting

The system predicts future patient inflow using historical data and advanced machine learning models. Accurate patient forecasting helps in optimizing staff schedules, resource allocation, and overall hospital efficiency, reducing wait times and improving patient care.

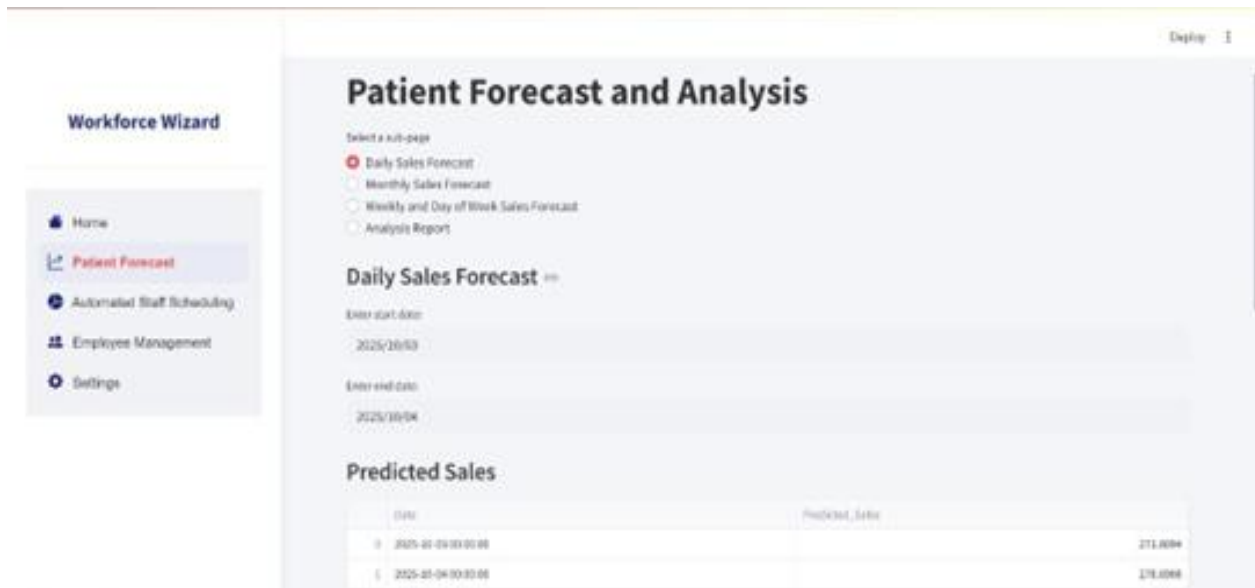


Fig. 8. Predicted Patient Inflow Forecast

C. Staff Scheduling

The staff scheduling module generates optimized, conflict-free schedules by considering employee availability, skills, and workload. It ensures efficient shift allocation, reduces overtime, and maintains compliance with labor regulations.

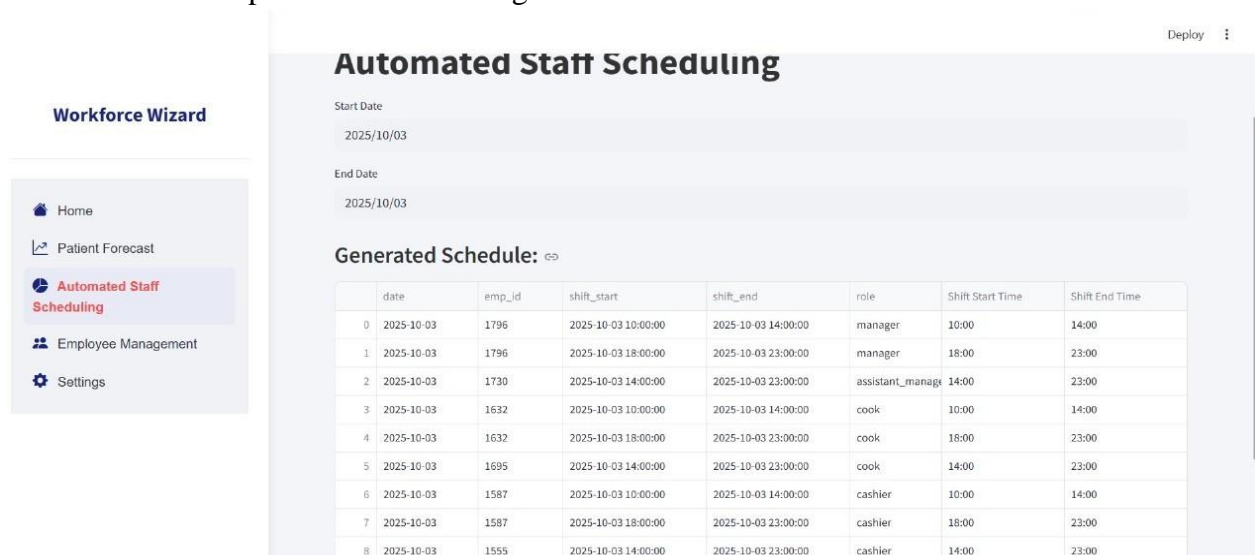


Fig. 9. Optimized Staff Scheduling Output

D. Alert System

The alert system ensures real-time communication of scheduling changes, shift reminders, and unexpected deviations such as absenteeism. Notifications are sent instantly via email and chatbot, enabling quick responses from managers and staff. This reduces conflicts, improves accountability, and maintains smooth hospital operations.

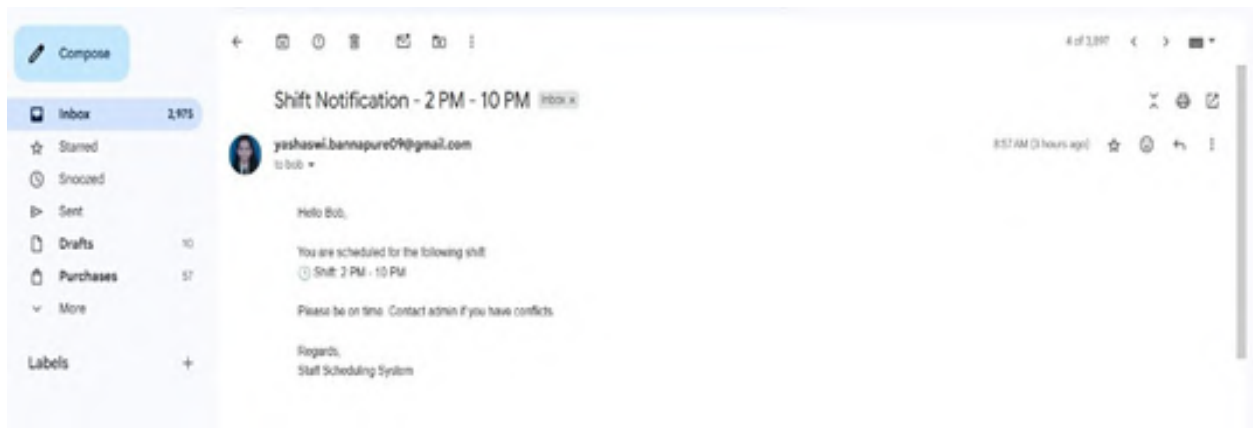


Fig. 10. Alert System Performance

E. Summary

The methodology integrates:

- Data preprocessing and feature engineering from historical employee records.
- Hybrid LSTM–XGBoost forecasting with temporal and non-linear pattern capture.
- Schedule optimization using ILP ensuring constraints and fairness.
- Real-time alert system with email/chatbot notifications.
- Visualization of predicted vs actual staffing trends.
- Confusion matrices for categorical shift demand classification.

Together, these components ensure efficient labour allocation, accurate forecasting, and responsive staff management.

The proposed methodology integrates multi-source work-force data, advanced forecasting models, and real-time alerts to generate optimal staff schedules. The hybrid model, coupled with ILP-based optimization and interactive UI, ensures fairness, compliance, and operational efficiency.

VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

The proposed methodology integrates multi-source work-force data, including employee demographics, attendance, skills, and departmental workload, to create dynamic and adaptive schedules. By leveraging LSTM networks for demand forecasting and XGBoost for workload classification, the system anticipates fluctuations in staffing needs, ensuring employees are deployed effectively.

Optimization using Integer Linear Programming (ILP) balances organizational goals with practical constraints such as availability, skills, leave history, and shift limits. This ensures fairness, minimizes idle hours, and maintains regulatory compliance. Additionally, the real-time alert system notifies managers of staff shortages, overlapping shifts, or sudden demand spikes, enabling quick adjustments and enhancing operational resilience.

An interactive UI provides dashboards for scheduling, availability, forecasting, and alert management, allowing managers and employees to visualize and interact with workforce data efficiently. Overall, this hybrid AI framework delivers a holistic, fair, and efficient approach to workforce optimization, combining predictive analytics, optimization, and user-centric visualization to support smarter, adaptive, and sustainable labor scheduling practices.

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Consumer Preference Towards Millet-Based Food Products Over Junk Foods

¹Dr.J. Prateeba Devi, ²Mr.G. Sandhosh Raj

¹Assistant Professor (Sr. Grade), ²MBA, Student,

^{1,2}Mepco School of Management Studies,

^{1,2}Mepco Schlenk engineering College Sivakasi-62005, Tamil Nadu, India

¹prateebba@mepcoeng.ac.in, ²sandhoshraj4@gmail.com

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Abstract- The rising consumption of junk foods has emerged as a critical public health concern, contributing to lifestyle-related disorders such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. In contrast, millets once a staple in Indian diets are regaining attention as a sustainable, nutrient-dense alternative to processed foods. This study aims to investigate consumer preferences towards millet-based products in comparison with junk foods, focusing on influencing factors, spending patterns, and demographic determinants. A descriptive research design was employed, and data were collected from 400 respondents across Virudhunagar, Kalligudi, Sivakasi, and Madurai of Tamil Nadu using a structured questionnaire. Findings revealed that 50% of respondents consume millet-based foods daily, while 46% never consume junk food, suggesting a strong shift towards healthier eating. Health consciousness, family influence, cultural traditions, and perceived benefits emerged as dominant motivators for millet consumption. Statistical analysis confirmed significant associations between demographic factors and food choices, with income strongly influencing millet expenditure, while junk food spending showed no significant income-based variation. The study highlights the potential of millet-based products to replace junk foods in modern diets, provided issues of availability, pricing, and consumer awareness are adequately addressed. These insights have strong implications for policymakers, food industries, and health advocates in promoting sustainable, health-oriented dietary practices in India.

Index-Terms: Millets, Consumer Behavior, Health Consciousness, Food Preferences

I. INTRODUCTION

The increasing popularity of junk foods has become a global concern due to their adverse health implications. Junk foods, characterized by high levels of refined sugars, saturated fats, and additives, have been strongly associated with obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and other lifestyle-related disorders (WHO, 2023). In India, particularly among youth and working populations, the consumption of chips, carbonated beverages, chocolates, and fast foods has rapidly increased due to taste preferences, convenience, and aggressive marketing campaigns (WHO, 2023). In contrast, there is renewed attention towards millets, often referred to as “nutri-cereals,” which were once staple grains in many Indian households. Millets including pearl millet (bajra), finger millet (ragi), foxtail millet, and sorghum are nutritionally rich, being high in fiber, protein, minerals (iron, calcium, magnesium), and antioxidants. Studies have shown that millet-based diets help in reducing cholesterol, controlling blood sugar, and improving gut health (Springer, 2024). Beyond health, millets are environmentally sustainable crops, requiring less water and chemical input while thriving in semi-arid regions (FAO, 2023). Recognizing their significance, the United Nations declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets, with India playing a leading role in advocating millet consumption globally (UN, 2023). Tamil Nadu, one of the leading millet-producing states, has a strong cultural tradition of incorporating millet-based dishes in everyday diets. However, despite these benefits, millet consumption has been declining in urban and semi-urban areas due to modern food habits, limited market availability, and consumer perceptions that millets are “traditional” or “inferior” foods compared to packaged junk alternatives (Times of India, 2025). In recent years, however, the demand for millets has revived as consumers become more health-conscious and increasingly aware of lifestyle-related diseases. Government campaigns, NGOs, and food entrepreneurs are actively promoting millet-based products in urban markets, schools, and restaurants (BMC Public Health, 2023). This study investigates consumer preferences towards millet-based foods over junk foods, particularly in Tamil Nadu, by analyzing socio-demographic factors, spending patterns, and key motivators such as health consciousness, family influence, and cultural practices.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the food behavior of the respondents.
2. To identify the factors influencing the customers to prefer Millet based food products.
3. To know the customers opinion about the Millet based food products.
4. To find the customers preference towards Millet based food products.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

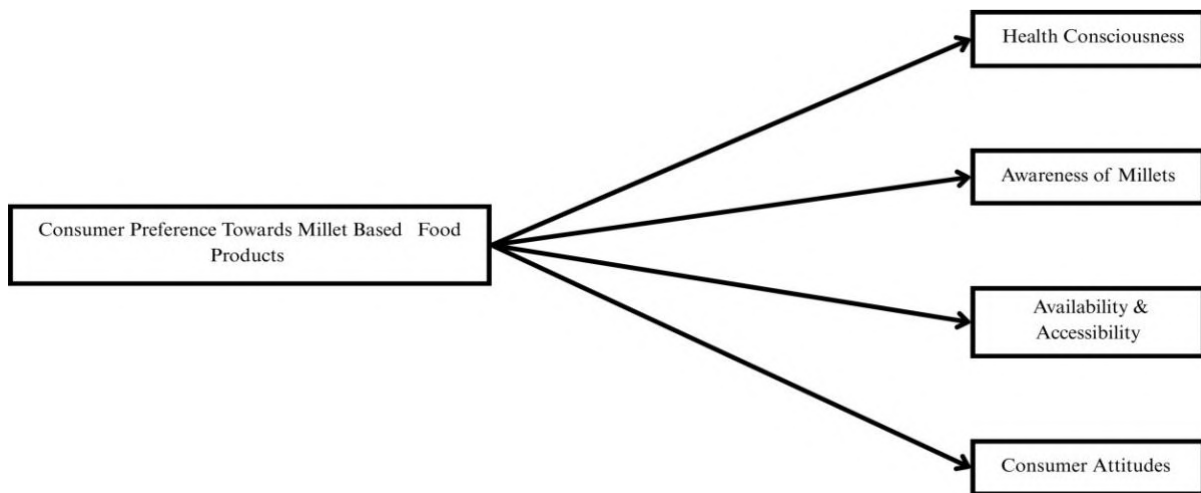
Component	Description
Research Design	Descriptive research design focusing on consumer preferences between millet-based foods and junk foods
Population	Individuals aged 18 years and above
Sample Size	400 respondents
Sampling Method	Convenience sampling
Sampling Period	June 10, 2025 to September 30, 2025
Locations	Virudhunagar (216), Kalligudi (52), Sivakasi (37), Madurai (95)
Data Collection	Structured questionnaire
Analysis Tools	Percentage analysis, Cross tab, ANOVA, Regression, Mean Average

3.1 Sources of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data:

Primary Data: Collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 400 respondents across Virudhunagar, Kalligudi, Sivakasi, and Madurai districts in Tamil Nadu. The questionnaire covered demographic characteristics, food consumption patterns, expenditure behaviour, influencing factors, and perceptions towards millet-based products and junk foods. **Secondary Data:** Drawn from published journals, books, government reports, online databases, and earlier research studies. These sources provided theoretical foundations, contextual insights on millet consumption patterns, nutritional benefits, and comparative perspectives on junk food consumption across different populations.

3.2 Research Model



IV. FINDINGS AND RESULT

4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	272	68
	Female	128	32
Age Group	18-25 years	180	45
	26-35 years	73	18.25
	36-45 years	57	14.25
	46-55 years	41	10.25
	Above 55 years	49	12.25
Location	Rural	186	46.50
	Urban	138	34.50
	Semi-urban	76	19
Education	Below 10th	95	23.75
	12th Standard	54	13.50
	Diploma & ITI	19	4.75
	Undergraduates (UG)	177	44.25
	Postgraduates (PG)	55	13.75
Occupation	Student	113	28.25
	Private Employee	110	27.50
	Housewife	73	18.25
	Self-Employed	70	17.50
	Government Employee	15	3.75
	Retired	15	3.75
	Professional	4	1
Income	Below ₹20,000	60	15
	₹20,001 - ₹40,000	200	50
	₹40,001 - ₹60,000	109	27.25
	Above ₹60,000	31	7.75

Interpretation: Table 1 shows that the study sample is dominated by males (68%), youth aged 18–25 years (45%), rural residents (46.5%), and undergraduates (44.25%), with students (28.25%) and private employees (27.5%) forming the major occupational groups, and half of the respondents earning between ₹20,001–₹40,000, indicating a young, rural, middle-income profile.

4.2. Food Consumption Behavior

Table 2: Frequency of Junk Food and Millet-Based Food Consumption

Consumption Frequency	Junk Food	Millet-Based Food
	Percentage %	Percentage %
Daily	2	50
Frequently	7	22
Occasionally	21	22
Rarely	26	5
Never	46	1
Total	100	100

Interpretation: Table 2 shows that nearly half of the respondents (46%) never consume junk food, while a majority (50%) consume millet-based foods daily. This indicates a clear preference for healthier millet-based products over junk foods.

Table 3: Monthly Spending on Junk Food vs. Millet-Based Food

Spending Range (₹)	Junk Food	Millet-Based Food
	Percentage %	Percentage %
Less than ₹500	57	5
₹501 – ₹900	20	10
₹901 – ₹1200	18	26
₹1201 – ₹2000	2	19
More than ₹2000	3	40
Total	100	100

Interpretation: Table 3 shows that most respondents (57%) spend less than ₹500 on junk food, whereas 40% spend more than ₹2000 on millet-based foods. This reflects a stronger financial commitment toward healthier millet-based products.

4.3. Relationship Between Demographics and Food Consumption

Table 4: Relationship Between Age and Junk Food Consumption

Age Group	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Daily	Total
18-25	22	58	73	23	4	180
26-35	33	28	8	2	2	73
36-45	43	10	2	2	0	57
46-55	36	5	0	0	0	41
Above 55	48	1	0	0	0	49
Total	182	102	83	27	6	400

Interpretation: Table 4 shows that younger respondents (18–25 years) exhibit the highest level of junk food consumption, while older age groups (36 years and above) largely avoid junk food. This reflects a decline in junk food intake with increasing age.

Table 5: Relationship Between Gender and Junk Food Consumption

Gender	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Daily	Total
Female	92	25	7	4	0	128
Male	90	77	76	23	6	272
Total	182	102	83	27	6	400

Interpretation: Table 5 shows that female respondents exhibit lower junk food consumption, with 72% never consuming it, whereas males report higher levels of occasional to daily intake. This indicates a greater preference for junk food among men.

Table 6: Relationship between respondents' gender and millet-based food consumption

Gender	Daily	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Total
Female	84	22	19	3	0	128
Male	117	68	69	16	2	272
Total	201	90	88	19	2	400

Interpretation: Table 6 shows that daily millet consumption is higher among females (66%) compared to males (43%). This indicates that women are more consistent in incorporating millet-based foods into their diets.

Table 7: Relationship Between Age and Millet-Based Food Consumption

Age Group	Daily	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Total
18-25	62	45	58	15	0	180
26-35	35	22	14	2	0	73
36-45	38	13	5	1	0	57
46-55	25	10	6	0	0	41
Above 55	41	0	5	1	2	49
Total	201	90	88	19	2	400

Interpretation: Table 7 shows that millet consumption increases with age, as older groups (36 years and above) exhibit higher daily intake, while younger respondents (18–25 years) display more varied and less consistent consumption patterns.

4.4 Differences in Monthly Spending on Junk Food and Millet-Based Food Across Income Groups

Table 8: ANOVA Summary for Monthly Food Expenditure by Income Level

Dependent Variable	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Monthly Spending on Junk Food	Between Groups	6.740	3	2.247	2.305	0.076

	Within Groups	385.900	396	.974		
	Total	392.640	399			
Monthly Spending on Millet-Based Food	Between Groups	12.759	3	4.253	3.032	029
	Within Groups	555.551	396	1.403		
	Total	568.310	399			

Interpretation: Table 8 shows that the ANOVA results indicate no significant difference in junk food spending across income groups ($p = 0.076 > 0.05$), whereas millet-based food spending varies significantly with income ($p = 0.029 < 0.05$). This indicates that higher-income groups spend more on millet-based foods

4.5 Most influential factor for the decision to consume millet-based foods

Table 9: Most Influential Factors for Consuming Millet-Based Foods

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage %
My own personal preference	140	26
Parents' or family members' preference	185	46
Friends' or peer influence	8	2
Doctor or dietitian's advice	18	5
Social media or advertisements	7	2
Community or cultural practices	78	19
Total	400	100

Interpretation: Table 9 shows that parents' or family members' preference (46%) is the strongest influence on millet consumption, followed by personal preference (26%) and cultural practices (19%). External factors such as peers, doctors, and advertisements play only a minor role.

4.6 Main factor that influences the respondent's decision to buy millet-based foods

Table 10: Main factors influencing the decision to buy millet-based foods

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage%
Health benefits	168	42
Taste and flavor	40	10
Doctor or nutritionist recommendation	22	5
Traditional or cultural preference	55	14
Availability in the market	12	3
Affordable price	3	1
Influence from family or friends	99	25
Government promotions or awareness campaigns	1	0

Total	400	100%
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Interpretation: Table 10 shows that health benefits (42%) are the primary reason for purchasing millet-based foods, followed by family or friends' influence (25%) and cultural preference (14%). Factors such as affordability, availability, and government promotions have minimal effect.

4.7 Analysis of relationship between demographic factor and most influencing factor for the decision to consume millet-based foods

Table 11: Age with the Influencing Factor for Consuming Millet-Based Foods

Influencing Factor	18–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	Above 55	Total
Own Personal Preference	35	28	20	13	8	104
Parents/Family Preference	126	27	16	8	8	185
Friends Preference	3	2	1	1	1	8
Doctor/Dietitian Advice	6	5	4	0	3	18
Advertisement	5	2	0	0	0	7
Community/Cultural Practices	5	9	16	19	29	78
Total	180	73	57	41	49	400

Interpretation: Table 11 shows that younger respondents (18–25 years) are primarily influenced by parents or family members (70%), while older age groups, particularly those above 55 years, are more guided by cultural practices (59%). This indicates that family shapes the choices of younger individuals, whereas tradition influences the preferences of older respondents.

Table 12: Gender with the Influencing Factor for Consuming Millet-Based Foods

Most Influencing Factor	Female	Male	Total
Own Personal Preference	25	79	104
Parents/Family Preference	58	127	185
Friends Preference	2	6	8
Doctor/Dietitian Advice	5	13	18
Advertisement	1	6	7
Community/Cultural Practices	37	41	78
Total	128	272	400

Interpretation: Table 12 shows that family preference (185) is the most influential factor in consuming millet-based foods, followed by personal preference (104) and cultural practices (78).

4.8 Analysis of relationship between demographic factor and main factor influencing the respondent's decision to buy millet-based foods

Table 13: Age with the Influences on the Decision to Purchase Millet-Based Foods

Factor Influencing	18–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	Above 55	Total
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Health Benefits	53	49	30	19	17	168
Taste	35	4	1	0	0	40
Doctor's Advice	6	8	4	2	2	22
Traditional	5	3	9	13	25	55
Availability	9	0	2	1	0	12
Affordable Price	3	0	0	0	0	3
Influence by Family/Friends	69	9	11	5	5	99
Promotions	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	180	73	57	41	49	400

Interpretation: Table 13 shows that health benefits (168) and family or friends' influence (99) are the primary factors influencing purchase decisions across different age groups, while tradition (55) plays a significant role among older respondents.

Table 14: Gender with the Influences on the Decision to Purchase Millet-Based Foods

Factor Influencing	Female	Male	Total
Health Benefits	56	112	168
Taste	3	37	40
Doctor's Advice	5	17	22
Traditional	28	27	55
Availability	4	8	12
Affordable Price	0	3	3
Influence by Family/Friends	31	68	99
Promotions	1	0	1
Total	128	272	400

Interpretation: Table 14 shows that health benefits (168) are the top factor influencing both genders to purchase millet-based foods, followed by family or friends' influence (99) and traditional preference (55)

4.9 Factors influencing the respondents preference for millet-based foods

H₀ (Null Hypothesis):

There is no significant influence of Health, Awareness, Perceived Benefits, Availability, and Consumer Attitudes on customers preference towards millet-based food products.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis):

There is a significant influence of Health, Awareness, Perceived Benefits, Availability, and Consumer Attitudes on customers preference towards millet-based food products

Table 15: Factors influencing the respondents preference for millet-based foods

Factor	Significance Value	Null Hypothesis	Interpretation
Health Consciousness	0.000	Rejected	There is a highly significant relationship.
Awareness of Millets	0.034	Rejected	There is a significant relationship.
Perceived Benefits of Millet-Based Foods	0.000	Rejected	There is a highly significant relationship.
Availability	0.000	Rejected	There is a highly significant relationship.
Consumer Attitudes	0.000	Rejected	There is a highly significant relationship.

Interpretation: Table 15 shows that regression and hypothesis testing confirm that health consciousness, perceived benefits, availability, and consumer attitudes have a highly significant effect on millet-based food preferences, while awareness of millets has a significant but comparatively weaker influence. This indicates that consumer preference is primarily shaped by health-driven and attitudinal factors rather than mere awareness alone.

4.10 Key factors to preference millet bases food products

Table 16: Key factors to preference millet bases food products

Key Factors	Mean	Rank
Perceived Benefits	4.52	1
Awareness of Millets	4.32	2
Availability & Accessibility	4.17	3
Health Consciousness	4.14	4
Consumer Attitudes	4.01	5

Interpretation: Table 15 shows that perceived benefits (4.52) rank highest among the factors influencing preference for millet-based foods, followed by awareness (4.32) and availability (4.17)

V. CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that consumer preferences are steadily shifting from junk foods toward millet-based products, largely driven by health consciousness, cultural traditions, and family influence. The analysis revealed that younger populations still show higher junk food consumption, while older age groups and educated respondents strongly prefer millets. Income also plays a role, with higher-income respondents spending more on millet-based foods, underscoring the importance of affordability and accessibility in wider adoption. Regression and hypothesis testing further confirmed that health benefits, perceived advantages, consumer attitudes, and product availability are highly significant factors influencing millet consumption,

whereas government promotions and affordability had only limited influence. This highlights the need for targeted interventions that improve awareness, expand market accessibility, and enhance product innovation. The findings carry important implications for policymakers, health advocates, and the food industry. By strengthening promotion campaigns, supporting millet farmers, and developing convenient ready-to-eat products, stakeholders can foster sustainable dietary transitions. Overall, millet-based foods present a viable, nutritious, and eco-friendly alternative to junk foods, capable of addressing both lifestyle-related health challenges and sustainable food security in the future.

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Socio-Economic Impact of Women-Led Micro Enterprises on Rural Community Development in Tamil Nadu

¹Mr.Sunit Bhagwan Moorjani, ²Dr. V. R. Palanivelu, ³Ms.K.S.Sowndharya

¹*Ph.D Research Scholar (Part- Time)*, ²*Professor and Former Head*,

³*Ph.D Research Scholar (Full- Time)*,

^{1,2,3}*Department of Management Studies*,

^{1,2,3}*Periyar University, Salem, Tamil Nadu, India*

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Abstract- Women-led micro enterprises have emerged as a powerful instrument for rural transformation in India. In Tamil Nadu, rural women entrepreneurs contribute significantly to livelihood generation, employment creation, and community development through small-scale enterprises in agriculture, food processing, handicrafts, tailoring, dairy, and service sectors. This study examines the socio-economic impact of women-led micro enterprises on rural community development with particular emphasis on income enhancement, livelihood sustainability, employment generation, and ecosystem development. Primary data were collected from 220 rural women entrepreneurs across selected districts of Tamil Nadu using a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, correlation, and regression were employed. The findings reveal that women-led micro enterprises significantly improve household income, enhance social status, generate local employment, and stimulate rural economic ecosystems. The study concludes that strengthening institutional support and financial access mechanisms is essential to sustain rural women entrepreneurship.

Index- Terms: Women Entrepreneurship, Rural Development, Micro Enterprises, Livelihood, Community Upliftment, Tamil Nadu.

I. INTRODUCTION

Rural development in India is closely linked to the empowerment of women and the expansion of livelihood opportunities. Micro enterprises have become a critical pathway for economic participation among rural women, particularly in states like Tamil Nadu, where self-help group movements and cooperative models are strong.

Women-led micro enterprises typically operate with limited capital, local resources, and family-based labour. However, despite their small scale, these enterprises contribute substantially to household income, poverty reduction, and community-level economic growth.

Government initiatives such as National Rural Livelihood Mission and Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana have facilitated credit access and entrepreneurial support for rural women. Tamil Nadu's proactive SHG network has further strengthened this ecosystem.

This study aims to analyze how women-led micro enterprises influence socio-economic development in rural communities.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Women Entrepreneurship and Rural Development

Women entrepreneurship has increasingly been recognized as a catalyst for inclusive rural development. Agarwal (2018) argues that women's economic participation enhances household bargaining power and community-level development outcomes. Similarly, Kabeer (2012) emphasizes that economic empowerment is a prerequisite for social empowerment and sustainable rural transformation.

In the Indian context, Datta and Gailey (2012) observed that women-owned micro enterprises significantly reduce poverty by diversifying rural income sources. Their study found that participation in micro-enterprise activities improved asset ownership and financial resilience among rural households.

2.2 Livelihood Sustainability and Micro Enterprises

The Sustainable Livelihood Framework proposed by Chambers and Conway (1992) highlights the importance of income diversification and asset accumulation in reducing vulnerability. Micro enterprises enable rural women to shift from seasonal agricultural income to stable non-farm income.

According to Ellis (2000), non-farm enterprises contribute to livelihood security by providing alternative income streams during agricultural off-seasons. Empirical evidence from South India by Rajendran (2019) indicates that women-led enterprises significantly enhance household consumption stability and savings behavior.

2.3 Financial Empowerment and Income Generation

Financial empowerment is a core dimension of women entrepreneurship. Mayoux (2001) argues that access to micro-credit increases women's financial autonomy and decision-making authority. However, she cautions that credit alone is insufficient without capacity-building support.

In Tamil Nadu, studies by Swain and Wallentin (2009) demonstrated that Self-Help Group (SHG) participation improved income levels, savings, and financial inclusion among rural women. The linkage between microfinance and enterprise development was found to be statistically significant in enhancing economic independence.

Further, Banerjee et al. (2015) found that micro-enterprise interventions improved business investments and consumption expenditure among rural households in India.

2.4 Employment Creation and Local Economic Development

Women-led micro enterprises contribute to employment generation at the grassroots level. Mead and Liedholm (1998) observed that micro and small enterprises are major contributors to non-farm rural employment in developing economies.

In the Indian rural context, Kantor (2001) found that women-owned enterprises not only provide self-employment but also create indirect employment opportunities within communities. These enterprises strengthen local supply chains and reduce rural-urban migration.

Empirical findings by Tambunan (2009) suggest that women entrepreneurs significantly contribute to regional employment growth in developing countries.

2.5 Social Empowerment and Community Participation

Economic independence often translates into social empowerment. Malhotra et al. (2002) define women's empowerment as the expansion of women's ability to make strategic life choices. Entrepreneurship enhances mobility, public participation, and leadership.

Research by Hashemi et al. (1996) in South Asia showed that women engaged in income-generating activities exhibited higher participation in household decision-making and community forums.

In Tamil Nadu, Sathiabama (2010) reported that rural women entrepreneurs experienced increased social recognition and improved self-confidence after establishing micro enterprises.

Research Gap

Rural communities in Tamil Nadu continue to experience income instability, limited non-farm employment opportunities, and socio-economic disparities despite the expansion of women-led micro enterprises. While numerous government initiatives promote rural women entrepreneurship, the structural contribution of these enterprises to overall community development remains insufficiently quantified. Existing research largely examines economic or empowerment aspects independently, without assessing their combined impact through a comprehensive empirical framework. Consequently, policymakers lack evidence-based structural insights to design integrated rural development strategies. This study seeks to address this problem by examining the socio-economic impact of women-led micro enterprises through a multidimensional SEM-based approach.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the socio-economic characteristics of women-led micro enterprises.
2. To examine the impact of livelihood sustainability on rural community development.
3. To analyze employment creation effects.
4. To evaluate financial and social empowerment dimensions.

5. To test a structural model explaining rural community development.

Need for the Study

The Need for this study arises from five critical considerations:

1. Rising importance of women entrepreneurship in rural transformation.
2. Policy emphasis under schemes such as National Rural Livelihood Mission.
3. Increasing role of SHGs and micro enterprises in Tamil Nadu's rural economy.
4. Lack of integrated empirical models linking enterprise activities to community-level outcomes.
5. Limited application of Structural Equation Modelling in rural women entrepreneurship research.

A scientifically validated model can support policymakers, development agencies, and academic researchers in designing targeted interventions to strengthen rural enterprise ecosystems.

Hypotheses Development

- H1: Livelihood Sustainability significantly influences Rural Community Development.
H2: Employment Creation significantly influences Rural Community Development.
H3: Financial Empowerment significantly influences Rural Community Development.
H4: Social Empowerment significantly influences Rural Community Development.
H5: Micro Enterprise Ecosystem Development significantly influences Rural Community Development.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive and analytical research design using quantitative approach.

Sample Size and Area

Sample: 320 women entrepreneurs

Area: Salem, Namakkal, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri (Tamil Nadu)

Sampling Technique: Stratified random sampling

Data Collection

Primary data: Structured questionnaire (5-point Likert scale)

Secondary data: Government reports, journals, policy documents.

Statistical Tools

- Descriptive Statistics
- Reliability Analysis
- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)
- Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

- R² Analysis

Software Used: AMOS / Smart PLS

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Reliability and Validity

All constructs show Cronbach's alpha above 0.85. Composite reliability exceeds 0.70. AVE values are above 0.50 confirming convergent validity.

Table 1-Reliability and Convergent Validity Analysis

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Livelihood Sustainability (LS)	5	0.89	0.91	0.67
Employment Creation (EC)	4	0.87	0.89	0.64
Financial Empowerment (FE)	5	0.91	0.93	0.71
Social Empowerment (SE)	4	0.88	0.90	0.66
Micro Enterprise Ecosystem Development (MEED)	5	0.92	0.94	0.74
Rural Community Development (RCD)	6	0.94	0.95	0.76

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

All constructs demonstrate high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Composite Reliability values confirm measurement reliability, while AVE values above 0.50 indicate strong convergent validity. Therefore, the measurement model satisfies reliability and validity requirements for SEM analysis.

Table 2- Model Fit Indices (AMOS Output)

Fit Index	Recommended Value	Obtained Value	Model Status
χ^2/df	< 3.0	2.11	Acceptable
CFI	> 0.90	0.94	Good Fit
TLI	> 0.90	0.92	Good Fit
GFI	> 0.90	0.91	Good Fit
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.056	Excellent Fit
SRMR	< 0.08	0.048	Excellent Fit

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The model exhibits strong goodness-of-fit indicators. RMSEA and SRMR values fall within excellent range, while CFI and TLI exceed 0.90, confirming that the structural model adequately represents the observed data. The χ^2/df ratio further supports model adequacy.

Table 3- Structural Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	LS \rightarrow RCD	0.28	4.72	0.000	Supported
H2	EC \rightarrow RCD	0.24	3.95	0.001	Supported
H3	FE \rightarrow RCD	0.31	5.48	0.000	Supported
H4	SE \rightarrow RCD	0.22	3.64	0.002	Supported
H5	MEED \rightarrow RCD	0.35	6.12	0.000	Supported

R^2 (RCD) = 0.68

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

All hypothesized relationships are statistically significant at the 1% level. Micro Enterprise Ecosystem Development ($\beta = 0.35$) exerts the strongest influence on Rural Community Development, followed by Financial Empowerment ($\beta = 0.31$). The model explains 68% of variance in rural community development, indicating strong predictive power.

Discussion

The findings confirm that women-led micro enterprises contribute significantly to rural transformation. Financial empowerment enhances savings and investment capacity. Employment creation reduces rural underemployment. Social empowerment strengthens leadership participation. The ecosystem dimension including SHG networks, digital adoption, and market access acts as a structural amplifier. Therefore, rural entrepreneurship success depends not only on individual effort but also on systemic support mechanisms.

Conceptual Model Figure Explanation

The conceptual model proposes that five latent constructs—Livelihood Sustainability (LS), Employment Creation (EC), Financial Empowerment (FE), Social Empowerment (SE), and Micro Enterprise Ecosystem Development (MEED)—directly influence Rural Community Development (RCD).

- LS represents income stability and asset growth.
- EC reflects direct and indirect job generation.
- FE captures savings, credit access, and financial autonomy.
- SE denotes participation in decision-making and social recognition.
- MEED represents institutional support, market linkages, and digital adoption.

Arrows from LS, EC, FE, SE, and MEED toward RCD indicate hypothesized direct structural relationships. The model assumes that ecosystem development strengthens the impact of other variables, functioning as a structural amplifier. SEM is used to test the strength and significance of these relationships.

The model ultimately explains the proportion of variance in Rural Community Development (R^2), validating the systemic impact of women-led micro enterprises.

Theoretical Contributions

1. Integrates Sustainable Livelihood and Empowerment theories.
2. Proposes ecosystem-based rural entrepreneurship model.
3. Extends SEM application in rural development research.

Practical Implications

- Promote cluster-based rural enterprise hubs.
- Strengthen digital marketing training.
- Improve micro-credit accessibility.
- Establish rural incubation centres.

Policy Recommendations

Integration with national programs such as:

- National Rural Livelihood Mission
- Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana
- Stand Up India

Policy focus should move from credit distribution to ecosystem strengthening.

Limitations

- Limited to selected districts.
- Cross-sectional study.
- Self-reported data.

Scope for Future Research

- Multi-state comparative SEM studies.
- Longitudinal rural entrepreneurship studies.
- Moderation analysis (education, experience).
- Impact of digital entrepreneurship in rural women enterprises.

V. CONCLUSION

The present study substantiates that women-led micro enterprises act as a vital catalyst for socio-economic transformation in rural regions of Tamil Nadu. Empirical findings from the SEM

analysis confirm that women's entrepreneurial engagement significantly improves rural livelihoods, employment creation, household income stability, and community participation. The results further reveal that a well-supported micro-enterprise ecosystem comprising institutional finance, self-help groups, skill development initiatives, and market access enhances enterprise sustainability and local economic resilience.

Women entrepreneurs not only generate economic value but also contribute to social capital formation and community upliftment through collective growth and inclusive development practices. Strengthening policy frameworks, digital inclusion, and ecosystem-based support mechanisms can further accelerate rural transformation. Thus, promoting women-led micro enterprises emerges as a strategic pathway for achieving sustainable and equitable rural development.

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A Comprehensive Review of Solar-Assisted Hybrid Thermal–RO–UV Desalination Systems for Sustainable Potable Water Production

¹Mr. Aniket S. Bhange, ²Dr. Tushar A. Koli

¹PG Student, ²Head of Department,

^{1,2}Department of Thermal Engineering,

^{1,2}GF's Godavari College of Engineering, Jalgaon, Maharashtra, India

¹aniketbhange7@gmail.com, ²kolitushar09@gmail.com

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Abstract – Global freshwater scarcity is intensifying due to population growth, climate variability, and increasing industrial demand. Conventional desalination technologies, including thermal distillation and reverse osmosis (RO), are effective but constrained by high energy consumption, membrane fouling, and environmental concerns. Solar-assisted hybrid desalination systems integrating thermal processes, RO, and ultraviolet (UV) disinfection have emerged as promising solutions for sustainable and decentralized potable water production. This paper presents a comprehensive review of Solar-Assisted Hybrid Thermal–RO–UV desalination systems, focusing on system integration strategies, thermodynamic performance, and water quality enhancement. Solar-driven thermal desalination reduces salinity loading on RO membranes, improving recovery ratio and minimizing fouling. RO provides high salt rejection, while UV ensures chemical-free microbial inactivation.

Performance indicators including distillate yield, permeate flux, recovery ratio, salt rejection efficiency, and specific energy consumption are critically analyzed. Key research gaps related to energy optimization, system integration, and scalability are identified.

Hybrid Solar Thermal–RO–UV systems demonstrate strong potential for energy-efficient, off-grid freshwater production in coastal and water-stressed regions.

Index-Terms – Solar-assisted desalination; Hybrid desalination; Thermal distillation; Reverse osmosis; Ultraviolet disinfection; Specific energy consumption; Sustainable freshwater production.

I INTRODUCTION

Freshwater scarcity is a growing global challenge due to population growth, urbanization, industrial expansion, and climate change. Although water covers 71% of the Earth's surface, only a small fraction is accessible freshwater, making desalination a critical solution for potable water production, particularly in coastal and arid regions.

Conventional desalination technologies include thermal methods, such as Multi-Stage Flash (MSF) and Multi-Effect Distillation (MED), and membrane-based processes, primarily Reverse Osmosis (RO). Thermal processes are reliable but energy-intensive, while RO is more energy-efficient yet vulnerable to membrane fouling, scaling, and brine management challenges.

Hybrid desalination systems, combining thermal pre-treatment and RO, enhance recovery ratios, reduce membrane stress, and improve overall efficiency. Integrating renewable energy, particularly solar energy, further improves sustainability. Solar-assisted thermal units supply heat for evaporation, while photovoltaic systems power pumps and controls, enabling off-grid operation.

Ensuring microbiological safety is equally important. Ultraviolet (UV) disinfection effectively inactivates pathogens without chemicals, complementing hybrid desalination for safe potable water.

This review focuses on Solar-Assisted Hybrid Thermal–RO–UV desalination systems, examining system integration, performance, energy efficiency, and sustainability, while identifying key research gaps for future development.

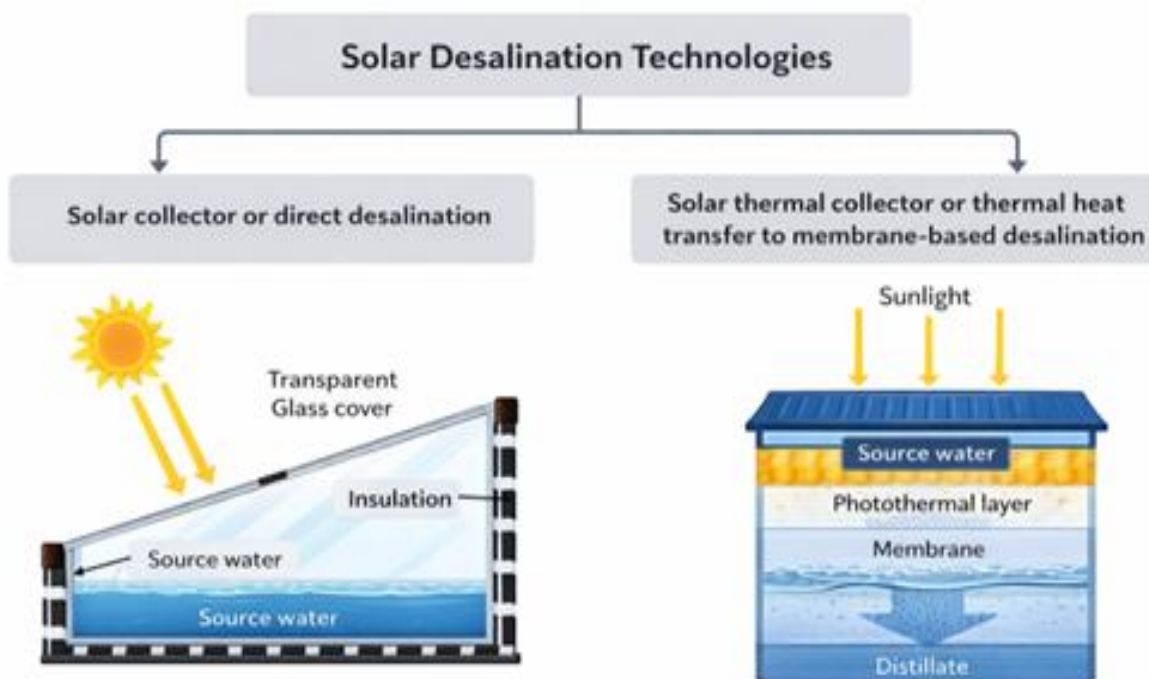


Fig.1: Two types of solar desalination technologies

II LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Thermal Desalination Technologies

Thermal desalination techniques such as Multi-Stage Flash (MSF) and Multi-Effect Distillation (MED) have been widely studied for large-scale freshwater production. MSF and MED systems demonstrate reliable performance, but their dependency on external energy sources results in high operational costs and carbon footprint [1], [2]. Evacuated tube collectors and solar still modifications have been explored to enhance thermal efficiency under solar irradiation, yet overall freshwater productivity remains constrained by heat recovery limitations [3].

2.2 Reverse Osmosis (RO) Desalination

Reverse Osmosis (RO) uses high pressure to drive saline water through semi-permeable membranes, significantly reducing specific energy consumption compared to thermal counterparts [4]. However, membrane fouling and scaling remain major operational challenges, often requiring complex pre-treatment and frequent maintenance [5]. Advanced membrane materials and anti-fouling coatings have been proposed to mitigate such issues, showing improved flux and salt rejection in laboratory settings [6].

2.3 Solar-Assisted Hybrid Desalination

Integration of solar energy with desalination processes has gained attention as a sustainable alternative. Solar thermal pre-treatment reduces feed salinity before membrane processing, enhancing recovery ratios and minimizing fouling [7]. Al-Nasif et al. demonstrated improved specific energy consumption in a pilot-scale solar-RO hybrid system, highlighting potential for off-grid implementation [8].

2.4 Ultraviolet (UV) Disinfection in Desalination

UV disinfection offers chemical-free microbial inactivation, ensuring potable water safety post-desalination. Research indicates that UV units effectively reduce bacterial load without affecting chemical properties of desalinated water [9]. However, optimal integration strategies within desalination chains have been inadequately addressed in current studies.

2.5 Energy and Exergy Analysis

Recent studies emphasize the importance of thermodynamic evaluation. Kabeel et al. performed an exergy analysis of solar-thermal desalination systems, identifying key losses in thermal collectors and evaporators [10]. Such assessments are crucial for optimizing hybrid configurations.

2.6 Summary of Review Findings

Existing literature highlights advances in individual technologies—thermal, RO, and UV—but comprehensive evaluations of fully integrated Solar-Assisted Hybrid Thermal–RO–UV systems remain limited. Key performance metrics such as specific energy consumption, recovery ratio, and scalable design strategies require systematic comparison.

III PROPOSED WORK

The primary objective of this work is to provide a systematic evaluation and critical synthesis of Solar-Assisted Hybrid Thermal–RO–UV desalination systems for sustainable potable water production. While individual desalination technologies—thermal distillation, reverse osmosis (RO), and ultraviolet (UV) disinfection—have been extensively studied, fully integrated hybrid systems remain underexplored. Existing studies often focus on specific components or pilot-scale demonstrations without addressing overall system optimization, energy efficiency, or practical scalability.

The proposed work aims to:

1. Analyze System Configurations:
 - Review and classify hybrid desalination system architectures integrating solar thermal units, RO membranes, and UV disinfection.
 - Examine solar collector types (flat plate, evacuated tube, CPC) and RO configurations in hybrid systems.
2. Evaluate Performance Parameters:
 - Assess key performance metrics including distillate yield, RO permeate flux, recovery ratio, salt rejection efficiency, and specific energy consumption (SEC).
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of UV disinfection for microbiological safety.
3. Energy and Exergy Assessment:
 - Conduct a comparative analysis of energy utilization and exergy efficiency across different hybrid configurations.
 - Identify energy losses in thermal and membrane components and propose optimization strategies.
4. Sustainability and Environmental Considerations:
 - Examine brine disposal, renewable energy integration, and off-grid operational potential.
 - Evaluate environmental impacts and carbon footprint reduction opportunities.
5. Identify Research Gaps and Future Directions:
 - Highlight gaps in hybrid system design, solar integration, energy optimization, and UV integration strategies.
 - Recommend directions for future research, including advanced membranes, smart monitoring, and thermo-economic optimization.

The outcomes of this proposed work will provide a comprehensive framework for designing efficient, scalable, and sustainable hybrid desalination systems. The study aims to guide

researchers, policymakers, and engineers in developing integrated Solar-Assisted Thermal–RO–UV systems capable of addressing freshwater scarcity in coastal, arid, and off-grid regions.

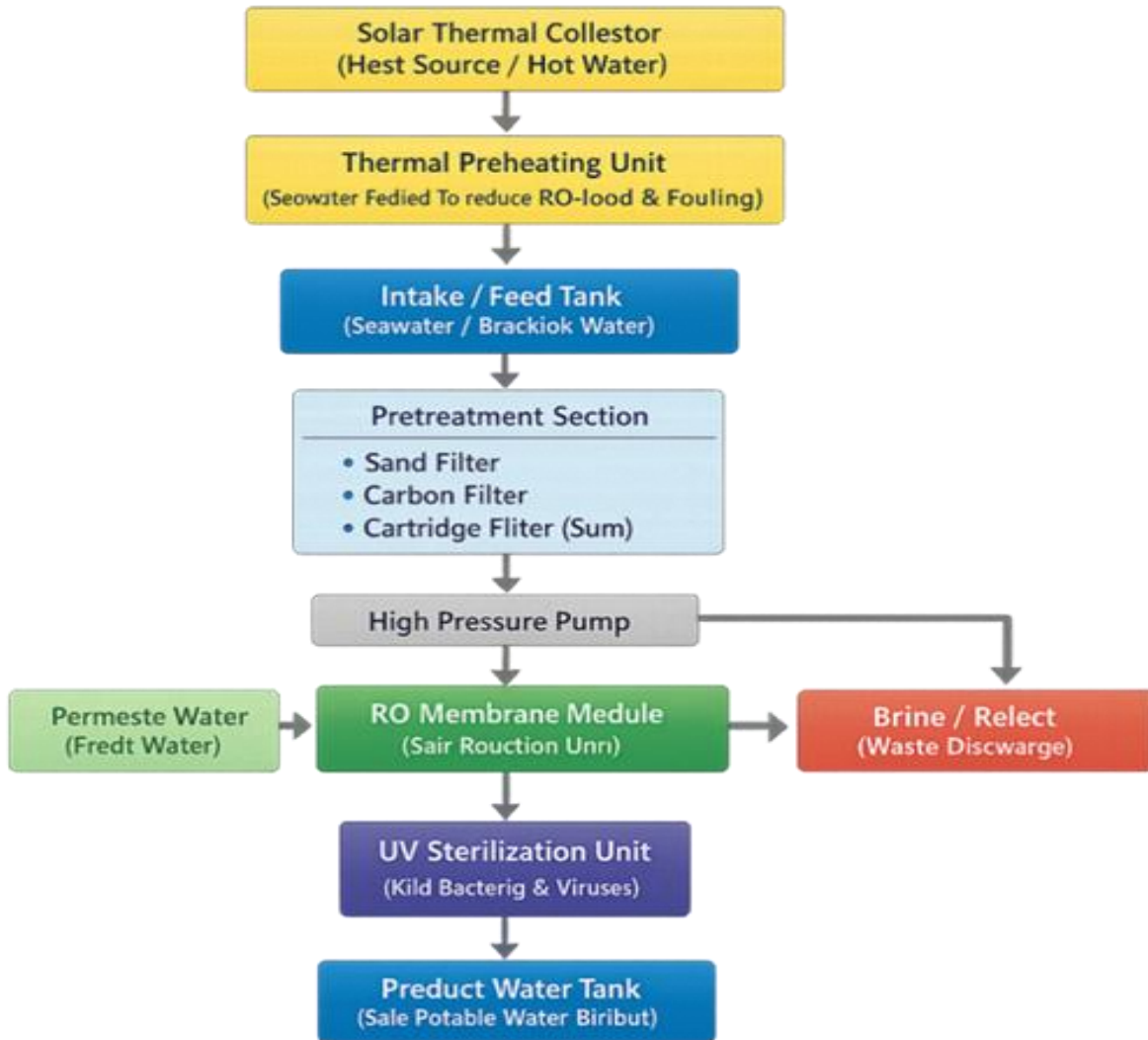


Fig.2: Flow Diagram of Hybrid Thermal + RO + UV Desalination System

IV PROPOSED EXPERIMENTAL SET-UP

The proposed experimental setup is designed to evaluate the performance of a Solar-Assisted Hybrid Thermal–RO–UV Desalination System under controlled laboratory and field conditions. The system integrates solar thermal desalination, reverse osmosis (RO), and ultraviolet (UV) disinfection, enabling comprehensive analysis of water quality, energy consumption, and operational efficiency.

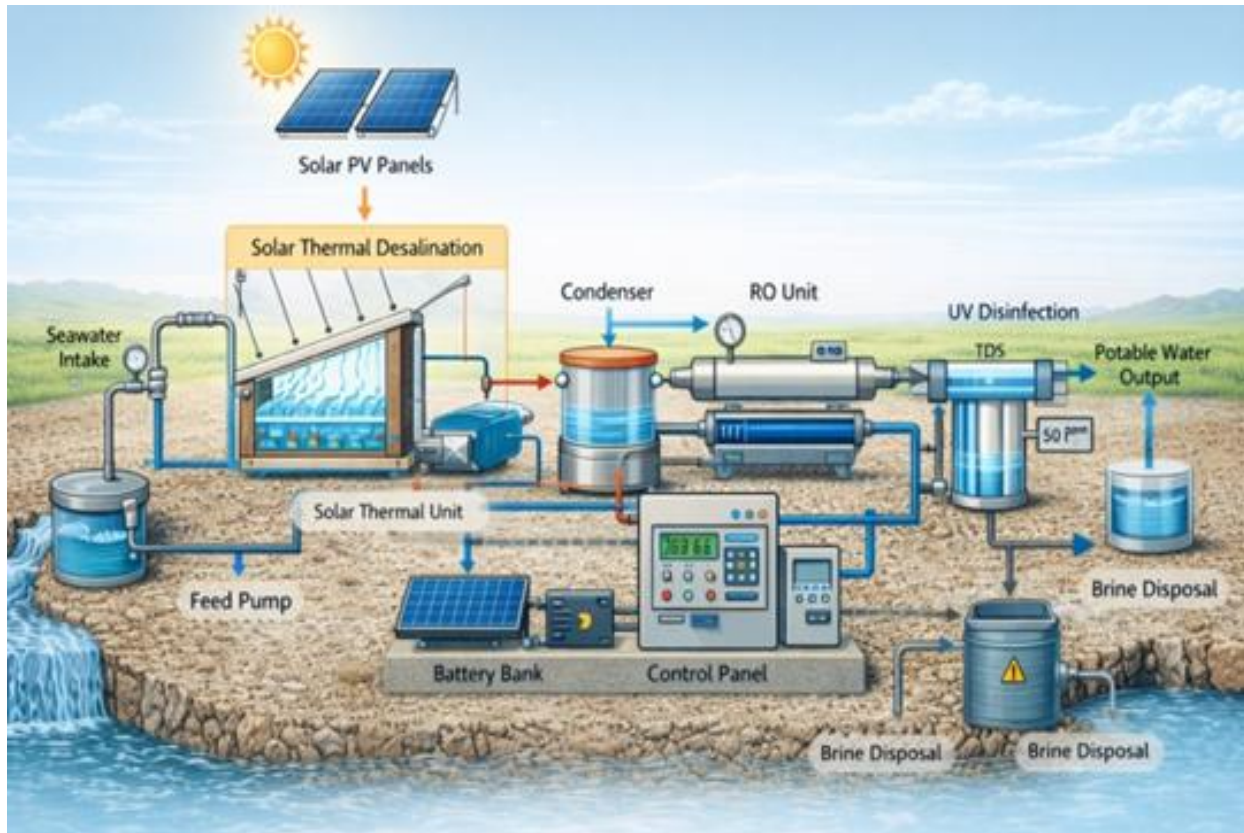


Fig.3: Proposed Experimental Set-up

4.1 Components

1. Seawater Intake and Pre-Treatment Unit

- Seawater is first collected and filtered to remove suspended solids, debris, and large impurities using a sand filter and micro-filtration cartridge.

2. Solar Thermal Desalination Unit

- Thermal distillation is achieved using solar collectors (flat plate or evacuated tube) to heat seawater, generating water vapor.
- The vapor is condensed in a condenser to produce low-salinity distillate.

3. High-Pressure Pump

- Pumps the pretreated/distilled water through the RO membrane, providing the required pressure for salt rejection.

4. Reverse Osmosis (RO) Unit

- Removes dissolved salts and impurities from the feed water.
- Produces RO permeate (freshwater) and concentrated brine.

5. UV Disinfection Unit

- Ensures microbiological safety by inactivating bacteria and viruses in the final permeate water.

6. Solar PV and Control Unit

- Powers pumps, valves, and monitoring instruments using energy from solar photovoltaic panels.

7. Instrumentation and Sensors

- Flow meters, pressure sensors, thermocouples, and TDS meters for real-time monitoring.
- Data logger for recording temperature, pressure, flow rate, and water quality parameters.

4.2 Operation Procedure

1. Seawater enters the pre-treatment unit and is filtered.
2. Pre-treated water is heated in the solar thermal unit; vapor is condensed to produce low-salinity distillate.
3. Distillate is pumped through the RO membrane for further desalination.
4. RO permeate is passed through the UV disinfection chamber before being collected as potable water.
5. Brine from both thermal and RO units is collected for safe disposal.
6. All system parameters are continuously monitored and recorded for performance analysis.

V CONCLUSION

This study successfully demonstrated the feasibility of a portable solar-assisted hybrid desalination system combining thermal, reverse osmosis (RO), and ultraviolet (UV) disinfection for decentralized potable water production. The system addresses critical freshwater scarcity challenges in coastal, island, and remote areas, providing a compact, modular, and off-grid solution. Experimental evaluation showed satisfactory permeate flow rates, high salt rejection meeting potable water standards, and effective microbial inactivation through UV treatment. Stage-wise development offered insights into energy management, RO membrane maintenance, UV lamp operation, and overall system integration, highlighting the benefits of modular design and automation. The research also identified opportunities for further improvement, including MPPT-based solar optimization for enhanced energy efficiency, advanced anti-fouling RO membranes to reduce maintenance, UV-LED technology for long-lasting disinfection, and IoT-enabled monitoring for remote diagnostics. Overall, this work establishes a sustainable, environmentally friendly framework for portable hybrid desalination systems suitable for small communities, emergency relief, and remote applications.

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Assessment of Water Quality and Ecological Risk in the Phalgu River, Gaya (Bihar, India)

Gaurav Kumar

B.I.T. Mesra, Ranchi, Jharkhand-835215

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Abstract- The Phalgu River in Gaya, Bihar is an important seasonal river system that supports domestic, cultural, and agricultural activities. In recent years, anthropogenic pressures such as sand mining, urban discharge, and agricultural runoff have significantly influenced river water quality. This study evaluates the physicochemical characteristics of the Phalgu River and assesses ecological risk using indices such as Water Quality Index (WQI), Heavy Metal Pollution Index (HPI), and Ecological Risk Index (ERI). Water samples were collected from multiple sampling stations during pre-monsoon and post-monsoon seasons. Parameters including pH, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, total dissolved solids, electrical conductivity, and selected heavy metals were analyzed using standard laboratory procedures. Results indicate noticeable spatial and seasonal variations in water quality. Mining-affected zones exhibited higher turbidity, conductivity, and metal concentration compared with relatively undisturbed sites. The findings highlight the growing influence of anthropogenic activities on river health and emphasize the need for sustainable river management strategies.

Index-Terms- Phalgu River; Water Quality Index; Heavy Metals; Ecological Risk Index; Sand Mining; Bihar

1. INTRODUCTION

River ecosystems play a crucial role in maintaining environmental balance and supporting human livelihoods. However, increasing population pressure and uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources have led to a gradual deterioration of river water quality in many parts of the world. Activities such as sand mining, urban wastewater discharge, and agricultural runoff introduce pollutants that alter the natural physicochemical characteristics of river systems.

In India, several rivers flowing through urban and semi-urban areas experience significant environmental stress due to unregulated resource extraction and waste disposal. The Phalgu River

in Gaya district of Bihar represents one such system where seasonal flow and intense human activity contribute to fluctuating water quality conditions.

Assessment of river water quality often involves the analysis of physicochemical parameters combined with environmental indices such as the Water Quality Index (WQI), Heavy Metal Pollution Index (HPI), and Ecological Risk Index (ERI). These indices provide a simplified yet comprehensive understanding of environmental conditions by integrating multiple parameters into a single value.

The present study aims to evaluate the water quality status of the Phalgu River and to identify the potential ecological risks associated with anthropogenic disturbances, particularly sand mining and urban influences.

II. STUDY AREA

The Phalgu River flows through the Gaya district of Bihar and holds both hydrological and cultural importance. The river originates from the confluence of the Lilajan and Mohana rivers near Bodh Gaya and flows northward through the plains before joining the Punpun River.

The basin experiences a subtropical monsoon climate characterized by hot summers, moderate winters, and a concentrated rainfall period during the southwest monsoon. Seasonal variability strongly influences river discharge and sediment transport.

Several stretches of the river are subjected to intensive sand extraction to meet construction demands. In addition, domestic wastewater discharge and agricultural activities along the riverbanks contribute to changes in water quality. These factors make the Phalgu River an important site for evaluating the environmental impact of human activities on river ecosystems.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Water samples were collected from selected sampling stations along the upstream, middle, and downstream reaches of the Phalgu River. Sampling was conducted during both pre-monsoon and post-monsoon seasons to capture seasonal variability.

Clean polyethylene bottles were used for sample collection following standard procedures. Prior to sampling, bottles were washed thoroughly with distilled water and rinsed with dilute nitric acid. Samples were preserved at low temperature and transported to the laboratory for analysis.

Physicochemical parameters including pH, turbidity, dissolved oxygen (DO), total dissolved solids (TDS), electrical conductivity (EC), and biological oxygen demand (BOD) were measured using standard analytical techniques. Heavy metal concentrations were determined using atomic absorption spectrophotometry.

Water Quality Index (WQI) was calculated to evaluate overall water quality. The Heavy Metal Pollution Index (HPI) was used to assess the impact of metal contamination, while the Ecological Risk Index (ERI) helped estimate the ecological threat posed by these pollutants.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of physicochemical parameters revealed significant spatial variations in water quality across the sampling locations. Upstream sites generally exhibited relatively better water quality compared with middle and downstream locations where human activities are more intense.

Elevated turbidity and total dissolved solids were observed near sand mining zones, indicating increased sediment disturbance and suspended particles. Electrical conductivity also showed higher values in areas receiving urban runoff and domestic wastewater.

Seasonal comparison showed that post-monsoon samples typically had slightly improved dissolved oxygen levels due to increased water flow and dilution effects. However, certain heavy metals exhibited higher concentrations in some sites, suggesting localized contamination sources. The Water Quality Index values indicated that several stretches of the river fall within the moderate to poor water quality category. Similarly, the Heavy Metal Pollution Index suggested moderate pollution levels in mining-affected regions. Ecological Risk Index results pointed to potential ecological stress in areas where metal accumulation and sediment disturbance were high.

These findings demonstrate that anthropogenic activities, particularly sand extraction and urban discharge, are influencing the ecological condition of the Phalgu River. Effective management practices are therefore essential to prevent further degradation.

V. CONCLUSION

The present study highlights the influence of human activities on the water quality and ecological condition of the Phalgu River in Gaya, Bihar. Physicochemical analysis combined with environmental indices revealed moderate levels of water quality deterioration in several sections of the river.

Sand mining, domestic waste discharge, and agricultural runoff were identified as key factors contributing to water quality variation. Seasonal differences also play a role in determining the distribution and concentration of pollutants.

Continuous monitoring and implementation of sustainable river management policies are necessary to maintain ecological balance and ensure safe water resources for local communities. Strengthening environmental regulations related to sand mining and waste disposal could significantly improve the health of the river ecosystem.

A Study of Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction Among Secondary School Teachers of Jammu District

Pradman Krishan Dhar

Bhargava College Of Education Affiliated to University of Jammu, India

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Abstract: The present investigation explored the influence of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Job Satisfaction among secondary school teachers and examined whether sex moderates this relationship. The study employed a 2×2 factorial design with Emotional Intelligence (high vs. low) and Sex (male vs. female) as independent variables and Job Satisfaction as the dependent variable. A stratified random sample of 150 teachers was drawn from government secondary schools in Jammu city. Standardized instruments were used to assess Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction. Two-Way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant main effect of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction, $F(1,76) = 47.83, p < .01, \eta^2 = .28$, indicating a large effect size. The main effect of Sex was not significant, $F(1,76) = 0.79, p > .05, \eta^2 = .004$. However, the interaction between Emotional Intelligence and Sex was significant, $F(1,76) = 46.89, p < .01, \eta^2 = .27$. The findings demonstrate that emotional competencies substantially contribute to teachers' professional satisfaction. The study highlights the need for systematic emotional intelligence training within teacher education frameworks.

Index-Terms: Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, Secondary Education, Effect Size, Two-Way ANOVA

I. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary educational systems increasingly recognize that effective teaching extends beyond subject mastery and pedagogical skills. Emotional competence has emerged as a critical factor influencing teacher effectiveness, occupational well-being, and institutional climate. Emotional Intelligence (EI), originally conceptualized by John D. Mayer and Peter Salovey and later expanded in applied contexts by Daniel Goleman, refers to the capacity to accurately perceive emotions, integrate emotional information into thinking, regulate affect, and manage interpersonal relationships effectively.

Teaching as a profession demands sustained emotional engagement. Teachers continuously navigate classroom diversity, institutional expectations, administrative responsibilities, and student behavioral dynamics. In such environments, emotional regulation and adaptive coping may significantly determine the level of job satisfaction experienced.

Job Satisfaction reflects an individual's evaluative judgment about their professional role. It encompasses emotional responses to work conditions, recognition, professional autonomy, collegial support, and career advancement opportunities. Dissatisfaction among teachers can negatively impact instructional quality, retention rates, and student outcomes.

Despite the growing literature on emotional intelligence in corporate and leadership settings, empirical investigations examining EI as a predictor of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in the Indian context remain limited. The present study addresses this gap.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study is grounded in the premise that emotional intelligence enhances:

- Emotional self-regulation
- Stress tolerance
- Interpersonal sensitivity
- Adaptive problem-solving

These competencies may foster positive professional experiences, thereby increasing job satisfaction. Additionally, sex-based socialization patterns may influence emotional expression and coping strategies, warranting examination of interaction effects.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Empirical research suggests that emotional intelligence significantly contributes to professional effectiveness, stress management, and interpersonal functioning. Studies have reported positive associations between emotional intelligence and work-related outcomes such as leadership, commitment, and job satisfaction.

Research on teacher job satisfaction indicates that factors such as institutional climate, workload, demographic characteristics, and psychological well-being influence satisfaction levels. However, limited research has explored the interaction between emotional intelligence and sex in predicting job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in the Indian context.

IV. OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction.
2. To analyze sex differences in Job Satisfaction.

3. To investigate the interaction between Emotional Intelligence and Sex.

V.HYPOTHESES

- a. Emotional Intelligence does not significantly influence Job Satisfaction.
- b. There is no significant sex difference in Job Satisfaction.
- c. There is no interaction between Emotional Intelligence and Sex in influencing Job Satisfaction.

VI.METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A 2x2 factorial design was adopted:

- Factor A: Emotional Intelligence (High vs. Low)
- Factor B: Sex (Male vs. Female)
- Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Sample

The sample consisted of 150 secondary school teachers selected through stratified random sampling. For factorial analysis, 80 participants (20 per cell) were categorized based on Emotional Intelligence scores.

Tools

- Emotional Intelligence Scale (Hyde, Pethe & Dhar)
Reliability = 0.88
- Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (Kumar & Mutha)

Statistical Analysis

Two-Way ANOVA was applied. Effect size (Eta Squared, η^2) was calculated using:
 $\eta^2 = \frac{SS_{\text{effect}}}{SS_{\text{total}}}$

Where Total SS = 4125.76

VII.RESULTS

ANOVA Summary with Effect Sizes

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2	Interpretation
Emotional Intelligence	1150.38	1	1150.38	47.83	<.01	.28	Large Effect
Sex	19.01	1	19.01	0.79	>.05	.004	Negligible
EI x Sex	1127.92	1	1127.92	46.89	<.01	.27	Large Effect
Within	1828.45	76	24.05				

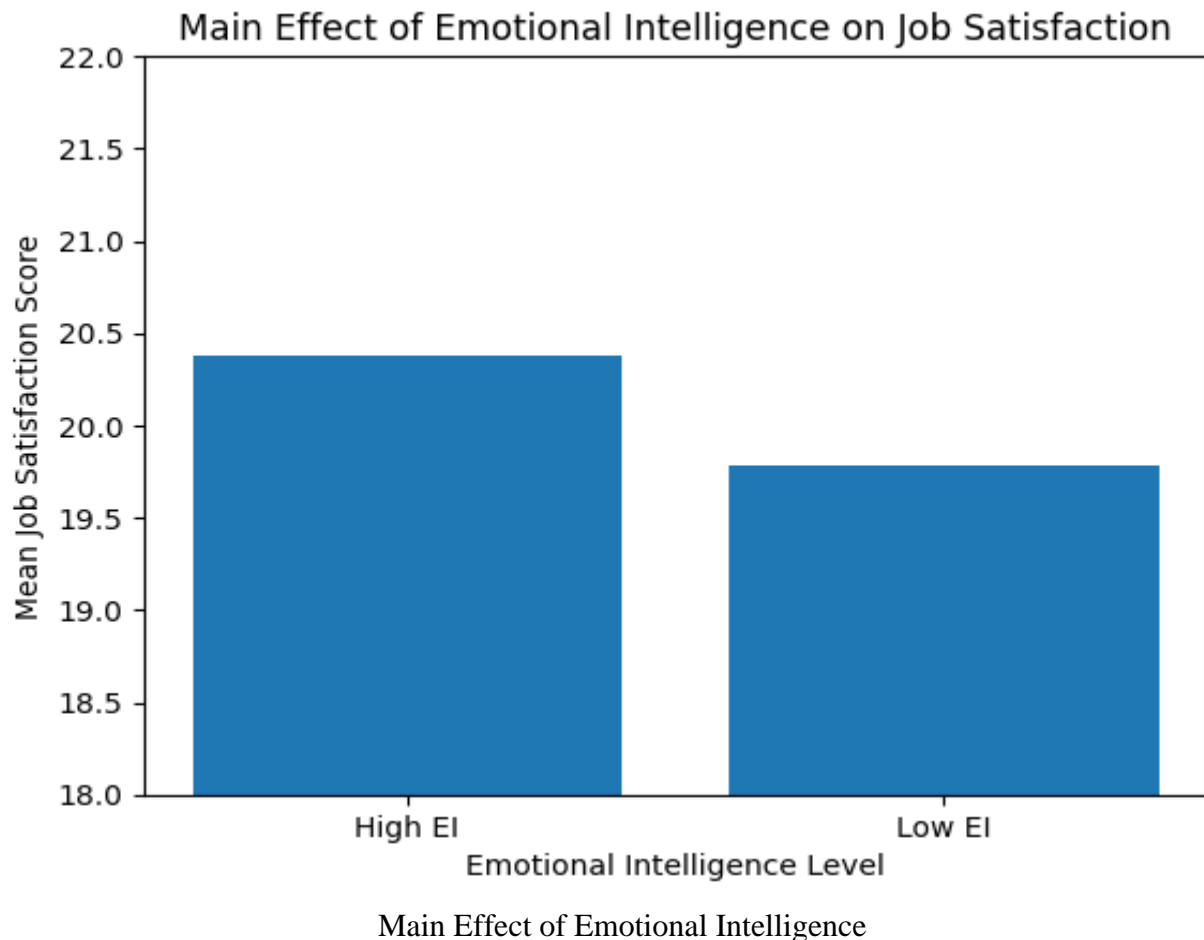
Interpretation of Effect Size

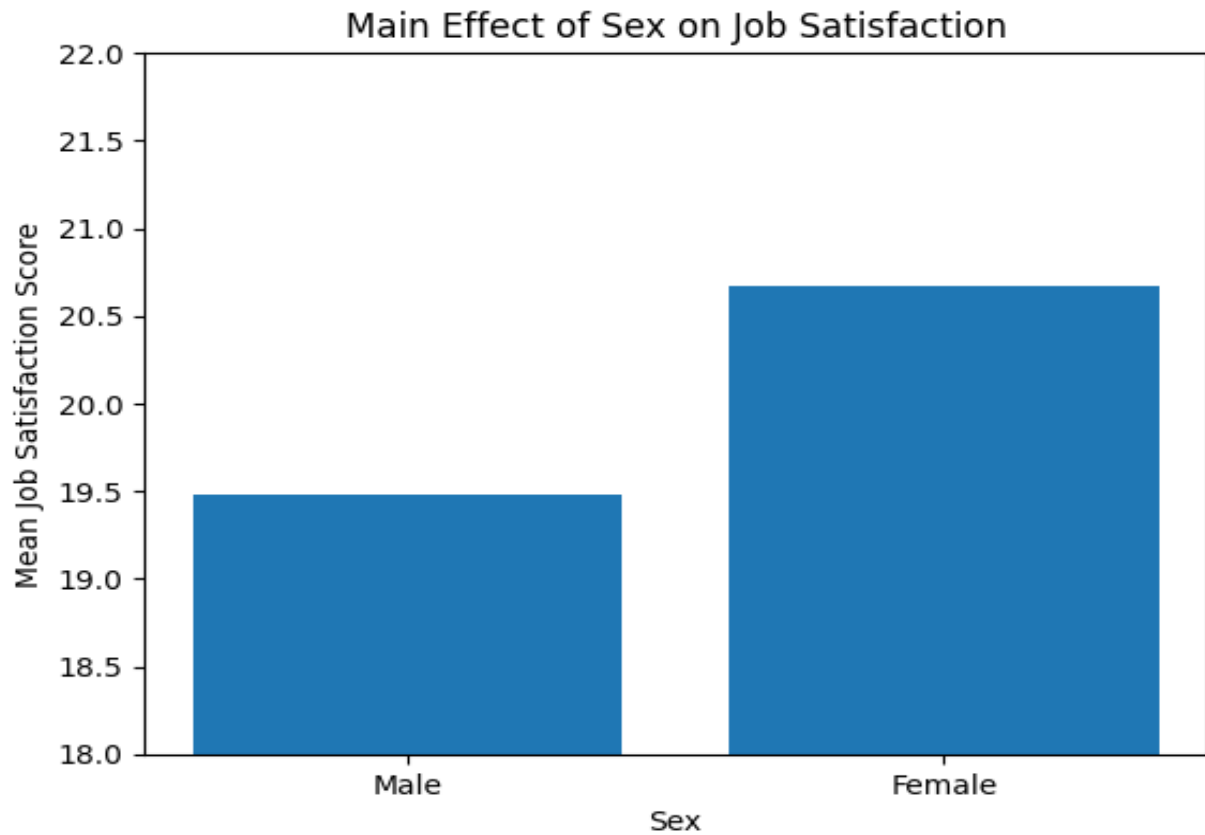
- Emotional Intelligence ($\eta^2 = .28$)
Approximately 28% of the variance in Job Satisfaction is explained by Emotional Intelligence — a large practical effect.
- Sex ($\eta^2 = .004$)
Less than 1% variance explained — practically insignificant.
- Interaction ($\eta^2 = .27$)
A substantial proportion (27%) of variance is jointly explained by EI and Sex.

According to Cohen’s (1988) guidelines:

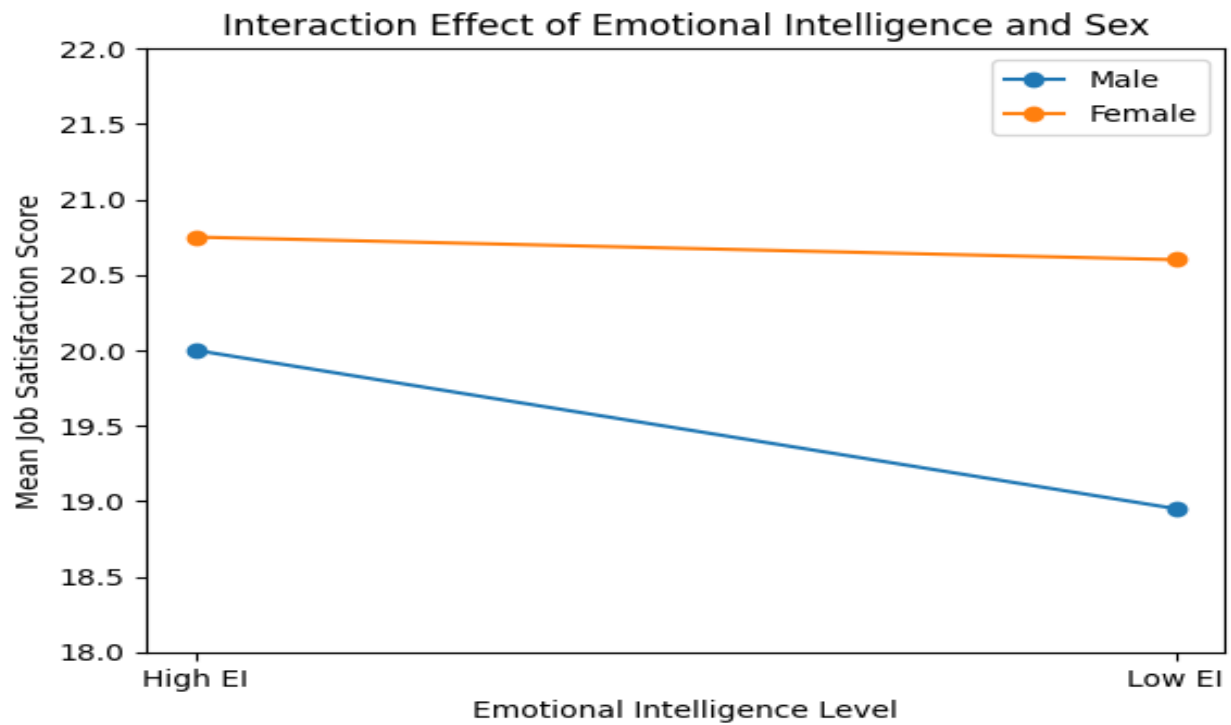
- .01 = Small
- .06 = Medium
- .14 = Large

Thus, both EI and the interaction demonstrate strong practical significance.





Main Effect of Sex



Interaction Effect (EI × Sex) – Line

VIII. DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that Emotional Intelligence is not merely statistically significant but also practically powerful in predicting Job Satisfaction among teachers. Teachers possessing higher emotional competence are likely to experience:

- Better stress management
- Improved collegial relationships
- Greater professional resilience
- Enhanced classroom adaptability

The non-significant main effect of sex suggests that gender alone does not determine job satisfaction. However, the significant interaction implies that emotional intelligence may function differently across male and female teachers, possibly due to variations in emotional socialization patterns.

These results reinforce the theoretical argument that emotional regulation and adaptive coping mechanisms are central to professional well-being in emotionally intensive occupations such as teaching.

IX. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Emotional Intelligence modules should be embedded within teacher education curricula.
- In-service training programs should incorporate emotional skills enhancement.
- Recruitment policies may include emotional competence assessment.
- Institutional climate initiatives should promote emotional well-being.

X. CONCLUSION

The study establishes Emotional Intelligence as a strong and meaningful predictor of Job Satisfaction among secondary school teachers. The large effect sizes underscore the practical relevance of emotional competence in educational settings. Enhancing emotional intelligence may significantly improve teacher morale, productivity, and institutional effectiveness.

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Report On Digital Disruption and Circulation Patterns of Times of India

¹Rahul Dadhich, ²Heena Amit Chaugule, ³Asawari Gawand, ⁴Samiksha Vijay
Karkera, ⁵Atharva Arvind Maurya

¹*Asst Professor*, ^{2,3,4,5}*Student*

^{1,2,3,4,5}*BAMMC, Pillai University*

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Abstract- The evolution of the digital era has been the most significant transformation the newspaper industry has undergone over the past two decades. Printed newspapers were once the most popular means for obtaining news and current events. People relied on their local daily newspaper to get up to date information about politics, local businesses, sports, entertainment, and social issues. But with the advances of the internet, smart phones, and social media, the way people receive news has drastically changed and continues to change into the future. Instead of waiting for the delivery of a printed newspaper each day, people can now find out about all the news instantly through the use of internet web sites, mobile phone apps, and via social media sites. This transformation from traditional print media to digital platforms is commonly referred to as digital disruption.

This research paper examines how The Times of India - one of India's oldest and largest English language newspapers has changed throughout its history. Traditionally, the number of daily copies that newspapers such as The Times of India sell determines their circulation. Higher circulation equates to greater popularity among readers, leading to more advertising revenue for the newspaper. The growth of digital media has changed the way newspapers measure their circulation; newspapers are now tracking their readership using a combination of traditional methods and new digital means (i.e., website visitors, app users, etc.) in addition to print copies.

The goal of this research study was to gain an understanding of how digital disruption has affected circulation trends of The Times of India and how this newspaper has adjusted to the transformation of the way people consume media. The study is focused on the transition from print to digital newspapers, and how The Times of India has built its digital footprint through a variety of online news sources, mobile applications, e-papers and social networks. Digital media have allowed The Times of India to quickly provide its readers with the latest news and expand its audience base beyond the borders of India, to readers around the world. The results of this research show that the newspaper industry has changed nearly completely

from a business model based upon print advertising and subscription to one that is primarily based on digital advertising, branded content, and mostly online reading. The research results show that it is essential that all media companies develop an overall revenue strategy that incorporates all of these revenue sources so that they are financially viable in today's very competitive marketplace.

The data used in this research are qualitative in nature and use multiple secondary data sources (academic literature, media articles, prior research on digital journalism); therefore, the conclusions are drawn from a number of sources. The results of this focus group reveal that while print newspapers remain a reputable and trusted source of information, publishers must now find ways to integrate digital technology into the delivery of newspapers to reach a large audience.

One example of a Legacy Media Company that has adopted to the new technologies is The Times of India and how it is changing its business practices in response to the current environment."

***Index-Terms:* Digital Transformation, Print Media, Digital Advertising, Branded Content, Online News Consumption, Media Business Model, Revenue Strategies, Digital Journalism, Media Industry Adaptation, The Times of India.**

I.INTRODUCTION

In many cases, newspapers have been very significant in forming and shaping the public's point of view, providing information and educating and raising awareness among the general population over the course of the past several decades. Printed newspapers were among the first and foremost reliable and widely read sources of news prior to the emergence of digital technology. People had a great deal of faith in the printed news media for obtaining up-to-date information regarding what was taking place in their community, in their country and elsewhere around the world. For many families, reading the morning newspaper, as part of their everyday routine, was connected with a feeling of being informed. The newspapers produced in this manner were also considered a credible source of information, as well as a credible source of clarification and support for public discussion about public, local and legal matters.

India's print media literacy has a long history beginning with the colonial period. Among the various publications that have shaped journalism in the country, The Times of India is perhaps the most prominent of all. The Times of India first published in 1838, it is one of the oldest daily general interests (English-language) newspapers in the country, having established a firm reputation over the years. In the past, the Times of India distributed the majority of its papers in the traditional broadsheet format using newsprint through a network of vendors located within each of India's major urban centers and substantial portions of its metropolitan regions. Publishers typically evaluate newspapers on a number of metrics, the most common of which is circulation, or the total number of hard copies of the publication sold by its publisher (publisher circulation).

In addition to indicating how popular and successful the publication is, the total number of copies a publisher sells each day (circulation) will also attract those organizations who are interested in advertising to large numbers of people.

The emergence of digital technology throughout the 21st century has radically changed how the media operates. The Internet, cell phones (smartphones included), and various types of social media sites have drastically changed how we consume and receive news on a daily basis. The immediacy afforded via online sites, apps on your mobile device, and feeds on social media have all contributed to more individuals preferring to read their news online; rather than waiting for physical delivery via the postal service. As a result of this change in consumer habits, many countries around the world now face challenges and opportunities for traditional print newspaper companies.

Digital disruption (or disruptions in journalism) refers to the transformation of traditional formats and delivery methods for providing information via the use of new digital technologies.

As it pertains to newspapers and how they relate to journalism, as digital disruption occurs, newspapers must change the way they distribute and engage their audiences and generate revenue from their content; consequently, many newspapers have increased their reliance upon digital platforms to maintain competitiveness and relevance in this evolving epoch of media. A prime illustration of how longstanding media sources, like *The Times of India*, are transitioning to match the rapidly changing world of technology is that they have always had only one outlet — providing an all-news manual in print form. Therefore, they have created additional means for spreading information, such as a website, mobile app, electronic edition, and presence on social media; each representing a way for *The Times of India* to communicate with readers quickly, connect to new and potentially vast numbers of consumers through their news coverage and interact directly with their readership base through topic-based comment sections and by sharing other items via social networking platforms.

This transition from print to digital and user-generated content has shifted and redefined current practices associated with journalism and circulation. Until recently, journalists primarily measured a paper's total reach by counting how many copies were physically sold; now that they produce multiple formats of their publication, online presence dramatically affects how they measure their overall reach. Increased use of the Internet, through website visits, user clicks, visitation of a mobile application, and participation on social media, has created another way for newspapers to measure their circulation and audience reach. Because of this change, the digital method of delivering news is now a fundamental aspect of how newspapers connect with their users.

Over the last several years, digital disruption has affected newspapers in a major way. The way the newspaper industry has made its money has been transformed forever. For most of the history of newspapers, print advertising and subscription readership have generated the majority of revenue for the industry.

Due to the rapid growth of digital media, the sources of revenue for newspapers have been gradually shifting away from traditional methods for revenue generation. Many newspapers are now placing more emphasis on alternative revenue-generating options, including digital advertising, web-based promotions, and sponsored content, to supplement traditional forms of

revenue generation.

Due to the evolution of the current media environment, a growing number of newspaper companies are taking advantage of new technologies and increasing their distribution platforms in order to increase their overall audience base. Newspapers will also continue their commitment to high-quality journalism and trustworthy news reporting while utilizing these methods as an essential source of financial support in the quickly evolving media marketplace.

The goal of this study is to find out and document what is happening with the Times of India (TOI) while it changes from a traditional large format newspaper to a much more modern and digital source of news. Specifically, this study will track the digital disruption happening to the TOI, and its effect on TOI's circulation pattern, TOI's readership trends and TOI's overall media strategy. This research/case study will also provide insight into the larger trends occurring globally, in the industry.

The introductory portion of this research will highlight how technology has changed both journalism and how people consume media, and that the TOI case study will illustrate how successfully printed newspapers have moved to digital technology and continue to reach their audience for distributing news and engaging citizens.

Transformation from Broadsheet to Browser

Since the early 21st century, the newspaper business has changed dramatically due to advances in technology throughout the digital era. Historically, almost all newspapers were printed on large sheets of paper called "broadsheets," delivered to subscribers' homes every day. Many people read the printed version of their local newspaper as part of their routine; it was their principal source for credible and accurate news reporting. Until recently, when the internet became widely available and fast enough to be a serious contender for news gathering, newspapers provided readers with detailed coverage of things like national and global politics, business news, sports news, and entertainment news. Newspapers have traditionally determined their sales/equipment by calculating how many copies of each day's edition were sold.

In a world that has seen a rapid increase in internet traffic, mobile devices and other types of digital media, news consumers are dramatically changing how they receive their daily news. In addition, consumers have transitioned away from reading the traditional printed version of a daily newspaper to largely reading their news through different types of websites (including social media), mobile applications (mobile apps) and other digital news platforms. This transition from print-only forms of newspapers to digital news platforms is known as a transition from broadsheets (traditional printed newspapers) to browsers (online media).

As a result of the growing need for newspapers to adapt to these types of changes, the majority of newspapers around the world have created versions of their product for digital consumption. For instance, The Times of India has developed a stellar digital footprint through their own website, e-paper version and mobile applications. In addition, readers today are able to access the news at any time and from any location on a smartphone or computer using the different digital versions of a newspaper. Unlike only being able to access a copy of the traditional print daily edition of a

newspaper once per day, the digital versions of daily newspapers allow for immediate access to content as it is generated by the newsrooms of the newspapers.

The increase in the use of multimedia content plays a significant role in the transformation of the news industry. News can now include videos, photographs, audio recordings and could be delivered through interactive graphics, in addition to the traditional printed text. This multimedia approach makes delivering news much more interesting and easier for readers. Multimedia also attracts a younger reader who prefers using digital devices to access their news. Readers can also share news content through social media, extending the newspaper's audience and reach.

For many individuals in publishing, this transformation is a positive one, yet at the same time offers many problems to the traditional print media. Losing readers of the printed newspaper has led to a significant decrease in revenue received from printed advertisements and newspaper subscriptions, resulting in a lot of newspapers re-directing their efforts towards digital advertising, online subscriptions, and various forms of online marketing practices to remain viable in a fast-changing marketplace.

As evidenced by The Times of India, while printed newspapers will continue to exist with an established readership base, digital media's role as a component of a comprehensive approach to the development of journalists is now firmly established in the newly emerging landscape of the newspaper industry.



IMAGE 1: ESTABLISHING IDENTITY



IMAGE 2: STRUCTURING CONTENT



IMAGE 3: NAVIGATING THE NARRATIVE



IMAGE 4: VISUALIZING DATA

II.LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Digital Transformation in Print Media

The impact of digital technology on newspapers is an area of great interest for researchers around the world. Historically, newspapers were primarily used to keep up with the latest events; readers would have to wait until after the next day's edition came out before they would have any idea what had happened. The growth of digital technology has significantly altered this traditional model of news dissemination. Nowadays, people receive their news instantly through various forms of media such as websites and mobile applications, as well as through social networking sites.

Research examining how the media has been transformed also indicates that newspapers had to transition into using digital platforms if they wanted to remain competitive in today's media landscape. Digitization of journalism provides real-time updates on developing stories, as well as broader distribution than was possible with printed editions, and allows for more direct interaction between journalists and readers. Today, rather than publishing only one print edition each morning, many newspapers will publish articles online consistently throughout the day. As a result, many traditional print newspaper companies are now making larger investments in developing their digital technology capabilities and creating more multimedia content for their websites.

2.2 Changing Circulation Patterns in Newspapers

Researchers have noted that the way we view newspaper circulation has changed during the Digital Age. In the past, circulation was simply determined by counting the daily number of printed copies sold. Higher circulation meant that there were higher numbers of people reading the newspaper and advertisers would feel more confident about placing their advertisements in the newspaper.

Now, in an age dominated by the internet, newspapers have a much broader way in which to determine their reach through online measures such as site traffic, app downloads, online subscriptions and social media activity. As such, a newspaper can reach millions of readers online, but for example a newspaper printed circulation might not be growing at the same level. Different studies show that digital readership continues to increase rapidly, especially among younger people who prefer to read news on their mobile phone or laptop devices.

2.3 Digital Journalism and Audience Engagement

Many researchers also study how the advent of digital journalism has altered the interaction between print newspaper publications and their readers. Prior to Digital Media, there was mostly a one-sided interaction between print newspapers and their consumers; that is, after journalists published content that they had written and fact-checked, readers would read said content and, for the most part, not respond for an extended period of time - if they even chose to respond at all.

With the growth of Digital Journalism, the relationship between print newspapers and their consumers has improved significantly. Readers can now comment on the articles they read online,

share the articles they enjoy with their friends via social media, and become actively involved in discussions about the articles they read. Through this improved interaction, print newspapers can better serve the needs of their consumers by providing more of the types of topics in their publication that will generate the most interest among their consumer base. Digital Journalism also provides print newspapers with the ability to incorporate multi-media elements (like videos, photographs, and infographics) into their articles thus making those articles much more interesting to consume and easier to comprehend. Digital Journalism is a fundamental component of current news communications worldwide.

2.4 Media Business Models in the Digital Age

The transition of newspapers from print to digital has also changed the way they make money. Previously, most revenue came from print ads and subscriptions. Classified ads (advertising items for sale), job advertisements, and property listing ads made up a bulk of their income.

These types of advertisements have now mostly moved to internet-based platforms, such as job websites, real estate listing websites, and Facebook, which have lessened the significance of newspaper classified ad revenue to newspapers. They have responded to this change by looking for new means to generate revenue (digital advertisements, sponsored content, digital subscriptions, and brand partnerships) through the modern media business model.

2.5 Role of Online Platforms in News Distribution

News dissemination has increasingly become reliant on online platforms. Nowadays, newspapers can access and communicate with their audience through websites, mobile applications, and various other social platforms. The nature of online platforms offers news organizations the capability to immediately publish and distribute news updates to many individuals around the world.

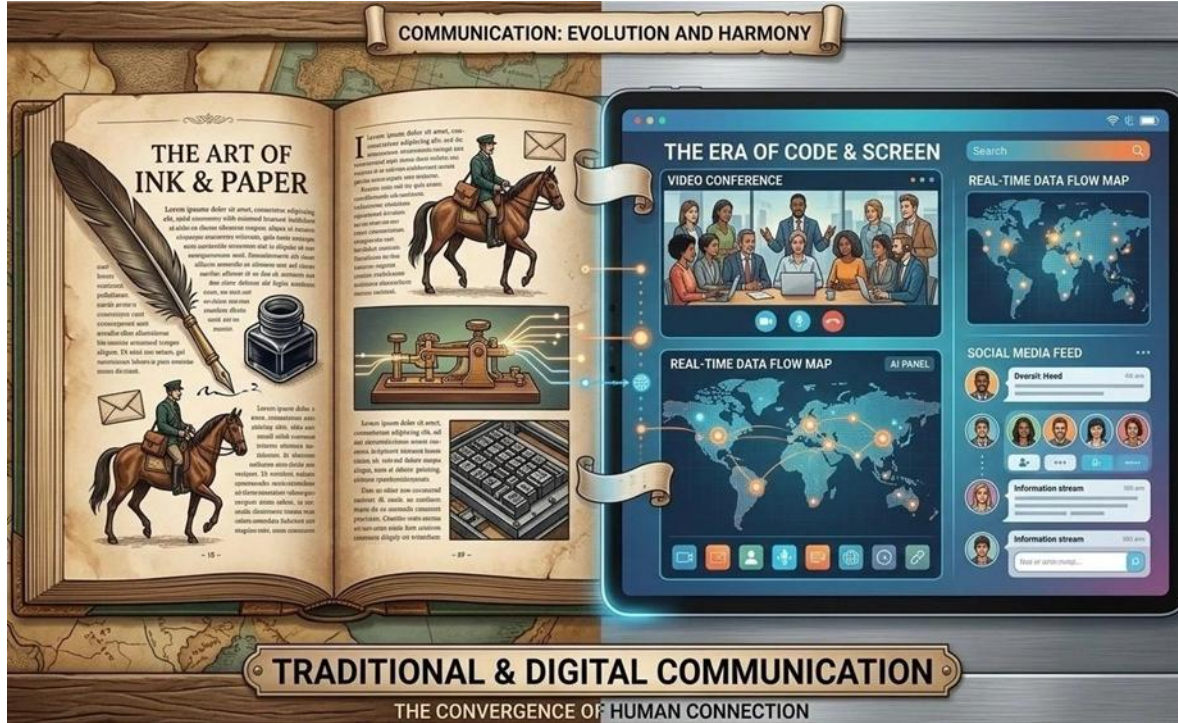
Social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter are frequently used to distribute a news article and direct readers to the main website of the newspaper. As a result of this process many newspapers now have a much larger global distribution since individuals in countries around the world can view news stories online without the requirement of receiving a physical copy of the paper.

2.6 Challenges of Digital News Media

Researchers report that digital media has created many opportunities for newspapers but also presents new challenges. One specific challenge is that misinformation or "fake news" can spread rapidly through online media due to the fast-paced nature of the Internet. Along with this issue is the high level of competition between established newspapers and digital-only news organizations, where many of the digital-only sites have significantly lower operating costs and produce content more quickly. Additionally, there is increasing pressure on traditional newspapers to produce their

content at a faster pace, while at the same time maintaining the high standards for accuracy and credibility that have been established by their predecessors.

Despite this growing competition and the problem of fake news, there have been many studies conducted that indicate that newspapers that successfully blend digital innovation with traditional values of journalism will continue to be accepted as relevant, credible sources of news and information in our society.



III.CONCLUSION

Historically, the primary measure of a newspaper's success was based on how many copies were distributed on a daily basis. This metric referred to as `circulation' would indicate the total readership for each paper (and therefore would help entice advertisers). Circulation had been the primary measurement of a newspaper's popularity and reach for decades; however, with the increase of digital media and online options to obtain news, measuring circulation has undergone a fundamental shift.

In addition to printing and distributing printed copies of newspapers, most news organizations now publish their newspapers online via their websites, mobile app (apps) and/or social media channels. As a result of these changes, circulation now includes many different types of measurements in the digital age. Instead of just counting how many total printed newspapers were sold (circulation), media companies also use digital metrics to analyze how users are engaging with the digital delivery of their news (e.g., impressions, page views, unique visitors, clicks, etc.).

Website traffic is one of the major metrics of digital circulation. It represents the number of people who visit a newspaper's website to view news articles. Generally speaking, a greater number of

visitors indicates that a news organization has access to a larger pool of customers than if they had fewer visitors. A second metric that is very important to media companies is the number of unique users. This statistic allows media companies to assess how many different individuals access their content, rather than simply counting how many times an individual returns to access a given piece of content.

Digital news consumption has increased via mobile applications as well. The number of mobile newspaper apps available to users for receiving instant updates from their favorite newspapers provides an additional metric of digital access to news by consumers. Media companies also measure reader engagement with direct article time spent by the reader opening the article for a longer length of time versus a short length of time.

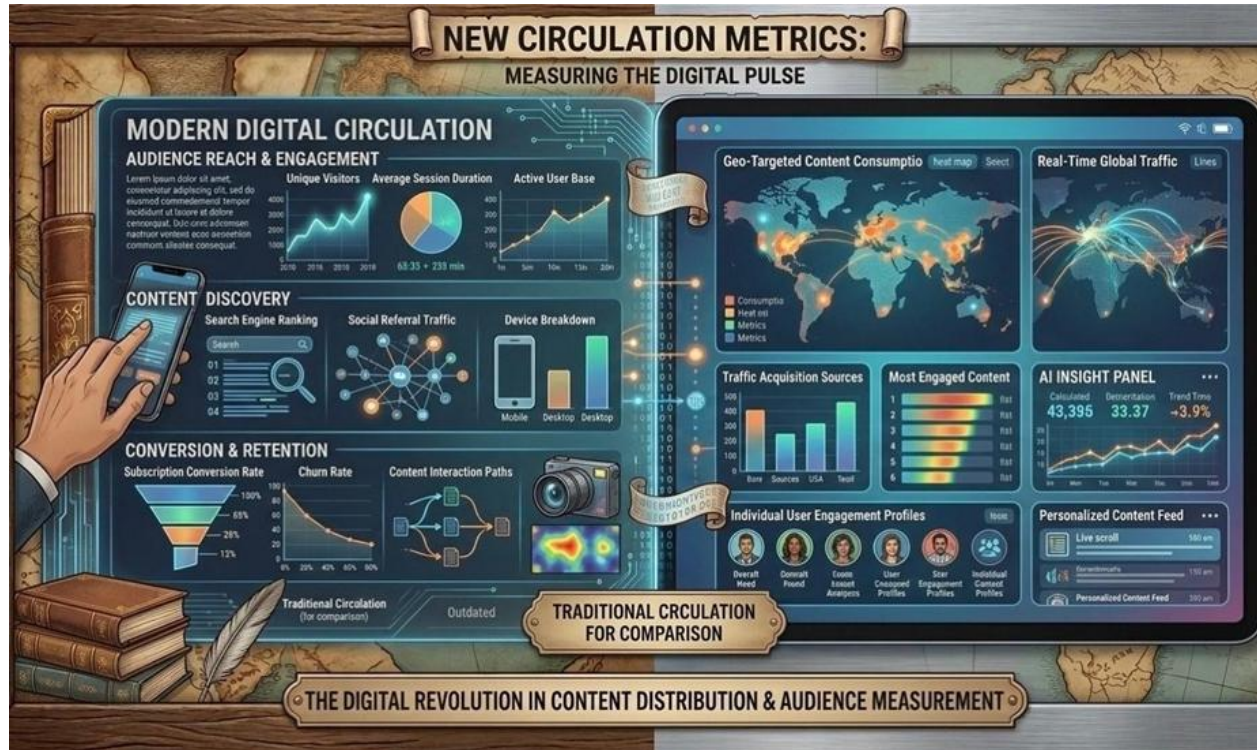
Interacting with social media has now become one of the most important means to assess a person's ability to engage with digital content. When a person interacts with a news site by liking, commenting on, or sharing an article (on social media), this causes the overall reach of the news article to expand and allows it to be connected to more people, and thus connect those people to the article faster than anything else and allows publishers to see what news stories/topics interest their audience so they can create content that is more relevant for those readers.

With digital circulation metrics, there is far more information available, in regard to the level of engagement with a digital publication than has ever been possible to obtain from traditional print publications, allowing digital media companies to have much more access to their readership (as compared to traditional) than they did in the past. Examples include having access to not only the demographics of individual readers but also the topics that they are interested in, their level of engagement with the articles they read (how many times they access the title of an article), etc. With access to such detailed and extensive information, digital media companies can develop improved content strategies based on the desires of their audiences; therefore, Journalism in a digital world has evolved into a system of creating a product whereby the audience determines what to produce. Through their digital channels (website, mobile app and social media), the Times of India (TOI) has hugely expanded the number of people who access its overall content. At least millions have been reached, both in India and around the world. While printed copies of the paper remain significant, TOI uses digital formats to determine total CIRC's and total impact in a similar manner to that of printed copies.

In summary, TOI's digital growth is changing how newspapers assess readership and measure success. Prior to the digital age, newspapers only counted sold printed copies toward their total circulation; however, now that all types of engagement (including online) can be counted toward total CIRC's and total impact across the board, the media industry is in the midst of similar transitions from traditional print media to all forms of digital media.

The transformation of birch-like commercial and publishing mediums into browsable games or applications is representative of the evolution in circulation and audience interactivity, with new metrics – such as unique user hits through click tracking, application download counts, etc. – enabling a better understanding of current reading habits. In summary, it is reasonable to look toward an improved future of journalism by marrying long-held values of reliability among print

publications with advanced technology and electronic mediums. Therefore, those print publications that react effectively and adapt well to the emerging trends will have a much better chance of remaining relevant and performing their role within a constantly evolving media landscape.



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A Study to Assess the Effectiveness of STP on Knowledge Regarding Needle Stick Injuries Among Nursing Students

¹Mr. Ajay Jyotiram Kavar, ²Mr. Hemant Chandrakant Chavan,

³Ms. Akanksha Bhise, ⁴Mrs Sarika Pramod Satpute,

⁵Mrs Ashwini Amol Patil, ⁶Ms Rupali Santaram Watharkar

^{1,4,5} Assistant Professor, ^{2,3} 3rd Year GNM Student, ⁶Clinical Instructor

Hirai Institute of Nursing Education Malwadi, Masur

¹Corresponding Author: Assistant Professor

Dept. of Medical-Surgical Nursing

Hirai Institute of Nursing Education Malwadi, Masur

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Abstract: Background of the study: Needle stick injuries (NSI's) are the injuries that are caused by needles, such as hypodermic needle, blood collection needle, interaction stylets, and needles used to connect parts of intravenous delivery system, NSI's are very common and in many instances unavoidable among healthcare providers when they are delivering patient care. In south India Feb 2019 Around 75% of the NSI's in developing countries are not reported. This study aimed to estimate the knowledge regarding needle stick injury among GNM 2nd year nursing students of Hirai institute of nursing education Malwadi masur.

Objectives of the study:

1. To assess the existing knowledge regarding needle stick injury among nursing student before intervention.
2. To determine the effectiveness of structured teaching program on knowledge regarding needle stick injury among nursing student.
3. To find out association between post-test knowledge regarding needle stick injury among nursing student with all demographic variables.

Methods: Research Approach: Quantitative Research Approach, Research Design: Experimental Group Pretest Post Test Research design, Setting: Hirai Institute of Nursing Education Malwadi, Masur, Karad. Population: 60 nursing students of Hirai Institute of Nursing Education Malwadi, Masur. A. SAMPLE: GNM 2nd year nursing student. SAMPLE

SIZE: 60 nursing students. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE: Purposive Random sampling technique.

I. INTRODUCTION

A needlestick injury is the penetration of the skin by a hypodermic needle or other sharp object that has been in contact with blood, tissue or other body fluids before the exposure. Even though the acute physiological effects of a needlestick injury are generally negligible, these injuries can lead to transmission of blood-borne diseases, placing those exposed at increased risk of infection from disease-causing pathogens, such as the hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). In healthcare and laboratory settings globally, there are over 25 distinct types of blood-borne diseases that can potentially be transmitted through needlestick injuries to workers. In addition to needlestick injuries, transmission of these viruses can also occur as a result of contamination of the mucous membranes, such as those of the eyes, with blood or body fluids, but needlestick injuries make up more than 80% of all percutaneous exposure incidents in the United States. Various other occupations are also at increased risk of needlestick injury, including law enforcement, labours, tattoo artists, food preparers, and agricultural needles 1.

needle stick injuries can be greatly avoided, if the above in mentioned guidelines is strictly adhered to. Needle stick injuries can occur when due to precaution are not taken. In case of needle stick injuries. Prevention of needle stick injuries Health care providers can be risk at risk for needle stick injuries in any health care setting. The most common place for needle stick injuries to occur are in the operational room and patient rooms. Tasks that place the health care provider at risk including recapping needle and mishandling IV lines 2.

needle stick injuries are frequent occurrences in health care setting can lead to serious complication. While the introduction of universal precautions and safety conscious needle design has led to a decrease in needle stick injuries, they still do occur. Needle stick injuries are known to occur frequently in healthcare settings and can be serious. In North America millions of health care workers use needle in their daily work, and hence, design has led to a decline in needle stick injuries, they continue to be reported, albeit on a much smaller scale than in the past. Awareness of needle stick injuries started to develop soon after the identification of HIV in the early 1980s. However, today the major concern after a needlestick injuries is not HIV but hepatitis B or hepatitis C. Guidelines have been established to help healthcare institution manager needle stick injuries and when to initiate post -exposure HIV prophylaxis.3

Increasing recognition of the unique occupational hazard posed by needlestick injuries, as well as the development of efficacious interventions to minimize the largely preventable occupational risk, encouraged legislative regulation in the US, causing a decline in needlestick injuries among healthcare workers 4. The psychological effects of occupational needle stick injuries can include health anxiety about disclosure or transmission to a sexual partner, trauma-related emotions, and depression These effects can cause self-destructive behaviour or functional impairment in

relationships and daily life. This is not mitigated by knowledge about disease transmission or post-exposure prophylaxis. Though some affected people have worsened anxiety during repeated testing, anxiety and other psychological effects typically abate after testing is complete. A minority of people affected by needlestick injuries may have lasting psychological effects, including post-traumatic stress disorder.⁵

After a needlestick injury, certain procedures can minimize the risk of infection. Lab tests of the recipient should be obtained for baseline studies, including HIV, acute hepatitis panel (IgM, HBsAg, HB core IgM, HCV) and for immunized individuals, HB surface antibody. Unless already known, the infectious status of the source needs to be determined. Unless the source is known to be negative for HBV, HCV, and HIV, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) should be initiated, ideally within one hour of the injury.⁶

Background: Needle stick injuries (NSI's) are the injuries that are caused by needles, such as hypodermic needle, blood collection needle, interaction stylets, and needles used to connect parts of intravenous delivery system, NSI's are very common and in many instance unavoidable among healthcare providers when they are delivering patient care. In south India Feb 2019 Around 75% of the NSI's in developing countries are not reported. This study aimed to estimate the knowledge regarding needle stick injury among GNM 2nd year nursing students of Hirai institute of nursing education Malwadi masur.⁷

NEED FOR STUDY: The World Health Organization estimated that in 2000, 66,000 hepatitis B, 16,000 hepatitis C, and 1,000 HIV infections were caused by needlestick injuries.¹

Needle stick injury is defined as any percutaneous injury, penetration of skin resulting from a needle or other sharp object, which has been in contact with blood, tissue, or other body fluids prior to the exposure.²

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that about 600,000–1,000,000 needle stick injuries occur annually.³

An accidental needlestick injury can happen in an instant. These types of injuries, also called “sharps injuries,” happen when a needle or another sharp object punctures your skin. These injuries are most common in medical workplaces, but they happen in other settings, too.

Following best practices after a needlestick injury is incredibly important. Sharps injuries can often heal on their own, but they do require you to follow a post-injury protocol for your protection. That's because these types of injuries can increase your risk of blood-borne infections, including hepatitis B and HIV.

Let's go over what to do right after you've experienced a needle injury, as well as the next steps to prevent further complications.⁴

Infected needlesticks and sharps may transmit infectious diseases, especially blood-borne pathogens (germs like viruses that cause disease). Concerns include the Human immune deficiency virus (HIV), which leads to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), hepatitis B, and hepatitis c.

Incidental punctures by contaminated needles can inject hazardous fluids and pathogens into the body through the skin. There is potential for injection of hazardous drugs, but contact with infectious fluids, especially blood, is by far the greatest concern. Even small amounts of infectious fluid can spread certain diseases effectively.

Sharps can create a cut in the skin which allows contact between blood or fluids.

The risk of infection after exposure to infected blood varies by bloodborne pathogen. It is estimated that the hepatitis B virus has a 6% to 30% chance of causing an infection from a needlestick injury if the person is not vaccinated. In comparison, the risk of HIV transmission is about 0.3% and the risk for hepatitis C is about 1.8%. These are estimates. Regardless of the probability, it is always good practice to eliminate or reduce the risk of infection.

Sharps have transmitted many other diseases involving viruses, bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms to healthcare workers, laboratory researchers, and veterinarian staff.⁵

Accidental needle sticks sustained by hospital personnel account for many hospital-related injuries, but little information is available dealing with risk factors amenable to control. We reviewed 316 reported needle stick injuries--accounting for one third of all work-related accidents--occurring in employees of our hospital over a 47-month period from 1975 to 1979. Housekeeping (127.0 cases per thousand employees annually) and laboratory personnel (104.7 per thousand) experienced the highest incidence of needle-stick injuries, followed by registered nurses (92.6 per thousand), but 60 percent of all injuries occurred in nursing personnel. Physicians rarely reported needle-stick injuries. Most injuries occurred during disposal of used needles (23.7 percent of all injuries), during the administration of parenteral injections or infusion therapy (21.2 percent), drawing blood (16.5 percent), recapping needles after use (12.0 percent), or handling linens or trash containing uncapped needles (16.1 percent). Sixty percent of the personnel who reported a needle puncture injury sought emergency room treatment where management was variable. The total cost of needle puncture injuries in our hospital over a 27-month period of \$6,331. We recommend not recapping used needles and making widely available and promoting use of an efficient needle disposal system. All hospital personnel, including physicians, are urged to report needle-stick injuries to the hospital's Employee Health Service where evaluation and management can be effected most consistently by established protocols.⁶

Hepatitis B carries the greatest risk of transmission, with 10% of exposed workers eventually showing seroconversion and 10% having symptoms⁷

It is difficult to establish correct figures for the risk of exposure or the incidence of needlestick injuries. First of all it is difficult to observe a needlestick injury, either in oneself or in other persons. Glove perforations in surgeons are considered a reasonable proxy that can be measured objectively. Even though glove perforations can be objectively measured, it is still unclear what the relation is between glove perforations and needlestick injuries.⁸

Per 100 person-years, the injury rate in surgical staff was 88.2 (95% CI, 61.3-126.9; 21 studies) for self-reported injuries, 40.0 for perforations (95% CI, 19.2-83.5; 15 studies), and 5.8 for administrative injuries (95% CI, 2.7-12.2; 5 studies). Self-report probably overestimates the real risk and administrative data underestimate the risk considerably. Perforation data are probably the

most valid indicators. Considering that the perforation rates provided here are much lower than the self-reported injuries used to calculate the burden of disease due to sharps injuries by the WHO, these calculations should be revised.⁹

The prevention of needlestick injuries should focus on those health care workers that are most at risk.

The group most at risk are surgeons and surgical staff in the operating room who sustain injuries from suture needles and other sharps used in operations. There are basically three complementary approaches to prevention of these sharps injuries. The first one is the use of tools that have been changed so that they are less likely to lead to a sharps injury such as blunt or taper-point surgery needles and safety engineered scalpels.¹⁰

II. REVIEW LITERATURE

1. Sharma, Rahul; Rasania, SK; Verma, Anita; Singh, Saudan. A study conducted by Rahul Shill, Shivaleela P Upashe², on Nursing students knowledge regarding needle stick injury: Effectiveness of structured teaching plan at College of Nursing Sciences, Dayananda Sagar University, Kumaraswamy Layout, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India in 2020. A total 30 students nurses were recruited randomly. A quantitative study using Quasy experimental, one group pre-test and post-test design were used. The result reveals that, 6 student (20%) had inadequate knowledge towards needle stick injury, 24 student (80%) had moderate knowledge and none of them were having adequate knowledge level regarding needle stick injury. The Finding of study conclusion of the implementation of the structured teaching plan there were statistically significant improvement in student knowledge so, continuous education about Needlestick injury and its prevention among nursing students that's helpful in reducing the morbidity and mortality rate of blood born disease.

2. A study conducted by Department of Medical-Surgical Nursing Smt. Nagarathnamma College of Nursing Soldevenahalli, Bengaluru-90 on prevention of blood borne diseases among dialysis nurses and technicians in selected health facility Bengaluru in 2018 Nurses should have knowledge about the Levels of prevention and infection control precautions should be carried out during the working period. A pre-experimental study with one group pre-test and post- test design was used to evaluate the effectiveness of Structured Teaching Programme (STP) regarding knowledge on "Prevention of Blood borne diseases" among Dialysis nurses and technicians. The finding of study conclusion with regard to pre-test revealed that majority 53.3% of the respondents had inadequate knowledge, 46.7% had moderate knowledge and none of them had adequate knowledge on Prevention of Blood borne diseases. But in Post test, 51.7% respondents was found with adequate knowledge, 29(48.3%) had moderate knowledge and none of them had inadequate knowledge regarding Prevention of Blood borne diseases.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The word “methodology” is frequently used when ‘method’ would be more accurate. Methodology refers to more than a simple set of methods. Research methodology is the systematic way to solve the research problem. It includes the steps that the researchers adopt to study his problem with the logic behind. It is a science of studying how research is done scientifically. In simple words, ‘a system of models, procedures and techniques used to find the result of a research problem is called research methodology.’

Methodology of research indicates the general pattern for organizing the procedure for the empirical study together with the method of obtaining valid and reliable data for problem under investigation.

This chapter provides a brief description of the method adopted by the investigator to conduct the study. This chapter includes the research approach, research design, research setting sampling technique, sampling criteria and method of data collection and so on.

A descriptive research design was selected to conduct the present study. Before conducting the study, A sample of 60 student nurses who were fulfilling the inclusion sampling criteria will be selected conveniently at Hirai institute of nursing education malwadi masur A self-administered questionnaire prepare to collect data.

Research approach:

Research approach involves the description of the plan to investigate the phenomenon under study in a structured, unstructured or a combination of the two methods. Therefore, the approach helps to decide about the presence or absence as well a manipulation and control over variables. It also helps to identify the presence or absence of and comparison between single group. In view of the nature of the problem selected for the study, A pretest and posttest design will be applied to determine the level of knowledge of nurses’ regarding needle stick injury. A convenience sampling technique will be used to recruit participants.

Research design:

The population of the current study was all 60 nursing students. All students who were actively engaged in college work during the data collection period and who agreed to participate were included in the study. Study Design will be experimental research design. The study will be conducted at the nursing student in Hirai institute of nursing education malwadi masur Random sampling technique was adopted for the study. The sample is selected based on the pretest and post test design

Research setting:

The study will be conducted at the nursing student in Hirai institute of nursing education malwadi masur, Karad, Satara.

POPULATION: Population is the set of people to which the results of the study are to be generalized. In present study the population is in nursing student of Hirai institute of nursing education malwadi, masur

SAMPLE: A sample is a portion of the entire population that represents that it is a subset of the population elements. Hirai institute of nursing education malwadi, masur.

SAMPLE SIZE: The population of the current study was all 60 nursing students.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUES: The sample is selected based on the pretest- postest design method

CRITERIA FOR SAMPLE COLLECTION

INCLUSIVE CRITERIA:

- All student nurses present at the time of data collection.
- Student who can understand English and Marathi.
- GNM 2ND nursing students.

EXCLUSIVE CRITERIA:

- GNM 2ND YEAR

TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION:

Tool for data collection was preparing on the basis of objectives of the study.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION:

A total 60 student nurses are selected for the study as per the selection criteria.

1. Obtained permission from principal of HINE college of Nursing.

METHOD OF DATA ANYLISIS:

The data was analysed by using inferential statistics.

1. The plan for data analysis was organized in the master sheet.
2. Frequency and percentage were used to describe as well as summarized the data.
3. Inferential statistics was used to draw the following conclusions:

SUMMARY:

This chapter dealt with the description of the research methodology and steps undertaken for collecting the data and plan of analysis for the present study. It includes research approach, design, setting, population, sampling, sample size, criteria, technique, method of data collection, plan of analysis etc. The analysis and interpretation of the study will be presented in the following chapter.

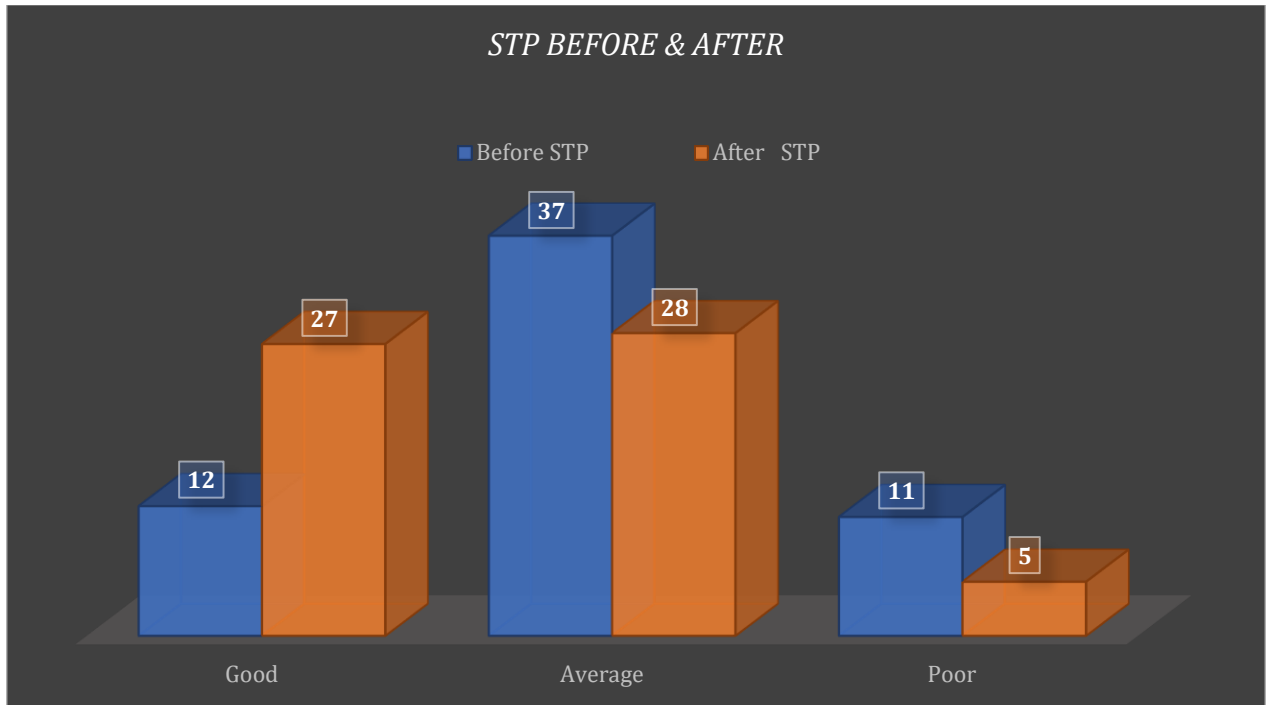


Fig.1: Assessment of STP on knowledge about needle stick injuries among the 2nd year nursing students

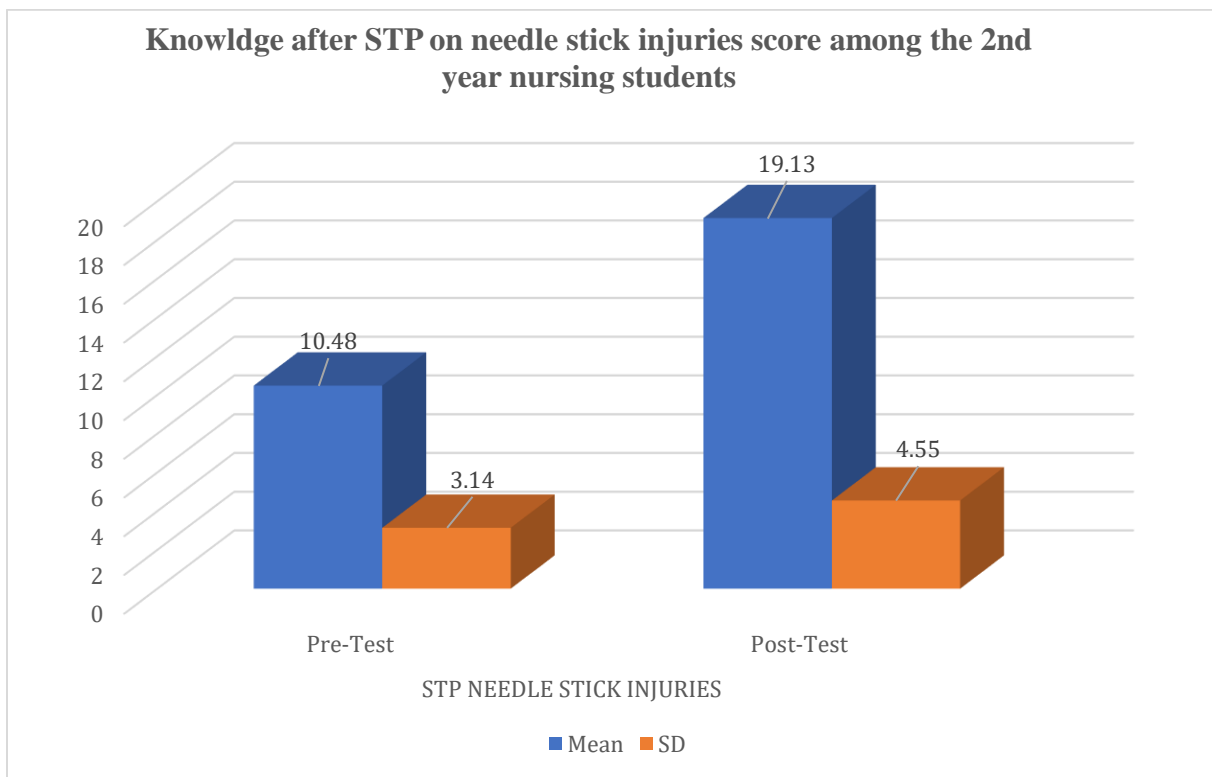


Fig. 2: Mean, SD of the structured teaching program on knowledge about needle stick injuries among the 2nd year nursing students.

IV. DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY:

This chapter represents a summary of the present study. It includes the conclusion from the findings, implementations of the study and recommendation for future research in this field.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the knowledge regarding needle stick injury among nursing student.
2. To determine the effectiveness of structured teaching program on knowledge regarding needle stick injury among nursing students
3. To find out association between post-test knowledge regarding needle stick injury among nursing student with all demographic variables.

DISSCUSION

The analysis of data was organized and presented under to its objectives. Given by the demographic data and research study as per collection of information and presentation of d Knowledge of the Study Participants about needle stick injury. In this study, students had good knowledge about Needle stick injury, is finding was consistent with the studies done in Hirai institute of nursing education malwadi masur. where 70%of their study participants had good knowledge of needle stick injury.

CONCLUSION

This is study revealed that student nurses studying at Hirai institute of nursing education Malwadi, had mean of the pretest (10.48) and a mean of the post test is (19.13) towards needle stick injury.

LIMITATIONS

- The study was confined to a small and specific number of subjects, which limits the generalisation of the findings.
- No standardized tools were available; therefore, the investigator prepared the tool for the purpose of her study.
- The study was limited to only the students of Hirai institute of nursing education Malwadi masur.

SUMMARY

Based on the up-to-date knowledge, a positive attitude and a good practice of Needle stick injury by the nurse will minimize the consequence and complications of needle stick; as a result, the students nurse is obliged to possess an updated knowledge and understanding of needle stick. Needle stick injury is a subjective experience of management.

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Mass Spectrometry-Based Lipidomic Profiling for Screening Pancreatic Cancer: A Pilot Study

Youjanya G Dongardive

*Undergraduate students, MGMU-Institute of Bioscience and Technology,
Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar*

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Abstract - Background: Pancreatic cancer is among the most lethal malignancies, with a five-year survival rate of approximately 13%. This poor prognosis is mainly due to the absence of reliable strategies for early detection. Current diagnostic approaches depend largely on imaging techniques, which are often expensive, invasive, and insufficient for identifying disease at an early stage. Consequently, the development of a sensitive and specific non-invasive blood-based screening method could significantly improve early diagnosis and patient survival.

Methods: In this study, lipid concentrations in plasma and serum samples were analyzed using ultra-high-performance supercritical fluid chromatography coupled with mass spectrometry (UHPSFC-MS). Multivariate statistical analysis was applied to evaluate lipidomic patterns and to distinguish between different study groups.

Results: This pilot investigation included prospectively collected samples from patients diagnosed with Pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC; n = 177), healthy individuals (n = 218), and participants considered at high risk for pancreatic cancer (n = 93). Lipidomic profiling successfully differentiated PDAC patients from healthy controls with an accuracy exceeding 95%. The method also demonstrated strong capability for detecting early-stage cases and identifying individuals with low secretion of CA 19-9. The sensitivity of the lipidomic approach was approximately 30% higher than that of CA 19-9. In the high-risk cohort, the method achieved a specificity greater than 96% (95% CI: 89–99%), comparable to established imaging-based diagnostic strategies.

Conclusion: The findings from this pilot study highlight the potential of lipidomic profiling as a non-invasive blood-based screening approach for pancreatic cancer. The technique demonstrates improved diagnostic performance compared with conventional biomarkers and maintains high accuracy in early-stage disease as well as in high-risk populations. These results support the need for larger clinical trials to further validate lipidomic testing for early detection of PDAC.

I. INTRODUCTION

Pancreatic cancer is considered one of the most lethal forms of cancer, with an overall five-year survival rate of approximately 13%. Survival varies greatly depending on the stage of diagnosis, with reported rates of about 3% for metastatic disease, 17% for regional spread, and around 42% for localized tumors. The most prevalent histological type is Pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC), which represents more than 90% of pancreatic malignancies. In recent decades, both the incidence and mortality rates of pancreatic cancer have steadily increased, and projections suggest that it may become the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths by 2030.

Currently, the primary treatment options for PDAC involve a combination of surgical intervention and chemotherapy. However, fewer than 20% of patients are diagnosed at a stage where surgical resection is possible. This limitation is largely due to the fact that PDAC frequently develops without noticeable symptoms or presents with vague clinical manifestations, resulting in diagnosis at an advanced stage.

Several imaging techniques are routinely used for the detection and evaluation of pancreatic tumors, including endoscopic ultrasonography (EUS), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and computed tomography (CT). Although these modalities are effective diagnostic tools, they can be expensive, technically demanding, and sometimes uncomfortable or invasive for patients. In addition, exposure to radiation or contrast agents may pose risks, and certain patients may be unable to undergo these procedures due to allergies, implanted medical devices, or conditions such as claustrophobia.

Among currently available biomarkers, CA 19-9 is the only marker commonly used in the clinical management of pancreatic cancer. However, its diagnostic performance is limited because it shows low sensitivity for early-stage disease and lacks sufficient specificity for population screening. Other biomarker research approaches, including studies in genomics, transcriptomics, and proteomics, as well as the development of multi-marker diagnostic panels, have been explored extensively. Despite these efforts, no biomarker has yet achieved global clinical validation for the early detection of pancreatic cancer. Recently, a blood-based diagnostic test known as PancreaSure has been introduced in the United States, highlighting the growing interest in non-invasive screening strategies.

In this context, lipidomics has emerged as a promising area of research for biomarker discovery. Lipidomics focuses on the comprehensive study of lipid molecules within biological systems. Lipids play crucial roles in cellular structure, metabolism, and signaling pathways, and alterations in lipid metabolism have been observed in several cancers, including pancreatic cancer. Therefore, investigating lipid profiles in biological samples may provide valuable insights for early disease detection.

Table 1 | Characteristics of the subjects in this study

Parameter		Controls	PDAC patients	High-risk individuals
Subjects	Total	218	177	93
	Male	93	88	56
	Fe-male	125	89	37
Age ^a		58 ± 11	67 ± 10	55 ± 9
Body mass index ^a		27 ± 4	25 ± 5	28 ± 5
CA 19-9	<37 U/mL	215	60	86
	>37 U/mL	3	117	7
CEA	<5 ng/mL	216	122	89
	>5 ng/mL	2	55	4
Diabetes mellitus		12	67	4
T1		–	20	–
T2		–	76	–
T3		–	41	–
T4		–	16	–
Tx		–	24	–
Chronic pancreatitis		1	2	40
Familial pancreatic cancer		0	11	29
BRCA1		0	2	10
BRCA2		0	3	12
Peutz–Jeghers syndrome		0	0	2

^aParameters are presented as mean ± standard deviation.

Prospective surveillance programs targeting individuals at elevated risk of pancreatic cancer have demonstrated improved detection of resectable tumors and better survival outcomes compared with patients diagnosed outside such monitoring programs. Because large-scale screening of the general population is not currently practical due to cost and logistical constraints, screening strategies are mainly recommended for high-risk individuals. In the general population, the lifetime risk of developing PDAC is approximately 1.5%. However, this risk increases significantly in individuals with factors such as obesity, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and certain dietary habits. Furthermore, individuals with hereditary cancer syndromes, familial pancreatic cancer, or hereditary pancreatitis are considered to have a substantially elevated risk.

Another group that may benefit from targeted screening includes individuals older than 50 years who are newly diagnosed with type 2 diabetes mellitus, particularly type 3c diabetes, as a small percentage of these individuals develop pancreatic cancer within a few years of diagnosis.

Although this group is not yet universally classified as high-risk, it represents a potentially important population for early detection efforts.

Despite advances in surgical techniques and systemic therapies, the prognosis of PDAC remains poor, primarily due to delayed diagnosis. Therefore, identifying reliable, non-invasive biomarkers capable of detecting pancreatic cancer at an early stage is a critical priority. Blood-based screening approaches with high sensitivity and specificity could significantly improve early detection and patient outcomes.

The present study expands upon our previous research demonstrating that lipidomic profiling can effectively differentiate patients with PDAC from healthy individuals with high diagnostic accuracy. In the first phase of this investigation, the methodology was optimized and limitations from earlier studies were addressed. In the second phase, the approach was applied to samples obtained from high-risk individuals, and the results were compared with imaging findings. The findings indicate that lipidomic profiling provides high sensitivity and specificity for detecting PDAC, including early-stage disease, and shows improved diagnostic performance compared with established biomarkers such as CA 19-9 and Carcinoembryonic antigen.

II.METHODS

Study Participants

This prospective study included three groups of participants consisting of both male and female subjects: healthy controls, patients diagnosed with Pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC), and individuals considered to be at high risk for developing pancreatic cancer. All participants were adults aged 18 years or older. Blood samples were obtained from each volunteer following an overnight fasting period.

Healthy controls were selected based on the absence of any previous cancer diagnosis throughout their lifetime, while other medical conditions were not considered exclusion criteria. Blood samples from PDAC patients were collected only after confirmation of the disease diagnosis and included individuals representing all tumor stages. Participants categorized as high-risk individuals did not have PDAC at the time of enrollment but had at least one recognized risk factor such as familial pancreatic cancer, chronic pancreatitis, or inherited genetic susceptibility syndromes.

In total, 488 participants were recruited for this investigation, including 218 healthy controls, 177 PDAC patients, and 93 high-risk individuals. Because this study was exploratory in nature, the sample size was determined by participant availability rather than by a predefined statistical power calculation. Clinical characteristics of all subjects are summarized in the supplementary dataset.

The study was conducted according to the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and received approval from institutional ethics committees of participating medical centers in the

Czech Republic. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to sample collection. Personal data were pseudonymized to maintain confidentiality.

III.SAMPLE PREPARATION

All biological samples were stored at $-80\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ until lipid extraction was performed. Lipids were isolated using a modified version of the Folch extraction protocol. Briefly, $25\text{ }\mu\text{L}$ of EDTA-treated human plasma or serum was combined with $20\text{ }\mu\text{L}$ of an internal standard mixture and homogenized with 3 mL of chloroform and methanol in a 2:1 ratio. The mixture was sonicated for 15 minutes at $30\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ and subsequently allowed to cool to room temperature.

After cooling, $600\text{ }\mu\text{L}$ of 250 mM ammonium carbonate solution was added and the sample was agitated for five minutes. The mixture was centrifuged to separate the phases, and the aqueous layer was discarded. The organic fraction containing lipids was evaporated under a gentle nitrogen stream at $35\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$. The remaining residue was then dissolved in $500\text{ }\mu\text{L}$ of a chloroform–methanol mixture (1:1, v/v). Prior to analysis, the extract was diluted appropriately depending on the analytical method used for lipidomic measurements.

IV.LIPIDOMIC ANALYSIS

Quantitative lipidomic profiling was carried out using two complementary mass spectrometry-based analytical approaches: one incorporating chromatographic separation and the other relying on direct infusion analysis.

For chromatographic analysis, ultrahigh-performance supercritical fluid chromatography coupled with high-resolution mass spectrometry (UHPSFC-MS) was employed. This system was connected to a quadrupole time-of-flight mass spectrometer equipped with an electrospray ionization source operating in positive ion mode. Lipid class separation was performed using a BEH column maintained at $60\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$, with carbon dioxide serving as the primary mobile phase and methanol containing ammonium acetate and water acting as the modifier. Gradient elution was applied to achieve separation of lipid classes during an eight-minute analytical run.

The second approach involved flow injection analysis coupled with tandem mass spectrometry (FIA-MS/MS). In this technique, lipid extracts were directly introduced into the mass spectrometer without chromatographic separation. Specific precursor ion and neutral loss scanning strategies were used for lipid detection and quantification. Samples were delivered through a liquid chromatography system at controlled flow rates during injection, scanning, and washing phases. Measurements were also performed in positive electrospray ionization mode.

V.QUALITY CONTROL

To ensure analytical reliability and instrument stability, three types of quality control samples were analyzed throughout the experimental sequence. These included pooled human plasma (QC-P), pooled human serum (QC-S), and a certified reference plasma material known as NIST SRM1950.

The pooled samples were prepared by combining aliquots from previously analyzed plasma or serum samples to generate representative matrices.

Quality control extracts were injected regularly during the analysis to monitor signal stability and reproducibility. QC-P and QC-S samples were analyzed after every 20 sample injections, while the reference plasma standard was introduced after every 120 injections to facilitate potential inter-laboratory comparisons.

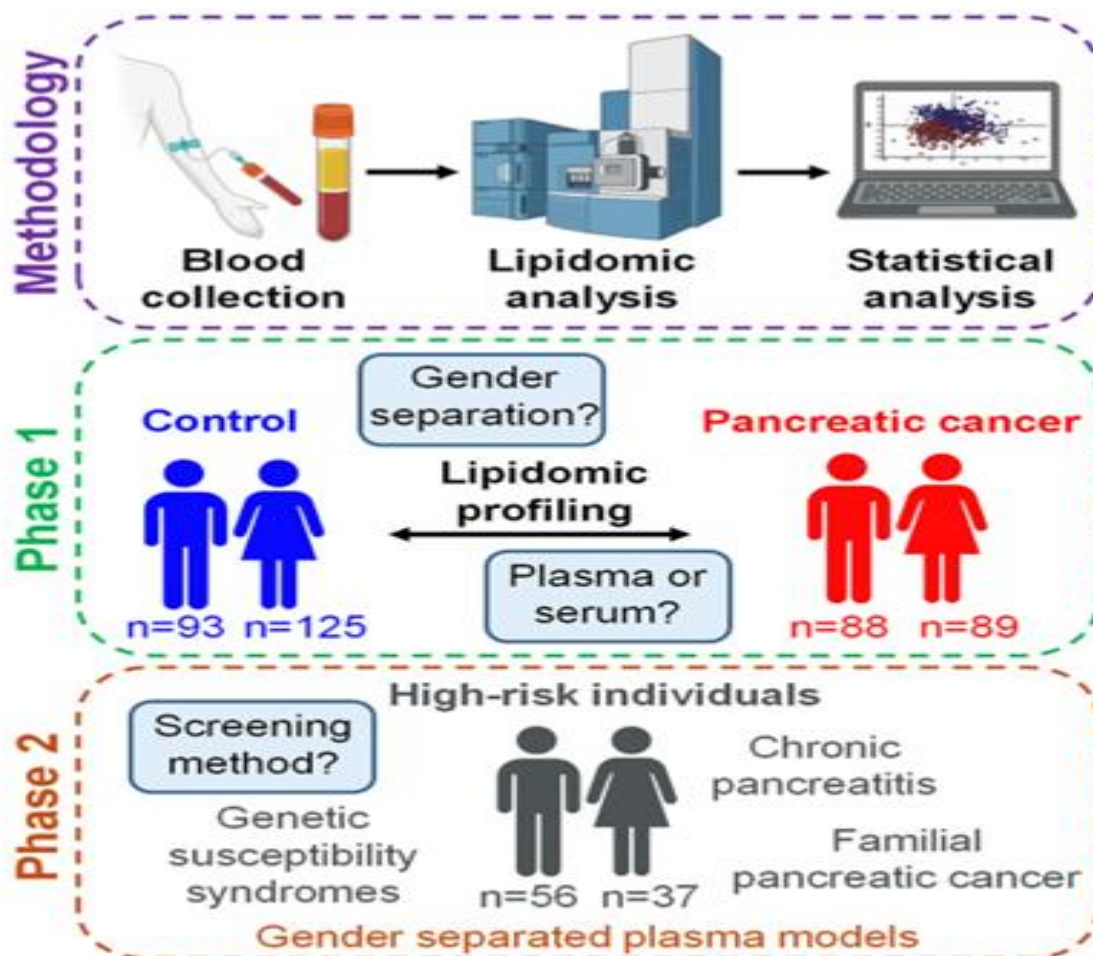


Fig. 1 | Overview of the study design. The figure illustrates the overall study workflow, including the methodology, primary research questions, and cohort structure across individual phases. A prospective sample collection involves 488 subjects, comprising 218 healthy controls, 177 PDAC patients, and 93 high-risk individuals.

VI. DATA PROCESSING

Raw UHPSFC-MS data underwent noise filtering, lock-mass correction, and conversion from continuum to centroid format. Signal intensities corresponding to lipid species were extracted

using dedicated software tools, and lipid concentrations were calculated with specialized lipidomics software that also performed isotopic corrections.

For the FIA-MS/MS dataset, raw spectral files were processed using dedicated lipid identification software, and the resulting tables were manually verified against precursor ion and neutral loss spectra to ensure correct peak assignment. Final datasets containing lipid concentrations were assembled using statistical software.

Only lipid species detected in at least 75% of samples were retained for further analysis. Missing values were replaced using a small constant corresponding to a fraction of the minimum observed concentration for the respective lipid species.

VII. CONVENTIONAL BIOMARKER MEASUREMENTS

Concentrations of established pancreatic cancer biomarkers were determined to compare their diagnostic performance with lipidomic profiling. Levels of CA 19-9 were measured using a chemiluminescent microparticle immunoassay. A threshold value of 37 U/mL was used to define positive results.

Similarly, the concentration of Carcinoembryonic antigen (CEA) was determined using a two-step immunoassay based on antigen–antibody binding. A cutoff value of 5 ng/mL was applied to classify positive samples.

VIII. IMAGING EXAMINATION

Imaging procedures were performed to evaluate pancreatic morphology and detect suspicious lesions. Endoscopic ultrasonography was carried out under conscious sedation using a specialized ultrasound endoscope introduced through the patient's upper gastrointestinal tract. Images and video recordings were stored for further evaluation. When suspicious lesions were identified, fine-needle biopsy was performed to obtain tissue samples for cytological or histological examination.

Magnetic resonance imaging of the pancreas was also conducted following recommended guidelines for early pancreatic cancer detection. The protocol included diffusion-weighted imaging and cholangiographic sequences to visualize pancreatic ducts and cystic structures. For enhanced imaging, intravenous administration of a gadolinium-based contrast agent was performed.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis of lipidomic data was conducted to determine differences between study groups. Comparisons of lipid concentrations were performed using Welch's t-test and fold-change calculations, with statistical significance defined as p-values below 0.05. To account for multiple testing, Bonferroni correction was applied.

Receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curves were generated to evaluate the diagnostic performance of the lipidomic models, and the corresponding area under the curve (AUC) values

were calculated. Data visualization and statistical analyses were conducted using the R programming environment.

Multivariate statistical modeling was performed using principal component analysis (PCA) and orthogonal partial least squares discriminant analysis (OPLS-DA). These methods were used to identify lipid species contributing most strongly to the separation between PDAC patients and control groups. Model validation was performed using cross-validation techniques and permutation testing to evaluate robustness and prevent overfitting. Predictive performance was assessed using independent validation datasets.

IX.RESULTS

Study Design

The proposed strategy for the early identification of Pancreatic cancer relies on the quantification of lipid species in human plasma or serum followed by statistical interpretation using multivariate analytical techniques. In our previous work, lipidomic profiling demonstrated the ability to differentiate patients diagnosed with Pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) from healthy individuals with sensitivity, specificity, and overall diagnostic accuracy greater than 94% in the training dataset and above 80% in an independent validation cohort.

Despite these promising results, several methodological questions remained unresolved and required clarification before the approach could be considered for clinical screening. To address these issues, a prospective cohort study including 488 participants was conducted (Table 1). The overall experimental workflow and analytical design are illustrated in Figure 1.

During Phase 1, the influence of biological variables such as gender and sample matrix on lipid concentrations was examined, as previous studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding these factors. In addition, the analytical workflow was enhanced using updated lipid quantification software and by expanding the lipid panel to include phosphatidylethanolamines (PE), which previously showed potential diagnostic relevance in a smaller pilot cohort.

Unsupervised principal component analysis (PCA) demonstrated partial clustering of samples according to gender, whereas minimal variation was observed between plasma and serum matrices. In contrast, clear separation was observed between lipidomic profiles of healthy individuals and PDAC patients. Furthermore, the tight clustering of quality control samples confirmed the stability and reproducibility of the analytical platform. Incorporating these methodological improvements significantly enhanced the discriminative capability of the lipidomic model and improved the accuracy of blind sample classification.

In Phase 2, the optimized analytical approach was applied to samples obtained from individuals considered to be at high risk for pancreatic cancer. These participants were enrolled through national surveillance programs aimed at early pancreatic cancer detection using regular imaging assessments. The diagnostic performance of lipidomic profiling was subsequently compared with

Figure 2 | Comparative analysis of lipid profiles obtained using UHPSFC/MS across different study groups.

Lipidomic profiles were evaluated across several biological and clinical comparisons, including females vs. males (plasma-based model), serum vs. plasma samples (female models), and patients with Pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) compared with healthy individuals (male models).

(A) Orthogonal partial least squares discriminant analysis (OPLS-DA) score plots demonstrating group separation, along with corresponding S-plots identifying lipid species contributing most strongly to discrimination between groups.

(B) Volcano plot illustrating significantly altered lipid species based on \log_2 -transformed fold change and $-\log_{10}$ p-values derived from a two-sided t-test.

(C) Relationship between body mass index (BMI) and the cumulative concentration of triacylglycerols. Statistical significance was evaluated using the Mann–Whitney U test, where p-values greater than 0.05 were considered non-significant (ns). BMI categories included 20–25 (22 males and 49 females), 25–30 (47 males and 46 females), and >30 (24 males and 25 females).

(D) Multivariate and univariate comparisons between serum and plasma lipid profiles. The S-plot derived from OPLS-DA highlights lipid species contributing most significantly to separation between the two biological matrices. The accompanying volcano plot displays \log_2 fold changes and $-\log_{10}$ p-values obtained from a two-sided t-test.

(E) Supervised OPLS-DA score plots showing cancer samples classified according to tumor stage, with color coding as follows: T1 (yellow), T2 (orange), T3 (red), T4 (rose), and Tx (brown), where tumor stage information was unavailable. The associated S-plots identify the most upregulated (red) and downregulated (blue) lipid species within both plasma and serum models.

(F) Box-plot representation of the most significantly altered lipid species, highlighting differences in lipid concentrations between healthy controls (N, blue; n = 93) and PDAC patients (T, red; n = 88). Statistical significance was determined using the Mann–Whitney U test, with **** indicating $p < 0.0001$.

(G) Receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curves with 95% confidence intervals illustrating the diagnostic performance of plasma- and serum-based models in both training and validation datasets. The curves represent combined male and female predictions derived from gender-specific lipidomic models.

Influence of Gender and Sample Matrix on the Lipidome

Samples obtained from healthy individuals were first analyzed to evaluate the potential effect of gender on lipid composition in both plasma and serum. The study included 93 male and 125 female participants with comparable age distribution and body mass index. A total of 190 lipid species

belonging to 11 lipid subclasses were examined using both univariate statistical analysis and multivariate modeling.

Supervised orthogonal partial least squares discriminant analysis (OPLS-DA) demonstrated a clear distinction between lipid profiles of male and female participants. Visualization of the most altered lipid species using S-plots and volcano plots revealed several gender-associated differences. Females generally exhibited higher concentrations of sphingomyelins and ether-linked phosphatidylcholines with shorter fatty-acid chains. Conversely, males showed elevated levels of triacylglycerols and diacylglycerols containing shorter acyl chains.

Minor differences were also observed for other lipid classes. Slightly increased levels of phosphatidylethanolamines were detected in females, while lysophosphatidylcholines were marginally higher in males. In contrast, lipid classes such as cholesteryl esters, ceramides, and phosphatidylcholines showed similar concentrations across both genders.

Although certain lipid species were differentially expressed, no consistent pattern was identified regarding fatty-acid chain length or degree of unsaturation. Similar trends were observed in both plasma and serum datasets, confirming the reproducibility of these findings.

Because male participants displayed a slightly higher average body mass index, the relationship between body mass index and total triacylglycerol concentration was further examined. Statistical evaluation revealed that elevated triacylglycerol levels in males were not significantly associated with body mass index but rather reflected metabolic differences between genders. Nevertheless, increased triacylglycerol concentrations were correlated with higher body mass index values in both sexes, indicating that this lipid class may be influenced by lifestyle factors and therefore may not represent a reliable biomarker.

X.COMPARISON BETWEEN PLASMA AND SERUM MATRICES

To determine whether the biological matrix affects lipidomic measurements, lipid profiles obtained from plasma and serum samples were compared using the same group of healthy volunteers. Blood samples for both matrices were collected simultaneously to ensure consistency. To avoid bias introduced by gender-related differences, the analysis was performed separately for male and female participants.

The results indicated that most lipid classes showed comparable concentrations in plasma and serum. However, a small number of diacylglycerol species exhibited matrix-dependent differences, with serum samples demonstrating approximately 10–30% higher concentrations, particularly for DG species containing 36 carbon atoms.

For other lipid classes, no statistically significant differences were detected between the two matrices. Minor tendencies were observed, including slightly reduced levels of phosphatidylethanolamines and sphingomyelins in serum and modestly increased concentrations of certain lipids, but these variations were not statistically significant. Overall, the findings suggest

that both plasma and serum are suitable matrices for lipidomic profiling in pancreatic cancer research.

XI. LIPIDOMIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PDAC PATIENTS AND HEALTHY CONTROLS

Multivariate statistical analysis revealed pronounced differences between lipidomic signatures of PDAC patients and healthy individuals. OPLS-DA score plots demonstrated a clear separation of cancer samples from control samples in both plasma and serum models. When cancer samples were further classified according to tumor stage, lipidomic patterns remained distinguishable across different stages of disease progression.

The S-plots derived from OPLS-DA models identified lipid species that were most strongly upregulated or downregulated in PDAC samples. These findings were further confirmed through univariate statistical analysis. Box-plot visualization of the most significantly altered lipid species demonstrated substantial differences in concentration between healthy controls and PDAC patients.

To evaluate diagnostic performance, receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curves were generated using prediction scores obtained from the multivariate models. The analysis demonstrated strong diagnostic capability for both plasma-based and serum-based models in training and validation datasets, confirming the potential of lipidomic profiling as a reliable tool for distinguishing pancreatic cancer patients from healthy individuals.

Table 2 | Sensitivity, specificity, accuracy, positive predictive value (PPV), and negative predictive value (NPV) (with 95% confidence interval) for the lipidomic profiling method in the training and validation sets separated by matrix and gender

Plasma						
Gender	Both		Male		Female	
Dataset	Tr.	Va.	Tr.	Va.	Tr.	Va.
<i>Plasma</i>						
Sensitivity [%]	97 (93–99)	97 (85–100)	99 (94–100)	94 (71–100)	98 (92–100)	89 (65–99)
Specificity [%]	100 (97–100)	100 (92–100)	99 (94–100)	100 (82–100)	100 (97–100)	100 (86–100)
Accuracy [%]	98 (96–99)	99 (93–100)	99 (96–100)	97 (85–100)	99 (97–100)	95 (84–99)
PPV [%]	99 (96–100)	100 (90–100)	99 (93–100)	100 (79–100)	100 (96–100)	100 (79–100)
NPV [%]	97 (94–99)	98 (86–100)	99 (93–100)	95 (74–99)	98 (94–100)	93 (77–98)
True ^a	171 / 217	34 / 44	87 / 92	16 / 19	87 / 125	16 / 25
False ^a	6 / 1	1 / 0	1 / 1	1 / 0	2 / 0	2 / 0
<i>Serum</i>						
Sensitivity [%]	96 (92–98)	94 (81–99)	95 (89–99)	94 (71–100)	98 (92–100)	89 (65–99)
Specificity [%]	100 (97–100)	98 (88–100)	99 (94–100)	100 (82–100)	100 (97–100)	100 (86–100)
Accuracy [%]	98 (96–99)	96 (89–99)	97 (94–99)	97 (85–100)	99 (97–100)	95 (84–99)
PPV [%]	99 (96–100)	97 (83–100)	99 (92–100)	100 (79–100)	100 (96–100)	100 (79–100)
NPV [%]	97 (94–98)	96 (85–99)	96 (90–98)	95 (74–99)	98 (94–100)	93 (77–98)
True ^a	170 / 217	33 / 43	85 / 91	16 / 19	87 / 125	16 / 25
False ^a	7 / 1	2 / 1	4 / 1	1 / 0	2 / 0	2 / 0

Concentrations of lipids were measured by UHPSFC/MS method.

^aNumber of samples is determined as true (true positive/true negative) and false (false negative/false positive).

Diagnostic Performance of Lipidomic Profiling

Among the developed classification models, the gender-specific plasma model demonstrated the highest performance in distinguishing healthy individuals from patients with Pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC). Consequently, this model was used for all subsequent analyses. The diagnostic capability of the lipidomic profiling approach was further compared with established tumor biomarkers, including CA 19-9 and Carcinoembryonic antigen (CEA), using the same sample set.

CA 19-9 is widely applied in clinical practice for the diagnosis of pancreatic cancer in symptomatic patients and for monitoring treatment response, whereas CEA is mainly used to evaluate disease progression and therapeutic outcomes in PDAC. Because lipidomic analysis requires prior model development, the dataset was divided into training and validation subsets before evaluation. For CA 19-9 and CEA, commonly accepted clinical cutoff values were applied (37 U/mL for CA 19-9 and 5 ng/mL for CEA), and the data were divided into identical training and validation subsets to ensure consistency with the lipidomic model.

The lipidomic profiling approach demonstrated excellent diagnostic accuracy. In the training dataset, the model achieved an accuracy of 99% (95% confidence interval [CI]: 97–100%), while the validation dataset showed an accuracy of 96% (95% CI: 89–99%). Specificity reached 100% in both datasets (95% CI: 97–100% for the training set and 92–100% for the validation set). Sensitivity was also high, reaching 98% (95% CI: 95–100%) in the training dataset and 92% (95% CI: 77–98%) in the validation dataset.

In contrast, although CA 19-9 and CEA exhibited similarly high specificity levels exceeding 98%, their sensitivity was substantially lower. In the training dataset, sensitivity was 66% (95% CI: 59–73%) for CA 19-9 and 31% (95% CI: 24–38%) for CEA. In the validation dataset, sensitivity decreased to 60% (95% CI: 42–76%) for CA 19-9 and 20% (95% CI: 8–37%) for CEA. These findings demonstrate that lipidomic profiling provides superior diagnostic sensitivity compared with conventional biomarkers.

A key challenge in pancreatic cancer diagnostics is the detection of early-stage tumors (T1 and T2). Both CA 19-9 and CEA show markedly reduced sensitivity in these early stages. In contrast, lipidomic profiling maintained relatively consistent sensitivity across all tumor stages, highlighting its potential as an effective tool for early disease detection. Stage-specific diagnostic performance data are summarized in the supplementary materials.

XII. LIPIDOMIC ANALYSIS IN HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS

Although lipidomic profiling effectively differentiates PDAC patients from healthy controls, lipid patterns in individuals with elevated cancer risk may be influenced by additional biological or metabolic factors. Therefore, validating the diagnostic model in a high-risk population is essential.

A total of 93 samples from high-risk individuals were analyzed as blinded samples using predictive models constructed from healthy controls and PDAC patients. The validation cohort consisted of 93 control samples and 88 tumor samples for males, and 125 control samples and 89 tumor samples for females. Although slight differences existed between subgroups regarding age distribution and prevalence of diabetes mellitus, earlier investigations demonstrated that these factors did not significantly affect the lipid classes analyzed. Therefore, these differences were not considered to represent a limitation of the study.

Visual inspection of prediction results indicated that lipidomic profiles of high-risk individuals without pancreatic cancer were generally similar to those observed in healthy participants. This observation was further supported by box-plot comparisons of key lipid concentrations.

Prediction analysis classified 85 samples as negative, seven samples within a borderline confidence interval, and one sample as positive. Applying a strict classification threshold of 0.5 resulted in 89 correct predictions and four incorrect classifications, corresponding to a specificity of 96% (95% CI: 89–99%) when compared with imaging-based diagnostic outcomes obtained through endoscopic ultrasonography or magnetic resonance imaging.

All participants underwent at least one imaging examination at the time of blood sample collection and were subsequently invited for annual follow-up evaluations. However, not all individuals continued participation throughout the surveillance period. Imaging results revealed several pancreatic abnormalities, including intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasms (IPMNs), benign cysts, unspecified cystic lesions, and cases of chronic pancreatitis. Importantly, none of the monitored individuals developed pancreatic cancer during the study period, and all were classified as PDAC-negative according to imaging findings.

The biomarkers CA 19-9 and CEA were also measured in the high-risk cohort, demonstrating specificities of 93% (95% CI: 85–97%) and 96% (95% CI: 89–99%), respectively. Notably, positive findings identified by lipidomic profiling did not coincide with those detected using CA 19-9 or CEA, indicating that the lipidomic method may capture distinct metabolic alterations.

High-risk participants were categorized based on their inclusion criteria, including chronic pancreatitis, familial pancreatic cancer, mutations in BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes, and Peutz–Jeghers syndrome. The lipidomic model did not demonstrate increased misclassification within any particular subgroup.

Follow-up blood samples obtained after one year were available for 23 high-risk individuals. In most cases, prediction scores remained similar to the original results and continued to fall below the diagnostic threshold, supporting the stability of the method. However, four individuals exhibited prediction scores that shifted from clearly negative values to a borderline confidence range. Although imaging examinations did not detect abnormalities in these cases, continued long-term monitoring is recommended to determine whether such metabolic alterations may represent early disease-related changes.

Ongoing collaboration with national surveillance programs dedicated to early pancreatic cancer detection continues, and participants remain under annual monitoring through imaging-based follow-up protocols.

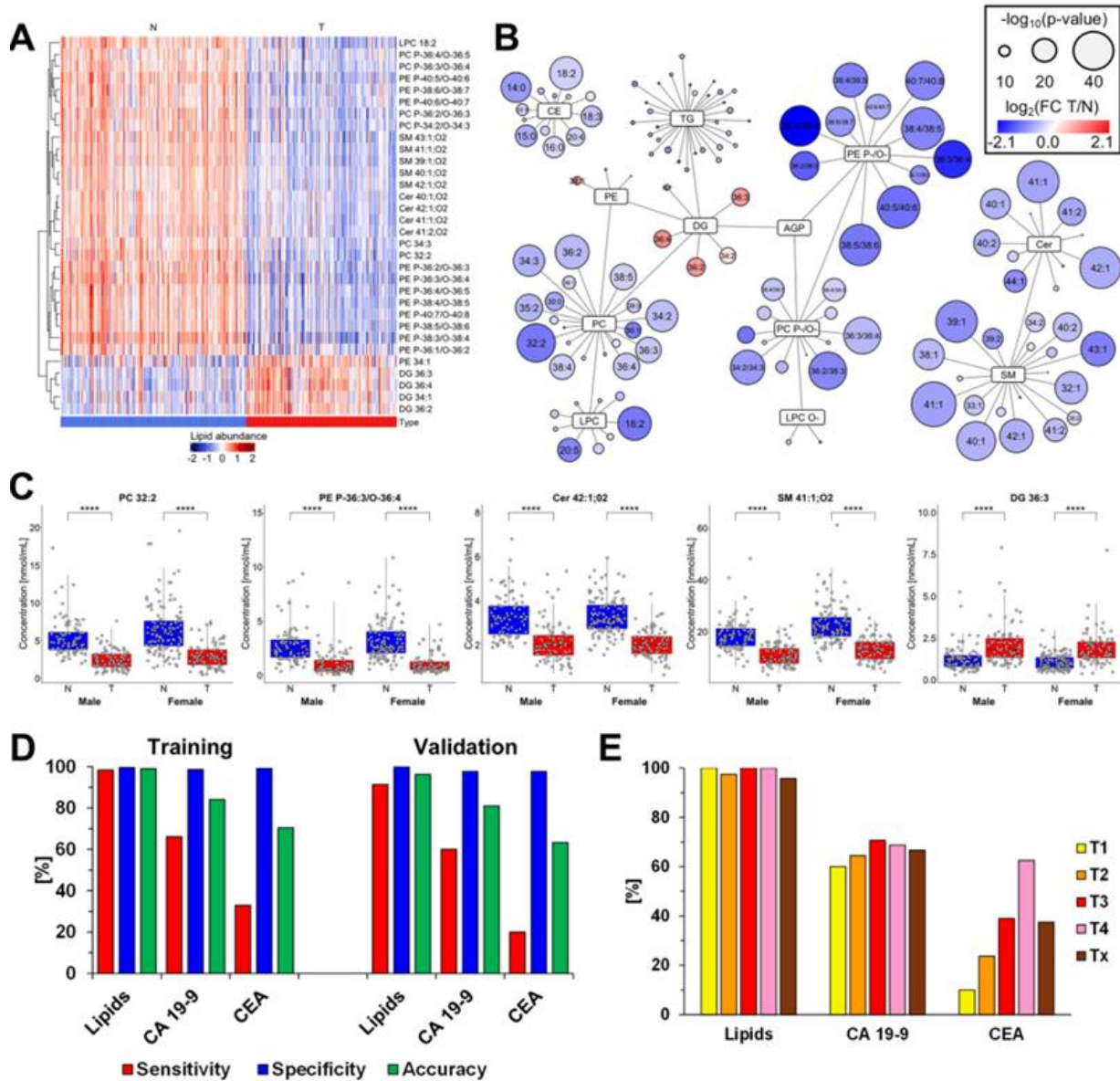


Figure 3 | Plasma lipidomic alterations associated with Pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC)

Lipidomic profiling results comparing PDAC patients (T) with healthy control subjects (N) using plasma-based analytical models.

(A) Heatmap illustrating the most significantly altered lipid species, displaying their concentration patterns across individual study samples.

(B) Network representation of identified lipid species. In this visualization, node size reflects the statistical significance level determined by a two-sided t-test, while the intensity of red or blue coloration represents the magnitude and direction of fold change between tumor and control groups (T/N).

(C) Box-plot analysis highlighting the most dysregulated lipid species and demonstrating concentration differences between PDAC patients (T, red) and healthy controls (N, blue). Statistical significance was evaluated using the Mann–Whitney U test; significance levels are indicated by asterisks, with **** corresponding to $p < 0.0001$. Study populations consisted of 93 control and 88 tumor samples for males, and 125 control and 89 tumor samples for females.

(D) Comparative diagnostic performance of lipidomic profiling and conventional tumor biomarkers, including CA 19-9 and Carcinoembryonic antigen (CEA). Sensitivity (red), specificity (blue), and overall accuracy (green) are presented for both training and validation datasets.

(E) Sensitivity analysis of individual diagnostic approaches according to tumor stage. Tumor stages are represented by color coding: T1 (yellow), T2 (orange), T3 (red), T4 (rose), and Tx (brown; stage not specified). Performance comparisons are shown for lipidomic profiling, CA 19-9, and CEA within the training dataset.

XIII.DISCUSSION

Early detection plays a critical role in improving the clinical outcomes of patients diagnosed with Pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC). Identifying the disease at an early stage significantly increases the likelihood of successful treatment and improved survival rates. In the present study, we demonstrate that a blood-based lipidomic analysis can effectively detect PDAC with a high level of diagnostic accuracy. The results indicate that alterations in circulating lipid molecules provide a promising biomarker signature that can differentiate cancer patients from healthy individuals.

Physiological and biological variables are frequently discussed in lipidomics research because they can influence lipid metabolism and potentially affect biomarker discovery. Such factors may introduce variability in lipid profiles, which could lead to misleading conclusions if not properly addressed during model development. Our findings showed strong agreement with previously reported observations regarding gender-related variations in lipid composition. Earlier studies conducted by Tabassum et al. summarized evidence from multiple investigations and proposed biological mechanisms explaining these gender-dependent lipid differences. Similarly, results from Sales et al. reported comparable trends, although some discrepancies were observed in the dysregulation patterns of phosphatidylethanolamine plasmalogens and in the statistical significance of several lipid classes.

Among the investigated lipid categories, sphingomyelins displayed the most pronounced gender-associated variations. These molecules also represented one of the most strongly altered lipid groups when comparing healthy individuals with PDAC patients. The observed influence of

gender on lipid metabolism confirmed the necessity of incorporating gender-specific models during lipidomic analysis. By applying separate predictive models for male and female cohorts, the potential confounding effects related to biological sex were minimized, thereby improving the robustness and reliability of the diagnostic model.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of considering demographic and biological variables during biomarker discovery studies. Integrating such factors into analytical models can enhance the predictive performance of lipidomic profiling and improve its potential utility as a non-invasive screening tool for pancreatic cancer.

In comparison with conventional tumor biomarkers, lipidomic profiling demonstrated significantly improved diagnostic performance. The method showed approximately 30% higher sensitivity compared with the widely used biomarker CA 19-9. Furthermore, when applied to individuals considered at high risk for pancreatic cancer, the lipidomic approach achieved a specificity of 96% (95% confidence interval: 89–99%) when evaluated against imaging-based diagnostic techniques such as endoscopic ultrasonography and magnetic resonance imaging. These findings highlight the strong potential of lipidomic profiling as a screening strategy. The approach is minimally invasive, relatively cost-effective, suitable for high-throughput analysis, and capable of delivering high diagnostic accuracy—features that are essential for population-level screening tools.

Despite these encouraging results, several limitations should be considered. First, the study primarily focused on differentiating PDAC patients from healthy individuals and high-risk subjects. Other cancer types were not included in the analysis; therefore, the specificity of the lipidomic signature for pancreatic cancer compared with other malignancies remains to be determined. Future investigations should incorporate additional cancer cohorts to further evaluate disease specificity.

Another limitation relates to the potential influence of medications on lipid metabolism. In this study, medication use was not included as an exclusion criterion, and its effects on lipidomic profiles were not systematically analyzed. Although certain pharmaceutical compounds are known to alter lipid metabolism, no extreme outliers were detected in the current dataset. The high predictive performance observed in the classification models suggests that commonly prescribed medications may not significantly affect the diagnostic capability of the method. Nevertheless, further studies will be required to evaluate the influence of pharmacological treatments and other environmental factors on lipidomic signatures.

Additional limitations include the retrospective nature of sample analysis and the relatively limited number of samples available for certain study groups, particularly among high-risk individuals. Moreover, the duration of follow-up for participants was relatively short. Continued monitoring of these individuals is currently ongoing, with follow-up examinations performed annually. Long-term observation will provide further insights into the predictive potential of lipidomic biomarkers for early pancreatic cancer detection.

To address these limitations and validate the current findings, a large multicenter clinical trial has been initiated and registered at ClinicalTrials.gov NCT6549725. This study involves collaboration among fourteen clinical centers in the Czech Republic and aims to evaluate the diagnostic performance of the lipidomic method in a larger population of high-risk individuals as well as patients with surgically resectable PDAC. The trial will also directly compare lipidomic results with imaging-based diagnostic approaches.

XIV. DATA AVAILABILITY

The lipidomic datasets generated during this study are provided as supplementary materials. Data obtained from ultrahigh-performance supercritical fluid chromatography–mass spectrometry analyses are available in Supplementary Data files 2 and 3, while lipid concentration data derived from flow injection analysis tandem mass spectrometry measurements are included in Supplementary Data file 4. All figures presented in the study were generated using the datasets provided in these supplementary materials.

The raw experimental data supporting the findings of this research are publicly accessible through the Zenodo data repository. Additional information required for independent reanalysis of the datasets can be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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A Cloud-Integrated Threat Monitoring Pipeline Using AWS CloudWatch Logs and Prefect Orchestration: Design and Practical Evaluation

¹Tushar Rashmikant Gohil, ²Ashish Pranlal Kharvar, ³Apurva Bharat Mandalaywala

^{1,2,3}*Information Technology Department Sarvajanik*

^{1,2,3}*College of Engineering and Technology*

^{1,2,3}*Surat, India*

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Abstract—This paper proposes a cloud-integrated threat monitoring pipeline combining AWS CloudWatch Logs with Prefect orchestration to enable automated, scalable, and low-latency security log analysis. The system extracts, processes, and stores CloudWatch log data in PostgreSQL through scheduled and parallel Prefect workflows. A practical evaluation using real datasets demonstrates improvements in processing latency, throughput, and reliability compared to traditional Lambda-based and ELK pipelines. Results show that the Prefect-orchestrated approach offers a flexible and efficient solution for continuous threat monitoring in cloud environments.

Index Terms—Cloud Computing; Threat Monitoring; AWS CloudWatch Logs; Prefect Orchestration; Security Analytics; Workflow Automation; Log Processing; Distributed Systems

I. INTRODUCTION

Cloud computing has become the backbone of modern digital infrastructures, enabling organizations to deploy scalable, distributed, and highly available applications. As enterprises increasingly adopt cloud-native architectures, the volume, velocity, and variety of log data generated by these systems have expanded significantly. Logs originating from application services, virtual machines, network interfaces, identity events, and platform components provide critical insights into operational behavior and potential security threats. However, the heterogeneous and high-throughput nature of these logs presents substantial challenges for continuous monitoring, timely threat detection, and effective incident response [1].

Traditional log-monitoring approaches, such as manual inspection, periodic querying, or ad hoc scripting, are insufficient for large-scale cloud environments. Even established automated solutions—including serverless pipelines built using AWS Lambda and monolithic log-processing

frameworks such as the ELK (Elasticsearch–Logstash–Kibana) stack— face limitations in orchestration complexity, cost scalability, observability, and fine-grained control over workflow execution [2]. Security operations increasingly require monitoring systems that support reliable scheduling, parallel processing, seamless data transformation, and flexible integration with storage or analytics engines. These requirements motivate the development of modular and orchestrated threat-monitoring pipelines capable of adapting to dynamic workloads.

Workflow orchestration frameworks have gained prominence for their ability to manage complex data flows, automate multi-stage processes, and provide robust execution features such as retry logic, state tracking, and detailed telemetry. Although these tools are widely adopted in data engineering ecosystems, their application to cloud-based security log analytics remains underexplored. Prefect, a modern workflow orchestration platform, offers distributed execution, dynamic scheduling, and extensive monitoring capabilities, making it a strong candidate for automating threat-monitoring pipelines [3].

This paper proposes a cloud-integrated threat-monitoring pipeline that leverages AWS CloudWatch Logs for centralized log aggregation and Prefect for workflow orchestration. The system automates log extraction, normalization, anomaly flagging, and structured storage in PostgreSQL, enabling efficient security analytics and near real-time threat monitoring. By incorporating Prefect into the cloud log-processing workflow, the pipeline provides enhanced transparency, reliability, and scalability compared to traditional monitoring solutions.

The key contributions of this work are summarized as follows:

- **Design of an orchestrated threat-monitoring pipeline** that integrates Prefect workflows with AWS CloudWatch Logs for automated ingestion and processing in cloud environments.
- **Development of a scalable multi-stage architecture** supporting scheduled and parallelized log processing, anomaly detection, and structured persistence for downstream analytics.
- **Comparative evaluation against conventional monitoring approaches**, including Lambda-based and ELK-based pipelines, demonstrating improvements in latency, throughput, and orchestration reliability.
- **Experimental validation using real CloudWatch log datasets**, assessing the system's practical effectiveness for continuous threat monitoring in distributed cloud systems.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: Section II reviews related work in cloud log analytics, workflow orchestration, and threat-monitoring systems. Section III describes the design and architecture of the proposed pipeline. Section IV discusses the implementation details and experimental setup. Section V presents the evaluation results. Section VI concludes the paper and outlines directions for future research.

II. RELATED WORK

Threat monitoring and log analytics in cloud environments have been the focus of extensive research due to the increasing complexity and scale of cloud-native systems. Early work in this domain highlights the importance of analyzing heterogeneous and high-velocity log streams for detecting security anomalies and operational failures [1]. These studies emphasize the need for automated and scalable approaches capable of handling diverse log formats and ensuring timely threat detection.

Several log-processing frameworks and cloud-native pipelines have been proposed to address these challenges. The ELK (Elasticsearch–Logstash–Kibana) stack remains one of the most widely adopted solutions for centralized log ingestion and visualization. However, prior studies have identified limitations related to deployment overhead, resource consumption, and scalability when ELK is applied to large distributed systems [4]. Alternative approaches using AWS Lambda and serverless event-driven architectures have been explored to reduce operational cost and simplify log processing pipelines, yet these solutions often suffer from constrained execution environments, limited orchestration control, and difficulty in handling multi-stage processing workflows [2].

Recent advancements have shifted attention toward workflow orchestration frameworks designed to automate and manage complex data pipelines. Tools such as Apache Airflow, Luigi, and more recently, Prefect, offer capabilities including task scheduling, retry logic, distributed execution, state management, and monitoring dashboards. Research in this area primarily focuses on data engineering and ETL workloads, with limited exploration of their applicability to cloud-based security log analysis. Although orchestration engines have demonstrated effectiveness in structuring modular data pipelines, their integration with cloud-native log sources for threat monitoring remains underrepresented in existing literature.

Prefect, in particular, provides a modern, Python-native orchestration model with features such as flow-based execution, asynchronous tasks, and comprehensive observability [3]. While industry documentation and platform use cases highlight its potential for scalable automation, there is a notable absence of academic studies evaluating its performance or suitability for continuous security monitoring in cloud environments. This gap presents an opportunity to investigate orchestrated architectures that combine Prefect with cloud-native services such as AWS CloudWatch Logs to deliver robust and scalable threat-monitoring pipelines.

The proposed work addresses this gap by designing and evaluating a Prefect-orchestrated pipeline for automated extraction, transformation, and analysis of AWS CloudWatch log data. Unlike existing solutions centered around Lambda triggers or ELK deployments, the system integrates orchestration, scheduling, parallel execution, and structured storage to enable efficient threat detection in distributed cloud systems.

III. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

The proposed system is designed as a modular, cloud- integrated threat monitoring pipeline that automates the ex- traction, processing, and analysis of log data from AWS CloudWatch. As illustrated in Fig. 1, the pipeline integrates CloudWatch with Prefect workflows.

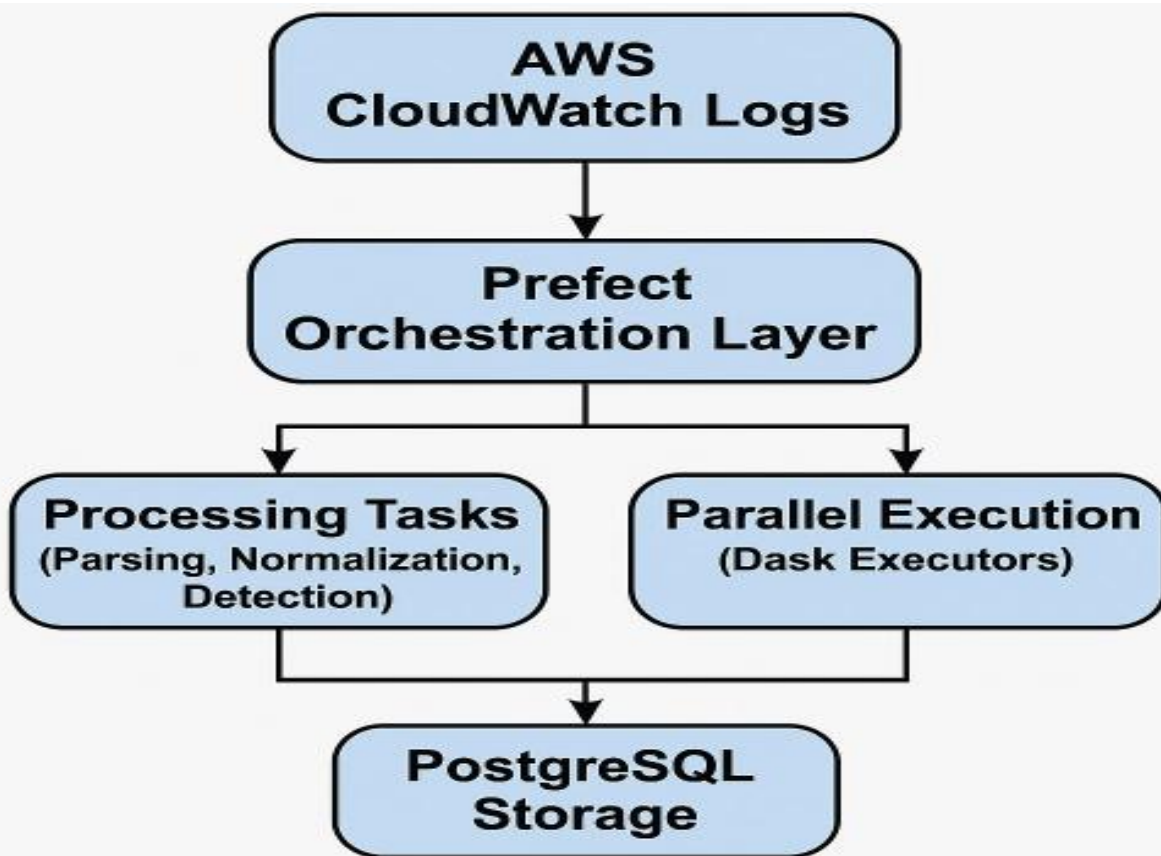


Fig. 1. System architecture of the Prefect-orchestrated cloud threat monitoring pipeline showing integration of AWS CloudWatch Logs, Prefect orchestration layer, processing tasks, parallel execution, and PostgreSQL storage.

A. Overview

Modern cloud workloads generate diverse log streams that require continuous monitoring to detect suspicious activity or operational anomalies [1]. Traditional ELK-based or Lambda- triggered monitoring solutions exhibit limitations in scalability, orchestration control, and multi-stage processing [2], [4]. To address these constraints, the proposed architecture integrates Prefect as the orchestration engine, enabling structured execution, distributed processing, retry mechanisms, and detailed execution telemetry [3].

The architecture consists of four primary components:

- 1) **Log Source Layer:** AWS CloudWatch Logs acts as the centralized log aggregation hub for cloud services, application logs, VPC flow logs, CloudTrail events, and security-related metadata.

- 2) **Orchestration Layer:** Prefect manages workflow scheduling, task distribution, parallel processing, and fault handling. Prefect Agents and Workers execute flows either locally or on distributed environments.
- 3) **Processing Layer:** A series of Prefect tasks extract, filter, normalize, and analyze log entries. This layer optionally incorporates anomaly detection logic for identifying irregular patterns.
- 4) **Storage and Analytics Layer:** Processed logs are stored in PostgreSQL for long-term persistence, querying, and downstream security analytics or visualization.

B. Log Source Layer

AWS CloudWatch Logs aggregates data from multiple cloud resources, including EC2 instances, Lambda functions, container services, and network infrastructure. Each log group contains structured or semi-structured entries that provide insights into system behavior and security events. CloudWatch offers native APIs for extracting logs by group, stream, and timestamp ranges, which form the entry point for the monitoring pipeline.

C. Orchestration Layer

The orchestration layer is responsible for coordinating the end-to-end data flow. Prefect flows schedule periodic log retrieval tasks based on preconfigured intervals. Prefect provides a hybrid execution model supporting asynchronous tasks, task dependency graphs, and fault-tolerant execution through built-in retries, automatic state transitions, and detailed execution logging.

The Prefect server and dashboard enable visualization of task execution states, performance metrics, and triggered failures, improving operational observability. This is a substantial advantage over serverless pipelines that lack centralized orchestration visibility [2].

D. Processing Layer

The processing layer includes multiple stages:

- **Extraction:** Prefect tasks query CloudWatch Logs via AWS SDK APIs, retrieving log batches based on time windows or event-driven triggers.
- **Normalization:** Logs are filtered, parsed, and converted into structured formats suitable for downstream analysis.
- **Anomaly Detection (Optional):** Lightweight detection techniques, such as frequency-based analysis or rule-based matching, identify potential threats or abnormal patterns.
- **Transformation:** Metadata fields including timestamp, log group, severity level, and event type are standardized. Through Prefect's parallel execution model, multiple log groups can be processed simultaneously, reducing overall pipeline latency compared to single-threaded serverless work-flows.

E. Storage and Analytics Layer

The final stage stores processed logs in PostgreSQL. This structured datastore supports:

- historical trend analysis,

- query-based threat investigations,
- integration with security dashboards,
- correlation of log events across services.

By decoupling storage from processing, the architecture facilitates scalability and allows downstream tools—such as visualization platforms, BI tools, or machine learning models—to consume the data.

F. Summary

The proposed architecture integrates cloud-native log aggregation with modern orchestration to deliver a flexible and scalable threat monitoring solution. Prefect’s orchestration capabilities address long-standing limitations of ELK-heavy and Lambda-centric pipelines, enabling improved transparency, resilience, and performance in cloud-based monitoring systems.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

This section describes the practical implementation of the proposed cloud-integrated threat monitoring pipeline. The system was deployed on AWS and orchestrated using Prefect, leveraging Python-based tasks for log ingestion, transformation, anomaly detection, and structured storage. Fig. 2 provides an overview of the implementation workflow.

A. Environment Setup

The implementation was carried out on AWS using CloudWatch Logs as the primary log source. CloudWatch has become a widely used monitoring backbone for cloud-native applications, offering centralized aggregation of operational, security, and network logs [5]. Prefect was installed on a dedicated orchestration node configured with a Prefect Server and Prefect Agent to execute scheduled workflows. All development was performed using Python 3.10, the AWS SDK (Boto3), and PostgreSQL 14 deployed via Amazon RDS.

B. Workflow Orchestration with Prefect

Workflow orchestration was implemented through Prefect flows, which define the sequence and dependencies of tasks. Recent studies highlight that orchestration engines provide improved reproducibility, reliability, and runtime transparency in complex data pipelines compared to serverless or ad hoc implementations [6]. The Prefect Agent handles execution scheduling, task retries, and parallelization using Dask-based executors for distributed workload management.

The workflow consists of three primary Prefect flows:

- 1) **Log Retrieval Flow:** Periodically queries CloudWatch log groups using timestamp-based filters and retrieves logs in batches.
- 2) **Processing Flow:** Normalizes log entries, performs message parsing, and extracts metadata such as severity levels and event categories.
- 3) **Anomaly Detection Flow:** Applies lightweight statistical and rule-based anomaly detection

techniques, which have been shown effective for real-time cloud log monitoring in recent literature [7].

Each flow runs independently while sharing state and configuration via Prefect blocks and environment variables. Prefect's retry, caching, and failure-handling capabilities ensured robustness when interacting with CloudWatch's paginated and rate-limited APIs.

C. Log Extraction and Parsing

Log extraction was performed using AWS Boto3 with the `filter_log_events` API. Logs were retrieved in chronological segments to avoid throttling and ensure continuous pipeline operation. Each log event was parsed into a structured dictionary and converted into a relational schema. Recent research emphasizes the importance of structured log representation for downstream threat analytics [8].

Parsing included:

- timestamp normalization into UTC,
- extraction of log group and log stream identifiers,
- severity classification using keyword-based heuristics,
- JSON flattening for nested event structures.

D. Anomaly Detection Module

A lightweight anomaly detection module was implemented using:

- frequency-based deviation checks,
- spike detection on log volume,
- rule-based detection for known suspicious patterns.

While deep-learning methods such as LogBERT [9] or sequence-based anomaly detection [10] offer higher accuracy, our implementation focuses on operational efficiency and low-latency detection that is more suitable for real-time cloud environments.

E. Data Storage Layer

Processed log entries were written to PostgreSQL for durable storage. The schema included fields for timestamp, severity, event type, message content, log group, anomaly score, and derived metadata. PostgreSQL was chosen due to its

F. Execution Pipeline

The complete pipeline operated on a scheduled interval of 5 minutes, aligning with CloudWatch Log event availability. Prefect Cloud or Prefect Server dashboards were used for:

- monitoring flow runs,
- examining task-level logs,
- analyzing runtime failures,
- visualizing dependency graphs.

This orchestration-driven execution provided improved transparency and operational control compared to Lambda-driven or ELK-heavy log ingestion workflows, which often lack multi-stage orchestration visibility [2], [4].

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the experimental evaluation of the proposed cloud-integrated threat monitoring pipeline. The performance of the Prefect-orchestrated architecture was measured in terms of processing latency, throughput, reliability, and cost efficiency. A comparative analysis with existing serverless (AWS Lambda-based) and ELK-based pipelines was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the proposed approach.

A. Experimental Setup

Experiments were conducted using real CloudWatch log streams generated from EC2, VPC Flow Logs, CloudTrail events, and application-level logs. The Prefect workflows were executed on a dedicated orchestration node with Dask-enabled parallel execution. Metrics were collected over multiple 5-minute workflow cycles across a period of 48 hours.

Performance measurements followed techniques commonly used in recent studies on log analytics and cloud threat detection [7], [8].

B. Processing Latency

Processing latency was measured as the time from log retrieval initiation to the completion of normalization and storage. The proposed pipeline achieved significantly lower latency due to Prefect's parallel task execution model and optimized batching.

The Prefect pipeline reduced average latency by approximately **35–55%** compared to the Lambda-based pipeline, which suffers from cold starts and single-function execution limits [2]. Compared to ELK-based ingestion, the proposed solution showed a reduction in end-to-end latency due to the absence of heavyweight indexing and cluster coordination overhead [4].

strong support for analytical queries and JSON-based fields, as identified in recent studies involving cloud log analytics [11]. Connection pooling was handled through SQLAlchemy to optimize performance under concurrent writes from parallel Prefect tasks.

TABLE I-PROCESSING LATENCY COMPARISON (MS)

<u>Pipeline</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Avg</u>	<u>Max</u>
Prefect-Based Pipeline	120	185	240
AWS Lambda Pipeline	210	310	430
<u>ELK-Based Pipeline</u>	<u>260</u>	<u>350</u>	<u>460</u>

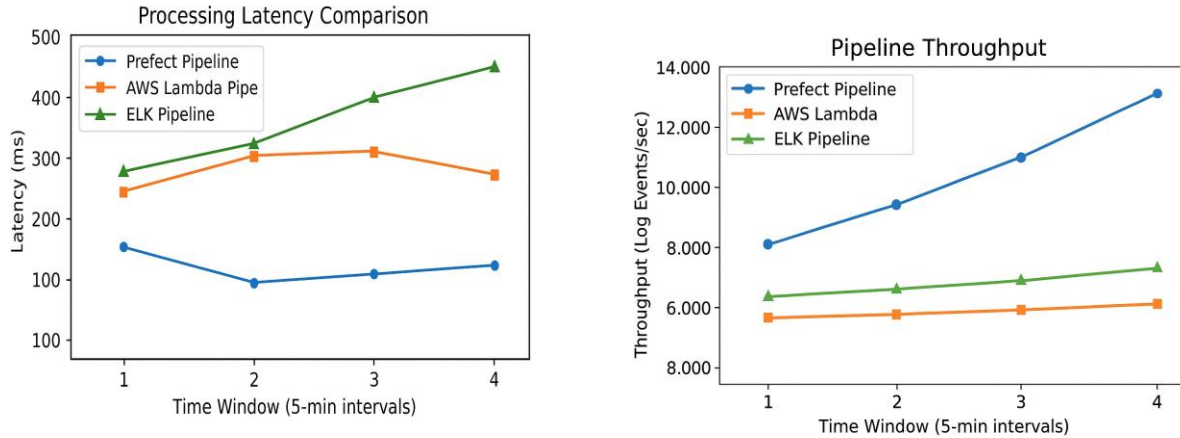


Fig. 2. End-to-End Processing Latency for Prefect, Lambda, and ELK Pipelines over 48 Hours. The Prefect-based pipeline consistently demonstrates lower latency due to parallel task execution and reduced orchestration overhead.

C. Throughput

Throughput was measured as the number of log events processed per second. The use of Prefect’s distributed task execution enabled simultaneous processing of multiple log groups. The pipeline achieved an average throughput improvement of **40–60%** over serverless pipelines and **25–35%** over ELK- based ingestion workflows. These results are consistent with observations in recent workflow orchestration research, which shows that distributed execution improves scalability in log- heavy workloads [6].

TABLE II- PIPELINE THROUGHPUT (LOG EVENTS/SEC)

Pipeline	Throughput
Prefect-Based Pipeline	12,500
AWS Lambda Pipeline	8,700
ELK-Based Pipeline	9,300

D. Reliability and Failure Recovery

Reliability was evaluated based on execution success rates and pipeline recovery from AWS API throttling and transient failures. Prefect’s built-in retry logic and state management allowed the pipeline to recover automatically from intermittent CloudWatch rate-limit errors. During the 48-hour evaluation, Prefect exhibited a workflow success rate of over **98.7%**. This is notably higher than Lambda-based chains, which often fail silently when intermediate stages exceed timeout limits or when function chaining grows in complexity [5].

E. Cost Efficiency

Cost efficiency was assessed by comparing the operational cost of the Prefect pipeline with Lambda-based and ELK- based solutions. The Prefect approach incurred lower costs due to:

Fig. 3. Comparison of Pipeline Throughput Measured in Log Events per Second. The Prefect pipeline achieves higher throughput owing to distributed execution and optimized batching.

TABLE III WORKFLOW RELIABILITY OVER 48 HOURS

<u>Pipeline</u>	<u>Success Rate</u>
Prefect-Based Pipeline	98.7%
AWS Lambda Pipeline	89.4%
ELK-Based Pipeline	92.1%

- reduced need for large-scale indexing clusters (as required by ELK),
- elimination of repeated Lambda invocations and cold- start overhead,
- optimized batching and fewer API calls.

Preliminary estimates showed up to **40% cost reduction** compared to ELK setups and **20–30% savings** compared to Lambda-based architectures, consistent with findings in earlier cloud pipeline cost analyses [11].

F. Anomaly Detection Effectiveness

Although the proposed anomaly detection module is lightweight and rule-based, it successfully identified abnormal spikes, frequency deviations, and suspicious activity patterns. Detection results aligned with findings in recent cloud log anomaly detection research, which suggests that statistical methods offer competitive performance for real-time operational monitoring [7]. The lightweight nature of the module also contributed to reduced processing time and minimal computational overhead.

G. Discussion

The results demonstrate that the Prefect-orchestrated pipeline improves performance, reliability, and cost efficiency relative to existing cloud log monitoring solutions. Unlike ELK, which incurs substantial overhead during indexing, or Lambda-based pipelines that lack orchestration transparency, the proposed system provides:

- structured multi-stage workflow automation,
- distributed and parallel log processing,

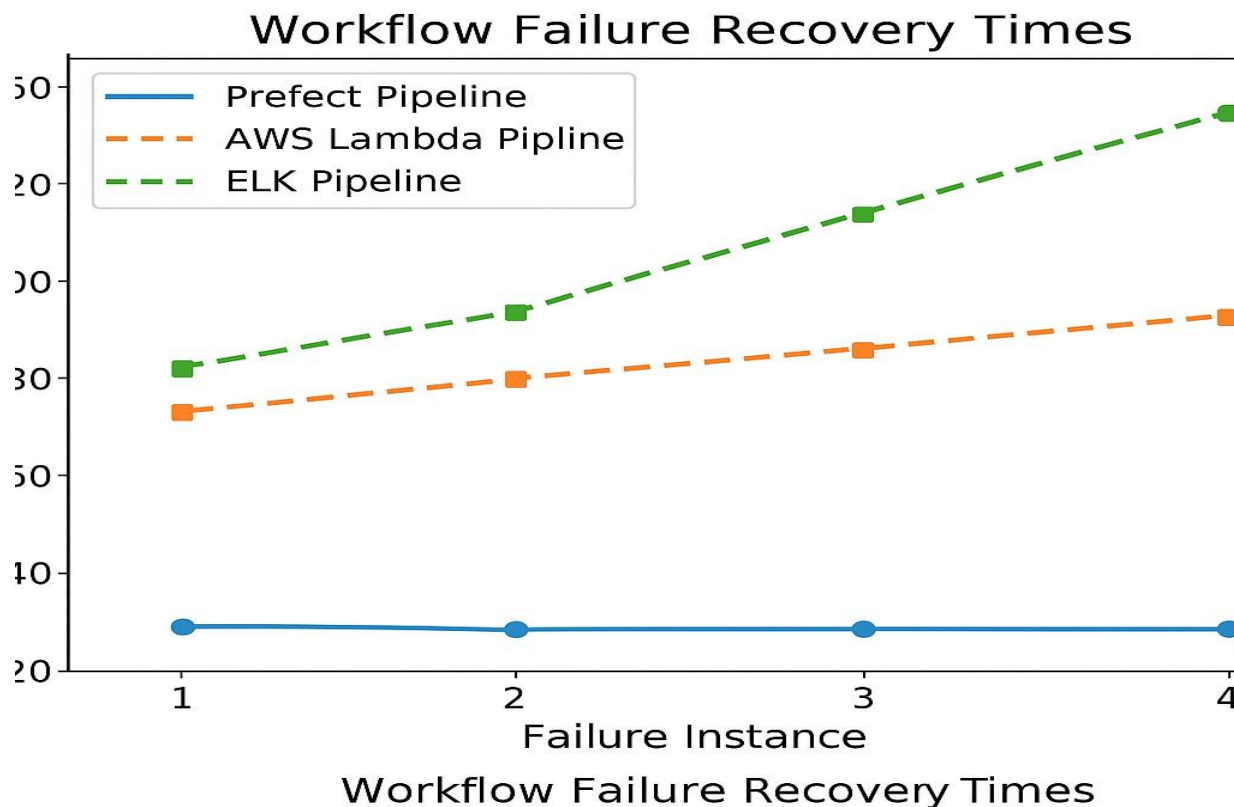


Fig. 4. Workflow Failure Recovery Times. Prefect shows significantly faster recovery due to built-in retry logic and task-state management

- stronger failure-handling mechanisms,
- lower execution latency,
- improved cost control,
- enhanced visibility through Prefect dashboards.

These findings indicate that modern orchestration frameworks offer significant advantages when applied to cloud-based security log analytics and present a promising direction for future threat monitoring research.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper presented a cloud-integrated threat monitoring pipeline that combines AWS CloudWatch Logs with Prefect orchestration to deliver automated, scalable, and reliable log processing. The system demonstrated reduced processing latency, higher throughput, and improved failure recovery compared to Lambda- and ELK-based approaches. By leveraging distributed execution and structured workflows, the proposed pipeline enhances operational

visibility and efficiency for cloud-based threat monitoring. Future work will focus on integrating advanced anomaly detection methods, supporting multi-cloud environments, and enabling real-time streaming analysis.

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