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**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE,
SUSTAINABILITY, AND EQUITY:
CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES FACED BY
JANA OF WAYANAD DISTRICT, KERALA,
INDIA**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of**

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In

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Abstract

This social work thesis examines the role of social workers in supporting and creating spaces for self-determining Jana¹ welfare. It explores Jana's experiences of injustices, future aspirations, and worldviews underpinning sustainability and explores the supports needed to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes. Rooted in a historical analysis of contemporary issues using colonisation literature, this research employs a green social work theoretical framework to contextualise key concepts and their interconnectedness. The socio-historic ontological stance acknowledges the socially and historically constructed nature of Jana's reality. Utilising community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) aligned with inbetweener epistemological positioning, this study employed a critical constructive conceptual framework to engage the participants in co-creating knowledge. Methodologically, this study utilised a three-tiered approach comprising of koottam (community meetings), photovoice, and in-depth interviews to gather data from the Jana communities.

The key research findings confirm that Jana, similar to Indigenous communities worldwide experience environmental, social, and human rights violations. Secondly, Jana's worldview of coexisting with nature provided knowledge about how traditional knowledge can achieve global sustainability. Furthermore, it emphasised the relevance of Governments partnering with communities for conservation. Thirdly, the Jana had clear visions and hopes about their future amidst their experiences of violations. However, the constant neglect of the governance systems contributed to feeling of hopelessness and concern about their future.

¹In this thesis, Adivasi are referred to as Jana, with the rationale for this terminology explained in Chapter one-Introduction, under the section, Introducing Jana (p.16).

Therefore, their land struggles remained alive for their children to have a better future. Lastly, the Jana shared their perspectives for achieving their welfare.

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. The significant implications and recommendations of the results included (1) acknowledging the significance of place belongingness within the environmental justice context, (2) environmental injustices epitomise and perpetuate other forms of injustices for Jana, (3) acknowledgement of Jana as Indigenous, (4) utilising strength-based social work practice framework with Jana, (5) recruitment of community-based cultural facilitator(s), and creating reflexive spaces for engaging Jana in social work research, and (6) strengthening social work education within educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies. These implications underscore the significance of addressing Jana's welfare from grassroots, strength-based, and community-driven perspective. To effect sustainable change, this study highlights revitalising social workers' roles in advocating and community collaboration at the grassroots level.

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VII
LIST OF FIGURES	1
LIST OF TABLES	3
GLOSSARY	4
PROLOGUE	9
CHAPTER ONE	15
INTRODUCTION	15
<i>Introducing Jana</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Decolonising labels: Jana communities</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Jana: Wayanad district of Kerala</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Participating Communities: Makkal and Kurichiya of Wayanad</i>	<i>22</i>
Paniyar: Originally the “Ippimala Makkal”	23
Kurichiyar: Hill or Malai Brahmins	27
<i>Pretext of Environmental Justice and Sustainability Concerns</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Sustainable Community & Environment for Social Work Lens: Study Rationale</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Aims and Research Questions.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Methodology and Methods</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Key terms and concepts.....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Structure of Thesis</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Chapter Conclusion.....</i>	<i>41</i>
CHAPTER TWO	43
CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND	43
<i>Past to Present: Historical analysis of Jana in Indian Sub-Continent.....</i>	<i>43</i>
Decline of Harappan (or Indus Valley) Civilisation and the Rise of Vedic Knowledge	46

Jana autonomy in the post-Vedic era	53
British Colonisation: Evicting Jana for Resource Extraction.....	55
Independent India: Continued Saga of Eviction	59
A Historical Analysis of Jana of Kerala	65
<i>Impact of Colonisation: Indigenous peoples and Jana communities</i>	71
<i>Harmonious co-existence vs conceptual rise of sustainability</i>	75
Challenges with Mainstream Environmentalism and Conservation Efforts	80
Relevance of Jana-led Sustainability Discourse in India	82
<i>Analysing Jana invisibility: Broadening of Indigenous land and sustainability struggles</i>	84
<i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	92
CHAPTER THREE	94
GREEN SOCIAL WORK: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND SUSTAINABILITY	94
<i>Contemplating a Theoretical Framework</i>	94
<i>Introducing and Situating Green Social Work Theory</i>	96
<i>Contextualising the key concepts and definitions</i>	100
Environmental injustice	101
Distribution justice: Inequitable sharing of environmental hazards and benefits	102
Procedural justice: Insensitive Governance and legal framework	104
Precautionary justice: Inclusive Environmental Practices	107
Social injustice.....	108
Addressing Human Rights Violations.....	113
Sustainability	117
<i>Aligning Green Social Work Theory with the Study's Objectives</i>	120
Strengths-based practice lens	122
Strengthening Grassroots Democracy through Social Work Practice	124
<i>Critique of Green Social Work</i>	126
<i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	129
CHAPTER FOUR.....	131
JANA ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, METHODOLOGY AND METHODS.....	131
' <i>Dominance of Historical</i> ': <i>Jana Ontology and Epistemology</i>	132

<i>Critical Constructivism Paradigm</i>	134
<i>Research Approach, Methodology, and Research Design</i>	137
Qualitative Exploratory Research Approach.....	138
Community-Based Participatory Action Research Methodology	139
Methodological Limitations.....	141
Methods from the Margins	142
<i>Research Design</i>	143
Koottam (Community Meeting)	144
Photovoice design	146
In-depth Interview Schedule design	147
<i>Research Process</i>	148
Research process outline	149
Recruitment of Cultural Facilitator and contact with NGO.....	151
Research Location and Rapport Building.....	152
Initiation of Research Process.....	153
Makkal: Community Engagement and Data Collection.....	155
Participant characteristics and Research Settings	155
Overall participant characteristics	157
Community Engagement and Data collection	157
Kurichiya: Community Engagement and Data Collection.....	160
Participant Characteristics and research setting.....	161
Ooru (Village) space	162
Overall participant characteristics	164
Community Engagement and data collection.....	165
Koha for the participants	167
<i>Data Analysis</i>	168
Makkal community.....	170
Kurichiya community.....	172
<i>Methodological Limitations</i>	175
<i>COVID19 Implications</i>	176

<i>Ethics Approval</i>	178
<i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	182
CHAPTER FIVE	183
RESONATING VOICES OF IPPIMALA MAKKAL (AKA. PANIYAR).....	183
<i>Findings</i>	184
<i>Construct of Self</i>	184
The Forgotten Past.....	185
Sense of belonging	186
<i>Bhūrahita or state of being without land</i>	188
Forest and Land Policies	188
Change in Subsistence patterns.....	189
No Land: “to live,” “practice culture”, or “bury dead”	190
“Encroaching the forest” that once belonged to them	194
Transience	196
Living Conditions.....	199
“How far to go to get water?”	199
“Life in Darkness”	201
“Walking through pocket roads and forest”	203
<i>Sociocultural and Economic challenges: “Meeting the two ends of lives”</i>	205
Sources of income.....	206
Challenge from unjust and inequitable food security system	207
Impacts on health and educational needs	210
Cultural diminution	213
Alcoholism and betel culture	214
Community response to socio-economic circumstances.....	215
Enduring Neglect and Ostracism: Makkal Perspectives	216
Government Blindness	217
“What is needed?” Versus “What is provided?”	219
Outsiders and Support organisations	221
<i>Picturing Tomorrow</i>	223
Expression of Critical Consciousness.....	223

Response to Struggle.....	224
Future hopes and aspiration	225
<i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	227
CHAPTER SIX	229
BATTLING LIFE OF INJUSTICES: THE WARRIORS OR KURICHIYAR	229
<i>Findings</i>	229
Our Past, Our Pride	230
Warriors settled in Wayanad	230
Kurichiya advocacy for land rights amid British colonisations	232
Sense of Self	233
Vicchēdanam: Colonisation and Exclusion from Forests	234
Life under Naduvazhi and British	234
Migration Influx.....	236
Post-independent Forest Policies and Exclusion	238
Continued Exclusion.....	239
Impacts of Exclusion from their Abode	241
Diminishing Tharavadu system.....	242
Rise of Landlessness	244
Past and Present: Changes to their Association to Forests.....	245
Shift in practices.....	247
Conflicts of the younger generation: Where do we fit?	250
Lost traditional educational and health system.....	252
Self-Sustenance: Socio-economic situation	254
Independent and Self-reliant communities	254
Farming challenges and their impacts on self-sustenance	257
Responses to financial constraints.....	258
Living Conditions.....	262
Transience	262
We walk to fetch water.....	265
How long to live in Darkness?.....	267
Isolation and Exclusion: Deplorable Road and Transport System	269

Hegemony: Government approaches and Outsider’s influence	273
Fear of appropriating Kurichiya land	273
Systemic neglect and inadequate supports	274
“Just Vote-banks”: Kurichiya Experiences of the Government	276
Outsider perspectives: How do we feel?	278
Bridged between the Government and Maoists	280
Unsustainable Initiatives: Disconnection that led to Destruction	281
Unsustainable Forest Conservation and Jana Exclusion	282
Impact of Unsustainable initiatives and Ecosystem deterioration	285
Future Hopes and Aspirations.....	287
Responses to Struggles.....	288
Future Conservation	289
Future hopes	291
<i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	292
CHAPTER SEVEN	294
DISCUSSION.....	294
<i>Reflecting on the Beginning</i>	294
<i>Environmental, Social, and Human Rights Violations faced by Jana</i>	296
Environmental injustices	297
Forcible deconstruction of spaces of belonging and identity.....	297
Commodification of land and displacement	304
Unfair share of environmental risks and benefits.....	310
Social Injustices: Denied Land Rights, Denied Social Rights	314
Assimilation of Subsistence, Health, and Educational systems	315
Distributive Unfairness: Access to Basic Resources	321
Human Right Violations	326
<i>Jana Worldviews: Way of Life that equates to Sustainability</i>	328
<i>Envisioning the Future</i>	334
Hopelessness from the Past and Ongoing Experiences	335
Achieving Sustainable community and environmental outcomes	337

<i>Interpreting the findings</i>	341
<i>Learnings for Social Work Practice</i>	344
Theoretical Implications for Social Work with Jana.....	344
Finding a space for “place” within environmental justice.....	344
Environmental Injustice as the epitome of injustice.....	346
Jana and the politics of indigeneity	348
Social work practice implications to support Jana.....	349
Strength-based Jana framework	349
Engaging with Jana for Social Work Research	352
Social work education implications.....	355
<i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	356
CHAPTER EIGHT	358
CONCLUSION	358
<i>Research aims and questions</i>	358
<i>Methodology</i>	359
<i>Key Findings</i>	361
What are the current social, environmental, and human rights violations that Jana faces?.....	361
Relevance of sense of belongingness and identity to land.....	362
Systemic neglect	362
Land privatisations and unsustainable growth	363
Assimilation of Jana’s self-sufficient systems	363
Alienated citizenship	364
How do Jana aspire and hope to envision their future?	364
Hopelessness of the existing State care.....	365
Hopelessness for better change.....	365
How do Jana’s worldviews inform their relationship with land and conservation?	366
Relationship with the environment	366
Ambivalence towards collaborations.....	367
What is the community’s proposition on devising sustainable remedies to enhance the living situation in Jana and, at the same time, address the current global environmental crises?	367
Restoring access and autonomy over traditional land.....	368

Supporting cultural revival and self-sufficiency	368
Equitable access to essential resources	369
Restoring the pride of Jana	369
Reviving traditional knowledge systems.....	369
<i>Implications and Recommendations for Social Work Practice</i>	370
Finding a space for place in the environmental justice context	371
Theoretical reconceptualisation of environmental justice.....	371
Acknowledging traditional land belongingness during practice	371
Environmental injustice is the epitome of injustice	372
Reconceptualising environmental justice as a form of social justice	374
Implementing new knowledge in practice	374
Jana and the Politics of Indigeneity.....	375
Educating Jana of UNDRIP	376
Advocating with Jana for their welfare	376
Strength-based framework	377
Social Workers as advocates for community-led progress	378
Social Workers Advocating for Grassroots Democracy for Government.....	380
Engaging with Jana for Social Work Research.....	381
Recruiting cultural facilitators from within the community.....	381
Creating a structure for reflexive praxis for action research.....	382
Social work education implications.....	382
Jana epistemology in social work education.....	383
Recognition in fieldwork education.....	383
Policy and Institutional Adoption	383
<i>Breathing life into “Grassroots democracy”</i>	384
<i>Future opportunities for research</i>	385
<i>Limitations of the study</i>	386
<i>Concluding reflections</i>	387
APPENDICES	390
APPENDIX I.....	391

APPENDIX II.....	392
APPENDIX III.....	394
APPENDIX IV.....	396
APPENDIX V	398
APPENDIX VI.....	400
APPENDIX VII.....	401
APPENDIX VIII.....	402
APPENDIX IX.....	403
APPENDIX X (A)	405
APPENDIX X (B)	406
APPENDIX X (C)	407
APPENDIX XI (A)	408
APPENDIX XI (B)	410
APPENDIX XI (C)	412
APPENDIX XII.....	414
APPENDIX XIII.....	416
APPENDIX XIV.....	417
APPENDIX XV.....	418
REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	436

List of Figures

SNo	List of Figures	Page Number
1.1	Map of Kerala showing the 14 districts (Kerala Travel Map, 2024)	20
1.2	A Makkal colony in Wayanad (Krishnan, 2019)	27
2.1	Key Events	87
3.1	Representation of Green Social Work theoretical framework	120
4.1	Research Paradigm (Prabhakar, 2020)	136
4.2	Outline of Research Process	150
4.3	A Kurichiya child using bow and arrow	162
4.4	Kurichiyar Tharavadu	163
5.1	Photo by Eshane (2020) from the photovoice project	193
5.2	Photo by Chigun (2020) from the photovoice project	194
5.3	Photo by Chandera (2020) from photovoice project	197
5.4	Photo by Chandera (2020) from photovoice project	197
5.5	Photo by Kunjan (2020) from photovoice project	200
5.6	Photo by Vellukkan (2020) from photovoice project	202
5.7	Photo by Kunjan from Photovoice project	203
5.8	Photo by Vinod from photovoice project	204
5.9	Photo by Vijayan from photovoice project	204
5.10	Photo by Santha from the photovoice project	209
6.1	Photo taken of Villoli Tharavadu land	243
6.2	Photo by Bindu (2020) from the photovoice project	263
6.3	Photo by Sarin (2020) from photovoice project	264

6.4	Photo by Sindhu (2020) from the photovoice project	266
6.5	Photo by Nanthan (2020) from the photovoice project	266
6.6	Photo by Aravindhnan (2020) from the photovoice project	268
6.7	Photo by Balakrishnan (2020) from the photovoice project	269
6.8	Photo by Vinod (2020) from the photovoice project	270
6.9	Photo by Thangam (2020) from the photovoice project	272
6.10	Photo by Sabitha (2020) from the photovoice project	284
7.1	Outline of the key areas identified under environmental, social, and human rights violations.	297
7.2	A Jana carrying his deceased wife back to his village (Khan, 2017)	320
7.3	Ripple effect of Environmental Injustice	347
7.4	Strength-based framework	351
7.5	Internal and External barriers to effective community engagement	353
8.1	Ripple Effect of Environmental Injustice	373
8.2	Strength-based Framework	379

List of Tables

SNo	Title	Page Number
2.1	Chronological overview of the historical period relevant to the Indian Sub-continent	44
2.2	Table Collating various studies and their limitations that discuss the original inhabitants of Harappan civilisation	49
2.3	Legislation, their enactments, and significant patterns that contributed to Jana displacement	61
3.1	The failure of State to address socioeconomic, health, and educational dimensions of Jana wellbeing	110
3.2	Table showing the human injustice violations among Jana	114
4.1	Table showing Categorisation of sub-themes into major themes.	171
4.2	Table showing Categorisation of sub-themes into major themes.	173
7.1	Significant findings and inferences related to environmental injustices	298
7.2	Summary of findings under commodification of land	304
7.3	Findings under the theme unfair share of environmental risks and benefits	311
7.4	Findings related to the theme assimilation of subsistence, health, and educational systems	315
7.5	Summary of significant issues faced by Jana	322
7.6	Jana's experience of injustice as a violation of constitutional rights	326
7.7	Findings on Jana worldviews on sustainability	329
7.8	Few illustrations from the research findings showing the gap between services and needs	335
7.9	Jana's proposition to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes	338

Glossary

1. **Adivasi:** Meaning “first inhabitants,” commonly referred to as Schedule Tribes in India. In this study, they are called Jana.
2. **Ammayi:** The wife of the Karanavar in a mittom, responsible for managing household affairs, delegating tasks, and participating in rituals.
3. **Angala:** Means “brother.”
4. **Anganwadi:** Anganwadi is a form of free rural childcare center in India, initiated by the Indian government in 1975 under the Integrated Child Development Services program to address issues of child hunger and malnutrition. It provides basic health care, nutrition, pre-school education, and support services for children under six, as well as pregnant and lactating women.
5. **Anushuchit Jana:** Refers to “protected people.” A term used in the Sanskrit version of the Indian Constitution to describe Adivasi or schedule tribe communities.
6. **Aryan:** Originally referred to an ancient Indo-European-speaking people from Iran and northern India.
7. **Bhagavathy:** A Hindu goddess widely worshipped in South India, often considered a manifestation of Shakti or the divine feminine energy.
8. **Bharathmatha:** A national personification of India as a mother goddess, symbolising the nation’s unity, strength, and cultural heritage.
9. **Bhūrahita:** State of landlessness.
10. **Birhor:** A nomadic Jana community primarily found in the states of Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal in India.
11. **Brahman:** A member of the highest caste in the traditional caste system, typically associated with religious duties, scholarship, and the priesthood.
12. **Chala:** Home unit within the Makkal padi (hamlet).
13. **Chaturvarna:** The four-caste system in ancient Indian society.
14. **Chenthamara Pakshi:** A bird associated with the red lotus.
15. **Cherokee:** A Native American tribe originally from the southeastern United States, known for their cultural heritage and language.

16. **Churam:** A term meaning “mountain pass,” often used to refer to routes through mountainous terrain, such as the Thamarassery Churam in Kerala.
17. **Dravida:** The origin of the Sanskrit word drāviḍa is from the language Tamil. In the Sanskrit tradition the word drāviḍa was also used to denote the geographical region of South India.
18. **Dvija:** Born twice.
19. **Jana:** Adivasi or Scheduled Tribes; the focus group of this study.
20. **Janmi:** Landlord.
21. **Jalanidhi:** Rural water supply and sanitation project in Kerala, aimed at providing sustainable drinking water and improving sanitation facilities in rural areas.
22. **Kaavu:** A sacred grove or forest, often dedicated to a local deity or spiritual practice, commonly found in Kerala and other parts of India.
23. **Kakkappattu:** A traditional form of folklore, often in the form of songs or stories, passed down through generations..
24. **Kalapangal:** Refers to revolts or uprisings, particularly in the context of Kerala’s history.
25. **Kalari Gurukkal:** A master or teacher of Kalaripayattu, the ancient martial art form of Kerala.
26. **Karnavar:** The head or leader of a joint family in the Kurichiya community, responsible for managing family affairs.
27. **Karumam:** Village community of the Makkal.
28. **Kattiyambhu:** Refers to a type of traditional arrow with sharp end used for hunting.
29. **Kshatriya:** Member of the warrior or military class in Hindu society, traditionally responsible for protection and governance.
30. **Kiowa:** Native American tribe historically located in the Great Plains, particularly in Oklahoma.
31. **Kootam:** Community meeting.
32. **Kudikettu:** Construction of a house or settlement.
33. **Kudumbhasree:** A community-based initiative in Kerala aimed at empowering women through self-help groups, focusing on social, economic, and cultural development.
34. **Kundalpani / Nilpu Pani:** Refers to bonded labour, particularly in the context of rural agricultural labour.
35. **Kurichiyabhasha:** Language spoken by Kurichiya.
36. **Kurivechavan:** Someone who takes aim or targets.

37. **Mahabharata:** Sanskrit epic of ancient India.
38. **Maoists:** known as Naxalites or Naxals carry out insurgencies against the Indian Government advocating for rights of forest dwellers.
39. **Māori:** Indigenous people of New Zealand.
40. **Malai:** Refers to a hill or elevated region, often used in geographic contexts in this study such as Ippimala.
41. **Marumakkathayam:** A matrilineal system of inheritance prevalent in Kerala, where property, including land, is passed down through the maternal side of the family.
42. **Mittom:** Collection of houses within each settlement.
43. **Moopan:** A traditional leader or elder in a community, often involved in decision-making or conflict resolution.
44. **Mottambhu:** Type of arrow with a blunt edge, traditionally used to scare away animals.
45. **Naduvazhi/ Zamindar:** Refers to the landowners or feudal lords, particularly in the context of rural governance or administration. The system where large portions of land were owned indiscriminately by a Naduvazhi/Zamindar is called Zamindari or Naduvazhi system.
46. **Ooru:** Hamlet.
47. **Padi:** Hamlet of the Makkal community.
48. **Pananpaattu:** Traditional songs or chants performed by the Panan community, often related to folklore or rituals.
49. **Panchayath:** Local government body consisting of five elected representatives from the village population in India. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) refer to the local governance structures established under the 73rd Amendment Bill, now present in all villages across India.
50. **Pandalpaattu:** A traditional form of folk song sung during pandal (temporary structures or tents) gatherings, especially during festivals or social events in Kerala.
51. **Pantheerappanmara:** Refers to “12 ancestors.”
52. **Paniyabasha:** Language spoken by Paniya.
53. **Pattayam:** Pattayam or Patta is a document that serves as a record of the land extent owned by an individual in a specific Village/Taluk, associated with a particular survey number or subdivision.
54. **Pela:** Community restriction to participating in any activities where inside or outside the community following an event of death or similar significant event, as an expression

of respect. For example, whenever someone in the family dies, the close members of the family will be under *pela* to participate in any auspicious ceremonies or functions.

55. **Pengala:** Means “sister.”
56. **Pire** or **chala:** Refers to a specific term that likely denotes a particular type of object, concept, or practice, but further context is needed to define it fully.
57. **Raja:** King or a monarch.
58. **Rajavamsham:** The lineage or dynasty of a king, often referring to the royal family or the descendants of a ruler.
59. **Ramayana:** Sanskrit epic of ancient India.
60. **Samara:** Refers to a battle or conflict.
61. **Sanskrit:** One of India’s ancient languages.
62. **Sarammar:** Officers.
63. **Shudra:** The lowest caste in the traditional caste system, traditionally associated with service or labour roles.
64. **Sreekoil:** Sanctum of a temple.
65. **Teo Reo Māori:** The Māori language, an Indigenous language of New Zealand.
66. **Terra nullis:** A legal term meaning “land belonging to no one,” used to describe land that is considered unclaimed or uninhabited, often used in historical contexts of colonisation.
67. **Tharavadu:** A traditional family or ancestral home.
68. **Thodalum theendalum:** Practice of untouchability by Kurichiya to all castes except Brahmins and reluctant take food with other castes except Nairs and Brahmins.
69. **Therandu kalyanam:** A celebration among Kurichiya community that involves the announcement of girl’s menarche.
70. **Thula pathu:** The celebration among Kurichiya community Thulampathu or Putthari (meaning ‘new rice’) is significant for this paddy farming culture, and often involves going hunting in the afternoon. On this day, special rituals are performed on the paddy fields.
71. **Utsavam:** A festival or celebration, associated with temple rituals, cultural events, or seasonal celebrations.
72. **Vaishya:** A member of the third caste in the traditional Hindu caste system, traditionally associated with commerce, trade, and agriculture.
73. **Vayal:** A field or farmland, often used in rural contexts to refer to agricultural land.

74. **Vicchēdanam**: Refers to separation or forced removed, specifically in the context of exclusion from land.
75. **Vishu**: The festival that marks the beginning of sowing season or sometimes referred to as farmer's new year.

Prologue

‘... before you pluck a leaf, you must ask the plant and Mother Earth. You are accountable for everything you do here, whether to humankind or the environment.’

Santhakumari (2012)

In laying the groundwork for this research, the prologue section introduces the researcher and outlines the journey leading to this topic, effectively delineating the researcher’s position in this social work study to co-create community-based solutions for Jana welfare.

I belong to the Thiyya community, also legislatively known as Other Backward Caste (OBC) in India. My childhood was filled with vivid memories of my grandparents’ stories and discussions about the challenges that their generation, as well as our ancestors, overcame to secure the privilege of independence for us. Amidst the tales of bygone days, a deep sense of national pride and environmental stewardship were ingrained in me. I was, and am, still grateful to our ancestors, as their struggles for independence granted us access to our traditional lands, alleviated the fear of upper castes and British rule, bestowed the freedom to dress as we pleased, facilitated the right to education, and, significantly, established a democratic framework.

Nevertheless, amidst the tales of triumph of our ancestors, I was intrigued by the feeling of hurt and shame that my parents and grandparents reflected from growing up in a stereotypical and biased world. They were consistently engaged in the struggle to forge new identities. And unfortunately, their hurt, shame, and guilt manifested into our lives. I grew up listening to deeply etched stories of how my ancestors were treated inhumanely by the British

colonisers and Naduvazhi², wherein they claimed the finest yields of our labour, leaving our large joint families and others to fend for the leftovers. They also recollected the precarity in owing land as displeasing the Naduvazhi or British could lead to dispossession, or even worse. The situation was so severe that some faced violent abuse if they accidentally crossed paths with people from high castes, who felt the need to go back home to take a shower to cleanse themselves. Yet, the women from the lower castes were often exploited for pleasures of those from higher castes and the British, stripping them of dignity. There was even a time when women had to pay taxes to be able to cover their breasts, a privilege reserved only for women from higher castes and the British. This oppression, stemming from the caste system and colonialism, underscored the power dynamics driven by superiority, resource acquisition and control. As the torchbearers of a generation who witnessed the end of colonisation, my grandparents became the subjects of the ballads they sang. My granddad's decision to join the Indian army to move away from his family, along with his efforts after independence to lobby government officers to change his caste certificate, reflects the internalised struggles of his generation. Perhaps his actions were aimed at aligning with a more dignified national identity, transcending caste-based stereotypes.

Although caste-freedom was achieved in 1947 with independence, it continues to be practiced and preached indiscreetly. As a child, I grew up believing that people belonging to Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Scheduled Castes (SC) led a primitive life in the forests, uncivilised compared to us. One of my earliest memories that may have contributed to shaping my perspective was when I observed my mother panicking as she saw me eating food that Kaali (who worked as our maid belonging to ST/ SC communities) brought from her home. I must have been around three years old, and my mother was worried about the quality of the food

² The system where large portions of land were owned indiscriminately by a Zamindar/ Aristocrat/ landlord.

that Kaali brought. My further understanding of such caste-based hierarchies came at school³ when I was nearly nine years old when my teacher asked me to find my caste, which I did not know until then. At school, my parents asked me to lie that I belonged to middle-caste, not backward. Later, learning from my parents that we belonged to a backwards caste (administratively categorised as Other Backward Castes or OBC) made me realise that several others higher on the social hierarchy thought about us much the same way we felt about Kaali and other under-privileged communities. My parents tried hard not to talk about our cultural identity to erase it from us. I noticed that unlike us, the privileged communities were not embarrassed to share their heritage. To them, caste showed their pride, but for many like us it was an identity forcibly knitted in shame.

Moreover, the hurt that the women in our communities suffered with colonisation and the caste system translated into protecting women from the outside world by confining them to their homes. To many like me, being born a female naturally disadvantaged me compared to my brothers or other males from dreaming big. From a young age, I had to resist the impacts of patriarchy and pervasive influence of male chauvinist views that limited my aspirations and worldview. One thing I was sure about was that I did not want to be a victim of such hegemony like my mother or my grandmother. Instead, I aspired to live my life to reflect the times of my ancestors, before colonisation when women had the strength to self-determine their future and needs. In textbooks, we personify women as our nation (Bharathmatha meaning mother India), language (mother-tongue⁴), and mother Earth, yet sadly, often the respect towards women in real life is tragically neglected.

³ I completed my schooling in Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates.

⁴ The first language that a person learns and understands, usually from home during childhood.

Lastly, from my grandparents' time (or much before then) to now, the notion that lighter skin was superior to darker skin has persisted. As a child, I have observed my younger brother getting taunted for his darker skin and observing people recommending home remedies to whitewash the brown in us. Through these experiences, I internalised the idea that being lighter skinned made us superior. Recently, my brother resorted to skin bleaching treatments, reflecting his internal struggles where the only thing bothering him was his melanin-gifted skin.

This introspective journey also led me to question the foundations of underlying caste-based hierarchy, the perception of lighter skin as superior, and the privilege males held compared to females or other genders. In my pursuit, I found resonance between my experiences and stories my grandparents shared, indicating that their insights and hurt reflected the past and translated into the grim realities we face today. My subsequent vision to become a social worker and specialise in community development was a journey against my own internalised stereotypes as I realised that the same country that preached diversity also somehow incubated self-despise.

During my social work degree, I interned extensively with Jana communities and with organisations that worked with them. My fascination deepened as I observed how they were undergoing a process of assimilation and subjugation, reminiscent of what my community experienced before becoming mainstream. Just as we were once considered primitive and unworthy, these communities face similar biases, often subjected to taunts about their lifestyle, darker skin, and the vulnerability of their women compared to mainstream societies. I was amazed at how, despite numerous challenges, they upheld the values of identity and environmental stewardship. These were aspects I had only been acquainted through my grandmother's tales and a few annual practices in my own community, unaware of their significance in giving back to the environment. I connected with their voices even more after I

volunteered to support Jana communities in the aftermath of the Kerala floods in 2018, wherein they raised concerns about environmental sustainability despite having no textbook knowledge. Often as we discussed climate change at home, I recollected how my grandparents often told me our actions provoked mother nature's displeasure. This notion resonated even more deeply during my subsequent work with Jana communities and the rich experiential knowledge that they showed, clearly explaining the reasons for the environmental catastrophe as a consequence of human greed. Indeed, their current narratives mirror our past experiences, and my aspiration recognises the imperative to assist them in avoiding the mainstream assimilation that my community faced. In fact, my journey to this research topic is my quest to achieve Jana welfare as a social worker, to amplify the voices of the marginalised, and to advocate for policies that address both environmental sustainability and social justice. It also stems from my realisation that our generation bears the responsibility to carry forward the legacy of my ancestors beyond the freedom struggle, to achieve just societies with a proud identity and a strong connection to the environment.

The purpose of this section is to carefully provide a researcher positioning within this study, which has both shades of an insider and outsider. My positioning as an outsider emanates from the privileges that I have had from leading a comfortable life outside India, away from any caste-based ostracism that many of my communities had to face like Jana communities. My insider realm stems from the shared values of giving back to the environment and the historic experiences of assimilation into mainstream society, thereby being uprooted from everything that defined my identity. Hence, moving forward, I have consciously refrained from using personal pronouns like "I" or "me" to underscore that this research extends beyond the realm of self and is concerned primarily with Jana communities. Nevertheless, this research connects to my own reality of estrangement and disconnection from my heritage and conduits my commitment to spotlight the resilience of communities like Jana who persevered to

maintain their unique identity and commitment to their lands against the tides of negative stereotypes and postcolonial influences. Hence, the following social work research aims to co-create ways to support the communities to create sustainable community and environmental outcomes in the face of cultural decline and environmental catastrophe.

Chapter One

Introduction

“Give us something poisonous to eat... finish us off right here. That’s fine. But don’t uproot us from here.”

(Survival International, 2014, pg. 1)

In the evolving landscape of global sustainability and Indigenous environmental justice, a profound realisation has emerged, highlighting the urgent need to acknowledge and protect traditional land rights and the associated knowledge of Indigenous communities for a sustainable future. Despite ongoing global discussions focusing on sustainable development by partnering with traditional societies, such discourses have not materialised in India due to the enigma of Jana’s indigeneity. Notwithstanding Jana communities steward biodiversity hotspots through sustainable environmental praxis, state and central Governments have not engaged with communities to create sustainable community and environmental outcomes. Instead, these communities confront the threat of eviction from their traditional lands, which forms the basis for their knowledge, livelihoods, and overall well-being. Jana communities, administratively known as Scheduled Tribes, occupy the resource-dense regions of the Indian sub-continent, where they have endured ongoing environmental and social injustices, as well as human rights violations, since colonisation. Considering these occurrences, this research aims to identify Jana’s self-determined of injustices, their vision for the future, their worldviews that inform sustainability, and their proposals for the supports needed to achieve sustainable community

and environmental outcomes. By analysing Jana's self-determined views, this study considers how social workers can support and create spaces for Jana to achieve their welfare.

This chapter introduces the study by presenting Jana communities and providing a brief background to this study, covering the study rationale, research questions and objectives, methods and methodology, and key terms and concepts. The chapter concludes by outlining the thesis structure.

Introducing Jana

This section introduces Jana communities of India, most commonly called the Scheduled tribes or tribes or Adivasi, who are the central focus of this study. Among the 5,653 distinct communities in India, there are 705 Jana communities (Census India, 2011). According to the 2011 census⁵, the Scheduled Tribes include about 104 million, comprising 8.6% of the total population in India, making India an abode for more than a quarter of the world's total Indigenous population of 370 million (Cariño et al., 2010; Census India, 2011). They live embedded in their social, cultural, and religious values centered on their relationship with the natural environment⁶. However, various events including migration, invasion, natural calamities, and colonisation⁷ have resulted in their disconnection from their traditional land

⁵ The most recent census in Kerala took place in 2011, and the next scheduled census has been postponed to 2025.

⁶ Discussed in Chapter two- Contextual Background, under, Harmonious co-existence Vs Conceptual rise of sustainability (p.75).

⁷ Discussed in detail in Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

and practices, thereby widening their experiences of environmental and social injustices and human rights violations.

This section has three parts. The first part justifies the appropriate labels to refer to these ethnic communities using historical scholarships of colonisation. The second part introduces the research location, mirroring the broader scope of Jana communities. Lastly, the third part provides a brief overview of the issues faced by Jana relevant to this study.

Decolonising labels: Jana communities

This section uses the decolonisation literature to analyse the appropriate use of the term to refer to the subjects of the study.

As stated previously, Jana communities are most commonly referred to as scheduled tribes or simply tribes in India. The use of tribe as a derogatory reference emerged during the 19th century to distinguish the colonised from the settler colonisers in Native America to imply lesser political status to the Indigenous peoples (Colson, 1986). Early ethnographic studies, which rapidly surged during this time, popularised using the terms tribe and primitives to refer to Indigenous communities (Sen, 2017). One of the most influential accounts was Morgan's (1877), in which he created a general scheme of human social evolution through three broad stages, from savagery to barbarism and then to civilisation. His system positioned Indigenous communities within an evolutionist perspective that assumed they were primitive societies. Morgan (1877) also stated the African and the Indian ethnic communities belong to the savagery and barbarian stages of evolution, respectively. Colonisation further institutionalised the term as an administrative category throughout the colonised world (Sneath, 2016). Later

ethnographic accounts revealed that the epithet most commonly found in association with the word tribe was savage (Yapp, 1983). As a result, in India, western ethnographers popularised the reference of tribal or primitive society for the Jana communities of India. Various colonial accounts of ethnographers characterised the Jana in India as blood-centric descent groups, savage, sensuous, body-centric, irrational, stateless, history-less, and so on (Guha, 2015; Sen, 2017; Skaria, 1997). Later in the 20th century, researchers like Fried (1966) and Southall (1970) questioned the validity and appropriateness of using the term tribe to describe certain social groups. However, the term was too established by then to be abandoned quickly (Sen, 2017). Hence, the use of the term tribe with a negative and evolutionary connotation justified colonisation by belittling the subjects in the colony during European colonial expansion and was widely used to refer to these ethnic communities since that colonial period.

In India, during the independence movement⁸, active efforts were made by the people of India against these negative connotations. During one such political insurgence in the 1930s, the term Adivasi was coined against the colonial Government and outside settlers voicing their aspirations for rights on traditional lands. The term Adivasi is derived from the Sanskrit language, “adi” meaning first or earliest, and “vasi” meaning inhabitant or resident (Das, 2015; Moodie, 2016; Sen, 2017). Thakkar Bappa (a non-Jana), a social reformer first referred to tribes as Adivasi during his efforts to uplift the Jana of Gujarat state in India (Barnes et al., 1993). Until then and since British colonisation, these communities were referred to as tribes. However, when India obtained independence from Britain in 1947, instead of progressing these discussions at a national level to obtain the self-determined views of these communities, the Constitution of India (effective January 26, 1950) assigned the designation of Scheduled Tribes

⁸ India gained independence from British in 1947 after nearly 200 years of colonisation British between 1600 ADE to 20th century.

to these communities. Since then, the term tribe has been used to designate those communities classified as tribes by colonial ethnographers.

Therefore, this study highlights the need for these ethnic communities to self-determine terms and concepts in their language to explain and interpret themselves in given times and situations, according to their aims, purposes, functions, practices, ideas, and aspirations. For the purpose of this research, the term Jana (means people) derived from the Sanskrit root, Jan meaning “to be born” or “to birth into” is considered to refer to these communities (Singh, 1972). This choice is grounded in the Sanskrit version of the Indian constitution, which designates these communities as Anushuchit Jana, signifying people in need of protection. It is also noteworthy that the transliteration of the names of most of the Indigenous communities worldwide simply means “people” or “their relation to their environment.” For example, the term Kiowa (one of the Indigenous communities of America) may be a variant of their name for themselves, Kai-i-gwu, which means “principal people” (Luebering, 2011, p.92). Similarly, in Teo Reo Māori, the term Māori (the Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa) means normal or natural (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2024). Likewise, for the Cherokee (the Indigenous peoples of America), the term means people of the cave (French & Hornbuckle, 1981). In a similar vein, the use of the term Jana can be justified instead of terms like tribes to describe these communities. Many sub-groups within Jana are also identified by names that emphasise their connection to nature and identity as a people. For example, the Kattunaikan of Kerala, whose name means “king of the forest,” and the Birhor of Jharkhand, meaning “people of the forest.”

It is therefore crucial to respond sensitively to ethnic groups who have been subjugated over the years and rendered powerless. Accordingly, this study invokes the use of terms such as Jana, Adivasi, ethnic communities, or indigene to represent these communities instead of following the colonial reference of the tribe. But at places where the term tribe is in use, this is

to underline the administrative perceptions rather than any particular mode of existence. By doing so, this study contributes to more inclusive and respectful reference and understanding of Jana communities and their lived experiences. A major future direction of this research is to focus on identifying the self-expressed voices of Jana to understand how they view themselves..

Jana: Wayanad district of Kerala

This study was carried out in the Wayanad district of Kerala. Figure 1.1 shows the State of Kerala, one of the 28 States in India, comprising 14 districts, bound by the forested hills of the Western Ghats in the east, and the Arabian Sea in the west.

Figure 1.1 Map of Kerala showing the 14 districts (Kerala Travel Map, 2024)



Kerala stands no different from the other states in terms of Jana land struggles. The Government of Kerala has classified Jana into 36 specific Scheduled Tribes categories in accordance with the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 2002.

According to the 2011⁹ census, Kerala had a total population of 33,406,061, of which Jana constituted about 484,839. Kerala is the most literate state in India with the literacy rate of 94 percent, and the state is renowned worldwide for the Kerala Model of Development, which was often portrayed as a universal model of development. This was because the State achieved equitable improvements in living conditions comparable to the social development indicators of the developed countries despite low per capita income (Jayakrishnan, 2016). However, despite its strong overall development indicators, the categorical exclusion of Jana from mainstream society during development, alongside corporate strategies that extracted benefits from their resource-rich lands have become the major pitfalls of this development model (Tharamangalam, 2006).¹⁰

The research location is Wayanad, situated in the north-east region of Kerala. Renowned as the epicenter of Jana culture and traditions in Kerala, Jana constitute 16 per cent of the district's total population. Prior to the arrival of the settled peasantry in the early 19th century, with colonisation bringing settlers from different parts of Kerala¹¹, Wayanad was home to most of the Jana population of Kerala. However, several communities migrated to other regions due to the pressures of colonisation and subsequent waves of migration. Nevertheless, even today, the Wayanad region has the highest number of Jana (151,443 population) across eleven Jana communities, including Paniyar, Kurichiyar, Kurumar/Mullu Kuruma, Adiya, Vettakuruman, Kattunaikan, Wayanad Kadar, Mala Araya, Karimpalan, Ulladan, and Thachanadan Moopan (Scheduled Tribes Development Department, 2011). Of these, Kattunaikan is classed as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribe (PVT) compared to other Jana

⁹ The most recent census in Kerala took place in 2011, and the next scheduled census has been postponed to 2025.

¹⁰ Detailed contextual information is provided in Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

¹¹ Discussed in Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

communities in Wayanad (KIRTADS, 2016). The population of Paniya is the largest with 69,116 forming 45.12 per cent of the total Jana population in Wayanad, while Kurichiyar is the second largest with 25,266 accounting for 16.49 per cent (Scheduled Tribes Development Department, 2013). In this study, Kurichiya and Paniya communities have participated in the data collection process. This study also uses the term Makkal instead of Paniya, as the latter carries connotations of slavery (discussed further in the next section). The next section introduces the Makkal and Kurichiya communities who participated in this study.

Participating Communities: Makkal and Kurichiya of Wayanad

This section introduces Makkal (also known as Paniya) and Kurichiya, the participating Jana communities in this research, each with distinctive socio-cultural, economic, and political status and histories of colonisation. It provides valuable context by outlining their historical, social, and political backgrounds. In doing so, this section establishes the background for the narratives of the Makkal and Kurichiya¹², including how they endured colonisation and the loss of their traditional lands.

¹² Discussed in result chapters- Chapter five (p.183) and Chapter six (p. 229).

Paniyar: Originally the “Ippimala Makkal”

Makkal (also known as Paniya¹³) are one of the five ancient clans of Tamil Nadu and Kerala and constitute one of the most vulnerable Jana communities in Kerala, forming some of the most common Jana settlements in these areas. Within their community, they speak the dialect paniyabhasha, which is a combination of Malayalam, Tamil, and Tulu. However, they fluently communicate with others in Malayalam.

The Makkal community has various legends surrounding their origin. One such narrative analysed by Nair (1976) sheds light on local folklore. According to this account, their story of origin traces back to Vaalakotamala, a hill in Northern Wayanad, also known as Ippimala. As per the folklore, Makkal are referred to as Ippimala Makkal, meaning, the children of the legendary ippu mountain range. Their story of subjugation predates British colonisation, commencing with the abduction and subjugation of two people of their community, angala (meaning brother) and pengala (meaning sister)¹⁴, by the Gounder and Uralikurumba communities. The angala and pengala were reared in captivity by the Uralikurumba for their Gounder masters, both of whom were settled cultivators. As the angala and pengala matured, a distinctive custom emerged wherein they regarded themselves as brother and sister from waist up and were permitted to be husband and wife from below the waist. Consequently, they reproduced and had ten children, five brothers and five sisters. These twelve ancestors are revered as pantheerappanmara, acknowledged as early ancestors by the Makkal community. In an alternative story, the Chetti and Goundar tribes decided to capture some people arriving from forests, clad in leaves and bark, to collect the leftover food after gatherings or festivals

¹³ Paniyar is derived from the Tamil word, pani meaning work, denoting to workers.

¹⁴ Angala and Pengala are believed to be their ancestors.

hosted by Chetti. The forest dwellers would call out, “ippi” “ippi” and swiftly retreated to the forest when they found food to eat. Eventually, the forests where they came from were referred to as Ippimala. The Chetti trapped two individuals during one such occasion and enslaved them to perform their labor.

Yet another version of the legend as quoted by Thurston (1897) details that the Nair janmi were annoyed with Makkal individuals who often destroyed crops and when alarmed, ran back to the forests calling out “ippi.” As such, the Goundar and Chetti decided to trap them. Subsequently, they caught a Makkal, who was treated well and released back to the forest. This was to deceive the others into believing that the life waiting for them outside was prosperous. Thus, the others followed, and they started to work for Chetti and Gounder. Although these three legends vary, a consistent element them is that the Makkal were enslaved by artisan tribes during the precolonial era.

Furthermore, literature states that the Ippimala Makkal began to be utilised as cheap labour since it was profitable for their landlords to have the Makkal settle in the village to do their labour. Hence, from forest dwellers, food-gatherers, and roaming tribes, the Ippimala Makkal gradually transitioned into slaves of Gounder and Chetti. This kind of bonded labour, called Kundalpani or Nippupani continued for centuries until the end of the British Raj in 1947. These bonded labour agreements were formalised between the landlords and Makkal during the annual temple festivals, such as Valloorkavu uthsavam (this festival still occurs annually, although without any bonded labour agreements, in the month of March and lasts for 14 days). The Makkal were obliged to pledge before the sreekoil (meaning Sanctum Sanctorum) of the Valloorkavu temple that they would serve their master till the temple festival in March the next year. References to how this commitment was sealed can be traced in the verses of their traditional song, Kakkappattu. This song frequently portrays the imagery of a helpless slave

coerced into servitude before the Goddess through a pledge. One such Kakkappattu reported by Devan (2006) that illustrated the plight of Makkal in the face of servitude is,

“Chinnine Pidichu kettunnallo

Udane Parayunu Chinnu Anneram

Enne Onnumcheyyaruhu Valluracha

Ivide Adimayil Nikkum Njanu

Vallooru Adimayayi Ninnu Chinnu

Kollathil Valloorekondaunnu.”

The above verses narrate the incident where Chinnu, a Makkal was taken captive and presented to the deity. Chinnu pleads with the deity to leave him unhurt and promises to serve his master in return. This relationship between the employer and the Makkal was exploitative with meager wages paid in terms of a measure of paddy. Similarly, a verse from another Kakkapattu mentioned by Santhosh (2008) is,

“Ba vo... Ba vo pulle

Amma Nhandukondu barum

Kuthakateerade

Ballikittade namukku

Inchu pattini aiyi povom

Bna vo..... ba bo

Bavombavom..... Ba vo...”

The above verse presents a mother singing a lullaby to her child. The mother pacifies the hungry child by promising to bring a crab to eat when she returns. But before that, she had to work in the fields as without this labour the family may not get food. Consequently, she expresses her fear and helplessness that she may not be able to quench her children’s hunger.

Overall, there are two significant observations in the above discussion. Firstly, the Makkal community experienced colonisation by artisan tribes and served as bonded labour long before British colonisation. This history of subjugation, assimilation, and exploitation persisted during British colonisation, marked by their role as a source of cheap labour. Following independence from British rule, the enactment of the Minimum Wages Act in 1951 increased the demand for Makkal as a labour force, leading to a transformation from a state of slavery to a daily waged lifestyle. Therefore, for the Makkal community, India’s independence merely signified a shift from enslavement to becoming daily-wage labourers, without any rehabilitation to preserve their ties with the environment.

After the enactment of the Land Acquisition Act of 1963, the Kerala Government provided collective land for the Makkal community to live in settlements. Despite an increase in population, they mostly continue to reside in the same allocated land. Today, Makkal typically live in settlements known as padi consisting of a cluster of huts, known as pire or chala with small courtyards. Several padi together are called karumam or village.

Figure 1.2 A Makkal colony in Wayanad (Krishnan, 2019)



It is quite common for the community to avoid any contact with outside communities apart from for employment. This tendency can be attributed to the centuries-old narratives of hegemony and the atrocities inflicted upon this Jana community by others.

The second observation is that the term Paniya carries a derogatory connotation, as it translates to slaves and was seemingly imposed on these groups as a reflection of their oppressed status. The origin of this term also signifies the transformation of the Ippimala Makkal into the slaves or Paniyar observed in contemporary times (Santhosh, 2008). Therefore, in this study, these communities will be referred to as Makkal, meaning children or people, instead of the term Paniya. This attempt aims to contribute to decolonising colonial epithets and encourage self-determination of the Makkal community as a future scope of the study.

Kurichiyar: Hill or Malai Brahmins

Kurichiyar, also known as the Malai (meaning hill) Brahmin, are a fierce warrior clan, practicing settled agriculture, with better socio-cultural indicators compared to other Jana communities. The name Kurichiya is derived from the phrase “kuri vechavan,” meaning he

who took the aim. This clan earned the title Kurichiyar from the Kottayam Raja due to their proficiency in archery and guerrilla warfare.

Among various legends of origin of Kurichiya communities, Ramachandran (2003) interprets the *pandalpattu* to decipher the mythological origins of the Kurichiya community. According to this account, before life came into existence, the sky occupied the upper realm, and the Earth, covered by the sea, lay far below. During this period, the Vadamara Bhagavathy, the deity of Kurichiya, had a dream where God instructed her to find a place to create 1001 castes. God granted her permission to shift the sea sideways to commence her work, with young virgins being provided as labourers. Upon completion, when the labourers sought remuneration, God created the Chenthamara pakshi (bird from the red lotus) to inspect the quality of work. The bird identified a flaw, that is, two hills stood close to each other without touching, and there was water between them. On these hills, God created and placed 18 human castes, various animals, and plants. The Kurichiya community believed that they were among these creations.

The Kurichiya's connection to the Wayanad regions lies in various historic events that explain the movement of the community to the northern Malabar region. In one such historical narrative, Logan (1951) explains that the Northern Malabar region (including Wayanad region) was ruled by the Veddars, who were divided into three subsects based on their occupation, namely, Mullu Kuruma (who collect bamboo), Then Kuruma (who collect honey), Urali or Bettu Kuruma (who were woodcutters, fishermen, and artisans). The region was also home to various ancient aboriginal ethnic groups (Thurston, 1897). Veddars ruled Wayanad region independently for several years before the Kottayam and Kumbrana kingdoms defeated the Veddars in the late 14th century or early 15th century. Following this, the latter established their rule in Wayanad (Johnny, 2001). Later, in the 18th century, Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja

(the Raja of Kottayam), conquered the Malabar region (Logan, 1951). A very popular account of arrival of Kurichiyar in Wayanad is that they were the warriors from the southern part of Malabar region. They were invited by Malabar Raja to clear the forest of wildlife that was considered detrimental to human life. In return, the Raja gave them Wayanad land upon which to live a settled life. Since then, Kurichiyar have remained in Wayanad. Balakrishanan (1983) stated that Kurichiyar, Makkal, and Kadar were the oldest inhabitants of Wayanad. They lived in the heart of the Durga Forest with no contact with any other communities who arrived after them.

By the close of the 18th century, the Malabar Kingdom experienced distress because of the fast-expanding pressures from the British East India company. Consequently, the Malabar Kingdom, led by Pazhasshi Raja revolted against the British, who eventually sought refuge in the Malabar forests to escape the colonial regime. Within the forests, the Kurichiya and Kuruma clans supported Pazhasshi Raja to resist British invasion for five years, due to their expertise in guerilla warfare. Led by Thalakkal Chanthu and Edachana Kungan (both Kurichiya men), the troops challenged the discriminatory and assimilatory British policies by fiercely attacking the British barracks at night and ambushing them with volleys of arrows. They safeguarded the Raja for five years until his demise in 1805, even after which they vehemently opposed unjust land taxes and acquisition policies. In April 1812, they protested the Government's decision to confiscate their land. Despite facing the British, who possessed sophisticated weaponry, the skilled archers of these communities fought fiercely. Unfortunately, as the rebellion progressed, many individuals from both communities lost their lives, and the uprising was eventually quelled. Historically known as the Kurichiya kalapangal (the revolt of Kurichiyar), this rebellion earned the admiration of William Logan, a Civil Service officer, for the valour and archery skills displayed by the Kurichiyar community (Binu & Rajasenan, 2013).

Following the subjugation of the Kurichiya and other Jana communities, the British uncovered secret passages leading into the densely forested area of Wayanad, known only to the Jana communities residing there, with the assistance of a Makkal man named Karinthandan. Tragically, after aiding the British, Karinthandan was killed (Augustine, 2019). After this discovery, the British built roads through the forest, now known as the thamarasherri churam. The construction of the roads had significant consequences, resulting in an influx of peasants from southern Kerala (Government of Kerala, 2006). This migration, beginning in the early 20th century and persisting through the 1970s and 1980s, eventually resulted in Kurichiya (and other Jana communities) losing their traditional land (Sebastian, 2018). This process contributed to their further subjugation and assimilation into the changing socio-cultural landscape of the region (Kunhaman, 1989). Several colonial legal interventions like the Indian Forest Acts (1865, 1878) and Forest Rights Act (1927) led to forest privatisation. Post-independence, laws such as the Kerala Land Acquisition Act (1963), the Wildlife Protection Act (1972) and Forest Conservation Act (1980) further displaced Jana from their lands, forcing them into state-designated areas (Bijoy, 2001; Kjosavik & Shanmugaratnam, 2021).

For Kurichiya, British colonisation brought about significant disruptions in the traditional way of life. The post-colonial period saw further challenges as external influences continued to impact their land, livelihoods, and cultural practices (Nimisha, 2018). However, the Kurichiya community has a significant history of resisting colonial hegemony and subjugation, demonstrating their enduring strength and opposition to outside domination. (Nimisha, 2018; Panoor, 2013).

Overall, with this analysis of the diverse contexts and differing histories of Makkal and Kurichiya, it is evident that both have undergone distinct trajectories of colonisation. Consequently, the above discussion highlights how each group forged its own distinctive path,

leading to varied response patterns and struggles, which will be explored later in the results chapters (Chapters five and six)¹⁵. Considering the uniqueness and diversity of different Jana communities, this study begins with the understanding that there is no single approach that can comprehensively address all the issues faced by Jana communities. Instead, this study aims to propose an approach that addresses common challenges by creating spaces for various communities to self-determine their problems and solutions. The following section discusses the study rationale, addressing the core issue and by underscoring how social workers can contribute towards achieving sustainable community and environmental outcomes.

Pretext of Environmental Justice and Sustainability Concerns

This section provides a brief overview of the central focus of the study pertaining to the environmental justice and sustainability issues faced by Jana communities.

The perpetual environmental injustices experienced of Jana from historical to contemporary times relates to the appropriation of their resource-dense traditional lands. Whilst such land thefts occurred for industrialisation-centred resource extraction during British colonisation, Jana land appropriations disguised development and conservation after independence (Bijoy, 2001; Bijoy & Raman, 2003; Choudhury, 2013, Das et al., 2011; Warren

¹⁵ Result chapters- Chapter five (p.183) and Chapter six (p. 229).

& Baker, 2019). The Union and State¹⁶ Governments continued to evict Jana despite inadequate rehabilitation or resettlement policies (Aufschnaiter, 2008). Such evictions and land appropriations have led to lost livelihood, disruption of traditional knowledge systems, cultural erosion, increased vulnerability to climate change, as well as poor health, social, economic and education indicators (Das et al., 2010; Das & Mehta, 2012; Manikandan, 2014; UNICEF, 2014; Veerbhadranaika et al., 2012; Veerasha, 2019). Studies also reveal the systematic marginalisation and invisibility of Jana interests across policy, political, and administrative levels (UNICEF, 2014; Veerasha, 2019). Decades after colonisation, Jana voices embody continued struggles for their land rights and sovereignty, which forms the pretext for the concept of environmental injustice in this study.

Studies have related Indigenous knowledge about their environment as potential solutions to counter climate change through sustainable development (Dhillon, 2018; Dominelli, 2012). Although the scope of indigeneity has not embraced Jana communities in India due to the controversies¹⁷, this literature has relevance for Jana since their displacement from their traditional land meant not only the loss of their customary land rights but also a permanent diminution of their centuries-old conservation practices. This is because the unique traditions of Jana have conserved forests for centuries. For example, Meghalaya stands apart from other states in India, with 90 per cent of the forest cover being collaboratively owned and protected by the Jana and the Government. For centuries, in the State of Meghalaya, Jana have looked after the sacred groves through the practice of their rich culture and traditions (Verschuuren et al., 2010). Hence, the issues of rapid climate change and environmental

¹⁶ In India, the state Governments are the level of Governments below the Union Government, i.e., each state is governed by the state Government while the entire country is governed by the Union/Central Government.

¹⁷ Discussed in Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

degradation trigger the need to rethink and redraw the boundaries of environmental justice to regulate and restrain ecological exploitation from a local perspective. Despite the renewed knowledge of sustainability with community partnerships, limited attempts have been made to theorise from a social work perspective how local community knowledge about sustainability can contribute to Jana community development and environmental welfare.

In summary, this section sets the background for the environmental injustices and sustainability challenges confronted by Jana communities. These communities endure perpetual environmental injustices that exacerbate their experiences of social inequalities and human rights violations. The link between unaddressed environmental injustices and emerging sustainability concerns was highlighted by illustrating how historical land appropriations have led to lost livelihood, disrupted traditional knowledge systems, and increased vulnerability to climate change. Despite ongoing discussions globally regarding the recognition and application of Indigenous knowledge for fostering sustainable community and environmental outcomes, in India, despite the rich traditional knowledge, these discussions on sustainability are engulfed in the paradox of indigeneity.¹⁸ The following section charts the path ahead, delving into how social workers can actively engage to foster sustainable community and environmental outcomes through the application of participatory methods.

¹⁸ Discussed in Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

Sustainable Community & Environment for Social Work Lens: Study Rationale

This section provides the study rationale by highlighting social workers' role in supporting environmental justice and sustainability outcomes for the welfare of Jana communities. As mentioned in the previous section, despite the vulnerability of Jana and the recent growth of Indigenous knowledge in addressing sustainability, limited research focuses on the intersection of environmental injustice and sustainability among Jana communities using a social work lens. The discipline and profession of social work, which began with the commitment to the person-in-the environment, embeds the realities of people's lives and has a holistic, social justice approach to social problems, making it easier to integrate environmental justice issues into its remit (Dominelli, 2012). Therefore, this research identifies the potential for social work interventions to promote Jana welfare through effective community engagement to co-produce strategies for achieving sustainable community and environmental outcomes by promoting environmental justice. This has several implications for future social work theory and practice. Firstly, it contributes towards the existing body of knowledge on environmental justice and sustainability within Jana communities, thereby addressing the research gap in the specific context. Next, it provides insights on enhancing engagement and practice with Jana by highlighting the importance of incorporating knowledge into practice. Thirdly, it contributes towards understanding Jana's self-determined worldviews and experiences of injustices to generate recommendations for social work practice in working with Jana communities to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes.

It is also important to note that within this research context, the theoretical framework of green social work theory and Indigenous perspectives are combined to contextualise and

frame these studies on Jana land struggles within the broader context of environmental injustice. This is relevant in a context where despite the similarity in the experiences of colonisation between Jana and Indigenous communities worldwide, very little research has been undertaken that unites Jana traditional land struggles in the global narrative of environmental injustice and sustainability.

Overall, by understanding the self-determined views of Jana communities on sustainability and experiences of injustices from a social work lens, this study contributes to social work practice with Jana communities. By critiquing the Union and State Government-led environmentalism and development practices disregarding Jana involvement, this study also provides insights for policy, practice and advocacy efforts promoting environmental justice and community-centred sustainable development of achieving Jana welfare and fostering sustainable national development.

Aims and Research Questions

The overall aim of the study is “to transform the lives of the Jana of India by addressing the social and environmental inequities, thereby developing a community-based sustainable model of co-existence in response to the current environmental crises.” The following objectives inform the research.

1. To understand the social, environmental, and human rights violations Jana faces today.
2. To capture the Jana voices by understanding their emerging perspectives and aspirations, with their ability to envision the future by accepting the historical injustices the community faces.

3. To develop a construct with the Jana worldviews between Indigenous knowledge and environmental conservation.
4. To contribute to the discussion on how reviving traditional ownership over land to Jana is a sustainable remedy to the current global environmental crises of climate change.

To support attaining these objectives, research questions were developed to frame the study. The questions that informed this investigation are:

1. What are the current social, environmental, and human rights violations that Jana face?
2. How do Jana aspire and hope to envision their future?
3. How do Jana worldviews inform their relationship with land and conservation?
4. What is the community's proposition on devising sustainable remedies to enhance the living situation in Jana and, at the same time, address the current global environmental crises?

Methodology and Methods

This study used a qualitative exploratory methodology to capture the data based on the contextual realities and participant perspectives of Jana within their holistic understanding. The researcher used a community-based participatory action research approach to facilitate community collaboration based on the boundaries and values set by research and its theoretical grounding. By drawing on the concepts presented by Blumenthal et al. (2013), a partial collaboration was undertaken with community members and other stakeholders. As part of this, the researcher retained essential control over the study to make sure that it did not deviate from the original research aims. The researcher then involved the community throughout the research process; with consideration given to any further suggestions or insights related to the scope of the research.

This research incorporated three methods that effectively complemented its participatory nature, which included Kootam (community meetings), photovoice, and in-depth interviews. These methods facilitated the gathering of comprehensive and in-depth qualitative data, ensuring a grounded and insightful exploration of the research topic. The use of green theoretical framework supported the use of the social work values of social justice and empowerment to work alongside Jana. The data were collected from three ooru (hamlet) of Mananthawady region of Wayanad district (Kerala). Two of these were Kurichiya ooru and one was Makkal ooru. The data were thematically analysed. From an ethical standpoint, this study complied with the Massey ethical guidelines of ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, cultural sensitivity and strived for reciprocity by ensuring that the research outcomes would directly benefit the participating communities.

Key terms and concepts

This section defines and discusses several key terms and concepts relevant to this research to clarify the context and scope of this study.

Adivasi

Adivasi (meaning first inhabitants), also known as Scheduled Tribes, was first used by Thakkar Bapa to refer to tribes in the 1930s, largely as a consequence of a political movement to forge a sense of identity among the various Indigenous peoples of India. The term is used primarily in India and Bangladesh. However, since the term was coined by a non-Adivasi individual and its usage and acceptance among various tribal communities remain unclear, this

research adopts the term Jana to refer to Scheduled Tribe communities¹⁹. This choice seeks to provide space for future studies on Jana self-determination and the development of their own preferred designations.

Jana

Jana (means people) derived from the Sanskrit root, “jan” meaning, to be born or to birth into. To respond to the sensitivity of the ethnic groups, who have been subjugated over the years into becoming powerless, this study uses terms such as Jana, ethnic or traditional communities, or indigene to represent these communities instead of following the colonial reference of the tribe. But where the term tribe is used, this is to underline the administrative perceptions of any particular mode of existence. A significant future scope of the research is to focus on including the voices of the self of the Jana to understand how they view themselves.

Environmental injustice

Refers to the struggles of Jana for traditional land rights, lack of appropriate rehabilitation and resettlement policies of the Government, and sustainability of the initiatives alongside the self-determined views of the Jana communities.

Makkal

Makkal is a term used to refer to Paniyar communities. This alternative use was due to two reasons: firstly, the word Paniya means enslaved people and secondly, the participants showed reluctance in identifying as Paniya. Once again, the scope for future research is

¹⁹ As discussed under the section- Decolonising labels: Jana communities (p.17).

determining what the Makkal communities (and potentially other Jana communities) wish to be called.

Moopan

A Moopan (meaning eldest), is the senior-most member who acts as the chieftain of a ooru.

Ooru

A Jana hamlet of Kerala usually referred to as ooru.

Scheduled Tribes

Article 366(25) provides a definition of scheduled tribes, stating that they encompass tribes, tribal communities, or specific segments within these groups that are officially recognised as Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of the Constitution under Article 342.

Social injustice

Social injustice involves the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, mental and physical health, and human rights issues faced by the Jana due to environmental justice violations.

Sustainability

Sustainability is the conscious and intentional strategies designed to secure a balance between humans and the natural world and to preserve that balance for the benefit of future generations.

Structure of Thesis

The thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 introduces the study topic by introducing Jana communities, followed by the study rationale. The research aims and objectives, methods and methodology and key terms and concepts are then presented. The chapter concludes by outlining the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 sets the scene for the study through providing contextual background to this study. This section examines the historical and contemporary issues faced by Jana that relate to environmental injustices, inequity, and sustainability. In doing so, this chapter draws on colonisation literature to analyse the parameters of social justice, environmental justice, and human rights to examine the prevalence of contemporary issues by developing an in-depth insight into Jana's experiences of historical injustices. Comparisons between the experiences of Jana and the Indigenous peoples worldwide are also drawn.

Chapter 3 discusses green social work theory, which provides the theoretical anchor for this study. It explains how green social work theory provides a lens through which the research is viewed.

Chapter 4 explains the Community-based Action Research (CBPAR) methodology used in this study. It navigates through setting the epistemological and ontological stances that bind the research methodology. Furthermore, the CBPAR methodology is discussed in terms of the rationale for its choice; the research design, including ethical considerations; the research process, including recruitment, participant selection process and data collection; the procedures with which the data were organised and analysed; and the limitations of the methodology. Towards the conclusion, the challenges due to COVID19 are also outlined.

Chapter 5 reports the findings from the Makkal community. This includes the conclusions of the three methods used in the study, namely, community meetings, photovoice, and interviews.

Chapter 6 reports the findings from the Kurichiyar community. This includes the conclusions of the three methods used in the study, namely, community meetings, photovoice, and interviews.

Chapter 7 analyses the results from the previous two chapters with the research questions. It further discusses the practical, theoretical, and educational implications for social work practice. The findings are then discussed and analysed with regard to their contribution to social work practice in working with Jana communities.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis by weaving together the initial research journey with the outcome and recommendations for Jana's welfare. The study's findings are reviewed by reflecting on the objectives, methodology, and results. Following this, the implications, and recommendations for achieving Jana's welfare and environmental protection, which include those concerning future research, are discussed. Finally, the study's limitations are discussed and reflection on the research to draw the thesis to its conclusion.

Chapter Conclusion

In summary, this chapter introduces the study topic. It entails a brief introduction to the subject, the use of appropriate labels to refer to communities in this study, the context and background of the research focus, study rationale, research aim, objectives and questions, methods and methodology, key terms and concepts used in this thesis, and an overview of the

structure of the thesis. The next chapter provides an in-depth contextual background to this study by examining the history of colonisation to situate the context of Jana with the thesis topic.

Chapter Two

Contextual Background

“To separate the Adivasi from his land is to stop his breathing.”

(Munda, 2014)

This chapter provides a historical overview of Jana and how the contemporary issues of environmental injustice, inequity, and sustainability issues have evolved. It critically examines the history of colonisation to situate the context of Jana within the thesis topic. Drawing on colonisation literature, the plight of Jana is compared to the other Indigenous communities worldwide to indicate the relevance of this study within the broader global context of environmental injustice and sustainability.

Past to Present: Historical analysis of Jana in Indian Sub-Continent

This section explores the historical backdrop of Jana communities in the Indian sub-continent, tracing how the contemporary issues of Jana are rooted in their historical experiences of oppression and subjugation. The Indian sub-continent holds immense historical significance due to its abundant natural resources and rich tapestry of language, arts, culture, literature,

trade, military, and more. These attributes have made the region a fertile ground for migration, invasions, natural calamities, and colonisation spanning several millennia. These events have shaped the historical experiences of Jana, who have lived through these ages. This section comprises four major historical periods, along with a historical analysis of Kerala in relation to Jana communities. These components include (i) Decline of Harappan civilisation, (ii) Jana autonomy in the post-Vedic period, (iii) British colonisation: Evicting Jana for resources, and (iv) Independent India: Continued saga of eviction, and (v) A historical analysis of Jana of Kerala.

Table 2.1 presents a chronological overview of the historical period relevant to the Indian sub-continent, along with notable trends and patterns during each era.

Table 2.1 Chronological overview of the historical period relevant to the Indian sub-continent

Significant periods with historical significance	Timeline	Significant patterns
Ancient period	The second interglacial period was from 400,000 to 200,000 BC.	The archaeologists identified the earliest traces of human activity in the Indian Sub-continent using evidence from stone implements excavated from this period (Thapar, 1966;Wiessner, 2013). In the absence of substantial evidence to the contrary, Maloney (1974) posited that this period was followed by a period of slow evolution, which gave way to one of the oldest civilisations in the world, the Indus Valley civilisation (also called Harappan civilisation).
Harappan or Indus Valley Civilisation	From 3300 BC to 1300 BC, with its mature form from	This civilisation was the most extensive during this period. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa were flourishing cities with significant income from agricultural surplus and trade. The cities of the civilisation were also known for their urban planning, baked brick houses, elaborate drainage systems,

	2400 BC to 1750 BC.	water supply systems, clusters of large non-residential buildings, and new techniques in handicraft and metallurgy (Singhal, 1983). Harappan and Mohenjo-Daro were urban settlements that had evolved into their most pristine form until 1700 BCE (Thapar, 1966; Maloney, 1974).
Vedic period	1500 BCE to 500 BCE	By 1500 BCE, the Harappan civilisation declined, followed by the migration of the Indo-Aryan from Iran, who introduced new features to the existing cultural context of north-western India (Roy, 1970). While significant controversies prevail with the indigeneity of Indo-Aryan to the Harappan civilisation, the Aryan migrated or possibly invaded the Harappan civilisation during its decline with floods. Some of the people, who belonged to the Harappan civilisation, slowly edged away from the Aryan control through migration into inaccessible interiors, where they lived by hunting and gathering food independently by maintaining some of their unique ways of life. In contrast, the others who remained in the lower relic faced subjugation under the Chaturvarna system (Thapar, 1966).
Medieval Period	6 ADE to 1600 ADE	This period saw the rise and fall of various kingdoms and monarchies. Very few records are available from the medieval period about the Jana communities. However, in the works of literature available, it is noted that Jana communities remained mostly self-sufficient monarchies, often maintaining reasonable relationships with neighbouring kingdoms. They practised agriculture, hunting, gathering, and fishing to meet basic needs. They lived harmoniously with their environment and possess rich traditional knowledge about their local ecosystems (Bijoy, 2001; Bijoy, 2008).
British colonisation	1600 ADE to 20 th century	After the 16 th century, the Indian sub-continent witnessed several invasions and colonisations, including Mughal, French, Portuguese, and finally by the British in the 18 th century. During British rule, the colonisers appropriated Jana's land to obtain resources for industrialisation in Britain. However,

		several land insurgencies took place against the British East India Company, all of which were brutally suppressed.
Independent India	1947 (independence) till present	Despite India being independent in 1947, Jana continued to be sidelined wherein they continued to be isolated from their traditional lands by the postcolonial Government. The struggles for Jana's land rights continued to remain.

The timeline above, capturing significant patterns, details the various migrations, invasions, and colonisations within the Indian sub-continent, emphasising how these events have shaped the environmental and social realities of contemporary Jana communities. The following sections discuss Jana experiences in the context of colonisation and subjugation spanning several millennia.

Decline of Harappan (or Indus Valley) Civilisation and the Rise of Vedic Knowledge

This section presents critical scholarship and debates about Jana's presence throughout the Harappan and Vedic period. It further highlights the inception and maturation of the caste system with the Vedic invasion, influencing the secluded lifestyle of Jana communities.

The decline of the Harappan civilisation and the rise of the Vedic era mark a period of evolution of complex social hierarchies, culminating alongside the establishment of the Chaturvarna system, also known as the caste system. Thapar's (1966) historical analysis suggests that when Aryan first came to Harappa, their societies formed three social classes, Kshatriya (warriors and aristocracy), Brahman (priests), and Vaishya (cultivators), based on social and economic organisation. However, Aryan introduced a fourth caste through the

Chaturvarna system, wherein Aryan subjugated the original inhabitants as they took control over the declining Harappan civilisation. The fourth caste, the Shudra (the untouchables or enslaved people), were the Harappan people and those of mixed Harappan people and Aryan origin (Thapar, 1966;Thapar, 1990). This Chaturvarna division initially used the distinction between skin colour between Aryan (paler skin tone with sharp features) and Harappan people (darker skin tone with blunt features and worshipped nature) to create the Chaturvarna (or caste system). Some of those subjugated people slowly edged away from Aryan control through migration into inaccessible interiors, where they lived independently by maintaining their unique ways of life. In contrast, those who remained in the lower relics faced subjugation under the Chaturvarna system (Thapar, 1966). Historical analysis suggests that the Chaturvarna system, emerging from the decline of the Harappan civilisation, played a key role in consolidating the Aryan social order, to the detriment of the Harappan people (Roy, 1970; Sen, 2017; Thapar, 1966; Thapar et al., 1990).

Scholarship on Jana related to this period suggests that they may be linked to the Harappan people, the original inhabitants of Indus Valley Civilisation. Notably, the ancient ethnographies of Mahabharata and Ramayana²⁰ (around the fourth century BCE) written in Sanskrit reference various Jana communities, implying Jana's presence during that period. In these epics, Aryan became the protagonists, while Jana communities were the antagonists. Furthermore, these Sanskrit texts designated Jana as das (enslaved person), dasyu (robbers), rakshasa, asura, savara, danava, and pulinda (all of which means demon) (Roy, 1970). These ancient and medieval epics mention various Jana groups, who still exist today, such as Kirata, Bhil, the Kinnaras, the Kiri, the Matsya, the Nisad, the Banara and so on (Pati, 2002). These

²⁰ Elaborated in the later section on how the ancient Vedic scriptures have subjugated the indigenes of the IS (Indian Sub-continent).

works of literature identified Jana as culturally and socially inferior people having darker skin and blunt features (Trautmann, 1997; Roy, 1970; Buitenen, 1978). Much like British colonial ethnographies of the 18th century, these literary works portray an ethnocentric approach justifying their colonisation (Sen, 2017)²¹. These ancient narratives, along with the discriminatory caste system, indicate the likelihood that present-day Jana and ‘other backward communities’ could be related to the Harappan people who were subjugated using the caste system. Moreover, this research argues that regardless of Jana’s link to the Harappan civilisation, the references made in Mahabharata and Ramayana about Jana communities suggest that they have a long history of living away from the caste system in interior spaces, trying to maintain their own unique culture and practices.

Despite arguments that relate Jana communities to the Harappan people, several limitations in the historical knowledge make this an ongoing debate. Table 2.2 collates various significant studies and their limitations. They suggest that Harappan people who migrated to inaccessible interiors against the forcible assimilation into the Chaturvarna system later became Jana (Adivasi or Scheduled tribes).

²¹ Various colonial ethnographies across the world compared the indigenes as savages and hence justified their colonisation.

Table 2.2 Summarises of studies about the original inhabitants of the Harappan civilisation and their limitations

Works of Literature	Argument	Limitations
Genetic study (Bamshad, et al., 2001)	The genetic study showed that upper-caste people had more pronounced European ancestral genes. In contrast, those from the lower castes, scheduled castes, and tribes had ancestral South Indian genes. This study supports that the lower castes, scheduled tribes and castes were possibly subjugated using the caste system, a tool of colonisation.	Only a few castes were analysed to obtain the outcome.
Archaeological study (Singh, 1963)	The study suggests that the Harappan society may have had elephants, as evidenced by the discovery of elephant bones at the Mohenjo-Daro site. Singh (1963) points out that in the Vedic texts, elephants were initially depicted with a sense of novelty, but later texts described their domestication. Also, Aryan supposedly had chariots and cattle, indicating that Aryans (semi-nomadic pastoralists who used cattle and horses) possibly migrated to the Harappan Civilisation.	Due to the highly symbolic nature of the Vedic texts, it can be open to various interpretations. Different scholars may interpret the same texts differently, leading to potential misinterpretations of the information they contain concerning historical events.
Historiographical studies (Thapar, 1966; Roy, 1970; Sen, 2017).	Some works of literature also set Aryan, predominantly pastoralists and nomads, apart from Harappan people, who were urban, by stating how the migration of Aryan into the Harappan society meant that the civilisation had re-experienced the growth of urban cultures from agrarian and nomadic systems.	Historiographic interpretations of archaeological evidence can be influenced by the biases and assumptions of the researchers, potentially leading to a distorted understanding of the past.

<p>Historiographical study Singhal (1983)</p>	<p>Singhal (1983) states that Brahui hills in the North of Baluchistan (ancient Harappan and Mohenjo-Daro sites) show archaeological remains of fractional burial²², a practice common in the old South. This study supports the possible migration of the Harappan people to the far South following the subjugation.</p>	<p>The Indus Valley Civilisation archaeological record is incomplete, and many aspects of the ancient society remain unknown. This incompleteness can lead to gaps in our understanding and limit our ability to undertake comparison studies.</p>
<p>Linguistic study (Dutt, 1985)</p>	<p>Linguistic studies have suggested that Harappan languages have affinities with Dravidian languages. Incidentally, the Oraon communities of Bihar state of North India speak a language similar to Dravidian. This indicates the indigenes' possible migration to India's southern and eastern parts with the subjugation under the Aryan.</p>	<p>The comparison between the native language of the Oraon communities (North) and Dravidian languages does not correlate to the Indus Valley script or language. Furthermore, the Indus Valley scripts are not yet wholly deciphered.</p>
<p>Linguistic study (Mukhopadhyay, 2021)</p>	<p>Linguistic study on Harappan script from rock excavates established that the Harappan people evidence that significant population of Indus Valley civilisation must have used Proto-Dravidian (the mother of most other south Indian languages) by studying the word pilu, which was used by the Harappan people and also in various Dravidian languages.</p>	<p>Establishing valid comparisons and avoiding coincidental resemblances can be methodologically challenging. This study has drawn its conclusions based on a single word.</p>

²² A burial practice common in the ancient South. Fractional burial represents a collection of some bones after the exposure of the body to wild beasts and birds. Five such burials have been found, the best specimen being an urn containing a skull and some fragmentary bones, along with several earthenware vessels and a variety of small objects including balls, beads, shell spoon, bits of ivory, and miniature vessels.

Archaeological and historiographical analysis (Thapar et al., 1990).	Archaeological evidence also suggests that the Harappan people used the Harappan or Indus script; however, Aryan had no writing until much later, around 700 BCE. The European scholars of Sanskrit in India (during the 18 th century) determined that Sanskrit was related in structure, possibly sound to Greek and Latin, and that the relationship was close. This eventually led to the theory of common languages initially spoken by the ancient Indo-European people with common ancestors.	Although these are reasonable arguments, it is essential to note that the linguistic landscape of the Indian sub-continent is complex, with several languages coexisting and influencing each other. Hence, determining the linguistic contact and impact on the civilisation can be complex.
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Table 2.2 outlines the arguments and limitations of establishing a connection between Jana communities and the Harappan people. The debate over the indigeneity of Indo-Aryan to the Harappan civilisation remains contentious, particularly as the politics of global indigeneity evolves. Aryan invasion theory, which questions whether Indo-Aryan displaced or assimilated the Indigenous Harappan populations, is increasingly challenged by scholars who suggest it was a gradual migration rather than a violent conquest (Bryant & Patton, 2005). Some scholars argue that the Harappan civilisation was Indigenous to the Indian sub-continent, with the Aryans forming part of a broader cultural continuum (Possehl, 2002). The issue of Harappan indigeneity has been closely tied to contemporary Indigenous rights movements in South Asia, questioning historical narratives and the Aryan-Dravidian divide (Thapar, 1966). Despite these debates, literature suggests that Jana communities have a long historical presence in the Indian sub-continent, potentially dating back to or before the Harappan civilisation. The genetic

similarity of various Jana communities to the Onge²³ people further hint at their long cultural and traditional heritage to the Indian sub-continent. Nonetheless, the challenges of confirming historical events from nearly 4500 years ago without concrete evidence are complex. Therefore, it is essential to approach these debates with sensitivity, ensuring that they do not diminish or undermine any group of people, whether Indigenous, migrated, or invaded, who have inhabited the Indian sub-continent for several millennia.

This section discusses the possible scenario where the decline of the Harappan Civilisation led to the rise of the Vedic period, wherein the Aryan (of European-Iranian origin) subjugated the Harappan people into the lowest relics of the society. In response to domination, several communities were exiled into the inaccessible interiors to lead an autonomous life. In contrast, the others were engulfed in the lowest caste, the Shudra, and the untouchables. Despite the limitations in linking Jana to the Harappan people, the conclusion drawn from this evidence indicates that Jana history stretches back several millennia, marked by migrations and colonisation. This knowledge is important as it signifies the long historical connection to the Indian mainland marked by various events of migration and invasion. Their histories also suggest the perpetuation of social and land violations faced by the Jana communities, who had to live in the inaccessible interiors to retain their autonomous lifestyles. This section also explains that Jana communities were forcibly incorporated into the caste system to become Shudra or Other Backward Castes (OBC), gradually erasing their distinct identity.²⁴

²³ The Onge people are among India's most ancient tribes, belonging to the Negrito racial group. They currently reside in reserved areas located at Dugong Creek and South Bay on Little Andaman Island. Unfortunately, their population is dwindling. They lead a semi-nomadic way of life, relying entirely on the natural resources for their sustenance.

²⁴ The inquiries about OBC do not fall within the scope of this study.

Jana autonomy in the post-Vedic era

This section discusses references to Jana in post-Vedic times to help explain the historical trajectory of Jana, where they either established independent, autonomous systems or coexisted alongside neighbouring kingdoms, all while preserving their distinct autonomy.

The dwelling of Jana in inaccessible interiors became significant during the post-Vedic period (approximately between 6 ADE to 1600 ADE) in safeguarding their identity and exercising relatively autonomous systems. The historical accounts and assumptions by Romelia Thapar and the Archaeological Survey of India identify each Jana community as homogenous and self-contained without any hierarchical discrimination; each community enjoying equal status (Thapar, 1966). These patterns of governance protected and organised each unit under a village Chief or group of elders. These political and administrative units were often characterised by communal leadership and decentralised decision-making. Jana communities maintained their identities during the post-Vedic period while encountering various cultural influences, including interactions with Vedic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain societies (Thapar, 1966). In the early medieval period, different Jana regions were either integrated into the dominions of empires such as the Gupta Empire or Chola Dynasty or maintained isolation within their traditional lifestyles (Sundar, 1997). The medieval period witnessed the impact of Islamic invasions and complex interactions between Jana and Muslim rulers, with varying degrees of assimilation (Thapar, 1966). Consequently, some communities adapted to and developed unique practices while simultaneously safeguarding their traditional lifestyles. These interactions shaped the trajectory of Jana's exposure to various cultures while

allowing them to maintain their identity and exercise a reasonable degree of autonomy over their lives in the interiors.

It is well-documented that Jana communities often faced discriminatory treatment when different kingdoms absorbed the Jana regions. Dhagamwar (1986) outlines how the kings did not extend the same rights and privileges to the tribes as they did with other citizens. For instance, the Battle of Panipat is mentioned in King Ashoka's records as evidence of his remorse for his actions after witnessing the bloodshed in the aftermath of the war. However, even his guilt was hard on tribes, as it also states how Ashoka was willing to give the tribes time to change their ways; otherwise, they would be considered hostile.

Similarly, Dhagamwar (1986) also details how Kautilya's Arthashastra refers to these communities as wild tribes who were challenging to subdue and states that one of the few methods was to either win their favour or seduce them into doing tasks for the kingdom. In one passage, Kautilya discusses robbers and tribes, where he preferred robbers over tribes because robbers would still be caught and punished, whereas tribes proved more resistant to conquest or control. In some cases, discontent between the Kingdom and these tribes would escalate into fierce conflicts, resulting in large-scale casualties and the eventual eradication of tribes from their forest homelands (Dhagamwar, 1986).

Other authors like Sharma (2005) and Piliavsky (2015) have also cited the era of Kautilya to highlight disparities in the treatment of Jana communities, portraying them as inherently associated with criminal instincts and consequently subjecting them to stereotyping (Sharma, 2005; Piliavsky, 2015). Interestingly, such stereotypes persisted until 2006, when India replaced Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), classified since 1975 for low literacy and pre-agricultural traits, with the more inclusive term Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) (United Nations Developmental Programme [UNDP], 2004). This discourse implies

that the Jana communities, predominantly residing in remote and inaccessible locations, were systemically marginalised by the dominating community. In fact, Jana opting for professions involving risks and living in isolation also signifies their struggles to uphold their values rather than submitting to the dominance of more powerful communities.

Overall, Jana communities shouldered the responsibility of preserving their cultural identity and traditional practices through resilience, fiercely guarding their way of life despite being faced with systemic marginalisation. Thus, their dwelling in inaccessible interiors became significant during this period in safeguarding their identity and exercising relatively autonomous systems. There is a need to reconsider the history of Jana in terms of their land, territory, and ecology, as their intentional geographic isolation played a crucial role in overcoming their experiences of perpetual social and environmental discrimination during that period.

British Colonisation: Evicting Jana for Resource Extraction

This section discusses how British colonisation led to intrusion into Jana's mostly secluded spaces, eventually leading to the disownment of Jana from their traditional land and cultural heritage.

Before British colonisation, Jana lived independently even though significant portions of it were nominally part of the regional kingdoms (Bijoy, 2008). As mentioned in the previous section, many of these groups remained fiercely independent, especially in northeast India. For Jana, such an exercise of autonomy away from the mainstream resulted in preserving their

socio-cultural and religious practices by retaining their distinct languages across generations. Unlike the previous invasions, conquests, and migrations, the permanent settlement of the British in 1793 led to significant changes. While in earlier times, charges and conquests were often driven by the pursuit of political power and governance, the British colonialists had a distinct agenda focused on exploiting resources to meet their industrialisation needs in their home country, Britain. As such, extensive land appropriation measures were undertaken, impacting Jana as they lived in resource-rich regions, making it a fertile ground for appropriation by the British (Bhengra, 1998). Consequently, the period of British colonial rule in India was an era characterised by severe exploitation.

The British took deliberate measures to advance the interests of their home country, showing little concern for the trajectory of the Indian economy. This transformation led to India, once one of the world's wealthiest nations with a GDP over 60 per cent of the British level, falling to less than 15 per cent by 1871 (Broadberry, 2014). Jana communities bore a high cost for Britain's development ambitions, as they occupied resource-rich lands and consequently experienced harsh land appropriations and cultural degradation.

Formal colonisation began with land privatisation and restrictive policies to obtain control over the land. The initiation of forest laws in the 1850s, followed by the enactment of the Forest Act of 1864, which later merged with the Indian Forest Act of 1927, all formed part of the colonial agenda to establish authority over these regions (Guha, 1983). These policies removed the autonomy Jana communities exercised over their land and opened their previously exclusive territories to exploitation by colonisers (Bijoy, 2008). By rendering once-inaccessible terrains accessible, these policies removed the protective barrier that shielded Jana communities from external threats, leaving them vulnerable (Lynch, 1995). Following access to Jana land, the indiscriminate environmental actions of the British raised concerns about

sustainability in British society (Rodrigues, 2012). These concerns led to the commissioning of the first forest conservator in India. In 1850, Alexander Gibson became the Bombay Forest conservator against the indiscriminate felling of trees in the Deccan, followed by the formation of the Forest Department in 1864 under Hughes Cleghorn (Rodrigues, 2012). However, these colonial conservation policies assumed the British to be conservators of forests and considered Jana very primitive or had no knowledge of the environment. Such perspectives were reinforced through ethnographies and policies that unjustly depicted those who had lived in these lands for generations as lacking environmental awareness (Guha, 1983). The British aspiration for continued exploitation of resources was the reason for them to retain control over the resources under the veil of protectors. In doing so, the conservation of forests involved the most unsustainable means of loosening the contact between the Jana and the forests by converting the forest cover into plantation trees (Guha, 1983). Gradually, the rights of the Jana became mere privileges conferred by the State. British policies during the initial period of colonisation as well as during later times underwent superficial transformations, from indiscriminate resource extraction to more ostensibly scientific resource management, portraying themselves as protectors of resources. However, both approaches resulted in similar consequences that included environmental degradation and the displacement of Jana communities from their lands.

Jana fiercely condemned the intrusions and invasions by the British colonisers into their lands. A few such revolts include the rebellions by Pahariya in Bihar in 1778 and the Kolis in Maharashtra between 1784 and 1789 (Meena, 2018). Despite numerous revolts and opposition from Jana communities throughout British India, they were displaced from their land with the brutal suppression of their rebellions. The Scheduled District Act of 1874, the Government of India Act of 1919 and the Government of India Act of 1935 were the administrative arrangements ceded by the British following persistent resistance from the people of the forests

(Bijoy, 2008). Some of these resistances resulted in the British pulling back from their regions, such as the subsequent classification of the Jana-dominated hill region of the northeast as excluded areas and that of the mid-Indian region as partially excluded areas from British administration (Bijoy, 2008). Nevertheless, the invasion and appropriation of resources continued. Unfortunately, the rulers of the various princely states signed a deed of accession, giving powers to the British, this included assuming the excluded and partially excluded areas had joined British India. More significant parts of northeast India entered a period of conflict as they were not historically a part of the Indian mainland until the British annexation during the later 19th century. Various insurgencies for self-determination persisted in these regions; meaning the Jana of the mid-central area were preoccupied with survival issues over aspirations for their land (Singh, 1978).

Colonialists rationalised colonialism by confronting and disavowing these imperial inclinations (Hadagali, 2014). To tide over the consciousness and self-image of the colonised, the British appointed ethnographers and researchers (Firminger, 1914;Risley, 1915) who followed a realist approach to portray Jana as primitive and backward in the 19th century; thereby erasing the fluid and interconnected relationships between social groups in the pre-colonial and early colonial period (Williams, 2021; Guha, 1999; Skaria, 1997;Tripura, 2023). The literary origins of the colonial times were grounded on language, culture, and imaginative worlds of people and nations whose histories were interrupted and radically transformed by the imperialists for their benefit (Smith, 1998;Spillman, 2012).

In summary, the British colonisers tortured, enslaved, and brutally evicted Jana from their lands to drive colonial interests (Bijoy, 2001). As a result, many Jana communities were out-numbered including the Great Andamanese communities (Khatua, 2022), while many others were at the brink of extinction, such as the Cholanaikan of Kerala with a population of

less than 200 people (Sreelakshmi, 2021). Therefore, Jana faced an ongoing burden of pervasive colonial interests, which resulted in them being seen as primitive tribes dissociated from their land, unable to practice the traditions that they had held together over several millennia. Throughout colonisation, Jana's voices remained prominent in asserting their rights over their autonomy. However, despite their perpetual resistance, the mostly independent Jana monarchies succumbed to British colonisation. The British pursuit of resources for their industrial markets led to them taking control of the forests from Jana meaning Jana became subjugated by British colonisers. This was justified by stating that Jana were too primitive and backward to take care of the forest resources, a moral justification used by the British to remove Jana from their traditional land.

Independent India: Continued Saga of Eviction

A key issue faced by the Jana during colonial and post-colonial times was the struggle for their traditional land rights. In the colonial context, colonising Jana land area was considered a prerequisite for civilisation (Anaya, 2004). This perspective was reinforced in colonial ethnographies, with De Vattel (1758, as cited in Fenwick, 1916) arguing that nomadic peoples should permit colonising nations to occupy their land in the name of civilisation and development. Unfortunately, even after independence (in 1947), as Aufschnaiter (2008) points out, these ideas continued to form the basis of depriving Jana communities of their traditional land. Despite Jana's significant contributions to the freedom struggle, the Government undertook a paternalistic approach towards addressing Jana concerns, depicting Jana as primitive, and needing assimilation into mainstream society. Such an approach manifested as excluding Jana communities from their traditional lands under the pretext of development and

conservation. The only difference was that the development objective of the Indian Government was directed towards India's advancement rather than serving Britain's industrialisation agenda during British colonial rule. Indeed, Aufschnaiter (2008) underscores the persistence of Jana traditional rights violations by noting that even in the 21st Century, the Government is displacing Jana communities from the forests, similar to how they were pushed out by the colonial predecessors, causing land dispossession and forcible integration into the dominant society. Hence, the approach of the Indian Government mirrored the colonial mindset, as it failed to acknowledge Jana's autonomy and interests, rendering them victims of development and conservation efforts, ultimately leading to further and ongoing land alienation.

The post-colonial Government exercised control over the forest land by effectively implementing legislation that strengthened the institutions of land privatisation and Government-led forest conservation. These regulations aimed not only at the Government's autonomy over resource extraction for development but also deemed Jana communities unsuitable for conservation efforts due to their perceived limited environmental knowledge. Table 2.3 details legislation during the post-colonial period that contributed to Jana displacement.

Table 2.3 Legislation, their enactments, and significant patterns that contributed to Jana displacement

Legislations	Enactments and Significant Patterns
Article 244 (Schedule V for the mid-Indian region and Schedule VI for the northeast region).	After independence, these legislations provided a minimum degree of self-governance based on traditions for protecting land rights. However, the State Governments under Schedule V disregarded and violated PESA, furthering Jana's struggles.
Forest Policy of 1952	The 1952 Forest Policy classified forests into various categories, including Reserved Forests, Protected Forests, and Unclassed Forests. Reserved Forests, which had the highest level of protection, often included Jana communities' traditional lands and habitats. This classification made it easier for the Government to restrict Jana access to their traditional forest resources for conservation purposes. Moreover, the Government's autonomy over the forests also meant that it was open for commercial interests and development projects, resulting in development-induced displacements.
Wildlife Protection Act of 1972	The Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 had already severely restricted the rights of Jana in the wildlife sanctuaries and removed their rights in national parks. The 1991 amendment to the Act took this a stage further. The 147 wildlife sanctuaries and 75 national parks (18 are tiger reserves) covering 4.26 per cent of the land mass are planned to increase. These moves, with the financial backing of the World Bank and other international agencies, have forced Jana to restrict further or altogether abandon their survival activities in the forests.
Forest Conservation Act of 1980	While not specific to Jana communities, this law has significant implications for them as it regulates the diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes. It has been a source of conflict as it can displace Jana communities from their traditional habitats.
Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA)	PESA extends the provisions of the Panchayati Raj (local self-governance) system to Scheduled Areas predominantly inhabited by Jana communities. It grants greater

	autonomy to local self-governing institutions in these areas. However, the State Governments have violated PESA, furthering Jana's struggles.
National Policy on Tribal and Panchayati Raj, 1996	This policy recognises Jana communities' unique socio-cultural and economic status and aims to promote their development and participation in local governance. However, this legislation has not taken its logical course due to the discrepancy in the Forest Acts, which will violate their fundamental land rights.
Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA)	This landmark legislation recognises the rights of Jana and other forest-dwelling communities over forest lands and resources. It grants them individual and community rights, including land, forest produce, and habitat rights. However, this legislation remains mostly on paper without being fully enacted.

The laws above discuss the policies and legislation that led to the alienation of Jana communities from their traditional lands. It is evident from Table 2.3 that the post-colonial government exercised control over the forest land by effectively implementing legislation that strengthened the institutions of land privatisation and Government-led Forest conservation. Land evictions occurred under the veil of unsustainable development and poorly designed environmental conservation mechanisms driven by capitalist interests (Padel, 2011; Choudhury, 2013; Bijoy, 2001; Warren, 2019; Bijoy, 2003; Das, 2011). Even into the 21st Century, Union and State²⁵ Governments continue to evict Jana despite inadequate rehabilitation or resettlement policies (Aufschnaiter, 2008). This has led to social and human rights violations visible in poor health, social, economic and education indicators (Das et al., 2010; Das & Mehta, 2012; Manikandan, 2014; Veerbhadranaika et al., 2012). Studies also

²⁵ In India, the state Governments are the level of Governments below the Union Government, i.e., each state is governed by the state Government while the entire country is governed by the Union/Central Government.

reveal the systematic marginalisation and invisibility of Jana interests across the policy, political, and administrative levels (Manikandan, 2014; Veerasha, 2019). These findings underscore the urgent need for a more inclusive and equitable approach that respects the rights and interests of Jana in India and addresses the social and human rights violations they continue to face.

About 60 million people have been displaced in the name of development since India's independence,²⁶ of which 40 per cent were Jana (Choudhury, 2013). It is essential to highlight that most Government laws for protecting Indigenous rights remain on paper and have no practical application to resolve their issues (Bijoy, 2001). Various Jana communities have relentlessly engaged in resistance against such Government negligence, asserting their traditional land rights. However, the Government responded to these protests with State-sanctioned violence, such as the Cheengeri rebellion (1995), the Panavally rebellion (1997), Chengara rebellion (2001) and Muthanga (2003). A notable incident in this context was the Muthanga incident where Jana protested against their forcible eviction from the forests as the area had been declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1980 (Haseena, 2014). The protests were repressed by the Government in 2001, focusing nationwide attention on Jana forest rights. This incident eventually led to the enactment of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, wherein the Government finally agreed to redistribute forest lands to the forest dwellers upon providing evidence of land claims (Nisha, 2022). However, even after nearly two decades of the enactment of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, the Government has failed to distribute the land to the Jana, and their struggle for land rights continues unresolved (Nisha, 2022). Many Jana have continued to live as encroachers on their land, while others have migrated to urban areas for

²⁶ India gained independence on August 15, 1947.

livelihood (Aufschnaiter, 2008). Those who live by the forests face police harassment and torture under allegations of Maoist links (Judge, 2015).

Despite the consistent battles against the Government to assert their land rights, Jana communities also face challenges from many environmentalists and conservationists who argue that conservation means keeping the Jana away from the forests. Nine court cases opposing the Forest Rights Act, 2006 were filed in the courts after its passing, of which the most influential were the petitions filed by three NGOs in 2008, namely, Wildlife First, Nature Conservation Society Amravati, and Tiger Research and Conservation Trust. These petitions represented broader sentiments that claimed that conservation was only possible if the forest dwellers were removed from wildlife habitats (Bathija, 2023, Madhusudan, 2019). Their concerns highlighted that the Forest Rights Act, 2006 was unconstitutional and that providing rights to forest-dwellers would destroy the forests in India (Citizens for Justice and Peace [CJP], 2008). Therefore, decades of struggle for land rights of the Jana continue across various frontiers that involve the Government, conventional conservationists and environmentalists, and mainstream society.

In summary, the sections above set the context for this study by tracing Jana's journey for traditional land rights across millennia marked by invasions, migrations, and colonisations. The discussion began by examining the Harappan and Vedic period, which holds significance in understanding the rise of the caste system and its practice. This system led to the marginalisation of Jana communities, even as they sought to distance themselves from it. Furthermore, while the available information linking Jana to the Harappan people is limited, there is clear evidence of their historical presence in the Indian sub-continent, engaging in conflicts with neighbouring states to preserve their autonomy (Bamshad, et al., 2001; Dutt, et al., 1985; Sen, 2017; Singh, 1963; Singhal, 1983; Thapar, 1966; Roy, 1970). Subsequently, the

medieval period revealed attempts by Jana to preserve their autonomy by residing in remote and inaccessible regions. The subsequent British colonisers disrupted the self-sustaining realms in pursuit of resources for industrialisation. This process involved taking control of the forest land by claiming that Jana were too primitive to protect the forests and through enacting various laws that gave the State control over forests. Unfortunately, even after independence, the Indian Government continued to adopt a paternalistic approach by controlling the forests and excluding Jana for development and conservation purposes. Post-colonial states in India, continued to subvert Jana through hegemonic bureaucratic and rational-legal political structures. The historical struggle and resistance are evidence of the structural violence involving state weakness, political failure, and the absence of norms necessary for true sovereign statehood (Vaidya, 2018). Therefore, this PhD study deems it imperative to address the environmental and social injustices faced by Jana within the context of colonisation. The next section provides contextual knowledge about the situation of Jana in Kerala, with a specific focus on Wayanad, the location of this research.

A Historical Analysis of Jana of Kerala

Before the 17th century, the Raja (King) of the Veddar tribes ruled most of the land in Wayanad (Bijoy, 2001). These communities were divided into 20 sub-groups and cultivated naturally evolved exotic varieties of paddy using traditional methods. It is believed that the land came to be known as Vayal Nadu (Land of Paddy). In fact, the Veddar tribal republic ruled the region until the emergence of feudal relations of production, eventually leading to them being overturned by rulers from the plains, who later enslaved them (Divya, 2016). After British colonisation, Pazhashi Raja, from the plains sought abode with the native Wayanad

communities in a quest to defeat the British East India Company during the 19th century, wherein he led the guerrilla warfare against the British for eight years. However, the British defeated Pazhashi Raja in 1805 and many Jana who valued freedom and feared a relapse of slavery fled to the dense jungles (Vaisakh, 2017).

The British eventually gained access to the forest interiors by taking advantage of Jana communities. In fact, the footpath from Thamarassery mountain pass to the heart of Wayanad was disclosed to the British by a Jana named, Karinthandan, who was treacherously killed by the British after the disclosure (Augustine, 2019). The construction of the roads by the British during the 19th century opened routes to Wayanad plateau for cash crop cultivation. Affordable rates for land and labour attracted many migrants from other parts of Kerala and from other states into an area predominantly belonging to the Jana. Gradually, the Jana began to lose their lands to the affluent migrants and British colonisers as they did not have any claims or proof of ownership and were compelled to work on the plantation as slaves (Kunhaman, 1989; Sebastian, 2018).

Colonial policies effectively isolated Jana communities from the forests despite their lives centring on the environment, which had relevance in their culture, traditional and spiritual belief systems. The colonials viewed Jana as primitive and backward, exercising only marginal or no role in the mainstream (Chandra, 2017; Shah, 2010). During the time of British rule, the British began slowly colonising the forests through the enactment of forest laws which increasingly reduced the access of Jana to the forest. This was faced with widespread protests by Jana (Bijoy, 2001). For example, the Kurichiya rebellion took place during 1812 by the Kurichiya Jana against the British invasion into the forests. On March 25, 1812, the Kurumba and Kurichiya rebelled, killing English officers and destroying British government structures. The Kurichiya rebellion was suppressed by the British on May 8, 1812 (Anjana, 2018).

Even after independence, the postcolonial policies continued to keep Jana away from their traditional forest land. For instance, the Kerala Land Reform Act, 1963 enacted the policy of land to the tiller, which led to the dispossession of Jana lands. Although the Government intended to implement this Act to ensure equitable distribution of land to the people as against the Zamindari system, this Act failed to recognise the traditional land rights of Jana. Under the law, the settler farmers became the owners of the land whereas Jana became agricultural labourers. After its implementation, there was a widespread non-tribal invasion (including people from the plains and other districts) into Jana areas of Attapaddy and Wayanad, who eventually appropriated Jana land. Alongside these, unsustainable developmental projects also led to large-scale displacement of Jana communities. Jana rebellions in response to these violations were suppressed by the Government including the Cheengeri rebellion (1995), Panavally rebellion (1997), Chengara rebellion (2001), and Muthanga (2003).

The persistent struggles by Jana against the Government's land alienation from the Kerala Land Reform Act, 1963 resulted in the Government of Kerala passing an act called the Kerala Scheduled Tribes (Restriction of Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Land) Act, 1975. This Act, a positive legislation towards safeguarding Jana's land rights, was included in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution to ensure that it was not challenged in any law court. However, the rules for implementing this Act were only formulated a decade later in 1986 with retrospective effect from 1982 (Bijoy, 2001). Under the Act, all the transactions where Jana land had been appropriated during the period between 1960 and 1980 were nullified. Jana beneficiaries were required to repay a portion of the total amount they received, calculated based on the value of the land involved in these transactions. The Government also gave provisions to Jana beneficiaries, unable to pay off the debt, to take loans from the bank, which had to be paid back in 20 years. The Act also restricted the transfer of Jana lands to non-Jana from 1982 without prior authority consent. The drawback of the law was that it remained

silent on the losses suffered by the Jana communities due to the prolonged dispossession of their lands and livelihoods.

Although this Act was everything that Jana had asked for, the Government failed to implement it. An estimated 8,553 applications were received to restore about 10,177 hectares of land (Ashokavaradhan, 2006). However, instead of prioritising the concerns of the Jana communities, the Government was influenced by pressures from non-Jana occupants to address their claims. This external pressure led to a High Court ruling that resulted in the dismissal of all applications within a span of six months, thereby undermining the intended protections for the Jana communities (Bhengra et al., 1998). During this time, C.K. Janu, a Jana woman also declared that the Jana would forcibly occupy lands that were rightfully theirs if no action was taken. With the delay in restoring land to the Jana applicants, the Government appealed for more time again and again while the High Court conceded to their appeal. In 1996, the Government deliberately tried to amend the Act which was rejected by the Governor. This was once again put forth by the next elected Government as Kerala Scheduled Tribes Amendment Act, 1996 but was aborted by the President, K.R. Narayanan on the failure of the Government to convince the genuineness and legality of the Act. Later, in 1999, the Kerala Restriction on Transfer by and Restoration of Lands to Scheduled Tribes Bill 1999 was passed which repealed the Kerala Scheduled Tribes (Restriction of Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Land) Act, 1975, apart from progressive restrictions on Indigenous Jana rights over forests (Bhengra et al., 1998).

A prominent struggle that gained popularity was the kudikettu samaram, which was against the inaction of the Government on the soaring number of hunger deaths in the Jana belts (200 recorded hunger deaths during the early 2000s), which continued the exploitation and denial of the basic rights of Jana (Nisha, 2022). The Jana who took part in the samara made

small shelter huts in front of the Government of Kerala Secretariat. The Government took this as a resettlement issue rather than a human rights violation and established a Tribal Resettlement and Development Mission to provide land to the landless Jana (Kumar, 2013). Once again, no visible positive steps were taken to restore Jana land. The worst incident was the Muthanga incident (2003) which gained national recognition and sympathy. Jana communities of the Muthanga village were forcibly evicted from the forests during the 1960s when the area was declared a Sanctuary. In the 1980s these areas were cleared for eucalyptus cultivation (Haseena, 2014). When the Government failed to address the needs and rights of Jana residents to their traditional land, Jana Gothramahasabha peacefully protested at the state capital, Thiruvananthapuram, to draw the attention of the public. The continued neglect led to the leader of the Jana Gothramahasabha, C.K. Janu, to fast until death protest, which eventually led to widespread public criticism of the negligence of the Government. Faced with immense criticism, the state agreed to a seven-point deal with the Jana Dalit Action Council. This agreement assured that wherever possible, each landless Jana family would be provided with five acres of land while in other places, a minimum of one acre of land would be provided, and a five-year livelihood programme was also offered until such time as Jana could sustain themselves. Eventually, the protest was called off with the agreement regarded as a historical triumph since it was the first time that the Government conceded to the demands of Jana (Bhengra, et al., 1999; Haseena, 2014; Nisha, 2022).

By April 2002, 568 families were provided with 1308 acres of land as the Chief Minister and C.K. Janu commissioned the first land distribution in Idukki district of Kerala (Bijoy & Raman, 2003). Over time, government responsiveness diminished following the allocation of 1,770 acres of land to 848 families, representing only three percent of the originally promised land. In response to this, Jana asserted their traditional rights over the Muthanga forests by entering the forests. However, they were forcibly evicted from the forests

by police lighting an open fire and burning down their huts (Bijoy & Raman, 2003). The Government also gave firing orders to the police justifying the orders by labelling the Jana as constitutional trespassers.

The Muthanga incident drew public sympathy and gradually led to the enactment of the Forest Law, 2006, in 2007, through which the Government agreed to distribute forest lands to the forest dwellers upon providing evidence of land claims. The centuries-long struggle for people's rights culminated in the enactment of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 at the national level; however, even after a decade, its implementation remained largely absent in the state. The State conceptualised the Act in such a way that the Government gave land ownership documents to the Jana without accepting their community rights and access to the forests. In December 2014, Jana once again protested, this time for 158 days. The purpose of the protest was to address the encroached Jana land, the rehabilitation of Jana, implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, the inclusion of vulnerable Jana tribes into the category of scheduled tribes and to stop the torture of Jana youth by the police raj in the Tribal hamlets in the name of Maoist terrorist links (Judge, 2015). Despite gaining significant public attention, the persisting challenges in land redistribution evidence the Government's failure to effectively implement such measures.

In summary, the predicament of Jana in Kerala mirrors the struggles faced by other Jana communities across India related to their enduring quest for traditional land rights. However, the implementation of the Kerala Land Acquisition Act, 1963 a state-level initiative, resulted in legislatively sanctioned Jana land encroachments by internal migrants and the Government. Despite the introduction of corrective legislation to address the historical injustices and the success of the Kerala Model of Development, Jana's traditional land rights remained unaddressed and favoured the migrants who occupied Jana land. The following section relates

the experiences of Jana to the experiences of other Indigenous communities worldwide to indicate the relevance of this study within the broader global context.

Impact of Colonisation: Indigenous peoples and Jana communities

This section delves into the Indigenous communities' experience of colonisation to gain insights into the connection between the historical and contemporary experiences of Jana communities. By analysing the interwoven nature and the unique aspects of their experiences, the section below underscores the importance of the need for a more comprehensive and empathetic approach to addressing the enduring legacies of colonisation on Jana and Indigenous communities worldwide.

From an international perspective, the phenomenon of colonisation is extremely relevant for Indigenous peoples as it represents a historical and ongoing struggle that has deeply affected their lives, cultures, and communities. Notably, similar to Jana communities, various Indigenous communities lived in relatively independent realms. For instance, Coates (2004) notes that pre-colonisation Indigenous societies possessed deeply entrenched Indigenous systems, were better off in terms of food supply and life expectancy, more stable, creative, and organised. However, with the advent of colonisation, these indicators were reversed. This change was a consequence of a conflict of purpose between the colonisers and the Indigenous people. That is, the Indigenous peoples were innately tied to living in harmony with nature with their responsibility towards the land and an intimate understanding of traditional landscapes; however, colonisers were primarily driven by the desire to exploit resources and expand their

industrial reach and empires (Coates, 2004). This conflict resulted in the colonisers using force to take control of Indigenous land and resources for the pursuit of resource extraction. There are documented histories of resistance, interface, or cooperation with colonisers by Indigenous peoples which demonstrate their conviction and self-determination to persevere with their distinct sovereign identities against colonial ideologies (Coates, 2004; Butlin, 2009; Stuchtey, 2011; Vaidya, 2018; Erni, 2014; Settles, 1996). Hence, colonisation, driven by exploitative motives, holds significance in Indigenous histories, symbolising the struggle for safeguarding their culture and identities that relate to their traditional lands.

Colonial authorities employed indiscriminate strategies aimed at asserting control over Indigenous land and reinforcing their dominance (Cox, 2017; Smith, 1998). First, the colonials used land privatisation as one of the primary strategies for acquiring Indigenous territories. The philosophy underpinning land acquisition was based on John Locke's notion of land ownership, where he stated that land ownership originated from tilling the soil, i.e., in mixing labour with the land (Arneil, 1996). The apparent absence of such activities within newly occupied territories led to the conviction that the natives possessed no legitimate claim over their traditional land. Thereby, the colonials appropriated Indigenous territories through settler collectives that claimed sovereignty over these spaces. For instance, in Australia, the doctrine of terra nullis (a land without people) was established under the British to reinforce that the Indigenous land was empty; it belonged to no one and was claimed for the colonial interests (Banner, 2005). Secondly, the colonials, to justify their pursuit of land and resources from the colonies, propagated ideas of racial superiority of the colonisers over the colonised (Dwyer, 2016). Under British colonisation, such views were naturalised through ethnographies and residential schools leading to the conviction that colonisation brought civilisation to Indigenous peoples (Cox, 2017; Smith, 1998). An illustrative example of this systematic erasure of Indigenous cultural identity and heritage is seen in the establishment of residential schools, in

colonies including Australia, Canada, and New Zealand wherein Indigenous children were forced into residential schools, often physically, emotionally, and sexually abused, to erase the Indigenous sense of belonging in them ("A Mutilated Tongue," 1993; Smith, 2009; Walker, 2016). Jana experienced similar approaches that involved land privatisation, constraints, and the dissemination of negative stereotypes as a means of subjugation. Therefore, the colonial strategies, which were primarily aimed at resource extraction, left Indigenous people, just like Jana, living as refugees in their own land.

The experiences of colonisation, as depicted in various Indigenous cultures, not only resonate with Jana communities in light of the information provided earlier in this chapter but also showcase lasting impacts that continue to influence the present day. The social, economic, and political marginalisation faced by Indigenous peoples is a global phenomenon, stemming from the lasting physical, spiritual, and emotional wounds inflicted during the colonial era, leaving them vulnerable (UN-DESA, 2009). A study that applied the United Nations Developmental Programme's Human Development Index (HDI)²⁷ to Indigenous populations in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States revealed a significant lag in the development indices of Indigenous populations compared to the general populations, with this disparity notably pronounced in Australia, despite the country being at the top of the HDI ranking in 2001 (Guimond, 2007). In essence, this chapter emphasises that akin to Jana communities, colonisation underpins the enduring vulnerability of Indigenous communities.

In summary, this section underscores the resonance between the historical and contemporary contexts of Jana and Indigenous communities. Notably, the shared commitment

²⁷ Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite measure that summarises a country's average achievements in three key dimensions of human development: life expectancy (reflecting a long and healthy life), education (representing knowledge and learning), and standard of living (indicating economic well-being) (UN, 2024).

to traditional lands is highlighted as a commonality between Jana and other Indigenous communities. Furthermore, both Jana and other Indigenous communities suffered from the consequences of colonisation initiated through the dispossession of their ancestral lands. This is aptly stated in the travel notes, *Keralathilea America*, by the renowned philanthropist K. Panoor, who compared the problems of the Jana of Wayanad with the issues of Native Americans. He stated that both communities had faced eviction from their lands, resulting in the loss of their identity due to the encroachment of outsiders (Panoor, 2013). Hence, this section recognises Jana communities' colonial history and its relevance to Indigenous peoples worldwide, situating it within the broader context of global indigeneity.²⁸ Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that colonisation is a highly intricate phenomenon, and this study offers only a concise glimpse of the similarities between Jana and other Indigenous communities.²⁹ The next section examines the emergence of the concept of sustainability, which replaced the notion of harmonious coexistence, this further contributed to the isolation of Jana communities from their traditional land, akin to Indigenous communities globally.

²⁸ Discussed further under the section, *Analysing Jana invisibility: Broadening of Indigenous land and sustainability challenges* (p. 84).

²⁹ Thoroughly exploring this literature exceeds the scope of my PhD; rather, the researcher has endeavoured to present ample literature to emphasise the similarities.

Harmonious co-existence vs conceptual rise of sustainability

Jana cultures are embedded in the notion of harmonious coexistence with nature. This harmonious coexistence predated the introduction and use of the concept of sustainability. This section examines the evolution of the concept of sustainability using colonisation literature and seeks to draw connections with the worldviews of Jana and Indigenous communities globally, emphasising living in harmony with nature.

The concept of sustainability emerged towards the end of the 20th century in response to growing concerns about the imminent ecological crisis from capitalism (Pisani, 2006). Despite its fairly recent conceptual origin, discussions and concerns about environmental degradation, including deforestation, salinisation, and loss of soil fertility, have existed since the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek, and Roman civilisations (Pisani, 2006). Plato in the 5th century BC, Strabo, and Columella in the 1st century BC and Pliny the Elder in the 1st century AD raised concerns about the environmental degradation caused by human activities such as farming, logging, and mining (Pliny, 1938; Columella, 1941; Pisani, 2006). These authors recommended using sustainable practices to maintain the everlasting youth of the Earth. Although several narratives to restore the planet have prevailed since ancient times, the rise of industrialisation, population growth, an increase in consumption after the Industrial Revolution, and the danger that crucial resources such as wood, coal and oil could be depleted boosted human beings awareness of the need to use resources in a sustainable way (Pliny, 1938; Columella, 1941; Pisani, 2006). Growing concern about these impacts eventually led to the rise of the concept and literature on sustainable development (Hajian & Kashani, 2021). Thus, it is crucial to acknowledge that the emergence of sustainability as a concept underscores an

anthropocentric process, framing the relationship between human beings and nature in a utilitarian manner and, consequently, perpetuating contributions towards ecological crisis.

As mentioned previously, industrialisation also marked the advent of colonisation endeavours, which led to the exploitation and indiscriminate utilisation of resources from the colonies (Guha, 1983). Consequently, the emergence of the concept of sustainability can be viewed as a response to the unregulated resource extraction that started exerting adverse environmental pressures under colonisation. Methods to sustain resource extraction with minimal environmental impact were developed (Mazzocchi, 2020). Unfortunately, the implementation of such recommendations, including scientific forestry continued to destroy the natural fauna and flora of the forests (Prakash, 1999). For many Jana and Indigenous communities, these colonial endeavours offered little benefit, as their access to forests (or traditional lands) remained restricted, allowing colonisers to extract resources sustainably from the colonial standpoint (Sivaramakrishnan, 2008). The previous section detailed how conservation measures that were implemented during the colonial period contributed to impeding Jana and Indigenous communities' access to their traditional lands. Unfortunately, even after several nations achieved sovereignty and independence, the postcolonial governance systems treated the Indigenous and Jana communities just like their colonial predecessors (Bijoy, 2001; Bijoy & Raman, 2003). Specifically, for Jana communities in India, the historical narrative presented earlier in this chapter details how postcolonial Governments assumed the role of colonisers, continuing to limit access to land for resource extraction in the pursuit of national development. In essence, sustainability implies a means to continue extracting resources with minimal adverse environmental impacts, by restricting Jana and Indigenous communities' access to their ancestral lands.

Jana perspectives on sustainability align with their fundamental views, rooted in eco-centrism, guided by principles of interconnectedness and reciprocity between humans and more-than-human entities (Verschuuren, 2010; Tiwari, 2010). The worldviews of these communities, grounded in experiential knowledge, stand in contrast to the dominant Western capitalist ideology, which, emerging during the colonial period, became the prevailing and unquestioned framework for understanding and interacting with the natural world. (Mazzhocci, 2020; Tiwari et al., 2010).

Specifically, the historical narrative presented earlier details how Jana inhabited the periphery of the forests for several millennia, relying on their experiential knowledge to coexist harmoniously with nature. Such practices allowed them to responsibly utilise resources while revering forests as a nurturing mother, often personified as a Goddesses (Madegowda, 2017). Their experiential knowledge enabled them to understand the intricate relations between ecosystems. They possessed deep awareness of the ecosystem, including knowledge about the various flora and fauna, their lifecycles, seasonal patterns, and how these resources can be repurposed for medicine and construction (Verschuuren, 2010; Tiwari, 2010). Drawing from the intricate knowledge about ecosystems and their interconnectedness, they developed sustainable practices that did not disrupt the balance of the environment. Some of these practices included organic farming, responsible hunting and gathering, and the use of traditional medicine (Verschuuren, 2010; Tiwari, 2010). Moreover, their conception of forests as living entities is reflected in their rituals or ceremonies which seek permission or forgiveness from the forest before utilising their resources (Verschuuren, 2010). For example, the Gond community, the largest ethnic community in India, regards Baba Dev as the creator of the universe. In their culture, God is believed to reside in the Saja tree, the most sacred to the community. They ensure the protection of the tree and the related biodiversity as a part of their ceremonial rituals (Oza, 2021). Therefore, Jana's long-standing coexistence with nature and

holistic knowledge systems represents an intricate and symbiotic relationship. This intricate connection that Jana has with their environment goes beyond their dependency on the extraction of resources emphasised by capitalism.

Jana worldviews embody a paradigm of living in harmony comparable to the Indigenous views of stewarding the environment. An example of such stewardship is apparent in the practices of Jana and Indigenous communities, who, despite numbering only 370 million globally, inhabit 20% of the Earth's biosphere in areas renowned for their abundant biological diversity (UN-DESA, 2009;Carino, 2010). This evidence underscores their positive and effective stewardship of the environment despite their small number. Jana and other Indigenous communities have long upheld their responsibility towards the environment, while the formal concept of sustainability and conservation emerged only recently in response to the visible deteriorating impacts on the environment due to irresponsible use of resources. It is interesting to note that the concepts of regenerative farming and supporting local have become slogans of sustainable development (Carlisle, 2022). Meanwhile, these practices have always existed in the day-to-day living of Indigenous communities.

Mazzocchi (2020) explains that the Western scientific notion of sustainability that focuses on the possibility of exploitation by minimising environmental risks fails to embed a sense of connectedness to the environment. Mazzocchi also emphasises the need to recognise traditional knowledge to redefine sustainability. Differences between Western and Indigenous perspectives on sustainability have sparked numerous debates, advocating for the recognition of traditional knowledge as a form of Indigenous science. The call for recognition of traditional experiential knowledge, forged through years of keen observation and environmental living, gained momentum through the concerted endeavours of numerous Indigenous activists and scholars (Knopf, 2015). Therefore, there is a recognised need to accentuate the significance of

traditional knowledge as Indigenous science that sustains their society and culture in consonance with their environment. This study seeks to draw connections with the worldviews of Jana, akin to Indigenous communities globally, emphasising living in harmony with nature.

This chapter highlights that the western concept of sustainability differs from the Jana and Indigenous views in its conceptual understanding. This section details how Jana, like other Indigenous communities had embedded sustainable living within their everyday lives, many years before the emergence of the concept. The key distinction lies in the fact that Western sustainability arose with a focus on resource extraction with minimal environmental impact, whereas traditional concepts centered on coexisting harmoniously with nature. This chapter underscores the importance of harnessing the traditional knowledge of Jana communities for improved environmental and community outcomes thereby expanding the scope of sustainability. By incorporating Jana wisdom into global and national politics of sustainability, society can benefit from their profound connection with the environment and effective stewardship of the Earth's biosphere. This study will contribute towards re-evaluating the concept of sustainability by understanding the reflections of Jana knowledge of living symbiotically with environment from a social work perspective. The next section discusses how despite the shared experiences of colonisation pertaining to the traditional land rights movements and visions of sustainability, Jana communities are sidelined in the global politics of indigeneity.

Challenges with Mainstream Environmentalism and Conservation

Efforts

This section critically examines how mainstream environmentalism and conservation initiatives neglect the potential contributions of the Jana community to sustainability, particularly in the context of their traditional knowledge.

Kameri-Mbote & Cullet (1996) observe that mainstream environmentalism focuses on two broad issues. Firstly, it prioritises preservation of wilderness areas, exemplified by the establishment of national parks where most human activities are banned. Secondly, it directs its focus towards environmental enhancements, which relates to scientific ways of pollution prevention and resource conservation. These phenomena are exemplified in the case of Wayanad, where the Jana community of Muthanga village faced forced eviction from the forests in the 1960s when the area was declared a sanctuary. Subsequently, in the 1980s, further displacement occurred when the areas were allocated for scientific forestry for eucalyptus cultivation (Haseena, 2014). Unfortunately, as evidenced in the example, both facets of environmentalism involve exclusion of ethnic communities who have lived in the forests and have experiential knowledge of living in harmony with nature. As widely indicated in this study, Jana and Indigenous peoples globally have fiercely resisted such mainstream environmentalism that selectively excludes them from conservation and development. Mainstream environmentalism and traditional land movements are intricately linked. The failure to address the rights of communities in addressing sustainable environmental outcomes is a missing link. Factors such as the introduction of new technologies, lifestyles, and market economies through processes like colonisation and globalisation undermine the transmission of experiential knowledge (United Nations Economic Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2009). Instead, mainstream environmentalism needs to recognise and value Jana

knowledge to foster a more inclusive and holistic approach to sustainability and environmental justice.

As stated previously, beyond the purview of the State and Central Government, several environmentalist and conservationist scholars have voiced concerns opposing legislative amendments, such as the Scheduled Tribes Act of 2006, which acknowledges the traditional land rights of the Jana community (Bathija, 2023; Madhusudan, 2019). The argument posed by these environmentalists and conservationists revolves around the perceived potential disruption to forest and wildlife conservation. An example used to justify the need to keep these communities away from conservation is the large-scale killing of migratory Amur Falcons by the Naga of Nagaland after the Government gave this group rights over their forests (Kashwan & Karthik, 2019). However, the local community, upon realising the ill-impacts of these practices and with the support of a local NGO successfully ran a community-led initiative to protect the migratory Amur Falcons (Banerjee & Aiyadurai, 2020). This later development of Nagas of Nagaland from predators to conservators achieved worldwide recognition³⁰ (Harris, 2015). Considering the Indigenous people's effective environmental strategies and the Indigenous people's innate sense of connectedness to the environment, environmental justice movements have essential lessons for framing a right to sustainable development by encompassing international law in mainstream local communities' environmental management. Essentially, comprehending the ramifications of disregarding the rights and practices of Jana communities necessitates a reassessment of environmental strategies,

³⁰ The Pangti village at Doyang, Nagaland slaughtered about 120,000 to 140,000 Amur Falcons until 2012 when the killings caught the national attention. NWBCT, a leading NGO of Nagaland together with the Government began a program called 'Friends with Falcon' involving the community. The community leads Amur falcon roosting became a self-sustained initiative where the community maintains round the clock patrolling efforts to save the Falcons from completing its 22,000 km long migration to Africa.

focusing on discerning the community's essential needs, a central theme of this study. Consequently, the objectives of this research focus on elucidating the sustainability worldviews of the Jana community. This pursuit aims to foster a more inclusive, culturally sensitive, and equitable approach, recognising the invaluable contributions of these communities to both sustainable development and environmental stewardship, particularly from the perspective of social work.

Relevance of Jana-led Sustainability Discourse in India

This section delves into the significance of redefining the sustainability discourse and praxis in India using the existing Jana knowledge systems.

Concerns about depleting forest covers, degrading environment, pollution, and rapid climate change present significant risks to providing a sustainable home to India's expanding population. Throughout history, India has held a position of prominence due to its extensive landmass, dense population, and abundant forest resources of roughly 85 per cent of land area (Bijoy, 2008). However, the colonial focus on revenue generation resulted in the excessive exploitation of forest resources, a trend that unfortunately persisted into the post-colonial era (Guha, 1983). The Forest Survey of India (2007) recorded that forests covered 21.02 per cent of the total geographical area, including coconut plantations (Chaudhry & Tambe, 2023). Of this total, nearly 12.4 per cent of the forest had no forest cover, and the area under the forest cover had been increased to reach an arbitrary target of 33 per cent set by the forest policy 1952 (Chaudhry & Tambe, 2023). Furthermore, studies indicate that the forest cover continues to decline in India (Banerjee & Madhurima, 2013).

A noteworthy aspect emanating from the Forest Survey of India Report in 2003 is that a substantial 37.82 percent of the nation's forest cover is concentrated in a mere 187 Jana

districts out of the total 449 districts (Bijoy, 2008). Of the 58 districts among the 449 districts, which have more than 67 per cent of their land under forest cover, 51 districts are predominantly Jana districts (Bijoy, 2008). This information underscores the critical role played by Jana districts in maintaining and possibly enhancing the overall forest cover in the country. These findings highlight the importance of acknowledging and understanding the dynamics within Jana districts for effective conservation and management of India's diminishing forest resources.

In a broader context, the role of Jana districts in forest preservation aligns with the earlier assertions emphasising how Jana communities consistently coexist harmoniously with nature. The preceding discussions also provide evidence that Jana, akin to Indigenous communities globally, demonstrates their dedication to living in harmony with nature, even during the formative stages of the sustainability concept, designed to counteract the adverse effects of unchecked economic development and colonisation. Therefore, the deep-rooted values of living in harmony with nature hold the potential to reshape the sustainability discourse and praxis in the country, providing a path towards an environmentally conscious and balanced future and achieving Jana welfare. Building on this analysis, this study aims to underscore the imperative for incorporating Jana's knowledge to redefine sustainability efforts undertaken in India as an urgent call for action against climate catastrophe. Utilising a participatory and strength-based social work approach, the study seeks to identify Jana's worldviews on sustainability and explore how integrating these perspectives can contribute to the development of sustainable outcomes for both the community and the environment.

Analysing Jana invisibility: Broadening of Indigenous land and sustainability struggles

Although shared narratives of colonisation bring together Jana and Indigenous communities, Jana voices remain almost invisible within the international politics of indigeneity. The section below explores this trend's evolution and persistence where Jana voices were sidelined.

Jana and Indigenous communities continued to remain vocal in advocating their traditional land rights, emphasising the heightened vulnerability resulting from the impact of colonisation on their lives. One of the earliest movements for the international recognition of Indigenous rights was the travel of Cayuga Chief Deskaheh, the representative of the Six Nations of the Iroquois to Geneva in 1923, to the League of Nations³¹, to make a plea for the cause of the people (Hauptman, 2008). However, he did not receive the necessary permit and returned to North America. Despite that, he had a remarkable campaign in Europe, attracting a more receptive audience in the media and the general public (Hauptman, 2008). A similar journey was also made by a Māori religious leader, W.T. Ratana, the following year to protest the breakdown of the Treaty of Waitangi, which was signed by the representatives of the British and Māori leaders in 1840. Ratana first travelled to London to petition King George V, with a large delegation, but he was denied entry (De Costa, 2006). In 1925, his delegation to the League of Nations, Geneva, was denied access (UN, 2019a; UN-DESA, 2009). These instances

³¹ The League of Nations, an intergovernmental organisation, founded in 1920 as the result of the end of World War I with the Paris Peace Conference, with the principal mission to maintain World Peace. Chief Deskaheh waited for a year to obtain recognition from the League.

highlight the endeavours of Indigenous communities from British settler colonies bound by treaties, who then approached the colonisers to address their issues. In contrast, in India's pre-independence from Britain, the slogans of independence by leaders who represented India on the international stage voiced collective national interests aimed at obtaining freedom for the entire nation, rather than emphasising the struggles of specific communities like Jana. After independence, and being a sovereign non-settler nation, the efforts of Jana communities for autonomy continued to take place within the national context (Anaya, 2004; Guha, 1983). Therefore, the historical marginalisation of Jana communities, with their struggles being overshadowed by the national narrative focused on liberation from colonial rule, is evident.

While several Indigenous communities from settler nations were able to clearly outline their concerns for sovereignty and land rights, in the case of Jana, the collective national interests buffered their land rights movements. Within the international space, the rising concerns of forced labour among Indigenous labourers as early as 1926 prompted the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to provide due consideration to Indigenous rights (MacKay, 2003). As a result, in 1957, ILO framed ILO Convention No. 107, entitled, *Convention Concerning the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and Other Tribal and Semi-Tribal Populations in Independent Countries*. It is noteworthy that the mention of "other tribal and semi-tribal populations in independent countries" within the convention title suggests that Jana experiences and struggles, along with those of Indigenous communities globally, contributed to the international recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples. The

development of this convention eventually led to the development of more comprehensive conventions like ILO Convention No. 169³² in 1989 (Roy & Kaye, 2002).

During the period between 1960s and 1970s, several decolonisation steps were undertaken including the establishment of a large number of national and international Indigenous organisations (Hill, 2009). Most of the issues highlighted by these organisations included the loss of land, broken treaties, discrimination, marginalisation, poverty, violation of human rights, social injustices, conflicts, including massive massacres (Hill, 2009). Figure 2.1 presents the key events that took place in the decades that followed include the following:

³² Convention 169 acknowledges the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination within a nation-state and establishes benchmarks for national Governments concerning the economic, socio-cultural, and political rights of Indigenous peoples. This includes the right to a land base.

Figure 2.1 Key events



The above events trace the gradual advancement of the international recognition of Indigenous rights. Still, within this research context, it is crucial to understand how certain Indigenous communities, such as the Jana, have been marginalised. A significant milestone in this context is the United Nations adopted the ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries in 1957 and 1989. When United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was established in 2007, it notably omitted the specific mention of “tribal peoples in independent countries,” instead using the term “Indigenous peoples” as a broader term meant to encompass all such communities. This omission can be traced back to the influential study by José Martínez Cobo (1972), which played a pivotal role in shaping the international definition of Indigenous peoples.

Cobo’s study introduced the working definition of Indigenous communities which included Jana communities. His findings were that Indigenous communities generally do not conform into national communities but instead constitute tribal and semi-tribal groups that adhere to clan or tribe-based land ownership patterns. Moreover, it was highlighted in his study that the majority of these Indigenous communities predominantly reside in rural areas. Cobo’s (1972) study also addressed isolated or marginal populations, not subjected to conquest or colonisation and maintaining ancestral customs and traditions due to isolation stating that they should be considered as Indigenous populations.

The criteria established in Cobo’s (1972) study, particularly the stipulation, “although they have not suffered conquest or colonization” did not apply to Jana communities, who also experienced colonisation impacts just like the other Indigenous communities (Cobo, 1971, p.13). This point highlights a limitation in Cobo’s original definition, as it excludes communities like the Jana who were subject to colonisation, despite fitting other criteria of Indigenous communities. Moreover, the findings of Cobo’s study neither differentiated Jana

communities from the broader population to be recognised as Indigenous. Additionally, the study did not offer adequate criteria to differentiate Jana communities from the broader population, nor did it provide a clear basis for their recognition as Indigenous. As a result, Cobo's influential study, which continues to shape contemporary discussions on Indigenous issues, contributed to ambiguity regarding the inclusion of tribal and semi-tribal peoples in independent countries within the broader definition of Indigenous populations. The aftermath of the UNDRIP sparked debate in several Asian and African countries, where the concept of indigeneity remained ambiguous due to historical conquests, invasions, migrations, and colonisation spanning millennia (UN, 2007).

These events made it difficult to clearly define Jana as "Indigenous" in the traditional sense, as their experiences and histories were shaped by both isolation and colonisation. For Jana communities, this ongoing debate about indigeneity complicates their recognition and access to rights afforded to Indigenous peoples globally. While they may share common characteristics with Indigenous populations, such as unique cultural practices and deep ties to their land, the history of colonisation and integration into the state often leaves them outside the official recognition of Indigenous peoples under international law. This creates challenges in securing the rights and protections they are entitled to as Indigenous populations.

Following the ratification of UNDRIP, the emphasis internationally shifted towards identifying and defining Indigenous communities, rather than providing essential support to all the communities that were once part of the collective struggle for recognition (Ananya, 2004). There was a uniform agreement on the perception of indigeneity among the Native Americans of America, Māori of New Zealand, Aboriginals and the Torres Strait Islanders of Australia. Despite such conformity, it is important to note that, in 2007, the CANZAUS countries (Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the US), initially refrained from fully endorsing

UNDRIP, expressing reservations or withholding their formal support at the time (UN, 2007). Previously, they had opposed it for over 30 years (Merlan, 2009). However, the noncompliance of CANZAUS countries with UNDRIP led to struggles and disharmony amongst Indigenous peoples within these nations, eventually resulting in their adoption of the Declaration (Horomia, 2007) (Horomia, 2007; UN, 2011). This shift in the CANZAUS countries highlights the complexities involved in the evolution of the concept, its acceptance, and its application in these settler colonial nations, where the concept could be easily replicated.

In non-settler independent nations with ethnic communities, there were disputes over acknowledging these societies as Indigenous, let alone compliance with UNDRIP (Coates, 2004; Das, 2015; Keating, 2016). For instance, India voted in favour of the UNDRIP on the condition that all Indians after independence are Indigenous, thereby conveniently rejecting the concept of Indigenous peoples and pointing out the lack of definition as a significant obstacle to the implementation of the declaration (UN, 2019b). Similar to India, other Asian countries like China, Pakistan, and Indonesia also remained silent as they denied the concept of indigeneity, with the Philippines being the only Asian country that voted in support of UNDRIP by officially recognising their Indigenous peoples (Erni, 2014). Due to their geographical location, these countries have histories of migration, invasion, colonisation, and conquests that date back several millennia. Hence, it would be technically unjust to confer the status of indigeneity to one specific community while all others were equally integral to the freedom struggle. Therefore, while indigeneity was applicable for nations that experienced settler colonisation, it remains controversial in countries with a significant presence of traditional communities but no settler population.

Ongoing defiance and lack of agreement from various countries in global forums related to a worldwide definition of Indigenous peoples has led to perpetual debates (Das,

2015; Sanders, 1999). These debates have included various Indigenous representatives, national leaders and authors arguing against the inclusion of a global definition of Indigenous people, which they believed could hardly capture the continually evolving and developing diversity of indigeneity under a single catchphrase (Daes, 2008; Henriksen, 2009; Tauli-Corpuz, 2001). For instance, Daes (2008) argued that the global definition of Indigenous people was not necessary; instead, self-identification as a part of their right to self-determination was required. As previously stated, non-settler nations like India, Indonesia, China, and Pakistan argued that the lack of a clear definition hindered UNDRIP's implementation, but the UN left it unresolved, citing global diversity and historical complexities (UN, 2007; UN, 2019a). Nevertheless, by urging all communities to self-determine their indigeneity, the United Nations is essentially encouraging them to assimilate to fit within the scope of indigeneity. Therefore, this analysis circles back to the necessity of reintroducing a more inclusive term to encompass communities like Jana, rather than forcing them under the umbrella of indigeneity, which may not be practically applicable in non-settler independent nations.

Overall, this study argues that different regions have unique histories, and the concept and term of indigeneity may need to be re-evaluated and contextualised to address better the diversity of the communities and their struggles for recognition, rights, and social justice. Indeed, the United Nations adopted the ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries in 1989; however, during the establishment of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007, the specific mention of "tribal peoples in independent countries" seems to have been omitted or lost. This exclusion raises concerns about the representation and recognition of these particular communities, who do not fit the purview of indigeneity due to their complex migration histories in the context of the broader declaration. This analysis is relevant in this current study as the dilemma of Jana indigeneity remains an obstacle to recognising Jana under UNDRIP by India,

which could potentially be a platform that would enable them to advocate for their rights and to seek social justice.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter traces the contextual background of the evolution of the environmental injustices and sustainability challenges faced by Jana, spanning from historical to contemporary times, drawing on colonisation literature. It sheds light on the persistent struggles of Jana, dating back over 3500 years, when they defended their traditional rights. The autonomy they once possessed over their land gradually waned with the onset of British colonisation, which continued through to postcolonial times. The experience of displacement from traditional lands to serve the capital interests of colonisers was a shared narrative between Indigenous peoples and Jana. Moreover, parallels were drawn in incidents such as land appropriation, which not only subjected Jana and Indigenous communities to discrimination but also depicted them as primitive, lacking the knowledge to steward their ancestral lands, a responsibility they had diligently fulfilled for millennia. As time progressed, they faced further marginalisation in the conservation process, with restricted access to their traditional lands. Unfortunately, even after gaining independence and sovereignty, the situation for Indigenous communities and Jana has seen little improvement. Despite the similarities in the experiences of displacement and sustainability worldviews between Indigenous and Jana, Jana find themselves sidelined in the global discourse on indigeneity, raising concerns about inclusivity. In essence, delving into the historical context and comparing with international literature helps clarify the current issues which are focus of study. This understanding, in turn, supports the development of effective strategies aimed at promoting environmental justice and sustainability for Jana, the primary goal of this study.

In this research context, the complexities of the Jana communities' struggles underscore the importance of this historical contextualisation for crafting meaningful social work interventions. Recognising the continuity of injustices is paramount in formulating strategies that promote environmental justice, sustainability, and, ultimately, a more equitable future for Jana and similar marginalised groups. The next chapter examines the concepts from a social work viewpoint.

Chapter Three

Green Social Work: Environmental Justice, Equity, and Sustainability

‘Without leaving a footprint showing where we’ve been.’

(Dominelli, 2012)

This chapter presents a critical review of theoretical literature for its application to Jana’s context within the purview of the research aims and objectives. By keeping the contextual background, including environmental injustices, inequity, and sustainability faced by Jana communities at the centre, this chapter examines the use of a green social work lens to provide a theoretical framework for this study. The chapter comprises three sections: the first introduces and locates green social work within this study. The second concerns how the theory fits into the ambit of study by providing contextual meaning to the concepts. The third section includes the strengths and limitations of green social work theory in relation to the research aims and objectives.

Contemplating a Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework within this study holds two purposes: firstly, to establish a connection between environmental injustices and sustainability, and to elucidate the relevance

of Jana's worldviews for achieving sustainable future outcomes. It involves analysing how the experiences of environmental, social, and human rights injustices intertwine with the pursuit of sustainability and how Jana's unique perspectives contribute to creating a sustainable future. Secondly, it is to detail the commitment of social work practice to the person-in-environment principle to create sustainable community and environmental solutions to these crises.

Contemplating the above rationale, several relevant theories were identified for achieving the study objectives. These included early ecological social work theories, environmental social work, eco-social work, and green social work theory. The early ecological models, based on systems theories built on the works of Von Bertalanffy (1968) and Bateson (1972), who played a pioneering role in emphasising the influence of the environment on the client's system. Although social workers initially used theories to explain the interactional processes between family members, these theories revived the social work profession's commitment to the environment by focusing on social and cultural institutions ranging from family to community. Later, environmental social work theorists such as Rogge (1994) and Besthorn (2008, 2012) extended the narrow focus of ecological theory to a broader concern for the person in their environment. However, environmental social work failed to transcend the limitations of the physical dimension and engage with neoliberalism's exploitation of planet Earth for profit. Around the same time, work by Matthies et al. (2001) on eco-social work highlighted the arguments and justifications in making demands for social justice, advocating for respecting human rights by devising participatory approaches through social work interventions.

Green Social Work theory, like eco-social work theory, stands out in bridging this knowledge gap by embedding the notion of environmental justice within the concept of social justice. It focuses on coproducing transformative social change that creates a living, viable

Earth with equitable shared and distributed resources and opportunities (Dominelli, 2012, 2014, 2018). Additionally, the holistic and transdisciplinary nature of the theory enables the researcher to draw social, economic, and ecological foundations from the other related theories and hence contribute to enhancing the knowledge base of the theory (Dominelli, 2012, 2014, 2018). Therefore, green social work theory aligns with the research objectives of understanding Jana's self-determined experiences of social and environmental injustices to identify social work interventions through participatory approaches³³ for achieving community-led and sustainable initiatives for the benefit of the community and the environment.

Introducing and Situating Green Social Work Theory

This section introduces and contextualises green social work theory within the scope of the study. It begins by outlining how the theory acknowledges and underscores the role of social work as a profession in addressing environmental justice and sustainability issues. Following this, the section navigates through aspects of the theory to introduce and situate it within the study context.

Social work as a profession concerned principally with social justice began out of a commitment to the person-in-environment approach (Hollis, 1967). Green social work reminds the profession of its origin, transcending the early limitations of neglecting the environment-

³³ Chapter four- Jana Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology and Methods (p.131) details the methods used in the study.

in-person aspect to include the duty to take care of the environment within its jurisdiction by addressing environmental issues with social justice and social work perspectives (Dominelli, 2012). Dominelli (2012) highlighted this need by using a socio-ecological development approach in response to the absence of social workers' voices during the 2004 Tsunami disaster. Through green social work, Dominelli (2012) challenged the social work profession to incorporate its basic social work principles and values in addressing concerns over environmental degradation and disasters associated with mainstream practice. Similarly, one of the central concerns of this study revolves around identifying social work's response to the fast-growing environmental practices in India that involve investment in unsustainable practices by evicting Jana communities, who have traditional knowledge concerning protecting the environment. This concern underscores the significance of exploring and integrating the role of social workers in addressing environmental and social justice implications in creating community-centered approaches to fostering equitable and sustainable outcomes for community and environment, thereby justifying the application of this theory.

In the context of this study, green social work theory finds precedence over other theories for several reasons. Firstly, it effectively interconnects environmental and social injustices with sustainability, the key tenets of this study. Dominelli (2012) achieves this by embedding the concept of environmental injustice within the parameters of social injustice by drawing insights from critical environmental theory³⁴. Therefore, green social work theory, developed by Lena Dominelli in 2012, presents a holistic perspective that provides a new dimension of social work approaches to ecological issues. It challenges neoliberalism and

³⁴ The critical environmental theory examines nature as a site of exploitation in which relationships between humans and nature are one-sided, with humans using nature to only take and exploit, and never give. The main aim of the theory was to create a movement that was liberating for the people and the environment (Jones, 2019).

unsustainable and inequitable resource distribution by advocating for locality-specific, culturally relevant measures for problem resolution (Dominelli, 2012). Underpinned by the values of social justice, human rights, and ecological sustainability, green social work focuses on social equity, social inclusion, the obligation not to destroy resources to sustain them for future generations, equitable distribution of resources and advocates a rights-based approach to meet the needs of the people to develop their skills ethically and sustainably (Dominelli, 2018). Within this research context, these factors enable the researcher to utilise the theory's values to analyse the factors of ecological sustainability and social justice to obtain a comprehensive understanding about injustices faced by Jana communities amidst rising environmental crises.

Secondly, the Indigenous views adopted by green social work theory align the study context with Jana. The theory adopts an inclusive approach to environmental problems practiced with an innovative outlook to include all people, other living beings (plants and animals), and the physical ecosystem; emphasising the relational nature of all its constituent parts; redefining the duty of care for and about others as one that includes the responsibility to care for and about planet Earth (Dominelli, 2012). This approach is drawn from the Indigenous values of sustainable interrelationships with the environment and incorporates a critique of neoliberal models of development and its governance structures for destroying the environment in search of profits magnifying social inequities. It effectively incorporates the Indigenous view of a minimal footprint of existence, highlighting the importance of the interwoven relationship between people, other living beings, and the physical environment for achieving sustainability (Davis, 1998; Simpson, 2008). These concepts align closely with the foundations of marginalised Jana communities facing environmental injustices due to the impact of neoliberal policies. Consequently, this theory proves particularly relevant, shedding light not only on the experiences of injustices of these communities but also relates to how it impacts the

environment they depend upon. Therefore, using green social work theory, provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics of environmental and social injustices faced by the communities, environmental degradation, and scope for social work practice to achieve sustainable Jana welfare.

Lastly, the theory underscores the need for social workers to work with local communities to coproduce alternative sustainable models to capture their aspirations and visions for their future, allocate resources equitably, reduce environmental and social injustices, and use the profits to benefit all and protect the planet. Huang's (2018) reflection on the tribal kitchen project provides a successful example of this approach, which significantly contributed to the post-disaster recovery of the Atayal tribes of Taiwan. The project utilised Indigenous knowledge on cooperative farming, traditional arts, craft-making, acting, learning, and guided tour, rooted in the core values of community-based mutual care. Similarly, Powers et al. (2018) applied the theory to highlight the long-term significance of active engagement with the Indigenous communities of Jamaica to preserve land and address the destruction of natural resources. In the context of this study, these examples demonstrate how the principles and values of green social work theory can provide a framework, emphasising a collaborative approach to addressing the concerns of traditional communities and the implications for sustainability. It highlights the importance of social workers engaging with local communities to coproduce sustainable solutions that align with their cultural values and aspirations to foster positive change that benefits both the communities and the environment that they rely on.

In summary, this section discussed the foundational theoretical framework to this study, offering a comprehensive lens through which to explore the intricate dynamics of environmental and social injustices faced by Jana communities. The theory interconnects the core tenets of this study, including environmental and social injustice and sustainability by

emphasising the need for innovative social work perspectives and models. The core focus and values underpinning the theory are explained, and the holistic approach of the theory advocates for social equity, inclusion, and locality-specific measures to address ecological issues. The incorporation of Indigenous perspectives aligns with the focus on marginalised Jana communities facing environmental injustices due to neoliberal policies. Next, the theory also emphasises the need for social workers to engage with Jana communities to coproduce sustainable outcomes that equally benefit the community and the environment. Therefore, the above discussion justifies the application of this theory in this research context as it aligns with this study's central focus and provides a practical framework for addressing the complexities social and environmental issues faced by Jana.

Contextualising the key concepts and definitions

The preceding discussion highlights the distinctive nature of green social work theory in bridging the concepts of environmental justice, social justice, and sustainability within the context of this study. This section further delves into contextualising and defining these concepts using green social work theory to provide a comprehensive understanding of their interconnections and implications for this study.

Environmental injustice

Within green social work theory, the concept of environmental injustice reflects the unequal distribution of Earth's resources due to neoliberal policies and governance, leading to the deterioration of the planet and people's well-being, thereby compromising future generations' needs (Dominelli, 2012). The key facets of environmental injustice from a green social work theory perspective underscore unequal sharing of Earth's resources (distributive justice), neoliberal governance (procedural justice), and sustainability (precautionary justice). An analysis of other theorists' discussion of the concept provides similar undertones, for example, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines environmental justice as the fair treatment and the meaningful incorporation of all people, irrespective of their race, colour, origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies (Institute of Medicine Committee on Environmental Justice, 1999). Similarly, Ikeme (2003) defines it as the equal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens among people.

In fact, Robert Bullard, a sociologist, documented the inequities and articulated the concept of environmental justice for the first time to further explore why minority and poor communities are more likely to be chosen as sites for locally unwanted land uses (Bullard & Johnson, 2000; Bullard et al., 2008). Subsequent studies confirmed that marginalised populations exhibited a significantly higher likelihood of residing in proximity to environmental hazards compared to privileged populations (Arcury & Quandt, 2020; Parsons et al., 2021). Collectively, these interpretations emphasise the conceptual understanding of environmental injustice as unequal environmental benefits and hazards by the governance framework to the citizens. However, green social work adds to the concept by integrating the

idea of sustainability into environmental justice, acknowledging the Indigenous land rights movements.

Therefore, environmental injustice, as conceptualised within green social work theory, encompasses equitable sharing of environmental benefits and drawbacks, Government input in providing support, and finding a balance between conservation and development, implying justice on distributive, procedural, and precautionary levels. This comprehensive understanding of environmental injustice, grounded in historical context and theoretical perspectives, forms the basis for its further exploration within the green social work framework. The following sections address: (i) Distributive justice-inequitable sharing of environmental risks and benefits, (ii) Procedural justice- insensitive governance and legal framework, (iii) precautionary justice- development and conservation.

Distribution justice: Inequitable sharing of environmental hazards and benefits

Equitable distribution of environmental risks and the benefits of environmental values across the demographic and geographic scales forms one of the core tenants of environmental injustice with a green social work framework. As already mentioned, the genesis of environmental injustice as a concept can be traced back to Warren County (USA), where Bullard (1993) first highlighted the disparities in the distribution of environmental advantages and hazards between marginalised and privileged populations. Further building on distributive justice, Dominelli (2012, 2014) utilised green social work theory to highlight the extensive impacts of inadequate access and the unfair share of environmental hazards on the health and well-being of low-income and marginalised communities. These distributional inequities can

be attributed to unsustainable globalisation, urbanisation, and environmental degradation (such as ozone depletion, water insecurity, diminishing biodiversity, and deforestation). Furthermore, Indigenous communities, as emphasised by Ford et al. (2020) bear a disproportionate burden of environmental hazards and benefits, as their livelihoods are intricately linked to their surroundings, enabling them to perceive and adapt to environmental changes. Similar to Indigenous communities, Jana provides a pertinent example of this situation³⁵, as their practices have fostered intricate relationships with the environment, rendering them susceptible to any alterations in their ecological milieu.

Indeed, green social work explores the concept of inequitable distribution of environmental hazards and benefits extensively in the context of development and disaster management, shedding light on how the unequal distribution of resources contributes to the impact on marginalised communities in both scenarios. In the realm of development, various marginalised communities, such as the Jana, have borne the adverse consequences, becoming the victims of national development initiatives. For instance, Jana communities constituted 40 percent of approximately 60 million people displaced in the name of development since India's independence (Choudhury, 2013), reflecting the communities' experience of the downsides of development rather than reaping the benefits of such projects. Similarly, in the context of disaster management, evidence indicates that poorly designed environmental systems contribute to the escalation of natural disasters, including floods and landslides (UNDRR, 2019). Dominelli (2012, 2014) highlights that marginalised communities face higher risks not only with exposure to the hazard events but also during rehabilitation, primarily due to limited access and the associated costs of the process. She cites the example of the 2004 Tsunami

³⁵ Discussed in Chapter two: Contextual Background, under the section: Harmonious coexistence vs conceptual rise of sustainability (p.75).

disaster to illustrate how environmental catastrophes of such magnitude can intensify pre-existing socio-economic inequalities, uphold traditional cultural values and norms, and perpetuate unequal gender relations. Unfortunately, in cases of environmental catastrophes such as rising sea levels, tidal surges, coastal erosion, and inundations, Indigenous peoples experience increased vulnerability due to the dynamic and unpredictable environmental changes caused by climate change (Dominelli, 2012, 2015, 2018).

Therefore, green social work recognises unequal distribution of environmental risks and benefits as a form of environmental injustice, a concern previously identified in Chapter two³⁶. Consequently, within the context of this study, it supports the researcher's position of understanding and promoting community-led sustainability initiatives, and advocating for equity for Jana communities, who face unique environmental challenges due to their close relationship with the environment.

Procedural justice: Insensitive Governance and legal framework

Green social work theory places neoliberal policies, insensitive governance, and inadequate legal frameworks as central aspects that contribute towards environmental injustices (Dominelli, 2012, 2015). Neoliberal policies, characterised by deregulation, privatisation, and free market principles, often prioritise economic growth over environmental and social considerations (Dominelli, 2012). Worsening socio-economic inequalities are intensified by exploiting land, labour, and resources at the lowest economic cost. One illustrative example involves the establishment of industries that ostensibly promise to provide

³⁶ Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

job opportunities for local communities. However, in reality, this often leads to vulnerability to industry-related hazards for the local population. Simultaneously, it enables the industry to operate with inexpensive local labour and resources, ultimately seeking to maximise profits from investments while claiming to fulfill human needs (Dominelli, 2012, 2018).

This exploitative dynamic underscores the inherent tension between economic interests and the well-being of marginalised communities within the framework of neoliberal policies. Dominelli (2012, 2014) discusses how such an approach leads to exploiting natural resources without adequate regard for environmental sustainability or the well-being of marginalised communities. Neoliberalism tends to exacerbate inequalities by concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a few, while marginalising and disenfranchising vulnerable populations (Dominelli, 2012). Dominelli argues that the many governments unfortunate, reliance on neoliberal policies has led to systemic failures in protecting the rights of marginalised communities. In many cases, Governments prioritise the interests of powerful industries or economic elites over the needs of marginalised groups and environmental conservation. In these instances, the inadequate exercise of the legal frameworks perpetuates environmental injustice by failing to protect vulnerable communities or enforce environmental regulations effectively (Dominelli, 2012). Legal systems may lack provisions for addressing environmental harms, or they may be biased in favour of powerful interests, making it difficult for marginalised communities to seek justice or hold polluters accountable for environmental damage.

These aspects are evident in the circumstances of Jana communities, the focus of this study. Chapter two³⁷ discussed how Jana faced large-scale displacement due to developmental

³⁷ Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

projects supported by the Government without proper rehabilitation or resettlement policies. Additionally, consistently restrictive policies have removed Jana from their environment while not effectively implementing legislation meant to protect marginalised communities. These insensitivities are reflected in the Government's paternalistic approach to interventions where the authorities make decisions on behalf of the people, assuming they know what is best for them, without involving the community in the decision-making process. In most scenarios, Jana have little to no knowledge about the legislation that impacts them the most (Kjosavik & Shanmugaratnam, 2021). Despite studies emphasising the importance of practical engagement with the law for Jana communities to self-determine their needs (Menon, 2007), non-participatory approaches have led to their social, political, and economic marginalisation, disrupting their self-sufficient and sustainable ways of life (Verma & Linkenbach, 2022). Therefore, green social work theory serves as a framework to address the environmental injustices as rooted in systemic issues such as neoliberal policies, insensitive governance, and inadequate legal frameworks. Such occurrences place Jana communities unfairly where economic interests take precedence over their well-being. By advocating for transformative social policies, inclusive governance structures, and robust legal protections, green social work aims to create more equitable and sustainable societies where all individuals have equal access to environmental benefits and are protected from environmental harm.

In essence, within the research context, green social work theory positions procedural justice as a significant cornerstone of environmental injustice highlighting how systemic issues, neoliberal policies, and inadequate legal enforcement impact Jana communities.

Precautionary justice: Inclusive Environmental Practices

Green social work underscores the significance of conservation practices and policies in achieving environmentally just outcomes. Dominelli (2012) notes the entanglement of environmental justice movements with mainstream environmentalism over the past decades. Mainstream environmentalism traditionally focuses on wilderness preservation and pollution prevention, often neglecting the rights and perspectives of communities, particularly Indigenous ones (Kameri-Mbote & Cullet, 1996). Indigenous peoples have consistently opposed mainstream environmentalism's exclusionary practices, advocating for the recognition of their rights within conservation initiatives. While mainstream environmentalism often neglects community rights, Indigenous communities maintain unique practices deeply connected to their traditional lands. However, the transmission of Indigenous knowledge is undermined by factors such as the introduction of new technologies, lifestyles, and market economies through colonisation and globalisation (Aswani et al., 2018). In the current global movement for sustainable development and climate change, green social work utilises Indigenous perspectives to highlight the importance of prioritising Indigenous knowledge systems, given their profound connection to the environment.

Therefore, within this study context, green social work theory emphasises precautionary justice as a central pillar of environmental justice, highlighting the significance of reconsidering effective environmental strategies employed by Jana communities. By doing so, green social work advocates for inclusive conservation, stressing the need to consider the perspectives, needs, and rights of all stakeholders involved in the conservation process. When conservation initiatives lack inclusivity, there is a risk of unintentionally contributing to environmental injustices. Green social work, therefore, supports an inclusive approach to

conservation that respects the rights and contributions of all communities, aiming to prevent or mitigate environmental injustices associated with conservation efforts.

Overall, within this research context, green social work provides a vital framework for the concept of environmental justice by highlighting distributive, procedural, and precautionary justice as central pillars³⁸. These understandings align with the situation of Jana as discussed in Chapter two³⁹. While green social work theory provides clear theoretical understanding of environmental injustice, it is important to note that this study also attempts to comprehend the self-determined perspectives of Jana concerning environmental experiences and discern the potential contributions that the social work fraternity can offer at the community level in the absence of visible shifts in governance, to amplify Jana voices and address their needs. In essence, green social work theory serves as a crucial framework for addressing environmental justice issues by Jana, while also recognising the communities' self-determined views. The next section undertakes a theoretical review of the concept of social injustice.

Social injustice

Social injustice is significant within the framework of green social work theory, as articulated by Dominelli (2018). Within this theoretical perspective, social injustice is defined as the inequitable distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges within a society (Dominelli, 2018). It is crucial to acknowledge that social justice and dignity are fundamental principles guiding the practice of the social work profession. This social work principle

³⁸ As illustrated in the Figure 3.1 Representation of Green Social Work theoretical framework (p.120).

³⁹ Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

advocates for ensuring that all individuals have the minimum level of participation in the community, promoting equal political, economic, and social rights (Hancock, 1997). Consequently, the key elements of social justice involve ensuring a fair distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges through effective community collaboration and inclusion, contributing to the overall well-being of society. This, in turn, plays a crucial role in enhancing the overall well-being of society, highlighting the significant role of social workers in facilitating this process.

This theoretical interpretation of distributive justice aligns with the historical emergence of the concept during the 19th-century Industrial Revolution, aiming to foster an egalitarian society by addressing the exploitation of marginalised populations (Dominelli, 2012). An examination of other theoretical perspectives also underscores social justice as the fair and equitable distribution of power, resources, and responsibilities to all members of society, irrespective of factors such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, ability, status, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation (Kenny & Hage, 2009; Smith, 2008; Sue, 2001). As Sue (2001) suggests, social justice embodies values of inclusion, collaboration, cooperation, equal access, and equal opportunity, collectively forming the bedrock of a democratic and egalitarian society. In other words, social justice from a green social work theoretical standpoint contributes to the broader goal of creating an egalitarian and democratic society by addressing historical imbalances and advocating for inclusive values.

Considering Indigenous viewpoints, social justice extends to the preservation of their cultural and spiritual practices. This perspective aligns with green social work, where social injustice relates to the concept of environmental injustice (Dominelli, 2018). As stated above, both concepts converge at the imperative of distributive fairness of power, resources, and obligations to all people in a society, irrespective of race, ethnicity, age, gender, ability, status,

sexual orientation, or religious affiliation. Notably, the use of green social work theory recognises environmental injustice and social injustice as intrinsically connected concepts. By analysing the situation in terms of Jana communities who are the focus of the study, the breakdown of the subsistence systems resulted from land possession and displacement of Jana communities, which prevented their independent and sustainable knowledge systems from developing as they aspired. The various socioeconomic, health, and education challenges align with disrupting their subsistence patterns, leading to forcible assimilation into the dominant ways. Consequently, their unique self-sufficient livelihood, health, and education systems were disrupted, forcing them to depend on the State for care. However, the literature indicates that the State has failed to ensure equitable distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges through effective community collaboration and inclusion for the society’s overall well-being. Table 3.1 provides evidence of literature of the poor socioeconomic, health, and educational indicators among Jana.

Table 3.1 The failure of State to address socioeconomic, health, and educational dimensions of Jana wellbeing

Indicators	Literature presenting the challenges and statistics
Socioeconomic	<p>Jana’s land alienation and displacement have resulted in their loss of livelihood, leading to poverty, indebtedness, and unemployment (Aufschnaiter, 2008).</p> <p>The Government has failed to provide any livelihood rehabilitation program after independence exacerbating Jana’s socioeconomic struggles (De, 2014).</p> <p>In India, the 2015-16 National Family Health Survey reveals that 45.9 per cent of the Scheduled Tribes were in the lowest wealth bracket (International Institute for Population Sciences [IIPS] & ICF, 2017).</p>

	<p>According to the World Bank brief, the Indian Jana, the 2011 census reveals that Jana accounted for one-fourth of their population in the poorest wealth quintile (Carino et al., 2010).</p>
<p>Health</p>	<p>In many parts of India, the Scheduled Tribes face ritually endorsed social exclusion called untouchability. This social exclusion prevented them from accessing Government health services and programs, further deteriorating their health and nutritional status (Das et al., 2011).</p> <p>The health conditions of Jana in India have become a public challenge. The maternal mortality rate (MMR) is 212 per 100,000 live births, while the five-year mortality rate was 95.7 per 1000 live births in 2011 (Government of India [GOI], 2011).</p> <p>Although Jana accounts for only 8.6 per cent of the total population, they account for 14 per cent of all under-five deaths and 23 per cent of the total deaths in the 1-4 years age group (Das et al., 2011).</p> <p>The UNICEF (2014) report on the nutritional status of children in nine states of India revealed that 29 per cent of Jana children showed severe stunting (UNICEF, 2014).</p> <p>In 2001, there were many starvation deaths in the tribal belts of different parts of the State like Wayanad, Palakkad and Kannur. A study in Attapady Jana block of Kerala revealed that the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) among Jana children was 66 per 1000 live births compared to 14.1 in the rest of the State (Manikandan, 2014).</p> <p>The 2011 Government of India Census data reveals that only 14 per cent of the tribal population have access to a source of clean drinking water within their homes, 75 per cent of Jana practice open defecation, only 17 per cent have access to bathing facilities within their homes, and only 46 per cent of Jana households have electricity supply (GOI, 2011; Seshadri & Ramakrishna, 2018).</p> <p>Veerasha (2019) also identified that this approach had resulted in deeply entrenched social structures such as jaati (caste), inequalities in exclusionary educational systems, rampant human rights violations, and exploitation of Jana by forest officials. This resulted in a porous recognition of lower caste (untouchables) and Jana, which further led to their repudiation from the other communities due to the social stigma involving untouchability</p>

	(Veerbhadranaika et al., 2012). Historically, the unjust and malice treatment had always been meted down upon the untouchables by society's upper section. This social exclusion continues to prevent them from accessing Government health services and programs, further deteriorating their health and nutritional status (Das et al., 2011).
Education	<p>A study by Veerbhadranaika et al. (2012) revealed that Jana of India receives the lowest-quality and indifferently administered education.</p> <p>Jana's culture, knowledge forms, language, and traditions find no place in the dominant educational system (Veerbhadranaika et al., 2012; Vishnoi, 2012).</p> <p>The school drop-out rates in India are also very high. According to the Ministry of human resource Development's 2014 educational statistics report, 48.2 per cent of Jana opted out of their schools. This reflects India's unequal educational system, where the poorest quality of education is provided to the poor and caste-based discrimination results in children from diverse social and linguistic backgrounds being gradually pushed out of school gradually (CARE, 2018; GOI, 2014).</p>

The above literature brings a broad perspective of the systematic marginalisation of Jana's interests across the policy, political, and administrative levels which has resulted in the State not providing equitable access to resources to Jana. Jana has neither received traditional ownership of their lands nor has the Government been able to ensure equitable distribution of resources. This evidence holds significance within the scope of this study as it emphasises the existence of social injustice according to the study's definition while at the same time it explores the self-determined views of Jana communities' experiences of social injustices. As a result, this framework supports identifying and addressing how these injustices influence Jana's lives. It also embeds environmental justice within the concept of social justice to accentuate the importance of the social work profession developing and using interventions rooted in community-based approaches that acknowledge and tackle the systemic challenges experienced by Jana communities, which forms the main over-arching objective of the study. This not only serves the immediate well-being of Jana but also contributes to the broader

discourse on social justice from a social work standpoint. Hence, this research tries to identify how unresolved environmental injustices have contributed to the social disparities among Jana, while also trying to understand their own self-determined views about social injustice. In doing so, this research aims to expand the scope of social work practice to advocate for the land rights of Jana to work towards social parity.

Addressing Human Rights Violations

Addressing human rights violations from green social work theoretical context advocates for a rights-based approach to meet needs of people by developing their skills ethically and sustainably (Dominelli, 2018). Human rights are the basic rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, to any other status. Some of the basic human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom from slavery and torture, the right to work education and so on (Florica, 2012). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) with 30 articles is proclaimed by the United Nations as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations worldwide (UN, 2019b). The UDHR was adopted on 10 December 1948. This declaration was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly as the common standard of living for all people to promote social justice and address human rights violations (UN, 2019b). India is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which outlines 30 articles protecting the rights of global citizens. While the UDHR is not legally binding, it serves as a guiding framework, and India has committed to upholding these rights within the country. This commitment is reinforced by the Indian Constitution, the longest written in the world, which provides robust legal protections for vulnerable communities, including Jana.

Despite the constitutional and legal provisions to protect the rights of Jana, the Indian Government has failed to protect them. Indeed, the trends discussed in this section relates to environmental and social injustices can be analysed under the human rights provision. Table 3.2 examines the significant violations of the environmental and social injustices. It relates them to the Indian constitutional rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁴⁰ to analyse the human rights violation incidences among Jana communities.

Table 3.2 Table showing the human injustice violations among Jana

Major injustices and violations discussed in the sections above	Provisions for constitutional rights in India	Articles under UNHR
<p>Insensitive Governance and inadequate legal framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence of negative stereotypes that view Jana as backward. • Paternalistic approach and non-engagement of Jana regarding the legislation for them. • Restrictive policies. • Non-implementation of legislation that favours Jana. 	<p>The following legislations were meant to restore Jana their land: Tribal Policies 1950, Kerala Scheduled Tribe Act (Restriction of transfer of lands and restoration of alienated land), 1975, Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, and Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. However, these legislations that support Jana to have access to their traditional lands and encourage participatory approaches are not effectively implemented.</p>	<p>Article 1 ensures all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, making negative stereotyping unconstitutional.</p> <p>Article 7 states that everyone is equal before the law, making non-implementation of legislation favouring Jana is unacceptable.</p>

⁴⁰ India is also a signatory of UDHR (which has 30 articles, protecting the rights of global citizens), thereby making it mandatory for the Government to ensure that these UDHR are maintained across the country.

<p>Duos of Development and Conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displacement under the pretext of conservation and development continues to take place. • Land commodification and laws that restrict access to their traditional environment. 	<p>The right to shelter is a fundamental right under Article 19 (a) of the Indian constitution. However, there has been no adequate settlement or rehabilitation following the displacements.</p> <p>The 44th amendment of the constitution act, 1978, point 5 states: Property, while ceasing to be a fundamental right, would, however, be given express recognition as a legal right, provision being made that no person shall be deprived of his property save in accordance with the law.</p>	<p>Article 17, Part 2 states that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.</p> <p>Article 27, part 2, Everyone has the right to protect the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.</p>
<p>Assimilation of traditional subsistence systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakdown of traditional subsistence patterns. • Lack of rehabilitative measures. • Forcible assimilation into capitalist economic systems. • Cultural identity being erased. 	<p>Article 39(a) suggests that citizens (men and women) shall have the right to an adequate means of livelihood.</p> <p>The right to health is covered under the Right to Life under Article 21 of the Constitution.</p> <p>Article 21-A in the Constitution of India provides free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine.</p> <p>Article 29 (a) of the Indian constitution states that the citizens of India shall have</p>	<p>Article 12 No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation.</p> <p>Article 27, part 1, Everyone has the right to freely participate in the community's cultural life, enjoy the arts and share in scientific advancement and its benefits.</p> <p>Article 19 Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.</p>

	the right to conserve their culture and language.	
<p>Systemic exclusion and failure to provide the duty of care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to attend to the care needs involving access to basic amenities. • Systemic exclusion. • Increased vulnerability. 	<p>There are six fundamental rights in the Indian Constitution: The Right to equality, the Right to freedom, the Right against exploitation, the Right to freedom of religion, Cultural and educational rights, and the Right to constitutional remedies.</p>	<p>Article 21 Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.</p> <p>Article 25 Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of himself and his family,</p> <p>Article 26, part 1 Everyone has the right to education.</p>

Table 3.2 indicates that despite legislation at the national and international levels, the plight of Jana remains the same. This illustrates the complex web of environmental and social injustices Jana communities face, ultimately aggravating the incidences of human rights violations against them. Within the ambit of green social work theory, the definition and implications of environmental injustice, social injustice, and human rights violations frequently converge. Although these concepts are distinct, they are closely linked. Hibbert (2017) suggests that human rights are the transcending rights of social justice. Likewise, Dominelli (2012) also stated that human rights violations go hand-in-glove with degraded environments. Hence, this theoretical perspective strongly reinforces the study’s approach of analysing environmental and social injustice contexts through the lens of human rights violations, while utilising the national and international legal frameworks.

In summary, the exploration of environmental injustice, social injustice, and human rights violations within the framework of green social work theory provides a comprehensive

lens for understanding the interconnections between the concepts and the implications for this study. Green social work theory offers a holistic approach that integrates environmental justice concerns with social work principles, emphasising the interconnectedness of ecological and social well-being considering a rights-based approach. In essence, green social work theory provides an integrated perspective, demonstrating that environmental issues are social issues and that addressing environmental injustices requires attention to social justice and human rights. This exploration within the green social work theory framework emphasises the interconnectedness of these issues and calls for transformative approaches that prioritise sustainability, social equity, and the well-being of communities, particularly those facing unique challenges like the Jana communities. The next section focuses on analysing the concept of sustainability in relation to green social work theory.

Sustainability

Sustainability forms one of the core tenets of green social work theory, underscoring the imperative to achieve sustainable environmental and community outcomes using inclusive and participatory social work approaches⁴¹. Within this theory, sustainability is defined as the process of attaining a balanced change by achieving harmony between the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change without compromising the needs of future generations (Dominelli, 2018). Recently, sustainable development has evolved to achieve centrality in the jurisprudence of

⁴¹ Further discussed later in this chapter under the section, Strengthening Grassroots Democracy through Social Work Practice (p.124).

world nations (Barral, 2012). Several studies also emphasise the significance of meeting human needs by taking care of the environment sustainably and ensuring social equity (Hollander, 2018; Prabhu & Iyer, 2019; Sharma & Bhuyan, 2021).

The multidisciplinary nature of green social work theory further highlights the integration of Indigenous knowledge in achieving sustainability, as noted in the previous chapter. This integration underscores how traditional practices align with modern social work goals of achieving long-term, balanced, and equitable outcomes for both people and the planet. Despite its acknowledged significance of the environment, Mawle (2010) points out that often economic development is prioritised over sustainable development resulting in persistent environmental violations. This trend often results in rendering sustainable development as only declaratory, lacking appropriateness to the type of development that is in progress (Mawle, 2010). As countries prioritise unhindered economic growth, transparency in decision-making and meaningful public participation often remains neglected (National Research Council, 2008). This oversight gives rise to social discontent due to breaches in participatory and informed community-based outcomes, leading to increased instances of environmental injustice and unsustainable consequences.

In a similar way, this study presents sustainability or sustainable development as an over-arching framework that carefully incorporates the components of environmental justice, a symbiosis that must be pursued in tandem. Sustainable development is important to ensure that millions of inhabitants who reside in close proximity to these developments do not suffer from its ill effects and have a voice in making decisions that relate to them (Ruhl, 1999). Redclift (2005) detailed that environmental justice is equally as important as sustainable development, i.e., one without the other is non-existent (Redclift, 2005). This perspective is relevant to the context of this study and for Jana communities, just as Indigenous peoples

worldwide, who are being displaced from their land despite having extensive knowledge about harmonious coexistence with their environment⁴². Within this study, the importance of achieving sustainability by addressing environmental injustice using community-based and participatory social work approaches is highlighted.

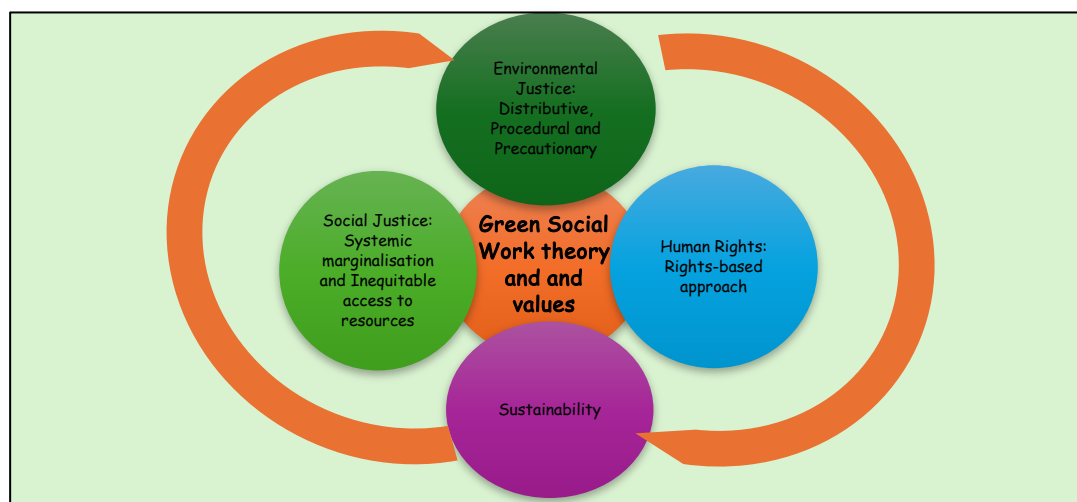
As a result, this study underscores the importance of bringing Jana to the forefront of the global sustainability discourse by emphasising the inseparable relationship between sustainability and environmental justice, emphasising the significance of simultaneous pursuit for the benefit of these communities and the environment at large. By integrating their wisdom into the global discourse on sustainability, society can benefit from their profound connection with the environment and effective stewardship of the Earth's biosphere. Hence, identifying the worldviews of Jana that inform their relationship with land and conservation is a key objective of this study. This information is relevant as it informs social work interventions aimed at fostering sustainable community-based environmental outcomes for Jana. Therefore, green social work theory emphasises promoting sustainable environmental and community outcomes through inclusive and participatory social work approaches.

⁴² Discussed in the Contextual Background chapter under the section: Harmonious co-existence vs conceptual rise of sustainability (p.75).

Aligning Green Social Work Theory with the Study's Objectives

Building on the insights outlined previously, this section illustrates how this study applies green social work theory to integrate key concepts such as environmental justice, social justice, human rights violations, and sustainability into its framework. Figure 3.1 represents the theoretical framework and the conceptual foundation that underpins the study.

Figure 3.1 Representation of green social work theoretical framework



The theoretical representation above presents how environmental justice, social justice, human rights violations, and sustainability form the foundational pillars of green social work theory, all of which are relevant to this study. As mentioned earlier, the theoretical framework of this study has two objectives. The above discussion indicates how the holistic nature of green social work theory facilitates understanding Jana's self-determined views of environmental and sustainability concerns, concurrently addressing the associated social and human rights issues. This framework thus serves as the foundation for the first part of the inquiry, aiming to identify

the self-determined views of Jana experiences of injustices, their vision for the future, their worldviews that inform sustainability, and their propositions for the support needed to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes.

As for the second part of the inquiry to understand how social workers can support and create spaces for Jana to achieve Jana's welfare, the anticipated outcome centres around developing sustainable solutions for enhancing Jana welfare from a social work perspective. Green social work theory outlines how the social work practitioner's role centres around enhancing local adaptation and resilience by promoting sustainable practices through inclusive and participatory interventions (Dominelli 2018). Such a standpoint underscores the scope for social work practice in addressing environmental justice and sustainability among marginalised communities (Dominelli, 2018). In the context of this research the focus is on identifying the role of social workers in creating sustainable community and environmental outcomes, two critical factors guided by green social work. The first view pertains to acknowledgment and use of the inherent potential of Jana to self-determine their welfare needs using a strength-based perspective. Secondly, by collating Jana views into a self-determined welfare model, the study endeavours to envision how social work practice can contribute to the reinforcement of grassroots democracy, ultimately supporting the community's autonomy within the context of collaborating with Jana. The following two sections examine the use of a strength-based perspective and the support for grassroots democracy within this study from a green social work theory standpoint.

Strengths-based practice lens

This section underscores the relevance of the analytical lens of utilising a strength-based approach of green social work theory within this study to prioritise Jana's strengths to achieve welfare.

A strength-based approach also referred to as strength-based practice, emerged in the 1980s and 1990s in several disciplines, including community development, social work, and organisational management. Within social work, Weick, et al., (1989) pioneered the development of this theory by challenging the conventional social work approaches, which assumed "that clients become clients because they have deficits, [and] are, in some way flawed or weak" (Saleebey, 2009, p.3). On a similar note, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993, p.2) advocated for a shift to asset-based community development by stating that an undue focus on the community's needs would lead the community to perceive themselves as "people with special needs that can only be met by outsiders." Instead, focusing on the community's strengths is more likely to inspire positive action rather than problems as it encourages a proactive role for citizens by replacing the passive and dependent role of the client in the welfare service delivery model of community development practice (Mathie and Cunningham, 2008; Saleebey, 2013). This approach is the philosophy of green social work theory, which employs the use of a strength-based approach for addressing environmental justice and sustainability issues. Since this study aims to develop a welfare model self-determined by Jana, the application of the strength-based approach guided by green social work, focusing on environmental justice and sustainability, becomes relevant from a social work perspective.

From a practical viewpoint, the use of strength-based approaches in working with communities has also evidenced positive outcomes. A notable example from the Indian state

of Meghalaya, where the Government has embraced a strength-based approach by recognising the community's strengths and empowering them to lead conservation initiatives at the Mawphlang sacred grove. Here, 90 per cent of the forest cover is owned and protected by the local people and the Government. Additionally, the Khasi Hills Community REDD+ project initiated in 2007 in India has further revitalised and strengthened the community-led conservation initiatives. Contrastingly, instances of an undue focus on deficits has resulted in the exclusion of local Jana from their environment, as seen in the case of Kanha Tiger Reserve, where local communities were excluded by law (Poffenberger, 2015). Consequently, Poffenberger (2015) highlights how the exclusion of traditional forest dwellers paved the way for the incursion of poachers and other intruders, underscoring the critical role of Jana in safeguarding the reserve. Hence, the success and relevance of investing in the community's strengths instead of focusing on deficits is highlighted.

This section emphasises how green social work offers a strength-based social work approach with communities by focusing on environmental justice and sustainability issues. It also provided examples of successful outcomes generated by focusing on strengths rather than deficits, showcasing the suitability of this approach for achieving the research aim and objectives. Thus, a green social work framework allows the researcher to prioritise promoting community empowerment, resilience, and sustainability. This framework provides a structure that enables the researcher to assist communities in addressing their challenges and achieving self-reliant outcomes. The next section examines how green social work offers social work the opportunity to facilitate the creation of independent communities rather than focusing on interventions mandated by government.

Strengthening Grassroots Democracy through Social Work Practice

This section outlines the broader significance of green social work theory in highlighting the role that social workers play in strengthening grassroots democracy through working with Jana through empowerment and facilitating inclusive governance.

Green social work theory stands out in effectively supporting community initiatives rather than relying solely on the Government to provide support. Consequently, the theory recommends a shift of power from the Government to grassroots communities, encouraging a bottom-up approach. Young (2011) argued that tackling structural injustices that arise from complex interactions requires collective political action. Two different collective action strategies include collective action as a democratic voice and collective action as a democratic practice (Young, 2011). Democratic voice encourages people to be involved in communicative action, pressuring powerful agents to reform existing institutions. On the other hand, democratic practice involves crafting institutions from the grassroots to fulfil citizens shared social and economic needs. In both instances, the role of social workers through community-based organisations is profound. At a communicative action level, social workers, through these grassroots organisations, can support creating awareness and educating the people's involvement in local governance structures. By promoting effective community participation in local governance, social workers can encourage structural justice as they have consequential and expressive implications for social justice. Kennedy (2018) utilises green social work to emphasise that social workers need to operate at the local community level, engaging in the daily lives of people and building networks that connect individuals to national and global levels. This approach ensures that the voices and advocacy efforts of social workers regarding

people and their environment have a pathway to reach the ears of upper levels of Government and policymakers (Kennedy, 2018).

However, as Endo (2023) argues, the insight from a structural perspective shows that even politically conscious individuals of people's agency, may be constrained by existing structures. Raising awareness may not be sufficient for resisting dominant structural processes. Instead, Endo (2023) argues for democratic action by combining with others to institutionalise democratic arrangements directly through practice. By doing so, social workers can empower the community through collaborative and collective efforts to create new opportunities and incentive structures. The benefits of such community efforts are demonstrated in how green social work theory was used to explain how the community-led Participatory Small Watershed Management Program (PWM)⁴³ supported the resilience of communities in Lijiang (China) in coping with ecological degradation and injustices⁴⁴ after the earthquake in 1996 (Luk, 2018). This eventually resulted in the Government recognising the need for social workers to work at the community level to develop community resilience. Another notable example of IPD⁴⁵ exemplifies how community-based organisations can work at local community levels by facilitating democratic voice and action. Through community organisations in two states of India, IPD encouraged people's participation to communicate their needs through local bodies.

⁴³ The PWM advocated for ending the vicious cycle of overfishing, deforestation and landslides took precedence with the rise of tourism.

⁴⁴ The Chinese Government invested in the rapid development of the tourism sector as a post-disaster reconstruction strategy, leading to the area gaining UNESCO World Heritage Status in 1997. However, this development came at the expense of the Indigenous Naxi and Yu communities who lived near the Lashi Lake watershed.

⁴⁵ The Institute of Participatory Democracy develops participatory methodologies for community development and social activism across different sectors. The primary intention of IPD was to educate and spread awareness of the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments that envisaged encouraging grassroots democracy.

This led to the identification of roads as a primary developmental need. With financial aid, the women's collective independently initiated and completed road construction, showcasing the community's capacity for self-directed action and change (Prentice, 2003). Hence, the efforts of these community organisations achieved the twin benefits of educating and creating awareness among the people about participation at local level.

In the context of this research, the green social work framework will guide the researcher in facilitating and encouraging community-led action, opening new opportunities and possibilities for developing a sustainable model. Rather than relying solely on pressuring political agents to reform existing institutions, the green social work theoretical framework aligns with the research objective of social workers, emphasising facilitating citizens to directly craft institutions from the bottom up to reorient people's practices towards self-sufficiency. In summary, the preceding parts offer a social work lens guided by green social work for engaging with Jana. This approach involves adopting a strength-based perspective and working towards the objectives with the aim of facilitating the development of a locally specific model capable of sustaining itself even without government support.

Critique of Green Social Work

This section critically evaluates limitations of green social work theory within the context of the research aims and objectives that relate to Jana communities. One of the limitations of green social work theory is that from a theoretical viewpoint, the concept of environmental injustice remains silent on the land struggles of Jana due to its over-emphasis on distributive fairness. Like its predecessors, the theory tends to funnel down the concept of environmental injustice to distributive fairness. It supposes that capitalist-led neoliberalism

creates a reliance to unsustainable practices to meet market demands, leading to unfair distribution of environmental and social resources, furthering the marginalisation of the marginalised (Dominelli, 2012, 2015, 2018). Consequently, green social work theory can sometimes perpetuate the idea that achieving distributive fairness is the key to attaining sustainable environmental and social outcomes. However, this compulsion to reiterate distributive fairness as an overarching framework of environmental injustice could be due to the academic oversight to re-conceptualise the concept from its initial development by incorporating local community knowledge and experiences.

As the literature suggests, the evolution of the concept of environmental justice began with the discriminatory treatment of African American citizens during the 1980s due to unequal sharing of environmental hazards and benefits by the Government (Bullard, 1993; Humphrey & Buttel, 1982; Lazarus, 2000). Although this movement was initially known as environmental racism, it later adopted the umbrella term environmental injustice to include other marginalised communities facing similar injustices (Kaswan, 2023). Over the years, in light of incidents that led to the emergence of environmental injustice, distributive fairness became its core basis, thereby limiting communities to self-determine how the concept relates to them. Therefore, this research attempts to overcome this limitation by adopting a participatory approach to collect the community's self-determined views to expand the understanding of environmental injustice within green social work theory.

Another significant critique of the practical applicability of green social work is the ignorance of the Indigenous perspective when translating into social work practice while working with *Jana* (Huang, 2018; Wu, 2018). Furthermore, Powers et al. (2018) states that environmental issues often discussed in scholarly scientific areas using scientific and technical terms exclude marginalised communities without voices, although they are experts in

understanding their own problems as they live with the impacts of environmental degradation. To counter this perspective, this research utilised the Community Based Participatory Action Research methodology. By placing community members at the centre and involving a cultural facilitator, this approach created a space for self-determination, enhanced communication, and fostered appreciation for the community's unique insights. Lastly, the literature also identifies that the transdisciplinary nature of green social work requiring knowledge from various other sciences such as health, arts, social policy, social work, and so on can pose challenge in terms of time and complexity (Nikku, 2018). However, the current study focuses only on the areas of environmental injustice, social injustice, human rights violations, and sustainability. Nevertheless, the broader transdisciplinary approach remains a challenge and future direction for this research.

This qualitative exploratory research uses community-based participatory action methodology, adhering to the fundamentals of the theory of green social work by listening to the voices of the marginalised to overcome the study limitations. Powers et al. (2018) used community-based participatory initiatives to address the environmental injustices faced by the people with three different case studies underpinned by green social work theory. From the cases presented by Powers et al, green social work theory enabled the researchers in the first case to serve a supporting role in addressing climate change in Kenya, to identify a potential role for social workers in long-term community-based work to address land preservation in Jamaica, and to be flexible and build trusting relationships in an anti-pollution campaign in India. Powers et al. (2018) also effectively used the perspective to get involved with marginalised communities in an anti-pollution campaign in Kerala to be able to build trust within the community as an outsider. This is relevant as the main purpose of this current research is to identify the self-determined views of the community to find the social workers' role in supporting and creating spaces for the community to achieve sustainable community

and environmental outcomes. Hence, as an “inbetweener,” the green social work perspective bridges the gap between academic concepts and practical application, positioning the participatory study to explore environmental injustices among Jana in Wayanad district, Kerala, through a comprehensive lens of social and ecological justice, guided by the principles of the social work profession.

Given the points made in this chapter, there is a clear justification for the research objectives and questions for the study and the exploration of environmental injustice among the Jana of Wayanad district, Kerala, through a more comprehensive social and ecological justice lens, positioning the researcher as an inbetweener.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presents a critical review of the theoretical literature and its application to Jana’s context within the purview of the research aims and objectives. The theoretical framework serves two main purposes: firstly, to establish a link between environmental injustices and sustainability by considering the relevance of Jana perspectives in achieving sustainable outcomes. Secondly, to revitalise the commitment of social work practice to the person-in-environment principle, fostering sustainable solutions for community and environmental challenges.

After reviewing various theoretical frameworks, including early ecological social work theories, environmental social work, eco-social work, and green social work theory, green social work theory emerged as the most suitable framework. Green social work theory integrated the concepts of environmental and social justice, facilitating transformative change

and participatory interventions to address injustices experienced by Jana. This framework thereby forms the basis for exploring the self-determined views of Jana regarding injustices, sustainability, and the necessary support for achieving sustainable outcomes. For the second part of the inquiry, green social work theory provides an analytical lens for the researcher in understanding how social workers can support Jana welfare through strength-based practice and grassroots democracy.

The chapter also discusses critiques of green social work, such as the narrow focus of environmental injustice, potential oversights in Indigenous perspectives in practice, and complexities involved with the transdisciplinary nature of the theory. To overcome these limitations, the study adopts a participatory approach and leverages the Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) methodology. This methodological choice underscores the study's commitment to amplifying community voices and fostering meaningful collaboration and is discussed further in the following chapter.

Overall, this chapter provides a comprehensive review of the green social work theoretical framework that guides the exploration of research aim and objectives within the Jana community to create community-based social work interventions to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes. By integrating theoretical insights with practical methodologies, this study seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge on environmental and social justice, while also advocating for inclusive and empowering approaches to community development and welfare. The next chapter delves into the methodological underpinnings and method in relation to this study.

Chapter Four

Jana Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology and Methods

‘Without leaving a footprint showing where we’ve been.’ (Dominelli, 2012)

This chapter discusses the methodological underpinning of the study that guided the research process. The qualitative exploratory research utilises community-based participatory action research to enable the researcher to capture Jana voices by understanding their emerging perspectives and aspirations with their ability to envision their future. The chapter begins by contextualising the historical implications of colonisation in determining the ontology and epistemology of the study. Subsequently, it underscores the inbetweener stance adopted in this study which complements the Jana epistemology. The subsequent sections explain the research paradigm in terms of the rationale for its choice, the limitations, and the integration of the conceptual and theoretical framework. Finally, the chapter concludes by exploring the methods, including the data collection and analysis.

‘Dominance of Historical’: Jana Ontology and Epistemology

Given the historical context of colonisation, the injustices experienced by Jana communities are deeply rooted in their historical experiences, underscoring the importance of establishing an ontological position to inform the perception and understanding of Jana realities. Notably, while considering the different ontological positions, due consideration was provided to the historical implications of colonisation, including the negative rhetoric that claimed Jana to be primitive and backward. The colonial ethnographers and philosophers often adopted realist knowledge that emphasised the notion of research as an objective, value-free, and scientific process for observing and making sense of the reality of the colonised (Denzin et al., 2008; Risley, 1915). However, this approach overlooked the dynamic nature of reality, which is constantly debated, negotiated, and interpreted by the community, highlighting a major drawback of the realist approach that relied on scientific instruments for observing human behaviours and conditions (Denzin et al., 2008). Various critical and feminist studies have criticised the realist approach by stating that there is no perfect scientific tool to measure the reality (Braun et al., 2014; Fraser, 1989; Smith, 1998). Therefore, this study’s ontological position considers upholding self-determined views of Jana within their own social constructs. The researcher consequently rejects the realist stance and adopts the understanding that the nature of the world, knowledge, and even human beings themselves are constructed.

This understanding led to considering a social constructivist ontological position within the study which posits that reality is multiple and relative, shaped by various social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values that have crystallised over time (Burr, 2003).

This aligns with the researcher's supposition that understanding Jana reality is achieved through their socio-historical and current experiences, allowing the community to construct this reality, which serves as the foundation for the research. In addition, this research emphasises Kincheloe (2005) assertion that researchers who acknowledge their social, cultural, and historical backgrounds comprehend the influences behind their political, religious, gender, or racial perspectives shaped by dominant ideologies. Such an exercise of a collaborative approach is consistent with the social constructive ontology, which proposes that humans adapt to the dynamic reality shaped through their experiences, and it requires mutual interactions between the researcher and the researched. In essence, the social constructivist ontological position enables this study to acknowledge the influence of colonial and postcolonial hegemony on Jana communities, positioning them as equivalent to any other outside community and recognising their ability as communities capable of self-determining their welfare needs.

The epistemological position of this study has dual purposes. Firstly, it complements the ontological position to challenge colonial research practices and the political dominance of knowledge. Secondly, it addresses the challenges faced by the researcher in understanding Jana epistemology by navigating the dilemma of interpreting and exploring their knowledge as a non-Jana researcher from a foreign university. Therefore, the epistemological knowledge challenge was addressed by using a subjective approach guided by an inbetween researcher position⁴⁶. Several authors advocate for thinking beyond the insider and outsider research positions, suggesting that it is a balancing act between the positioning that the researcher actively takes and how the research participants define the role of a researcher (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Milligan, 2016). In perceiving the fluidity of researcher position, the potential

⁴⁶ Explained in Prologue (p.9).

advantages of cultural triangulation⁴⁷, as suggested by Smith (1998), are noted. Within this research context, these include exploring and interpreting data from Jana viewpoint, inbetween researcher viewpoint, and international knowledge perspective. Furthermore, the inbetween research position supports a critical participatory approach, which, as Braun et al. (2014) argues, facilitates decolonising methodologies by challenging the power relations between the researcher and the researched, engaging all the potential participants equally, listening to the participant voices and co-constructing new knowledge. Therefore, this study's subjective lens and use of inbetween epistemological position supports prioritising participant-driven data rather than relying on researcher assumptions in research design and data collection.

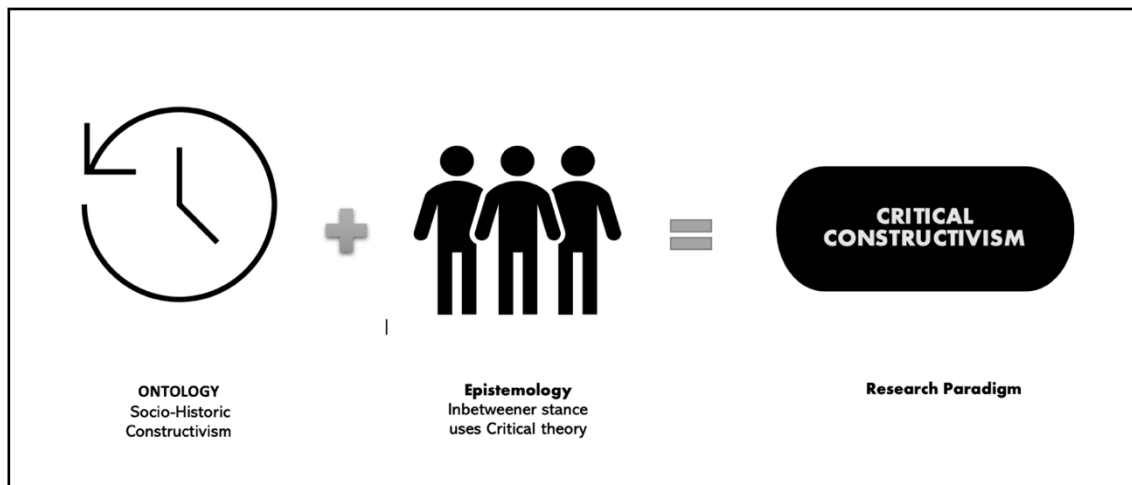
Critical Constructivism Paradigm

This section describes the research paradigm or conceptual framework which incorporates critical theory and constructivism to strengthen the knowledge framed through this study. The research paradigm or conceptual framework encompasses specific direction by which the research is undertaken, distinct from the theoretical framework which provides a general representation of relationships between variables in a given phenomenon (Creswell, 2018a, 2018b). Within the purview of this research, the critical constructivist theory presents the overall structure of the study in terms of how it is directed, whereas green social work theory explains the variables that are explored within the study.

⁴⁷ Permeability of cultural reflexivity between Jana participants, researcher's cultural background and understanding of the Jana world as a researcher from a foreign university.

As discussed in the previous section, the ontological and epistemological knowledge of this study places confidence in the authentic accounts of the lived experiences of Jana and the voices of their inherited tradition and prevailing culture. By further strengthening the subjective epistemology by situating the notion of inbetweenness, this study acknowledges the formulation of participative knowledge and co-construction of meaningful relationships in the field. The researcher maintains the constructivist pedestal that reality is socially constructed, i.e., the reality is the construction of the knower of what is known (Gergen, 1999; Berger & Luckmann, 2011). By attributing the reality of the knower or Jana as a manifestation of colonial and post-colonial history, this study utilises critical theory to place the knowers as historical and social subjects. This assertion resonates with critical constructivist paradigm introduced by Kincheloe (2005), who emphasised that our perspectives are rooted in specific historical and temporal contexts, shaping our constructions of reality. This understanding supports the claim of this study that Jana reality, along with their worldview and knowledge, is socially and historically constructed. Consequently, the knowledge produced in this study is subjective and co-created. Therefore, the use of critical and constructive standpoints in the conceptual framework of this study justifies the adoption of a critical constructivist research paradigm. Figure 4.1 illustrates how the ontology and epistemology contributes to the research paradigm of this study.

Figure 4.1 Research Paradigm (Prabhakar, 2020)



Critical Constructivism is a research paradigm, developed by Joe Kincheloe (2005) that combines critical and constructivist theories. Influenced by Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy, it aims to facilitate greater personal and social consciousness, motivating persons to take critical action. Freire (1982) believed that the dialogue exchanged through research can potentially transform the perspectives of the community through conscientisation, whereby the people become motivated to engage in praxis, i.e., to take active action to improve their lives based on what they have learnt. This approach identifies and questions false consciousness among individuals or groups relative to their powerlessness or power, examining issues such as repression, lack of freedom, ideology, participation, representation, inclusion/exclusion, and the protection of interests (Asghar, 2013; Held, 1980). Applied to this study context, this approach enables acknowledgement of injustices that are implicit in the reproduction of class, caste, and cultural oppression of Jana over the years, aiming to encourage reflexivity and the opening of questions through conversation and critical reflection. It reiterates the notion that reality is constructed in the minds of all people and shaped by society (Kincheloe, 2005). Therefore, critical constructivism is anticipated to foster knowledge generation and initiate a dialogue among Jana, promoting critical awareness. Furthermore, by facilitating alternative

discourses and new ways of thinking while exposing oppressive systems, this framework exposes elitist assumptions on Jana as naïve and historically backward, thereby dignifying their struggle for environmental justice in existing knowledge and opening avenues for dialogue.

In summary, the critical constructive conceptual framework or research paradigm seeks to understand how socio-historic influence and shape an object of inquiry ontologically, and epistemologically it explores how the foundations of knowledge of a given context surround an object of inquiry justifying a subjective and critical investigation. Within this study, it supports co-creation of the knowledge by actively engaging the participant community⁴⁸ by further exploring the major issues outlined by green social work theory using critical constructivist paradigm. The next section outlines the research approach, methodology, and research design used in the research.

Research Approach, Methodology, and Research Design

This section discusses the research approach, methodology, and research design utilised in this study. It will discuss the research design, the Community-based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) methodology, the rationale for its choice, which includes ethical considerations, data collection, the procedures by which the data were organised and analysed, and the limitations of the methodology.

⁴⁸ This is further explained in the Research Process Section (p.148).

Qualitative Exploratory Research Approach

This section elucidates the rationale for selecting a qualitative exploratory approach as the research methodology for this study. Building upon the ontological and epistemological positioning outlined earlier, which emphasises reflexivity and critical self-reflection, as well as the critical constructivist conceptual framework, which questions dominant systems of knowledge production, this approach aims to facilitate dialogue and promote critical awareness. In complementing these objectives, a qualitative exploratory approach is employed.

As described by Sheppard (2021), there are three basic research approaches, namely, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research approach. A qualitative approach befits this study as it supports capturing Jana voices and experiences that describe the situation, more commonly (known as what); and focuses on the reasoning behind the actions of individuals, societies, and cultures, (known as why), through exploratory questions. Qualitative inquiry is defined as a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting (Ahmad et al., 2019). This approach explores how a specific event has occurred through the lens of those being investigated (Phrydas, 2014). Therefore, as Creswell (2018) highlights, a qualitative research approach within this study facilitates constructing data based on the contextual realities and viewpoints of the participants within their holistic understanding.

Various qualitative research designs have been detailed by different authors, including narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994), grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2014), ethnography (Fetterman, 2020; Wolcott, 2008); case study (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009, 2012), participatory action research (Kemmis et al., 2014), and discourse analysis (Cheek, 2004). The critical constructivist paradigm used in this

study highlights the use of a participatory approach for knowledge co-creation, which aligns with the participatory action research, as described by Kemmis et al (2014). By utilising the qualitative community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) approach informed by the critical constructivist paradigm, this research implements an interactive process of knowledge sharing between the researcher and the knowledge users. The next section discusses further of the CBPAR methodology employed in this study.

Community-Based Participatory Action Research Methodology

As discussed previously, the participatory nature of this study supports the use of CBPAR as the chosen methodology. CBPAR is a philosophical and methodological approach that focuses on relationships between academic and community partners with the principles of mutual benefit, co-learning, and long-term commitments (Blumenthal et al., 2013). The CBPAR framework is community-based (grounded in the issues, concerns, and strategies of communities), participatory (directly engaging the community and the community knowledge in the research process), and action based or oriented (supporting the communities' strategies that leads to community transformation through research). It incorporates community theories, participation, and practices into the research efforts, beginning with identifying a community issue, proposed action, or strategy, followed by enhancing or supporting this action with the research that is community based and engaged. The CBPAR approach is also consistent with the critical constructivist paradigm which questions the power relationships that are inherently embedded in the western knowledge paradigm, advocates for sharing of power between the

researcher and researched, acknowledges the legitimacy of the experiential knowledge, and focuses on research aimed at improving situations and practices (Asghar, 2013; Børsen, 2020; Kincheloe, 2005). Therefore, CBPAR, within the context of this study, allows collective, reflective, and systematic inquiry in which researcher and the researched engage equally in the research process with the goal of educating, empowering, improving practice or bring about a social change.

Implementing CBPAR in this research context, as argued by Wallerstein and Duran (2008), enables participants to develop critical consciousness by engaging in identifying problems and personally interacting with the knowledge. CBPAR is carried out across a continuum of community-engaged research, from collaborative studies between community members and other stakeholders, and academic researchers with equal partnership in the study, to studies conducted by academic researchers which are community-based but in which the community members are not the absolute partners, and the academic researchers retain control over the research (Blumenthal et al., 2013; Hatch et al., 1993). Drawing on the concepts presented by Blumenthal et al. (2013), a partial collaboration was undertaken with community members and other stakeholders, where the researcher retained the essential control over the study to make sure that it did not deviate from the original research aims. The community was involved throughout the research process; however, any further suggestions or insights were considered as part of the future scope of the research⁴⁹.

The analysis underscores the suitability of CBPAR methodology for research conducted with and for the community, acknowledging the irreplaceable value of community knowledge. It emphasises the importance of researcher-researched dialogue in understanding

⁴⁹ Discussed in Chapter eight- Conclusion, under the section Future opportunities for research (p.385).

and resolving community issues, highlighting the ineffectiveness of interventions imposed from outside without community consultation (Blumenthal et al., 2013; Hatch et al., 1993). Moreover, it promotes equal inclusion and collaboration within communities to address their issues, recognising the legitimacy and value of community knowledge. Overall, the CBPAR approach aligns with the researcher's objectives and expectations for the research.

Methodological Limitations

Given the points above, there is clear rationale to the application of CBPAR within this study context. The use of CBPAR enabled the researcher to take an activist or social advocate stance that captured Jana worldviews and aspirations in envisioning their future for empowering their communities.

CBPAR, as a methodology also presents several challenges for this research⁵⁰. Firstly, CBPAR can present challenges in maintaining the commitment of community members throughout the research process, as their active involvement is integral to this approach (Crabtree & Braun, 2015; Gillis & Jackson, 2002). Next, issues with power imbalances and establishing egalitarian relationships require addressing before initiating participatory-action research (Gillis & Jackson, 2002; Maguire, 1987). As explained by Blumenthal (2013) and Hatch et al. (1993), this study outlines a partial collaboration with the participants. To maintain the originality of the research, the researcher included suggestions and recommendations by the participants as part of the future scope of the research. Some of the further steps undertaken included involving a cultural facilitator in the research process to facilitate good relationship-

⁵⁰ Discussed in Chapter eight- Conclusion, under the section Research Limitations (p.386).

building with the community. The study also adhered to strict ethical guidelines wherein participants were not compelled by any means to remain in the study, and they could leave anytime they wished. Moreover, the researcher managed the implications of bias of qualitative exploratory research through active participant review after each phase of data transcription and with the recruitment of a cultural facilitator. Above all, the researcher applied reflexivity to highlight the researcher's professional social work education, insights, and past experiences in working with Jana communities.

Considering all the benefits and limitations discussed above, the researcher utilised the CBPAR methodology to explore the social and environmental injustices faced by the Jana. This supported the researcher to utilise social work values and principles as an inbetweener⁵¹ researcher for the effective and ethical conduct of the research by partnering with the Jana for their empowerment. The next section discusses the selection of participatory research methods for this study.

Methods from the Margins

The selection of methods for this study was informed by extensive engagement through informal discussions and consultations with participatory researchers, community members, workers, philanthropists, and NGOs. These interactions not only informed the selection of methods but also provided insights into the community's environmental concerns and the significance of the research. Following Creswell's (2014, 2018) assertion that the selection of methods is crucial and should align with the sought information, these engagements influenced

⁵¹ Explained in the previous section, Critical Constructivism Paradigm (p.134).

the development of the research title, abstract, research questions, and the design of subsequent data collection methods. Moreover, the researcher's field experiences, and philosophical considerations of ontology, epistemology, and methodology further shaped the selection of data collection methods. Therefore, the chosen methods for data collection, including community meetings, in-depth interviews, and photovoice, were carefully selected to align with the study's primary aims. The initial phase focused on gathering accounts from Jana community impacted by social and environmental injustices, capturing their worldviews and aspirations for the future, while the latter phase aimed to co-create a Jana welfare model. These participatory methods, consistent with the CBPAR approach, were chosen to ensure the collection of rich, comprehensive, and grounded qualitative data that accurately reflected the community's perspectives and experiences.

Research Design

The research involved a three-tiered approach to the research process which involved koottam (community meeting), photovoice, and in-depth interviews. In this section, the design of each method is outlined, and the ethics of the study as they relate to the design are also detailed. The design also involved procedures including sampling, participant recruitment and selection, which are discussed within the research process section.

The research design involved the development of a tentative Koottam (community meeting schedule) (Appendix II), a questionnaire for the in-depth interviews (Appendix III), and guidelines and prompts for photovoice (Appendix IV). Apart from these major procedures, the research design also included making posters for invitation of members for the meeting (Appendix V) and developing photovoice training manuals (Appendix IV). In this section the

design of each instrument is outlined, along with the ethics of the study in relation to the design. A draft of the research process was prepared prior to the formal commencement of the procedure. However, this was altered during the procedure owing to the needs of the communities and also the challenges presented by COVID19.

Koottam (Community Meeting)

Koottam serves as a crucial participatory method in this study, akin to group or focus group discussions, where data is gathered from multiple participants who often share common experiences and interpretations of their challenges (Payne & Payne, 2004). As asserted by Daley et al. (2010), this approach is particularly pertinent when engaging with marginalised communities, emphasising its effectiveness in collaborating with the communities to develop sustainable and impactful solutions. In this study, koottam played a vital role in establishing strong working relationships built on reciprocity between the researcher and the participants, thereby addressing certain methodological and ethical concerns identified in the research⁵². Therefore, koottam served as a platform for building relationships and exchanging information with the community, ensuring that the research addresses their concerns by prioritising reciprocity in the research relationship. Furthermore, the term koottam is preferred over focus group discussion in this study, as it aligns better with the participatory and flexible nature of the research. Koottam were intentionally kept informal compared to traditional focus group discussions to ensure that participants felt comfortable and engaged in the research process.

⁵² As discussed, under, Methodological Limitation (p.175).

The design of the koottam schedule drew upon the literature review⁵³ and the researcher's prior field experience, including interactions with Jana communities. Alongside this the researcher reviewed various similar meeting schedules. Although this review provided valuable insights, none of these were directly replicated for the research. Recognising the uniqueness of each Jana community it was understood that they might necessitate varying strategies for engagement. Consequently, a tentative koottam schedule was prepared. To further refine this schedule, various academic and non-academic resource persons, experienced in working with Jana in Wayanad were contacted by telephone and email. Their input aided in identifying key variables related to respondents' characteristics and backgrounds, informing the design of the koottam schedule. Although the schedule was intended to be flexible during fieldwork to accommodate community aspirations, developing a draft schedule provided the researcher with a structured framework for understanding the community meeting process.

The koottam schedule (attached as Appendix II) comprised seven segments. These included a briefing on rapport building, roles of meeting facilitators, pre-meeting arrangements, session preparations, session introductions, facilitating discussions, and consolidating into a poster or any other suitable means, and session conclusion. Drafts of the schedule were refined via discussions with research supervisors, considering the ethical implications of undertaking this process. Additionally, the cultural facilitator who was recruited for the study was also significantly involved in making the koottam guide to ensure cultural appropriateness.

⁵³ Discussed in Chapter two: Contextual Background (p.43).

Photovoice design

Photovoice, a method employed in this study, is an action-oriented, participatory method of documentary photography aimed at understanding the community's challenges from their perspective (Ostaszewska, 2018; Wang & Burris, 1997). It serves as powerful tool to create community change by understanding the strengths and concerns of a community to disseminate the findings to the public for a broader change (Wang & Burris, 1997). Crabtree and Braun (2015) in their research on developing contextually appropriate disaster reduction strategies, emphasise how the core principles of CBPAR guided the photovoice method, fostering community awareness, engagement, and capacity-building among vulnerable communities in Hawaii. In line with the CBPAR principles (as described in the methodology section), the participants were asked to share their perspectives and stories in relation to the aims of the study.

The photovoice process necessitated the design of two distinct tools to facilitate and direct the process. To accomplish this, consultations were held with various academic researchers and community workers who had previously engaged in photovoice projects with marginalised communities in Kerala. Within the framework of the participatory nature of CBPAR, it was decided to create provisional prompts for the photovoice project (Appendix IV). A primary goal was to develop a sample prompt sheet to guide participants in taking photographs. The final prompts were intended to be determined during community meetings, incorporating input from community members. Additionally, guidelines for the ethical conduct of the study during photovoice were established. These guidelines (Appendix IV) covered basic photovoice training, the timeline for completion, considerations for photographs involving human subjects, prioritisation of photographs, and techniques for giving voice to the photos.

This served to provide foundational knowledge to potential participants regarding photovoice and its expectations.

Photovoice kits provided to participants included these guidelines, prompts, a camera, a book, and a pen. The cameras were intentionally selected as inexpensive, reusable models to minimize potential loss if misplaced. Participants were instructed to use the cameras to capture photos and return them once the task was completed. These tools were collaboratively designed with the cultural facilitator in consultation with both academic and non-academic community workers in Wayanad. Furthermore, they were regularly reviewed by the researcher's academic supervisors experienced in qualitative research to ensure their effectiveness and appropriateness.

In-depth Interview Schedule design

In-depth interviews served as another method for data collection, allowing a qualitative exploration of participants' personalised experiences, perceptions, and accounts relevant to the research. This method aimed to obtain a comprehensive understanding of concepts for further investigation and descriptive analysis (Kaufman, 1992; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; MacDonald, 2012; Patton, 1987; Seidman, 2019). Moreover, in-depth interviews are often employed in participatory approaches, enabling participants to articulate their situations (Creswell, 2018). For this study, in-depth interviews were instrumental in capturing the social realities of Jana, particularly regarding any violations of environmental rights, by comprehensively studying and interpreting individual experiences.

The interview schedule was designed to be semi-structured, a common approach in qualitative research (Creswell, 2018). This schedule (Appendix III) served as a guide to ensure that all relevant areas were addressed during the interviews. The design of the semi-structured interview schedule was informed by the literature review, which included an examination of interview schedules used in previous research with Jana communities. While these previous questionnaires provided valuable insights, none could be directly adopted for this study due to their lack of alignment with its specific purpose, necessitating the creation of a tailored schedule.

The design process involved identifying variables concerning the participants, resulting in the division of the interview schedule into five sections: socio-demographics, health and wellbeing, vulnerability to environmental injustices, Government aid, and level of consciousness. Drafts of the interview schedule underwent refinement through discussions with research supervisors and following recommendations from the ethics committee. The interview schedule consisted of 46 questions, including 43 open-ended and three closed-ended questions. The general areas included: socio-demographics, health and well-being, injustices faced, Government supports, worldviews and acceptance of injustices.

Additionally, the cultural facilitator was consulted during the design process to ensure that the questions were culturally appropriate.

Research Process

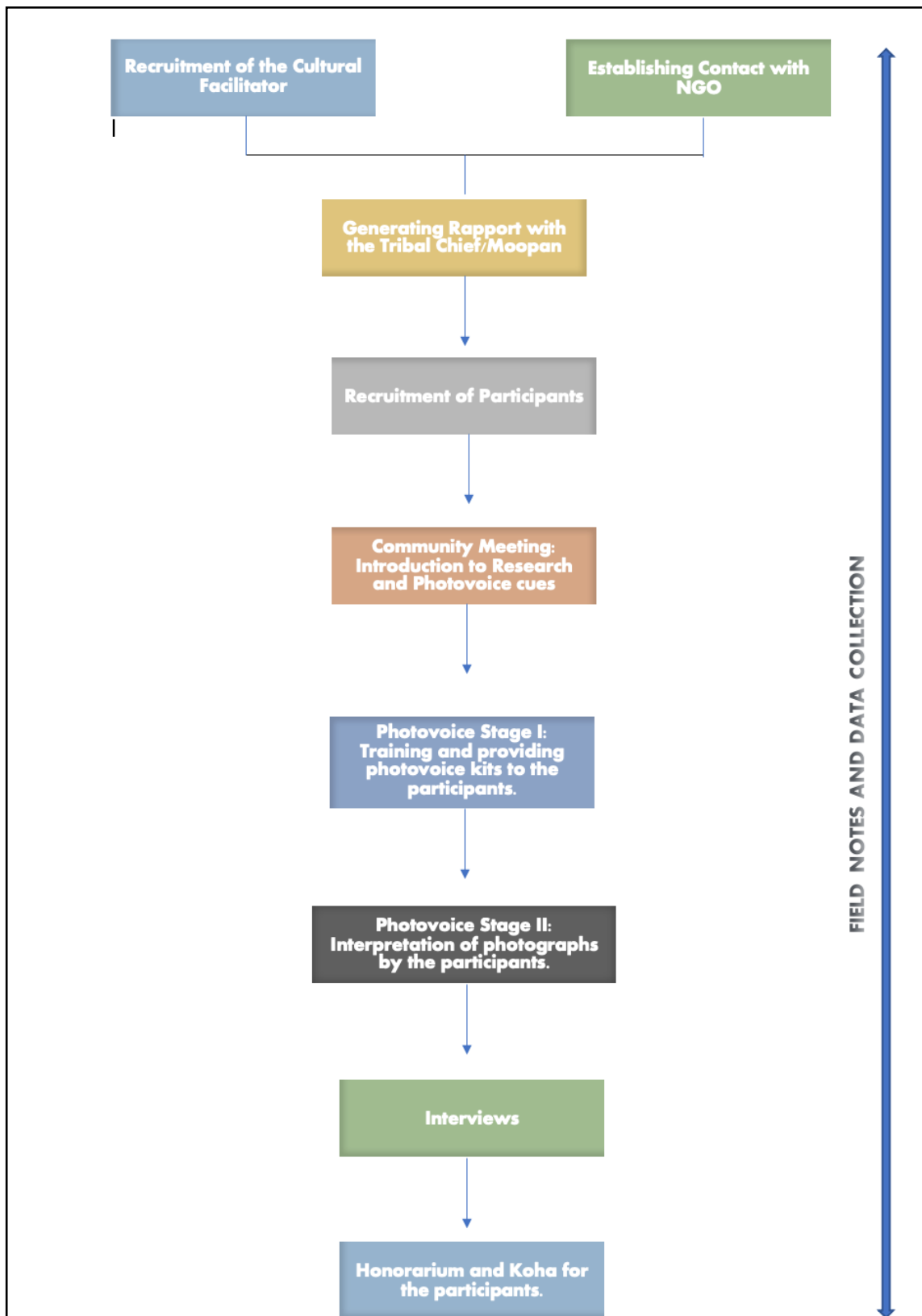
The research process involved various steps in the researcher's engagement with Jana of Wayanad to collect data using the methods set out by the CBPAR methodology. Data

collection through face-to-face interactions was conducted between late February and March 2020. However, due to the onset of the COVID19 pandemic, the remaining data were collected electronically mostly telephonically. This research process is segmented into various sections for clarity. Initially, an overview of the research process is presented, followed by a breakdown of the steps within this process. This includes the recruitment of a cultural facilitator and the establishment of rapport. For clarity in illustrating the fieldwork, the research process is delineated separately for the Kurichiyar and Makkal communities.

Research process outline

Figure 4.2 illustrates a general outline of how the data were collected. However, due to COVID19 implications, certain processes overlapped to facilitate community participation, as discussed later.

Figure 4.2 Outline of Research Process



Recruitment of Cultural Facilitator and contact with NGO

Before the commencement of the research process, the researcher organised various planning and discussion meetings with community researchers, philanthropists, and community workers in Wayanad. As informed by the ethical implications of the research, a cultural facilitator was recruited for the study to transcend the language and cultural barriers of the research. The role of the cultural facilitator was to foster a harmonious relationship between the non-Jana researcher and the Jana community, incorporating perspectives from both parties to ensure collaboration, respect for diverse forms of knowledge, and adherence to Indigenous research principles. These approaches were taken to enhance reflexivity, mitigate biases stemming from colonial influences, empower the community through participatory methods, and acknowledge the centrality of Jana culture and knowledge.

The researcher recruited the cultural facilitator for the research with the support of the Kudumbashree⁵⁴ unit and various other professional contacts. The criteria used in the recruitment process included: (1) understanding of tribal dialects as well as Malayalam⁵⁵, (2) to assist in video-recording during photovoice and translate it into English/Malayalam subtitles, (3) provide support in generating a rapport with the Moopan and the Jana of different colonies, (4) as well as, assist with photovoice training to the tribal people, and (5) to assist the researcher

⁵⁴ A community-based initiative in Kerala aimed at empowering women through self-help groups, focusing on social, economic, and cultural development. The organisation is committed to empower Jana, Dalits, socially and economically disadvantaged women with a vision of bringing sustainable solutions.

⁵⁵ Language supported building rapport, as evidenced in the researcher's previous research experiences with Jana communities

in undertaking the overall data collection process (Guidelines for cultural facilitator are attached as Appendix VI). The cultural facilitator was selected from a pool of three members who responded to an advertisement through a professional contact of the researcher. Selection criteria included the candidate's extensive experience working with Wayanad's Jana communities and their expertise in research-related studies. Additionally, a confidentiality agreement was signed by the cultural facilitator to uphold the privacy of research participants (Appendix VII). The cultural facilitator also supported with transcribing the data and hence the transcriber's confidentiality agreement was also signed (Appendix VIII). Compensation for their services was provided upon the completion of data collection and data classification.

The researcher also contacted the Kudumbashree Unit, in Wayanad for institutional research support. Before contacting Kudumbashree, an approach was initially made to another NGO. However, this NGO wanted to renegotiate the purpose of the study and sought funds from the researcher to run their projects. In consultation with the supervisors, the researcher decided to approach a different organisation, the Kudumbashree District Mission, Wayanad. This NGO and various professionals supported the researcher in providing relevant information related to research in Wayanad and the recruitment of the cultural facilitator. However, during the fieldwork, the researcher did not require any institutional support since most of the research process was organised at public spaces at the request of the community.

Research Location and Rapport Building

The research location selected was the Wayanad district of Kerala, which was chosen for its dense population of Jana communities compared to other regions in the state. Despite the researcher's prior engagement with Jana communities in the Palakkad district, Wayanad was deemed more suitable due to its historical significance as a refuge for Jana communities

during British colonisation⁵⁶. Nevertheless, this study acknowledges that the injustices faced by Jana are prevalent across Kerala. Specifically, the study was undertaken in the Mananthawady block of Wayanad district of Kerala, owing to the largest population of Jana in the region. However, prior to the research process, alternate research locations were also considered, such as Sultan Batheri, Pulpally, and Muthanga to mitigate potential challenges arising from the aftermath of the August (2019) floods that affected the Wayanad district. This approach ensured continuity in data collection if one site became inaccessible, although fortunately, this contingency plan was not required.

In terms of rapport building, a participatory approach was adopted with a focus of optimising the involvement of the participants and maximising the impact of the research. As stated in the methodology section, the participatory approach emphasised partial collaboration between researcher and participants, acknowledging the purpose of the study, rights of the participants and valuing their contributions throughout the research process. By fostering a platform for participants to share their voices and actively co-construct the research process, the study aimed to empower participants as collaborators and advocates, rather than passive subjects.

Initiation of Research Process

Before the formal commencement of the fieldwork, meetings were organised with Kudumbashree NGO staff, various community workers, Jana researchers and the Tribal Development officer (TDO) of Mananthawady to discuss the research and the researcher's

⁵⁶ Discussed in Chapter two: Contextual Background (p.43).

expectations. A significant concern raised during these discussions was the recent Maoist⁵⁷ attacks and threats in Wayanad towards outsiders, prompting the need for special permission from the State Tribal Officer or District Collector to ensure researcher and community security (Hindu, 2020; Manoj, 2020; The New Indian Express, 2020). Urgent applications were made to the District Collector of Wayanad for approval, while potential data collection sites in Jana hamlets such as Panamaram, Pulpally, Aaranyam, Kuruva islands, Villoli, Ippimala, and Kaattikulam were identified. Aaranyam, Ippimala, and Villoli were selected for their diverse Makkal and Kurichiyar populations.

The research was commenced after formal approval from the district collector was received (Attached as Appendix IX). As an initial step the community centers and organisations were visited including Aaranyam Tribal School, Aaranyam Anganwadi, and Villoli Anganwadi. These visits supported rapport building and understanding of the key dynamics within the respective communities. Due to the distant location of the Kudumbashree unit, which offered institutional support, the Moopan arranged for the local school or Anganwadi to provide institutional support for the research within the community. However, this option was not utilised due to the COVID19 pandemic and because most of the fieldwork took place directly in the community. Important considerations highlighted during this discussion included cultural sensitivity and respecting the political ideologies of Jana. Challenges in rapport building with the Makkal community were noted. The following sections describe the research process employed within the two communities, Kurichiyar and Makkal respectively.

⁵⁷ In Wayanad, they mostly live inside the wildness to protect the Jana from exploitation by the Government and the outsiders as well. The group is designated as terrorist organisation in India under Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Makkal: Community Engagement and Data Collection

This section delves into the process of community engagement and data collection within the Makkal community. Data collection through face-to-face interactions was conducted between late February and March 2020. However, due to the onset of the COVID19 pandemic, the remaining data were collected electronically mostly telephonically. Initially, the characteristics of the participants and the research setting are discussed, providing an overview of both. Subsequently, it explores the community engagement and data collection process with the Makkal community.

Participant characteristics and Research Settings

The Makkal of the Ippimala padi lived close to the nearby Mananthawady hills, often in the fringes of the forest. Located around five to six kilometres from the nearest town, narrow and worn-out roads or shortcut routes in the forest connected the Ippimala Makkal to the outside world and vice versa. Moreover, most of the residents did not have access to public or private transport. They mostly walked to work daily carrying their items in a tightly packed cloth bag on their head or sometimes in a homemade cloth bag around their shoulder. Most of them, being daily-waged workers, walked to work as early as seven am and came back after five pm. The children walked to school early due to the non-availability of other means of transport. Hardly any of the Makkal owned vehicles; even if they did, they were adept at quickly identifying any vehicles that did not belong to the area.

The Ippimala padi, situated on mountainous terrain, had several identical compact houses of concrete and bricks, unlike their traditional constructions with straw, mud, and clay. Around 27 to 30 family units lived in the Ippimala padi, comprising of roughly five to six members in each household. This land has community ownership and was provided to them by the Government nearly a century ago (as indicated by the people who lived in the padi). Most of these houses had a small courtyard, a kitchen, a bedroom, and a toilet built outside the home. The yards were neat and hand-polished with cow dung and clay. The padi had single standard fencing but did not have fencing around each household. Several packs of unharnessed dogs wandered in the padi (similar to Mudumalai padi and Kurichiyar households). No Makkal homes owned dogs privately; instead, these dogs lived in the padi and followed the Makkal everywhere. When asked about them, they said the dogs had always been with them to safeguard the Makkal.

The informal koottam happened at the muttam (meaning courtyard) of the Moopan's kudumbhu in the Ippimala padi. Kuravan, the Moopan of the Ippimala, was the oldest member of the padi. Unlike several other communities, the power of decision making vested within every community member and not solely on Moopan. The Moopan, the elder of the padi, commenced all the vital ceremonies of the ooru. Their previous Moopan died prematurely (he did not have any descendants), and Kuruvan, being the oldest, became the Moopan of the padi following the customary rituals. With the death of the last Moopan, they reported that their culture and practices had progressively declined meaning they felt the need for a strong Moopan to drive their culture amidst the pressing challenges.

The Makkal community members gradually showed openness to the research as they became more comfortable with the research and the researcher. In addition, they showed active

engagement with the photovoice process and koottam, although they struggled with verbalising their thoughts into words during the interviews.

Overall participant characteristics

The participants displayed unique age characteristics. Makkal reported that they only followed an estimate of their age. Especially the older generation who did not have any idea when they were born. They said that those children born at the hospital sometimes had their correct birth details, while most others birthed in the padi estimated their ages. Therefore, Makkal only considered age as a significant number that they needed to have if they had to go outside the community, for instance, for bank-related purposes or the enrolment of children into schools. The participants included young unmarried adults, married women (with younger children), middle-aged men and women with older children, and elders (who worked in paid work and some who did not).

Community Engagement and Data collection

When discussing possible engagement with the Makkal community for the study, the school principal and headmaster suggested visiting them directly to organise a time for a meeting. While engaging with Kurichiyar community during this period, Makkal community remained passive, often withdrawing from discussions or crowds. Although a joint community meeting for both Kurichiyar and Makkal was planned, separate meetings were later held to ensure that the enthusiasm of the Kurichiyar community did not overshadow the participation of the Makkal community.

Despite efforts to engage with the Makkal community through separate discussions, they remained silent and attempted to distance themselves from the researcher. Recognising this challenge in building rapport and trust with Makkal, the researcher adjusted the approach and sought an alternative strategy to build rapport with the community. Consequently, with the assistance of the Kurichiyar Moopan of Aaranyam, a visit was organised to meet with the Moopan of a nearby Makkal hamlet. Although initially agreeing to the research, the community ultimately withdrew their participation due to their ooru decision to refrain from the research for two weeks due to pela⁵⁸. Despite the researcher's willingness to wait until the pela was over, the community remained reluctant to engage, highlighting underlying trust issues.

Subsequently, a review meeting was organised between the researcher and the facilitator to identify alternative strategies to build rapport with the Makkal community. Recognising the importance of trust, it was decided to approach the community with someone they trusted. With the support of a Kurichiyar man familiar with the Makkal community through land rights protest, permission was sought from the Moopan of another Makkal hamlet to conduct the research. A community meeting was organised, attended by 19 participants including 10 males and 9 females, with additional attendees coming and going throughout the process. Prior to the meeting, an informal gathering allowed for the sharing of research details. Subsequently, visits were made to all 25 out of 28 households in the ooru. During the community meeting, the community members expressed concerns regarding landlessness and lack of access to basic amenities. It was collectively agreed not to specify themes for the photovoice projects, instead allowing participants to capture images of what they perceived as

⁵⁸ Community restriction to participating in any activities where inside or outside the community to release the most often, death pollution. For example, whenever someone in the family dies, the close members of the family will be under pela to participate in any auspicious ceremonies or functions.

issues around them. Dates and venues for photovoice camera training were also decided during this meeting.

The photovoice training session was opened by the Kurichiya representative, followed by facilitation by the researcher. Thirteen community members participated, including three children above 12 years old accompanied by their parents. The training covered camera usage and expectations for the photovoice session, followed by hands-on practice. For most of the participants, it was the first experience of holding or touching a camera. The cameras were deliberately chosen for their affordability and reusability to reduce the potential impact of loss or damage. Participants were instructed to use the cameras for photography and return them upon completing the task. While the researcher instructed one participant on camera operation, the community members took initiative to teach each other with the children actively involved in supporting adults. This collaborative learning demonstrated the participants' sense of ownership over the research. Due to the emerging COVID19 pandemic and the high prevalence of alcoholism among the Makkal community, it was previously suggested by the Moopan to request the photovoice participants to return the photovoice cameras on the same day. However, the participants themselves suggested that they would return the cameras on the same day as they might potentially lose them or get busy with other work on other days. They agreed to meet the researcher in the late afternoon at their hamlet with the photos. Out of 10 photovoice participants, nine were males and one was a female. Subsequently, the participants invited the research team to attend a gathering where they interpreted their photos, which were video recorded by the cultural facilitator with their verbal consent.

Simultaneously, the in-depth interviews were conducted, with participation from three females and two male participants. With this, the research process with the Makkal community was completed and did not require further engagement via telephone in contrast with

Kurichiyar community, where most of the photovoice projects were done through internet and telephone.

Overall, the data captured through photovoice reflected participants day-to-day challenges that impacted their immediate household, while the kootam and in-depth interview supported participants to describe specific situations. The Makkal felt more comfortable with the photovoice process, where they captured their everyday life in photos using a camera and interpreted them. They struggled to put their thoughts into words during the in-depth interviews; however, during the koottam, the Makkal seemed more relaxed and expressive.

Kurichiya: Community Engagement and Data Collection

This section delves into the process of community engagement and data collection within the Kurichiya community. Data collection through face-to-face interactions was conducted between late February and March 2020. However, due to the onset of the COVID19 pandemic, the remaining data were collected telephonically. Initially, this section explains the Kurichiya characteristics and their ooru space based on researcher engagement, thereby outlining the participants and their environment involved in the research. Subsequently, it explores the community engagement and data collection process with the Kurichiya community.

Participant Characteristics and research setting

Kurichiyar, also known as “hill brahmins” or “warriors”, are the second most common settlement in the Mananthawady region. They spoke Kurichiyabasha within their community, and they fluently spoke Malayalam outside their community. Kurichiya were mostly organic farmers, cultivating ancient varieties of paddy, plantain, coffee, bittergourd on a large scale. They also produced other vegetables and grains for their household. Hence, the village has several homesteads scattered over the region, each having a hill and field.

Kurichiya have a rich culture and practices that made them unique. They were matrilineal, meaning the land was inherited through the maternal side through a practice called Marumakkathayam. They also indicated thodalum theendalum⁵⁹, therandu kalyanam⁶⁰, and Thula pathu⁶¹ as their essential practices. The Kurichiyar also strictly followed thodalum theendalum in the past. These customs had been modified over time⁶². However, they still practiced and followed certain rituals such as not eating outside from restaurants, consuming only meat hunted from the forest, taking a shower before entering the home, and isolating during the time of menstruation. Some who had relocated to the towns and overseas did not always follow these customs, opting for what was feasible in their current situation. However, upon their return to the ooru, they resumed these practices. Their customs prohibited

⁵⁹ Thodalum theendalum is the practice of untouchability by Kurichiya to all castes except Brahmins and reluctant take food with other castes except Nairs and Brahmins.

⁶⁰ Therandu kalyanam is the celebration that involves the announcement of girl’s menarche.

⁶¹ The celebration Thulampathu or Putthari (meaning ‘new rice’) is significant for this paddy farming culture, and often involves going hunting in the afternoon. On this day, special rituals are performed on the paddy fields.

⁶² Discussed further in the forthcoming sections.

intermarriage with individuals from outside their community, leading to exclusion for those who choose to marry from other communities.

Every Kurichiya household and each member within the household owned bows and arrows, their traditional weapons. The adults taught the children archery and martial arts from a very young age.

Figure 4.3 A Kurichiya child using bow and arrow



Each family made their bow and arrow from wood, creepers, and metal. The two main types of bows used included Kattiyambhu (used for hunting) and Mottambhu (used to scare away animals). They stored the arms in the family armoury.

Ooru (Village) space

Typically, the Kurichiya dwellings were grouped in clusters, and a collection of houses within each settlement is referred to as mittom, also known as Tharavadu. Two villages, namely, Aranyam and Villoli of the Mananthawady district participated in the study. Both the villages had a head-chief, also known as Karnavar, who lived in the Tharavadu. The Karnavar presided over important ceremonies and meetings of the village. In addition, the Karnavar had supreme authority to make decisions related to land-related disputes or transactions. The wife

of Karnavar, also known as Ammayi, also shouldered several responsibilities within the household such as cooking and assigning duties to the female workers of the mittom.

The Tharavadu had a large courtyard, neatly glazed with mud, cow dung and clay, as depicted in Figure 4.4. In earlier days, each Tharavadu was big enough to accommodate a hundred families, however, they now live in individual homesteads. Only the Karnavar and Ammayi lived in the Tharavadu. However, during any ceremonies, all the village's residents gather at the Tharavadu. Most of these festivals and ceremonies related to the seasons and agricultural foundations of the community.

Figure 4.4 Kurichiyar Tharavadu



The participants of the Aranyam village⁶³ were mostly landless (who encroached forest land), while the participants of the Villoli village owned land. The landless Kurichiya represented a minority group among the wider Kurichiya, shadowed by the generalised view of Kurichiyar as elite Jana. These residents used to live in the Aranyam village but had moved to the encroached forestland and had been living there for the past eleven years. Consequently,

⁶³ The study included mostly landless individuals from the Aranyam village. However, it's important to note that within the broader population of the Aranyam village, landless individuals constituted only a minority.

they did not belong to the broader Aranyam village; however, the Karnavar of the Aranyam village still assumed the responsibility of overseeing the affairs of the Moopan for these relocated families.

The Aranyam village had Government constructed compact houses, while the ones in the encroached lands were made from mud, clay, straw, and sometimes asbestos or tarpaulin sheets. The different households in the encroached lands were also more compactly placed compared to those in the village.

Located further interior, the Villoli village was isolated from the town. Due to the deplorable conditions of the road, the residents walked six to eight kilometers to the nearest town through the forest. The residents of this village tried to get back home by five pm each day due to fear of being attacked by wild elephants and bison that came from the forest scavenging for fodder. The homes constructed in this village were mostly traditional, while there were several Government-constructed compact houses.

Overall participant characteristics

The participants included men and women of various age groups. These included young adults, middle-aged, and elders. The elders only knew an estimate of their ages, while the young adults and most of the middle-aged knew their age.

Community Engagement and data collection

During initial visits to the school, the headmaster and principal introduced the Moopan of the Aaranyam Kurichiyar Community. Consequently, a meeting was arranged with the Moopan and elders of the Kurichiyar community, allowing for communication about the study, understanding their perspectives, and addressing their concerns. The Moopan expressed appreciation for the research topic and recognised its alignment with contemporary issues faced by the community. The Moopan granted permission to commence data collection at their ooru, and the Moopan also suggested planning for meetings at Tharavadu to introduce the research to isolated households. Transect walks and home visits were also permitted, provided individuals were available. Similarly, due to the cultural facilitator's prior engagement and established trust within the Villoli ooru, permission was subsequently obtained for the research in Villoli.

In the rapport building phase, visits to various homes and common places like playgrounds and paddy fields, engaging in informal meetings were undertaken where discussions naturally evolved as more community members joined. These interactions often began with one-on-one conversations, sometimes under a tree or while walking through the fields. Fieldnotes from these meetings were made by the researcher. Despite initial apprehension due to negative experiences with outsiders, the Jana community demonstrated hospitality rooted in their cultural traditions. As interest in the research grew, more individuals showed interest to participate, relating the study's themes that included environmental and social injustices and sustainability to their own life experiences. The Kurichiya community, in particular, actively engaged in sharing knowledge and stories, displaying approachability and friendliness throughout our interactions, which sometimes extended into lengthy conversations. Their generosity and welcoming nature extended to ensuring the comfort of both

the researcher and cultural facilitator during visits. While efforts were made to minimise reliance on community assistance or accept it minimally without causing offense, reciprocity was practiced by the researcher. For instance, when community members offered to escort the researcher to different homes within the ooru for safety from Maoist attacks, this support was graciously accepted. Similarly, despite bringing food, the villagers insisted on sharing meals, which were gratefully received. In return for their hospitality, the researcher reciprocated by covering some of their expenses, such as purchasing household items, covering medication costs, and providing assistance during a hospital visit.

Following rapport building, community meetings were organised in both Villoli and Aaranyam, with 22 (14 male participants and 8 female participants) and 26 participants (17 male participants and 9 female participants), respectively, alongside additional attendees whose numbers were not recorded. Despite challenges such as prior community events affecting attendance, participants remained engaged and supportive of the research process. During these meetings, it was decided not to impose predefined themes for the photovoice project, as issues affecting individuals varied in severity and impact. Instead, all community members were encouraged to prioritise issues related to their environment equally. Consequently, eight members from Aaranyam and three from Villoli volunteered for the photovoice project, demonstrating their commitment to the research despite the COVID19 pandemic.

The day before the scheduled photovoice training at the Kurichiyar Villoli hamlets, a surge in COVID19 cases linked to a breach of safety protocols by a foreigner, prompted special Government orders to prevent outsiders from entering Indigenous hamlets. Consequently, a group of young Kurichiya adults barred the researcher and the facilitator from entering the ooru, however, community elders intervened, expressing apologies and organising an alternate method for data collection. Participants agreed to take photos based on the issues discussed during the meeting and send it across to the researcher electronically. They also nominated a

contact person to record their sharing and send the photos since most of them did not have a phone with camera facility. The researcher and the facilitator apologised to the community and also thanked them for their beneficence. Consequently, the photovoice process among the Kurichiyar community was mostly collected through the internet. Despite the setback, community members remained engaged, with many expressing a desire for their voices to be heard internationally. The community members also expressed their desire to organise a photo exhibition at the panchayath level so that the outsiders understood what difficulties they were undergoing. However, the exhibition did not take place as planned. Due to COVID19, out of 10 photovoice projects (six males and four females) undertaken by the Kurichiyar, only one participant provided direct photo interpretations, while the rest were conveyed via telephone to the cultural facilitator, highlighting the community's commitment to the project.

Immediately after the community meetings, the researcher and the facilitator started conducting in-depth interviews with the participants. The Kurichiyar community, known for their vocal participation, provided rich data during these interviews. Three participants (two males and one female) from the Aaranyam village and two participants (one male and one female) from the Villoli village participated in the in-depth interviews respectively. After the completion of the data collection process, Koha (an acknowledgment) was provided to participants as compensation for their time and travel, as discussed in the subsequent section.

Koha for the participants

After the research process, all ten participants from the in-depth interviews (five from Kurichiya and Makkal communities) and twenty participants (ten each from Kurichiya and Makkal communities) photovoice projects were provided Koha (an acknowledgement) for their time and travel. In consultation with the Moopan of the respective communities, it was already

decided to provide Koha (donation) in the form of kind that included food, clothing, and basic amenities worth 1000 INR each. However, the researcher provided Koha in the form of money in some circumstances as a means of reciprocity for their support, which is a common practice in such situations.

Consistent with the CBPAR approach, the research process incorporated an action-oriented focus, within the limitations of the COVID19 pandemic. In this study, the action-centred approach was grounded in the Indigenous perspectives of creating opportunities by amplifying Jana voices articulating their struggles, aspirations, and visions for the future. Although the communities had suggested a photovoice exhibition as the next step, the COVID19 pandemic limited the scope for immediate, large-scale interventions during the research period. Anticipated outcomes of this study include organising a photovoice exhibition as suggested by the participants and presenting outcomes to relevant authorities such as the Wayanad District Collector and Scheduled Tribe Development Department. These intended actions aim to position participants' voices as evidence for policy and advocacy, with potential benefits anticipated beyond the submission of the thesis. The next section will discuss the data analysis process.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study was grounded in thematic analysis and guided by green social work theory principles. The analysis process aimed to identify key themes related to the self-determined experiences of the Jana communities, focusing on their struggles with injustices (environmental injustices, social injustices, and human rights violations), their aspirations for the future, and their worldviews regarding sustainability. The analysis was also

designed to explore the role of social workers in supporting Jana communities in their efforts to achieve sustainable outcomes.

The community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) approach employed in this study emphasises collaboration with communities to generate rich, contextually relevant data (Blumenthal et al., 2013; Brown & Clarke, 2022). Data were collected through three primary methods: community meetings, photovoice projects, and in-depth interviews. All data, including audio recordings from interviews and meetings, were transcribed and then translated by the researcher and the cultural facilitator. The thematic analysis was structured around several steps to ensure a comprehensive and systematic approach to data interpretation. The analysis was guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2022) six-phase framework for conducting thematic analysis, which involves identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data.

Each data type (community meetings, photovoice, and in-depth interviews) was considered separately at first, with the researcher and cultural facilitator identifying initial themes or patterns relevant to the research questions. The process was iterative and involved both inductive and deductive reasoning, drawing from the data itself as well as the theoretical framework of green social work theory. In the case of the photovoice project, photographs served as a powerful tool for capturing participants' lived experiences. Each image was accompanied by descriptive data, which provided additional context. The raw data were examined carefully, and relevant patterns were highlighted. These patterns were then allocated corresponding codes to help categorise and index the data. The analyses were conducted separately for the Makkal and Kurichiyar communities to ensure that the perspectives of each community were accurately and fairly represented.

All qualitative data transcripts from community meetings, photovoice discussions, and semi-structured interviews were subjected to thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's

(2006) six-step process. Initially, each data type was coded separately to respect the distinct contexts in which they were generated. After initial coding, the researcher developed code lists for each method and then merged these iteratively into a code-spreadsheet. This process involved comparing codes across datasets, collapsing overlapping codes, and refining categories until broader, cross-cutting themes were generated. Manual coding was carried out using colour-coded spreadsheets rather than qualitative software, as the dataset was manageable in size and this method allowed for close engagement with the data. Reflexive memos and coding reports were used to document analytical decisions, which also helped in identifying contradictions and nuances between different participant groups.

Trustworthiness of the analysis was enhanced through multiple strategies. Credibility was supported by prolonged engagement with both Jana communities, triangulation across methods, and feedback on preliminary findings from key community contacts. Transferability was addressed through providing comprehensive description of the study context and participant experiences. Dependability was ensured through systematic documentation in reflexive memos and coding reports, while confirmability was strengthened through reflexive practice and the involvement of the cultural facilitator in the analytic process.

Makkal community

For the Makkal community, a total of 105 codes were identified from the community meetings, 42 codes from the photovoice project, and 157 codes from the in-depth interviews.

The identified codes were analysed further to detect sub-themes and major themes. In the community meetings with the Makkal community, the sub-themes identified included: landlessness, forest restrictions, living conditions, culture, food insecurity, response to hegemony, sustainability, and future hopes and aspirations. In the photovoice analysis, the sub-

themes identified were living conditions, road transport, APL card, spirituality, burial practices, culture, transience, and government hegemony. The in-depth interviews revealed sub-themes such as: education, culture, social and economic conditions, sources of income, land ownership patterns, forest restrictions, responses to and acceptance of injustice, government hegemony, the impacts of colonisation, and concerns and hopes for the future. The sub-themes consolidated across the methods includes 18 sub-themes including: landlessness and forest restrictions; living conditions, culture, and food insecurity; response to hegemony; sustainability; future hopes and aspirations; road transport; APL card; spirituality; burying the dead; transience; Government hegemony; education; social and economic situations; sources of Income; land ownership patterns; acceptance of injustices; impacts of colonisation; and worries and hopes.

Once the initial coding was complete, the sub-themes were reviewed and refined which required careful examination of patterns across the three data sources. Table 4.1 shows sub-themes which were further explored and categorised into broader, more comprehensive themes

Table 4.1 Table showing Categorisation of sub-themes into major themes

Sub-themes	Major Themes
Colonisation	Construct of Self
Landlessness and forest restrictions	Bhūrahita or state of being without land
Land ownership patterns	
Transience	
Living conditions	Living conditions
Road transport	
Culture, and food insecurity	
APL card	

Sources of Income	Sociocultural and economic challenges: meeting the two ends of lives
Social and economic situations	
Education	
Spirituality	
Burying the dead	
Government hegemony	Enduring neglect and Ostracism: Makkal Perspectives
Response to hegemony	
Future hopes and aspirations	Picturing tomorrow
Worries and hopes.	
Acceptance of injustices	
Sustainability	

Kurichiya community

For the Kurichiya community, a total of 91 codes were identified from the community meetings, 53 codes from the photovoice project, and 350 codes from the in-depth interviews.

The identified codes were analysed further to detect sub-themes and major themes. The sub-themes consolidated across the methods include 19 sub-themes: contested income; history; concept of self; culture and practices; spirituality; living condition; education; social issues; Government approach, hegemony, and support; false promises; questioning sustainability; weather change and conservation; landlessness; forest restriction impacts; 1963 act; colonisation and outsiders views; response, worries, and hopes; conflicts by younger generation; and acceptance of injustices.

Once the initial coding was complete, the sub-themes were reviewed and refined which required careful examination of patterns across the three data sources. Sub-themes were further explored and categorised into broader, more comprehensive themes as shown below:

Table 4.2 Table showing Categorisation of sub-themes into major themes

Sub-themes	Major Themes
History	Our Past, Our Pride
Concept of Self	
Colonisation	Vicchēdanaṁ: Colonisation and Exclusion from Forests
Landlessness	
1963 Act	
Culture and Practices	Impacts of Exclusion from their Abode
Forest restriction impacts	
Conflicts by younger generation	
Education	
Spirituality	
Income	Self-sustenance: Socio-Economic Situation
Living Condition	Living Conditions
Outsiders' views	Hegemony: Government approaches and Outsiders influences
Government approach, hegemony, and support	
False promises	
Questioning unsustainability	Unsustainable initiatives: Destruction that led to Disconnection
Weather change and Conservation	
Response, worries, and hopes	Future Hopes and Aspirations
Accepting injustices	

The final stage of data analysis involved triangulation of the data obtained from both communities by comparing and contrasting the findings to ensure that the results were valid. Triangulation helped to confirm the consistency and reliability of the findings across the various sources, allowing for a more comprehensive and robust interpretation of the data.

The thematic analysis was conducted with a focus on green social work theory, which placed an emphasis on sustainability and the role of social workers in creating equitable, environmentally just communities. Green social work is particularly relevant to this study, as it highlights the relationship between social justice, community well-being, and environmental sustainability. In applying green social work theory, the study sought to understand how Jana worldviews on sustainability are rooted in their lived experiences and how they conceptualise the role of social workers in supporting sustainable community outcomes. The self-determined perspectives of Jana, as captured through interviews and photovoice, were analysed in terms of their visions for a sustainable future, including their aspirations for preserving their land, culture, and resources.

The thematic analysis provided a rich understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and aspirations of the Jana communities in relation to their struggles, visions for the future, and the role of sustainability. By triangulating the data from the community meetings, photovoice projects, and in-depth interviews of the Makkal and Kurichiya communities, this study offers a comprehensive account of the challenges faced by Jana communities and their aspirations for a sustainable and just future. Through the lens of green social work theory, the findings also highlighted the importance of social workers in supporting Jana's journey toward self-determined sustainability and justice.

These themes and the insights gained from the thematic analysis inform the discussion and conclusion chapters, where the implications for policy, practice, and future research are discussed.

Methodological Limitations

As outlined in the previous sections, CBPAR and its associated methods were deemed suitable for conducting this participatory qualitative research. However, one major challenge associated with CBPAR for this study was the significant cost involved, requiring considerable investment of time and resources in its development and maintenance, which is often not fully funded. Freeman et al. (2006) asserted that in any CBPAR effort, time must be devoted to the process of relationship-building well in advance of a grant deadline or project start date, as the process itself may be as crucial as the final product. While various mechanisms support facilitating these relationships, there was no one-size-fits-all approach that worked for the diverse range of activities encompassed by CBPAR (Freeman et al., 2006). This limitation meant that the researcher had to utilise the cultural facilitator and various community members to navigate through the challenges as they occurred.

Additionally, community engagement presented a significant challenge, as it cannot be assumed that communities will readily participate in CBPAR initiatives. CBPAR presented challenges, particularly in maintaining the commitment of community members throughout the research process, as their active involvement was integral to this approach (Crabtree & Braun, 2015; Gillis & Jackson, 2002). Engaging with communities required time and effort, which was a limitation of the methodology. It is important to acknowledge that these challenges were amplified since the research process occurred during the time of COVID19 outbreak. However,

since the rapport and relationship with the community members were already established prior to the COVID19 lockdown, the researcher was able to develop alternative strategies to collect the data.

COVID19 Implications

Despite the proactive measures taken to address various challenges in the field, the research process coincided with the unprecedented COVID19 outbreak, presenting unforeseen obstacles and uncertainties. This unexpected situation required flexibility, adaptability, and resilience from the researcher to navigate through the complexities and continue the research endeavour.

The research fieldwork was initially scheduled between March 01, 2020, to April 30, 2020. However, due to the onset of COVID19, the face-to-face research process was completed within Feb 26, 2020, to March 19, 2020. The shortened research process had significant implications for the data collection methods, particularly for the photovoice projects and in-depth interviews. Simultaneous data collection from both the communities resulted in deviation from the planned timeframe for photovoice. With the Makkal community, this meant instead of returning the cameras with photographs after three days as initially planned, participants had returned them on the same day. On the other hand, with Kurichiya community, most of the photovoice projects from the Villoli community were conducted online via telephone, as were the photovoice projects at the Aaranyam Kurichiyar community. Despite the challenges, the photovoice projects for the Kurichiya community were undertaken electronically after this period, with active community involvement, cooperation, and beneficence. One such instance

illustrative of community resilience and adaptability was when the community made the decision to electronically undertake the photovoice project.

The COVID19 outbreak posed a significant challenge for the researcher, as someone who had recently travelled from abroad. In Kerala, the outbreak began after a foreign national breached health and safety protocols, leading to the first community spread of COVID19 infection. Consequently, there was heightened sensitivity towards individuals who had recently travelled from abroad. The researcher encountered opposition from some individuals due to being perceived as an outsider. An example of this was when a group of youth prevented the researcher from entering the Villoli village, following immediate restrictions imposed on outsiders by the community. These restrictions were communicated directly by the police to the community, and the news was not officially provided to the researcher, leading to the misunderstanding. Although with the intervention of elders, the situation was resolved, it was undoubtedly a concerning and unsafe circumstance for the researcher, cultural facilitator, and the community.

The researcher also undertook some additional precautions to navigate the challenges during the COVID19 situation. Recognising the constrained time limits due to COVID19, the researcher and cultural facilitator worked all days during the week, starting field work as early as 6:00 am to late evening until 1900 hours or 2000 hours. Before the end of each day, the researcher and the cultural facilitator debriefed to discuss the challenges and strategies to manage it efficiently. Despite the researcher and the cultural facilitator being involved in a motor vehicle accident and sustaining minor injuries, public transport was used until wounds were healed. Besides, being aware of the impacts of COVID19 on the health and safety of Jana community, precautions were taken before the lockdown, when the research process commenced, to use hand sanitiser and maintain social distancing.

Lastly, the researcher had to remain in India for a period of 4 months after the data collection as New Zealand borders were shut down in response to the global pandemic. This meant that the researcher had to remain in India alone most of the time without support and income, which generated a lot of stress. Due to poor internet connectivity in the area and lack of access to resources due to lockdown, not much progress could be made in terms of research. The supervisors and the graduate research school provided a recommendation letter to immigration in support of the travel exemption, which was eventually granted. The researcher returned back to New Zealand on June 15, 2020, completing time in mandatory isolation in a quarantine facility.

Ethics Approval

Following the completion of the research design, the proposed research went through a full ethics application process for approval by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. The Massey University Human Ethics Committee (Northern) approved the 19/63 application (Appendix I). The Human Ethics Committee approval process was helpful in terms of delineating the role of the cultural facilitator, reviewing transcripts of participants, participant selection, ensuring participation based on informed consent (information consent for koottam, in-depth interview, and photovoice are attached as Appendix X-a, X-b, and X-c), information sheets for the data collection methods (information sheet for koottam, in-depth interview, and photovoice are attached as Appendix XI-a, XI-b, and XI-c), maintaining confidentiality, feedback of knowledge generated, counselling service for the participants (Appendix XII), ensuring safety of the researcher as well as the community during the research (Appendix XIII).

Various considerations were taken into account to ensure adherence to ethical guidelines. Firstly, addressing the ethical implications of a non-Jana researcher conducting Jana research, a cultural facilitator was recruited to transcend the potential cultural and language barriers. The cultural facilitator included identifying potential cultural challenges and devising strategies to address them. Additionally, the cultural facilitator supported understanding differences and similarities between the researcher and Jana's cultural preferences, along with ways to minimise any potential impacts on the research. The recruitment documents and guidelines outlining the role of cultural facilitator are detailed in Appendix VI⁶⁴.

Next, this research prioritised informed participation, respecting participant rights and privacy, while also addressing cultural barriers and ensuring cultural sensitivity. Participation in the research was voluntary, consistent with the principles of CBPAR. Potential participants were invited to take part, contributing to the validity and reliability of the research. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before data collection, with verbal consent provided for those unable to read⁶⁵. Although initial plans to allow participants to review their transcripts post-data collection were hindered by COVID19 constraints, participants were informed that transcripts would be available for review upon request. Despite efforts to facilitate contact, no participants requested to review their transcripts. This step was taken to ensure participants agreed with the content noted in the transcripts and were aware of their use in the research. Transcripts, excluding those from in-depth interviews, were intended for review by Moopan for authentication of cultural content. However, no concerns were raised by the

⁶⁴ The process of recruitment of the cultural facilitator is discussed in the previous section, Recruitment of Cultural Facilitator and contact with NGO (pg. 151).

⁶⁵ This was read out to four participant who requested. However, the informed consent was explained to every participant in the research as it was easier for them to comprehend.

Moopan (neither did he review them), as he expressed that those were stories from the community and did not need to be altered. Confidentiality was strictly maintained, with data securely stored and accessible only to the researcher. Data will be retained until after the thesis examination, after which it will be securely destroyed. Furthermore, pseudonyms were used, and identifying characteristics were removed in research presentations and subsequent publications, upholding confidentiality as a paramount principle.

Thirdly, to address the ethical use of photography during the photovoice process, the participants were asked to take photos only of objects (Crabtree and Braun, 2015). If a participant wished to take a photo of a person to convey the message, the participant was asked to obtain a signed consent (provided by the researcher) of the person being photographed. Out of the total 54 photos taken, 16 photos had photos of human subjects. These photos, mostly of participant themselves were anonymised through blackening to safeguard their identities. Photo release forms were signed by the participants (Appendix XIV).

Next, to mitigate potential harm to both the researcher and participants, a familiar cultural facilitator accompanied the researcher, ensuring awareness of rights and positions through discussions and provision of information sheets. Research activities were conducted in secure environments such as safe public spaces or within the NGO premises. Additionally, a list of available counsellors was provided to offer support to both the researcher and participants in managing any distress related to past trauma recollection. Moreover, for participants who were unable to read or write, the cultural facilitator provided detailed explanations of their rights as participants and assisted them in signing the consent forms. This process was carried out both during community meetings and through individual interactions to ensure clear understanding of the information presented.

To address information that might cast the community in a negative light, an ethical implication as indicated by various researchers (Israel et al., 1998; O’Sullivan et al., 2022), the researcher and cultural facilitator had discussions with the participants before and after the data collection to set strict reporting guidelines. These discussions involved ensuring participants’ informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and providing participants with the opportunity to review transcripts to remove any sensitive content. As an additional safeguard, the researcher also provided an additional option for recruiting another Jana member (of their choice) to serve as a cultural reader or reviewer of manuscripts. However, while a Jana participant was engaged as a second cultural facilitator, they declined to review any information, emphasising that their stories should be published as they were told. To address concerns regarding data ownership, the researcher transparently informed both the local Moopan and the participants about the study’s purpose, clarifying that the findings would be published and reported. Such a precaution was undertaken given the history of colonisation and the role of research in this context, it is important to seek approval from the community or Moopan before the research is published (Kelley et al., 2013). The participants were given the contact details of the researcher to obtain the research findings in person.

Lastly, the academic supervisors provided active support to the researcher to address any ethical challenges that came up during the fieldwork. The supervisors, based in New Zealand, maintained communication with the researcher through WhatsApp, facilitating updates and discussions on progress. Additionally, regular Zoom supervisions were arranged as required to provide guidance and ensure adherence to ethical procedures throughout the research process. These were particularly relevant since the research process had to be altered following the COVID19 outbreak.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodological framework that governed the research process, informed by the ontological and epistemological positioning of the study within the historical context of the Jana communities. The choice of qualitative exploratory research methodology aligns with the inbetween positioning, reinforcing Jana epistemology and linking well with the research paradigm. The rationale for selecting CBPAR is justified due to the participatory nature of the study, influenced by ontological, epistemological, and research paradigm considerations. The discussion also covers the design of research instruments, including community meetings, photovoice projects, and in-depth interviews. It further outlines the research process including engagement and data collection with the Kurichiyar and Makkal communities. Thematic analysis guided by the research questions informed the data analysis utilising green social work theory as the framework that facilitated the understanding of the different concepts of this study. Furthermore, the chapter critically evaluates the limitations of the methodology and examines the impact of the COVID19 pandemic on the research process.

The subsequent chapter delves into the research findings from the Makkal and Kurichiya communities.

Chapter Five

Resonating Voices of Ippimala Makkal (aka. Paniyar)

“Why should we voice when we know they will not listen?”

-Makkal man, 2020

This chapter presents the evocative and echoing voices and experiences of the Ippimala Makkal (children of the Ippi hill). As detailed in Chapter one⁶⁶, they are commonly known as “Paniyar” and are referred as Makkal within this study and the Makkal’s colony that participated in this study is referred to as Ippimala padi. Makkal voices reflected in the sections below were obtained through engagement in koottam, photovoice, and interviews as detailed in Chapter four. This chapter captures the research findings from the Makkal community, aligning with the research aim and questions. The voices of Ippimala Makkal identify the following six significant themes: construct of self, Bhūrahita or state of being without land, living conditions, sociocultural and economic challenges- “meeting the two ends of lives”, enduring neglect and ostracism- Makkal perspectives, and picturing tomorrow.

⁶⁶ Chapter one- Introduction (p.15).

Findings

Three different data collection methods were used to capture the Makkal voices. Common themes that emerged from the koottam included landlessness, forest restrictions, living conditions, food insecurity, diminishing cultures, political hegemony, response to hegemony, and hopes and worries for the future. Similarly, prominent themes in the photovoice process, which depicted their day-to-day realities, included transience, Government hegemony, diminishing culture and spiritual practices, and living conditions. Additionally, major discussion points during in-depth interviews revolved around their socio-economic situation, education, forest restrictions, land ownership patterns, Government hegemony, response to hegemony, sustainability impacts, worries and hopes for the future. These sub-themes were summarised into major themes: construct of self, Bhūrahita or state of being without land, living conditions, sociocultural and economic challenges- “meeting the two ends of lives”, enduring neglect and ostracism- Makkal perspectives, and picturing tomorrow. These themes are explored in detail in the following sections.

Construct of Self

This theme situates Makkal’s reflection of their culture and heritage within the research context, offering an interpretive framework that facilitates contextualisation of their perception of self in relation to their land in Wayanad. Through discussions on their forgotten past and deep connection to their heritage, this theme facilitates the exploration of the study objective, focusing on how the Makkal communities perceive environmental injustices.

The Forgotten Past

The Makkal expressed a sense of their history being “*forgotten*” or that it “*cannot be recollected*.” All the interview and koottam participants stated that they lacked any knowledge of their past. For example, Unnikkan, during the in-depth interview, said, “*Nobody has told me anything [refers to the history] neither have I heard anybody talking about it.*”

There were times when the Makkal inadvertently reflected on their past with a deep sense of helplessness. During the koottam, one of the participants said, “*...we still live like slaves of other... we work for them [outsiders]... like we are born for that....*” Another participant during the meeting added, “*We don’t have a glorious history like them [refers to Kurichiyar] ... we have always lived like this.*” Similarly, a Makkal elder also reported, “*We do not have anything like Kurichiyar [a neighboring Jana] that makes us unique and different.*”

The Makkal were also hesitant to share the ballads they sang for every ceremony. Some of the participants stated, “*we don’t know how to sing it. Maybe our elders in the ooru may be able to recite it.*” As discussed in the Introduction chapter⁶⁷, these ballads are recitations of their slave genesis. The pananpaattu (often sung by the Makkal), the traditional folklore of the Makkal, involved narratives of how the different colonisers trapped them.⁶⁸ This cultural expression aligns with the sentiments of the Makkal community, as it was noticed that they exclusively identified themselves as “*Adivasi*” during the research, and not Paniyar. The hesitation to speak openly about their enslavement further highlights the significance of

⁶⁷ Chapter one- Introduction (p.15)

⁶⁸ Some of the verses are included in Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

preserving their cultural traditions and collective history. This observation reinforces the researcher's decision to use the term Makkal instead of Paniyar consistently throughout the study, reflecting the community's current identity and their complex relationship with their past.

In essence, whether the Makkal knew their past or not, it was evident that they did not want to recollect it. This reluctance could be for several reasons such as their reluctance to share this with an outsider due to a lack of trust or maybe due to feelings of shame associated with it. The next section discusses how they related to the land.

Sense of belonging

Makkal recognised themselves as “*aadyam vasichavar*” (first inhabitants) of the land yet faced with “*duritham*” (misfortune) of fighting for the land that also belonged to them. The Makkal had an intricate relationship with their land combined with a sense of long-established rights. A participant during the koottam noted, “*We are from here. Our forefathers were all born here... they all have died now. We belong here.*” The Makkal did not have a history of coming from elsewhere and strongly identified that they belonged to the Wayanadan forest and hills.

While the Makkal participants did not directly discuss their history of enslavement, they conveyed how the Wayanadan hills held the legacy of their ancestors and themselves. They described how the hills tell the story of their forebears who toiled tirelessly and ultimately perished, a narrative that continued to resonate with their own experiences. As one respondent during a koottam expressed, “*Our ancestors worked blood, sweat, and tears for their masters... Here we in way continues to do the same...*” These reflections illustrate the Makkal's awareness

of the ongoing repercussions of historical injustices, which persisted in shaping their contemporary experiences, alongside their profound attachment to the land and its past.

In addition to their deep connection to the Wayanadan hills, the Makkal participants emphasised their longstanding tenure on the land where they currently lived. Kali, during the interview, noted, “...we have been given this 1-acre land before ages. All of us live here... hm... we own the home that is constructed, but the land belongs to all of us.”

Makkal had no perception of private property, instead they strongly affirmed their belongingness to the land. During the interview, Mayan said that their forefathers did not own land for themselves and that their ancestor’s lives were no different from theirs. He stated, “... it was just like how it is now.” Asserting their communal land rights during the koottam, a participant explained, “We have rights over this land [refers to the encroached land]. It belongs to us.” Another participant said, “We are Adivasi. Adivasi means the one who first started living here. We belong here.”

In summary, the Makkal participants showed reluctance to express their connection to their past selves. Within this study understanding these dynamics were crucial for building trust and rapport with the Makkal community and for conducting sensitive and respectful research that honors their lived experiences. Additionally, it underscores the importance of creating safe spaces for the Makkal to share their stories on their own terms, if they choose to do so, and to validate their perspectives and narratives. Despite their limited self-connection, they expressed a strong sense of belongingness to the Wayanadan hills, a place their stories continue to endure. This perspective sets the context of exploring the environmental injustice experiences of Makkal within this study, highlighting how the Makkal have endured alienation from the land where they belonged.

Bhūrahita or state of being without land

Within this theme, the Makkal discussed the ongoing impacts of their exclusion from the Wayanadan hills, a place where they felt strongly connected. It encapsulates the major determinants of environmental injustices, a major focus of the study, including the loss of traditional land rights and its ripple effects. The underlying sub-themes are discussed below, including forest and land policies, the impacts of restrictions, landlessness, encroachment of the forest, and transience.

Forest and Land Policies

Makkal expressed profound connections with the forests as an integral part of their identity, regarding them as safe havens where they found refuge and security. Unnikkan, emphasised this sentiment during the in-depth interview by remarking that they often went inside the forests to “*hide from outsiders*” as they felt safe. Another participant in agreeance stated, “*No one can harm us there. We feel safe there.*”

Despite their connection, in recent years, the Makkal reported feeling disconnected from the forest due to restrictions. Kira said, “*If we go into the forest to get something, the sarrammar [officers] will come and arrest us....*”

Unlike in the past, they no longer completely relied on forests for sustenance. These days, they only went into the forests to collect firewood. Although this was not legal, the participants stated some forest officers permitted them to collect firewood. During the in-depth interview, Shobhana said, “*... they do not make a lot of fuss around us collecting the firewood.*”

When asked about the land reform acts and forest policies, the Makkal reported that they did not know about any land or forest policies after independence. All the participants of the in-depth interviews indicated that they did not know about land acquisition and redistribution or forest restrictions or what these changes meant for their lives. No participants could explain why this happened or when this happened. However, they could recollect that the “*sarrammar*” (officers) tried to keep them away from the forest at various points in time. They did not resist the “*sarrammar*” but confined themselves into their space and explained they no longer depended on forests to survive.

The experience of forest restriction excluded them from their safe place. The lack of awareness of Makkal of the forest restrictions and policies that impacted them indicates a systemic failure in communicating these regulations and land policies to the community. While they no longer depended on the forests for their needs, these changes have brought about significant changes to their lifestyles, as discussed in the next section.

Change in Subsistence patterns

The Makkal reported that forest restrictions had direct impacts on their ability to forage for food in the forests. Consequently, they felt “*helpless*” as they had to find additional means of income to ensure food security in their homes due to “*no accessibility to forests to obtain edible roots*”, “*decline of their food culture*”, and “*the increase in diseased conditions.*”

The forest restrictions resulted in the gradual erasure of their traditional food habits, which added financial constraints. When they had access to the forests, they often foraged getting the “*edible roots, shoots and wild fruits*” from the forest. Recognising the added financial pressure with organising food due to restrictions, Kunju during the in-depth interview

explained, “... *if there were no restrictions, we could have gone to the forest to find edible roots for feed... that’s not even a possibility now...*”

Due to their restricted access to the forest and its produce, the Makkal relied mostly on subsidised rice and other food that the Government provided⁶⁹ (the forthcoming section discusses the Government’s food security supports). The Makkal reflected on how their change in food culture led to poor health outcomes within their communities. A participant during the koottam emphasised this sentiment by stating,

In the olden days, we used to have less rice or those that are made of rice. We mostly had food from the forest in the form of edible roots, fruits and so on. We were very healthy then. Even our children were very healthy. Even if they have a terrible fall, they never broke their bones. Even though they had lean bodies, they were very strong. Back then, there was no poison in our food.

Therefore, due to being excluded from the forests, the Makkal had to undergo a shift in their food culture, which added financial constraints to them as they had to organise alternative income to ensure food security for their families.

No Land: “to live,” “practice culture”, or “bury dead”

Landlessness was a gradual outcome resulting from forest restrictions, which worsened over time due to the rise in Makkal population within the land allocated by the Government

⁶⁹ Discussed further under the section, Challenge from unjust and inequitable food security system (p.207).

nearly a century ago. This section discusses how forest restrictions promogulated their experiences of Bhūrahita to live, practice their culture, and bury their dead.

Landlessness and congested living situations were common themes throughout the research process. During the koottam, a participant highlighted how these issues had worsened in the last decades by stating, “... *we live in five cents⁷⁰ of land, which also includes the courtyard.*” The Government built two-bedroom houses for the Makkal regardless of the number of persons living in the household. Consequently, except for their ancestral home (called Tharavadu), all the other newly constructed homes by the Government had only two bedrooms.

The participants elaborated on the congested living conditions by stating that they had “*five little children*” in their household. During one of the field visits, Siva indicated, “*There are seven of us living here. We lie down wherever there is room available. He [pointing to another person in his household] sleeps in the kitchen [giggles]...*” Similarly, four out of five in-depth interview participants indicated that their two-bedroom households had more than four family members, including children.

Further explaining the increase in landlessness among Makkal, a participant in the koottam noted, “*Land does not grow in number as we do....*” Unnikkan, a Makkal in his 80s, stated, “... *we still live on this 1-acre land given to our elders by the Government for almost a century now... There are 10 to 20 homes for about 27 to 30 families...*”

⁷⁰ Roughly 162 sq meters.

Makkal also recollected their traditional and cultural practices with a deep sense of loss and despair of due to landlessness. A Makkal participant in the koottam stated, “...now there is no place for us to do all that since we had to build houses there. We do not do it anymore.”

Further explanation of why they could not follow their practices was given by another participant who pointed to the number of people that attended the proceedings when she said,

During any such ceremonies, all of us take part in it equally. Often more than hundreds of people participate in these, including the children. All those who come in contribute in the best way they can, to the person organising this. Those who can bring rice brings it... those who can bring some curry will do that. We then have a ceremony that lasts for 2 to 3 days. One person can't do it... we all contribute to it.

Another participant added,

We have stopped following and organising all the ceremonies and practices. We are aware that even community is fading away eventually. How will our children learn and respect us? Only if they see us following these will they learn about our culture... this isn't happening, and we know we won't last long!

The Makkal voiced their distress in stating that they could clear any space to practice culture when “there are still many desperate to build houses...”.

Similarly, the Makkal participants expressed their frustrations over not having enough land to utilise as burial grounds. A kootam participant stated, “this area also includes our burial grounds....” The Makkal expressed their worries about the fast-exhausting burial grounds. Another participant added, “...there are about 27 families living on this one-acre land... the dead are also buried on the same land. This in itself is against our culture.” They spoke about “feeling defeated” in being forced to follow the patterns of the outsiders. A participant in the

kootam said, “...we do not bury them in boxes [refers to the culture of some other communities] ... we dig and make space... and then we wrap the body in a straw mat and bury them.” Eshane pointed to the photo (see Figure 5.1) showing the burial ground and stated, “This is where we bury our dead. There are no more places left here. We are afraid that we might need to bury one over the other... that’s not our culture.”

Figure 5.1 Photo by Eshane (2020) from the photovoice project



The kootam participants expressed their worry in the context of COVID19 by stating, “I am worried. Look at the diseases these days; it is no way like how they were when we were younger. If many of us die at once, where will we bury our dead? One cannot just throw them in the river!” It was part of their culture to show respect to their dead (or elders). They wrap the dead in a straw mat and bury them under the soil inside the forest.

Chigun, a photovoice participant, reiterated his concerns for exhausting burial grounds (see Figure 5.2).

This is the place where we bury our dead. It is getting exhausted now. We need more places to bury our dead... we need to give them the respect they deserve, and this is our culture, we need to follow it... but we don’t know what to do once it gets completely exhausted... we cannot stop people from dying.

Figure 5.2 Photo by Chigun (2020) from the photovoice project



The Makkal's narratives of landlessness show implications for their living situation and the continuation of their cultural practices. They expressed deep concerns and frustrations over not having enough land to live on or to practice their culture, despite being native to the Wayanadan hills. They also expressed fear that their cultural heritage would eventually be erased due to the lack of opportunities to practice and pass on their knowledge to younger generations. The next section outlines how the Makkal have responded to their situation of landlessness.

“Encroaching the forest” that once belonged to them

The initial response of Makkal towards the pressures from landlessness was to remain silent and cope with the stressors. However, they eventually allied with the Kurichiya to encroach into the forest land. The Makkal stated that although they were involved in the land rights movement with Kurichiya community, they quickly fell back and withdrew from the struggle when the oppositional party deceived them. Recalling the incident that led to their withdrawal from the land struggle movement, Kuttappan (Makkal elder) revealed,

We waited for them to save us from prison...promised to protect... at least for our family's sake... they used us... maybe to win elections... I don't know. We will never trust them again.

Due to the backing of the Communist Party in land advocacy, Makkal communities aligned with the Kurichiya in the land rights movement. However, during the protest, the community members were arrested by the police, leaving them shaken as no political parties intervened on their behalf. This occurrence had a pronounced effect on the Makkal, as their families, including dependent children, awaited their return for sustenance (they were daily-waged workers). Their release occurred a couple of days later, prompting a return to their families, marked by apprehension and a reluctance to engage further in similar endeavours. With time, the Kurichiyar and Makkal encroached again into the forest (approximately 2012). Those who infringed on the forest and built homes had no access to electricity, water connection, or other benefits⁷¹. Yet, they remained there out of desperation.

The Makkal reported that in 2016, the forest department and police officers demolished their homes inside the forest where they had lived for nearly four years. The police threatened to arrest them if they came back. Despite these threats, many individuals once again returned to the encroached land, driven by desperation due to having nowhere else to go and fueled by the hope of a better future for their children. One participant stated, “*we went to the encroached land because we wanted our children to have a good life and not live like us...*” There were also others who went back to live in their congested home environment back in their padi out of fear of imprisonment. Sudhan stated,

⁷¹ Discussed further under the section- Living Conditions (p.199).

...we came back from the encroached lands and did not go back again to protest. Sometimes in the year, we do go back and live in the sheds in the encroached lands. But we are scared.

In summary, the Makkal protested for their land rights only once they had no land to live on. Following eviction from their encroached land, some returned to these lands, living in constant fear of Government eviction, while others returned to the padi. Both situations depict the desperate and compromised living conditions of the Makkal.

Transience

The issue of landlessness and transience were prominent among the Makkal and were reflected by the participants throughout the research process. Nine participants out of 10 indicated “*landlessness*” and “*transience*” as their critical issues. Makkal shifted from one place to another from time to time. Vedhachan noted, “*We go and live inside the forest for around 6 to 7 months... rains... when the monsoon comes, we go back to our Padi and adjust there.*” He explained that the sheds in the encroached lands that were built out of tarpaulins and straw were blown away or destroyed during the downpour. Similarly, another participant during the photovoice further explained why they returned to the padi during certain times of the year. He said,

... during heavy monsoon spells, we come and stay here [refers to the Padi]. The heavy downpour and strong winds... it's very frightening and unsafe to stay inside with only big trees around. Out of fear, most of us come back to stay together in the colony houses with whatever we have.

The Makkal expressed their reluctance to build permanent and stable homes with what they can afford on encroached land due to their fear of eviction. Kali stated during the interview, *“We forcibly attained this land... and we live in fear of being evicted by the Government anytime.”*

The sheds of Makkal were made entirely of tarpaulin sheets drawn on wooden sticks sometimes, made of straw and wood. Due to their transience and the lack of resources to build stable homes, they lived in compromised living conditions. Chandera illustrated this in the following pictures (see Figure 5.3 and 5.4) and by his comment, *“...we live here... When it starts to rain, we come back to the colony... it leaks and gets damaged during monsoons.”*

Figure 5.3 Photo by Chandera (2020) from Photovoice project



Figure 5.4 Photo by Chandera (2020) from Photovoice project



On occasion the non-availability of land to live in the padi meant many encroached on the forest land. However, living in the forest land did not provide them with a stable space to live. The forest restrictions and the fear of eviction at any time meant they lived in fear. Since the Government had already evicted them once, they were frightened to construct proper homes, incurring extra expenses that they could not afford. This meant they moved between the padi and the shed throughout the year with their children.

The precarity of stable living space resulted in various instances of compromised living, especially with children. The encroachment of the forest land was about reclaiming the land taken from them. However, by encroaching on the forest land, the lives of the Makkal did not ease. Due to them not having pattayam⁷² for the encroached land, they could not approach the Government for any benefits, including water connection, electricity, and independent ration cards.

In summary, this section entitled Bhūrahita describes how forest exclusion, as an environmental injustice resulted in the Makkal being landless and other impacts have resulted from it. The lack of understanding about the laws that have confined the Makkal to designated areas, coupled with forest restrictions hindering their access to vital resources, underscores the need for greater engagement and empowerment of the Makkal community in legal matters. The challenges from exclusion, including shifts in subsistence patterns and resulting landlessness, with implications for their cultural identity have created disparate responses including encroachment and transient living situations for the Makkal. Furthermore, these reflections find relevance in recognising and addressing environmental and social injustices faced by Makkal; thereby highlighting the systemic challenges they face in accessing and preserving their

⁷² Pattayam or Patta is a document that serves as a record of the land extent owned by an individual in a specific Village/Taluk, associated with a particular survey number or subdivision.

ancestral lands, which are integral to their identity and well-being. The next finding further sheds light on the living conditions of the Makkal in the encroached land and the padi.

Living Conditions

Over time, with an increase in population, the land where the Makkal live had become congested, compromising their ability to live in a safe, secure, and healthy environment. Under this finding, discussions from participants revolved around their crowded living (discussed under the previous section), access to water resources, a lack of electricity connections, as well as no roadways or access to public transport systems. The photovoice method supported participants to capture photos of their living situation.

“How far to go to get water?”

The Government provided water access to the residents of the Ippimala padi under the Jalanidhi service. However, the Government discontinued the service due to non-payment of taxes. Unikkan stated, *“They have come and turned it [refers to water connection to their padi] off because we did not pay the bills for a couple of months.”* The Government established Jalanidhi⁷³ connected to the padi, but they had discontinued it due to the Makkal not paying

⁷³ Kerala Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency implements Jalanidhi, a World Bank-assisted “Kerala Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project” for sustained delivery of adequate quantity of water and sanitation services in rural areas in four districts of Kerala.

taxes. This meant that the Makkal walked long distances to fetch water for their daily needs (both in padi and forest). A participant during the koottam explained,

There is a panchayat community well, we all draw water from there. It is in a very steep place. Every morning, we wake up and draw from there. It is hard for our women to draw water from it and carry it on their backs. It is very steep.... We draw water from there for washing our dishes, drinking water, water for bathing and other purposes. We carry it from there and then go for work in the morning.

Another participant commented that it was hard for them to collect water if they ran out of it at night. He stated,

The panchayat gave us a well... that's true... but we have no proper ways to get there... we must walk through the other's courtyard to get there. If we need to get some water at night, it becomes a great difficulty.

In the Ippimala community, men took the responsibility to draw water every day for their families due to the risks associated with fetching water from the steep well. Kunjan pointed to the photo from his participation in the photovoice (Figure 5.5) and stated, “*We go to the nearby bunt, get water from there early in the morning and then go to work.*”

Figure 5.5 Photo by Kunjan (2020) from photovoice project



They carried the water to their homes in steel pitcher pots. Similarly, Chembhan reported on their daily struggles to draw water, “*There’s plenty of water available. But we do not get it here [refers to water connection]. So we need to carry it from there up here to our home every day.*” He added, “*To get water, we need to go down this hill [points to the water source] and then come back carrying it.*”

The Makkal felt disrespected by the Government decision to build the common well near the graveyard against the community wishes. The Makkal opposed its construction at the current site since their graveyard was just above the well. A participant during the koottam stated,

The graveyard is on the top [refers to their 1-acre land located on the mountain], and the panchayath well is right below. There are chances for the water in the well to get contaminated with the graveyard on the top.

The water from the well was considered impure due to its proximity to the graveyard; however, they had no choice but to use it.

“Life in Darkness”

To access the electricity facility, the Makkal had to live in legally permitted land and had to have a house number. Hence, most of the households in the padi had electricity connections; however, those in the encroached forestland did not.

The Makkal reported that around five to six households in the colony did not have electricity. Aravi stated, “*None of those houses which were recently constructed has an electric*

connection. So, they must do the wiring.” She also added, “They cook and do everything outside, and they come in and sleep inside at night.”

While this was the condition in the padi, those Makkal who lived in the forestland had no access to electricity. The Makkal did not specifically mention the impacts of being without electricity. Vellukkan pointed to the following photo (Figure 5.6) during the photovoice process and stated,

...we do not have a proper home to live in or water even to drink or electricity or a road to get there. We went there since we had nowhere to live here in our colony. Only if we make a shed and get a house number will we get the electricity.

Figure 5.6 Photo by Vellukkan (2020) from photovoice project



Therefore, the Makkal participants, especially in the encroached lands suffered due to lack of access to the electricity.

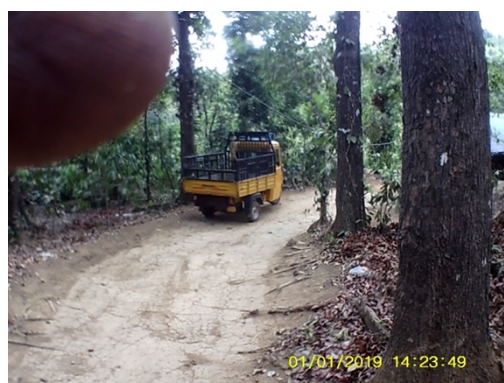
“Walking through pocket roads and forest”

This section outlines the challenges faced by Makkal in not having adequate roads or transport facilities to their padi. It includes how the Government had neglected their padi from providing basic facilities and how these manifested as challenges in their everyday lives.

The Government was constructing the road during the research fieldwork. To the Makkal, this meant they could walk on the road, or if they used private transport (which most of them did not), they could quickly go to the town. They still had to walk three to four kilometers to the nearest bus station. Nine of ten photovoice participants indicated that they considered not having proper roads and public transport services a big daily hassle. Kunjan, a participant who lived in the encroached land, noted that it was still burdensome since they had to further walk inside the forest. He pointed to the photo taken by him (Figure 5.7) and said,

...after this main road, we need to walk through the pocket roads that we made after which we still to walk the long distance to get to the shed (refers to their encroached land) we live inside the forest.

Figure 5.7 Photo by Kunjan from Photovoice project



Vinod also lived in a shed in the forest. He pointed to the photo (Figure 5.8) he took during the photovoice to show the routes they travelled each day in and out of the forest to go

to work. He stated, “...*this path is from the colony to our shed. There is no road; there is only this small pathway inside the forest that we’ve made ourselves.*”

Figure 5.8 Photo by Vinod from photovoice project



Vijayan, another participant, pointed to the photo (Figure 5.9) taken by him and stated, “...*Our home is on the top of this hill; we need to walk this path every day....*”

Figure 5.9 Photo by Vijayan from photovoice project.



Even in an emergency, they were still required to walk this distance carrying the sick person to access public transport services. The children were not exempt; they also had to walk around 30 to 45 minutes daily to get to school. The lack of road infrastructure and public transport facilities isolated them from the outside world meaning they had to find solutions even in times of emergency or to access basic human rights.

In summary, participants highlighted compromised living conditions, including lack of access to water and electricity, and poor road conditions. Interestingly, whether they resided legally in the padi or encroached into forest land, they faced similar challenges. While those in the padi had the option to pay for services such as water and electricity, those in encroached land did not even have the option to have access to basic amenities. Additionally, the poor socioeconomic conditions of the Makkal often prevented them from affording such services, leading to a lack of access to water and electricity regardless of where they lived. The next section delves further into the sociocultural and economic challenges faced by the Makkal community.

Sociocultural and Economic challenges: “Meeting the two ends of lives”

Aligned with the research objective of exploring the social injustices faced by the Makkal community, this finding delves into exploring the sociocultural and economic struggles experienced by the Makkal. It sheds light on their daily lives, highlighting subthemes such as sources of income, unjust food insecurity systems, impacts on basic needs, cultural diminution, alcoholism and betel culture, and community response. These narratives provide insights into the complexities of Makkal’s lived experiences and underscore the need for holistic solutions to address their challenges.

Sources of income

This section details the Makkal's different sources of income. Nearly all the participants in the research engaged in daily waged work. To the Makkal, the precarity of work was associated with stress and uncertainty. If they did not work one day, they would not have money to buy food. Therefore, they detailed that their daily struggles to meet their needs was tied to their income from daily waged work. During the interview, Unnikkan said, *"If we go to work, we earn. If not, we will have no money left for that day. That's how we live...."* Another participant, concerned about their daily expenses from the money they earned, said during the koottam, *"We get 500 rupeya [rupees] per day from work. We buy all that is needed for the day for our household... and have nothing left someday."*

The Makkal also indicated that apart from the daily-waged work, some cultivated plantain or bitter gourd and sometimes coffee in the surrounding land. During the koottam, a participant stated, *"marancheten [refers to a colony resident] ... He has made some forestland into beautiful farmland...."* However, this did not necessarily generate a viable source of income as the cultivated forest farmlands were small-scale and were not always accessible due to forest restrictions.

Only one participant, Sunitha, indicated that she went to high school and secured a job in an Anganwadi⁷⁴; however, she said she *"came back,"* as she felt she *"did not fit there."* Sunitha remained in the padi looking after her children and has not gone to work at Anganwadi

⁷⁴ Anganwadi is a form of free rural childcare center in India, initiated by the Indian government in 1975 under the Integrated Child Development Services program to address issues of child hunger and malnutrition. It provides basic health care, nutrition, pre-school education, and support services for children under six, as well as pregnant and lactating women.

since. Subsequently, Sunitha began engaging in daily-waged work like other community members, where she felt more comfortable. During the interview, she explained, “...*we live with the money from it [refers to daily waged works]. But we also have some bitter gourd garden.*”

As noted, the Makkal depended on their ability to find daily work to sustain their household. Some of the participants had vegetable gardens; however, they did not generate viable income from those cultivated in the forest land since the Makkal could not easily access it. The additional financial constraints impacted them as they struggled to maintain their families. Even when they secured other jobs (as in Sunitha’s experience), they found it challenging to stay in those roles as they often felt that they did not fit. The following section describes further challenges limiting their income.

Challenge from unjust and inequitable food security system

Building on the previous section’s discussion of the Makkal’s reliance on forest resources for food and their subsequent adaptation to alternative livelihoods due to forest restrictions, this part delves into their experiences with Government food security welfare systems. Despite turning to these systems for monthly rations to ensure food security, the Makkal found them to be unjust and inequitable.

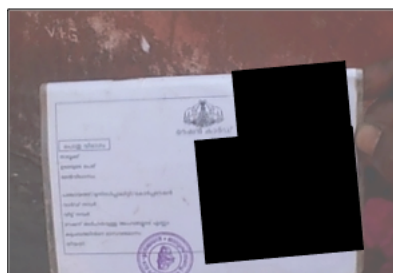
The Makkal participants expressed their frustrations stating that despite qualifying for Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards⁷⁵ for receiving ration, the Makkal explained that the Government provided them with Above Poverty Line (APL) instead. Highlighting the unfairness with this approach, a participant during the koottam noted, *“Last year, the Government issued all of us a new ration card, the white card [refers to APL card]. So now many of us get only 2 kg rice per month.”* Another participant added, *“They told us the cards were renewed for all, including us... and they gave us this white card.”* The APL card (white colour) provided 2 kg rice as a food subsidy, while the BPL card (pink colour) offered 30 kg rice.

The participants voiced discontent regarding the Government’s failure to issue BPL cards to the Makkal despite repeated requests. Consequently, even after a six-month period following the issuance of the APL cards, the Makkal continued to possess APL cards. During the interview, Bindu indicated how the Government neglected their requests for BPL cards. She stated, *“...we were initially issued an APL card, and to get it changed into BPL card, and we went there several times, do you know?”* Bindu added, *“...even now, many are left with the APL cards”* Santha, a participant in the photovoice process, took a photo of her APL card (see Figure 5.10) to show how the Government had not replaced her card. She stated,

⁷⁵ To ensure food security, the Government classifies people as Above Poverty Line (APL) or Below Poverty Line (BPL) based on income. APL cardholders receive 2 kg of rice, while BPL cardholders receive 30 kg per month. However, the Makkal were mistakenly classified as APL, with some Kurichiya also initially classified as APL, but they successfully had their status corrected. Many Makkal, however, still hold APL cards, limiting them to only 2 kg of rice per month.

Using this card, we only get 2 kg rice... 2 kg rice... sometimes 5 kg rice... this is how we get subsidies every month. We now must buy from outside with whatever money that we earn. We want to have a BPL card instead.

Figure 5.10 Photo by Santha from the photovoice project



In another instance, a participant of the koottam said, “...in a household where we have four to five little children, how will we survive with 2 kg rice for a month? So we buy from outside.”

Many families continued to have APL cards which further added financial constraints. Even those with the BPL cards struggled to feed their families and felt the food subsidy was insufficient. Balu stated, “We get 30 kg of rice per month through ration. It is often not enough for us, and we buy from the market paying huge money.” Similarly, during the koottam, a participant stated, “... the 30-kilo rice that we get cannot feed a family of five or six children and adults for a month. We could have easily gone into the forest to grab some wild roots to eat in the past.”⁷⁶ As a result of the forest restrictions and the availability of subsidised rice, rice became the staple food for the Makkal. They typically had rice meals, in the evening and relied on leftovers from dinner for breakfast, often skipping lunch altogether.

⁷⁶ Impact of forest restriction, discussed under the section, Bhūrahita (p.188).

Since most Makkal undertook daily waged work, they did not understand why the Government classed them as APL. During the in-depth interview, Balu stated, “*Many others here have a white ration card [Above Poverty Line card]. It’s still not sorted by the officials... how can we [refers to Makkal in the collective] be above the poverty line?*” The Makkal believed that being classed as APL exerted an additional financial burden on them since they had to buy from shops at standard rates including vegetables and other household items they must buy for their daily needs.

The Makkal regarded substituting APL cards for BPL cards as a challenge exacerbating their economic constraints. They also perceived a systemic disregard for their needs, as evidenced by their numerous unaddressed requests. While the Makkal grappled with earning sufficient income to sustain their families, the next section delves into the impacts on their health and educational needs, which often incurred additional expenses.

Impacts on health and educational needs

The Makkal faced financial constraints due to their limited income, exacerbated by Government oversight in providing adequate subsidies for meeting their basic needs. As a result, they encountered difficulties in meeting other basic needs such as healthcare, education, and access to basic resources.

Unnikkan (an elder) indicated that he struggled to get medicines for his health condition, which incurred extra costs. He referred to the uncertain income situation and said, “*it is tough if I have to get my medicines for my health condition.*” For many others, their geographic isolation and infrastructural constraints resulted in them not seeking medical attention, sometimes even when required. Another participant referred to the long-distance and

lack of transport availability at times of medical emergency and stated, “... *to take a sick person to the hospital from here is difficult.*” The Makkal had contact numbers of rickshaw drivers; when they were in dire need, they would ring them to go to the hospital, but the Makkal rarely used the rickshaws because it was costly.

Another socio-economic constraint was meeting the educational needs of their children. During the koottam, a participant referred to his financial struggles in keeping his children at school and stated,

The schools require our children to wear uniforms on all five days. When they come back, they sometimes have no other clothes to change to... the parents get drained of money by just buying the uniform, and our children have nothing other than the uniform to wear at home.

Another participant agreed adding,

It is so expensive to be at school. They give us two pairs of uniform clothes. We must make money to get it stitched. It is so expensive to get it stitched. When there are four to five children in a household, we must buy and stitch uniforms for all of them, right? In the end, we will have no additional money and ask them to wear it at home. This time to stitch two pairs of uniform, I had to spend around 1200 rupia.

These challenges persisted while they were already battling the high school dropout rates of the children from their community. A participant during the koottam raised concerns of how their “...*children are far less educated when compared to the others.*” Makkal participants also expressed distress over their children not progressing like others at school. Chembhan, during the interview, said, “*Our children are studying, but we are not sure how far they will study or will they be changing their mind. We have children studying in eighth and*

nineth grade.” While no one was able to provide an answer as to why there were school dropouts, Unnikkan, a Makkal in his 80s, recollected why he dropped out of school,

I have not gone to school. In my time, when we see outsiders, we run and hide inside the forest. When we even see a group of three to four people, we immediately go into the forest in the olden days. That was how it was back then, however, now things have changed.

He added,

... back then; we feared people from outside. The school was approximately 30-45 mins away from our place... we had to walk through the forest to get there. It was after we grew up that the high schools were established. We all were scared, and we used to run to the forest. Our parents were scared and did not let us go...

These concerns highlighted the Makkal’s fear that their children may be deprived of educational opportunities, perpetuating a cycle of adversity. Their financial constraints intensified these difficulties, leaving them feeling powerless and unable to prioritise addressing the high school dropout rate.

The Makkal faced daily struggles to ensure good health and education due to the associated costs. These difficulties underscore the need for policies and interventions aimed at addressing health and educational disparities among Makkal communities.

Cultural diminution

Earlier in the chapter⁷⁷ it was discussed how landlessness contributed to a loss of culture due to not having enough land to practice their culture. This section continues this discussion by reflecting on the Makkal's struggles in preserving their traditions and cultural practices amidst challenges posed by limited human and financial resources. Sunitha, a participant during the in-depth interview illustrated this, "*To bring it [refers to culture] back, we need to have someone who knows about it in our community. Only then we can get it back.*" She added,

No, it is not possible for people to simply teach it to others. Everyone can't see or feel God. It is being inherited over generations. That one person will be very knowledgeable on all the matters. There will be that one person who will be capable of doing it. It is present among all the Adivasi communities... however, our Godman died, and now, for all spiritual practices, we must ask someone from our community from a different place to come in. It is expensive, and hence we do not do it often...

The Makkal felt helpless witnessing the erosion of their age-old practices. Unnikkan, bore this out when he said,

Back in the olden days, there was a strong Moopan who was able to guide us and do all the practices... Now, we neither have that nor do our children have any will to learn it. Even if they want to learn, they cannot as we do not know anything about it. Nobody has taught us about it. Nobody is there to teach us about it too... there's no use of it

⁷⁷ In the section, No Land: 'to live', 'practice culture', or 'bury dead' (p.190).

now. There is no point in teaching us about it now... we cannot learn it... I don't know....

However, they maintained some of these practices by depending on other Makkal communities. Unnikkan added, *“To do it [refers to one of their cultural practices], we need to hire someone from outside to perform their practice. If we learn from someone who performs this, God will enter our body too.”*

With the additional financial burden on the community with hiring someone from outside to perform their cultural rituals two to three times a year, the Makkal expressed their “fear” and “helplessness” about losing their cultural roots forever.

Alcoholism and betel culture

There was a high prevalence of alcohol use and betel quid⁷⁸ among the Makkal. Unnikkan, during the in-depth interview, stated how they tried to make more money to “buy some beedes.” Despite facing numerous challenges stemming from limited income, habitual alcohol consumption remained widespread among the Makkal. While various factors likely influence their drinking habits and betel use, this study did not explore them extensively. However, it is acknowledged that these behaviours may stem from the consequences of their circumstances.

⁷⁸ Betel leaves are used as a stimulant, an antiseptic, and a breath-freshener, whereas areca nut was considered as aphrodisiac. Chewing betel quid has been shown not only to be a risk factor for cancers of the oral cavity and pharynx, as well as oral potentially malignant disorders (OPMD), but also to contribute to the development of other cancers and adverse health effects (Chen, Mahmood, Mariottini, Chiang, & Lee, 2017).

Community response to socio-economic circumstances

At times, the Makkal community found themselves in a situation where they had to borrow money from others to meet their expenses, thereby accumulating debt. Shobhana said, *“We are all indebted! We have borrowed money from others and have a lot of it to repay.”* However, they did not have accounts or debts or loans in the banks. Some indicated they have *“no banks debts,”* especially since they did not go to the bank. Unnikkan, during the in-depth interview, explained, *“...we hardly go to the bank to get a loan as its hard for us to repay. Nobody has a loan and all. The 10 to 13 family units [houses] have no loan or debt.”* Most of them saw this as a good thing by keeping themselves away from banks. Some individuals even expressed that they would prefer to skip meals and retire to bed early instead of resorting to borrowing from banks when faced with financial difficulties.

Without sufficient income, they lapsed in the payment of taxes, resulting in the Government withdrawing the Jalanidhi water service to the padi, highlighting systemic issues of economic disparity and inadequate Government support.

In summarising the above findings under sociocultural and economic challenges, it is evident that the Makkal’s livelihood primarily relied on daily-wage labour. Although one participant mentioned leaving an Anganwadi job due to not feeling like she fitted in, further exploration into this aspect is limited⁷⁹. The precarity linked to their ability to find a job each day had a ripple effect on their other aspects of life. Added to these are the challenges they

⁷⁹ This line of analysis is relevant as it may offer insights into why the Makkal community tends to avoid pursuing education or employment outside their communities. However, delving deeper into this exploration is beyond the scope of the current study.

faced systemic negligence in the issue of APL cards to them instead of BPL. Moreover, due to the ongoing struggles to meet their family's daily needs for food, the Makkal often struggled to afford the health and educational needs within their families. The Makkal also noted that they found it harder to practice cultural rituals important to their community due to having to hire someone from outside the community. The hidden costs of habitual drinking added additional expenses. Some resorted to borrowing money to manage their financial burdens, while others opted to sacrifice their own necessities to avoid borrowing. These reflections shed light on the sociocultural and economic challenges confronting the Makkal community, prompting questions about the systemic supports for livelihood rehabilitation programs for Makkal to transition away from historical patterns of enslavement and assist them in adapting to new ways of living amidst forest restrictions. The subsequent section delves into the Makkal's perspectives on enduring neglect and ostracism from the Government and outsider communities, and the resultant impacts on their lives.

Enduring Neglect and Ostracism: Makkal Perspectives

The preceding findings have elucidated the Makkal's encounters with injustices and violations, questioning the adequacy of the State's duty of care towards them. Within this overarching theme, the systemic neglect endured by the Makkal and its ramifications on their daily existence emerged as a pivotal aspect of their narratives. Their experiences of neglect and ostracism were evidenced through terms such as "*Government ignorance*," "*unfulfilled*

promises,” “*subjugation,*” “*assimilation,*” and “*restrictions.*” These experiences are further discussed in the subsequent sections.

Government Blindness

The Makkal expressed a sense of their needs being consistently overlooked by the Government. Despite having communicated their needs to Government officials’ numerous times, they often found themselves disappointed. During the koottam, a participant elaborated by stating,

Even if we borrow money [for travel and other purposes to go to the town to meet the Government officers] to meet them to address some of our pressing needs, it is not addressed immediately. We must go there several times to have our requests to be considered at the least. We must go and fall at their feet each time, even then they come, if or when they come. We are living amidst a lot of hassles.

Vinod, during the photovoice session, highlighted their predicament of living without electricity for nearly eight years, remarking, “...we have told them of all these issues that we were facing. They do not even consider it.” Additionally, Shobana, during the in-depth interview, recounted,

...the back portion of our house was damaged completely in the last monsoon. We applied to the Government twice to have this reconstructed for us, but we haven’t received any response. When they come during the election campaign, they give us false hopes into making this and that, however after elections, none of them return to us ever.

The Makkal felt that they were not valued by the Government, except during elections when politicians sought their votes. They expressed frustration at politicians' tactics of making promises during election campaigns but failing to follow through afterward. A koottam participant shared, *"When the party members come asking for votes, they make various offers to us saying they will rectify everything. But, after elections, nothing happens."*

After the elections, the Makkal reported that politicians disappeared, only to return five years later, closer to the next election. Another participant noted during the meeting,

...they do not do it for us... after elections when we go, they say come tomorrow.... Day after tomorrow, and finally nothing is done at all.

The participants highlighted the need for political leaders to come and visit them and possibly even live in their ooru so that they understand their plight. A koottam participant said,

The leaders and ministers should come to us to understand the problems faced by the Adivasi. They come and stay in expensive hotels. We think they pay some random person to disguise Adivasi and give false information to everyone about us. To understand our problems, they should come here and talk to us. They've never come here.

Another participant referred to the false advertisements the political parties used during the elections to state, *"The truth is what we are telling you. It is not what you see outside."*

The participant narratives highlight their experiences of Government neglect despite actively communicating their needs. This consistent pattern of neglect created frustration and mistrust towards the Government, which the Makkal perceived meant they were viewed solely as vote-banks without politicians then fulfilling promised commitments. The next section

delves into the discrepancies identified by the participants between what they need and what the Government offered them.

“What is needed?” Versus “What is provided?”

The Makkal expressed dissatisfaction with the Government, asserting that successive administrations failed to address their needs. Instead, they believed that the Government’s priorities revolved around gaining publicity and creating a false image of being supportive of Jana to the wider society. A Makkal *kootam* participant reported, *“No Governments till now have offered any genuine support, all they have done was to get fame and for their benefit. They were exploiting us.”*

While another added,

The party people often do many PR activities stating when their party was elected; they build houses for everyone. But see? What we need and what they have given are different stories. Shouldn’t they make sure the money they’ve spent is doing us any good? We are often used as scapegoats to achieve their political interests.

The participants’ sentiments resonated with the rhetoric of political representatives, which often set expectations for the Jana community to conform to the Government’s vision rather than addressing their needs according to the wishes of the people.

Contrary to the Government’s expectation, many Makkal preferred to live in traditionally constructed homes, which they were unable to build due to forest restrictions. As mentioned earlier, the padi had mostly Government made concrete houses. The following

excerpt from the researcher's field notes illustrates the failure of the Government to recognise the needs of the people:

Walking through the most forested area that was electric fenced [to prevent wild elephant attacks] during the field visit, we saw Janu, an elderly woman [probably in her 70s] who was walking up the hill to her house carrying firewood on her head. She asked us to walk with her to her home. She took us to a well-constructed, single storey, concrete building. The building was glazed with new glass designs in the windows. She proudly showed us her newly constructed home. Janu told us that this house was made for them by the Government and that almost everyone in the Kuruvadweep had similar dwellings.

She welcomed us in and showed us around the house. The rooms contained agricultural produce and seeds for the next season. I asked her where she and her family slept, and she replied, 'We sleep outside, it is so nice and cool outside... we cannot sleep here... we could die of heat [laughs]. So, most at times, we sleep here on the verandah to escape the aggressive elephants.' Janu told me that they used to have their houses built of straw, mud, and wood; however, they were taken down to make these houses. 'We could no longer enter the forests to get wood to make our own home, we had no other go... it used to be nice and cool inside there, and we didn't have to sleep outside', added Janu, recollecting her memories on this.

I also asked her why she was collecting firewood as she must've had a new gasoline connection to cook food. Janu laughed and said, 'we cannot cook food with that... we have put it inside one of the rooms inside this house. So, we cook outside using firewood. Our food tastes so different and better when using the firewood.' She added that the forest officers permit them to collect the firewood but not anything else.

The above example paints a picture of how the Government's aspirations did not tally with the people's aspirations, resulting in the squandering of resources and the gradual eroding of their traditional ways of life.

Outsiders and Support organisations

When asked if any other organisations were involved in supporting them, one of the participants said during the field visits,

The church... they offered us work. They put a chain with a cross [a rosary] around our necks and asked us to be like them if we wanted more support. Some stayed... it was for hunger. I was scared; I came back here... that's not our way. We never went back again....

Another participant said, "...yes... they came back with a cross around their necks. Our gods will never forgive us if we did this. It's not us..." To the Jana, this was not the only attitude of the support groups, agencies, and organisations but the vantage point of most non-Jana and the Government.

The Makkal felt that the Government and the outsiders did not look after the forests properly. Makkal expressed their frustrations over the Government excluding them from the forests and having outsiders look after them. As Karuppan stated, "... we have never seen forests differently... it's a part of us..." Similarly, another kootam participant expressed,

... they [referring to outsiders] have looted the forest, and now even our water levels have gone down. When I was younger, it was hard for us to cross the river because of the water level. But now, look at our river!

He also added,

Even after being impacted the most with the wrongdoings of the outsiders, we still live like slaves of others... we work for them... sometimes it feels like we born to do this...

The Makkal felt the Government was punishing them for the malpractice and corruption of the outsiders through exclusion. Instead of the Government recognising their connection to forests, they felt the Government further excluded them, which impacted them in many ways. Unnikkan, during the in-depth interview, also added,

We Adivasi live in the forests. We do not cut down the trees or destroy the forests. If we cut down forests, we will not get any more edible roots or firewood. In the olden days, we used to go inside the forests to play; however, nothing of that sort is possible these days.

During the meeting, the participants expressed their despair about how they thought they paid the price for what the others did inside the forest because they lived in proximity. A koottam participant stated, “*Even after us being impacted the most with the wrongdoings of the outsiders, we have to live like this [referring to the state of being restricted to forests].*”

In summary, this section encapsulates the Makkal’s reflections of systemic neglect despite actively communicating their needs and the ostracism they faced from support groups and outsiders. This neglect bred frustration and mistrust towards the Government, which was seen as viewing them solely as vote-banks without fulfilling promised commitments. This discrepancy between Governmental aspirations and the needs of the people results in the squandering of resources and the gradual erosion of their traditional ways of life. Additionally, the Makkal’s experiences of ostracism from support groups and communities could potentially exacerbate their feelings of isolation and disconnection from others, impacting their self-

esteem and sense of belonging. This underscores the imperative for greater understanding and inclusion of the Makkal within broader social and educational frameworks, emphasising the need for social work engagement with the community.

Picturing Tomorrow

This section synthesises Makkal reflections from the findings discussed above to highlight how they envision their future amidst experiencing various injustices and neglect. This aligns with the aim of the study to develop a model for Jana development based on these insights by analysing how they self-determine their needs, their response to struggles, and how they articulate future needs and aspirations.

Expression of Critical Consciousness

Amidst the recollection of injustices and neglect faced by Makkal, the need to assert their rights surfaced sporadically, reflecting their emerging critical consciousness. Some participants argued that they should no longer allow the Government and others to treat them unfairly and advocated for collective action to fiercely fight against it. A koottam participant emphasised this point by stating, “...*only if we Adivasi stay together, and the fight will the political parties and others consider us.*”

The participants felt enraged and resentful with the recollection of their lives inflicted with injustices and negligence. A participant asserted the right of Makkal on their forest land during the koottam; he stated, “...*do we even have land to live in? We need it... we have rights*

over it... it is our land.” Another participant echoed this sentiment, discussing the importance of raising their voices to ensure a peaceful future for their children.

Many participants felt the contradiction of being Jana, the original inhabitants of the land, yet they were unable to access to their ancestral land. A koottam participant emphasised this sentiment, *“Adivasi itself means those who came to this land first. This is our land, and we should not be frightened of anyone to talk out about our worries and problems.”*

The participants spoke about the importance of fighting for a secure future for their children. Reflecting this determination, a participant stated, *“Everyone here in this land will get frightened if we, the Adivasi, come together as one. So let us come together and fight. We want our children to learn and respect our culture too.”*

Thus, through the Makkal’s recounting of experiences of negligence and disregard by the Government and outsiders, the research process triggered an awakening of critical consciousness among the Makkal community. However, their actual responses to these circumstances were more about complying with these injustices instead of asserting their rights which are discussed in the next section.

Response to Struggle

As is echoed throughout the findings, the common responses of the Makkal towards the contemporary challenges included *“hopelessness”*, *“encroachment”*, *“fear”*, and *“acceptance of injustice”*, implying a complex blend of resilience, pragmatism, and resignation. They conveyed their hopelessness by stating that enduring various challenges was more manageable than expressing their concerns, which they felt the Government consistently disregarded. Many

participants described “*encroachment*” as a common response to landlessness, with some stating that occupying forest land is the only way for Jana to secure land. Despite the risks involved, they saw it as a necessary step to address their housing needs. However, their experiences of trauma from past evictions from encroached lands had instilled a sense of fear and helplessness. Despite these challenges, the Makkal had learned to adapt and make do with their compromised living conditions and cultural loss but still held genuine worries for the future of their children. The acceptance of injustice and the adaptations suggest a gradual assimilation into their circumstances, driven by necessity rather than choice. This highlights the urgent need for systemic change to address the root causes of their marginalisation and ensure their rights and well-being are upheld. The final section under this theme sheds light into the self-determined views of Makkal community to foster community development, aligning with the research objective of identifying a community-led action plan for their welfare.

Future hopes and aspiration

As widely reflected in the findings, Makkal’s future aspirations and hopes included sentiments such as “*no hope*”, “*better living conditions*,” “*reviving culture practices*,” and “*children’s future*.” Despite experiencing systemic neglect and feeling hopeless about receiving support, the Makkal participants expressed aspirations for better outcomes for themselves and their children to break the cycle of poverty. During the in-depth interviews, Shobhana stated, “*I want my children to get educated and not live like us*.” Another interview participant added, “*I don’t want them to live and die like us... that is my only hope and concern for our future*.” Their hopes centered on educating their children to ensure they had better opportunities than themselves. They desired access to basic amenities such as water and

housing, with a focus on securing land for their future. A collective vision that resonated throughout the sharing was to have land to live on. A koottam participant stated, *“If they give that [refers to encroached land] to us, we will have no further issues... all our issues will be settled for good.”* They strongly aspired for the Government to see their adverse living conditions and not the act of encroachment. These reflections summarised the aspirations expressed by the Makkal across the preceding findings.

The Makkal provided insights into fostering sustainable communities by recommending that the Government enact livelihood rehabilitation measures and offer support for sustainable livelihoods. For instance, Unnikkan, during the in-depth interview, referred to support with farming by stating, *“If they give goats... or hen... to farm.... It’s just my thought... We don’t want cow....”* They believed that offering more sustainable livelihood support would help them transition away from daily waged labour meaning they could achieve more stable livelihoods.

Another important measure Makkal spoke about was the need for the Government to act on their needs and encourage development that aligned with their needs, highlighting the importance of inclusive governance and decision-making processes. A koottam participant stated, *“...we should gradually develop in our way. Adivasi have always been ignored in the development process.”* However, the Makkal claimed that the Government did not involve them in the decision making or review process to understand their needs. During the field visit, a resident commented that, *“... we are not permitted in any of these decision-making processes.”*

Despite expressing their aspirations for the future, their hopes were overshadowed by their sense of helplessness. Many Makkal had lowered their expectations from the Government to protect them; instead, all they wanted was not to have their rights violated. For example,

during the in-depth interview, Shobhana stated, “...*we just don't want to be harmed... we just want to live and die like this.*” As much as they wished to change their situation to lead a good life, it was evident that the Makkal has lost their faith in the power structures that should have taken care of them.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presented the research findings from the Makkal community which explored the alignment of Makkal voices with the research aims and objectives. As a result, the above findings and the sections analysed the self-determined views of Makkal's experiences of injustices, their vision for the future, their worldviews that inform sustainability, and their proposition of support needed to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes.

The main findings reflect constructions of self, Bhūrahita, compromised living conditions, sociocultural and economic challenges, enduring neglect and ostracism, and picturing tomorrow. The reflections highlight the Makkal community's profound attachment to the Wayanadan hills, which remains fundamental to their identity, despite their fragmented sense of self resulting from historical colonial experiences. These reflections frame their experiences of environmental injustice within this research context, tracing them back to the progressive forest restrictions and confinement to fixed land, which contradict their sense of belonging and land ownership patterns. They articulated how these experiences promogulated their sociocultural and economic challenges, leading to cultural loss and compromised living circumstances, highlighting the resultant social injustices. These findings are relevant in recognising and addressing environmental and social injustices faced by Makkal; thereby

highlighting the importance of Makkal having access to their traditional lands, which are integral to their identity and well-being.

Furthermore, the subsequent findings present Makkal's experiences of systemic neglect and ostracism from support groups and communities, highlighting how these attitudes could potentially exacerbate their feelings of isolation and disconnection from others, impacting their self-esteem and sense of belonging. This underscores the imperative for greater understanding and inclusion of the Makkal within broader social and support frameworks, emphasising the need for social work engagement with the community. Moreover, a noticeable pattern emerges, demonstrating the resilience of the Makkal community in articulating their perspectives and aspirations despite the challenges they face, although with an underlying sense of hopelessness. In essence, the preceding chapter delves into the first three research questions posed to the Makkal community. It provides insights into the overall aim of framing their self-determined views for their welfare.

In the discussion chapter⁸⁰, a more in-depth exploration of these findings using green social work theory is undertaken to explore the underlying dynamics, implications, and potential avenues for addressing the multifaceted issues underscored in the results. Furthermore, by analysing Jana's self-determined views, the discussion chapter also considers how social workers can support and create spaces for Jana to achieve Jana's welfare. The next chapter presents the findings for Kurichiya community.

⁸⁰ Chapter seven- Discussion (p.294).

Chapter Six

Battling Life of Injustices: The Warriors or Kurichiyar

“We will never stop fighting; this struggle is for our ancestors and our children.”

- Kurichiya Man (2020)

This chapter presents the research findings of the Kurichiyar (or the warrior clan) community. The Kurichiyar self-determined reflections on the social, environmental, and human rights violations and acceptance of injustices are explored across the chapter. The chapter also links the traditional knowledge and worldviews of the Kurichiyar with the objectives of global sustainability and community well-being. By doing so, this research adds valuable insights to the discourse on the sustainable restoration of traditional land ownership for the Kurichiyar, offering a potential remedy to enhance their living conditions and address contemporary global environmental challenges. The following findings navigate through the sharing of Kurichiya experiences in relation to the research aims and objectives.

Findings

The Kurichiya were vocal and found it easier than the Makkal to communicate verbally during the research. Common findings that emerged from the data collection included: our past, our pride; vicchēdanam- colonisation and exclusion from forests; impacts of exclusion from

their abode; self-sustenance- socio-economic situation; living conditions; hegemony- government approaches and outsiders' influence; unsustainable initiatives- disconnection that led to destruction; and future hopes and aspirations.

Our Past, Our Pride

This section encompasses the Kurichiya reflections on their history and heritage, emphasising their profound connection to self and land. These views lay the foundation for subsequent discussions on the relevance of addressing Kurichiya issues concerning their land. The following three parts explores the Kurichiya perspectives on their history as warriors, their advocacy for land rights with the inception of colonisation, and their construct of self.

Warriors settled in Wayanad

The Kurichiya community expressed great pride and connection to their cultural heritage and ancestry, identifying themselves as “*fierce warriors*” who migrated to Wayanad from the Kottayam archery, as detailed in the literature presented in Chapter One. Accounts from Kurichiya participants, shared during koottam, photovoice gatherings, and in-depth interviews, highlighted their rich oral tradition, including ballads that narrated their roles as warriors in ancient kingdoms. In one such account during a koottam, Kungan stated, “*Back then [refers to the time before British colonisation], the King ruled the land. We used to be the generals and soldiers under Kottayam rajavamsham [dynasty].*” He added how his ancestors

were involved in enforcing law and order in the community by stating, *“We were responsible for disciplining the troublemakers of the community and taming the wild animals.”*

The Kurichiya mentioned that the Raja, before the British colonisation, *“invited”* them to Wayanad from the Kottayam region to bring it under their control. While some stated that the Raja wanted to bring the Wayanad region under Raja’s control by killing all the *“fierce animals”*, others added that they were also asked to kill the *“vicious people”* who inhabited the forest for Raja to enter the forests freely. They marched to Wayanad in a large group from Kottayam. On the way, some remained in the hills to rest while the rest marched further to accomplish their mission. Those who remained in the hills became known as Kunnu Kurichiyar, while those who marched forward were called Villu Kurichiyar. During the in-depth interview, Manjesh explained,

When the King’s daughter came looking for us, she saw us [their group] resting with the bow and arrow on our chest. So she told the King to take our group [Villu Kurichiyar] further, and the others resting by the Kunnu [hill] without bow and arrow were asked to leave.

After Villu Kurichiyar cleared the Wayanadan hills of all the threats, the Kottayam Raja honoured them by offering the Wayanad region as a place to live. A koottam participant stated, *“After we completed our mission, they did not send us back. In return to our valour, the Raja offered us the Wayanad region.”* The Kurichiyar reported that the Raja named them *“Kurichiya”*, which means the one with the aim, due to their exceptional archery skills and expertise in guerilla warfare tactics.

This history underlines the Kurichiya belief in their rightful possession of the Wayanad region, grounded in their perceived virtues of *“archery skills,” “honesty,” “discipline,”* and *“bravery,”* predating British colonisation. The following section highlights their active

involvement in battles against the British East India Company from the inception of colonisation, marking a significant chapter in Indian history.

Kurichiya advocacy for land rights amid British colonisations

The Kurichiyar recounted anecdotes of bravery, highlighting their active participation in leading and organising fierce battles against the British colonisers alongside Pazhashi raja, showcasing their distinctive guerilla warfare techniques and archery skills.

Edachena Kungan and Thalakkal Chanthu led the Kurichiyar rebellion⁸¹ with Pazhashi raja when the British waged war against the Kottayam rajavamsham (Kottayam kingdom). During these significant episodes, the Kurichiya safeguarded Kerala Varma Pazhashi Raja from the British, providing refuge in the forest during the conflict.

The participants stated that for a long time, “*the British could not enter the dense tropical forests,*” nor could they beat the “*guerilla warfare and archery skills*” of the Kurichiya. However, facing difficulty in overcoming these obstacles, the British resorted to “*treachery,*” resulting in the demise of Kurichiya leaders, Kungan and Chanthu. Subsequently, with the death of Pazhashi raja and the Kurichiya leaders, the Kurichiya reported that their community gradually succumbed to the colonial powers. During the in-depth interview, Vella, a Kurichiya elder, stated,

⁸¹ After the death of Pazhashi in 1805, the British put Kurichiya through miseries including slavery, land-grabbing, and imposition of heavy taxes. Kurichiya rebellion (1812) was led by the Kurichiya and Kuruma of Wayanad region. The rebellion was against the imposition of heavy taxes by the British, compulsion of paying the taxes in cash, and seizing of agricultural land as a consequence of non-payment of taxes.

...after our Pazhashi Raja died... after our leaders Thalakkal Chanthu and Aaranyam Kungan died... there was nobody to lead or look after us. It was during this time that the Britishers came in and dominated us gradually. Since then, all our system went horribly bad.

Until British colonisation the Kurichiya had exercised reasonable control over the forests. These stories offered by participants emphasise the Kurichiya's pride as warriors who engaged in relentless battles against the British. Preceding this, their loyalty to the King's orders earned them the gift of the land of Wayanad. It is evident that before British colonisation, that the Kurichiya community had retained significant control over the forests, reinforcing their profound connection to their land and subsequent land struggles that persist even today (as detailed in Chapter One).

Sense of Self

The stories of Kurichiya valour, bravery, and pride reverberated throughout the research from both participating Kurichiya villages. They viewed themselves as “*hardworking*,” “*truthful*,” and “*blessed by ancestors*.” Their contribution to the Indian history of independence and their position as “*protectors of the forest*” reverberated in their construct of self. Despite their current situation, there was a prevailing sense of pride which they strongly connected to their community and land.

This section and its three segments have highlighted how the Kurichiya firmly adhered to their Wayanad land and ancestral heritage, marked by a deep sense of pride. This construction of self was also manifested in their present-day identity, as evident in their commitment to preserving traditional practices and passing them down to younger generations.

The Kurichiya narrative stands as a testament to their resilience, cultural pride, and enduring connection to a storied past that continues to shape their sense of self. The following section discusses how colonisation led to the separation of Kurichiya from their abode, the forests.

Vicchēdanam⁸²: Colonisation and Exclusion from Forests

The exclusion of Kurichiya communities from the Wayanadan hills, their ancestral home and abode of their cultural identity, is a complex issue with historical roots in colonisation. This section, entitled Vicchēdanam, details the Kurichiya recollection of the events that systematically and forcibly excluded them from the forests. This is pertinent for understanding the environmental and social injustices faced by the Kurichiya, aligning with the study's objectives. The following parts encompass instances of hegemony under Naduvazhi and British, migrant influx, and forest policies.

Life under Naduvazhi and British

The Kurichiya shared stories of rebelling against the British colonial policies, notably protesting “*land taxes*” and “*land-grabbing*”. Despite their resistance, they succumbed to

⁸² Refers to separation or forced removed, specifically in the context of exclusion from land.

colonisation, with many community members losing their lives during their struggle for autonomy.

Under British colonisation and the Naduvazhi system, the Kurichiya gradually transitioned into agricultural servitude, effectively becoming enslaved in their own land. Siddharthan, during the in-depth interview, stated, “...*the Kurichiyar were under the Naduvazhi. We had to work for these people... like slaves.*” Recollecting stories passed through oral tradition, a koottam participant said,

We have heard our forefathers recounting how the Naduvazhi instructed us to cultivate ragi on various hills by clearing the forests. So, if cultivated ragi on one hill this year, we had to move to a different hill the following year.

Similarly, Siddharthan, during the in-depth interview, stated, “*If we cultivate paddy or plantain, we were required to give the best to the Naduvazhi. Eventually they gave us land. They gave us land and permitted us to build our Tharavadu here.*”

Another koottam participant added, “*Before giving us land, they tell us we must do all the works there.*” The Kurichiya also reported that the Naduvazhi treated them as slaves by making them hunt from the forest saying, “*...we had to hunt for the Naduvazhi for the Thula pathu festival. That was slavery....*”

Under British colonisation, the Kurichiya transitioned from being archery generals for the monarch to becoming agricultural slaves of the Naduvazhi. This transition rendered them refugees in their own land, compelling them to live a precarious life by appeasing both the Naduvazhi and the British authorities for survival. This transition also marked the beginning of their experiences with environmental injustice.

Migration Influx

In addition to the challenges presented by the Naduvazhi and British colonisers, the colonial period also witnessed the onset of internal migration with the construction of roads for forest access.

Following colonisation, the British sought to identify routes to the dense forests for resource extraction. The construction of roads increased the influx of migrants from different parts of Wayanad seeking farming opportunities. A koottam participant explained, *“After the Britishers ruled Wayanad, they started displacing us and slowly making the roads, eventually, the different communities started coming and taking away our land.”*

Siddharthan, during the in-depth interview, remarked how the migrants seized their traditional land, stating, *“The Adivasi have also cleared the forests to make the land for a living. When we clear some land for living, the migrants would come and confiscate our land from us...”*

The participants noted that their practice of thodalum theendalum, where they distanced themselves from outsider communities, allowed migrants to seize control of Kurichiya land. Vella spoke about this during the in-depth interview stating,

Years back, many [refers to Christian and Muslim migrants] came here requesting us for some land to live. And we let them live here, thinking they must be struggling. We belonged to Wayanad. However, due to our practice of ‘Thottu theendal’, we moved further into the forests as the migrants came in. Sadly, they took advantage of this and further confiscated our lands.

Siddharthan also explained that migrants used unfair means to appropriate their lands, which continued in postcolonial times when even the independent India failed to return their land to them. He said,

... we owned all of this land, and then the migrants came in, bribed us with bettel and alcohol, and took away all our land without giving any compensation or money. In 1975, a new law signed by President stated that the land confiscated from the Adivasi should be returned. However, it is still not put into practice. To be real, the Adivasi are still undergoing a lot of discrimination and injustice. Our people will give away even 10 acres of land if given some betel leaves and alcohol. That was how we lost all our land to the Muslim and Christian migrants.

Consequently, even after independence, the Kurichiya experience with the British, Naduvazhi, and migrants instilled a sense of fear and apprehension towards politicians, who were mostly outsiders. A koottam participant explained,

When these politicians come dressed in white, even our forefathers get worried and hid. We then went further into the forests, where we felt safer than being outside. Seeing this, slowly, the Christian and Muslim migrants started taking our land and making homes.

In summary, this section details how the construction of roads to the dense forest resulted in the migration of Christians and Muslims who confiscated the Jana land. While the Kurichiya expressed that the migrants used dishonest means to confiscate their lands, they also felt that their practice of thodalum theendalum contributed to this. The next section delves into the role played by policies and legislation in further excluding the Kurichiya from their ancestral land.

Post-independent Forest Policies and Exclusion

Despite playing a significant role in the freedom struggle, when independence arrived in 1947, it meant continued alienation of the Kurichiya from their traditional lands. Some even described the post-independent Government as nothing different from the Naduvazhi system or British rule, emphasising a lack of substantial improvement. After independence, Kurichiya reported that they had to redirect their produce to the Government instead of the Naduvazhi. In support of this assertion, Siddharthan, during the in-depth interview, stated, “... *if we cultivate paddy, we must give levy to the Government. They will give a negligible amount of money for that.*” In addition, the post-independent Government restricted Kurichiyar access to the forests by introducing various forest policies. During the koottam, a participant reported,

...the Government asked us [refers to their parents and grandparents at the time of independence]to build a house nearby the forest... once we did, they gave us the title deed of the land where we built our home and restricted our entry to the forests.

Another participant added, “...*our forefathers hence made big Tharavadu and fenced the area so that many could live within.*” Hence, following independence, the Kurichiyar were confined to the fixed land provided by the Government and their entry into the forests was restricted. Madiyan, reflecting on the period before independence when they had unrestricted access to the forests during the in-depth interview,

Our forefathers used to cultivate ragi in the forest, especially since it wasn't an issue to cultivate in the forest. We used to cultivate ragi all over there [points to the forest and the slopes]. All of these belonged to our forefathers, but we had no legal documents

that gave us land rights as it does now. The forest department confiscated the land many years later and asked us not to cultivate ragi anymore.”

In terms of awareness of the legislations that led to their exclusion from the forests, most of the Kurichiyar participants reported that they were “*aware*” of the Kerala land acquisition act⁸³. Some participants described it as “*the best of the worst situation*”, and “*the Adivasi still have land only because of that legislation*”, while others reported that “*it benefitted only the migrants as they became owners of their [Jana] land.*” Therefore, following independence, the Government formally restricted the Kurichiya from accessing the forest through confining them to designated land. This starkly contrasted to the previous situation, where despite facing various challenges, they could freely traverse the forests. Independence had therefore only perpetuated environmental injustices for the Kurichiya.

Unlike the Makkal, the Kurichiya participants were aware of the legislations that led to their exclusion. Some mentioned that these regulations reduced confiscations, while others noted that they benefitted migrant settlers who still retained ownership over their land.

Continued Exclusion

Kurichiyar expressed frustrations over the Government’s ongoing and active exclusion practices keeping them from their traditional land alongside a lack of respect for their traditional land ownership rights. The participants highlighted their concerns by pointing out the Government’s reluctance to implement laws such as the Kerala Scheduled Tribes Act 1975

⁸³ Kerala Land Acquisition act and its impacts are discussed in Chapter two- Contextual Background, under the section; A Historical Analysis of Jana of Kerala (p.65).

to address the environmental injustices that occurred from the Kerala Acquisition Act and the subsequent appropriation of Jana land by migrants. During the koottam the Moopan of the Aranyam village reflected on this history, “In 1975, a new law signed by President stated that the land confiscated from the Adivasi should be returned. However, it is still not implemented.” Similarly, another koottam participant highlighted that even today, the Government used various excuses to appropriate their land. He explained,

We were given 100 acres of land in 1912 in papers; however, it was not measured. Back then, they simply gave us land in our name to settle... but they gave us 400 acres of land instead. The forest department has come forward with surveys and statistics asking to give back the land given to us more than a century ago.

Further, this participant expressed skepticism about the Government’s intentions, stating,

They are saying that our farmland belongs to them and is doing the survey. They are also saying that they will give back our land after the survey. I am not sure how far that is true. Even if they give, they will give the pattayam according to the forest act.

The participants worried about the terms and conditions of the return of land by the Government since land deeds (or pattayam) under the Forest Act enabled the Government to exert further control over the land. This could result in further restrictions on the use of the land for community purposes, making the situation more challenging for those involved.

Similarly, in conveying a persistent fear of displacement, the Moopan of the Villoli village expressed that the Government tried to displace them from their village by making different offers. He remarked,

Government has intentions to displace us from this land since we live in the heart of the forest. Dense forests surround this area. We cannot even think of living in a different

area. Most of the Adivasi living in the forests are being displaced. The Government gave us one to two acres of land above a hill in Nedumboi. When we went there, it was on the top of the hill! How can we live on the top of a hill? Many of us went to see and just came back.

A participant summarised the discussion at the koottam, stating, “*All the land that once belonged to us are now mostly with the Government and migrants... we are living now in this limited land.*” As a result, the implementation of certain forest policies, which led to the confiscation of Jana land, coupled with the non-implementation of corrective measures, posed a significant threat to the Jana communities residing near the forests.

In summary, this section encapsulates the Kurichiya community’s reflections on their deep connection between their traditional lands and their sense of self and heritage. This connection had been eroded with their enduring exclusion since British colonisation. This legalised exclusion, of which the Kurichiya showed awareness, persists to the present day, illustrating the failure of post-colonial systems to address colonial land policies that marginalised them. The post-colonial policies exacerbated their plight by perpetuating land grabbing practices and failing to implement corrective measures, indicating the perpetuation of environmental injustices. The following section sheds light on the Kurichiya sharing of how the forest exclusion impacted their lives.

Impacts of Exclusion from their Abode

The Kurichiya community had a profound connection with their traditional land that was deeply intertwined with their sense of self, cultural heritage, and way of living. Their

exclusion from these lands meant changes in the ways they depended on the forests. This highlights the study objective of outlining the environmental injustice consequences faced by the Kurichiya due to their exclusion from their traditional land. The following parts discuss the findings identified based on participant reflections, including their sharing about the deterioration of the Tharavadu system, the rise of landlessness, dissociation from forests, cultural loss, conflicts among the younger generation, and external pressures for change.

Diminishing Tharavadu system

The Tharavadu⁸⁴ system, was central to Kurichiya traditions and culture. In the past there were 108 Kurichiyar Tharavadu; but currently only 54 remain. Under a Tharavadu system, no individual owned any Tharavadu land, and any Kurichiya under the Tharavadu had the right to approach the Tharavadu for abode.

The Moopan of Aaranyan village stated how the introduction of the concept of private land ownership disrupted the traditional land inheritance system of the Kurichiya community, known as Marumakkathayam. Under this matrilineal heritage system, the Tharavadu system, where property and leadership are passed down through the maternal line, gradually deteriorated. Kootam participants described the changes to the matriarchal society, noting that now people have rights over their father's property. A participant stated, "*now things are changing... Now people have rights over their father's property too.*" Another participant added, "*That is why we have registered the Tharavadu into a trust like devasam (registered as an NGO). Otherwise, this will not sustain.*" Due to the privatisation of land, the tradition of

⁸⁴ Introduced in Chapter four: Jana Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology, and Methods (pg. 131).

Marumakkathayam was hardly practised. Figure 6.1. is a photo of the communal land under the Aaranyam Tharavadu which was open to anyone from the community to work on and reap benefits.

Figure 6.1 Photo taken of Villoli Tharavadu land



While the community members expressed sadness over the diminishing Tharavadu numbers, others held differing views about the practice of Marumakkathayam. The Moopan stated that it was “*good that Marmakkathayam is no longer practised.*” He recollected how he had to leave his family and Tharavadu (where he grew up) at 15 years of age to be Karnavar of the Aranyam Tharavadu. Despite his personal experience, he supported the Tharavadu system and expressed concerns about its gradual extinction. He remarked, “*All the Nair Tharavadu have gone, now only the Kurichiyar Tharavadu is existing... This should also exist, right?*”

Siddharthan further reiterated the importance of protecting the Tharavadu system by stating how each Tharavadu has a sacred groove protected by the community. He stated, “*In every temple, there will be a kaavu, and there will be trees, there will be a pond. This is the way you protect the forests... and the land around.*” However, he expressed concern that their “*kaavu and Tharavadu are getting wiped away*” He also added, “*if a new law does not come into effect [to protect them], all these Tharavadu will eventually die out.*”

Overall, the participants were disappointed with the diminishing Tharavadu numbers. Faced with a lack of Government support to sustain the Tharavadu system, the Moopan and other community members took proactive measures by registering their Tharavadu as an NGO. This step was taken to preserve the Tharavadu and its associated knowledge for the benefit of future generations within the community.

Rise of Landlessness

The rise of the concept of private property and the imposition of living in fixed allocated Government land led to an increase in landlessness among the Kurichiyar. Like the Makkal, the Kurichiyar expressed a lack of familiarity with the concept of private land ownership. Manjesh, during the in-depth interview, stated, *“In the past, there was no private property. We all belonged here.”* He further explained how in the past the community governed their surrounding land,

...this forest once belonged to us. We cultivated ragi... Back then, there was not any Government here... The forest officers never used to tell us what to do and what not to do like they do now. See how times have changed everything.

Manjesh’s remarks underscore the historical dynamics of communal land ownership and governance, reflecting on the changes over time and the encroachment of external authority, ultimately leading to community confinement to fixed land.

Over time, with the rise in population and land privatisation, several participants expressed concerns about adequacy of land for the growing population. Concerned about the rise in landless, a koottam participant explained, *“...if, a father, owes one acre of land and*

has three to four children; he may not have enough land for his children. When this happens, they are forced to live in the forest.” Consequently, as Madiyan reported, “*around 15 families*” had encroached the forests living in compromised living conditions due to landlessness.

Further highlighting the precarious nature of land ownership among those Kurichiya with land, the Moopan of Aranyam village emphasised their vulnerability to eviction from their traditional land, noting that most people did not possess legal documents for the land they inhabited.

Overall, the findings underscore the Kurichiya acknowledgment of the rise in landlessness due to land privatisation and forced relocation to confined areas, contrasting with their previous ways of life. This situation led several community members to encroach forest lands. Moreover, their disconnection from the concept of private land ownership was evident in the fact that many landholders lacked legal documentation confirming their ownership, reflecting their unfamiliarity with current land management practices. The next section discusses the change in the Kurichiyar association with the forests through colonisation.

Past and Present: Changes to their Association to Forests

The Kurichiya reminisced about how their relationship with the forests had changed over time. Recollecting past experiences, a Kurichiyar elder during the koottam spoke about the calmness and security they felt inside the forest. He stated, “*...you just simply get inside these forests... and sit under the tree there... it is so cool and nice that you will simply fall asleep. There is warmth, coolness, and breeze... there is everything in the forest.*” Similarly, another participant noted how in the past they depended on forests for food and shelter,

In the past, we used to live in the forests. We lived on the fruits from the forests... jackfruit, kotta pazham, njaival pazham, honey and so on. There were also plenty of edible fruits and roots to eat. So, we built huts inside the forests and lived there by feeding on the forest produce.

Further explaining their past reliance on forests for subsistence, another koottam participant elaborated,

In the early days, we depended on the forests mostly to get wood to construct the houses. We cut the tree from the forest; we needed cane, creeper strings, and grass from the hill to make our house. Similarly, we also used to get fish and meat from the forest.

The richness of resources from the forests was emphasised by another participant, who added, *“There was nothing that we did not get from the forests and the river. We used to live with all of that.”*

However, with forests restrictions the Kurichiya were no longer able to depend on the forest for subsistence. During the in-depth interview, Siva stated, *“Now we are no more allowed to go inside the forest. Back then, most of the people were in the forest most of the time. Now, we enter the forest only for the Thula pathu.”*

The Kurichiya collectively emphasised that their disconnection from the forest also impacted their traditional ways of living. Ammuचेchi, highlighted this by explaining, *“the straw houses are better... But the Government builds these for us instead [refers to concrete buildings].”* She further added, *“Even if we want to build houses our way, we will not get the wood from the forests.”* Hence, similar to the frustration expressed by the Makkal regarding the Government’s construction of two-bedroom homes without considering their needs, the

Kurichiya also felt dismayed that new houses did not consider their views and were built contrary to their desires and aspirations.

Overall, the Kurichiya conveyed a profound shift in their way of life, transitioning from complete dependence on forests to a state of disconnection. This shift compelled them to seek alternatives for their subsistence, thereby adding additional challenges to their lives⁸⁵.

Shift in practices

Kurichiya participants shared accounts of losing numerous cultural practices and traditions due to their disconnection from their traditional land. Some of these, such as Marumakkathayam, Tharavadu system and kaavu, have been discussed earlier in this chapter. Some of the other practices voiced by the participants included transitioning from traditional houses to concrete structures, replacing traditional flooring patterns with tiling, challenges in preserving cultural practices outside their village, and making internal community changes for their own improvement.

A koottam participant spoke about how they were no longer able to enter the forests to build their traditional houses,

My traditional ancestral home was made of straw [sedge grass]. However, times have changed, our children will not prefer to live like us. As they get more and more educated, they interact and mingle with the children from outside societies, they go to their homes and finally develop aversiveness towards our way of living. That is why we

⁸⁵ Discussed under the theme, Self-Sustenance- Socioeconomic situation (p.254).

decided to do sheet roofing instead of sedge grass. Straw houses are like air-conditioned ones... During rainy especially it is very similar to any air-conditioned houses...and we can manage very well in summer too. It was very convenient too. However, this sheet roofing makes it hard for us to stay inside because of the heat.

The participants explained that the construction of concrete houses had replaced traditional mud and cow dung flooring with tiles. They highlighted the loss of traditional practices and the potential health implications of modern flooring choices, which they felt forced to adapt to. Ammuhechi stated,

...the traditional mud and cow dung flooring are now replaced with tiles. Our way is more beneficial and safer than this contemporary flooring pattern. When people walk on often-cold tiles, it mostly results in diseases like arthritis; however, if the floors are swabbed with cow dung and mud, it is even safer to lay down here in a sedge grass mat.

In this way, the community members highlighted how the loss of their culture also resulted in various health implications.

The restrictions also impacted their culture of thula pathu⁸⁶ despite undertaking this carefully and sustainably, the Government had restricted them. Vishnu said,

When we go for hunting, we only hunt down wild boars and rabbits. We have not brought anything other than these from the forests. We also go to forests for collecting wood to construct houses (Vishnu lives in encroached land and relies on forest wood for constructing houses). We have never entered the forest for monetary benefits.

⁸⁶ Introduced in Chapter four- Jana Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology, and Methods (pg. 131).

While reflecting on the loss of traditional practices, the Kurichiya communities also expressed their ongoing efforts to adapt and evolve. Siddharthan, in an in-depth interview, remarked, “we have changed and overcome our earlier practices of *thodalum theendalum* and not eating from outside. Every community undergoes some change over time.”

During a *koottam*, a participant elaborated on the evolution of the practice of *thodalum theendalum* into the concept of personal cleanliness. He explained that they now ensure personal hygiene, such as taking a shower before entering their home if they have been outside. He stated,

We now shower before entering our home. It is a good custom... It will help us cleanse ourselves of any microbes that might have gotten on us from outside. It is relevant in corona these corona times, when we may get infected if we do not cleanse ourselves.

In addition, the Kurichiya community stated there was no expectation from those who have migrated from *ooru* to follow their customs. Madiyan, during the interview, remarked, “Now, a lot from our community works in Dubai. They cannot follow all our traditions and practices from there... it is about survival...”

Although they adapted to changing times culturally and traditionally, the Kurichiyar reported losing many practices to assimilative pressures, especially with their dissociation from the forests. The next section outlines the conflicts faced by many younger generations, impacting their overall wellbeing and connection to their community.

Conflicts of the younger generation: Where do we fit?

Kurichiya participants conveyed their concern over the younger generation's sense of disconnection from the forests, which they felt had left them "helpless" and torn between two worlds. A participant during the koottam stated, "...they [refers to their children] are not more connected to the forests. To know more about it, they should have seen it or heard about it." Additionally, many adults in the meeting shared that their children sometimes found "all these customs quite awkward" and did not take pride in being Kurichiya. Madiyan, during the in-depth interview discussed how the educational system created a disconnect by stating, "The more we educate our children, the more they dislike our culture..." A koottam participant said that their children were even provided incorrect knowledge, disrespecting their cultural rootedness. He recollected,

When I was at school, there was one page which talked about Kurichiyar. They said that when a Kurichiyar woman dies, a fishing hook is kept with her corpse during her funeral, while bow and arrow are kept when a Kurichiyar man dies. I stood up and told my teacher that this was not true and that I would not study or follow this.

As the children received education, the participants noticed a shift away from their cultural practices. Some mentioned instances where Kurichiyar girls converted to different religions through marriage to outsiders and, when faced with hardships, sought to return to their community. However, a participant during the meeting stated, "...we cannot let them back into our community anymore. We care for them, but the collective will no longer let them in." This conflict highlighted the challenges faced by the Kurichiya in balancing their cultural identity with external influences and the repercussions of such conflicts on their community. Aligning with the sentiments of feeling conflicted, Manjesh (a young Kurichiya), during his in-depth interview, stated,

...sometimes we feel detached and feel like we do not belong anywhere. We often used to get confused... should we pursue it further or not? If we try to maintain our minds serene by adhering to our culture, things will go smoothly. It gets hard when we are in a state of conflict thinking... should we follow our culture or follow the world outside? That was a serious difficulty I faced when I went to study in the hostel. When we returned there, we followed our culture and rituals, and everything used to be normal. We take a shower even before entering our house. Once we get home, we hardly think about the hostel and life there. Our minds and heart constantly dwindle between our culture and the outsiders. Their lives are different. I am sure we will be less impacted if our minds are clear always.

Another young adult said they struggled when they lived in the education hostel⁸⁷. He stated,

...when we used to stay at the hostel, sometimes, they cooked beef which we could not eat. We stay hungry then... At home, our parents teach us our culture and make our viewpoints stronger. It is a challenge to dwindle between two lives.

In essence, the Kurichiya held concerns for their younger generation, who they felt were conflicted between Kurichiya values and outside influences, leading to a sense of disconnection from their Kurichiya identity and their land.

⁸⁷ Children often had to stay at hostels to be able to have access to higher education at schools as they lived remotely.

Lost traditional educational and health system

The Kurichiya felt that their traditional educational and health system which were built on systems that connected to their environment were no longer actively practiced. The Moopan of Villoli village highlighted how the disconnection from forests has led to a decline in interest and awareness among the younger generation regarding traditional medicine. Chandra echoed this sentiment during the in-depth interview, by stating

Forest is important since we can get only get our medicines from the forests. In the outer plain, we cannot find our medicines. Our new generation is not really aware of all of these things as they are no longer go into the forests like us.

A koottam participant expressed concerns about the modern healthcare system, highlighting that anyone with sufficient financial means can obtain knowledge and qualifications. On the contrary, the Kurichiya participant stated that the knowledge of medicine is serene and should come through “*meditation and spirituality, only such a person can use these medicines.*” He further added, when referring to the malpractices in the modern health systems, that “*not everyone should be able to learn it...*”

Similarly, the participants shared how their traditional educational system, which focussed on holistic education through Kalari gurukkal and emphasised holistic wellbeing and knowledge about connection to the environment, had been discontinued. This shift resulted in them being forced to take up education through Government institutions.

The participants felt that the conventional schools often failed to acknowledge the cultural roots of the Kurichiya. The Government tribal school in the region, attended predominantly by Jana students, was cited as an example of this perceived disparity. The Kurichiya, who abstained from consuming meat from domesticated animals and only

consumed hunted meat from the forest during special occasions, expressed concern about the inclusion of chicken curry in the Government school's mid-day meal plan. Many parents sent their children to school primarily for the daily meal provided by the Government. Hence, the children who attended the school had no other option other than to eat the food provided by the Government which ignored their cultural practices. During the koottam, an elder stated,

This is, in fact, our school, and our children attend that school. They serve chicken curry for the mid-day meals. What to do? Our children will have to eat it. Is there any other go to it? No... The Government knows that many families send their children so that our children can eat well. So, we just take it.

Kurichiya participants also felt that their children's education did not address aspects of their livelihood related to their land. For example, despite being a self-sustaining community primarily engaged in agriculture, schools did not offer education related to farming. A koottam participant said,

There are many among us who are educated, but they are jobless. Because they studied a lot, many of them do not know farming or any of our works. Many of those educated are ashamed even to take the tools to go and work in the muddy fields. They think it is a shame! None of our educational systems emphasises promoting agricultural works along with education. Even our girls do not like to get married to farmers these days.

As such, the participants argued that the educational system failed to acknowledge their reality by not promoting agricultural works alongside academic education.

In summary, the narratives from the Kurichiya community underscore the challenges they faced due to their exclusion from traditional lands. These challenges encompassed disruptions to their traditional subsistence patterns, diminishing the *Tharavadu* system pivotal

for self-sufficiency, increased landlessness, altered relationships with forests leading to cultural and practice loss, erosion of traditional education and health practices, and conflicts among the younger generation torn between tradition and modernity. As discussed in the next section, these challenges resulted in diminished self-sufficiency and a weakened connection to the environment, exacerbating their sociocultural and economic situation.

Self-Sustenance: Socio-economic situation

With Kurichiya exclusion from the forests, the community was compelled to reside on land provided by the Government, exacerbating their struggles to maintain self-sufficiency. This section delves deeper into the ramifications of self-sustenance, shedding light on the study objective of exploring the experiences of social injustices stemming from their exclusion from traditional lands.

Independent and Self-reliant communities

Most of the Kurichiya participants lead an independent life, engaging in traditional and organic farming, with minimal reliance on outside resources on the land that was provided to them by the Government “*nearly a century ago.*” The participant reflected that despite the challenges forest exclusion posed; the communities demonstrated capacity to maintain their self-sufficiency.

All participant Kurichiyar families (considered for this research) cultivated traditional food crops organically, on the land available to them, irrespective of the size of their

landholding. Those who did not own land cultivated on the common Tharavadu land. They often sold the surplus produce after meeting their household needs. Madiyan, a landless Kurichiya, stated, “*We farm on our ancestral land... This is our Tharavadu... [points out to his Tharavadu.]*” Although the forest exclusion had rendered several families landless, the Tharavadu of each village supported their people to remain self-sufficient and independent by allowing farming on the common land.

Paddy cultivation was the most common type of farming; however, they also produced other crops. Some owned cattle (mostly less than five per household) for dairy farming. Siddharthan Moopan, referring to the different sources of income of the people of his village, stated,

Our main sources of income include paddy cultivation, coffee plantation, pepper, cashew, vegetable, plantain, areca palm farming... we are yet to start with rubber plantation. These are our main sources of income... we also have cattle farming [only dairy].

Some participants indicated that they undertook MGREGA⁸⁸ (Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act) works apart from farming. For instance, Ammuchechi, an interview participant, stated, “*...our income comes from... MGNREGA works, cattle [Cow] raising and farming.*”

The younger Kurichiya generation had been experimenting with various other livelihood strategies, but not all have been successful. For example, Manjesh mentioned, “*I have a taxi jeep, but I hardly earn anything from it. Hm... our... main sources of income come*

⁸⁸ Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Act 2005, is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the ‘right to work.’

from plantain and bitter gourd farming.” Additionally, some others lived outside their village, working in the public sector. However, most of those who lived in the village depended on agriculture for sustenance. Siddharthan Moopan detailed the livelihood patterns in their ooru by stating,

Many Kurichiyar have Government jobs and live outside. However, for most of us, we cultivate our land and do not complain. Only if they have no works in their fields do they go for other works. It is always better to work on our land and earn by selling the produce from our land. And we also produce enough food for our household. So, we continue to do that... we hardly go and complain to others of things that we do not get or have.

Most of their diet consisted of produce they cultivated, adhering to customs and beliefs that discouraged the consumption of cultivated animals (except at schools as discussed earlier). They tried to only consume wild-hunted meat, following customary or ritualistic practices. This practice was particularly prominent during the Thula pathu festival (as permitted by the Government) when they ventured into the forest to hunt animals, with Vella Moopan specifying that they primarily hunted animals like wild boar or rabbit.

Overall, the Kurichiyar strived to remain self-sufficient despite the challenges from forest exclusion through community-led initiatives such as farming on common land to support the landless community members. They traditionally cultivated ragi and paddy but now also produced different crops. Agriculture formed the primary source of income, while some also undertook dairy farming on a small scale or went for MGNREGA works. However, their desire to continue to be self-sustaining came with various challenges, which will be discussed in the next section.

Farming challenges and their impacts on self-sustenance

As communities that relied on farming for self-sustenance, they encountered several challenges despite Kurichiya's aspirations to remain self-sufficient. Foremost among these challenges was the difficulty in practicing organic farming and adequately meeting the needs of their families. During the kootam, the participants discussed various reasons that contributed to these challenges including, "*farming at a loss*," "*meeting the needs of their joint family*," "*cost of manure*," "*weather change*," "*no assets*," "*lack of Government support*," and "*outsiders influence*." Kootam participants expressed their concerns, highlighting how recent extreme weather had directly impacted their cropping patterns. Referring to how the extreme summer heat had impacted their primary income from coffee plantations which had lessened over the years a kootam participant said, "*Now, we have less revenue coming from coffee, and most of our pepper creepers have dried off. However, we have paddy cultivation to contribute to income*." The concern during the rainy season was the rise in water levels leading to crop destruction. Ammuchechi, during the in-depth interview, stated,

We only have 50 cent lands for cultivation. We take only punjakrishi [paddy]... we cannot have two crop cultivations since the water rises until the Kanji month. Normally we cultivate two crops... now, it is hard for us to do so as there is not sufficient time for both because of the floods until the Kanji month. Now, the water rises even in our thottam, and we hardly get chilies or coffee, and it just wears away in excess water. Our pepper creepers fall away too with excess water.

These climate changes led to most households relying on income from just one crop, unlike in the past where they cultivated two crops a year. Consequently, they faced challenges in meeting the collective needs of the joint family structure. A participant stated, "*But see, we live in a joint family system here... you just calculate and see how expensive it might be?*"

Another participant added that they only earned enough money to meet their daily needs staying, “*We are moving forward only with the strength and blessings offered to us by our spiritual gods. We have no assets.*” The Moopan reiterated their concerns that their “*agriculture was often at a loss*” due to climate change.

All the Kurichiya participants felt that outsiders were a constant threat to their traditional agricultural practices. Farmers (outsiders) who lived just outside their village boundary used chemicals and fertilisers, which sometimes “*seeped into their fields*” or “*introduced unknown crop diseases.*” As a result, concerns were raised by participants about the emergence of new “*plant diseases that destroyed*” their crops and impacted their age-old agricultural practices. Siddharthan, during an in-depth interview, stated,

In fact, it was the new agricultural practices and the migrants who are destroying our traditional practices of agriculture. I agree that they have brought in some viable cultivation practices, but they have been responsible for destroying a lot of our age-old practices.

This left the Kurichiya community with challenges maintaining self-sufficiency stemming from difficulties in generating income through their traditional agricultural practices. Additionally, the loss of dependence on forests due to forest restrictions, which could have served as a compensatory resource for agricultural losses, further compounded their struggle.

Responses to financial constraints

The struggle to remain self-sufficient placed a significant financial burden on the participants. In response, several participants sought financial assistance from banks or private

lenders, while others continued to experiment with other livelihood measures. Like Makkal ⁸⁹, some borrowed money from banks or even privately, while others tried to manage with whatever they earned.

Except for those who did not have land, most of the participants from Aranyam village indicated that they had loans and debts in the bank. These included debts to construct homes for themselves, while others had liabilities due to failed farming. Ammuचेchi, during the in-depth interview, explained how she had incurred debts building a home for her family to live together. She said,

We have our gold assets and the legal documents of this land in the bank. We borrowed this money as we did not have enough money to build this house. This (points to their house) is, in fact, a Government-sanctioned house. Out of 3.5 lakhs, they gave us around three and said will give the rest after we finished the work of the house. We then took around two more lakhs to build the house and make it look this way....

Other koottam participants explained how they had no other choice but to “*borrow money for farming needs.*” They repaid some of the debt, while the Government wrote off debt when the rain destroyed their crops. However, several participants criticised the Government for “*teaching the Adivasi to be furtive*” and “*welfare dependent*” by waiving off the loans for everyone who has not paid. A koottam participant gave an example,

For instance, they have decided to waive off the loans of many who have not repaid; however, those who deserve to get loan waived have not been given this relief. I have

⁸⁹ Discussed in Chapter five- Resonating Voices of Ippimala Makkal (aka Paniyar) (p.183).

worked hard to repay the loan. However, because I regularly paid some amount back, they have decided not to waive off my loan.

He added, *“they said they would have waived it off if we had not repaid it. The Government itself is teaching the people furtiveness.”* The Moopan of both the villages explained that their community was *“hardworking”* and should be *“encouraged to work”* instead of being welfare dependent. The Moopan of the Aranyam village stated,

To be frank, they should be encouraged to repay the loans. If not, they should be asked to pay the interest fewer loans. Some intentionally do not pay it back, thinking it would get waived off. At the same time, some others cannot repay it at all because of their hard situations. There are crafty others who take advantage of things like this. The Government is conditioning the people to be furtive.

On another note, the Moopan of the Aranyam village indicated that many of their residents could not get loans from the bank due to not having title deeds for their land. This issue arose from their communal concept of land belonging rather than individual ownership, resulting in many lacking legal ownership documents. Some of them, he stated, instead borrowed from private lenders for urgent situations. He said,

I do have debts to be paid off. However, most of us are not eligible for loans since out of ten, maybe only one has legal documents of their land. Since I have all the legal documents for my land, there is no issue for me to get the loan; however, many still cannot take any loan from the bank.

On the other hand, the participants of Villoli village affirmed that they hardly had any debts. Although Manjesh (during the in-depth interview) stated that he has *“debts and loans”*,

he reported that most others did “*not often go to banks to get loans... hence they are often not indebted.*” Similarly, the Moopan of the Villoli village stated,

If we go to the bank and apply, we may get money. However, most of us have chosen not to deal with banks at all. Because to return the bank loan, we will need to have a regular income that most of us do not have, and we chose not to take the hassle.

The Moopan further added,

If we work hard, we can eat... if not it's hard to live. Hence, we work day and night. We drink a black coffee in the morning before we work... See, I have manured around 30 plantains today even without having rice porridge. We do work all day to survive on our land...?

Most of the Kurichiya, whether they owned land or not, worked on the farms daily despite the struggles posed by unreliable weather, lack of Government support, and additional costs involved. Most of the Kurichiyar did not borrow money and tried to live with whatever they had. If they did borrow money those with land and title deeds sought assistance from bank loans while others borrowed it privately.

Overall, the Kurichiya were self-sustaining and independent communities through farming and reliance on the forests. Despite their commitment to autonomy, they faced challenges such as inadequate Government support, farming losses attributed to climate change, and additional costs. These challenges left some needing to borrow money from banks or private firms or having to adjust to their living conditions. Nevertheless, they continued to work hard and maintained their strong values, which were imbibed by their culture and ancestry. In other words, these findings exemplify the community's resilience in adversity, as they continued to remain self-sufficient. This resilience highlights the far-reaching potential

that could be achieved with appropriate support systems in place, thereby underscoring the study aim of co-creating sustainable community outcomes for their welfare. The next section delves into the living conditions of the participating Kurichiya communities.

Living Conditions

This section offers insight into the living conditions of the Kurichiya community in both Aaranyam and Villoli villages, focusing on key issues such as transience, water accessibility, road conditions, public transportation, and the erosion of cultural and traditional practices. These factors collectively underscore the significant challenges the Kurichiya community faced, particularly those landless, the ones most severely affected by forest exclusion.

Transience

As indicated above, landlessness had become highly prevalent with the increasing population. A significant number of the participants in the photovoice process represented landless Kurichiya individuals. There were among approximately 16 out of around 120 families in the Aranyam village who encroached the forest for habitation, living in precarious conditions. Bindu, during the photovoice process, took a photo (Figure 6.2.) of her home in the encroached forestland and stated,

This is our house which we have built in the encroached land. We do not have any land for ourselves, and hence it is tough for us to survive. Moreover, since the Government

does not approve the land, we have no electricity or water connection. So, we have been living here for the past eight years... without electricity.

These individuals who had encroached upon the forest lived in constant fear of eviction. In the past eleven years, they had faced eviction by the forest department, during which all their belongings were destroyed as part of the eviction process. She explained,

This was the place where we had first built our shed. Unfortunately, the forest department took this down after three to four years of us living there. We had to go then and live in the Tharavadu, where so many people were already living. It was hard and impossible to be there as we did not have any place to live. We were helpless; we lived there for nearly a year and then came here again to build another house here. We will not go away from our land... they should kill us otherwise... we are determined. We have no other land to go. This is our home.

Figure 6.2 Photo by Bindu (2020) from the photovoice project



Despite finding shelter through encroachment, the living conditions for these families were severely compromised. A Kurichiya elder Sarin highlighted how they continued to endure deplorable conditions and relied on the Government's mercy for a more secure living situation. In the photovoice process, he shared the following (Figure 6.3),

The major crisis that we face is that we have no land for ourselves... therefore, we have come to this state of life. I live with my family in an encroached land, consistently living in fear of our shed being taken off by the Government. We live in a period of uncertainty. We are expecting the Government to give this land to us....

Figure 6.3 Photo by Sarin (2020) from photovoice project



These homes often had a big room (roughly 200 square meters) divided into two or three units. Each family unit sometimes had four or more individuals, including the children. The kitchen was mainly situated outside due to using firewood for cooking. The toilets and shower were also located outside as separate units.

The life of all sixteen families who encroached on the forest land remained precarious. They grappled with constant fear of eviction while simultaneously enduring compromised living conditions, as detailed in the subsequent sub-sections.

We walk to fetch water

The Kurichiya community, especially those without land, often walked long distances to fetch water for their daily needs. Despite having done so for an extended period, they did not view it as a challenge, although they expressed a desire to have a water connection at home similar to that of outsiders. Ammuchechi, a resident who owned her land in the Aranyam village, during the in-depth interview, stated,

We have no difficulty in getting water. We get water from the headstreams, which is connected to our home through a pipe connection. We also have a Jalanidhi connection, and however, if we get water from it one day, it will be turned off for another two days. Sometimes, we just get into the forest and carry water from there.

Ammuchechi, who owned land, prioritised obtaining “unpolluted” and “good quality” water from their headstreams. She also did not perceive it as difficult to get water from the forest when needed. In contrast, all the participants of the Villoli village and those living in the encroached forest land in Aranyam village indicated that they walked long distances to go the stream to collect water each day for their needs. Sindhu of Villoli village, who lived on her own land, perceived access to water resources with difficulty. She pointed to the photo (Figure 6.4) she took and stated,

Lack of access to water is the major issue that we are facing now. When it rains, we harvest rainwater and use it. However, things get tough during the summers. When there is no rain, we must carry the water from the river or natural bunt nearby. We do not have the Jalanidhi services now since an elephant broke the pipeline from the forest; it has not been repaired till now. It has been a long time!

Figure 6.4 Photo by Sindhu (2020) from the photovoice project



Similarly, Nanthan (physically disabled), who lived on the encroached forestland, expressed his daily struggles to get water. He stated the following about the photo (Figure 6.5) that he took during the photovoice.

This shows that we do not have access to water resources. We must walk at least one km through the forest one side one a single day to fetch water. Then we carry it back home. If we run out of water, we might have to go and fetch water again. It is hard to carry it back....

Figure 6.5 Photo by Nanthan (2020) from the photovoice project



Overall, whether the Kurichiyar lived on encroached land or land they owned, they struggled to access water resources. Most of them were used to their daily routine of fetching water from the headstreams.

How long to live in Darkness?

The Kurichiya living in the forest land lived a life in darkness inside the forest. The other Kurichiya who lived in the village had access to electricity. The sixteen families who lived in the encroached land did not have a house number allocated. Due to this, they did not have access to electricity connections approved by the Government. Some “*tapped*” electricity through cells or batteries and used it only when necessary. As a result, they lived mostly in darkness. They reported that after several pleas, the Government finally “*agreed and placed an electric post.*” However, during the koottam, a participant stated, “*Some outsiders lodged a complaint, and the court halted the process.*”

Another koottam participant expressed that they did not even have alternate support to live without electricity. She said,

...we do not even get enough kerosene oil from the ration shop. We just get half a litre for a month. It is not possible to live with just half a litre per month. Hence, we use it only when we are desperate.

Participants had adapted to these situations as they had lived without amenities like electricity connections for the last eight years. Another koottam participant explained how they had adapted, “We cook and have our dinner before it gets dark (before 6 pm). Some go to bed after that while others sit outside by burning firewood until they go to bed.”

Although participants believed that the adults could cope with the situation, they reported adverse impacts on their children and family unit. During the photovoice process, Aravindhan indicated how their life in darkness impacted their family, especially children.

It (refers to the photo in Figure 6.6) shows the house that we live in. We do not have electricity in our house ever since we moved in there. Our children are school going and it is so difficult for them to study. They have to either go to education hostel, which is not possible now or go to someone else's house or under the streetlight to study.

Figure 6.6 Photo by Aravindhan (2020) from the photovoice project



Hence, to be educated, the children were often sent to education hostels or schools (sometimes, during exams, schools allowed children to stay on campus, supervised by teachers and community members) where they could have better opportunities to learn. During the fieldwork in late February 2020, the Aranyam Tribal School encouraged the children and parents to utilise the learning opportunities available. However, having no electricity at home, as Kamalakshi stated, placed their children “*at a significant disadvantage compared to outsiders.*” Balakrishnan, another photovoice participant, expressed how they perceived this as a big issue, mainly due to its impact on their children. He referred to the photo (Figure 6.7) to state,

I have school going children at home... see how at a significant disadvantage they are with not being able to study or thrive as we have no resources that others do. They come back after school from four pm to five pm. After six pm, it gets dark... and our children have no other go other than to go and sleep. More than us, having no electricity impacts our children.

Figure 6.7 Photo by Balakrishnan (2020) from the photovoice project



Therefore, despite the adults having learnt to manage their lives without electricity, the Kurichiya reported that the lack of access to electricity placed their children at a disadvantage in schools compared to others.

Isolation and Exclusion: Deplorable Road and Transport System

All the villages' participants emphasised the inadequate roads and lack of public transport facilities irrespective of having land. For instance, from the fieldnotes, only one bus was available to nearby Villoli village, after which they had to walk nearly six kilometres (three through a shortcut route) to reach the village. Similarly, the nearest town to the Aranyam village

was four kilometres away. Therefore, although some of them had two-wheeler vehicles, most of them walked to nearby places. Shika stated that she walked with her three-year daughter to Anganwadi through the forest during the koottam. Similarly, Vinod, a participant, during the photovoice referred to the photo (Figure 6.8) taken by him and stated,

Our road and transport facilities are poor. In case of any medical emergency, we have no other way than to die here. It is hard to take the sick person through these forest paths to the main road where the sport is available. We often try to avoid such situations, and we often feel helpless during these times....

Figure 6.8 Photo by Vinod (2020) from the photovoice project



The following excerpt from my field notes depicts the strained situation of the Kurichiya, who tried to adjust to the available resources and fit in the system.

On the last day of fieldwork, Madiyan [an active participant] rang me and asked me to come a bit early to say goodbye. When I went there, I saw Madiyan, and his wife neatly dressed prepared to go outside. When asked where they were up to, Sabitha stated, 'Chettayi (refers to husband) was in terrible pain the last couple of months. The doctors told us that he has appendicitis and that it needs to be operated out. We are going for

the operation and wanted to see you before we left.’ I got worried that he had not even spoken about it in the past couple of weeks when he walked me around for various field visits. I checked with them on how they were going to the hospital, and they said, ‘we are walking up to Valad [the nearest town that was four kilometers away], and then we are hoping to catch the 8-o-clock bus to Mananthawady....’ I felt helpless, thinking they had to walk despite being sick. I asked them to go on my scooter, and they said, ‘we do not know how to ride it... our bodies and hearts are used to this way of life... don’t you get worried for us.

Thangam, from the Villoli village, stated that they were isolated in accessing services, which made their day-to-day lives difficult. She further noted how it compromised their health and livelihoods. She remarked by referring to the photo (Figure 6.9) she took,

There are hardly any transportation services here since there are no proper roads here. The difficulty is when, especially when there are hospital cases. The condition of the mud roads here is pathetic. We all are farmers. We have plantain, bitter gourd, and other cultivations here. When we harvest these, it is difficult for us to take this product to the market. Sometimes, we even must carry it to the market... Oh... and the hassle of hiring a vehicle here with the fear of damaging it! It is so difficult even for my children to go to school. My daughter must walk six km every day to get to her school. However, this is not an issue now because of corona [schools closed]. This will especially become difficult during the rainy season since the muddy roads get seeped away in the rain.

Figure 6.9 Photo by Thangam (2020) from the photovoice project



All the participants, irrespective of whether they owned land, expressed that they did not have access to good transport services. This impacted their daily lives, including their ability to access to medical, educational and livelihood needs.

In summary, this section illustrates the Kurichiya community's resilience in response to challenges in their everyday living while also highlighting the systemic violation of their basic rights, including access to basic amenities such food, water, and shelter. These reflections highlight how environmental and social justice violations have precipitated human rights violations. The precarious living conditions of Kurichiya echo through their collective stories, highlighting the complexities and difficulties they endure. These narratives mirror those of the Makkal communities⁹⁰, as both the landless Kurichiya and the Makkal face compromised living conditions. However, a key distinction identified is that for the Makkal, these precarious living conditions persisted regardless of whether they resided in encroached land or not. In essence,

⁹⁰ Discussed in Chapter five- Resonating Voices of Ippimala Makkal (aka Paniyar) (p.183).

the Kurichiya accounts underscore the importance of understanding and addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by the community to foster sustainable and equitable solutions for their welfare. The next section highlights the Kurichiyar reflections on systemic violations they faced.

Hegemony: Government approaches and Outsider's influence

While earlier sections explored the diverse impacts of forest exclusion, detailing its effects on the socio-economic circumstances and self-sufficiency of the Kurichiya, this section delves deeper into the systemic hegemony that marginalised the Kurichiya. This section provides insight into Kurichiya reflections on how Government approaches, coupled with external influences, converged to shape the lives and aspirations of the Kurichiyar community.

Fear of appropriating Kurichiya land

The Kurichiya participants voiced concerns regarding systemic neglect and Government attempts to confiscate their land. The Kurichiya expressed deep concern over the Government's attempts to confiscate their existing communal lands. As mentioned previously in this chapter, the Moopan of Aranyam revealed that the forest department periodically measured the same forest land. However, during the last measurement, they claimed that the land, given to the Kurichiya over a century ago, belonged to the Government. Concerned about losing their rights, the Kurichiya approached the court to halt the process, fearing that if the

Government provided title deeds, it would undermine their ability to rely on the land for their needs and access loans. Similarly, the participants of the Villoli village also expressed feeling pressured by the Government to relocate to another area from their traditional land. Consequently, there was a prevailing sense of being unsupported by the Government, coupled with a perceived pressure to assimilate and move from their traditional land.

Kurichiya participants also raised concerns about political parties confiscating restricted forest land for political activities without facing any legal consequences. A koottam participant explained, “the different political parties come here; they have illegally confiscated the forest land. The ruling CARE office of the ruling CPM party has taken over a lot of forest land.”

Their frustrations stemmed from the perception that ruling political parties could break the law without facing repercussions, while when a Jana did the same, it was labelled as encroachment and resulted in dire consequences.

Systemic neglect and inadequate supports

Kurichiya narratives underscored the disconnect between the Government’s provisions and the community’s actual needs, indicating a lack of genuine community consultation. The Kurichiyar expressed gratitude for certain forms of Government support, such as purchasing organic agricultural produce at fair rates and providing monthly rations. During the koottam, Madiyan stated how the Government collected their organic produce, thereby preventing exploitation by outsiders. For example, he said, “*If we sell coffee directly in the market, they give us only 68 Rs per kg; however, NAMBARD gives us 80 Rs per kilogram.*”

Koottam participants also spoke about receiving rations every month that contributed to their living. However, when asked if the support they received from the Government was sufficient, a koottam participant stated, “*We have a lot of other concerns where we need a lot of support, but not even looked into.*” They felt the supports were inadequate and did not meet their needs. Throughout the research process, the Kurichiya reflected the lack of support for strengthening the Tharavadu system, promoting self-reliance, cultural revival, construction of houses, and seeking development on their own terms.

Additionally, the participants pointed out the contrast in the support provided and needed by the Government by referring to the poor execution of projects like MGNREGA. They criticised the poor coordination of MGNREGA works, citing examples like weeding during the rainy season, which they deemed ineffective and wasteful of taxpayer money. They suggested that the Government should utilise the MGNREGA works (MGNREGA laborers are usually locally sourced) to reinforce “*farming works*” within Kurichiya land. In doing so, Siddharthan suggested how the Government could purposefully source MGNREGA work that benefitted the community equally. He stated,

If they make these workers do the farm field works, coffee picking, manuring the coffee, it will benefit them, the Government and us. However, to be frank, this is not the right time to weed the land and see they are being told to do it. It does not benefit anyone.

This frustration reflected the Kurichiya’s concern over the wastage of taxpayer money, as they perceive these efforts as ineffective and ultimately futile.

The Kurichiya community emphasised the need for government regulations to guide housing initiatives for Jana. They noted disparities in housing within their villages, with some having homes while others lacked proper housing. Despite some individuals being approved up to three houses, many still did not have suitable living arrangements. They felt this situation

underscored the Government's irresponsibility in ensuring timely completion of construction projects. A koottam participant explained,

When the Government sanctions a house construction, but it's not completed within ten years, the Government go ahead and provide sanction to construct another house. However, even this new house often isn't built within the next ten years. The Government doesn't regulate this process, causing losses for both the Government and the Adivasi community.

Consequently, the Kurichiya participants highlighted concerns about unsustainable and inadequate government support, emphasising the importance of proper utilisation and oversight of resources to ensure their effectiveness.

Overall, while the Kurichiya expressed gratitude for the support provided to them, they also raised several concerns regarding the implementation of these supports. By highlighting instances where the support systems failed to benefit either the Government or the community, the above reflections contribute to identifying areas to enhance and strengthen the support systems.

“Just Vote-banks”: Kurichiya Experiences of the Government

Similar to Makkal's experiences, at various junctures of the research process, the Kurichiyar participants conveyed a sentiment of being treated as vote-banks by the Government. The Kurichiya expressed how various politicians only visited during the elections to seek votes by making false promises. Vella, during the in-depth interview, stated,

They come to us to make false promises, and they never get it done for us. They come to us to get the votes, and they promise us to build a house, road, bridge and everything... but in the end, they do nothing.

Manjesh, during the in-depth interview, asked, *“The Government should resolve our issues, right? What do we do if they chose not to?”* A koottam participant stated, *“The Government that comes term after a term will make false promises to the people to give legal rights over their land, and nothing happens.”*

Similarly, Madiyan explained that the party members came to support their land struggle movement during the elections. However, after the elections, the opposition party ordered the demolishing of all their belongings in the encroached forestland. He stated, *“We built our house initially there [points to a different area], and they demolished it. We were homeless then, and we organised and fought legally for over a year.”* However, during this time, he reported that no one had come to their rescue.

Siddharthan, during the in-depth interview, said that during the elections, the Government *“takes care of them”* and *“make false promises”*, while during all other times, they were faced with injustice; he stated,

Now recently in Attappadi, an Adivasi was killed for stealing food out of hunger. It was because he was hungry! This is the wrongdoing of the Government. So many people who sell gold and crores of money, aren't they living safely in this country as good Samaritans? All the corruption and scam doers are in the Government. However, they only arrest those who are less fortunate...

The Kurichiya voiced their frustrations, noting a consistent pattern of ill-treatment towards Jana, with exceptions made only during election periods when it served the political agenda.

Overall, the Kurichiya reported that the Government approached them as a source of votes during the election periods, after which they were neglected. Their observation about the disparities in the treatment of the less fortunate compared to individuals involved in corruption and scams reflected a broader sentiment of injustice and inequality within the Government's actions and priorities.

Outsider perspectives: How do we feel?

Amidst already feeling threatened by migrants and outsiders, as discussed earlier in the chapter, Kurichiya reported that their culture, practices, and way of living were treated as “*inferior*” by outsiders. Siddharthan, during the interview, said, “*they (refers to outsiders) always come and say that we are backward.*” A koottam participant concurred, “*The people from outside come and tell us that it was because we are following all practices just fully that our conditions are not improving. Some people believe this and follow the outsiders.*”

Similarly, another participant during the koottam stated,

So many [refers to outsiders] have even asked me why I am still doing this paddy cultivation, and they have suggested that I do some cattle farming instead. So many still come and tell our people this. They come and ask us to give them our farming... they say, give it to us for lease....and that it is not of any good to us... The others are responsible for us still struggling and not improving.

The Kurichiya observed that the younger generation started to develop a dislike for themselves and their traditional practices⁹¹. Consequently, many of their children had begun to emulate outsiders. Siddharthan noted that this trend led to many young Jana getting into trouble as they were influenced by outsiders. He said,

...now, when they go hunting, they try to bribe us by offering alcohol, betel leaves, and money. Only we know the routes inside the forest... Similarly, we are exploited in several ways by them... Sometimes, the Adivasi fall prey to their infidelity.

Similarly, Madiyan, during the koottam, stated,

Many of them have come here and asked us, why don't you cut all the trees and sell it? They have even offered us a market to sell it. We have strictly told them that this will not happen here. Some of them have even tried to lobby the Adivasi in cutting down the trees secretly to sell it in the market.

During the in-depth interview, Renji explained how outsiders often said that “*the Adivasi do not take a shower or wear clean clothes.*” However, during the koottam, a participant expressed, “*...we are the ones who do things so clean and serene. Even the Paniyar community maintain their cleanliness... but it is just that they wear the same clothes every day. This is because they have no money to buy new ones.*” Another participant added how the other children at school did not mingle with them due to “*wearing the same clothes,*” which sometimes used to be “*wet after washing.*”

⁹¹ Discussed earlier under the subheading Conflicts of younger generation: Where do I fit? (pg. 250).

In essence, the Kurichiya felt they were treated differently by outsiders. These challenges underscored the complex dynamics of cultural assimilation, economic coercion, and discriminatory perceptions faced by the Kurichiya community.

Bridged between the Government and Maoists

The Kurichiyar felt trapped between Government decisions and Maoist powers. They said the forests had become an “*unsafe place*” as Maoists lived in the forests. During the in-depth interview Vella stated that the Maoists did not harm the local Jana. Instead, the Maoists targeted outsiders who entered the forests for dishonest reasons or sometimes to reiterate that they needed to remain outside the forests. He stated,

If the outsiders like you come here and walk by yourself, they will abduct you. They will not harm us at all. When we asked them why there all these doing, they said they were trying to look after us and the forests. They tell us it is your right to look after the forests and not the Government's.

Due to this, throughout the fieldwork, different villagers took turns to remain with us until we left their ooru. During the fieldwork, many stated that the Maoists visited their homes sometimes for food or other essentials. They felt that the Maoists remained in the forests to protect Jana interests and rights over traditional land. However, the Kurichiya felt conflicted between a group of people who fiercely battled the Government using violence, sometimes killing innocent outsiders and their commitment towards the Government and justice system.

In summary, this section underscores the Kurichiya's interactions with the Government, showcasing how their voices went unheard, and their needs were neglected. Despite occasional

Government engagement during election periods, the participants highlighted a substantial gap between the support provided and their actual requirements. Caught in the middle of Maoist extremists and a Government who perceived them solely as vote banks, the Kurichiya expressed a sense of helplessness. This sentiment was compounded by their feeling of being viewed as inferior by outsiders, contributing to a negative perception of both the Government and external entities. These reflections underscore the persistent challenges faced by the Kurichiya in maintaining their cultural identity and sense of self. Despite their relentless efforts, they felt disillusioned by a system that failed to honour their values, while outsiders labelled them backward. This underscores the imperative of allowing the Kurichiya to self-determine their needs and rewrite the negative narrative surrounding their community. The upcoming section discusses the conflicts between the Kurichiya worldviews of sustainability and the initiatives of the Government furthering their experiences of environmental injustices.

Unsustainable Initiatives: Disconnection that led to Destruction

This finding presents the Kurichiya concerns about conservation and sustainability initiatives, highlighting how current trends led to environmental degradation following their exclusion. They expressed dissatisfaction with state-driven conservation strategies, especially regarding forest restrictions that excluded forest communities like Kurichiya from accessing forest resources. As a result, the following parts explore Kurichiya's perspectives on conservation and sustainability strategies, aligning with the study's objective to understand their worldview in this regard.

Unsustainable Forest Conservation and Jana Exclusion

The Kurichiya criticised several Government conservation approaches, which they deemed unsustainable and exclusionary. Their reflections centered around their frustrations at being excluded from the conservation process despite their extensive knowledge and stewardship of the forests. They felt there was “*no point in separating the people from the forests.*” When they freely wandered inside the forests, they pointed out that “*the counts of the animals never went low.*” However, due to the forest restrictions, they stated that “*the tiger and elephant poachers and sandalwood robbers populate the forests these days.*” Furthermore, the Kurichiya emphasised their commitment to protecting the forests, even without expecting any payment for their efforts. During the in-depth interview, Madiyan stated, “*even if they have not given us any authority over the forest, we are still doing our best to protect it.*” They highlighted how forest officers were appointed based on qualifications rather than experiential knowledge. Vella, during the in-depth interview, stated,

Many forest officers are appointed by the Government based not on their educational qualification; however, they do not know the forest... when the DFO (a district forest officer) came here to visit, we asked them many questions about the forests, and they did not know anything; instead, they blabbered something in English. We asked them to tell us the name of a tree there, and they did not know.

This lack of expertise led to reliance on the Kurichiya for guidance and conservation efforts. This was reflected by a koottam participant, “*they [refers to the forest officers] will not know what happens here unless we tell them.*” Therefore, the Kurichiya played a crucial role in forest conservation efforts, despite the lack of recognition or support from forest officials.

The Kurichiya expressed concerns about the Government's unsustainable conservation measures, yet their concerns were disregarded. A koottam participant stated, "*When Forest officers visit our area, I always remind them that neither they nor we planted these native trees, so we have no right to destroy them; instead, we should protect them.*"

However, as stated by another participant, the Government continued to plant "*economically viable trees like Acacia in the name of conservation*" that altered the ecosystem. Vella, highlighted the environmental impact with such practices during the koottam, by saying,

The Acacia tree draws much water and is tall because of which the grass often does not grow around it. Therefore, it is not reachable for elephants or buffaloes. Unlike the leaves of the native trees, their leaves do not decompose quickly either... they just remain there forever like plastic.

The Kurichiya also expressed frustration that the Government and outsiders often ignored their concerns about the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. Sabitha, during the photovoice, summarised the unsustainable outcomes by referring to the photo (Figure 6.10) she took,

A particular issue that we face is regarding the seepage of chemical and other fertilisers used by the outside community that lives around us. They even carelessly dump plastic and other wastes into our water bodies. They do not listen to us when we try to educate them. We often clean it up twice a year, and still, it is so much of waste! Many organisms live in the river, too, right? They all will die out if we continue to do this.

Figure 6.10 Photo by Sabitha (2020) from the photovoice project



Overall, there was a shared sentiment during the meeting that the community members, “*entered the forests to live and not destroy.*” This reflects the Kurichiya’s deep connection to the forests and their commitment to conservation despite facing restrictions on their access. The Kurichiya had taken on the responsibility of forest stewardship without seeking or expecting any benefits from the Government, illustrating how conservation was seamlessly integrated into their daily lives. Their kaavu system further enabled the protection of forest biodiversity⁹². However, the continuation of unsustainable practices by the Government without valuing the knowledge of these communities highlights a systemic failure to recognise traditional knowledge systems for conservation. The next section highlights how these the non-inclusive conservation measures have led to direct ecological consequences to Kurichiya.

⁹² Discussed under sub-theme Diminishing Tharavadu system (p. 242).

Impact of Unsustainable initiatives and Ecosystem deterioration

The participants emphasised that their exclusion from forests, endangered their traditional stewardship roles, eventually resulting in the State adopting several unsustainable forest management practices. These practices had resulted in adverse ecological impacts, significantly affecting their overall well-being.

Firstly, Kurichiya raised concerns about the impacts of climate change which they believed was a result of unsustainable State initiatives that degraded the environment. Venu, during the in-depth interview, reiterated this sentiment by stating,

In the past, we never used to have flood or landslides even with six months of consistent rain... but see now, these happen with just one single rain. Back then, there were trees preventing floods... but now we have check dams and huge potholes instead.

Another participant reminisced about how their livelihood and significant events which were intricately tied to the environment were impacted by climate change. She described their perception of time, likening a year to a day. She elaborated by explaining their belief that “*the sun sets from the time of Vishu⁹³ for up to six months and that the sun rises during Onam [the harvest festival of paddy]*”. She further expressed concerns about how their livelihood, which was inherently reliant on the weather, had become increasingly unpredictable.

Vishu marks the beginning of monsoon. It used to get so dark that it was hardly possible to see the sun in our time. It lasted for six months. By Onam, the rain ceases. Now, things have changed. In fact, after Vishu, we used to cultivate ragi, paddy, tapioca, and

⁹³ The festival that marks the beginning of sowing season or sometimes referred to as farmer’s new year.

yam... Most of the farming begins in Wayanad after Vishu. By Onam, we will be able to harvest all the produce. It is not possible to do all of that now. The weather has reversed. See, now we had had natural disasters from the last two consecutive years, right?

Furthermore, the loss of biodiversity was highlighted by an interview participant Madiyan, who recalled how in the past, when “*there was certain kind of birds that wakes*” them up for work and “*an insect that screeching closer to evening*” that suggested to them that it was time for bed. He added that these no longer existed,

The trees have been cleared widely, and there is no place for these insects to live on. Maybe it has gone to places where it is more suitable for them. Back then, many insects lived in the canopy of these trees. There were also many birds here. However, with trees being cleared and chemical insecticides being used, all the insects died, and the birds who fed on these insects gradually have died too. Similarly, honeybees are dying too.

The previous section also detailed how the uncontrolled use of pesticides had impacted their organic farming practices. Apart from these challenges, the Kurichiya also explained that since planting foreign trees like Acacia and cutting down native trees, the animals did not have enough fodder; they often entered their village scavenging for food. A Kurichiya elder, during the community meeting, recollected, “*in the past, the only time these bison come here was when they get chased by the tiger or lion.*” A koottam participant stated,

From the day we plant plantain, we must be there to guard our plants against the possible wildlife attacks. However, unfortunately, the government is not willing to help us with this. Now, the area is electric fenced, but still, we have elephants and bison invading our place... The bison came here and ate all the grass we saved for our cattle on the last day. So now, we do not have feed for our cattle.

The Kurichiya were profoundly concerned about the unsustainable conservation practices implemented by the Government and their detrimental impact on the environment and the livelihoods of Kurichiya communities, who were closely connected to their surroundings. These concerns underscored the urgent need for more sustainable conservation strategies that consider the perspectives and knowledge of communities like the Kurichiya, who have rich traditional knowledge of conservation. In summary, the Kurichiya participants expressed frustration with the Government's disregard for their knowledge of forest conservation, despite relying on them for protection and conservation efforts without compensation. The disconnection had led to the gradual destruction of the forests evidenced by climate change, crop failure, illegal poaching and cutting down native trees, and the annihilation of Indigenous agriculture, practices, and conservation approaches. Hence, the findings identify how sustainability and environmental injustice issues are interconnected.

Future Hopes and Aspirations

This theme synthesises Kurichiya reflections from the above findings to illustrate their vision for the future amidst experiencing various injustices and neglect. This aligns with a key objective of the study, aiming to develop a model for Jana development by analysing how they self-determine their needs, respond to struggles, and articulate future needs and aspirations.

Responses to Struggles

As echoed throughout the findings in the previous themes, the common responses of the Kurichiya towards the contemporary challenges included “*acceptance*,” “*resistance*,” and “*encroachment*.”

The Kurichiya demonstrated acceptance of certain injustices out of feeling helpless. Nevertheless, they also evidenced resistance through their advocacy for traditional land rights and continuation of sustainable practices in response to the negative stereotypes propagated by external entities like the Government and outsiders. These responses were rooted in their deep connection to their land and culture, driven by a desire to preserve it for future generations. These findings underscore the importance of understanding and addressing the challenges faced by Indigenous communities like the Kurichiya.

The Kurichiya’s resistance was evident in their resilience against the numerous challenges stemming from forest exclusion, as they strived to overcome these obstacles using their traditional practices, such as the Tharavadu system. Their responses highlight the complexities of navigating issues such as land rights, cultural preservation, and systemic injustices. Recognising and valuing their traditional knowledge and practices is crucial for implementing effective strategies that support their well-being and promote sustainable development. Additionally, there is a need for greater collaboration and inclusion of Jana voices in decision-making processes to ensure more equitable and respectful approaches to conservation and development initiatives.

Future Conservation

All the research participants expressed that they did not trust the Government's conservation strategies or outsiders. This distrust stemmed from their negative experiences of forest exclusion and the ongoing threat of eviction from their environment. While their opinions on working with outsiders and the Government varied, the common thread among their perspectives was a general distrust towards external entities. Despite this, during the in-depth interviews, two participants stated that they were optimistic about working collaboratively with the Government to protect the forests. Siddharthan, stated during the interview,

If it to protect our nature and move forward, we will be there in the front to guide and lead them. However, if it is destroying, whether related to farming or living... we will never agree. We cannot alter our environment or our practices to move forward.

While Vella acknowledged that the idea had potential if implemented properly, he also voiced concerns about the feasibility and potential challenges of putting it into practice.

Yes, we will, but we will think to have to think before we get into such partnerships as they may be good to us and then later take our land from us. We need to make sure if they are saying this for good or bad. If we are protected by law in such a collaboration, we will.

Two other participants strongly opposed any collaborative approaches as they had no good experiences in dealing with the Government or outsiders. Madiyan, during the koottam, opined,

No... never. The outsiders will come to us only to fulfil their hidden purpose. They have come here many times, especially Christians and Muslims. Some of them have even married off our children. I have always told them off. How can we trust someone who tries to take away our children? We have told them that this would not happen here at ease. Many of them have come here and asked us, why don't you cut all the trees and sell them? They have even offered us a market to sell it. We have strictly told them that this will not happen here. Some have even tried to lobby the Adivasi to cut down the trees secretly to sell them in the market. This will not happen among the Adivasi. We will stop these activities at any cost. We have told them that we live here, and this forest is our life.

Similarly, during the interview, Manjesh expressed that outsiders or the Government were not competent enough to care for the forests.

...the strategies devised by the outsiders to protect the forests are very poor and unsustainable. Moreover, see... we pay the price of it. It is because of us that this forest is still existing. Here, we can protect all sorts of trees. We do not trust or want people from outside to come here to look after our forest.

Overall, the Kurichiya felt that they should lead the conservation movement, and the Government and outsiders should follow them. However, fear and apprehension were evident among all the participants about the collaborative approach towards conservation and revival. They believed it was only possible by giving the forests back to the Jana.

Future hopes

The Kurichiya articulated their future hopes and aspirations for themselves and the sustenance of their community. Echoed throughout this chapter, the Kurichiya expressed their aspirations for a sustainable future centered around preserving their cultural heritage and achieving self-sufficiency. They emphasised the importance of traditional farming practices and suggested utilising government programs like MGNREGA for agricultural work to benefit both the community and the government. They also expressed a desire for their children to receive an education that respects and upholds their culture, lamenting the current educational systems disconnect from their traditions. Furthermore, they advocated for the return of forest management to their community, believing it would enable them to generate income while safeguarding the environment. In essence, the Moopan of the Aranyam village stated, *“We are welcoming the change, but we want it to be sustainable and beneficial for us as well as our nature.”* Despite their hopes for positive change, they remained skeptical due to years of without any progress.

In summary, this section underscores the community’s resilience in recognising gaps in existing support systems and proposing strategies for their collective welfare of the community and the environment. These findings are relevant as it highlights the community’s inherent strengths, thereby emphasising the importance of the Government’s receptiveness to their insights through active community engagement in policy implementation for Jana. Furthermore, the Kurichiya’s concerns highlight the urgent need for inclusive and community-centered conservation strategies that recognise and incorporate traditional knowledge and practices. The community suggested strategies for enhancing achieving their welfare which are further combined into a comprehensive model for Jana welfare in the subsequent discussion chapter.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presented the research findings from the Kurichiya community which explored the Kurichiya voices aligning with the research aims and objectives. As a result, the above themes and the sections captured the self-determined views of Kurichiya's experiences of injustices, their vision for the future, their worldviews that inform sustainability, and their proposition of support needed to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes.

The narratives identify the thematic domains encompassing Kurichiya past and pride, *vicchēdanam*, impacts of exclusion from forests, struggles with their socio-economic situation, living condition, hegemonic Government influences and outsider influences, unsustainable initiatives, and their future hopes and aspirations. These findings highlight the Kurichiya's strong cultural identity and deep connection to their land, contrasting with the fragmented sense of self experienced by the Makkal community due to colonial assimilation. Their profound attachment to the Wayanad hills framed the context of their experiences, from being forcibly removed from their traditional lands to living as refugees on their own territory, marking their beginning of environmental injustice experiences. The chapter delved into how post-colonial government policies, particularly forest restrictions, have exacerbated environmental injustices for the Kurichiya, restricting their access to forests and confining them to fixed locations. This exclusion led to socio-economic and cultural injustices, compromising their living conditions, and infringing upon their basic human rights. Despite these challenges, the Kurichiya demonstrated resilience through community-led systems like the Tharavadu system, emphasising the need for community-driven initiatives to address their issues. The reflections also highlighted the Kurichiya acceptance of these injustices out of a sense of helplessness,

underscoring the hegemonic approach of the government and the adverse effects of unsustainable initiatives due to lack of engagement with forest communities. Overall, the insights from the Kurichiya community shed light on the importance of Jana knowledge and community involvement in addressing contemporary environmental challenges and promoting Jana welfare. These findings contribute valuable insights for investigating the initial three research questions concerning the Kurichiya community and provides insights into the overall aim of framing their self-determined views for their welfare.

In the next chapter, a more in-depth exploration of these themes using green social work theory is undertaken to explore the underlying dynamics, implications, and potential avenues for addressing the multifaceted issues underscored in the results. Furthermore, by analysing Jana's self-determined views, the discussion chapter also considers how social workers can support and create spaces for Jana to achieve Jana's welfare.

Chapter Seven

Discussion

“There’s really no such thing as the ‘voicelessness’. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard.”

- Arundhati Roy

This chapter uses critical constructivist analysis to discuss the research findings, outlined in the previous two results chapters along with the overall aim, the research questions, and the literature. The chapter is presented in three sections. The first section reminds the reader of the overall aim and research questions that underpin the study. The second section constructs a dialogue between the research findings and literature to answer the research questions, while the third section details the study’s implications and recommendations.

Reflecting on the Beginning

The findings of the current study use a critical constructivist analysis to construct answers for the four research questions derived from the overall aim of this social work research, namely, “to transform the lives of the Jana of India by addressing the social and environmental inequities, thereby developing a community-based sustainable model of co-

existence in response to the current environmental crises.” The research questions that underpin the study include the following:

- i. What are the current social, environmental, and human rights violations that Jana faces?
- ii. How does Jana aspire and hope to envision their future?
- iii. How do Jana’s worldviews inform their relationship with land and conservation?
- iv. What is the community’s proposition on devising sustainable remedies to enhance the living situation in Jana and, at the same time, address the current global environmental crises?

The discussion below interprets Jana’s stories, presented as findings in the previous two chapters, along with the overall aim and research questions stated above. The following sections expand on the research questions by constructing dialogues between the research findings and literature using the theoretical grounding of green social work theory. Hence, green social work theory has dual purposes within this chapter; firstly, it captures the social and environmental injustices from Jana’s perspectives to develop community-led sustainable solutions. Secondly, it supports the study’s commitment to reviving social work practice in addressing social and environmental crises faced by Jana. The discussion follows the order of the research questions in the first half. In the latter section, the research expands on this study’s theoretical, practical, and educational implications.




Environmental, Social, and Human Rights

Violations faced by Jana

The first research question, “what are the current social, environmental, and human rights violations that Jana faces?” is an essential starting point for the research findings. By understanding the self-determined views, as experienced by Jana, this research question provides the foundation for this study that further identifies solutions to achieve the overall research aim. While the Contextual Background chapter⁹⁴ acknowledges the prevalence of environmental, social, and human rights violations towards Jana, the research findings confirm such distinctive experiences among the Makkal and Kurichiya. The discussion below employs a critical constructivist approach to examine colonisation literature, aiming to place the unique experiences shared by the participants within the more extensive Indigenous experiences from both historical and contemporary contexts. It is divided into the following three subsections: (i) environmental injustices, (ii) social injustices: denied land rights, denied social rights, and (iii) human rights violations. Figure 7.1 provides an outline of the key areas identified under each sub-section:

⁹⁴ Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43).

Figure 7.1 Outline of the key areas identified under environmental, social, and human rights violations

 <p>Environmental Injustices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forcible deconstruction of spaces of belonging and identity. 2. Commodification of land and displacement. 3. Unfair share of environmental risks and benefits. 	 <p>Social Injustices: Denied Land rights is denied social rights</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assimilation of Subsistence, Health, and educational systems. 2. Distributive unfairness: Access to basic resources. 	 <p>Human Rights Violations</p>
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Environmental injustices

Makkal and Kurichiya identified environmental injustices as the forcible destruction of spaces of belonging and identity, commodification of land and displacement, and incorporation of unsustainable practices. The subsections below consider Jana voices under each environmental injustice experience. In addition, they analyse the key findings in relation to colonisation literature. In doing so, the discussion draws similarities between the Jana and the Indigenous peoples worldwide.

Forcible deconstruction of spaces of belonging and identity

The key findings emerging from this research concerning forcible deconstruction of spaces of belonging and identity include: (1) Relevance of spaces of belonging and identity

within Jana’s environmental justice context, (2) Negating Jana’s spaces of belonging and identity to their land, and (3) Community efforts to maintain cultural identity. Table 7.1 presents the findings related to environmental injustices from the results chapter and the inferences drawn from it.

Table 7.1 Significant findings and inferences related to environmental injustices

Experiences of Environmental Injustices	Jana Voices	Inference
<p>Forcible deconstruction of sense of self and identity</p>	<p><i>Relevance of spaces of belonging and identity within environmental justice context:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makkal and Kurichiya shared stories of the continued struggles to reclaim their land, conveying a deep sense of belonging and responsibility. • Their voices reverberated powerful memory, knowledge about the forest resources, their natural responsibility to protect the forests, customary practices, and intimacy that they explained through references such as stewards or protectors of the forests. 	<p>The spaces of belonging and identity to land finds relevance in the environmental justice context.</p> <p>This finding is relevant as Jana voices emphasise that the traditional lands of Jana form spaces of belonging and identity, inseparable from them, their culture, and their spiritual identity.</p>
	<p><i>Negating Jana’s spaces of belonging and identity to their land:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systemic neglect: 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government lacks insight into the sense of belonging of Jana to their land. • Jana stated that the Government was reluctant to enact laws favouring returning land to Jana. <p>2. Negative stereotypes and assimilatory views:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana expressed that outsiders and the Government consider their relationship with the environment primitive and unclean. • There is an expectation from the Government for Jana to live like outsiders. • Jana's felt that the Government and outsiders viewed their ways of life with their environment as backward and inferior. <p>3. Impacts of negative stereotypes and assimilatory views:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana felt that such stereotypes impacted their sense of self from birth. • They see their children undergoing the same trauma. • Makkal refused to be referenced as Paniyar and did not want to share their story. 	<p>The post-independent governance structures disregarded the importance of Jana's sense of belonging.</p> <p>The research identified the prevalence of negative stereotypes of Jana. As such, the Government tended to compare Indigenous peoples to the general population requiring Jana to comply with racist structures by altering their ways to meet the dominant culture's standards.</p> <p>Due to the propagation of negative stereotypes of Jana since colonisation, a culture of silence and mutism prevailed among the Kurichiya and Makkal,</p>
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		resulting in poor self-concepts concerning belongingness and identity.
	<p><i>Community efforts to maintain cultural identity:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having learnt from their traumatic experiences, the Kurichiya elders teach children from a young age about their history, cultural practices, and relationship to traditional lands against the impacts of prevailing stereotypes and generalisations. By doing so, they uphold their identity as Kurichiya of Wayanadan Hills. • On the other hand, the Makkal struggles to maintain their cultural identity due to poverty. • Jana stated that no Government initiatives supported their cultural identity and sense of belonging. 	Jana were left solely to themselves to retain their identity in a state-centric system with little cultural tolerance.

The relevance of spaces of belonging and the identity of Jana to land demonstrate that both communities' strong sense of belongingness to the Wayanadan hills, reflecting their association with the forests that went beyond extracting resources to survive. Thus, Jana's strong sense of belonging was contingent on recognising the land they belonged to, which became part of how they identified themselves. Jana portray a sense of belonging comparable to different Indigenous communities worldwide whose relationships with nature and land often involve symbiotic and sacred representations and spiritual relationships with universalising notions such as mother Earth (Smith, 1998; Wilson & Peters, 2005). Hence, the traditional

lands of Jana, like other Indigenous people, form spaces of belonging and identity inseparable from them, their culture, and their spiritual identity. This finding is important as it extends the knowledge on articulating the concept of environmental justice within green social work theory to include spaces of belonging and identity to land.⁹⁵

The Table 7.1. further identifies that Jana's spaces of belonging and identity to their land were threatened through systemic neglect and perpetuation of negative stereotypes and assimilatory views. The findings concerning systemic neglect identify the post-independent Government's reluctance to acknowledge Jana's sense of belonging towards their land. The participants sharing aligns with the hypocrisy of the State in their prompt enactment of the Kerala Land Reformation Act, 1963, which led to largescale Jana land dispositions. However, the Kerala Scheduled Tribes Act 1975⁹⁶ meant to address the shortcomings of the 1963 Act remained unenacted for 21 years (Bijoy, 2001). Later, in 1996, the Government amended the Act to focus on resettling and rehabilitating the Jana instead of restoring their alienated land (Bijoy, 2001; Bijoy, 2003). Despite several legislative changes, the Government has not yet resettled, rehabilitated, or restored Jana lands. Such examples of willful neglect of Jana's deep connections to traditional land as well as their existence,⁹⁷ justify the participants sharing of feeling politically marginalised. In addition, such sharing also reflects the points made within the colonisation literature concerning the disregard of the postcolonial governance systems and international welfare organisations for Indigenous spaces of belonging and identity to their traditional land (Grieves, 2009; OECD, 2014; Sangha et al., 2015). This means that just as for

⁹⁵ Discussed in Chapter Eight- Conclusion, under the section Implications and recommendations (p.370).

⁹⁶ The legislation sought to prevent Jana from losing their existing land and restore the land that they previously lost to others since independence.

⁹⁷ Discussed in Chapter three- Green Social Work: Environmental justice, equity, and sustainability, under the section Addressing Human Rights Violations (p.113).

Indigenous peoples worldwide, acknowledging the sense of belonging and identity to the traditional lands of Jana in India is key to addressing their environmental justice movements

The findings confirm the prevalence of negative stereotyping of Jana's relationship to their environment by the Government and outsiders. For example, the Kurichiya reported that the outsiders often disregarded their traditional organic farming practices, instead outsiders pressured them to adopt conventional chemical farming methods solely focused on profit, thereby undermining their traditional values that connected to their land. This finding relates to mainstream society and governance systems' views that Jana's association with land is exotic, primitive, and backward (Chandra, 2017; Shah, 2010). Considering these findings and the colonisation literature (Das Gupta, 2020; Prasad, 2022), this study asserts that such derogatory stereotypes that emerged since colonisation to justify the imperial agenda continue to manifest in contemporary perceptions of Jana identity (like Indigenous peoples worldwide). Hence, by stereotyping Jana's knowledge, interrelationship, and interconnectedness to the forests as primitive and savagery, these findings identify how systemic views and expectations are an attempt to assimilate Jana into mainstream society. This finding concurs with Shah's (2010) assertion that governance systems exoticise and patronise Jana as those needing long-term protection and development equal to mainstream societies. Apart from the participant sharing, the field-notes also detail that those in power expressed the need for Jana to "*live like others*" by giving up their traditional ways of living to develop. Hence, by portraying Jana negatively, the systems used comparison of Jana with the general population, implying the necessity for Jana communities to alter their ways to meet dominant cultural standards.

Table 7.1. also refers to the impacts of Jana's poor sense of belonging and identity to the land. This evidence from the current study resonates with Indigenous literature that shows how harmful stereotyping of the Indigenous sense of belongingness and identity resulting in

negative emotional experiences, including anxiety, depression, anger, sadness, and loneliness (Carpiano & Hystad, 2011; Liu et al., 2014). Comparably, Fanon (1991) found that the victims of racism internalised such negative schemas with prolonged exposure, negating their self-embodiment. One example from the current study is the perpetual reference to Makkal as “paniyar”, which means slave tribes by the governance system, outsiders, and the community. Understandably, the Makkal showed reluctance to be referred to as Paniyar and refused to share their history. As such, the findings support Freire’s (1993) claim that the prolonged exposure to this oppression and the impact of negative emotions results in those impacted people in accepting the injustices inflicted on them. Hence, the prevalence of a culture of silence and mutism among the Kurichiya and Makkal resulted in poor self-concepts concerning belongingness and identity.

The findings also present the community’s efforts to maintain a cultural identity while overcoming the disadvantages of systemic neglect, negative stereotypes and generalisations. As illustrated in Table 7.1 the Kurichiya worked hard to develop cultural identity among their younger children but struggled to maintain this due to poverty. The depiction of how Makkal felt inferior to Kurichiya signified the need for a developed sense of place⁹⁸ in a community’s engagement and characteristics (Bruno et al., 2020). Furthermore, the possession of a strong cultural identity and sense of belonging promotes resilience, enhances self-esteem, engenders pro-social coping styles serving as a protective factor against mental health symptoms, to achieve life balance and protection against adverse life impacts, including intergenerational trauma and loss and buffers discrimination-induced distress (Bals et al., 2010; Black, 2024; Gee et al., 2014; Stephane et al., 2017; Turner & Tajfel, 1986; Usher et al., 2021). Hence, by

⁹⁸ A sense of place consists of an inter-relationship between spatiality, sociality, and historicity, where it is both the context and product of practice.

comparing both communities, the research demonstrates how the strong cultural connectedness of Kurichiya, compared to Makkal, minimised some of the distress caused by colonisation. The findings of the two communities highlight the relevance of upholding Jana’s sense of belonging and identity to their traditional lands in addressing Jana’s community-led development. Most importantly, a key finding from this study is that the Jana were left to themselves to retain their identity in a state-centric system with little cultural tolerance.

Commodification of land and displacement

This research found that the themes under commodification of land and displacement included (1) Relevance of community land belongingness over ownership patterns; (2) Negating Jana’s traditional land ownership patterns; (3) Community efforts to maintain traditional land ownership patterns. Table 7.2 summarises the findings under each subheading as Jana voices and the inferences drawn from the Jana voices:

Table 7.2 Summary of findings under commodification of land

Experiences of injustices	Jana Voices	Inference
Commodification of land and displacement	<p><i>Significance of community land belongingness over ownership in the environmental justice context</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jana felt alienated from their land through the introduction of land ownership patterns and forest restrictions. 	The Jana experienced the formalisation of their lands since colonisation resulting in forcible dissociation, physically and spiritually, mandated by law, making them refugees in their land.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makkal and Kurichiya participants said they did not “own” the forest or land but instead “belonged” there. • They continued to fight for their land to oppose ownership patterns and forest restrictions. • Kurichiya had been rebelling against such policies since colonisation. 	
	<p><i>Negating Jana’s traditional land ownership patterns</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postcolonial land policies and restrictions • Makkal and Kurichiya expressed that after independence, “at some point”, the introduction of title deeds and imposition of forest restrictions meant they had to settle in Government-designated land. • Legally permitted illicit land confiscations • Makkal and Kurichiya recollected stories of how the migrants used dishonest means to confiscate Jana’s lands. • Jana expressed frustrations over the Government’s reluctance to return the land in 1975 with the change in legislation. 	<p>The post-independent Government continued to sideline Jana by perpetuating colonial land ownership policies and restrictions without consultation with Jana.</p>

	<p><i>Community efforts to maintain traditional land ownership patterns</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana tried to maintain community land ownership patterns despite the constraints of the law. • Makkal has not partitioned the land provided to them for nearly a century since independence between the nearly 30 families and refers to it as their common land. However, on the other hand, the Kurichiya have Tharavadu common land, which belongs to the community. 	<p>Jana demonstrated the potential to maintain traditional ownership and governance systems. Such strengths can be the foundation for future participatory development initiatives for Jana.</p>
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As detailed in the Table 7.2, Jana’s responses exemplified their precedence for traditional land belongingness over the prevailing State and private land ownership patterns. This is evidenced by the Kurichiya community’s efforts to safeguard community land under the Tharavadu system and the Makkal’s lack of private ownership on their community-owned land. This finding demonstrates the importance of community land belongingness over ownership in environmental justice. Indigenous experiences worldwide present similar debates against ownership patterns by embodying and upholding their strong values and relationships to the environment (Garrity, 1999; Kelly & Peluso, 2015). As a result, both Jana and Indigenous worldviews find commonality in viewing land as spaces of belonging instead of a commodity. The Western views of the commodification of nature commenced with colonising different colonies and the growth of capitalism (Arneil, 1996; Banner, 2005). Some colonial strategies used by the British to appropriate Jana land included the introduction of private land ownership and forest restrictions. However, the research findings and colonisation literature confirm that such colonial strategies continue to take centre stage today. The literature review has also not

identified any countries that have entirely decolonised such colonial views that commodify land. Nevertheless, the Jana, like Indigenous peoples worldwide, continue to face land formalisations resulting in forcible dissociation, physically and spiritually, mandated by law, making them refugees in their land. Considering this finding, this research emphasises the need to articulate environmental injustice from a historical context of colonisation to rectify such colonised views of land ownership over the concept of traditional land belongingness of Jana.

Table 7.2 identifies that the postcolonial land policies and restrictions led to Jana's land appropriations, as reported by Makkal and Kurichiya participants, where they were forced to live in designated areas by restricting access to forests. The findings indicate that the Government forced Jana to settle on designated land by imposing restrictive laws. Such sharing illustrates how the Lockean values of land ownership continued to influence the governance of Jana post-independence, similar to the circumstances of other Indigenous peoples worldwide (Domínguez & Luoma, 2020; Wynyard, 2019). The Government's attempts at sedentarisation of Jana raises two significant issues. Firstly, the Jana worldview of living in harmony with the environment (as explained in the previous section) contradicts the State perspective that endorses the privatisation of land. In essence, the disconnect between local perspectives on the environment and the primacy of land ownership as a statutory expectation of the Government has resulted in the non-recognition of Indigenous values of belonging (Bell et al., 2008). Secondly, Jana's lack of awareness of the legislation that impacted them, especially within the Makkal community, questions the effectiveness of Jana's engagement with the law and instead indicates the assimilation of Jana's ways of living by the Government. This finding is congruent with literature that asserts that the Jana had little knowledge about the legislation that impacted them the most (Kjosavik & Shanmugaratnam, 2021). Hence, the Government disregarded Jana's views of land belongingness and tried to assimilate them by imposing the laws made without community engagement. By underlining the relevance of practical Jana's engagement

with the law to self-determine their needs and goals for development, this research concludes that the Government sidelines Jana to pursue their capitalist interests.

Another way by which Jana's traditional land ownership patterns were compromised was through unlawful land confiscations by migrants. For example, the Kurichiya described how the construction of roads enabled migrants to confiscate Jana land, where migrants would sometimes bribe them or manipulate the Kurichiya's practice of distancing themselves from outsiders by moving closer to them, prompting the Kurichiya to relocate further away. Jana's sharing of land confiscation by migrants aligns with Thurston's⁹⁹ (1897) ethnography, where he stated that the migrants treated Jana ruthlessly by capitalising on their trust and generosity to appropriate land. Even after independence, faulty implementation of the Kerala Land Reform Act 1963 led to settlers' appropriation of Jana land (Bijoy, 2001). The migrants misused the legislation by temporarily leasing Jana land to register themselves as tenants with the authority to obtain title deeds. Realising the resulting downside of the 1963 legislation, the Government passed the Kerala Scheduled Tribe Act (Restriction of transfer of lands and restoration of alienated land) 1975¹⁰⁰. The Government did not implement the legislation due to pressure from settlers, who were politically powerful compared to Jana. The Government also amended the original Kerala Scheduled Tribes (Restriction of Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Land) Act, 1975 in 1996 to resettle the dispossessed Jana instead of returning their land entitlements as claimed by the initial act. The Moopan of the Kurichiya village asked, "*Why were we not given our land back in 1975?*" Their question remains valid

⁹⁹ Thurston's is one of the oldest available ethnographies that discusses about Jana during the period of colonisation.

¹⁰⁰ The Act nullified any appropriation of Jana land by the migrants/settlers from 1960 and promised restoration of any appropriated land under the protection by the Government. This act also further prevented selling and buying of Jana land.

as the Government promptly enacted the Kerala Land Acquisition Act, 1963, which led to the confiscation of Jana land by migrants. However, the 1975 Act to revive their lost lands remained on paper. Independence for Jana had consequently resulted in an equally colonial Government that continued to sideline Jana by perpetuating colonial land ownership policies, restrictions, and legislations that prompted land confiscation without community engagement.

Both communities shared how they maintained traditional land management systems within the constraints of law as much as possible. In maintaining such land management practices the communities continued to demonstrate resilience including supporting people's livelihoods and offering housing to those experiencing homelessness. Instead of supporting and strengthening such community-based initiatives, the Government felt that secure tenure systems could only arise with private land titles (Mousseau, 2020).

To move forward, this study calls for progressive discussions around how the Government can engage Jana in the decision-making of the forests. One hallmark example is from Aotearoa, New Zealand, around co-governance arrangements for natural resource management with tangata whenua (Parsons et al., 2021). The co-governance arrangements between the Māori iwi Ngāti Maniapoto and the New Zealand Government entail joint governance and management of the Waipā River. These new governance structures are empowering Ngāti Maniapoto to pursue environmental justice by addressing significant issues such as distributive inequities, insufficient participatory parity, and inadequate recognition of Māori governance approaches. Likewise, in India, Article 244(2) of the constitution permits the creation of autonomous district councils by designating the areas as tribal areas by law. The Government has provided such status to only four states with a high Jana population in India, which does not include Kerala. For example, Jana areas are treated as tribal areas under Schedule IV to give them the authority to form autonomous district councils to make

environmental decisions. Thereby, the research findings demonstrate the need to build systems incorporating the diversity of traditional ownership and governance, focusing on supporting Indigenous peoples instead of assimilating them into the capitalist world.

Overall, the research findings suggest that the apogee of Jana land politics has relied on recognising their traditional land rights. It shows how, since colonisation, the State exercised various measures, including forest restrictions and land privatisation, to gain control over their land. This Government commodification of land contradicts Jana's views of belonging and identity with the environment. Despite the challenges arising from the Government's unsupportive stance, both communities continued to practice traditional land management even within the constraints of restrictive laws. This study urges the Government to treat the Jana under Article 244(2), which allows them to make decisions about their environment, thereby acknowledging their sense of belonging to the land. This study also recommends that the Government utilise global indigeneity and Indigenous politics¹⁰¹ to further discussions around co-governance systems to recognise the Jana worldview of attachment to land territory within a historical context of colonisation.

Unfair share of environmental risks and benefits

The Kurichiya and Makkal communities' participants disclosed an inequitable distribution of environmental risks and benefits that significantly affected their daily lives, even

¹⁰¹ Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43) explores the contested nature of the term "indigeneity" in the Indian context.

though they solely contributed to the conservation of the forests. The summarised findings are encapsulated in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 Findings under the theme unfair share of environmental risks and benefits

Environmental injustices	Jana voices	Inference
Unfair share of environmental risks and benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana faced significant dangers from natural hazards, wildlife attacks, and lack of access to essential resources. • They related their vulnerabilities to the illegitimate felling of trees and killing of wild animals, their exclusion from conservation practices, and the introduction of unsustainable developmental initiatives without community consultation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana bears a disproportionate burden of environmental deterioration relative to its benefits.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jana participants expressed frustrations over Government initiatives to plant non-native trees like teak and acacia, which have more commercial value than native varieties. These have increased wild-animal attacks in their residences, destroying their crops and produce. Similarly, they stated how the construction of dams in their areas leads to displacement and increased vulnerability to hazards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unsustainable economic development measures of the Government without community participation puts Jana at risk of environmental hazards. In addition, the forest restrictions and policies deprived Jana of environmental benefits.

Despite inhabiting resource-dense forests, the participants felt they faced a disproportionate burden of environmental dangers compared to benefits. The study revealed

that Jana participants identified various instances, including heightened occurrences of landslides in their areas due to the indiscriminate felling of trees for commercial purposes. Additionally, they pointed out issues such as depletion of groundwater and wildlife invasion into villages because of the absence of natural feed in the forests caused by the cultivation of foreign trees like Acacia and the cutting down of native trees. Moreover, the increased use of chemical fertilizers by outsider communities was mentioned as a factor leading to new plant diseases and chemical seepage affecting their agricultural fields. These are just a few examples of the disproportionate environmental impacts highlighted by Jana communities in the study. From an international perspective, Dominelli (2012) also highlights with rising sea levels, tidal surges, coastal erosion, and inundations, Indigenous peoples experience dynamic and unpredictable environmental changes due to climate change. The strong relationship between Indigenous peoples and their place provides foundations for their living systems, enabling them to identify and experience environmental changes (Ford et al., 2020). As such, climate change, deforestation, pollution, development, and biodiversity loss pose severe threats to the Indigenous peoples due to their environmental dependence (Jerez, 2021). Hence, this analysis concludes that Jana assume a disproportionate burden of environmental impacts relative to its benefits.

Despite knowledge about the environment and their proximity to the forests, the Governments have continued to exclude Jana from conservatory practices, resulting in unsustainable developmental initiatives without community consultation. Such measures prioritise unimpeded economic development over sustainability (Mawle, 2010). The implications of unsustainable Government-imposed initiatives and their impacts show how unsustainable growth impacts the poor and powerless the most, resulting in gross

environmental injustices¹⁰². Therefore, developing a framework that connects sustainable development to environmental justice is crucial (Redclift, 2005). Creating such a framework is important due to the implications on the lives and livelihoods of millions of residents living by these unsustainable developments (Ruhl, 1999). The research findings and the literature exemplify how environmental degradation and violations of Jana's environmental rights co-exist with the continuation of capitalist modes of economic development. Hence, this research recommends focusing on sustainable economic development that locates the decision-making capacity locally to encourage meaningful participation of the public while advocating these advancements¹⁰³.

Overall, the findings of this section include: (1) Spaces of belonging and identity connected with the land are significant in addressing Jana's environmental injustice; (2) Jana's spaces of belonging and identification with their traditional lands face the threat of destruction through Government neglect, assimilatory views, and perpetuation of harmful stereotypes; (3) Long term impacts from point (2); (4) Community-led efforts to retain their identity. This study agrees with Mader (2021) suggestion that the system including the Government should empower Jana by providing opportunities to revive their spirituality and connection to their land. For this change to occur, the Government must acknowledge the connection of Jana to their land, acknowledging the enduring sense of traditional belonging that persists despite the historical impacts of colonisation and ongoing injustices. One effective approach is to acknowledge Jana as Indigenous by acknowledging their traditional connection and feeling of belonging to the land on an international level. This study also identifies the potential of

¹⁰² Discussed in Chapter two- Contextual Background (p.43) and Chapter three- Green Social Work: Environmental justice, equity, and sustainability (pg.94).

¹⁰³ Discussed in Chapter eight- Conclusion, as implication under Strength-based Jana Framework (p.377).

engaging in global Indigenous politics as a platform for Jana to advocate for decolonising colonial narratives with their self-determined perspectives.¹⁰⁴ This study also emphasises the importance of the Government endorsing community-led initiatives and supporting them in resolving the issues. For instance, the Government could allocate funding and resources for Jana to undertake cultural practices to enhance their sense of belonging and identity to their land. Collaborating with the community, the Government can identify ways to integrate these practices into the welfare systems.

Social Injustices: Denied Land Rights, Denied Social Rights

Both Makkal and Kurichiya recognised changes in the assimilation of their subsistence, health, and educational systems and access to essential resources as their experiences of social injustices. Considering the research findings with colonisation literature, this study analyses how Jana's unaddressed environmental experiences heralded their rising social injustices. This section discusses social injustices related to (1) Assimilation of Subsistence, Health, and Educational systems and (2) Distributive Unfairness: Access to Basic Resources.

¹⁰⁴ Discussed in Chapter eight- Conclusion, under Implications and Recommendations (p.370).

Assimilation of Subsistence, Health, and Educational systems

The upcoming section delves into the social injustices faced by Jana as their livelihood, health, and educational systems are assimilated into dominant cultural norms. The findings related to the theme of assimilation of subsistence, health, and educational systems are summarised in Table 7.4:

Table 7.4 Findings related to the theme assimilation of subsistence, health, and educational systems

Social Injustice experiences	Jana's sharing how their current social circumstance evolved post-independence	Inference
Assimilation of Subsistence Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makkal were forced to become daily-waged workers, and Kurichiya became independent farmers to meet their needs. • Due to rising market demands, Kurichiya struggled to maintain its organic farming and self-sufficiency ethos. • They were no Governmental measures to rehabilitate the Jana post-independence. 	The pressure to conform to the global economy and the inability to undertake traditional subsistence living placed Jana at a disadvantage compared to others.
Assimilation of Health systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana expressed fear towards Western health systems, which were not holistic and lacked the serenity and spirituality of healing practice. They felt that only those with money could practice medicine and access healthcare systems. They raised 	The prevalence of institutional discrimination that sidelines Jana and inequitable access to health resources have led to poor health outcomes.

	<p>concerns over the current health system's monetary bias.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of equitable access to available health systems. • Lack of Governmental support to develop traditional medicine. 	
<p>Assimilation of Educational systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional educational systems (Gurukula) based on experiential and holistic educational systems based on localised knowledge for living in harmony with the environment no longer existed. • The current educational system perpetuates negative stereotypes about Jana. • Jana does not trust the current educational system. • Most Makkal, who dropped out of school, often worked with their parents on daily-waged jobs. The local school principal and headmaster spoke about the failure of Government and school-led awareness campaigns and initiatives to produce positive outcomes for communities like Makkal. 	<p>Perpetuating negative stereotypes of Jana through educational systems and destroying their traditional education systems have led to poor educational outcomes.</p>

The findings highlight the assimilation of Jana's subsistence patterns, reflecting the disruption of their traditional ways of living with the environment, compelling them to seek alternative ways to sustain their livelihoods. This disruption aligns with broader patterns observed among Indigenous communities worldwide whose traditional subsistence patterns

were altered with colonisation and the rise of capitalism (Royal Commission of Aboriginal People, 1993). As Magubane (1979, p.3) notes, colonisation created a foundation for the “birth and maturation of the capitalist socioeconomic system,” profoundly transforming Indigenous livelihoods, as evidenced in this research. This transition was rooted in various market-based assumptions that Indigenous practices were inefficient and backward, thereby failing to meet the demands of industrialisation (Kuokkanen, 2011; Magubane, 1979; Royal Commission of Aboriginal People, 1993; Tauli-Corpuz, 2001). The implication of this was that Jana and other Indigenous communities who were once self-sufficient economies could no longer remain self-sufficient in post-colonial times (Dick et al., 2022; Kuokkanen, 2011; Royal Commission of Aboriginal People, 1993; World Bank, 2004).

This systemic disruption is evident in broader socioeconomic statistics which indicate that Indigenous peoples, including Jana, are three times more likely to live in poverty than other populations (ILO, 2019). Therefore, the pressure to conform to the global economy and the inability to undertake traditional subsistence living placed Jana at a socio-economic disadvantage compared to others. These challenges are reflected in the research findings that indicate how exclusion from forests forced the Makkal and Kurichiya to seek alternative livelihoods. Makkal relied on daily wage labour while Kurichiya attempted to maintain self-sufficiency through organic farming after losing their traditional income source. This finding relates to the poor socioeconomic indicators of Indigenous peoples absorbed into the global market economy post-colonially (Dick et al., 2022; Magubane, 1979; Royal Commission of Aboriginal People, 1993). Hence, this research attributes the poor socioeconomic situation of Jana to the impacts of colonisation including the appropriation of their land and ways of living, which forced their integration into capitalist systems.

The research findings align with colonisation literature, which contends that colonisation employed Western education as a target and tool, making dismissive and derogatory references to Jana (Chandra, 2017; Shah, 2010; Vazhakunnan, 2021) and other Indigenous ways of living (Pihama & Lee-Morgan, 2019). It resulted in devaluing and destroying the localised education systems, replacing it with a system of education complicit with the colonial endeavour (Hutching & Lee-Morgan, 2016; Smith, 1998). Unfortunately, even after independence, the dominant educational system failed to incorporate Indigenous Jana culture, knowledge forms, language, and traditions (Veerbhadranaika et al., 2012; Vishnoi, 2012). The participants' narratives resonated with these experiences, uncovering that the educational system not only neglected to offer essential knowledge about Jana but sometimes even provided inaccurate information about themselves and their agricultural practices. Such shortcomings frequently left the younger generation in a state of conflict between the two contrasting worlds. Relatedly, the research findings concur with the UN-DESA (2023) report on education, which identifies how the current educational system perpetuates negative stereotypes of Jana alongside the prevalence of ethnic discrimination. This is further substantiated by literature that confirms that the governance systems' measures did not achieve Jana's localised and holistic educational experiences marginalising them (CARE, 2018; GOI, 2014; UN-DESA, 2023). To overcome the institutional biases in education, Jana identified the need to change the colonial rhetoric prevalent in the educational systems, which conveyed their culture as primitive. They also discussed the possibility of reviving the Gurukula system and the need for communities to review information conveyed through educational systems to test its authenticity. Since the communities identified these as the significant barriers to trusting educational systems, the research recommends communities review the information about Jana in educational materials to build trust. It may also be helpful

to conduct future research to support reviving the Gurukul system that provided local and culturally bound holistic learning opportunities.

Similarly, the findings on assimilating traditional health systems identified critical points such as Jana's mistrust towards Western healthcare systems and unequal access to health systems. The findings from this study indicate that Jana's mistrust of Western healthcare systems stems from their lack of connection to it. Moreover, they voiced how they felt Western knowledge disregarded their traditional systems, despite making remarkable achievements. One such illustrative example was how the Kurichiya shared they were able to support a patient who was deemed unable to walk by Western medical professionals, yet "*they were able to walk again*" with their traditional methods¹⁰⁵. The findings suggest that Jana's mistrust towards the Western healthcare systems emanated from Western medicine's disdain for traditional medicinal knowledge and practices. This mirrors other Indigenous cultures' experiences of colonisation which documents that Western educational and medicinal bodies regarded Indigenous medicine as unscientific, backward, and even prohibited ceremonial practices in some colonies like Canada and New Zealand (Bollen, 2011; Hill, 2003). This dismissive attitude towards Indigenous health approaches was identified as one of the reasons for Jana's poor engagement with health services. These findings align with literature identifying poor health and well-being outcomes for Indigenous peoples and Jana (Chakraborti, 2018; Guimond et al., 2007). This study also notes that appropriation of traditional medicinal knowledge through biopiracy¹⁰⁶ co-occurs with disregarding such practices as unscientific and backward.

¹⁰⁵ Discussed in Chapter six- Battling Lives of Injustices- The Warriors or Kurichiya (p.229).

¹⁰⁶ Unauthorised appropriation of knowledge and genetic resources from Indigenous communities by individuals or institutions seeking monopoly through patents and intellectual property.

Furthermore, Jana's concerns about the inequitable access to the current health systems¹⁰⁷ remain relevant in India amidst several reports from participants in this study of families carrying the sick or deceased (for several kilometres) to their villages from hospitals, and vice versa, due to not having money to pay for ambulance services or the lack of any roading infrastructure. Figure 7.2 is from the Indian Express newspaper showing an incident in Odisha where a Jana carried his deceased wife from the hospital to the village with his daughter (Khan, 2017).

Figure 7.2 A Jana carrying his deceased wife back to his village (Khan, 2017)



Overall, the failed recognition and advancement of Indigenous medicine and knowledge, alongside the forcible incorporation of Western medicine and inadequate access to available health facilities have contributed to disturbing health outcomes for Jana in India (Chakraborti, 2018; Gee et al., 2014; Griffiths et al., 2016; Guimond et al., 2007)¹⁰⁸. Hence, this research identifies the need to acknowledge the traditional medicinal systems, protect traditional medicinal knowledge against biopiracy, and take measures to develop inclusive healthcare systems to overcome institutional racism. A paradigm shift is significant for change;

¹⁰⁷ Elaborated in the next section- Distributive unfairness: Access to basic resources (p.321).

¹⁰⁸ The fieldwork was conducted at the onset of the COVID19 pandemic, and it remains unclear how the pandemic may have subsequently influenced or altered the views and experiences shared during the study.

this study calls for policy changes to enable Jana's leadership to self-determine goals and solutions. One such example can be drawn from the He Korowai Oranga- Māori Health Strategy¹⁰⁹ in New Zealand that includes Māori leadership to overcome the Māori health disparities. Furthermore, in line with the UNDRIP Article 24¹¹⁰, the present study also recommends that the Government allow Jana's traditional medicinal knowledge systems to progress. Such opportunities could be provided by encouraging research on traditional medicines to test their validity and progress further.

Distributive Unfairness: Access to Basic Resources

The Makkal and Kurichiya participants' sharing of their everyday lives demonstrated vast disparities in accessing essential resources such as land, food, water, electricity, health, education, and road and transport facilities. Table 7.5 summarises the social disadvantages conveyed by the participants throughout the research. The table also links to national and international literature.

¹⁰⁹ He Korowai Oranga outlines the Government's vision for Māori health; pae ora (healthy futures), mauri ora (healthy individuals), whānau ora (healthy families), and wai ora (healthy environments).

¹¹⁰ UNDRIP Article 24 affirms the rights of Indigenous peoples to their traditional medicines and health practices, and to all social and health services. Although not a legally binding agreement, UNDRIP encourages nation states to comply and implement measures to support and uphold its provisions.

Table 7.5 Summary of significant issues faced by Jana

Voices of the participants	Living Conditions	Comparison to National and International Literature
<p>Landlessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest restrictions and migrants appropriating the land that belonged to them. • Rise in population and no land to accommodate the growing population. • Failure of the Government to put the land distribution law into practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana lives in compact spaces (homes in an area of 162 square meters), sometimes with more than five persons. • Encroached forest land and lived in fear of eviction by the forest department. • Transient living conditions, living in the forests for a few months and returning to the village before the monsoons. 	<p>As discussed in the previous section, introducing land ownership patterns and policies to displace the Jana and the Indigenous communities rendered them landless. In India, land vulnerabilities faced by Jana increased between 1987 to 2011, rendering nearly two-thirds of the population landless (Kujur et al., 2020). Comparably, the United Nations reports that Indigenous peoples face an increased threat of eviction from their ancestral lands. Even peaceful efforts by the Indigenous peoples to exercise control over their traditional lands have resulted in accusations of treason and terrorism.</p> <p>Landlessness reads in line with the introduction of land ownership policies.</p>
<p>Cultural Dismembering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Disconnection. 	<p>Land alienation of Jana is linked with cultural genocide, and this</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural deprivation and appropriation due to separation from the forests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erosion of cultural practices that also inform their sense of self and belongingness. 	<p>destruction is largely ignored in mainstream development (Joseph & Beegom, 2017). Grieves (2009) identified cultural association and spirituality as essential determinants of welfare under threat by dissociating the Indigenous peoples from their land.</p>
<p>Poverty and Food insecurity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot access forest produce due to forest restrictions. • Precarity in livelihood patterns. • Climate change-related impacts on farming. • Insufficient ration (mostly rice grains) through Public Distribution System. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty and hunger. • Dependency on inadequate Government rations. • Climate change results in a loss in farming, resulting in food insecurity. 	<p>As mentioned in the previous section, due to the dependence of the Jana and Indigenous peoples on their land, dissociation from their land also meant dissociation from their subsistence patterns, eventually leading to poverty and food insecurities. As per the Socioeconomic Census in 2011, nearly 79 per cent of rural Jana households are considered poor (Census India, 2011). Skinner et al. (2013) referred to Native Americans to state how they struggled with the native force and the traditional food cropping and sharing habits that helped them manage food insecurity and poverty struggles.</p>
<p>Lack of access to road and transport system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children must walk through the forests for several hours each day 	<p>The Governments have sidelined the areas inhabited by Jana and the Indigenous peoples from ensuring</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated living and the Government's negligence in constructing roads and providing public transport to Jana areas. 	<p>due to the lack of road and transport systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in accessing essential health services, including attending a medical emergency. Isolation from any services during any natural hazards or natural disasters. 	<p>adequate road and transport systems. For example, a recent habitation survey carried out by the Integrated Tribal Development Agency in the 11 Jana mandalas of Vishakhapatnam identified 978 doli habitations (out of 3800 villages) with about 3700 km of no roads and about 87 per cent of the region have no access to any public transport systems (Oommen, 2021).</p>
<p>Lack of access to Water and Electricity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to living in encroached forest lands due to landlessness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having to walk several kilometres to fetch water for everyday use. Impacts the children's education as they cannot do any schoolwork at home. 	<p>The 2011 Government of India Census data reveals that only 14 per cent of the tribal population have access to a source of clean drinking water within their homes, only 17 per cent have access to bathing facilities within their homes, and only 46 per cent of the Jana households have electricity supply (Anand, 2017; Census India, 2011; Seshadri & Ramakrishna, 2018).</p>
<p>Difficulty in accessing health and education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in accessing road and transport services. Affordability. Social exclusion (feeling disconnected from the system that devalues them). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school dropout rates among Jana. Poor engagement with the health systems. 	<p>The health and educational statistics suggest that Jana lags far behind the other mainstream population (CARE, 2018; Das et al., 2011; Das et al., 2010; Manikandan, 2014; Veerbhadranaika et al., 2012; Vishnoi, 2012). International literature also suggests poor health</p>

		and educational outcomes for Indigenous peoples compared to non-Indigenous people.
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Table 7.5 illustrates Jana’s major socioeconomic issues and how this is comparable to the national and international data. From Jana’s perspective, maintaining traditional land ownership can resolve the issues of landlessness, cultural dismembering, poverty, and food insecurity. However, they felt the Government should still ensure equitable distribution of necessities such as water, electricity, road and transport, health, and education to all Jana. Jana have neither received traditional ownership of their lands nor has the Government been able to ensure equitable distribution of resources. Hence, for the landless Jana from this study and other Indigenous communities, these inequities shadow their lives from their “womb to tomb” (Baciu, 2017, p.101). In fact, Kate Gilmore (UN Deputy Commissioner for Human Rights, 2018) referred to the depressed socioeconomic situation of Indigenous peoples worldwide to state that they are the living example of the world’s most disadvantaged, marginalised, and left-behind people (UN, 2018). Furthermore, the colonisation literature asserts that its cumulative effects, ineffective policies, and chronic underfunding to rehabilitate and revitalise the Indigenous ways of living have exacerbated Indigenous people’s socioeconomic disadvantages (Brittain & Blackstock, 2015). The present study details that Jana experience socioeconomic disadvantages similar to other Indigenous people. Hence, the research findings underscore the imperative to rectify historical injustices by restoring ancestral lands to Jana. This involves empowering Jana to engage in their cultural practices, with the Government taking responsibility to ensure fair access to resources.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Explained under the next section, Envisioning future (pg.334).

Human Right Violations

The prevalence of historical and ongoing environmental and social injustices that Jana face includes the deprivation of human rights. The implementation of adverse land policies against Jana, the non-enactment of laws that uphold Jana’s rights, and the inequitable distribution of basic resources are a few examples of Jana’s Indian constitutional rights violation. Table 7.6. captures the experiences of Jana with the rights of the Indian constitution.

Table 7.6 Jana’s experience of injustice as a violation of constitutional rights

Experience of Injustice	Legislative Provisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jana experiences landlessness, due to which many have encroached into the nearby forests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The right to shelter is a fundamental right under Article 19 (a) of the Indian constitution. Tribal Policies of 1950¹¹². The following legislations were meant to restore Jana their land: Kerala Scheduled Tribe Act (Restriction of transfer of lands and restoration of alienated land), 1975¹¹³, Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996¹¹⁴, and Scheduled Tribes

¹¹² Introduction of scheduled areas and governance, the protection of Jana from exploiters, the safeguarding their age old customs and free and enchanting in their societies and culture and bring them in to the mainstream of development process were important tasks of these Tribal Policies.

¹¹³ The Act nullified any appropriation of Jana land by the migrants/settlers from 1960 and promised restoration of any appropriated land under the protection by the Government. This act also further prevented selling and buying of Jana land.

¹¹⁴ The PESA Act was for ensuring Jana self-governance through traditional Gram Sabha for people living in the Scheduled Areas of India. Scheduled Areas are areas identified by the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

	and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 ¹¹⁵ .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to forest restrictions, the communities were deprived of their subsistence, thereby resulting in food insecurity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 39(a) suggests that citizens (men and women) shall have the right to an adequate means of livelihood.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of Jana who participated in this research did not have access to water and electricity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Right to water and electricity in India has been protected as a fundamental human right by the Indian Supreme Court emanating from the Right to Life guaranteed under Article 21 of the constitution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana often struggled to have access to health and educational services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to health is covered under the Right to Life under Article 21 of the Constitution. • Article 21-A in the Constitution of India provides free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to forest restrictions, they struggle to practice their culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 29 (a) of the Indian constitution states that the citizens of India shall have the right to conserve their culture and language.

Table 7.6 shows that constitutional and legislative provisions protect Jana's environmental and social rights. There are continued incidences that highlight the Government's failure to protect Jana's rights. As such, the Moopan of the Kurichiya

¹¹⁵ The SCT law concerns the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades as a result of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India.

community remarked that they still await the Government to serve them the justice “*promised to them in 1975*”. The research findings concur with Bijoy’s (2001) finding that despite the emergence of several laws to promote Jana self-rule, Jana still have not received their entitled land. Accordingly, Aufschnaiter (2008) stated that the only difference between the colonial and postcolonial times is that before independence, Jana were pushed out of the forests into the margins, while they get forcibly evicted from their land these days. The systematic exclusion of Jana from the mainstream has given rise to a situation best described as alienated citizenship (Veerasha, 2019). It indicates that the Government has alienated them from decision-making despite them being Indian citizens. The researcher argues that environmental injustice is an undercurrent in the jurisdiction by formulating public policies. These institutional arrangements produce structural inequalities and violence. The environmental and social injustices have worsened with the defective implementation of the Forest Rights Act and policies, inadequate budgetary allocation for social welfare, weak State and administrative capacity to deal firmly with the injustices, and administrative practices. Hence, these research findings identify that the Government’s failure to execute progressive constitutional provisions to recognise equal rights to the systemically marginalised Jana perpetuates human rights violations.

Jana Worldviews: Way of Life that equates to Sustainability

This section explores how Jana worldviews inform environmental conservation practices. Key points discussed include: (1) Relevance of Jana’s worldviews for achieving

sustainability; (2) Addressing sustainability through environmental justice, (3) Developing community partnerships for planet conservation and sustainability, and (4) Community efforts.

Table 7.7 encapsulates the findings on Jana worldviews on sustainability.

Table 7.7 Findings on Jana worldviews on sustainability

Jana Worldviews	Jana Voices	Inferences
Relevance of Jana’s worldviews for achieving sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both communities have stated that they protect the forests by not destroying them and calling out illicit activities. • They stated that they had been protecting the forests for years and called out any illicit activities without seeking any recognition or monetary benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana’s traditional knowledge and ways of living are essential in sustainable planet management.
Addressing sustainability through environmental justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana stated that the Government disregarded their traditional environmental knowledge and often made decisions without Jana’s consent. • Jana gave a few examples, such as the large-scale planting of non-native trees in the forests, the construction of dams, and the exclusion of the Jana from mainstream environmentalism and conservation. • However, these environmental measures disproportionately impacted them adversely.¹¹⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For sustainable change to occur, the Government must address the environmental injustices inflicted on Jana.

¹¹⁶ As discussed in the section, unfair share of environmental risks and benefits (p.310).

Developing community partnerships for planet conservation and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jana expressed ambivalence to community partnerships for conservations as they mistrusted the Government and outsiders. • Jana feels they should be given autonomy over forest conservation and is ready to be accountable to the Government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government should address barriers to Jana's involvement to create sustainable community partnerships for conservation.
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The findings concerning the relevance of Jana's worldviews for achieving sustainability evidence intricate, holistic, and symbiotic relationships with their environment that come with in-depth experiential understanding and knowledge of their ecosystem. Jana's portrayal as a protector of forests is comparable to other Indigenous people, as stewards of the land, due to their commitment to the environment. Thus, it comes with no surprise that despite accounting for only five per cent of the world's population, Jana and the other Indigenous peoples manage nearly 20-25 per cent of the Earth's land surface, stewarding 80% of the planet's biodiversity and about 40 per cent of all terrestrial protected areas and ecologically intact landscapes (Sobrevila, 2008). While this traditional knowledge and commitment to protecting the environment is rooted in years of observations and experiential learning, the concept of sustainability and conservation only emerged recently as a response to the large-scale destruction of the environment (Mustonen et al., 2022; Pisani, 2006).

It is interesting to note that the concepts of regenerative farming and supporting local have become slogans of sustainable development. Meanwhile, these have always existed in the day-to-day living of Indigenous communities. Drawing on participants' beliefs about conservation, this research argues that for Jana, like other Indigenous people, their sense of sustainable living is entwined in their worldviews of commitment to their environment. Hence, this research calls for the recognition of Jana's traditional knowledge just as several Indigenous activists and academics highlight the need for Indigenous science to replace Western scientific

notions of sustainability (Risiro et al., 2013; Sobrevila, 2008; UN, 2019a; UN-DESA, 2009). Overall, this study acknowledges Jana's environmental knowledge in the sustainable management of the planet and biodiversity and urges against appropriating these knowledge systems into Western conceptions of conservation.

The findings indicate that the Government disregards the traditional knowledge of the environment by perpetuating environmental injustices failing to address sustainability through environmental justice¹¹⁷. The literature also notes that the planet-wide movement for sustainability co-occurs with the eviction of Jana and Indigenous peoples from their traditional lands (Dhillon, 2018; Kameri-Mbote & Cullet, 1996). There are well-documented illustrations of such incidents, from the expropriation of Indigenous land to develop the Dakota pipeline in Canada to the recent Supreme Court verdict to evict all Jana from the forests in India (Spice, 2018; CJP, 2019). Such measures to evict Jana and other Indigenous peoples with experiential knowledge of living in harmony with the environment arise when governments prioritise economic development over the sustainability of the environment and community. The research findings demonstrate the Indian Government's preference for unsustainable economic development contrary to Jana's views. For example, the planting of economically viable trees such as Acacia and Teak over native trees against the community's advice.

Nevertheless, the Jana community persists in caring for their environment, actively reporting illicit activities such as deforestation and poaching, participating in regular clean-up missions, and enduring counter-pressure from the Government. This illustrates their ongoing commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities to the land, even as they vehemently resist mainstream environmentalism that has selectively excluded them from conversations on

¹¹⁷ The term environmental injustice encompasses the Jana's articulation of such experiences discussed in the result chapters- Chapter five (p.183) and six (p.229).

conservation and development. The fight for Indigenous land rights is about acquiring their traditional land and securing sustainable futures through Indigenous practices (Jacquelin-Andersen, 2018). Therefore, this study recognises that for sustainable changes to occur, the Government should take measures to rectify environmental injustices. The governance systems should collaborate with Jana and other Indigenous communities to address sustainability.

In connection with developing community partnerships for planet conservation and sustainability, the findings indicate Jana's ambivalence to collaborative approaches to environmental conservation as they felt the Government and outsiders might use this for monetary gain. Such frictions prevail due to the Government's negligence and lack of acknowledgement of Jana's land struggles and traditional knowledge of the environment. Jana's rich knowledge of their ecosystem and commitment to environmental protection demands addressing environmental injustice. One way to address environmental injustice is to encourage collaborative practice through efficient enactment of legislation involving local self-governance and ensuring Jana's engagement in decision-making. As an initial step, this study recommends enacting legislation such as the PESA and SCT Acts¹¹⁸ to correct the historical and continued injustices towards Jana by promoting self-rule. Therefore, the Government must appropriately enact legislation to include Jana in decision-making relating to their environment while balancing their commitment to serve the economy. Social workers can act as conduits between the Government and the community to achieve independent engagement between the community and the Government. Thereby social workers can work towards encouraging

¹¹⁸ The PESA Act was for ensuring Jana self-governance through traditional Gram Sabha for people living in the Scheduled Areas of India. Scheduled Areas are areas identified by the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India. The SCT law concerns the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades as a result of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India.

communities' engagement with the law and coproducing alternative sustainable models to capture their aspirations and vision for sustainable outcomes.

While addressing broader sustainability issues, this study reinforces the need for the Government to address environmental injustices such as Jana's exclusion from forests by affirming Jana autonomy over the forests through community-led initiatives to conserve and maintain the forest resources by paying them for their service. One such example of good practice and effective collaboration with Indigenous peoples comes from Canada, where the Indigenous Circle of Experts was established in 2016 that comprised both Indigenous and non-Indigenous citizens who used traditional knowledge to conserve biodiversity (Jerez, 2021). The stories of effective community engagement to protect Amul Falcon (migratory birds) also depict how the Government and communities can collaborate to achieve sustainable environmental outcomes. However, literature notes that such collaborative practices rarely occur compared to the environmental injustices inflicted on Jana and Indigenous peoples (Dawson et al., 2021). Nevertheless, their commitment to safeguarding the environment makes them advocates for pro-environmentally-responsible-development with their sustainability knowledge (Dudgeon & Berkes, 2003; Magni, 2017). Due to their connection with the environment, traditional knowledge systems such as kaavu system alongside their stewardship values to caring for the forests can play an immense role in global sustainability and decreasing the impacts of climate change. Hence, it is essential to respectfully involve these communities in the forefront of conservation by acknowledging their traditional environmental knowledge.

Overall, considering the Indigenous peoples' effective environmental strategies and their innate sense of connectedness to the environment, the research findings advocate for the need to frame environmental justice movements to mainstream local communities in sustainable environmental management. Since these knowledge systems rely on experiential

learning from local environments, any collaboration with Jana to create sustainable solutions for environmental management will only be effective by addressing the underlying issues of environmental injustice towards Jana. Once again, this study recommends using international Indigenous politics to advocate for Jana's worldviews to support the attainment of environmental sustainability.

Envisioning the Future

This chapter affirms the prevalence of environmental, social, and human rights violations against Jana, often revealing parallels between the experiences of Jana and other Indigenous groups. The analysis further suggests how Jana's worldview, centered on harmonious coexistence with nature and grounded in traditional knowledge, can contribute to sustainable community and environmental outcomes using efficient community partnerships. Building upon this foundation, the subsequent discussion aims to address the latter two research objectives. The first is understanding how Jana envision their future amidst the environmental, social, and human rights violations they face. Secondly, it outlines Jana's views on creating a sustainable development model to enhance their living situation by addressing environmental conservation. Thus, the below discussion views these communities as those with strengths and capabilities to self-sustain if provided an opportunity. The significance of the study lies in integrating Jana practices and worldviews into developing a sustainable management process in the interests of global recovery, thereby supporting the Indigenous communities to express their aspirations, targets, means, and priorities. The sub-sections identified include (1) Hopelessness from the past and ongoing experiences; (2) Feedback towards achieving sustainability.

Hopelessness from the Past and Ongoing Experiences

Continued environmental, social, and human rights experiences have left Jana feeling hopeless about their vision for the future. The research findings illustrate the impacts of colonisation and the ineffective Governmental support post-independence. Table 7.8 provides exemplars from the research findings:

Table 7.8 Few illustrations from the research findings showing the gap between services and needs

Jana system	Impact of Colonisation and Postcolonial Governance	Supports for the Jana	Outcome	What is needed?
The Jana lived in traditional homes with resources extracted from the forests, such as straw, mud, and wood. They refurbished it every one to two years. These helped them thrive in	Forest restrictions prevented their unrestricted entry into the forests to secure the resources. This resulted in them not being able to construct homes.	Concrete buildings were constructed for Jana by the Government at subsidised rates through bank loans.	They had to earn enough to construct homes. But, on the other hand, the young generation's knowledge of constructing their traditional homes is declining due to a lack of opportunities for experiential learning.	Enable their entry and dependence on the forests. Recognition and initiatives to develop and nurture traditional construction patterns.

scorching summer and rainy seasons.				
Forest-based subsistence endorsed with rich knowledge about the environment.	Both communities were forced to shift to different forms of production, resulting in precarity in livelihood and food security. In addition, forest restrictions resulted in forced assimilation into the capitalist economy.	Public distribution system that supplied food and kind to Jana every month.	Lack of sufficient food supply through PDS further aggravates poverty and food insecurity. Shifted from self-sustaining, independent communities into those reliant on the capitalist economic system.	Enable their entry and dependence on the forests. Providing support to develop community farms further.
The Jana used firewood from forests to cook and keep animals away from their homes.	Forest restrictions prevented their entry into the forests to get firewood.	Subsidised LPG as a replacement for firewood freely available to them without any education.	Many households still use firewood as they fear the use of LPG. Those who used LPG had to save money to purchase it.	Enable their entry and dependence on the forests.

The above illustrations connect Jana’s hopelessness with the destruction of their self-sustaining capacity as a community resulting in State dependency on often counter-productive or culturally inappropriate support. Therefore, the research findings support Wallerstein (1974) argument that Governments create dependencies through the forcible assimilation of traditional

systems into global capitalist systems. The resulting structural distortions: political, economic, and social, within these communities mean the State have a duty of care for the communities. This study agrees with Kumar and Sahoo's (2019) view that the failure of the Government to provide appropriate care to its citizens through effective community engagement is an outcome of the Government's capitalist interest in Jana's welfare. In other words, the creation of dependency has erased traditional knowledge and self-reliant ways of living, eventually resulting in the State taking complete control of the forests. Instead of creating dependencies by treating them as backward, which the British used to acquire the Jana land, the Government should enable the community to self-determine their problems and solutions. Hence, this study recommends shifting the Government's focus from an interventionist model that views Jana as primitive to a community-centred approach based on community strengths. The Government should utilise existing legislation, such as PESA, to encourage communities to self-determine their problems and solutions. By doing so, the Government could draw on the community's assets and strengthen its capacity for sustainable and long-term stability.

Achieving Sustainable community and environmental outcomes

Although the participants felt helpless and hopeless when envisioning their future, they provided feedback on enhancing their living conditions by addressing environmental crises.¹¹⁹ Despite the hopelessness overshadowing the future aspirations of Jana, their continued struggle

¹¹⁹ Their feedback is consolidated into a Sustainable Model of Development for Jana the section, social work practice implications to support Jana (p.349).

for traditional land included slogans for achieving sustainable community and environmental outcomes. The thoughts of their children and future generations having to live a life like theirs kept their land struggles alive. Table 7.9. details community suggestions to address these problems, some of which they are already executing to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes.

Table 7.9 Jana’s proposition to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes

Measures to achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes	Jana’s proposition
Restoring Traditional Land	The Makkal and Kurichiya felt that returning the traditional land that belonged to them was the first step towards addressing the Jana issues. The current land struggles are for the Government to return the autonomy over the forest land. This will allow them to live in the forest and also protect it.
Enabling access and autonomy over forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jana also felt that the autonomy over their environment should reside within the community, including being accountable to State legislation. They already protect the forests by calling out on any illicit activities. They do this as their moral obligation without seeking any monetary benefits. • Jana’s knowledge and commitment to their land are to be translated into opportunities to be trained as Government Forest and range officers through community leadership. • Jana believes that only having access to forests can enable experiential learning for their younger ones. This will allow the elders to pass on the traditional knowledge to future generations. • Most importantly, Jana wants any decisions regarding their environment to be taken with their consent. Jana faced significant dangers from

	<p>natural hazards, wildlife attacks, and lack of access to essential resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They related their vulnerabilities to the illegitimate felling of trees and killing of wild animals, their exclusion from conservation practices, and the introduction of unsustainable developmental initiatives without community consultation.
Supporting cultural revival and self-sufficiency	<p>The Jana communities demonstrated resilience against the social and environmental realities by trying to maintain their traditional and cultural systems. For instance, the respective Moopan(s) headed the Kurichiya families under the two Tharavadu (who participated in the research). Each Tharavadu owned community farms that supported the communities' food security issues. The common areas planted vegetables for community members to use within the villages. Any community member could go to any of the homes to have food if they were hungry anytime. The Tharavadu system lets anyone without a homestay at the Tharavadu without any expenses until they can build a home. There was also a strong sense of justice among community members governed by the Moopan and community elders. Hence, there was hardly any theft or domestic violence incidences. The villages could manage themselves, and there was less state intervention.</p>
Livelihood support from the Government	<p>Even if the Government returns the traditional land, the Jana felt they may still require Government support to achieve sustainable livelihood. These include support during adverse weather impacts on farming; MGREGA works to be provided to the Jana to earn income while they work on their farms. They also felt support in buying farm animals (for small-scale farming per household) would benefit them in achieving self-reliance.</p>
Equitable access to essential resources	<p>The Jana argued that they should have equitable access to essential resources such as food, water, shelter, road and transport systems, electricity, and health and education. Jana being deprived of these necessities cannot be attributed to them</p>

	living in isolation or being primitive. This accounts for systemic failure to ensure equitable access to resources.
Restoring the Pride of Jana	The need to decolonise the colonial epithets that view Jana as primitive and backward. Jana wants to review educational materials that discuss them. Furthermore, they also try to teach the younger generation of their pride to enhance their strong cultural identity.
Reviving traditional knowledge systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding reviving traditional knowledge systems, the Jana referred mainly to their educational, health, and cultural knowledge. • Jana wanted the contents of the educational systems concerning Jana to be reviewed by the community. • Jana wanted access to the forests to pass on traditional knowledge to the children based on experiential learning. • Government to provide opportunities for research and development of traditional medicine and healing practices. • Government offers financial and structural support to encourage traditional knowledge systems, including architecture, painting, environmental knowledge, martial arts, music, arts and cultural forms, sports, organic farming practices, and traditional systems like the <i>Tharavadu</i> system. • However, currently, the responsibility of protecting the traditional systems is solely on the community with counter-pressure from the Government to mainstream society.

The Government's reluctance to acknowledge and redress historical injustices is consistently repeated in the discussion, which prevented Jana from achieving sustainable community and environmental outcomes. As mentioned earlier, Jana's dissociation from their land also meant disrupting their self-governing realms built on traditions and cultural grounding from experiential knowledge (Aufschnaiter, 2008; Bijoy, 2001). Jana's struggle and resistance evidence the prevalence of structural violence against Jana and the State's reluctance

to uphold Jana's rights, political failure, and the absence of norms to achieve sovereign statehood (Vaidya, 2018). Table 7.9 exemplifies how Jana's suggested approach could enable them to self-determine their development. Therefore, this study underscores the importance of the Government acknowledging and recognising Jana communities, thereby empowering them to exercise self-determination in matters related to environmental conservation and community welfare.

Interpreting the findings

The study aims to: transform the lives of the Jana of India by addressing the social and environmental inequities, thereby developing a community-based sustainable model of co-existence by addressing the current environmental crises. While the aim to transform the lives of Jana is very ambitious, the study findings identify that such changes can be achieved through effective community-based interventions.

The current study emphasises the need to develop a community-based sustainable development model by giving power back to the community. It is clear from the results and broader literature that Jana and Indigenous peoples worldwide show poor progress across various situations (UN-DESA, 2009). Likewise, Gilmore (UN Deputy Commissioner for Human Rights) in 2018 referred to the depressed socioeconomic situation of Indigenous peoples worldwide, stating that they were the living embodiment of the world's most disadvantaged, most marginalised, and most left-behind populations (UN, 2018). At this point, it is essential to remind the readers of how the current research findings evidence the failure of the State to provide care to Jana. Brittain and Blackstock (2015) referred to the poverty among the Native Americans as "poverty by design" created by the cumulative effects of colonisation,

ineffective policies, and chronic underfunding to rehabilitate and revitalise the Indigenous ways of living. For many marginalised communities, such as the landless Jana of this research, various structural inequities shadow their lives from their “womb to tomb” (Baciu, 2017:101). However, it is crucial to rethink the focus of our governance systems to wield power within the State, a concept borrowed from the colonisers who used it for resource utilisation and governance. While Jana communities have proven resilience and sustainability such as Tharavadu to address poverty, the Government needs to focus on these strengths as means to revive Jana lives. Table 7.9 illustrates the community proposals to achieve better outcomes. In addition to the community recommendations, the current research also identifies the need for the following:

1. Jana to self-determine their identities as the first step towards decolonising colonial rhetoric.
2. The State should acknowledge the traditional land belongingness of Jana and focus on decolonising the colonial epithets to resurrect Jana pride through international Indigenous politics and advocacy.
3. The State should recognise the sense of belongingness of Jana to the traditional land over land ownership patterns.
4. Jana-based knowledge systems, including traditional medicine, healing, architecture and painting, need protection against appropriation with intellectual property rights.
5. Government to provide funding to give Jana to set up forest schools to impart knowledge of forest conservation and possibly about their history and connectedness to their environment to outsiders.

The research identifies that achieving sustainable community and environmental outcomes is possible by addressing Jana's historical and continued environmental injustices. The Government should respectfully collaborate with Jana to support them to utilise the rich, localised experiential knowledge about their environment for environmental conservation in their localities. To achieve this, the Government will need to return the ancestral lands of Jana to them. Hence, sustainable development could be considered an over-arching framework that carefully incorporates environmental justice. This symbiosis must be pursued in tandem. When this interlink is impacted, millions of inhabitants who reside close to these developments for their lives and livelihood experience ill effects from such occurrences.

Kameri-Mbote and Cullet (1996) state that the only missing dimension of sustainable development in mainstream environmentalism is addressing the traditional rights of communities that live near such developments and initiating effective community engagement. Indigenous communities have unique practices which connect them to their traditional lands. For example, many Indigenous peoples across the world consider forests as sacred groves and, hence, protect them. Dhillon (2018) also states that when there is a planet-wide movement for sustainable development and climate change should prioritise Indigenous knowledge systems that relate to the environment. Considering the Indigenous people's effective environmental strategies and the Indigenous people's innate sense of connectedness to the environment, the current research believes that environmental justice movements have essential lessons for framing a right to sustainable development by encompassing international law to mainstream local communities in environmental management.

Learnings for Social Work Practice

The previous discussion identifies several significant implications for social work research with Jana and other Indigenous communities, Jana's community development through Jana's social work practice and other theoretical implications. The sections below capture the practical, theoretical, and educational implications for social work practice.

Theoretical Implications for Social Work with Jana

This study identified several theoretical implications by assessing the findings regarding the broader significance within the disciplinary context. The following section discusses a call for a deconstruction of the concept of environmental justice to take place given the experiences of Jana. Furthermore, it demonstrates how addressing environmental justice for Jana could potentially support their self-sufficiency to become independent communities.

Finding a space for “place” within environmental justice

The findings identify the need to reconceptualise environmental injustice to embody the importance of place in recognising the land struggles of Jana. A critique of green social work theory in Chapter Three suggests that environmental injustice often narrowly focuses on distributive fairness while neglecting deeper issues tied to land struggles¹²⁰. This omission fails

¹²⁰ As discussed in Chapter Three: Green Social Work- Environmental justice, equity, and sustainability (p.94).

to capture the full scope of Jana's struggles, which are intrinsically linked to their connection to land and place. This compulsion to focus on distributive fairness as an overarching framework of environmental injustice accounts for the failure to incorporate local community knowledge and experiences. As the literature suggests, the evolution of the concept of environmental justice was emphasised by the discriminatory treatment of African American citizens during the 1980s with unequal sharing of environmental hazards and benefits by the United States Government (Bullard, 1993; Humphrey & Buttel, 1982; Lazarus, 2000). Although this movement was initially known as environmental racism, it became environmental injustice to include other marginalised communities facing similar injustices (Roberts, 2017). The focus of distributive fairness limited the communities' capacity to self-determine how the concept related to them. Hence, this research attempts to expand the understanding of environmental injustice within green social work theory to advocate for the self-determining capacity of communities to interpret the meaning of their experiences.

Jana interpreted their experience of environmental injustice as forcible physical, emotional, and spiritual detachment from their land and unsustainable environmental initiatives without active community engagement. Clearly, these interpretations transcend the conventional view of environmental justice that relies on distributive fairness. However, these interpretations are comparable to other Indigenous views of environmental justice to reclaim the traditional lands. Literature on settler colonialism by Gilio-Whitaker (2019) and Whyte (2018) argued that genocide and the removal of Indigenous peoples from the land was a form of environmental injustice that needed recognition. Similarly, Banerjee (2017) argued that the forced displacement of Native Americans from their land represents a significant form of environmental injustice, likening it to the pollution of one's home. Consequently, Indigenous discourses have led to a reinterpretation of the concept of environmental justice to include lived understandings of the complexities of intergenerational environmental injustices and

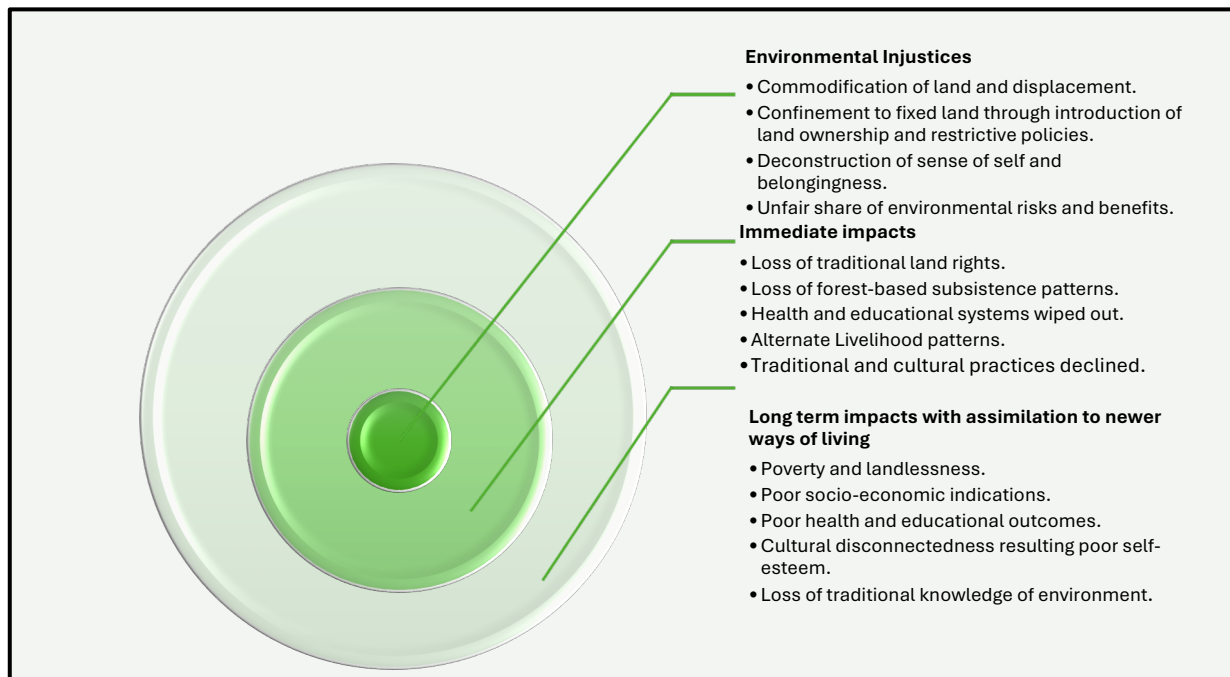
colonisation; the current context of environmental governance; and giving prominence to the sovereignty, cultures, and identities of Indigenous peoples through their epistemologies and ontologies (Parsons et al., 2021).

This research utilises the theoretical grounding of Indigenous discourses instead of Western interpretations that rely solely on distributive fairness to interpret the experiences of Jana. It endeavours to find spaces for Jana environmental injustice discourses to prevent the generalisation of their unique experiences with other Indigenous communities.

Environmental Injustice as the epitome of injustice

This research identifies a critical intersection between social and environmental injustices. The colonisation process gave rise to a dominant culture underpinned by privatisation, competition, consumption, anthropocentrism, and the dominance of Eurocentric values. The process deliberately frames several groups of people as having less worth determined by and to benefit those with power, embodied by land appropriation, enslavement, and systemic oppression. The Indigenous and Jana literature evidence how colonisation led to the appropriation of Indigenous land that formed the heart of subsistence living (Dick et al., 2021; Vazhakunnan, 2021). The current study identifies how incidences of historical and continued environmental injustices have ripple effects on the overall well-being of Jana. Environmental injustices perpetuated since colonisation continue to perpetuate social injustices and human rights violations. Figure 7.3 illustrates the cascading impact of environmental injustices which have led to various other forms of injustices resulting in both immediate and long-term consequences, including assimilation into new ways of living:

Figure 7.3 Ripple effect of Environmental Injustice



This research asserts that unaddressed environmental injustices since colonisation have worsened the social inequities of Jana and Indigenous people. In association with Figure 7.3, the unaddressed environmental injustices have triggered immediate impacts that have resulted in the dissociation from traditional lands and ways of living ultimately leading to assimilation into new ways of living. This has resulted in poorer social indicators, including compromised socio-economic conditions, health and educational indicators, increased poverty, landlessness, and cultural dissociation. Collectively, these outcomes signify exacerbated social injustices. This finding has both theoretical, practical, and educational implications. From the theoretical perspective, the existing literature, including green social work theory, discusses how social injustices perpetuate environmental injustices. Dominelli (2012) utilised this theory to embed environmental justice within the concept of social justice to accentuate the significance of social work professionals working to address environmental concerns. Nevertheless, the current study extends this concept at two levels. On the one hand, this study presents Jana's

interpretations of environmental justice¹²¹ that transcend the conventional view of distributive fairness. It also captures how Jana attribute the responsibility for their poor socioeconomic conditions to the unaddressed environmental injustices. From a practical viewpoint, the research identifies the need to address the core issue of environmental injustice (Figure 7.3.) instead of focusing on addressing the issues on the outside layer. The following section expands on some of the strategies recommended by the Makkal and Kurichiyar communities to address the core issue of environmental injustice and its visible impacts.

Jana and the politics of indigeneity

A key implication of this study is the call for recognition of Jana in the global politics of indigeneity. Chapter Two: the Contextual Background chapter discussed how India rejects the concept of indigeneity on the basis that all Indians are Indigenous. While such an argument is valid, this research also reminds us that under the Indian constitution, Jana are referred to as “anushuchit Jana”, meaning those people who need protection. The discussion highlights how the Government’s failure to protect Jana has resulted in the gradual erasure of a culture that has the potential to run the world sustainably for future generations. Also resonating throughout the prior discussion is how Jana’s history of colonisation and the challenges they face even today are comparable to Indigenous peoples worldwide. This study, therefore, recommends that the Government recognise Jana in global Indigenous politics. Henceforth it is recommended that the Indian Government utilise global indigeneity and Indigenous politics:

¹²¹ As discussed in the section, Environmental Injustices (p.297) of this chapter.

1. To further discussions around such co-governance systems to recognise the Jana worldview of attachment to land territory within a historical context of colonisation.
2. To advocate for decolonising the colonial rhetoric with self-determined views of Jana. This includes providing an opportunity for Jana to identify what they should be called.
3. To advocate for protecting Jana's worldviews and ways of living for achieving environmental sustainability.
4. To advocate for the revival of traditional medicine and protection against biopiracy.
5. To advocate for their vision, hopes, and aspirations in an international space.
6. To have a fair opportunity to share their experiences and culture with international communities and know about similar communities worldwide.

Social work practice implications to support Jana

This discussion identifies two practical implications for social work. Firstly, it discusses the importance of strength-based practice for Jana's community development and then the implications for social work research in engaging with Jana. These implications exemplify ways social work researchers and practitioners can assist Jana communities to self-determine their problems and solutions.

Strength-based Jana framework

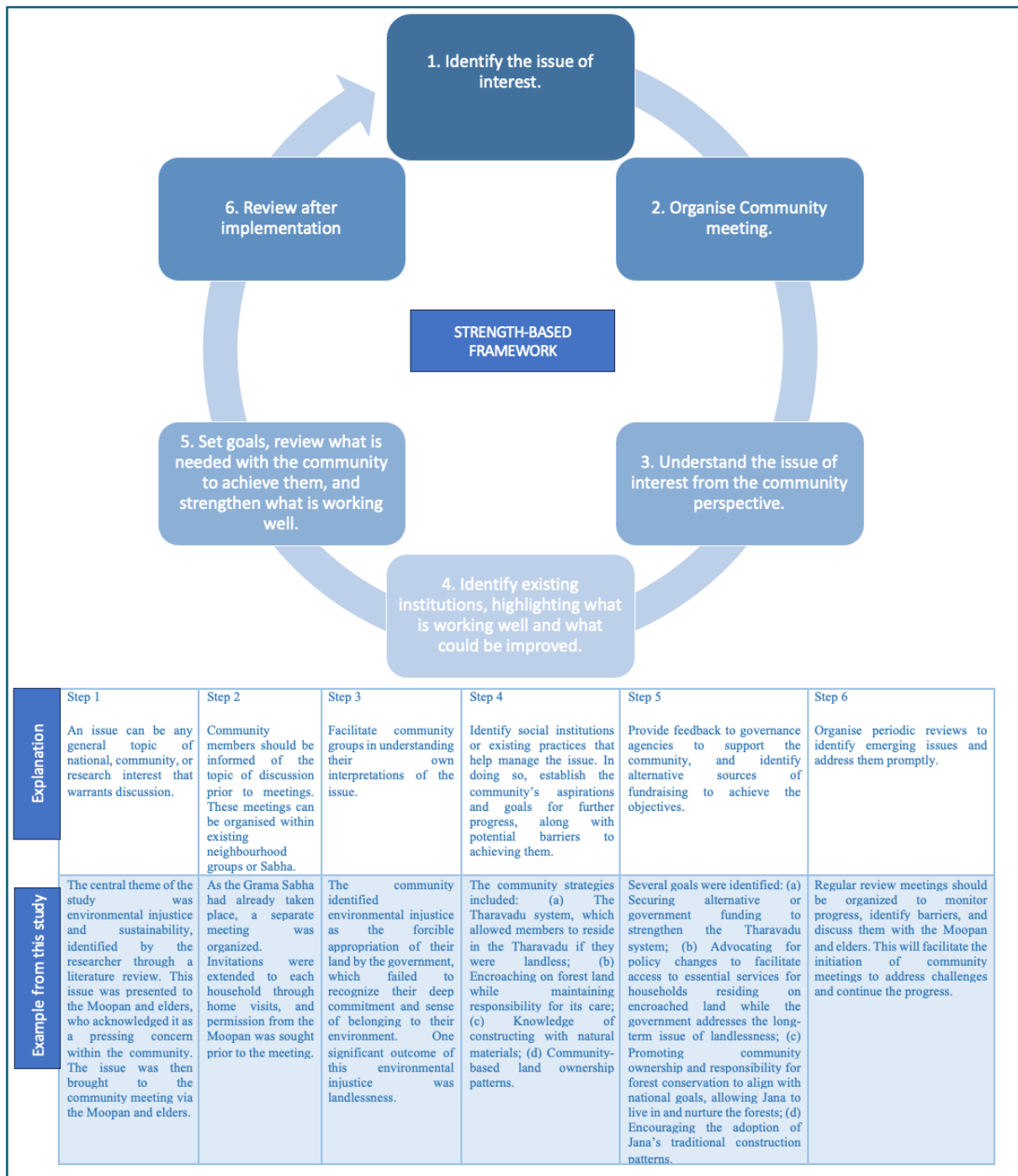
One of the significant implications of this study is the need to construct a strength-based framework for social workers to work with communities like Jana by focusing on the strengths

and capacities of the community to achieve their welfare. The findings and the literature at various points in this discussion identify how the Government has exoticised and patronised Jana as those needing long-term protection and development equal to mainstream societies. As Fforde et al. (2013) state, deficit narratives concerning people, practices, and ways of life perpetuate the deficit-based approaches. The deficit processes highlight a lack of something and aim to identify the failures and insufficiencies to be remedied through interventions (Fogarty et al., 2018). This research disagrees with such paternalistic interventions and uses green social work theory (Dominelli, 2012) to enable a strength-based perspective to coproduce transformative knowledge to tackle the issues identified by Jana. From this lens, this current study has witnessed several instances of the community's resilience towards various challenges. One such key strategy was the Tharavadu system of Kurichiya and community-based land ownership patterns among the Makkal which highlighted and identified the successes and self-sufficiencies through community-based interventions. In another instance, when the data collection came to a halt due to the COVID19 lockdown, the community took ownership of the research by making community efforts to learn technology and complete the research process.

As such, this study argues that Jana have strengths and the capacity to overcome challenges by strengthening existing community-based initiatives. The most common finding that resonated throughout the discussion was the Government's failure to provide practical and culturally relevant services to address the disparities between Jana and the other population. Hence, in this context, strength-based social work practice epitomises community action from the nodal points where the individual's history, culture, and moments meet. Therefore, this study recommends that social workers work alongside Jana as conduits between the community and the Government to support addressing their welfare needs.

Based on this study, the framework (Figure 7.4) relies on strength-based social work practice as a basic template to achieve the goals. The narrative within the black box on the left side elucidates the seven-point strength-based framework identified in this study. On the right side, there is an example directly sourced from the study.

Figure 7.4 Strength-based framework



Engaging with Jana for Social Work Research

In terms of enhancing effective engagement with Jana, this study offers ways that social work researchers can overcome the barriers to engaging with Jana communities. Some ways include (1) Recruiting cultural facilitators from within the community and (2) Creating reflexive spaces.

Firstly, this study found the need to recruit cultural and language facilitators within the community to navigate barriers was crucial to effective community engagement. A local person from the region was hired after considering literature that recommended having local researchers or fieldworkers for community engagement (Haynes et al., 2019; Vincent et al., 2022). The presence of the cultural facilitator supported the initial process of identifying the Jana community to be involved in the study. Community engagement was only made possible with the support of a local person from the ooru, who effectively supported this study with other locals. Hence, this research found the need to be open to recruiting facilitators who identify as someone from within the community where the research is conducted. In participatory and etic research, such practices will also enable the community to feel committed and connected to the study, thereby improving the overall outcome.

Secondly, this study found that reflexive praxis enabled effective community engagement by minimising the risks of subjectivity. The subjective nature of qualitative research seeks to understand human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviours (Bumbuc, 2016). As part of this, researchers unconsciously immerse themselves in subjective research processes. Likewise, some of the internal and external barriers to community engagement faced in this study are included in Figure 7.5:

Figure 7.5 Internal and External barriers to effective community engagement



Awareness of subjectivity develops through an internal process supported by various external experiences. Such self-examination was undertaken through specific actions such as journaling, supervision, or constructive discussions within a field of inquiry that is also an object of awareness. For instance, an internal conflict developed during the research process to seek: “Who am I?” and “Why am I researching Jana when my community is equally distorted?” Such notions developed from the researcher’s own personal experiences of not inheriting any traditional knowledge from family. Therefore, the researcher used reflexive spaces to create constructive conversations (informal) with the community and cultural facilitator to understand how colonisation resulted in the assimilation of various communities into mainstream society and how Jana’s struggles were significant considering such continued assimilatory forces. These reflexive spaces enabled the researcher (as both a researcher and also as a person belonging to a backward community) to “start where the client is” (Goldstein, 1983:267) and use the curiosity that the researcher had only recently developed about the community to advocate for Jana (as communities who have withstood colonisation even today). Hence, the

current research demonstrated how creating reflexive spaces enabled transcending the risks of subjective emotions. Regarding the external challenges, reflexive spaces were created through supervision and discussion with the cultural facilitators and community members. For example, the Methodology section (Chapter IV) explains how such practices enable overcoming the challenges of COVID19. Therefore, this study highlights the importance of social work researchers having reflexive spaces to promote conscious-raising discussions to work across various sociocultural and historical contexts.

This study underlines the relevance of recruiting local cultural facilitators and creating reflexive spaces to achieve research outcomes by keeping the client system at the centre to improve community engagement. These processes are identified as crucial in the research process, and therefore the following recommendations are made:

1. Recruiting a cultural facilitator after the place and the specific community of research interest are identified is of utmost significance. It is essential to understand that each community is unique. Within each community, there are different ooru headed by their respective Moopan. Once the ooru is identified, conversations with the Moopan will enable identifying a cultural facilitator. In the case of this current study, home visits and community meetings (koottam) also supported identifying a facilitator from within the community.
2. Setting basic structure for reflexive praxis prior to the research process. For instance, regular supervision with the supervisors, informal reflexive meetings with the cultural facilitator daily or weekly and setting up regular community meetings.
3. Feedback to the community of any changes made with reflections to the process, mainly if such reflections were carried with the community.
4. If any particular outcome, when implemented, does not work, it is essential to stop and reflect by including more members. Continuing the same ways may shut the

community down to research entirely. Informal spaces can be created naturally through participation in community events.

5. Keep the client system at the centre of any reflexive session before identifying solutions.
6. Keep daily records of any reflections.

Social work education implications

This study carries significant implications for social work education in India, particularly in Kerala. The findings highlight the need to integrate the concept of indigeneity into the social work curriculum, as it is currently underrepresented. Equipping social work trainees with a deeper understanding of indigeneity, along with the historical context of Jana communities, is essential to foster culturally responsive practice. Such knowledge can help prevent judgmental attitudes and support more respectful, inclusive, and effective engagement with these communities.

At present, the social work curriculum is largely grounded in Eurocentric frameworks. While there have been recent efforts to adopt Indigenous frameworks, these are often limited to the context of settler-colonial nations and do not adequately reflect the perspectives of non-settler nations with scheduled communities. This study address this gap by rethinking curriculum design in India to move beyond Eurocentric models, give space to local knowledges, and acknowledge the lived realities of Jana communities as valid and valuable sources of learning. This shift can pave the way for the development of Jana perspectives and Jana social work methodologies, reshaping social work education in Kerala to include critical perspectives on environmental justice, Indigenous knowledge systems, and decolonising practice.

Based on these implications, it is recommended that this study be used as a reference document in the training of social workers, both in field practice and at universities. Furthermore, NGOs and governmental agencies can also draw on the findings to promote culturally responsive and reflexive social work services with Jana communities.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has examined the nature, significance, and implications of the research findings concerning the overall aim and the research questions. Overall, the results support the three general conclusions which are outlined in the discussion under each research question and further create a sustainable model for achieving Jana welfare using Jana's views. As for the research questions, firstly, the research findings and discussion confirm the unique and self-determined experiences of environmental, social, and human rights violations Jana faced. Several commonalities between Jana and Indigenous groups worldwide have been highlighted throughout the discussion above. Secondly, Jana's worldview of living in harmony with nature provided knowledge about how traditional knowledge can achieve global sustainability. Furthermore, it emphasised the Government addressing the environmental injustices to form community partnerships for conservation. Thirdly, the Jana had clear visions and hopes about their future amidst the environmental, social, and human rights violations they faced. However, the constant neglect of the governance systems contributed to feelings of hopelessness and concerns for their future. Therefore, they kept their land struggles alive for their children to have a better future. Lastly, the Jana contributed their views to create a sustainable model of their development (as depicted in Table 7.8).

This study has theoretical, practical, and educational implications. The implications of the results include (1) the need to acknowledge the significance of place belongingness within the environmental justice context, (2) environmental injustice is the epitome of injustices for Jana that perpetuate other forms of injustice, (3) the need for Jana to be acknowledged as Indigenous, (4) the need to use a strength-based social work practice framework in working with Jana, and (5) prioritising the ways to engage Jana in social work research by recruiting a cultural facilitator from within the community and creating reflexive spaces, and (6) strengthening social work education within educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies.

In conclusion, the critical constructivist analysis used in this discussion has navigated understanding how the Government and privileged communities subjugate Jana's realities by perpetuating environmental and social injustices and human rights violations. Furthermore, this study highlights Jana's dialogue with the Government to achieve Jana welfare as a community with strengths and capacity for self-sustainability. The next chapter reviews the thesis and makes recommendations for green social work theory and social work practice with Jana to draw the research to a conclusion.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

*"Hold on to what is good, even if it's a handful of Earth. Hold on to what you believe,
Even if it's a tree that stands by itself. Hold on to what you must do, Even if it's a long
way from here. Hold on to your life, Even if it's easier to let go. Hold on to my hand,
Even if someday I'll be gone away from you."*

- Crowfoot, Blackfoot warrior and orator 1830 - 1890

This chapter concludes the thesis by weaving together the initial research aims with the outcomes and recommendations for Jana welfare. Firstly, this study is reviewed in terms of the objectives, methodology, and results. Next, the implications and recommendations for achieving Jana welfare and environmental protection, which include those concerning future research, are presented. Discussing the study's limitations and reflecting on the research draw the thesis to its conclusion.

Research aims and questions

The overall aim of the study was "to transform the lives of the Jana of India by addressing the social and environmental inequities, thereby developing a community-based

sustainable model of co-existence in response to the current environmental crises.” The aim was derived from the literature and the prior field experiences of the author. The following research questions underpinned the overall aim of the study:

- i. What are the current social, environmental, and human rights violations that Jana face?
- ii. How do Jana aspire and hope to envision their future?
- iii. How do Jana worldviews inform their relationship with land and conservation?
- iv. What is the community’s proposition on devising sustainable remedies to enhance the living situation in Jana and, at the same time, address the current global environmental crises?

Green social work theory was utilised as the theoretical framework for this study and a justification for framing the research questions and the lines of enquiry followed in the study's methodology (chapters three and four). It also informed the interpretation and analysis of data, particularly regarding self-determining Jana’s experiences of environmental, social, and human rights violations to develop community-based strategies to achieve Jana welfare and sustainability. Furthermore, it supported the study’s commitment to reviving social work practice in addressing social and environmental crises faced by Jana.

Methodology

This study used Community-based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) as the methodology, underpinned by a critical constructivist worldview. The critical constructivist research paradigm combines the ontological stance of socio-historic constructivism and the

epistemology that incorporates the inbetween stance using critical theory. The philosophical knowledge of ontology, epistemology, and methodology formed the foundation for selecting methods for the study. As such, the participatory methods used for data collection included koottam (community meetings), in-depth interviews, and photovoice.

The data collection was completed between February 2020 to June 2020 in the Wayanad district of Kerala, India, when COVID19 was first becoming prevalent around the globe. This study used koottam (community meetings) to build rapport and trust between the researcher and the communities. Three koottam were held in three ooru, two for Kurichiyar and one for Makkal. The koottam for Kurichiya organised at Aaranyam had 26 participants, while the one organised at Villoli had 22 participants. The koottam organised for the Makkal had 19 participants. Several other informal koottam also took place naturally. These meetings often started with simple one-on-one conversations with the community members, which were gradually joined by others, sometimes while resting under a tree or walking across the paddy field. The community meetings identified 10 participants each from Kurichiya and Makkal communities for photovoice. Simultaneously, five in-depth interviews were also undertaken from both communities. The use of these qualitative methods of data collection to generate in-depth knowledge from Jana's perspective was descriptive and time-consuming. Owing to the qualitative exploratory nature of this study, the number of participants for each phase of the study was deemed sufficient to generate results.

The findings from both communities were reported separately in the results chapters¹²². Thematic analysis was used to analyse both data sets wherein common themes were identified for exploring and interpreting patterned meanings across datasets. The themes were further

¹²² Chapter five (p.183) and Chapter six (p.229).

analysed by focusing on the four research questions in the discussion chapter. The analysis supported conclusions that shed light on Jana welfare through community-centred practices.

The application of the CBPAR methodology had several strengths. Firstly, using the CBPAR methodology supported active community engagement, meaning participant voices were distinct and clear when responding to the research questions. Secondly, it placed considerable power within the community, which led to the community taking ownership of the research. This advantage facilitated an understanding of Jana's experiences of injustices and strengths of resilience from their perspectives. Lastly, using CBPAR enabled the researcher to take an activist or social advocate stance that captured Jana's worldviews and aspirations in envisioning their future for empowering their communities from a strength-based perspective.

Key Findings

The research findings respond to the overall aim and research questions that underpin the study. The findings as they relate to each research question are presented below:

What are the current social, environmental, and human rights violations that Jana faces?

The findings reflect Jana's unique and self-determined articulation of injustice. The forms of environmental injustices faced by Jana included the forcible destruction of spaces of belonging and identity to land, commodifying traditional land and forest restrictions, and an

unfair share of environmental benefits and hazards. Jana discussed social injustices as the assimilation of their traditional subsistence, health, and educational systems into modern systems and the failure of the State to ensure equitable distribution of resources to Jana. The research findings also found human rights violations, including the Government's failure to implement progressive constitutional provisions to recognise equal rights to Jana. Key findings relating to these Jana's experiences of injustices include: (1) relevance of sense of belongingness and identity to land, (2) systemic neglect, (3) land privatisations and unsustainable growth, (4) assimilation of Jana's self-sufficient systems, (4) alienated citizenship.

Relevance of sense of belongingness and identity to land

The study identified that acknowledging a sense of belongingness and identity to land was crucial in addressing Jana's environmental injustices through decolonising colonial epithets that allude to Jana's relationship to the environment as primitive and backward. Jana live as refugees in their land due to land formalisations and forest restrictions mandated by law resulting in forcible land dissociation impacting them physically and spiritually.

Systemic neglect

Systemic neglect in addressing the concerns of Jana resonated throughout the study. Government systems had not addressed the decolonisation of the colonial rhetoric that negatively stereotyped Jana. This created a comparison of Jana with the general population requiring them to comply with racist structures by altering their ways to meet the dominant culture's standards. Exposure to such negative stereotypes created a culture of silence and

mutism among Jana, resulting in poor self-concepts impacting feelings of belonging and connection to their traditional lands. Furthermore, Jana were solely responsible for maintaining their identity by counter-balancing the systemic pressure to comply with discriminatory structures.

Land privatisations and unsustainable growth

The research found that the Government did not encourage community-based land tenure systems as they fixated on the idea that secure land tenure systems can only exist with private land ownership to support capitalist interests. The unsustainable economic development measures of the Government without community participation put Jana at risk of environmental hazards. Most importantly, Jana wanted any decisions regarding their environment to be with their consent.

Assimilation of Jana's self-sufficient systems

The appropriation of Jana's traditional land and assimilation of their unique ways of living that embraced their self-sufficiency into capitalist systems have resulted in their poor socio-economic conditions. Assimilation of Jana's traditional ways of living resulted in the State taking responsibility for Jana's duty of care. However, these supports were insufficient and culturally inappropriate. Systemic neglect in acknowledging and protecting the traditional health and educational systems and inequitable distribution of these facilities contributed to poor health and education outcomes.

Alienated citizenship

Jana have alienated citizenship in India due to the System failing to provide progressive constitutional provisions to recognise equal rights to the systematically marginalised Jana perpetuating human rights violations.

In summary, Jana faced environmental, social, and human rights violations and held self-determined views of what each meant to them. The findings above also highlight how the Government neglected to address such injustices, furthering such experiences of Jana, resulting in assimilation into mainstream society. The following research question relates to their aspirations and visions of the future amidst all their injustices.

How do Jana aspire and hope to envision their future?

Despite the experiences of historical and continued injustices, Jana had clear visions and hopes for their future. However, the constant systemic neglect of Jana's needs and aspirations made them hopeless and worried about their future. Jana felt hopeless about the State care they received and about any change to State care in their favour. Therefore, the significant findings relating to this research objective include the following: (1) hopelessness of the existing State care, and (2) hopelessness for better change.

Hopelessness of the existing State care

The creation of Jana's dependency on the Government led to the erasure of several traditional forest-based self-sufficient practices due to forest restrictions and land commodification. Furthermore, the Government failed to provide appropriate care to Jana through active community engagement by prioritising State's capitalist interests over Jana's welfare. As such, the State's care was often counter-productive and culturally inappropriate. In other words, the Government's neglect of sustainable community and environmental outcomes accounted for their focus on the paternalistic interventional model of care by viewing Jana as backward.

Hopelessness for better change

Jana identified several supports that would support their overall well-being and welfare¹²³. However, they indicated that despite voicing their needs to the Government, the consistent neglect left them feeling hopeless.

Overall, Jana felt hopeless about their future amidst their continued experiences of injustice. Their hopelessness pointed to the failure of the System to address their needs appropriately. Despite such hopelessness, they try to maintain their traditional practices and worldviews, which connect them to the environment, as discussed in the following section.

¹²³ Collated under the fourth research question.

How do Jana's worldviews inform their relationship with land and conservation?

Jana communities held worldviews and experiential knowledge systems to protect the environment around them. Jana did not see the existence of human society and nature separately; instead, they stated that everyone who lives in a place has a responsibility and commitment to give back to nature. The experiential knowledge to protect the environment came from this commitment to living harmoniously with nature. Hence, the two key findings that inform the relationship of Jana to the environment and future conservation partnerships include (1) relationship with the environment, and (2) ambivalence to collaboration as given below.

Relationship with the environment

This study found Jana's worldviews to be intricate and holistic, and involved symbiotic relationships with their environment that come with in-depth experiential understanding and knowledge of their ecosystem. Jana's environmental knowledge of a sustainable planet and biodiversity management was evident in the participants' narratives and the practices in their villages. Hence, it is essential to protect traditional environmental knowledge against appropriation into Western conceptions of conservation. As such, the significant findings identify that Jana's traditional knowledge and ways of living are essential to sustainable planet management.

Ambivalence towards collaborations

Systemic neglect through the non-engagement of Jana regarding the forest-related decision-making and continued perpetuation of environmental injustices separated Jana from their involvement with the conservation practices. Jana were ambivalent about engaging with the Government, and outsiders, which prevailed as a barrier to any Government-community collaboration.

Overall, Jana's worldviews and traditional knowledge of their environment explained their stewardship of nature without any external support. These are essential to sustainable planet management. Hence, Jana's struggle for environmental rights is also a proponent of sustainable development. However, Jana expressed ambivalence about any collaborations due to their prior experiences. The following section outlines Jana's proposition for a sustainable community and environmental remedies for Jana's welfare and environmental conservation.

What is the community's proposition on devising sustainable remedies to enhance the living situation in Jana and, at the same time, address the current global environmental crises?

Jana made propositions about their views on the support needed to achieve sustainable outcomes for their welfare and environmental conservation. These recommendations are given below, including: (1) restoring access and autonomy over traditional land, (2) supporting

cultural revival and self-sufficiency, (3) equitable access to essential resources, (4) restoring the pride of Jana, (5) reviving traditional knowledge system,

Restoring access and autonomy over traditional land

Jana identified the first step towards addressing Jana's issues as returning to the traditional land that belonged to them. Jana also felt that the community's autonomy over their environment should include accountability to State legislation. They wanted any forest-related decisions to have their community's approval before implementation. Another proposition was for Jana's knowledge and commitment to their land to translate into opportunities to be trained as Government Forest and range officers through community leadership. Furthermore, Jana believed that having access to forests would enable experiential learning for their younger ones.

Supporting cultural revival and self-sufficiency

Jana communities demonstrated resilience against social and environmental realities by trying to maintain their traditional and cultural systems. As such, Jana expressed that they needed support to maintain their existing system and revive the traditional and cultural practices. Even if the Government returned the traditional land, Jana felt they may still require Government support to achieve sustainable livelihoods. This support included adverse weather impacts on farming; and the MGREGA works to be provided to Jana to earn income while they work on their farms. They also felt support in buying farm animals (for small-scale farming per household) would benefit them in achieving self-reliance.

Equitable access to essential resources

Jana argued that they should have equitable access to essential resources such as food, water, shelter, road and transport systems, electricity, and health and education. Jana being deprived of these necessities should not be attributed to them living in isolation or being primitive. This accounts for systemic failure to ensure equitable access to resources.

Restoring the pride of Jana

The need to decolonise the colonial epithets that view Jana as primitive and backward was identified. Jana wanted the contents of the educational systems concerning Jana to be reviewed by the community. Jana also stated they wanted access to the forests to pass on traditional knowledge based on experiential learning to the children.

Reviving traditional knowledge systems

Jana referred mainly to their educational, health, and cultural knowledge with regard to reviving traditional knowledge systems. In addition to what was mentioned under restoring the pride of Jana, they said opportunities for research and development of traditional medicine and healing practices would be beneficial. They added that financial and structural support encouraged traditional knowledge systems, including architecture, painting, environmental knowledge, martial arts, music, arts and cultural forms, sports, organic farming practices, and traditional systems like the Tharavadu system.

In summary, Jana made several recommendations for achieving sustainable community and environmental outcomes despite their experiences of injustice and hopelessness for a positive change. Nevertheless, Jana communities continue to bear the sole responsibility for protecting the traditional systems and their abiding worldviews of living in harmony with nature, trying to overcome counter-pressure from the Government and mainstream societies.

Implications and Recommendations for Social Work Practice

The research findings add substantially to the knowledge about Jana experiences of injustices, worldviews, hopes and aspirations, barriers, and the community's proposition of a model for achieving sustainable communities and the environment. The following implications and recommendations identified from the research findings include: (1) finding a space for place in the environmental justice context, (2) environmental injustice as the epitome of injustices, (3) Jana and the politics of indigeneity, (4) Engaging with Jana for Social Work Research, (5) Strength-based social work framework for Jana, and (6) strengthening social work education within educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies. The relevance of the implications lies in the fact that Jana welfare is achievable when considering the issues and solutions at a grassroots level using a strength-based and community-driven perspective. Hence, for sustainable change to occur, the recommendations need to extend revitalising the role of social workers in addressing these issues at the grassroots level by working and advocating with the communities.

Finding a space for place in the environmental justice context

A significant implication of this study is identifying the need to reconceptualise environmental injustice to embody the importance of place in recognising Jana experiences of environmental injustices. This implication has recommendations for extending theoretical knowledge and social work practice.

Theoretical reconceptualisation of environmental justice

Firstly, the conceptualisation of environmental injustice needs to be revisited within green social work theory, as the results suggest the need to recognise Jana's connections with the land. This research recommends that future research be undertaken so that existing theories related to environmental injustice, including green social work theory, extend to include the self-determined views of the community based on Indigenous experiences.

Acknowledging traditional land belongingness during practice

Secondly, considering the importance of acknowledging traditional land belongingness to Jana well-being, social workers practising with Jana need to acknowledge and respect their traditional land belongingness. At a basic level, this can be done through opening a koottam or practice with Jana communities by paying respect to Jana, acknowledging their traditional land belongingness, and affirming who they are today while working with communities. At a broader level, this can also involve liaising with the communities to hold authorities and power

structures at the local governance accountable when they continue to neglect it, using political forums, debates, and social action movements. In this way, social workers can encourage and support communities to participate in a grassroots governance system, thereby enabling advocacy for Jana's traditional land rights through community organisations and *panchayath*¹²⁴.

Creating space in the context of environmental injustice to strengthen the theoretical frameworks to address Jana and other Indigenous issues is central to empowering Jana communities. Social workers should advocate for Jana by making land acknowledgements during practice with Jana communities and liaising with communities to hold those in power accountable if they neglect their traditional land belongingness.

Environmental injustice is the epitome of injustice

The study found that environmental injustice was the most significant form of injustice experienced by Jana, which perpetuated other violations. This was because land dissociations, both physically and spiritually, led to the breakdown of Jana's otherwise self-reliant systems. That is, they faced a shift in their livelihood patterns, health, and educational systems, which relied on their traditional knowledge about their environment. As a result, they could not provide experiential learning opportunities to their younger ones, creating traumatised and insecure communities. Furthermore, their separation from decision-making related to forests

¹²⁴ The Panchayat is a local government body consisting of five elected representatives from the village population in India. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) refer to the local governance structures established under the 73rd Amendment Bill, now present in all villages across India.

resulted in unsustainable practices, placing them at the risk of an unfair share of risks and benefits of such outcomes. Figure 8.1 from the discussion chapter presents how environmental injustices resulted in immediate and long-term consequences, including assimilation into mainstream societies.

Figure 8.1 Ripple Effect of Environmental Injustice

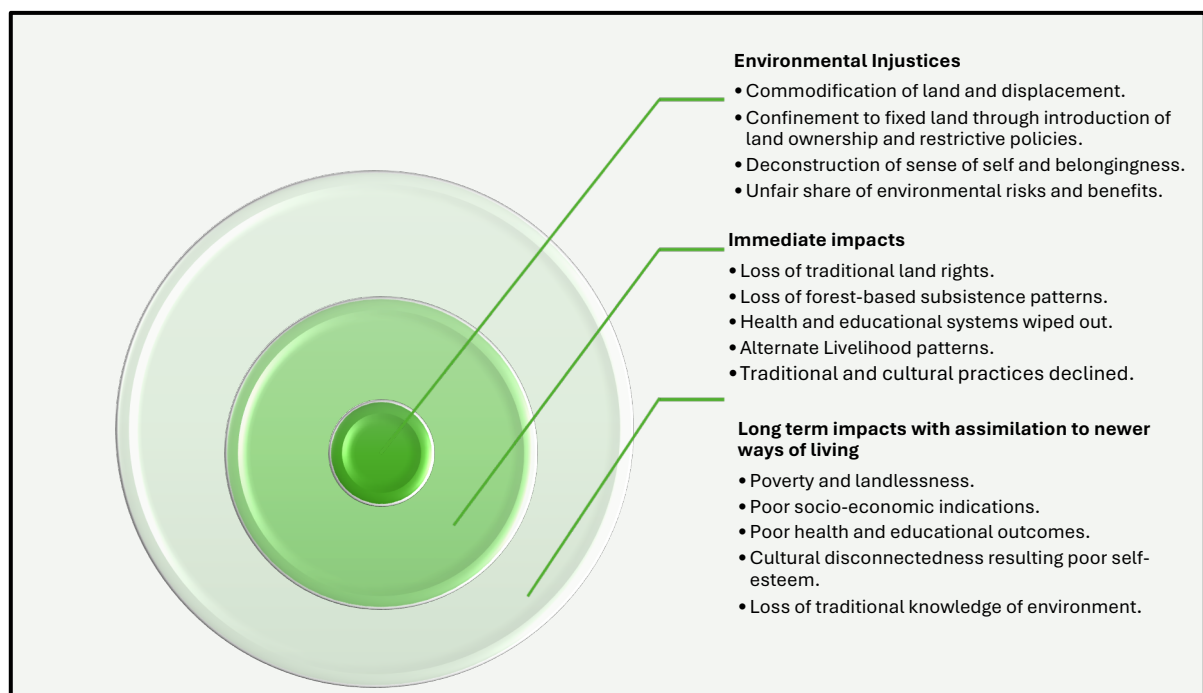


Figure 8.1 conceptualises the injustices faced by Jana. It demonstrates how environmental injustices lead to other forms of injustice for Jana, such as social injustices and human rights violations. The conceptualisation of injustices in this way enables the development of new ways of thinking and engaging with Jana.

Reconceptualising environmental justice as a form of social justice

This study recommends reconceptualising the theoretical perception of green social work theory to include that environmental injustice is a form of social injustice by considering the results. It implies how unaddressed environmental injustices perpetuated the other forms of violations, including social injustices. Reconceptualising green social work theory to recognise the role of environmental injustices in furthering other forms of injustices for Jana will support addressing the core issue of environmental injustice for sustainable environmental and community outcomes from a social work perspective. To build on this foundation of knowledge, future social work research is needed with other Jana and Indigenous communities to establish, identify, and verify how environmental injustice places them at a social disadvantage.

Implementing new knowledge in practice

The need to address environmental injustice instead of focusing on the issues on the periphery is central to social work advocacy alongside Jana (as shown in Figure 8.1). Social workers can work with communities to organise training/events/presentations in educational and Governmental institutions or public forums to present how environmental injustice perpetuated other forms of violations. Figure 8.1, which shows the ripple effect of environmental injustices on Jana, can be used to explain the core issue and how often supports offered to Jana address only those issues in the periphery.

Overall, it is recommended that green social work theory consider the impact of unaddressed environmental injustices on Jana and that future research is undertaken to verify

this knowledge among other Jana and Indigenous communities. From a practice perspective, it is also recommended that social workers provide training and presentations that convey the relevance of addressing environmental injustices for Jana welfare to educational and Governmental institutions working with Jana to enable a better quality of social work practice with Jana.

Jana and the Politics of Indigeneity

A key implication of this study is the call for recognition of Jana in the global politics of indigeneity. The literature and findings verify similarities between Jana and other Indigenous communities' experiences of injustices through colonisation. Despite these similarities, the Indian Government rejected Jana as Indigenous under the UNDRIP¹²⁵. At the same time, the findings and literature confirm that the Government failed to protect Jana, resulting in the gradual erasure of a culture focused on sustainability. Against this backdrop, this study implies the recognition of Jana as Indigenous to establish the rights of Jana on par with Indigenous peoples worldwide guided by the universal human rights instrument by UNDRIP. In other words, this study weighs the benefits of recognising Jana as Indigenous over the Government's rationale for rejecting the status of indigeneity for Jana under UNDRIP by stating that all the citizens are Indigenous after independence. This implication identifies the following recommendations for social work practice.

¹²⁵ UNDRIP establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the world's Indigenous Peoples, addressing existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms that apply to the specific context of Indigenous Peoples.

Educating Jana of UNDRIP

It is recommended that social workers educate Jana about UNDRIP and further work with them to advocate with Jana for them to be recognised as Indigenous by the Government to address the environmental and social injustices under UNDRIP. By doing so, social work practitioners can support and create space for Jana to participate in and utilise global indigeneity and Indigenous politics, as independent communities have no restrictions in coming forward to self-determine their indigeneity.

Advocating with Jana for their welfare

The use of global indigeneity and Indigenous politics to address the issues of Jana has several practice recommendations for social workers working with Jana. In light of the research findings, social workers can support and create space for Jana at the UNDRIP to:

- (1) Further discussions around such co-governance systems at the local governance and through political forums, debates, and social action movements to recognise Jana's worldview of attachment to land territory within a historical context of colonisation.
- (2) Advocate for decolonising the colonial rhetoric with self-determined views of Jana. This includes allowing Jana to identify what they want to be referenced through ongoing discussions and research.
- (3) Advocate for protecting Jana's worldviews and ways of living to achieve environmental sustainability.
- (4) Advocate for the revival of traditional medicine and protection against biopiracy.

(5) Advocate for Jana's vision, hopes, and aspirations in the UNDRIP. It will also provide a fair opportunity to share their experiences and culture with international communities and learn about similar communities worldwide.

However, the above scope of practice will remain valid based on the community's aspirations and consent to represent at the UNDRIP. In other words, social workers must acknowledge and support Jana's right to self-determine their needs, and social workers should work with Jana for change to occur.

In summary, this study identifies the immense potential for global indigeneity and Indigenous politics to advocate for their needs and protect their unique culture and ways of living. The role of social workers is to educate Jana about such an opportunity and, if the community identifies the need, support and create space for them to advocate for their rights.

Strength-based framework

The research findings supported the construction a strength-based framework for social workers to work with Jana by focusing on the strengths and capacities of the community. The study findings identified this need, illustrating how the Government exoticised and patronised Jana as requiring long-term protection and development. Such a paternalistic intervention model undermines the strengths demonstrated by Jana to maintain their unique traditions and identity. Given that Jana clearly articulated their needs and the support they needed from the Government for their welfare, this study recommends that social workers use the strength-based framework while working with Jana. This study also underlines the use of a strength-

based framework by ensuring that Jana's aspirations and hopes for self-determining change lead the process. As such, the strength-based practice makes the following recommendations for social work practitioners.

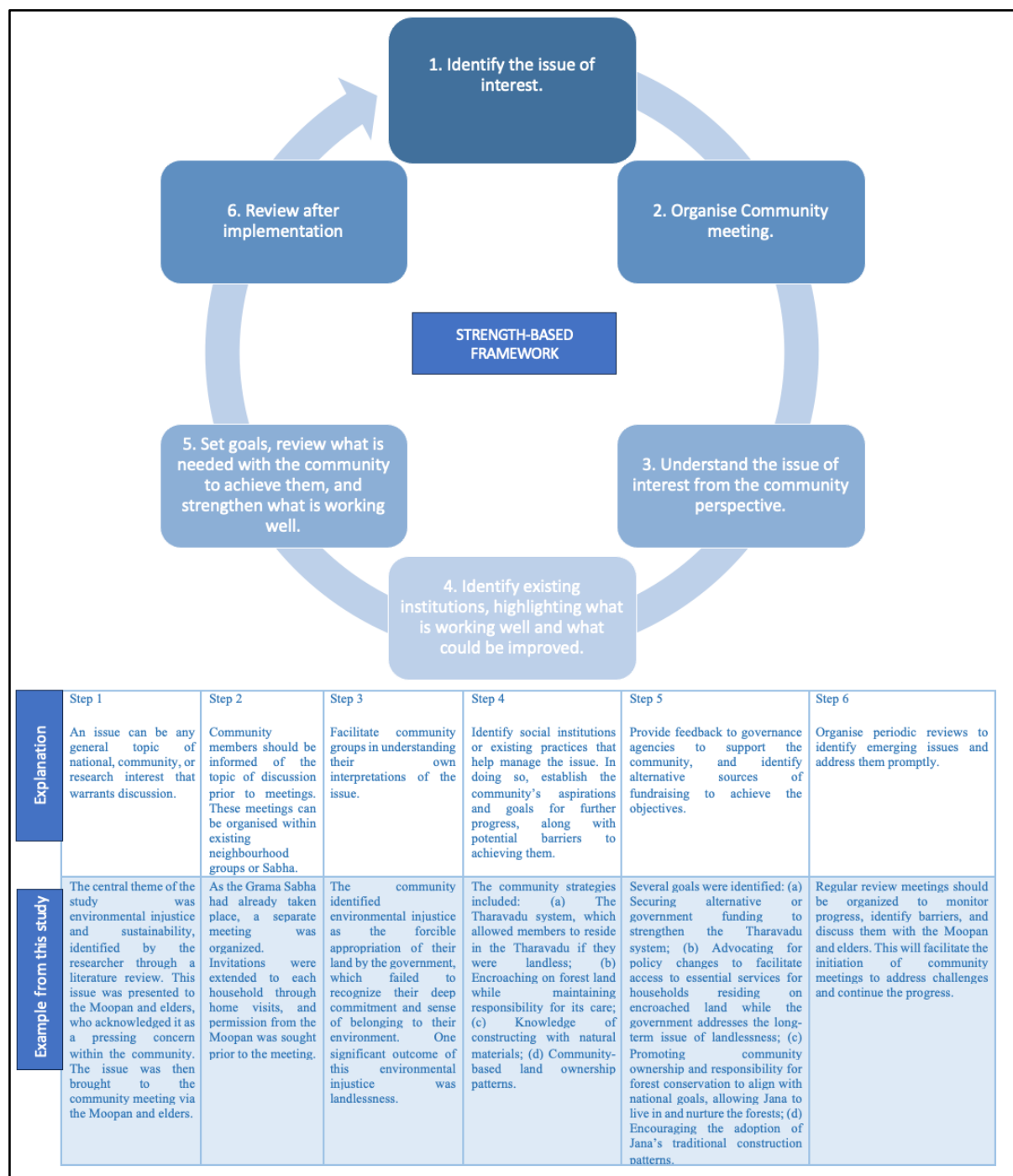
Social Workers as advocates for community-led progress

It is recommended that social work practitioners (within a Governmental or non-Governmental agency and community organisations) working with Jana communities use strength-based practice to amplify their voices to achieve community-led progress. Figure 8.2 provides a framework for social work practitioners within Governmental and non-Governmental agencies to approach Jana communities to identify the need and work alongside communities to achieve the community's goals. It also provides an example from the study; a few other areas identified by Jana within the current research that opens the scope for social work practice and future research include:

- (1) Reviving Jana's traditional subsistence patterns, health, and educational systems for their welfare. Social workers can support and create a space for Jana to revive their practices through practical research and development.
- (2) Recognition of traditional land belongingness of Jana over the land by the Government systems. As previously stated, social workers can prioritise land acknowledgements during practice and liaise with communities to hold those in power accountable if they neglect their traditional land belongingness.
- (3) Decolonise the colonial epithets that negatively stereotype Jana with self-determined views of Jana.
- (4) Reviewing the information about Jana in educational materials.

- (5) Determining ways to impart knowledge of forest conservation and Jana’s history and connectedness to their environment to the Government and outsiders.

Figure 8.2 Strength-based Framework



In summary, this study recommends that social workers use the above framework to guide strength-based social work practice with Jana, and this can be used as a basic model to achieve the goals identified by the community. Although supporting Jana through community organisations is possible, it is crucial to continue to advocate for support from the Government for sustainable change. As such, the following recommendation underline the scope of social work practice in encouraging Jana's engagement with local governance systems to enable effective Grassroots democracy.

Social Workers Advocating for Grassroots Democracy for Government

Social workers can support Jana communities to advocate for a shift into a strength-based framework from the paternalistic intervention model followed by the State care that functions on a deficit-based system. A shift into a strength-based framework will require social workers to liaise with Jana to encourage active community engagement with local governance systems and political participation and representation. This will provide opportunities for communities to come forward to solve their problems, thus focusing on the community's strengths to empower their capabilities to achieve long-term stability. Furthermore, by working with the community, social workers can be conduits between the community and the Government until the community feels confident with such engagements. Thereby social workers can work towards encouraging communities' engagement with the law and coproducing alternative sustainable models to capture their aspirations and vision for sustainable outcomes.

In summary, it is recommended that social workers use a strength-based approach with Jana communities to develop community-led initiatives that utilise the above framework. This shift will enable social work practitioners to support capacity building and self-empowerment within Jana communities.

Engaging with Jana for Social Work Research

Engaging with Jana has methodological implications for social work research. The research process encompassing the CBPAR methodology recognised the use of cultural facilitators from within the community and exercising reflexive praxis to enhance meaningful community engagement across the fieldwork. These processes are identified as crucial in the research process, and therefore the following recommendations are made.

Recruiting cultural facilitators from within the community

Firstly, it is recommended that social work researchers recruit a cultural facilitator from the specific Jana community of research interest. This is because each community is unique. Within each community, there are different ooru headed by their respective Moopan. Once the ooru is identified, conversations with the Moopan will enable identifying a cultural facilitator. In the case of this study, home visits and koottam also supported identifying a facilitator from within the community.

Creating a structure for reflexive praxis for action research

Reflexive praxis enables understanding and sometimes challenges how we think from our subjective lens to be more mindful of how we communicate with others and make decisions (Bumbuc, 2016; Pawar, 2015). Such reflexive praxis during action research enables critical thinking and decision-making to allow effective community engagement (Pawar, 2015). After considering the benefits of utilising reflexive praxis in research including during field experience, it is recommended that a basic structure is created for reflexive praxis before the commencement of the research process and a commitment given to the process. For instance, regular supervision with supervisors, informal reflexive meetings with the cultural facilitator daily or weekly and setting up regular koottam. Social workers must provide feedback to the community on any changes made with reflections to the process, mainly if such reflections were carried with the community. If any particular outcome, when implemented, does not work, it is essential to stop and reflect by including more members as continuing without making changes may close the community to research entirely. Informal spaces can be created naturally through participation in community events. In other words, keeping the client system at the centre of any reflexive session before identifying solutions is essential. The social work practitioner also needs to keep daily records of any reflections.

Social work education implications

This study carries significant implications for social work education in India, particularly in Kerala. These findings point to the need for the development of Jana perspectives and methodologies in social work, reshaping education to include critical

perspectives on environmental justice, Indigenous knowledge systems, and decolonising practice. Incorporating these insights can help prevent judgmental attitudes and foreground Jana epistemologies in social work practice. The key recommendations are outlined below:

Jana epistemology in social work education

The current social work curriculum in India is largely grounded in Eurocentric frameworks. Although there has been a recent surge in Indigenous voices, these are not always effectively adapted to the Indian context. This study highlights the importance of integrating Jana epistemologies into social work education. The findings can serve as a reference for designing curricula in Kerala and beyond. It is recommended that the syllabus incorporate content on indigeneity and the complex historical experiences of Jana communities, thereby validating their lived realities as valuable sources of knowledge.

Recognition in fieldwork education

It is further recommended that this study be utilised in fieldwork education, particularly by NGOs and training institutions. NGO staff can be provided with specialised training to better recognise and engage with the socio-cultural contexts of Jana communities. In turn, this would prepare social work students to address community needs more effectively and with cultural sensitivity.

Policy and Institutional Adoption

Finally, governmental agencies and academic institutions are encouraged to adopt Jana-informed frameworks in their policies, training modules, and service delivery models. By embedding these perspectives at the institutional level, social work education and practice can

move towards a more culturally responsive and decolonised approach, ensuring that Jana voices and knowledges are meaningfully recognised in both pedagogy and practice.

Breathing life into “Grassroots democracy”

The research findings identified that systemic neglect furthered Jana’s experiences of violations and injustices. Each research implication discussed above has potential recommendations for the Government to make changes to achieve sustainable outcomes for the communities and environment. However, achieving timely change within Government is challenging due to organisational inertia. This study realises that the Government making shifts for Jana welfare is ambitious and time-consuming, reflected in the delay of nearly 80 years since independence despite repeated advocacy by Jana communities for their rights. Therefore, the recommendations above create opportunities for social work practitioners to work alongside Jana to encourage their engagement in Grassroots democracy¹²⁶ in India to shift the decision-making as much as practical to the organisation’s lowest geographical or social level. In other words, instead of waiting on the System to create a change, social workers should guide the System to make the change by acting locally by working with communities.

¹²⁶ Discussed in Chapter two: Contextual Background (p.43).

Future opportunities for research

The study identifies the following as potential areas for future research:

- (1) This study provides replication logic for similar research to be undertaken on other Jana and Indigenous communities to understand how environmental injustice perpetuated other forms of injustices and unsustainable environmental justice outcomes.
- (2) This study provides replication logic for similar research among other Indigenous communities to understand how addressing environmental injustice can achieve sustainable community and environmental outcomes.
- (3) This research recommends that future research is undertaken so the existing theories related to environmental injustice, including green social work theory, extend to include the self-determined views of the community based on their experiences.
- (4) Future social work research with other Jana and Indigenous communities is needed to establish/identify/verify how environmental injustice places them at a social disadvantage.
- (5) Future research is needed that focuses on reviving Jana's traditional subsistence, health and educational systems and how such changes can be made independently or by collaborating with the existing systems. The strength-based framework can be utilised in the research process to identify the goals and the steps to achieve them.
- (6) Future action research to determine ways to decolonise the existing colonial rhetoric with self-determined views of Jana/Indigenous peoples and how to ingrain such views within the different systems will benefit the decolonisation process.

- (7) Similar community-led action research can be undertaken with other Indigenous communities to self-determine their views of injustices/issues of concern to develop community-led initiatives for their betterment.
- (8) Future research to investigate the role of distinct gendered dynamics in relation to environmental practices, livelihood strategies, and decision-making processes among Jana communities to create gender-responsive interventions.

Limitations of the study

One of the significant strengths of this study was using a community-based participatory approach, which enabled working together with the community. It led to building trust with the community and taking responsibility for the data collection at various times. For instance, the community provided solutions to complete the research process during the COVID19 lockdown, which involved additional efforts to overcome technological barriers. Despite these strengths, the transferability of the findings of this study is limited. However, the study contributes knowledge about three out of two Jana communities (among 860 other Jana communities in India). Although many of the issues identified may resonate with other Jana groups, caution is warranted against over-generalising the results to all 860 Jana communities in India. Rather, the study should be understood as offering contextual insights and a foundation for comparative or expanded research in the future. It, therefore, provides a foundation and exemplar for future research among other communities. Hence, this study offers proximal similarity and provides for replication logic ensuring trustworthiness in the research process. It further relates to the knowledge-building and theory development of green social work theory regarding understanding environmental injustice.

Another limitation relates to language and translation. All interviews and discussions were conducted in Malayalam and later translated into English. Every effort was made to preserve the accuracy of participants' voices, but it is possible that subtle meanings, cultural nuances, or local expressions may not have been fully conveyed in translation. This introduces a degree of interpretive limitation that must be acknowledged.

Other limitations included time constraints, funding, and the COVID19 lockdown. The study struggled due to the time constraints and funding to carry out community-based participatory research in an international study location. Such constraints pressurised the researcher to carry out the research, sometimes not at the pace of the community. As indicated in the methodology, this led one of the Makkal community backing out of the research during the initial stages. However, fixed time frames did support the timely completion of the data collection. Additionally, the research process commenced during the COVID19 breakdown and lockdown. This lockdown resulted in additional stress and furthered the time and financial constraints. However, on the other hand, the benefit of the CBPAR methodology was witnessed in how the community led the research process, ultimately to its completion. It is important to acknowledge that the findings of this study are reflective of the unique circumstances of this period, including the impact of the pandemic.

Concluding reflections

The overall aim of the study was “to transform the lives of the Jana of India by addressing the social and environmental inequities, thereby developing a community-based sustainable model of co-existence in response to the current environmental crises.” In conclusion, all the research objectives of this study were achieved, and the research conclusion

identified steps to achieve the overall aim. Firstly, the research findings and discussion confirm Jana's unique and self-determined experiences of environmental, social, and human rights violations they faced. As such, several commonalities between Jana and other Indigenous experiences were noted. Secondly, Jana's worldview of living in harmony with nature provided knowledge about how traditional knowledge can achieve global sustainability. Furthermore, it emphasised the importance of the Government addressing environmental injustices and to form community partnerships for conservation. Thirdly, Jana had clear visions and hopes about their future amidst the environmental, social, and human rights violations they faced. However, the constant neglect of the governance systems left them feeling hopeless and worried about their future. Therefore, they kept their land struggles alive for their children to have a better future. Lastly, Jana contributed their views to create a sustainable development model. The implications and recommendations of these findings make significant practical and theoretical contributions to social work.

By self-determining the views of Jana's experiences, this study shows the strength and resilience of Jana against oppressive powers. It also outlines the need for social workers to approach Jana's welfare from a strength-based approach and not rely on a deficient-based and paternalistic intervention model. Although the research findings resonated with the prevalence of systemic neglect as one of the key factors contributing to Jana's current circumstances, the study recommends reviving grassroots democracy in India by creating opportunities for social workers to advocate for shifting the decision-making as much as practical to the organisation's lowest geographical or social level. Failing to address Jana's needs and aspirations could result in their communities being absorbed into modern capitalist democracy, becoming increasingly disconnected from their traditional roots and sense of belonging.

The environment is dying, communities that protect the environment suffer systemic neglect, and soon there will be little sustainability to offer future generations. Governments must recognise the reality of Jana's experiences (and maybe communities like mine) to create community-led initiatives for their welfare. However, as social workers we can advocate for Jana's rights by supporting Jana voices. Social workers can also work with community organisations and local governance systems to enable grassroots democracy for creating community-led initiatives instead of relying solely on State care for Jana welfare. As a nation that has endured nearly 200 years of colonisation, it is with community and togetherness that success can be achieved and all voices heard, especially those from the margins. We must work hard to achieve this for our children's future, just like our forefathers gifted our childhood with independence.

Appendices

SNo	List of Appendices	Title
1	Appendix I	Ethics Approval Letter from Massey University
2	Appendix II	Tentative Koottam Schedule
3	Appendix III	Interview Schedule
4	Appendix IV	Photovoice Guidelines and Prompts
5	Appendix V	Poster
6	Appendix VI	Roles and Guidelines for Cultural Facilitator
7	Appendix VII	Cultural Facilitator- Confidentiality Agreement
8	Appendix VIII	Cultural Facilitator- Transcriber's Confidentiality Agreement
9	Appendix IX	Permission Letter from District Collector of Wayanad
10	Appendix X	(a) Informed Consent- Koottam (b) Informed Consent- Photovoice (c) Informed Consent- In-depth Interview
11	Appendix XI	(a) Information Sheet- Koottam (b) Information Sheet- Photovoice (c) Information Sheet- In-depth Interview
12	Appendix XII	Counsellor's List
13	Appendix XIII	Personal Risk Management Plan
14	Appendix XIV	Photo Release Form
15	Appendix XV	Translated Document

Appendix I

Ethics Approval Letter from Massey University



Date: 19 December 2019

Dear Thara Prabhakar

Re: Ethics Notification - **NOR 19/63** - 'Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by Adivasis of Wayanad'

Thank you for the above application that was considered by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Human Ethics Northern Committee at their meeting held on Thursday, 19 December,

Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Professor Craig Johnson
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and Director (Research Ethics)

Appendix II

Tentative Koottam Schedule

***Briefing of Rapport Building Phase:** Prior to the Community Hui, a rapport building phase will involve rapport generation with the Tribal Chief and the community. The 'Moopan' or tribal leader has final decision-making power in all matters about their community. So, it is essential to generate a rapport with the 'Moopan' and seek permission to collect the data from the potential participants. The Moopan of the communities will be contacted with the help of the cultural facilitator to organise a community event. The researcher will explain the Moopan about the research and the community-based participatory approach utilised in the study. With the consent of the Moopan, the homes of the Adivasis of the respective hamlet will be visited. The potential participants will be invited for the Community Hui. An informal discussion will also be conducted with each household on their understanding of the environmental injustice. The researcher will work closely with the cultural facilitator and Moopan to make sure that the researcher's engagement with the community is aligned with the community protocol. Refer to research process (data collection) document. The participants can ask the researcher to have the recorder turned off at any time during the research process (Community Hui). However, during the community meeting, if someone wants the recorder turned off, while others do not, their (the participant who wants the recorder turned off) details will neither be transcribed, nor will it be included in the data analysis. The recorder will be turned on to record the responses of the other participants.*

Note to facilitators: Instructions to facilitators are in standard print. Questions to read out are in **non-italic, bold**. **Prompts** are also provided, to be read out if and when needed (for example, if people do not understand a question, or to help encourage further discussion).

A. Running the Meeting

- There will be two people to facilitate the Meeting - one to lead the session, the other to take notes and make sure the recording equipment is running properly.
- Notes of each session are taken
- Remember to take a note of the group session and to record this on any tapes or note sheets used during that session.
- It is important to remember that you are seeking to reach a group viewpoint as far as possible. You should try to get everyone involved in the discussion. This does not mean that everyone must have the same view, but the discussion should lead to some conclusions. You need to record both majority and minority views.

B. Before the Meeting

- Test the recording equipment to make sure it is working and that the sound is recording at an acceptable level.

- Once the group is settled, start with introducing each-other and make sure that all are comfortable and can see one another before the session starts.
- Read the Confidentiality agreement loud and clear. For ethical reasons, participants are asked to sign the participation consent forms.
- Information within the participation consent forms are communicated with all the participants.
- The video-recorder will be turned on only after seeking permission from the participants. It will be turned off in-case of any instance of discomfort or inconvenience to the participants.

D. Introducing the Session

- The facilitator of the group discussion introduces the session.
‘I’m very grateful to you all coming here to talk about environmental injustices faced by your respective community. There are no right or wrong opinions, I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel.’

E. Discussion

- Can you share your viewpoints on the environmental injustices which are faced by your community?
- Do you feel you are more impacted than the others?

Using the components, condense the discussion into a poster or any other appropriate ways.

F. ENDING SESSION

Finally, summarize the discussions and thank participants for their time. Collect the participant consent forms.

Appendix III

Interview Schedule

About the Interview Questionnaire

The interview questions are broken into three sections, including asking information about:

1. Socio-demographics
2. Health and Well-being
3. Vulnerability of People to Environmental Injustices
4. Governmental Aid
5. Level of Consciousness

Section I

This will help me to understand the characteristics of the population- social demographics and their accomplishment of basic needs.

- i. Age
- ii. Gender
- iii. Marital Status
- iv. Can you tell me more about your sources of income and how well you can meet your expenses?
- v. Could you please tell me more about your education level and also of others at your home?
- vi. Could you please describe more about your housing patterns and your land ownership?
- vii. How has the Kerala Land Acquisition Act, 1962 affected your life with respect to the possession of your land ownership documents?
- viii. Can you discuss with me more about your family (how many members are there in your household? What do they do? Any other bread-winners other than you?)
- ix. Do you have any outstanding debts? If so, how much is it worth and how did you get indebted?
- x. Do you or any of your family have any conditions which makes them ill? If yes, what are they? What do you think caused them?
- xi. How would you describe your accessibility to the basic needs of food, water and shelter?

Section II

This section deals with understanding more about the tribe and their history. The questions focus on understanding their sense of belonging to their respective tribe and how this is under threat.

- i. How would you describe your tribe? What makes your tribe special?
- ii. Do you take pride to belong to your community? Why so?
- iii. You are often referred to as 'Children of Forests/ Kadinte Makkal' how do you connect your life to forests?
- iv. How do you feel your connection with the nature is under threat?
- v. How often do you depend on forests?
- vi. How do you preserve the forest resources traditionally and culturally?
- vii. How do you feel displaced from your land and place where you belong?
- viii. How has the practice of your traditional and cultural rites over your forests changed over time?
- ix. Do you feel the forests are still safe or do you think they are vulnerable? Why do you think so?
- x. What was the pattern of land ownership of your parents and grandparents?
- xi. Do you still have the similar pattern of land ownership? If not, why?

- xii. Have you felt that you have been denied your basic rights to your land? Why do you say so?

Section III

To understand how they consider their environment and their lives under threat.

- i. How do you think the environment around you is being over-exploited?
- ii. What do you say about the 'Muthanga incident'?
- iii. How safe is it safe to be in this environment that you are living?
- iv. How do you think your life is affected in being in this environment?
- v. What do you have to say about the restricted access to your own lands?
- vi. Has your land been every taken away? If yes, where you given compensation for it?
- vii. Why do you feel your culture and traditions treat the environment better?
- viii. Why do you feel that the other non-tribal people are less aware of the importance of the worth of the environment?

Section IV

This section deals with their awareness and response to the various government initiatives for tribal welfare.

- i. What do you have to say about the money that you earn and the money that you spend in a month?
- ii. What support does the government provide to you?
- iii. Do you think the support which the government gives are appropriate for you? Why?
- iv. How do you think the government should support you?
- v. How often have you made any efforts to communicate your interests and desires?
- vi. Do you feel neglected by the government? How?
- vii. What is your dream of a better tomorrow?
- viii. What do you have to say about initiative of the government to build toilets for you?
- ix. Have you ever felt that the hospitals, the dams, the wildlife sanctuaries and various other development initiatives have taken up your land and space? How?

Section V

This section tries to understand their level of conscious towards the environmental injustices which are instilled on their lives.

- i. What does your hopes and aspirations for future mean to you amidst all the challenges faced by you?
- ii. How do think your lives can be made better?
- iii. How do you articulate the responsibility of the situations that you are undergoing?
- iv. Why do you think this happens to your community more than it happens to the others?
- v. How do you think you can overcome this?
- vi. How do you wish to carry forward your culture and traditions to the future generate?
- vii. How do you wish to bring about a change to your life?

Appendix IV

Photovoice Guidelines and prompts

Photovoice Guidelines

Step 1: The researcher will support participants to become familiar with cameras and their use during the process of rapport building and completing the interviews.

Step 2: Photovoice training is given to the participants by the researcher and cultural facilitator at Kudumbashree or other safe public places in Wayanad for 1 hours. The modules which will be covered during the session will be on:

- Learning how to use a camera.
- Demonstration sessions.
- Understanding the purpose of the study.
- Giving prompts.
- Providing an overview of the time frame for the submission of the photovoice.
- Distribution of photovoice kits.

Step 3: The participants will be given one week to take the photographs based on the prompts which are given below and submit it to the researcher. The photos of human subjects are not preferred, however, if otherwise, the participants will be requested to obtain a photo consent from the human subjects being photographed. Meanwhile, the researcher and the cultural facilitator will make visits to the homes of the participants to make the participants feel more comfortable in participating in the photovoice process.

Step 4: After the photos are submitted. The researcher will ask the participants to choose among the three best photographs to which they can connect themselves to the problems faced by them.

Step 5: The participants will be given 10minutes each to speak about each photograph (the best 3).

Step 6: The participants' interpretation of the photograph is video recorded. The video is then later translated with English subtitles.

Note: The below given are the tentative themes/prompts, however, the prompts for the photovoice will be decided during the Community Hui by the participants of the study.

Prompts

1. Your daily life and environment.

Indigenous tribes are known to have a very great connection with the environment. You are free to capture any daily life circumstances where you feel in touch with the environment. You can also capture photographs of the issues that you are facing in your daily environment or about how a typical day would mean to you.

2. What do you want to remove from your environment to make it more peaceful?

You can capture anything that is worrying you that must be removed immediately or eventually from your environment to make your life more peaceful.

3. Government projects for you.

The government projects which you are benefiting from or those government initiatives which you believe are of no use to you at all.

Appendix V

Poster

Note: This is a tentative poster and will venue, data and time be subject to change with the data collection process.

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR THE STUDY

We are looking for volunteers for a research study to share insights and experiences of environmental injustices.

WHO?

- (i) Men or women who identify themselves (self-determination) as Adivasis
- (ii) Participants should be above 16 years of age
- (iii) Participants should be knowledgeable or experienced with the phenomenon of environmental injustice.

WHAT?

1 Session- 1 hour long

A community gathering to discuss about the experiences of the participants on environmental injustices.

WHEN & WHERE?

On March 05, 2020 at 1700 hours at KDM Community Hall,
Wayanad.

Want to Participate?

Please contact **Thara Prabhakar** at +919495280820 or email
T.Prabhakar@massey.ac.nz.

പഠനത്തിന് വോളണ്ടറി പങ്കാളികൾ ആവശ്യമാണ്

പാരിസ്ഥിതിക അനീതിയുടെ ഉൾക്കാഴ്ചകളും അനുഭവങ്ങളും പങ്കിടുന്നതിന് ഒരു ഗവേഷണ പഠനത്തിനായി ഞങ്ങൾ സന്നദ്ധപ്രവർത്തകരെ തിരയുന്നു.

ആരാൺ?

- (i) സ്വയം (സ്വയം നിർണ്ണയം) ആദിവാസികളായി സ്വയം തിരിച്ചറിയുന്ന പുരുഷന്മാരോ സ്ത്രീകളോ
- (ii) പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നവർ 16 വയസ്സിന് മുകളിലുള്ളവരായിരിക്കണം
- (iii) പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നവർ പാരിസ്ഥിതിക അനീതിയുടെ പ്രതിഭാസത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് അറിവുള്ളവരോ പരിചയസമ്പന്നരോ ആയിരിക്കണം.

എന്ത്?

1 സെഷൻ- 1 മണിക്കൂർ ദൈർഘ്യം

പാരിസ്ഥിതിക അനീതികളെക്കുറിച്ച് പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നവരുടെ അനുഭവങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് ചർച്ച ചെയ്യുന്നതിനുള്ള ഒരു കമ്മ്യൂണിറ്റി ഒത്തുചേരൽ.

എവിടെ?

വയനാട് കെഡിഎം കമ്മ്യൂണിറ്റി ഹാളിൽ.

പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ?

+919495280820 എന്ന നമ്പറിൽ താര പ്രഭാകറുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെടുക അല്ലെങ്കിൽ T.Prabhakar@massey.ac.nz എന്ന ഇമെയിൽ വിലാസത്തിൽ ബന്ധപ്പെടുക.

ന്യൂസിലാന്റിലെ പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്തിലെ മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി അംഗീകരിച്ചു.

Appendix VI

Roles and Guidelines for Cultural Facilitator

Cultural Facilitator- Roles and Guidelines

1. Understand the tribal dialects as well as Malayalam.
2. Assist in videorecording during photovoice and translate it into English/Malayalam subtitles.
3. Help in generating a rapport with the Tribal Chief and the tribal people of different colonies.
4. Assist photovoice training to the tribal people.
5. Assist the researcher in undertaking the overall data collection process and classifying the document.
6. Assist the participants of the study to review the transcripts.

Appendix VII

Cultural Facilitator- Confidentiality Agreement



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

‘Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by *Adivasis* of Wayanad’

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Full Name - printed)

agree to keep confidential all information concerning the project

.....
.....
.....
..... (Title of Project).

I will not retain or copy any information involving the project.

Signature: **Date:**

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Appendix VIII

Cultural Facilitator- Transcriber’s Confidentiality Agreement



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

‘Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by *Adivasis*
of Wayanad’

TRANSCRIBER’S CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Full Name - printed) agree to
transcribe the recordings provided to me.

I agree to keep confidential all the information provided to me.

I will not make any copies of the transcripts or keep any record of them, other than those required for
the project.

Signature: **Date:**

Appendix IX

Permission Letter from District Collector

File No.DCWYD/2730/2020-DSC1

Collectorate, Wayanad, Kalpetta.
Toll free No: 1077 Phone: 04936-202251,
email : dcwayanad@gmail.com

Date:17/03/2020

Proceedings of The District Collector, Wayanad

(Present :Dr. Adeela Abdulla I.A.S.)

Sub:Study among Tribal population in Wayanad –permission for conducting Research in Wayanad District- permission granted- Order issued.

Ref: 1. Request letter dated 06.03.2020 from Ms.Kieran O'Donoghue, Associate Professor, Massey University, New Zealand
2. Application from Ms. Thara Prabhakar, PhD Student, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Vide reference cited 1& 2, Ms.Kieran O'Donoghue, Associate Professor, Massey University, New Zealand and Ms. TharaPrabhakar, PhD Student, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand had submitted requests for getting permission to Ms TharaPrabhakar for conducting research and for collecting data from Edathana tribal colony, Valad grama panchayath of Wayanad District for the period up to 30.04.2020. As mentioned in the request letter, the subject of her research work is 'Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary challenges faced by Adivasi of Wayanad District'.

Based on the communications received above, permission is hereby granted to visit and collect data from Edathana tribal colony, Valad grama panchayat of Wayanad District till 30.04.2020 subject to the following conditions:

1. Permission is granted for research purpose only and shall be restricted to Edathana tribal colony of Valad grama panchayat in Wayanad District.
2. The visit shall be conducted with the prior knowledge of Tribal Development Officer, Mananthavady.
3. Permission of the Forest Department shall also be obtained for entering in the tribal settlements amidst the forest.
4. The study should not cause any harm/disturbance to the Scheduled tribes.
5. The study and camp activities shall not violate any provisions of any law.
6. The copy of the research findings shall be made available and send to this office for the purpose of using the same for future development planning.
7. The information/ Data collected through the study shall in no way be utilised against Central/State Government policies and is only for

File No.DCWYD/2730/2020-DSC1

academic purpose.

8. In the lights of the recent outbreak of KFD in the district, the applicant should consult District Medical Officer 9 (ph:9946 10 54 93) for necessary advice before entering such suspected areas and should take precautions including vaccination if necessary.

ADEELA ABDULLA IAS, DC DCWYD, O/O DC WAYANAD

District Collector

To

The Applicant.

Copy to :

1. District Police Chief, Wayanad.
2. Tribal Development officer, Mananthavady.
3. DFO, South Wayanad.
4. Stock file.

This document is electronically approved in eOffice on 17/03/2020 Hence it does not require signature in ink

Appendix X (a)

Informed Consent- Koottam



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

‘Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by *Adivasis* of Wayanad’

COMMUNITY MEETING CONSENT FORM

I have read or have had read to me in my first language, and I understand the Information Sheet. I have had the details of the study explained to me, my questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

1	I understand that I have an obligation to respect the privacy of the other members of the group by not disclosing any personal information that they share during our discussion.	
2	I understand that all the information I provide will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law, and the names of all people in the study will be kept confidential by the researcher.	
<i>Note: There are limits on confidentiality as there are no formal sanctions on other group participants from disclosing your involvement, identity or what you say to others in the discussion. There are risks in taking part in the Hui and taking part assumes that you are willing to assume those risks.</i>		
3	I agree to participate in the discussion under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.	

Declaration by Participant:

I _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Appendix X (b)

Informed Consent- Photovoice



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

‘Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by *Adivasis* of Wayanad’

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read or have had read to me in my first language, and I understand the Information Sheet. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

Please Tick against the respective statements as ‘Agree’ or ‘Disagree’

S.No.	Statements	Agree	Do Not Agree
1	Recordings can be used by the researcher for the purpose of research		
2	I wish to take part in photovoice training		
3	Photos will be submitted to the researchers on completion		
4	Each photo will be described to the researcher following photovoice guidelines.		
5	The photovoice training and photo describing process will be video recorded.		
6	Recordings will be used specifically for the research purpose.		

Declaration by Participant:

I _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Appendix X (c)

Informed Consent- In-depth Interview



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

‘Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by *Adivasis* of Wayanad’

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read or have had read to me in my first language, and I understand the Information Sheet. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

Please Tick against the respective statements as ‘Agree’ or ‘Disagree’

S.No.	Statements	Agree	Do Not Agree
1	Interviews can be sound recorded		
2	Interviews can be image recorded		
3	Recordings can be used by the researcher for the purpose of research		

Declaration by Participant:

I _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

School of Social Work

Appendix XI (a)

Information Sheet- Koottam



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

‘Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by *Adivasis* of Wayanad’

INFORMATION SHEET FOR COMMUNITY MEETING

Dear **Potential Participant**,

My name is Ms. Thara Prabhakar, I am a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) student at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand. I have previously worked for the Indigenous tribal rights at Palakkad district of Kerala against the Endosulfan use and its subsequent impacts on the tribes of Muthalamada.

This research seeks to understand the environmental injustice faced by the Indigenous tribal population of Wayanad District of Kerala, India. The research will involve the participation of Indigenous *Adivasi* men and women of Wayanad district. I would like to invite you to participate in the research. This will involve discussions based on specific prompts given by the moderator. The Community will be invited for the Community meeting which will be held informally and will form venues for discussions on environmental injustice faced the respective community. The Community Meeting (Hui) will be held at Kudumbashree, Wayanad or any safe public place. If you agree to be a part of the research, you will be taking part in a discussion where in you will be given the freedom to develop themes for the photovoice. With your permission the focus group discussions will be digitally recorded using a video recorder. All information will be treated confidentially.

You are under no obligation to participate in this process. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any question during discussion.
- Withdraw from the study at any time during the research data collection process;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- Ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the process However, during the community meeting, if someone wants the recorder turned off, while others do not, their (the participant who wants the recorder turned off) details will neither be transcribed nor will it be included in the data analysis. The recorder will be turned on to record the responses of the other participants.

The video recorded discussions will be transcribed by transcriber. This person will sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure confidentiality of the information.

For my study, I am supervised by Associate Professor. Kieran O'Donoghue, Dr. Nicky Stanley-Clarke, and Associate Professor. Sita Venkateswar, all of whom are very experienced qualitative researchers. Their contact details are:

1. **Associate Professor. Kieran O'Donoghue**
Head of the School (Social Work),
Massey University, Palmerston North Campus,
New Zealand
Contact Number- +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83517
Email ID- K.B.ODonoghue@massey.ac.nz
2. **Dr. Nicky Stanley-Clarke**
Senior Lecturer, School of Social Work,
Massey University,
Palmerston North Campus, New Zealand
Contact Number- +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83515
Email ID- N.Stanley-Clarke@massey.ac.nz
3. **Associate Professor. Sita Venkateswar**
Associate Professor, School of People, Environment, and Planning,
Massey University,
Palmerston North Campus, New Zealand
Contact Number: +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83663
Email ID: S.Venkateswar@massey.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 19/63. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor David Tappin (Committee Chair), Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Please do not hesitate to contact me about any aspect of the research. I can be contacted through the School of Social Work at Massey University in Palmerston North on phone: (06) 356 9099 extn 83057 or by email at: T.Prabhakar@massey.ac.nz. When I am in India, I can be contacted in +91 9495280820.

Thank you for your assistance.

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

School of Social Work

Appendix XI (b)

Information Sheet- Photovoice



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

'Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by Adivasis of Wayanad

Information sheet for photovoice

Dear **Potential Participant**,

My name is Ms. Thara Prabhakar, I am a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) student at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand. I have previously worked for the Indigenous tribal rights at Palakkad district of Kerala against the Endosulfan use and its subsequent impacts on the tribes of Muthalamada.

This research seeks to understand the environmental injustice faced by the *Adivasis* of Wayanad District of Kerala, India. The research will involve the participation of Indigenous tribal men and women of Wayanad. I would like to invite you to participate in the research. If you agree to be a part of the research, you will be given photovoice training and photovoice kits, wherein you are expected to take photos in response to specific given cues and submit it to the researcher within a duration of one week. The photos of human subjects are not preferred, however, if you do wish to take photos of people, you will be need to obtain a photo consent from the people being photographed. Photovoice is a method in which participants take pictures to illustrate their life situations. Each participant is then expected to select three photographs out of their pool of photos and describe them. The description of the photos by the participants will be video-recorded. The guidelines and instruction of this process will be given prior to participation. All information will be treated confidentially.

You are under no obligation to participate in this process. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question during discussion;
- Withdraw from the study at any time during the research data collection process;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- Ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the process.

The video recorded findings of photovoice will be transcribed by transcriber. This person will sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure confidentiality of the information.

For my study, I am supervised by Associate Professor. Kieran O'Donoghue, Dr. Nicky Stanley-Clarke, and Associate Professor. Sita Venkateswar, all of whom are very experienced qualitative researchers. Their contact details are:

4. Associate Professor. Kieran O'Donoghue

Head of the School (Social Work),
Massey University, Palmerston North Campus,
New Zealand

Contact Number- +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83517

Email ID- K.B.ODonoghue@massey.ac.nz

5. Dr. Nicky Stanley-Clarke

Senior Lecturer, School of Social Work,
Massey University,
Palmerston North Campus, New Zealand

Contact Number- +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83515

Email ID- N.Stanley-Clarke@massey.ac.nz

6. Associate Professor. Sita Venkateswar

Associate Professor, School of People, Environment, and Planning,
Massey University,
Palmerston North Campus, New Zealand

Contact Number: +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83663

Email ID: S.Venkateswar@massey.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 19/63. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor David Tappin (Committee Chair), Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Please do not hesitate to contact me about any aspect of the research. I can be contacted through the School of Social Work at Massey University in Palmerston North on phone: (06) 356 9099 extn 83057 or by email at: T.Prabhakar@massey.ac.nz. When I am in India, I can be contacted in +91 9495280820.

Thank you for your assistance.

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Appendix XI (c)

Information Sheet- In-depth interview



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

‘Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by *Adivasis* of Wayanad’

INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEWS

Dear **Potential Participant**,

My name is Ms. Thara Prabhakar, I am a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) student at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand. I have previously worked for the Indigenous tribal rights at Palakkad district of Kerala against the Endosulfan use and its subsequent impacts on the tribes of Muthalamada.

This research seeks to understand the environmental injustice faced by the Indigenous *Adivasis* of Wayanad District of Kerala, India. The research will involve the participation of Indigenous tribal men and women of Wayanad district. I would like to invite you to participate in the research. If you agree to be a part of the research, you will be interviewed for a duration of one hour. After the interview, the participant will be given 30 minutes to review the transcripts prior to the Closure Hui. With your permission the interviews will be digitally recorded using an audio Dictaphone. All information will be treated confidentially.

You are under no obligation to participate in this process. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the study at any time during the research data collection process;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- Ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

The interview recordings may be transcribed by transcriber. This person will sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure confidentiality of the information.

For my study, I am supervised by Associate Professor. Kieran O’Donoghue, Dr. Nicky Stanley-Clarke, and Associate Professor. Sita Venkateswar, all of whom are very experienced qualitative researchers. Their contact details are:

7. **Associate Professor. Kieran O'Donoghue**
Head of the School (Social Work),
Massey University, Palmerston North Campus,
New Zealand
Contact Number- +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83517
Email ID- K.B.ODonoghue@massey.ac.nz
8. **Dr. Nicky Stanley-Clarke**
Senior Lecturer, School of Social Work,
Massey University,
Palmerston North Campus, New Zealand
Contact Number- +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83515
Email ID- N.Stanley-Clarke@massey.ac.nz
9. **Associate Professor. Sita Venkateswar**
Associate Professor, School of People, Environment, and Planning,
Massey University,
Palmerston North Campus, New Zealand
Contact Number: +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 83663
Email ID: S.Venkateswar@massey.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 19/63. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor David Tappin (Committee Chair), Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Please do not hesitate to contact me about any aspect of the research. I can be contacted through the School of Social Work at Massey University in Palmerston North on phone: (06) 356 9099 extn 83057 or by email at: T.Prabhakar@massey.ac.nz. When I am in India, I can be contacted in +91 9495280820.

Thank you for your assistance.

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa



School of Social Work

Appendix XII

Counsellors List



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

Counsellors List

S.No.	Name of the Counsellor	Address
1	Joshvin Samuel	Counsellor, Louis Mount Hospital Chennalod, Wayanad Phone : +91 75618 91483
2	Josna Jose	Family Counsellor, Women Welfare Association, Wayanad Phone: 04936 217208
3	Jijo Thampan	Counsellor, Oolampara Mental Hospital, Calicut Phone: +91 9947163826
3	Dr. Milu Maria	Counsellor, Prajyothi Nikethan, Thrissur Phone: +91-480 2752885
4	Midhun Babu	Counsellor and Community Development officer, Wayanad Phone: +91 9388292945

5	Anu Paul	Counsellor, Peeves Public Institution, Nilambur Phone: +91 7034042349
6	Dr. Milu Maria Anto	Counsellor, Prajyothi Nikethan, Thrissur Phone: +91 480 2752885
7	Dr. Sukanaya Menon	Counsellor, Prajyothi Nikethan, Thrissur Phone: +91-480 2752885
8	Ann Theres Francis	Family and Child Counsellor, Suhruth Sadan Ernakulam Phone: +91 8078101645
9	Geomol Kuriakose	Counsellor, Suhruth Sadan, Ernakulam Phone: +91 9497830057

***Telephonic/skype services can be made available upon request.

Appendix XIII

Personal Risk Management Plan



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

Personal Risk Management Plan

- The researcher will cover the entire stay period under the travel and health insurance.
- Accommodation will be arranged near the town where public services (police station, hospital, railway stations and so on) are available. Furthermore, the researcher has close personal support systems in Wayanad to provide any further support.
- When traveling to remote areas, the researcher will inform about the travel to the NGO/PSS (friend). They will be asked to notify the police in case if the researcher does not show up within the expected timeframe.
- The researcher will always carry an immediate first aid kit and personal safety item during the research process.
- Take medical advice from an experienced medical practitioner before travel. Immunizations will be administered with the consent of a qualified medical practitioner from India.
- The supervisors will be contacted regularly during the data collection process via skype /email/zoom. The researcher will update the supervisors about the daily progress.
- The researcher will gain advice from other academics and networks in Wayanad to keep me safe. The researcher will maintain contacts with them for guidance and support during the entire duration of the fieldwork.
- The researcher will work closely with the cultural facilitator and Moopan to make sure the research is carried by respecting the Community protocol.
- The Massey University online help resource will also be utilised by the researcher (http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/student-life/services-and-resources/health-counselling-services/counselling-resources/counselling-selfhelp-resources_home.cfm.)
- The researcher will meet with the cultural facilitator weekly for debriefing.

Appendix XIV

Photo Release Form



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

‘Environmental Justice, Sustainability, Equity: Contemporary Challenges faced by *Adivasis* of Wayanad’

PHOTO RELEASE FORM

I give permission to Ms. Thara Prabhakar, the researcher to use my photograph for the research purpose. I understand that the images may be used in print publications, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media. I also understand that no royalty, fee or other compensation shall become payable to me by reason of such use.

Signature:

Date:

.....

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

School of Social Work

Appendix XV

Translated Documents



**പാരിസ്ഥിതിക നീതി സുസ്ഥിരത, തുല്യത :
വയനാടിന്റെ ആദിവാസികൾ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന
സമകാലിക വെല്ലുവിളികൾ**

കൈയെഴുത്തു പ്രതികൾ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കാനുള്ള അനുമതി

എന്നോടൊപ്പം നടത്തിയ അഭിമുഖത്തിന്റെ കൈയെഴുത്തു പ്രതി വായിക്കാനും ഭേദഗതി ചെയ്യാനും എനിക്ക് അവസരം ലഭിച്ചുവെന്ന് ഞാൻ സ്ഥിരീകരിക്കുന്നു.

ഇതിൽനിന്ന് എഡിറ്റ് ചെയ്ത കൈയെഴുത്തു പ്രതിയും ഉള്ളടക്കങ്ങളും ഗവേഷണത്തിൽ നിന്ന് ഉണ്ടാകുന്ന റിപ്പോർട്ടുകളും പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണങ്ങളും ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നതിന് സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു.

ഒപ്പ് : തീയതി :

പേര് : താര പ്രഭാകർ



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

രഹസ്യസ്വഭാവം സൂക്ഷിക്കുമെന്നുള്ള സമ്മതപത്രം

ഞാൻ താൻ പ്രഭാകർ പ്രോജക്റ്റുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട എല്ലാ വിവരങ്ങളും രഹസ്യമായി സൂക്ഷിക്കും എന്ന് സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു. ഗവേഷണം സംബന്ധിച്ച ഉപയോഗത്തിനല്ലാതെ പ്രോജക്റ്റിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു വിവരവും ഞാൻ സ്വകാര്യമായി സൂക്ഷിക്കുകയോ പകർത്തുകയോ ചെയ്യില്ല.

തീയതി:

ഒപ്പ് :



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

**പകർത്തിയെഴുത്തിൽ രഹസ്യസ്വഭാവം
പുലർത്തുമെന്ന ഉടമ്പടി**

എനിക്ക് നൽകിയ റെക്കോർഡിംഗുകൾ പകർത്തിയെഴുതാൻ പകർത്തിയെഴുത്തുകാരനിൽ നിന്ന് രഹസ്യസ്വഭാവം സൂക്ഷിക്കുമെന്നുള്ള ഉടമ്പടി (പൂർണ്ണ നാമം അച്ചടിച്ചത്) സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു.

പ്രോജക്ടിന് ആവശ്യമായ ഒപ്പ് ഒഴികെ കയ്യെഴുത്തു പ്രതികളുടെ പകർപ്പുകളോ അവയുടെ രേഖകളോ ഞാൻ സൂക്ഷിക്കുകയില്ല.

എനിക്ക് നൽകിയ എല്ലാ വിവരങ്ങളും രഹസ്യമായി സൂക്ഷിക്കുമെന്ന് സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു.



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
 COLLEGE OF HEALTH
 TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

**പാരിസ്ഥിതിക നീതി സുസ്ഥിരത, തുല്യത :
 വയനാടിന്റെ ആദിവാസികൾ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന
 സമകാലിക വെല്ലുവിളികൾ**

ഫോക്കസ് ഗ്രൂപ്പ് സമ്മതപത്രം

എന്റെ മാതൃഭാഷയിൽ ഞാൻ വായിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്, കൂടാതെ വിവര ഷീറ്റിന്റെ ഉള്ളടക്കം മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു. പഠനത്തിന്റെ വിശദാംശങ്ങൾ എനിക്ക് വിശദീകരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്, എന്റെ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾക്ക് സംതൃപ്തികരമായ ഉത്തരം ലഭിച്ചു, കൂടാതെ എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും കൂടുതൽ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ ചോദിക്കാമെന്ന് ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു. ഈ പഠനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കണോ എന്ന് പരിഗണിക്കാൻ എനിക്ക് മതിയായ സമയം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്, പങ്കാളിത്തം സ്വമേധയാ ഉള്ളതാണെന്നും എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും എനിക്ക് പഠനത്തിൽ നിന്ന് പിന്മാറാമെന്നും ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു.

1. ഞങ്ങളുടെ ചർച്ചയ്ക്കിടെ മറ്റ് അംഗങ്ങൾ പങ്കിടുന്ന വ്യക്തിഗത വിവരങ്ങളൊന്നും വെളിപ്പെടുത്താതിരിക്കുന്നതിലൂടെ ഗ്രൂപ്പിലെ മറ്റ് അംഗങ്ങളുടെ സ്വകാര്യതയെ മാനിക്കാൻ എനിക്ക് ബാധ്യതയുണ്ടെന്ന് ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു
2. ഞാൻ നൽകുന്ന എല്ലാ വിവരങ്ങളും നിയമപരമായി രഹസ്യമായി സൂക്ഷിക്കുമെന്നും കൂടാതെ പഠനത്തിലെ എല്ലാ ആളുകളുടെയും പേരുകൾ ഗവേഷകൻ രഹസ്യമായി സൂക്ഷിക്കുമെന്നും ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു.

കുറിപ്പ് : നിങ്ങളുടെ പങ്കാളിത്തം, ഐഡന്റിറ്റി അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഫോക്കസ് ഗ്രൂപ്പിലെ മറ്റുള്ളവരോട് നിങ്ങൾ പറയുന്ന കാര്യങ്ങൾ വെളിപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിൽ നിന്ന് മറ്റ് ഗ്രൂപ്പ് പങ്കാളികൾക്ക് ഒരു

ദ്രോഹിക ഉപരോധങ്ങളില്ലാത്തതിനാൽ രഹസ്യ സ്വഭാവത്തിന് പരിധികളുണ്ട്. കമ്മ്യൂണിറ്റി മീറ്റിംഗിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നതിൽ അപകട സാധ്യതയുണ്ടെന്ന് ഞാൻ മനസിലാക്കുന്നു. ഇതിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നതിലൂടെ ഈ അപകട സാധ്യത ഞാൻ മനസിലാക്കുകയും ഏറ്റെടുക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

3. ഗവേഷണത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമായി നടത്തുന്ന കമ്മ്യൂണിറ്റി മീറ്റിംഗിൽ അനുബന്ധമായി അറ്റാച്ചുചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്ന ഇൻഫർമേഷൻ ഷീറ്റിൽ പറഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്ന വ്യവസ്ഥകൾ പ്രകാരം ഫോക്കസ് ഗ്രൂപ്പിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ ഞാൻ സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു.

പഠന പങ്കാളിയുടെ പ്രതിജ്ഞാപത്രം
ഞാൻഈ വ്യവസ്ഥകൾ പ്രകാരം ഈ പഠനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു.

ഒപ്പ് :

തീയതി :



**പാരിസ്ഥിതിക നീതി, സുസ്ഥിരത, തുല്യത:
വയനാടിന്റെ ആദിവാസികൾ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന
സമകാലിക വെല്ലുവിളികൾ**

ഫോക്കസ് ഗ്രൂപ്പ് ചർച്ചയ്ക്കുള്ള വിവര ഷീറ്റ്

പ്രിയ ഗവേഷണ പങ്കാളി, ഞാൻ ശ്രീമതി താരാ പ്രഭാകർ, ന്യൂസിലാന്റിലെ പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്തിലെ മാസി സർവകലാശാലയിൽ ഡോക്ടർ ഓഫ് ഫിലോസഫി (പിഎച്ച്ഡി) വിദ്യാർത്ഥിനിയാണ്. എൻഡോസൾഫാൻ ഉപയോഗത്തിനെതിരെയും അത് മുത്തലമദയിലെ ഗോത്രവർഗ്ഗക്കാരെ ബാധിച്ചതിനെതിരെയും കേരളത്തിലെ പാലക്കാട് ജില്ലയിലെ തദ്ദേശീയ ഗോത്രാവകാശങ്ങൾക്കായും ഞാൻ മുമ്പ് പ്രവർത്തിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. കേരളത്തിലെ വയനാട് ജില്ലയിലെ ആദിവാസി ജനത നേരിടുന്ന പാരിസ്ഥിതിക അനീതി മനസ്സിലാക്കാൻ ഈ ഗവേഷണം ശ്രമിക്കുന്നു. വയനാട് ജില്ലയിലെ തദ്ദേശീയരായ ആദിവാസി പുരുഷന്മാരുടെയും സ്ത്രീകളുടെയും പങ്കാളിത്തം ഗവേഷണത്തിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടും. ഗവേഷണത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങളെ ക്ഷണിക്കാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. മോഡറേറ്റർ നൽകിയ നിർദ്ദിഷ്ട നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ അടിസ്ഥാനമാക്കിയുള്ള ചർച്ചകൾ ഇതിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടും. ഓരോ സാമുദായിക ഒത്തുചേരൽ 60 മിനിറ്റ് നീണ്ടുനിൽക്കും, ഇത് കുടുംബശ്രീ, വയനാട് അല്ലെങ്കിൽ സുരക്ഷിതമായ പൊതുസ്ഥലത്ത് നടക്കും. ഗവേഷണത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമാകാൻ നിങ്ങൾ സമ്മതിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ, നിങ്ങൾ ഈ സാമുദായിക ഒത്തുചേരലിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കും, അവിടെ നിങ്ങളുടെ സമുദായത്തിന്റെ മെച്ചപ്പെടുത്തലിനായി ഒരു മാതൃക വികസിപ്പിക്കാനുള്ള സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ലഭിക്കും. നിങ്ങളുടെ അനുമതിയോടെ ഫോക്കസ് ഗ്രൂപ്പ് ചർച്ചകൾ ഒരു വീഡിയോ റെക്കോർഡർ ഉപയോഗിച്ച് ഡിജിറ്റലായി റെക്കോർഡുചെയ്യും. എല്ലാ വിവരങ്ങളും രഹസ്യമായി പരിഗണിക്കും.

1. ഈ പ്രക്രിയയിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഒരു ബാധ്യതയുമില്ല. പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾ തീരുമാനിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ, ചർച്ചയ്ക്കിടെ ഏതെങ്കിലും പ്രത്യേക ചോദ്യത്തിന് ഉത്തരം നൽകാതിരിക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് അവകാശമുണ്ട്.
2. പ്രോജക്റ്റ് പൂർത്തിയാക്കുന്നതിന് മുമ്പായി ഏത് സമയത്തും പഠനത്തിൽ നിന്ന് പിന്മാറുക.
3. പങ്കെടുക്കുന്ന ഏത് സമയത്തും പഠനത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് ഏതു ചോദ്യങ്ങളും ചോദിക്കാം.
4. നിങ്ങളുടെ പേര്, നിങ്ങളുടെ അനുമതിയില്ലാതെ ഈ ഗവേഷണ

ണത്തിൽ ഉപയോഗിക്കുകയില്ല.

- 5. പ്രൊജക്റ്റിന്റെ അവസാനം അതിന്റെ കണ്ടെത്തലുകൾ നിങ്ങളെ അറിയിക്കുന്നതാണ്.
- 6. പ്രോസസിംഗിന്റെ ഏത് സമയത്തും റെക്കോർഡർ ഓഫ് ചെയ്യാൻ ആവശ്യപ്പെടാം എന്ന് ഞാൻ മനസിലാക്കുന്നു.

വീഡിയോ റെക്കോർഡ് ചെയ്ത ചർച്ചകൾ ട്രാൻസ് ക്രെബർ പകർത്തുന്നതാണ്. വിവരങ്ങളുടെ രഹസ്യാത്മകത ഉറപ്പാക്കുന്നതിന് ഈ വ്യക്തി ഒരു രഹസ്യാത്മക കരാറിൽ ഒപ്പിടും.

എന്റെ പഠനത്തിനായി, എന്നെ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്ന അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ. കീരൻ ഒ ഡോണോൾ, ഡോ. നിക്ക് സ്റ്റാൻലിക്ലാർക്ക്, ഡോ. സീത വെങ്കിടേശ്വർ എന്നിവരെല്ലാം പരിചയസമ്പന്നരായ ഗവേഷകരാണ്.

- 1. അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ. കീരൻ ഒ ഡോണോൾ സ്കൂൾ ഹെഡ് (സോഷ്യൽ വർക്ക്) മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി, പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത് കാമ്പസ്, ന്യൂസിലാന്റ് Contact No. +64 (06) 356 9099 Extension 83517 E.Mail.ID -K.B.ODonoghue@massey.ac.nz
- 2. ഡോ. നിക്ക് സ്റ്റാൻലിക്ലാർക്ക് സീനിയർ ലക്ചറർ, സ്കൂൾ ഓഫ് സോഷ്യൽ വർക്ക് മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത് കാമ്പസ്, ന്യൂസിലാന്റ് Contact No. +64 (06) 356 9099 Extension. 835155 E.Mail.ID N.Stanley-Clarke@massey.ac.nz
- 3. അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ. സീത വെങ്കിടേശ്വർ സ്കൂൾ ഓഫ് പീപ്പിൾ, പരിസ്ഥിതി, ആസൂത്രണം. മാസ്സി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത് കാമ്പസ്, ന്യൂസിലാന്റ്. Contact No. +64 (06) 356 9099 Extension 83663 E.Mail.ID-S.Venkateswar@massey.ac.nz

ഈ പ്രോജക്റ്റ് മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി ഹ്യൂമൻ എത്തിക്സ് കമ്മിറ്റി സതേൺ ബി, ആപ്ലിക്കേഷൻ വഴി അവലോകനം ചെയ്യുകയും അംഗീകരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഈ ഗവേഷണത്തിന്റെ പെരുമാറ്റത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് നിങ്ങൾക്ക് എന്തെങ്കിലും ആശങ്കയുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ, ദയവായി ജൂലി ബോഡിയെ (മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി ഹ്യൂമൻ എത്തിക്സ് കമ്മിറ്റി സതേൺ ബി, ടെലിഫോൺ 06 356 9099 : 86055, ഇമെയിൽ humanethicssouthb@massey.ac.nz) ബന്ധപ്പെടുക. ഈ ഗവേഷണത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് കൂടുതൽ വിവരങ്ങൾ അറിയണമെങ്കിൽ താരാ പ്രഭാകറിനെ (പാമർസ്റ്റൺ

നോർത്ത് മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിലെ സ്കൂൾ ഓഫ് സോഷ്യൽ
വർക്കർ വിദ്യാർത്ഥിനി Contact No. (06) 356 9099 extn 83057
അല്ലെങ്കിൽ Email ID : T.Prabhakar@massey.ac.nz.) ബന്ധപ്പെടുക.

താൾ പ്രഭാകർ ഇന്ത്യയിലായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ, + 91 9495280820
എന്ന നമ്പറിൽ ബന്ധപ്പെടാം.

നിങ്ങളുടെ സഹകരണത്തിന് നന്ദി.



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

**പാരിസ്ഥിതിക നീതി, സുസ്ഥിരത, തുല്യത:
വയനാടിന്റെ ആദിവാസികൾ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന
സമകാലിക വെല്ലുവിളികൾ**

അഭിമുഖത്തിനുള്ള വിവര ഷീറ്റ്

എന്റെ പേര് ശ്രീമതി താര പ്രഭാകർ, ഞാൻ ഫിലോസഫി വിദ്യാർത്ഥിനി (പി.എച്ച്.ഡി.) പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത്, ന്യൂസിലാന്റ്. എൻഡോസൾഫാൻ ഉപയോഗത്തിനെതിരെയും അത് മുത്തലമദയിലെ ഗോത്രവർഗ്ഗക്കാരെ ബാധിച്ചതിനെതിരെയും കേരളത്തിലെ പാലക്കാട് ജില്ലയിലെ തദ്ദേശീയ ഗോത്രാവകാശങ്ങൾക്കായും ഞാൻ മുമ്പ് പ്രവർത്തിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഈ ഗവേഷണം കേരളത്തിലെ വയനാട് ജില്ലയിലെ തദ്ദേശീയരായ ആദിവാസികൾ നേരിടുന്ന പാരിസ്ഥിതിക അനീതികളിൽ ശ്രദ്ധ കേന്ദ്രീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. വയനാട് ജില്ലയിലെ ആദിവാസി ഗോത്ര പുരുഷന്മാരുടെയും സ്ത്രീകളുടെയും പങ്കാളിത്തം ഗവേഷണത്തിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടും. ഗവേഷണത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങളെ ക്ഷണിക്കാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. ഗവേഷണത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമാകാൻ നിങ്ങൾ സമ്മതിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ, ഒരു മണിക്കൂർ സമയത്തേക്ക് നിങ്ങളെ അഭിമുഖം നടത്തും. അഭിമുഖത്തിന് ശേഷം, കയ്യെഴുത്തു പ്രതികൾ അവലോകനം ചെയ്യുന്നതിന് പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നയാൾക്ക് 30 മിനിറ്റ് സമയം നൽകും. നിങ്ങളുടെ അനുഭവത്തിലോടൊപ്പം അഭിമുഖങ്ങൾ ഒരു ഓഡിയോ ഡിക്ടേഷൻ ഉപയോഗിച്ച് ഡിജിറ്റലായി റെക്കോർഡ് ചെയ്യും. എല്ലാ വിവരങ്ങളും രഹസ്യമായി പരിഗണിക്കും.

ഈ പ്രക്രിയയിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ബാധ്യതയില്ല. പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾ തീരുമാനിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ, നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഇനിപ്പറയുന്നവയ്ക്കുള്ള അവകാശമുണ്ട്:

1. ഏതെങ്കിലും പ്രത്യേക ചോദ്യത്തിന് ഉത്തരം നൽകാൻ വിസമ്മതിക്കുക;
2. പ്രോജക്റ്റ് പൂർത്തിയാകുന്നതിന് മുമ്പായി എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും പഠനത്തിൽ നിന്ന് പിന്മാറുക.
3. പങ്കെടുക്കുന്ന ഏത് സമയത്തും പഠനത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് എന്തെങ്കിലും ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ ചോദിക്കുക.

4. നിങ്ങൾ ഗവേഷകൻ അനുമതി നൽകുന്നില്ലെങ്കിൽ നിങ്ങളുടെ പേര് ഉപയോഗിക്കില്ലെന്ന ധാരണയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള വിവരങ്ങൾ നൽകുക.
5. പ്രോജക്റ്റ് കണ്ടെത്തലുകൾ അവസാനിക്കുമ്പോൾ അതിന്റെ സംഗ്രഹത്തിലേക്ക് പ്രവേശനം നൽകുക.
6. അഭിമുഖത്തിനിടെ എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും റെക്കോർഡർ ഓഫുചെയ്യാൻ ആവശ്യപ്പെടുക.

ഇന്റർവ്യൂ റെക്കോർഡിംഗുകൾ ട്രാൻസ്ക്രിബർ പകർത്തിയേക്കാം. വിവരങ്ങളുടെ രഹസ്യാത്മകത ഉറപ്പാക്കുന്നതിന് ഈ വ്യക്തി ഒരു രഹസ്യാത്മക കരാറിൽ ഒപ്പിടും.

എന്റെ പഠനത്തിനായി, എന്നെ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്ന അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ. കീരൻ ഒ ഡോണോൾ, ഡോ. നിക്കി സ്റ്റാൻലിക്ലാർക്ക്, ഡോ. സീത വെങ്കിടേശ്വർ എന്നിവരെല്ലാം പരിചയസമ്പന്നരായ ഗവേഷകരാണ്.

1. അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ. കീരൻ ഒ ഡോണോൾ സ്കൂൾ ഹെഡ് (സോഷ്യൽ വർക്ക്) മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി, പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത് കാമ്പസ്, ന്യൂസിലാന്റ് Contact No. +64 (06) 356 9099 Extension 83517 E.Mail.ID -K.B.ODonoghue@massey.ac.nz
2. ഡോ. നിക്കി സ്റ്റാൻലിക്ലാർക്ക് സീനിയർ ലക്ചറർ, സ്കൂൾ ഓഫ് സോഷ്യൽ വർക്ക് മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത് കാമ്പസ്, ന്യൂസിലാന്റ് Contact No. +64 (06) 356 9099 Extension. 835155 E.Mail.ID N.Stanley-Clarke@massey.ac.nz
3. അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ. സീത വെങ്കിടേശ്വർ സ്കൂൾ ഓഫ് പീപ്പിൾ, പരിസ്ഥിതി, ആസൂത്രണം. മാസ്സി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത് കാമ്പസ്, ന്യൂസിലാന്റ്. Contact No. +64 (06) 356 9099 Extension 83663 E.Mail.ID-S.Venkateswar@massey.ac.nz

ഈ പ്രോജക്റ്റ് മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി ഹ്യൂമൻ എത്തിക്സ് കമ്മിറ്റി സതേൺ ബി, ആപ്ലിക്കേഷൻ വഴി അവലോകനം ചെയ്യുകയും അംഗീകരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഈ ഗവേഷണത്തിന്റെ പെരുമാറ്റത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് നിങ്ങൾക്ക് എന്തെങ്കിലും ആശങ്കയുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ, ദയവായി ജൂലി ബോഡിയെ (മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി ഹ്യൂമൻ എത്തിക്സ് കമ്മിറ്റി സതേൺ ബി, ടെലിഫോൺ 06 356 9099 : 86055, ഇമെയിൽ humanethicssouthb@massey.ac.nz) ബന്ധപ്പെടുക. ഈ ഗവേഷണത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് കൂടുതൽ

വിവരങ്ങൾ അറിയണമെങ്കിൽ താരാ പ്രഭാകറിനെ (പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത് മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിലെ സ്കൂൾ ഓഫ് സോഷ്യൽ വർക്കർ വിദ്യാർത്ഥിനി Contact No. (06) 356 9099 extn 83057 അല്ലെങ്കിൽ Email ID : T.Prabhakar@massey.ac.nz.) ബന്ധപ്പെടുക.

താര പ്രഭാകർ ഇന്ത്യയിലായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ, + 91 9495280820 എന്ന നമ്പറിൽ ബന്ധപ്പെടാം.

നിങ്ങളുടെ സഹകരണത്തിന് നന്ദി.



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പാരിസ്ഥിതിക നീതി സുസ്ഥിരത, തുല്യത :
വയനാടിന്റെ ആദിവാസികൾ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന
സമകാലിക വെല്ലുവിളികൾ

PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

ഞാൻ എന്റെ മാതൃഭാഷയിൽ വായിച്ച് മനസ്സിലാക്കിയിട്ടുണ്ട് കൂടാതെ പഠനത്തിന്റെ വിശദാംശങ്ങൾ എനിക്ക് വിശദീകരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്, എന്റെ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾക്ക് തൃപ്തികരമായ ഉത്തരങ്ങൾ ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്, കൂടാതെ എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും കൂടുതൽ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ ചോദിക്കാമെന്ന് ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു. ഈ പഠനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കണോ എന്ന് പരിഗണിക്കാൻ എനിക്ക് മതിയായ സമയം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്, പങ്കാളിത്തം സ്വമേധയാ ഉള്ളതാണെന്നും എനിക്ക് എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും പഠനത്തിൽ നിന്ന് പിന്മാറാമെന്നും ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു.

പ്രസ്താവനകൾ സമ്മതിക്കുക (v) അല്ലെങ്കിൽ (x) വിരോധിക്കുക

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|-------|--|----------------|----------------|
| നമ്പർ | പ്രസ്താവനകൾ | സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു | വിരോധിക്കുന്നു |
| 1 | അഭിമുഖങ്ങൾ ശബ്ദമായി
റെക്കോർഡുചെയ്യാം | | |
| 2 | അഭിമുഖങ്ങൾ ഇമേജ്
റെക്കോർഡുചെയ്യാം | | |
| 3 | റെക്കോർഡിംഗുകൾ ഗവേഷകന്
ഗവേഷണ ഉദ്ദേശ്യത്തിനായി ഉപയോഗിക്കാം | | |

പ്രഖ്യാപനം:
ഈ പഠനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ ഞാൻ.....
സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു.
ഒപ്പ്:..... തീയതി:.....



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COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

**പാരിസ്ഥിതിക നീതി സുസ്ഥിരത, തുല്യത :
വയനാടിന്റെ ആദിവാസികൾ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന
സമകാലിക വെല്ലുവിളികൾ**

പങ്കാളിയാകാനുള്ള സമ്മതപത്രം

ഈ സമ്മതപത്രം എന്റെ മാതൃഭാഷയിൽ ഞാൻ വായിച്ച് മനസ്സിലാക്കിയിട്ടുണ്ട് കൂടാതെ പഠനത്തിന്റെ വിശദാംശങ്ങൾ എനിക്ക് വിശദീകരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്, എന്റെ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾക്ക് തൃപ്തികരമായ ഉത്തരങ്ങൾ ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്, കൂടാതെ എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും കൂടുതൽ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ ചോദിക്കാമെന്ന് ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു. ഈ പഠനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കണോ എന്ന് പരിഗണിക്കാൻ എനിക്ക് മതിയായ സമയം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്, പങ്കാളിത്തം സ്വമേധയാ ഉള്ളതാണെന്നും എനിക്ക് എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും പഠനത്തിൽ നിന്ന് പിന്മാറാമെന്നും ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു.

യോജിക്കുക 'അല്ലെങ്കിൽ' വിധേയമാക്കുക

ക്രമ

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|-------|---|---------------------------------|
| നമ്പർ | പ്രസ്താവനകൾ | യോജിക്കുന്നു വിധേയമാക്കുന്നു |
| 1 | റെക്കോർഡിംഗുകൾ ഗവേഷകന്
ഗവേഷണ ആവശ്യത്തിനായി
ഉപയോഗിക്കാൻ കഴിയും | |
| 2 | ഫോട്ടോവോയ്സ് പരിശീലനത്തിൽ
പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു | |
| 3 | ഫോട്ടോകൾ പൂർത്തിയാകുമ്പോൾ
ഗവേഷകർക്ക് സമർപ്പിക്കും | |

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

School of Social Work
Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, New Zealand T +64 6356 9099 www.massey.ac.nz

- 4 ഫോട്ടോവോയിസ് മാർഗ്ഗനിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ
പിന്തുടർന്ന് ഓരോ ഫോട്ടോകളും
ഗവേഷകന് വിശദീകരിക്കും
- 5 ഫോട്ടോവോയിസ് പരിശീലനവും
ഫോട്ടോ വിവരിക്കുന്ന പ്രക്രിയയും
വീഡിയോ റെക്കോർഡ് ചെയ്യും.
- 6 ഗവേഷണ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾക്കായി റെക്കോർഡ്
ഡിംഗുകൾ പ്രത്യേകമായി ഉപയോഗിക്കും.

പ്രഖ്യാപനം:

ഈ പഠനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ ഞാൻ.....
സമ്മതിക്കുന്നു.

ഒപ്പ്:.....

തീയതി:.....



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ഫോട്ടോ റിലീസ് ഫോം ഗവേഷണം

ഞാൻ ഗവേഷണത്തിന്റെ ആവശ്യത്തിനായി എന്റെ ഫോട്ടോ ഉപയോഗിക്കാൻ ഗവേഷക ശ്രീമതി താര പ്രഭാകറിന് അനുമതി നൽകുന്നു. ചിത്രങ്ങൾ, അച്ചടി പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണങ്ങൾ, ഓൺലൈൻ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണങ്ങൾ, അവതരണങ്ങൾ, വെബ്സൈറ്റുകൾ, സോഷ്യൽമീഡിയ എന്നിവയിൽ ഉപയോഗിക്കാമെന്ന് ഞാൻ മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു. അത്തരം ഉപയോഗങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടി ഒരു റോയൽറ്റിയോ ഫീസോ മറ്റ് നഷ്ടപരിഹാരമോ എനിക്ക് നൽകേണ്ടതില്ല.

ഒപ്പ് :
 തീയതി :



നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ

1. നിങ്ങളുടെ ദൈനംദിനജീവിതവും പരിസ്ഥിതിയും

തദ്ദേശീയഗോത്രങ്ങൾക്ക് പരിസ്ഥിതിയുമായി വളരെ വലിയ ബന്ധമാണുള്ളത്. പരിസ്ഥിതിയുമായി സമ്പർക്കം പുലർത്തുന്ന ഏതൊരു ദൈനംദിന ജീവിത സാഹചര്യങ്ങളും പകർത്താൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യമുണ്ട്, നിങ്ങളുടെ ദൈനംദിന പരിതസ്ഥിതിയിൽ നിങ്ങൾ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന പ്രശ്നങ്ങളുടെ ഫോട്ടോഗ്രാഫുകളും അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഒരു സാധാരണ ദിവസം നിങ്ങൾക്ക് എങ്ങനെ അർത്ഥമാക്കാം എന്നതും നിങ്ങൾക്ക് പകർത്താനാകും.

2. കൂടുതൽ സമാധാനപരമാക്കാൻ നിങ്ങളുടെ പരിതസ്ഥിതിയിൽ നിന്ന് എന്താണ് നീക്കം ചെയ്യാൻ നിങ്ങൾ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നത്?

നിങ്ങളെ വിഷമിപ്പിക്കുന്ന എന്തും നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഫോട്ടോയിൽ പിടിച്ചെടുക്കാൻ കഴിയും, പരിസ്ഥിതിയിൽ നിന്നും നീക്കം ചെയ്യുന്നതിലൂടെ നിങ്ങളുടെ ജീവിതം കൂടുതൽ സമാധാനപരമാകും എന്ന് നിങ്ങൾ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്ന പരിസ്ഥിതി പ്രശ്നങ്ങളും നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഫോട്ടോയിൽ പകർത്താം.

3. നിങ്ങൾക്കുള്ള സർക്കാർ പദ്ധതികൾ

നിങ്ങൾക്ക് പ്രയോജനം ചെയ്യുന്ന സർക്കാർ പദ്ധതികൾ, അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഇല്ലെന്ന് നിങ്ങൾ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്ന സർക്കാർ സംരംഭങ്ങൾ എല്ലാം ഫോട്ടോയിൽ പകർത്താം.



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COLLEGE OF HEALTH
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പ്രിയ സാധ്യതയുള്ള പങ്കാളി,

എന്റെ പേര് ശ്രീമതി താര പ്രഭാകർ, ഞാൻ ന്യൂസിലാന്റിലെ പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്തിലെ മാസി സർവകലാശാലയിലെ ഡോക്ടർ ഓഫ് ഫിലോസഫി (പി.എച്ച്. ഡി) വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയാണ്. എൻഡോസൾഫാൻ ഉപയോഗത്തിനെതിരെ കേരളത്തിലെ പാലക്കാട് ജില്ലയിലെ തദ്ദേശീയ ആദിവാസികളുടെ അവകാശങ്ങൾക്കായി ഞാൻ മുമ്പ് പ്രവർത്തിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഗവേഷണത്തിൽ വയനാട്ടിലെ ആദിവാസി ഗോത്ര പുരുഷന്മാരുടെയും സ്ത്രീകളുടെയും പങ്കാളിത്തം ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഗവേഷണത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങളെ ക്ഷണിക്കാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. ഗവേഷണത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമാകാൻ നിങ്ങൾ സമ്മതിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ, നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഫോട്ടോ വോയ്സ് പരിശീലനവും ഫോട്ടോവോയ്സ് കിറ്റുകളും നൽകും, അതിൽ നിർദ്ദിഷ്ടസൂചകങ്ങൾക്ക് മറുപടി കൊടുക്കുകയും അവരുടെ ജീവിതസാഹചര്യങ്ങൾ വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നതിന് ചിത്രങ്ങൾ എടുക്കുകയും അതിൽ നിന്ന് മൂന്ന് ഫോട്ടോഗ്രാഫുകൾ ഓരോ പങ്കാളിയും തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്ത് അവ വിവരിക്കുമെന്ന് പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു. അവരുടെ ഫോട്ടോകളുടെ വിവരണം വീഡിയോ റെക്കോർഡുചെയ്യും. പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നതിനുമുമ്പ് ഈ പ്രക്രിയയുടെ മാർഗ്ഗനിർദ്ദേശങ്ങളും നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങളും നൽകും. എല്ലാ വിവരങ്ങളും രഹസ്യമായിരിക്കും.

ഈ പ്രക്രിയയിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഒരു ബാധ്യതയുമില്ല. പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾ തീരുമാനിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് അവകാശമുണ്ട്:

1. ചർച്ചകൾക്കിടയിൽ ഏതെങ്കിലും പ്രത്യേകചോദ്യത്തിന് ഉത്തരം നൽകാൻ വിസമ്മതിക്കുക.
2. പ്രോജക്റ്റ് പൂർത്തിയാക്കുന്നതിനുമുമ്പായി എപ്പോൾ വേണമെങ്കിലും പഠനത്തിൽ നിന്ന് പിന്മാറുക.
3. പങ്കെടുക്കുന്ന ഏതു സമയത്തും പഠനത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് എന്തെങ്കിലും ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ ചോദിക്കുക.
4. നിങ്ങൾ ഗവേഷകന് അനുമതി നൽകുന്നില്ലെങ്കിൽ നിങ്ങളുടെ പേര് ഉപയോഗിക്കില്ലെന്ന ധാരണയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള വിവരങ്ങൾ നൽകുക.
5. പ്രോജക്റ്റ് കണ്ടെത്തലുകൾ അവസാനിക്കുമ്പോൾ അതിന്റെ സംഗ്രഹത്തിലേക്ക് പ്രവേശനം നൽകുക.
6. പ്രോജക്റ്റ് സമയത്ത് റെക്കോർഡർ ഓഫ് ചെയ്യാൻ ആവശ്യപ്പെടുക.
7. റിക്കോർഡു ചെയ്ത കണ്ടെത്തലുകൾ ട്രാൻസ്ക്രൈബർ പകർത്തി വിവരങ്ങളുടെ രഹസ്യാത്മകത ഉറപ്പാക്കുന്നതിന്



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COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

ഈ വ്യക്തി ഒരു രഹസ്യാത്മക കരാറിൽ ഒപ്പിടും.

എന്റെ പഠനത്തിനായി, എന്നെ നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്ന അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ. കീരൻ ഒ ഡോണോഗ്, ഡോ. നിക്കി സ്റ്റാൻലിക്ലാർക്ക്, ഡോ. സീത വെങ്കിടേശ്വർ എന്നിവരെല്ലാം പരിചയസമ്പന്നരായ ഗവേഷകരാണ്.

1. അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ. കീരൻ ഒ ഡോണോഗ് സ്കൂൾ ഹെഡ് (സോഷ്യൽ വർക്ക്) മാസി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി, പാമർസ്റ്റൺ നോർത്ത് കാമ്പസ്, ന്യൂസിലാന്റ് Contact No. +64 (06) 356 9099 Extension 83517 E.Mail.ID -K.B.ODonoghue@massey.ac.nz
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