

## The Political Economy of Purity: Chhaupadi, Feudal Legacies and Intersectional Social Justice in Nepal

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: June 21, 2025	The embedded tradition of the chhaupadi in Nepal drives the women on their menstruation through narrow life-threatening sheds. That arrangement reveals the ugly separation of fundamental rights of respect. Instead of depending on the mainstream feminist perspectives that focus on tradition, this work relies on Critical Political Economy of Health coupled with Socialist and Materialist Feminism to discuss the problem. The core points? Chhaupadi is not some gull attitude of backward tradition but it is framed with historic traditions of power inequity. This habit is maintained by two types of control combined together. One is delicate which is based in ancient and conventional wisdom of Hindu concept of cleanliness and supported closely by social status and birth. The other type is harder it is about money and politics, nurtured by the ineffectiveness of government acts, fairness of resource distribution, or exclusion founded on location. Statistics indicate that the extent to which Chhaupadi is lethal thrives on the confusion between wealth and caste status and place of residence. Maintaining this tradition is therefore a pointer of gross injustice and implicitly it indicates the involvement of the state. The elimination of Chhaupadi is never stuck away with a either oldstyle awareness campaign or quick fix commodities. Rather, it demands reforms that are based on fairness that hold leaders accountable, redistribute resources equally, and turn around the deep power imbalances in health systems that allow harm to go unpunished.
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### Introduction

Menstruation is a fundamental part of the body process that most people who are born to a female go through. Although it is completely natural, it is still remembered even in the most developed countries and in many places it is treated as dirty or shameful regardless of the location or the wealth of the nation. Bobel and others (2020) investigated by stating that periods have a global stigmatization effect that contributes to the maintenance of systems of malediction. Similarly, Johnst on Robledo and Chrisler discovered (2013). Menstrual taboos restrict the women freedom, movement and still leave them out of the normal public tasks nurturing gender gaps. These consequences are not limited to annoying they are far deeper. Hennegan and team (2019) state that they damage physical health, educational access, even simple dignity. In this ample context, periodbased isolation manifests itself in Nepal as practiced in the Chaupadi one. It is practiced in isolated Nepal villages in the western part of the country and during their menstrual periods compels females to remain elsewhere, usually in crowded sheds known as chhau goths or in animal areas (Amatya et al., 2018). Due to the ancient Hindu beliefs on cleanliness at certain times, Chhaupadi views the menstrual blood as something sacred as well as bodily impure (Thapa et al., 2019). Therefore, menstruating girls are not allowed to enter any cooking space, touch food, milk-based products and meat, covered prayer places and even touch an elder person or a man in the household.

Although Chhaupadi was outlawed in 2005 by the highest court in Nepal, and subsequently by

the Muluki Aparadh Sanhita, a law that outlawed certain offenses, in 2017, the tradition continues to be practiced by people in Nepal. According to the 2017 law, violation of this rule results into paying money or jail conviction though, the practice continues, predominantly in western Nepal poor areas. Ranabhat and colleagues have thought already in 2015 that it is not so easy to unwind something that is so closely related to culture and poverty by the laws. Since Chhaupadi has not been replaced, it reflects on more encompassing issues not only gradual transformation but the failed apparatuses, which require new thought. There is much research and government literature regarding Chhaupadi that is largely the result of the mainstream feminist perspective that primarily focuses on sexism and disgrace concerning periods. These models identify unjust treatment women immediately encounter, but likely to move the conservatives that of accusing victims to emphasize the role of local attitudes rather than investigating deep-rooted causes that are related to broader systems. This perspective makes the issue personal, deemphasizing the failure of institutions in a larger scale (JohnstonRobledo and Chrisler, 2013).

Other more frequent leftwing reactions include period education, pad distribution, or MHM promotion. Although the kind of gestures assist in shortterm knowledge sharing and dispersion, they do not address the dire situation that causes the Chhaupadi to become an absolute necessity to bad women to survive. These fixes are primarily concerned with habit change because more profound economic problems, such as bad housing, weak toilets, economic inadequacies persist that keep period bans alive (Hennegan et al., 2019).

This narrow perception allows the government and the affluent to get away. Considering Chhaupadi as a mere olden day tradition, one would overlook underlying problems such as poverty, poor leadership or unbalanced development (Ranabhat et al., 2015). The framing in this manner guarantees that the mainstream talk does not question the status quo, which protects the people in power. Owing to this, we acutely require new forms of thinking which would show the actual economic and political pressures that perpetuate Chhaupadi as a means of control.

This article applies the concept of socialist feminism and materialist perspectives about health in an effort to give meaning to the world. Navarro in 1976 already identified how the unfairness of the systems in health patterns is based on the very ways in which capitalistic systems are constructed, with distribution of what and to who rests on the nature of the power of classes. Similarly, the article of Marmot and Bell (2012) also supported by Pickett and Wilkinson (2015) demonstrates that health disparities are more closely related to politics and income disparities than to individual decisions. These are all points that support the fact that Chhaupadi is not merely a tradition that people can easily adhere to, but a systemic type of harm. The Chhaupadi culture remains strong due to the cultural beliefs intertwining with the economic status the attitudes of people towards purity, depending on caste and social position, are formed gradually. Such ideas are sticky since they are communicated by local structures through the daily practices. Meanwhile, the lack of governmental encouragement, lopsided development and isolation in the countryside make circumstances when this kind of practice remains unquestioned. The degree to which it can be harsh depends on who you are and what your background is, the amount of money you make or what sex you are or the location you belong to all these combine to different results in the experiences of people. It demonstrates that Chhaupadi is not only about culture but also strong imbalances in society. (Bista, 2020)

This concept extends the views of Banerji 2003 take how health norms of a society are determined by the economic, cultural, and political foundation. Through that lens, in Nepal, Chhaupadi survives by overlapping with strong leaders, state machineries, as well as market forces that force continued marginalization. Therefore, it is not a fixed tradition in aspic, rather it is that which drifts with imbalances of power based on neglect. Ultimately, it is possible to VPL Chhaupadi as a form of institutional injustice that is related to the larger regime of control and suggests profound alteration based on justice, accountability in the rule of law, as well as proportional provision of what people require.

This study looks at Chhaupadi with a new perspective of money, power and overlapping injustices. Rather than simply attributing tradition to blame, it demonstrates the manner in which the old hierarchies collide with the new inequality to keep the custom alive. It scrutinizes the benefactors, which brings to light certain invisible drivers of the practice. Instead of the top down fix, it proposes

modifications, which focus on equitableness and authentic communal requirements. It is no rush reform but structural change up to the root.

### Method

The qualitative approach employed in this work is a theme driven analysis to examine a global perspective of the periods, as well as challenge the use of Chhaupadi in Nepal. It relies on secondhand information that has been reviewed by focusing on thematic interpretation as opposed to survey or statistics. Instead of generalizations, the arrangement is geared towards a deeper pattern on the spread of shame related to menstruation across cultures. It also brings out the role of power structures and economic states in Nepal in sustaining such practices.

### Literature Review

The issue of periods and their connotation in society, tabooed around them appears everywhere, and is often bound with male-dominated opinions and faith-based ideas. Men have traditionally viewed having a period as shameful in numerous venues, sordid or impure this state of mentality pressures, goes individual and dictates its own life (Bobel et al., 2020; JohnstonRobledo). & Chrisler, 2013). False ideals, strict social norms, and structures which gloss over need add to this shame, foil the way to treatment, to school, and respect. (Hennegan et al., 2019). Although the amount of stigma varies across place to place, the roots male power, money gaps, and stern religion are almost never, alike. Periods in South Asia tend to cling to past conceptions, the relations of clean and unclean beliefs based on the Hindu customs and male apparatus (Douglas, 1966; Stubbs, 2008). & Sharma, 2019). Rather than merely determining the ways women think of their bodies, also supported by these perspectives are inequitable power positions restricting the number of people that are visible or heard. It is indicative of the fact that menstrual practices are not a frivolity because such stigmas do not fade away quickly, myths norms maintained upon, the domination of the male over female lives (LahiriDutt, 2015).

According to feminist scholars, the silence of menstruation is no coincidence it conceals inequality though retains primal imbalances going (Bobel, 2019). In Nepal, ingrained taboos over periods manifest starkly through Chhaupadi. It is a rural western practice that is used to force women during their cycle so that they can be alone in simple huts sometimes unsafe, never clean (Amatya et al). al., 2018; Ranabhat et al., 2015). Harnessed to ancient Hindu philosophies on existence, it is unsacred, it proscribes them house, cooking-room, sanctuary, even some meals like milk or meat. It has been proved that this harm is real and it causes breathing troubles, snakebites, cold nights, and hurting emotions as pushed away by others (Thapa et al., 2019). Due to it, the ritual is evidently violated, core rights to the dignity and health, to safety, and steer the even hand regardless of your sex. Laws and rules were introduced to address the issue of Chhaupadi.

In a similar case back in 2005, Nepal top court declared it to be against the law, although criminalizing it was established in law in 2017, with penalty or jail time as a result of whoever causes women to seclude themselves during their menstrual period. Still, studies show the following measures have not actually curbed the tradition particularly in the remote regions (Ranabhat et al., 2015). Experts attribute this to the fact that the deeper problems such as low income, poor are the reasons, schooling, women uneconomic workloads and insufficient governmental aid is not being handled properly. Staying power of Chhaupadi is not only about tradition clings around instead, it bears poor structures of government and neglected social and economic demands. (Gurung, 2020).

A lot of the research carried out up to date is more inclined to employ either liberal feminist perspectives or action-oriented models, which deal with disseminating knowledge, schooling, management of periods that is hygienically dealt with (House et al., 2012; Crawford et al., 2019). Such practices have proven useful to some extent, but have been criticized, since they are oversimplified, not penetrating into the realworld conditions, and 2 more intense drives of the stigma of periods (Bobel, 2019). Often, such angles place accuses them of individuals, and portray women who engage in such practice as ignorant, whereas bigger powerful analogs of poverty and marginalization obtains, overlooked. Due to this, there were problems based on the class divisions, caste arrangements, and unequal gender roles still do not receive the slightest attention.

The new criticism is calling to revisit Chhaupadi, based on the conceptions of Critical Political Economy of Health and Socialist or Materialist Feminism believe Banerji, Navarro, Hartmann. Rather

than viewing health behaviors as individual's choice, the said perceptions make them bound up with financial hardships and governmental positions and absence. resources. Banerji claims that it is not the private that determines what is considered to be healthy. beliefs yet by wider motivated economic powers. In much the same way, left feminists emphasize that male domination is combined with profit making. appear to consume female labor, flesh, and the possibility of giving birth, work hard, Ehrenreich and English.

Looking at Chhaupadi in such a manner reveals old style stratifications in silent manner which is practically invisible. to internalize the low position of women as a normality; and in the same vein, it causes poor services and so on. poor economies bring brute force barriers to ensure that hardship does not escape. A review of the previous research indicates a strong gap in theory and facts. Although there is much literature surrounding the traditions and health impact related to Only a few of them challenge the position of power or money based origins: Chhaupadi. keeping it alive. What is required are more in depth looks. customs investigating rather than how government of actions, polarities between poor and rich, and weak economies interact to perpetuate. period shame going. This project is based on old findings and not new data. deems him as otherwise with effect more acute. analytical angle relating Chhaupadi with larger trends of oppression and disregarded struggles in Nepal.

### **The Critical Analytical Lens: Employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

In order to achieve the objective of the shift of liberal to critical approaches, the method focuses on the Critical Discourse Analysis and theme based blending (Acharya, 2019). Rather than taking a surface content, CDA excavates policy texts and dominant narratives seeking in how choices of words and structure and labels reproduce now-established hierarchies as they strengthen them. It is not much what is said but who gains when it is said like that (Fairclough, 2003). The CDA approach towards analyzing Chhaupadi assists in disclosing implicit power discursive (Acharya, 2019). To use one example, consider the way in which it disaggregates the manner in which the official Nepal publications or international Non Governmental Organizations typically describe Chhaupadi as nothing but a tradition. That perspective is a pass to conceal the reality that leaders are not fulfilling their roles of correcting bad roads, ineffective services or disproportional distribution of wealth (Acharya, 2019; Human Rights Watch, 2018). Focus is shifted towards the practice instead of broken systems. Once again, CDA reveals the bias behind the answers in which you have to dig into terms of choice, jargons, and why support often results into MHM kits being pushed down your throat instead of failing policies being pushed down (Acharya, 2019). Due to this perversion of speech, poor wages, mistreatment, economic downsizing, and work traps remain as no one dares to ask who has the final word.

### **Stages of Rigorous Thematic Synthesis (Braun & Clarke)**

In ensuring that nothing went off the track or off the subject within the theory aspect that is the key element of a sound academic work we relied on the 2006 model by Braun and Clarke which further divides the thematic analysis into 6 repeated processes. It is not simply checking boxes, but the technique aided in peeling off all the veneer to, beneath, uncover genuine patterns that would form, based on the 2019 CPEH lens by Acharya. First one: acclimatizing to the material. This involved reading the same material repeatedly, writing down rough notes in the process, and having one eye on the main vital ideas throughout. Codes began to appear in terms of not only the highlighting of bits of information but also the identification of major weaknesses linked to CPEH concepts, such as legal loopholes, barriers of a caste type, unstable MHM markets, or stagnant economic growth (Braun and Clarke, 2006). followed sorting: little pieces of code were then packaged into larger units that fit the driving forces of the political economy core (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and links the scattered notes to a clear bucket such as Quiet Feudal Influence or Profit Driven Ignorance. Looking at potential ideas took the form of sequentially going through every piece of information in all the information to ensure that they genuinely corresponded to what was emerging therein, as well as aligning with the overall picture that Banerji proposes (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Acharya, 2019). It was followed by shaping and naming these concepts it was a matter of tweezing them into the four set segments required in the Discussion part, keeping things crisp in meaning and right to the point on how the beliefs intertwined with real life situations (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Producing the report implied following a clear process incorporating major writings prior to entering

data. It tried to get beyond simply identifying patterns. That displacement maintained the edge on how ancient structures of power such as feudalism and capitalism would impact on the discussion around Chhaupadi and its lethal real world impact (Braun, and Clarke, 2006). Due to such an orderly method of labor, the conclusions are weighty and understandable when cited in demanding unfairness of a concerning magnitude. The close examination of global and local literature alters the prism: stigma is not some odd tradition it is connected to each other by the hierarchies of history, which are being supported today by political and economic denial to acknowledge their presence.

### **Phase 1: Global Ideological Roots of Menstrual Stigma: The Soft Power of Ritual Purity**

Majority of the world despises the times upon observation as dirty or something to conceal both in India and the affluent world such as the US (Buckle & Gottlieb, 1988; JohnstonRobledo and Chrisler, 2013). Nevertheless, other researchers believe that this concept did not emerge at once it served to keep specific individuals in power and retain wealth and authority (Acharya, 2019). According to the Hindu beliefs that influence Nepal culture, time intervals are considered spiritually impure this concept is based on ancient beliefs regarding purity (Ghimire et al., 2020). TheLong ago, there emerged laws like the Muluki Ain which have imprisoned strict rules depending on the cleanliness of a person and his or her place in the society; writings like Garudpuran have further imposed restrictions (Acharya, 2019). Another similarity in the way of control bans on entering temples or cooking during menstruation not unlike the Shinto term of kegare which translates into impurity are other bans used all around the world to further the control process based in belief systems (Mahon and Fernandes, 2010; Kinsley, 1996).

Period stigma is perpetuated in Western countries by concealing periods and silent advertisements of period products (Chrisler et al., 2015). The concept of ritual cleanliness achieves the status of a new normal, gradually becoming accepted as the way that things have never been (Ghimire et al., 2020). Rather than coercion, social consensus makes it perpetual this silent assent is useful in maintaining current lines of class and caste where the fear and shame of women are used to ensure that people follow as expected. One forced out of their home moving under the name of religion relegates attention to those things that are in fact real issues such as the absence of money or a voice in a decision, making inequality appear right (Acharya, 2019). The most obvious evidence of this system in Nepal is Chhaupadi, which confines menstruating women out of households it is the simplest evidence of this system since the spiritual ranking is the direct determinant of people who lose most of their body and lives in everyday life.

### **Phase 2: Critique of Liberal MHM Interventions: Marketization and Structural Failure**

The global response to shame of the issue is primarily reflected in initiatives such as Menstrual Hygiene Management that highlighted the problem and distributed the basic supplies (Mahon et al., 2015). Nevertheless, when considered in terms of power and resources, the existing MHM messaging leaves much to be desired, even supporting those systems, which perpetuate the unfair gaps (Acharya, 2019). What bugs critics? Fixing into sales and selling as the solution. MHM interprets the lack of inexpensive sanitary products as a mere shopping challenge rather than the deeper-rooted problems that its issues are causing those who are hardest affected by the current predicament of period distress (Acharya, 2019; Crawford et al., 2014). This approach diverts the prospective attention of the profound defects in joint and taxpayer-supported systems and safety nets (Acharya, 2019). Such systemic problems are manifested in poor access to toilets that pushes skipping school in poor countries like Kenya (Sommer et al., 2015) and lack of menstrual products strikes vulnerable groups the most such as jailed women or homeless individuals in the U.S. (Sebert Kuhlmann et al., 2019). Individuals trapped in Chhaupadi have lethal consequences not relating to their menstruations, but imperative to absent amenities such as safe housing, clean water, warmth, or command over their bodies, which is founded on the poor governance and scarcity of resources (Acharya, 2019). In times in which such initiatives have tunnel vision on hygiene concerns only, the underlying issues related to power inequalities and skewed systems are disregarded (Acharya, 2019). In order to turn menstruation a dignified process in a real sense, researchers emphasize meeting basic needs safety, freedom, and choices which fail when the governments neglect funding the activities that people need to cope with the routine (Acharya, 2019).

### **Phase 3: The Nepali Context: Legislation, Impunity, and the Gap Between Law and Life**

The history of Chhaupadi in Nepal reveals a significant lack of compliance regulations have



been put in place, but the real-life circumstances remain the same (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Although the Supreme Court prohibited it in 2005, and the Criminal Code in 2017, the tradition remains entrenched particularly in western regions; in this case, cases leap to 21.1% in Sudurpaschim Province six times higher than the rest (UNICEF, 2019) which shows that laws tend not to be sound in new areas but only work around economic and power structures of local regions (Acharya, 2019). Nor is the lack of actual action viewed as mere bad management but instead, it is the claim of apathy among leaders and systemic immunity (Acharya, 2019). The enforcement of the law is also insufficient since the money is scarce, people resist, but most importantly there is not that urge of officials to break the practices closely connected to the influence that local authorities have (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Such deaths, such as the suffocation case of a young woman in 2019, frequently result in probes or cases being closed due to powerful community pressure coupled with the protection that people within influential positions have (Acharya, 2019). These officials seem to have a hands-off role in maintaining the life of Chhaupadi by failing to render necessities (Acharya, 2019). Unless they invest in functional systems decent shelters, clean water, effective rural policing the causes of the unsafe dwellings problem, poor hygiene remain in the same stagnation every year (Shrestha, 2020). Designing Kathmandu as a priority and unfairly sharing its resources with the outer areas traps poor women into perilous and obsolete loneliness. Due to this arrangement, making criminal activities illegal unless they are truly assisted or held responsible at the level of the system is an act, but on mere appearance, leaving the abusers without consequences rather than remedies.

### **Discussion**

#### **The Intersecting Drivers of Chhaupadi: A Critical Political Economy Analysis**

The Intersecting Drivers of Chhaupadi: A critical Political Economy Analysis. This section combines political economy and feminist analysis to examine why Chhaupadi continues to go on demonstrating the attachment of beliefs and poverty, which strengthens this practice of abuse by solid social isolation.

#### **The Maintenance of Ideology: Feudalism, Ritual Purity, and Caste Stratification**

The fundamental motivation behind Chhaupadi is the old-fashioned notions connected to Hindu notions of purity, which have been transmitted to Nepal in the past, prior to democracy (Acharya, 2019). The views are employed intentionally to support the mistreatment of women and maintain the traditional rankings; centuries ago rules like the Muluki Ain (MA) positioned the society with strict clean/unclean categories, when periods were considered dirty (chhuwachhut), having the religion-based authority to suppress individuals (Acharya, 2019; Shrestha, 2020). The perception of bodily menstrual blood as ritual pollution aids in maintaining the caste and class strata of Nepalese society the severity of the manifestation of this entirely relies on where one fits in stratifying the strata of personal identity (Acharya, 2019). Dalit women are at the lowest of the bottom: due to the prevalent stigma, they remain marginalized not only physically and socially but also provide inadequate justifications to justify the deprivation of resources or the performance of arduous labor (Thapa et al., 2019). This concept allows the perspective that in case the person is perceived as ritually impure, it is reasonable to force such an individual away divert attention out of the profound unfairness inherent in caste orders. But at the same time, isolating women during their monthly period prevents them from attending the workplace, eliminating their day-to-day responsibilities, instill guilt in their hearts, and religion creates fear as a way to remain in charge (Acharya, 2019). When saying the people who bleed and many low-class people as well are dirty does create a feeling of legitimacy in denying them access to common resources such as wells or farmland owned by higher authorities (Acharya, 2019). As a matter of fact, Chhaupadi is a kind of an instrument that is also designed to normalize and legitimize the unjust distribution of power (Shrestha, 2020).

#### **The Intersecting Drivers of Chhaupadi: A Critical Political Economy Analysis**

Combines political and feminism to demonstrate how this practice remains alive because of the interconnected forces. It continues to stay so because ancient beliefs are cementing it, whereas the bad life conditions are holding it in. Superstitions of clean and unclean based on some religious concepts support the need to lock women out annually. These ideas are interacting with the social stratification

related to the caste and money to maintain the control of men. Power is no mere figurative thing but is also pressure in real life in the form of unstable systems forming governments and lack of necessities. The women cannot afford to go to any other place, except without proper homes, basic sanitation, and stable money and that too mostly in the remote areas. This makes individuals adhere to a damaging tradition by their choice or without their consent and with deadly consequences that beliefs are translated into harmful reality because the law designed to prevent it was enacted in 2017 (Bista, 2020). This is not just an old tradition, it is mixed with sexism and class divisions, and poverty simultaneously.

### **Enforcement of Ideology: Feudalism, Ritual Purity and Caste Stratification (Soft Power).**

The fundamental explanation of why Chhaupadi thrives? It is nourished by the antique feudal notions related to the concepts of cleanliness in Hinduism, which was transmitted to Nepal and before democracy (Acharya, 2019; Bennett, 2005). These perceptions are reused and reused and silent to support abuse of women to maintain the power structures intact. Hindu legal traditions such as the Muluki Ain (MA) established rigid roles of a woman in the past determining how people can relate to each other with regulations concerning cleanness and uncleanness (Liechty, 2010). Periods are regarded as dirty and this makes religion supported in its ability to control the who does what in society. The confused concept of periods connects directly to the way that Nepal maintains social ranks so rigid (Cameron, 1998). Chhaupadi is like an instrument of keeping certain people in line how cruel it is will depend on your person and your capacities within the overlapping hierarchies of society (Shrestha, 2020).

The Dalit communities of women suffer the most because they are at the end of the list because of caste, sex and finances (UNICEF, 2019). There exists a strong ideology of clean and unclean that encloses them both physically and socially, providing refuge to mistreatments and involuntary labor (Tamang, 2009). When a person regards a woman as a spiritually unclean person, there is no harm of forcing her off, thus concealing the true issue the inhumanity inherent in the caste system. Unequal roles between men and women at home and in villages are preserved by the forced isolation of Chhaupadi. Instead it leaves women out of their everyday chores like cooking, areas of work, or even taking care of animals as it plants a silent sense of guilt inside them (Karki & Subedi, 2018). Due to this way of thinking, the struggles of women are perceived as the state of normalcy as even godlike obligation that silently gives building and sustenance of male dominance and privilege in work and influence. The discrimination of people who are menstruating or other individuals who fall in lower caste brackets as impure is supported by religion to deny them access to clean water, sacred places, or even farm lands (Cameron, 1998; Tamang, 2009). This attitude with its roots in the ancient social orders maintains wealth and land in strong families or elite classes. Therefore, Chhaupadi is not only customary but also an instrument that supports unjust systems and makes them look ordinary as they become the norm of existence (Acharya, 2019; Shrestha, 2020).

### **The Economic and Geographic Determinants of Severity: Capitalism, Deprivation, and Regional Exclusion (Hard Power)**

Ritual purity could be the cause but it is the attachment to the thin air pockets and malfunctioning systems that make Chhaupadi lethal this becomes most agonizing when it comes to the last thread of keeping one alive (Acharya, 2019; Tamang, 2009). Poverty does not only mold adversity it pulls consecrated tradition to choking threat. Wealth differentiations do not hum they shout in who lives, who suffers, who gets behind. It is Sudurpaschim that is bleeding in the most with a data of 21.1(norm) and other parts of Nepal is close to an average of 3.5(norm) (MICS, 2019). This region is struggling with extreme poverty, low investments in infrastructure, and stringent social disinvestment an indication of broader fractures crafted by imbalances of coreoutsirts (Liechty, 2010). Regional inequalities centered around Kathmandu, have been gradually expanding; therefore, services become inaccessible, faces are no longer represented in top positions, and the harshness of the working conditions worsens in remote areas (Acharya, 2019).

Others remain in crammed sheds some in drafty barns uneven by nature but hinged on money. Wealthier families may push out development of a simple hut with little safety and poorer households, particularly Dalit or tribal women end up with only a little left. These shelters can not do much to keep off cold thick fumes of fire, flimsy walls, and darkness dangers. Lack of any decency on the front end

means no defense and just more destitution. Having no land savings and power to opt, they live what small possibilities remain. The health hazards are piled surprisingly quickly when survival is based on homemade roofs and paper-thin delimitations. Freezing nights animal attacks are attacked based on possessing virtually nothing.

The problem lies within embedded inadequacies capitalistic systems cannot perform their vital functions alongside failed states which cannot provide basic necessities (Bennett, 2005; Cameron, 1998). Money flow and power concentrations in Nepal have left social needs behind in favor of selfish interests, so what most people consider essential like clean water, functioning toilets, bacteria-free areas and storm resilient houses remain an unattainable luxury to those who tend remote hillside farms (UNICEF, 2019). In the absence of support, women are left to put up tentsy roofs, they put their lives in danger merely to have four walls around them. It is this reality, which is in turn conditioned by power structures: a lack of physical facilities has forced to depend on secluded shacks (hard control), and belief systems have labeled these realities as natural or legitimate (soft influence), so uprisings occur infrequently, change comes slower, as the uncertainty is suppressed before it can go viral, and the process of deprivation repeats itself with tradition (Acharya, 2019; Tamang, 2009).

### **State Complicity and Policy Gaps: Governance Failure and the Political Economy of Neglect**

As though they have firm laws prohibiting Chhaupadi, it continues to exist not only evidence of bad systems, but decisions made by the top (Human Rights Watch, 2018; Tamang, 2009). Rather than actual intervention, it is a blanketing of tolerance, attuned to apathy or expedience, which demonstrates even more gonse forging policy loopholes (Acharya, 2019; Bennett, 2005). Courts are underfoot, offices slow, development halts every quarter which shows how shattered this system is. In the event of a flop of the 2017 Criminal Code, particularly in remote areas, the responsibility is left on vacuous commitments and slender financing directed nowhere close to village level venerations of justice (Ministry of law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2017). The deaths related to Chhaupadi are hardly properly investigated; investigations are simply put on hold, sentences are lost due to the pressure of influential members of the community and the family faces the loss without ever having closure just a daily way of escaping, as it happens to those who get away with it (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The process of development is unbalanced with national policies positioned excessively on one territory, Kathmandu, and hinterlands becoming decrepit and worn (Liechty, 2010; MICS, 2019).

Regional imbalance is not accidental but it gets paved in where roads, who gets clean water, staffing of clinics. Rural stability is not being funded in reality, and such practices as Chhaupadi continue to exist behind the veils of lack of the law (UNICEF, 2019). Governmental documents are full of praise of fairness, local power, women rights but there remains silence about change in the budgets. The flow of resources is not outward thus control remains concentrated in old networks, worn out systems (Bennett, 2005; Tamang, 2009). Lack of outcry on power sources does not mean being apolitical it is the quiet but strong support. Lack turns to practice when lives are at stake because of what is not received a major understanding of the Critical Political Economy of Health (Banerji, 1982; Navarro, 2008). The disintegrating state of the public health system in Nepal is almost an imminent resemblance of broader trends among South Asia making it practically unavoidable to shun the physical risks associated with Chhaupadi (Banerji, 1982). Care is distributed like favors such is the case today in the economic system rather than being viewed as collective responsibility. Once women are hit by sickness, cold, or injury during menstruation, assistance is seldom provided due to the fact that there is deliberate neglect of clinics. These lapses do not occur at random they are coded into the way resources are distributed. What is herein referred to is what Banerji referred to as health culture where harmful practices are maintained through the established disinvestment (Banerji, 1982; Navarro, 2008).

### **Health and Human Rights: Chhaupadi as a Consequence of Structural Violence**

Human rights health reveals the way Chhaupadi expands on the systemic systems of harm patterns outlined by Farmer and Galtung. The systems constructed on imbalance usually result in subtle anguish, invisible, but harmful. Such arrangements disenfranchise justice on stratum levels of tradition and regulation. When it becomes the order of the day to reject, bodies suffer. There is danger in frosty nights, in poisonous blows, in fumes crowding stuffy buildings, which lacked ventilation. Deaths are



silent, but are later registered as preventable and not observed. Here infection sneak in, where the hygiene is compromised, medical assistance is remote. During cycles, female bodies undergo an extra strain, being left out, having little to no defense. Comfort becomes chronic when attended to late or even denied. Conditions in life aggravate what is supposed to be manageable pain. Torment mounts upon intention not as a chance.

Every suffering can be seen as a result of decisions that were made many years ago, and are still committed today by silence and acquiescent. Chhaupadi poses strict food taboos that restrict access to milk, flesh, fruit that silently causes diminution of strength to the people who are already on its periphery (Acharya, 2019). Violence does not exist as such here, but rather it overlaps, involves. Hardest hit? Women who were born into the Dalit families, poor families, isolated villages the ones pushed into the collapsing wall huts where the cold and smoke are characteristic features (MICS, 2019; Tamang, 2009). It is true, such a practice negatively violates any clear legal promise dignity, safety, wellbeing all of which are the declared global refrains such as CEDAW and the UDHR (United Nations, 1948, 1979) but the term just illegal falls short of the essence of the problem. It is not just a law being violated but it is a government that is neglected in the most fundamental manner: shelter, water, protection is leaching through cracks in the hands of the people (Bennett, 2005). The missed days due to a menstrual period closes off future earnings in the long run, which will leave families in the poverty trap between generations (UNICEF, 2019). Not only would Chhaupadi continue to deny young girls any opportunity to learn and work, but any attempt to keep it in place promotes old hierarchies of power without raising any questions; it serves the systems that already make a good profit by pushing young girls to the margins (Farmer, 2004; Acharya, 2019; Tamang, 2009).

### Conclusion

This study interprets Chhaupadi in Nepal not as a remaining tradition, but as a part of the systems that make control covert. It clings on fed by old hierarchies which are twinned with inextricable poverty in which belief creates behavior and in which scarcity makes this stick. The concept of menstrual pollution, poached on the Hindu worlds and primitive societal systems, lends credibility to forcing women into the background during menstruation. These ideas support the privilege of men and the caste hierarchy, allowing privileged groups to remain there uncoercively. Meanwhile, lack of road, inadequate services, persistent sufferings of people and government lapse particularly affected secluded regions like Sudurpaschim that has made custom risky. Bodies are hurt, brains are stretched, diseases get transmitted among females, more so Dalits or those who have very little to no means, and this shows the facet of layered injustice in rooting. The gap between the Criminal Code of 2017 and the 2017 community habits of real life will not only be out of date but also the indicator of bad governance, promises being forgotten because of weak leadership, but the responsibility is clearly not going anywhere. Rather, surface level schooling impulse or policy accretion or rust breaking, bringing to an end Chhaupadi means repositioning bedrock of land, of money, of opportunity of movement; of whose voice is privileged the distance out of power centers. The change only works when systems bend towards fairness where the access to health and the dignity is not rationed by gender. In a perspective determined by bodies determined by capital and domination, the prohibitions of menstruation are not tradition, but a strategy of calculable negligence a trend maintained by policy silence and day-to-day apathy. It takes a considerable amount of time to unlearn this culture, to break the cycle of financial inequalities, bureaucratic apathy upon which they treat the lives of women as expendable ones.

### Recommendations

Change cannot be a superficial affair when it comes to removing Chhaupadi in Nepal it needs to penetrate deep-rooted imbalances around power and access. Change must be focused on equality, striking the sources of injustice inherent in the allocation of resources and power through communities. Efforts should not be weighed towards the top down plans made Kathmandu style, but rather increase in the realities of remote locations. Investment should go where it is needed the most, safe shelters, clean water systems, working toilets, good roads. These are not doubles of theirs, they are essentials deprived by their long neglect. Redistribution of land would loosen the traditional hold that has been held on the lives of women. There are already existing laws such as the 2017 Chhaupadi ban but have not been enforced because of weak follow through, and shielded networks of authority. The next step in action

would be to ensure that those laws have well-operating courts, trained staff, and regular supervision. Unless there is some internal pressure, traditional habits remain unchecked. The education cannot be reduced to handwashing. It has to excavate the ways in which concepts of clean and dirty have been constructed by centuries of caste and classes divisions tearing apart the myths that are still lingering. The schools must also address questions of who is benefiting out of those old hierarchies when they are discussing bodies. Money choices made long distance influence the actions at home and at classes. Budgets can be structured in ways that would react to the lives of the woman, taking into consideration race, poverty, disability all overlaid. Others such as direct payments could provide actual breathing space instead of short-term relief. Clinics and childcare and transit, they transform everyday living, should they have the money. Dignity isn't abstract. It manifests itself when a person is able to spend money on pads, painkillers, vacation time with no worry. The actual change implies creating systems that would allow not to be ashamed or struggle when dealing with your period.

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