

Title: Access to Water: As A Human Rights Concept

Principal Investigator (PI)

Professor Pritee Sharma
Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Indian Institute of Technology Indore

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)

Dr. Salla Nithyanth Kumar
Post Doctoral Researcher, Jaya Prakash Narayan
National Centre of Excellence in the Humanities,
Indian Institute of Technology Indore



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Overview of the project:

In India, nearly 820 million people are experiencing high to extreme water stress. Every year, around 200,000 deaths are attributed to inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene. Seventy percent of the country's water is contaminated. As of 2018, India ranked 120th out of 122 countries in the water quality index. Additionally, 75 percent of households lack access to drinking water on their premises, and 84 percent of rural households do not have piped water access. This study examines these issues from a Human Rights perspective, acknowledging the distinction between process and outcome in water governance. It utilizes the Hohfeldian framework of rights, alongside the "Respect, Protect, and Fulfill" approach, to analyze the development of the right to water in India.

Research Methodology:

The identification of blocks and villages in rural Indore, as well as in urban areas, will be based on geographic and socio-economic diversity, using secondary data. From the selected blocks and villages, information will be gathered through "Key Informant" questionnaires. This data will include details on overall water availability and sources, which will be analyzed using linear discriminant analysis. To ensure our explanatory variables are continuous, we plan to include socio-economic characteristics such as age, education, income, household size, the proportion of household income spent on water, water bills, and institutional factors like the distance to hand pumps, time taken to collect water, the number of people required to fetch water, and the amount of water delivered or consumed. A detailed questionnaire will be prepared to collect this information.

Deliverables:

The deliverables of the project will include two research publications in refereed journals, contributing to the academic discourse on water governance and related socio-economic factors. Additionally, a comprehensive Policy Brief will be developed for both academic and policy-making purposes. This Policy Brief will be shared with academic journals for publication and will also be submitted to the JP Narayan National Centre of Excellence in the Humanities (JPNCOEH) to inform and influence policy decisions.