
UNIT 15 INTERNET AND MARGINALISATION

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15.0 INTRODUCTION

The term "marginalisation" comes from the word "margin," which refers to something on the edge. The multifaceted concept of marginalisation contains many meanings to describe the lived experience of millions worldwide who lack political, economic, and social resources. People on the margins of society have limited control over their lives and opportunities. In addition to marginalisation at the national and global levels, classes and communities can also be marginalised locally by the prevailing social order.

The Internet greatly impacts the lives of marginalised people because it provides them with information, resources, opportunities, and communication platforms; however, digital inequality is a significant challenge here. The fact that not all underprivileged groups enjoy equal internet access and skills is an

alarming indicator of the persistence of digital inequities. Cost, infrastructure, digital literacy, and language can all limit internet access and prevent marginalised communities from obtaining full benefits.

This unit concentrates on the opportunities and challenges presented by the Internet in the context of the marginalisation of Scheduled Castes (Dalits), Scheduled Tribes (Adivasis), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), religious minorities (Muslims et al., and others), women, the LGBTQ+ community, persons with disabilities, etc. It elaborates on the techno-optimistic and techno-pessimistic views of marginalisation and creates an in-depth understanding of the topic.

15.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- understand the concept of marginalisation and its causes and dimensions;
- explore the role of the Internet in the lives of marginalised individuals and communities;
- discuss the socio-centric and techno-centric accounts of marginalisation; and
- understand the usage of the Internet by the marginalised individual or community and for the marginalised individual or community.

15.2 CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF MARGINALISATION

We can observe marginalisation through the interconnectedness of the exclusion and inclusion of an individual or a specific social group. Social exclusion and marginalisation are related terms, as they are often discussed in the context of one another. The unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, and authority in society leads to social exclusion. Individuals or communities experience social exclusion when they cannot fully participate in or access the benefits of mainstream society. Therefore, to be socially excluded is to be on the fringes of society. The dominant or privileged groups maintain and reinforce social inequality by using their power to oppress the less powerful or marginalised groups. In society, marginalisation manifests in a variety of ways, including for those who are disenfranchised due to poverty and location, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and/or illness, religion, and personal circumstances, such as the descendants of migrants and refugees (Mowat, 2015). Marginalised Individuals or groups may encounter systematic barriers that prohibit them from accessing resources, opportunities, and rights that others in society have. They may face discrimination, prejudice, stigma, and inequitable treatment.

15.2.1 Definition of Marginalisation

The process by which an individual or group is driven to the fringes or periphery of society, often resulting in their exclusion or limited participation in mainstream activities and decision-making processes, is referred to as

"marginalisation". The Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines marginalisation as "the process or result of making somebody feel as if they are not important and cannot influence decisions or events; the fact of putting somebody in a position in which they have no power". According to Mowat (2015), "To be marginalised is to have a sense that one does not belong and, in so doing, to feel that one is neither a valued member of a community nor able to make a valuable contribution within that community nor able to access the range of services and/or opportunities open to others". Marginality has a tremendous impact on the development of human beings and society at large. Marginalisation can manifest in different forms, including poverty, limited educational and employment prospects, a lack of political representation, and restricted access to healthcare and other essential services.

15.2.2 Dimensions of Marginalization

Exclusion from promoting individual autonomy through economic, social, or political means may have unintended consequences. According to Messiou (2012), marginalisation can manifest in different forms. These dimensions, at various levels, depend on the political economy of a country. Although no one rule can explain the complex dynamics of marginalisation, it is observed through the lens of strategic actions in terms of social, economic, and political means of achieving life chances.

Social Marginalisation

Social marginalisation is being outside the mainstream of productive and/or social reproductive activity (Leonard, 1984). Socially marginalised individuals have limited access to social opportunities. They may become stigmatised and are frequently subjected to negative public attitudes. Many circumstances can give rise to the feeling of being on the social margins, for example, individuals such as differently abled people or those born into marginal communities (for example, lower castes in India). This kind of marginality is typically lifelong and greatly determines their lived experience.

Economic Marginalisation

Economic marginalisation is marginalisation related to economic structures. It is the consequence of disparities in wealth accumulation or employment opportunities. It sometimes has an economic origin; however, it may have non-economic origins, for example, in discrimination by gender, caste, or ethnicity.

Political Marginalisation

Political marginalisation prevents individuals or groups from participating in democratic decision-making, consequently forfeiting their entitlement to all social, economic, and political benefits. For example, women's political involvement in developing nations is strongly associated with political marginalisation. Sections such as ethnic minorities and migrants all experience this type of marginalisation to varying degrees.

15.3 THEORETICAL INTERPRETATION

Class, ideology, social consciousness, and human activity are helpful analytical tools in particular social, cultural, economic, and political contexts, causing marginalisation across digital spheres. Theories provide diverse perspectives on the tangents of internet-driven marginalisation. They emphasise the significance of the power dynamics of identity, social inequalities, and complex intersecting processes of marginalisation. By examining Marxists and Crenshaw's approach, researchers and educators can develop strategies for challenging and addressing the relationship between the Internet and marginalisation and the mechanisms underlying digital marginalisation.

15.3.1 The Marxist Approach

The Marxist analysis sheds insight into the conditions and experiences of those marginalised in capitalist society, especially in the digital sphere. Marx's views on marginalised communities can be comprehended in his capitalism and class conflict concept. Marx examined society through the lens of economic relationships and unequal wealth and power distribution. It analyses the capital and power concentration within the digital economy. By analysing the concentration of digital capital and power, it is possible to comprehend how it moulds the digital landscape and exacerbates digital marginalisation by reinforcing class-based inequalities.

Marxists strongly emphasise the value of owning and managing the means of production. This comprises platforms, data, algorithms, and infrastructure in the context of digital technology. We can comprehend how power is concentrated in the hands of a few entities, such as IT corporations or platform owners, by looking at who owns and manages these digital resources. Marxists also highlight the prejudices and exclusionary behaviours ingrained in digital algorithms. The interests, values, and power dynamics of those who create and maintain algorithms are reflected in them rather than acting neutrally. This may result in unfair outcomes, including biased judgements, profiling, and the exclusion of marginalised groups.

15.3.2 Crenshaw's Approach

Crenshaw's intersectionality framework shows how important it is to recognise and deal with overlapping systems of power, the amplification of inequalities, and the need for inclusive and intersectional ways to access, reflect, and participate in digital spaces. The concept of intersectionality developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw emphasises that individuals may experience multiple forms of marginalisation due to the intersection of multiple social categories, such as race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and ability.

In the digital realm, individuals at the intersections of multiple marginalised identities may face compounded forms of discrimination and marginalisation. For example, a person who is both a member of a racial group and a woman may face different kinds of exclusion in the digital space because of how race and gender interact. Accessing digital resources, participating in online

communities, and earning the benefits of digital advancements may become more difficult for individuals who intersect multiple marginalised identities. Intersectionality helps us understand how digital technologies can amplify existing inequalities.

15.4 INTERNET - BOON OR BANE

The Internet is a new medium with many facets comprising technical components and social structures, with the latter lending meaning and significance to the former. It is difficult to generalise the effects of the Internet on marginalised communities and individuals because there are so many facets to consider. The global reach and accessibility of the Internet can both foster greater equality and exacerbate existing disparities. Information, resources, and educational opportunities that may have been out of reach for marginalised groups are now available via the Internet. It can elevate marginalised perspectives and counter-hegemonic narratives and empower bottom-up movements for social change and justice.

Nevertheless, digital inequality is a barrier on an individual level and throughout the process. Digital inequality occurs when marginalised populations, such as those living in low-income areas or rural areas, cannot fully participate in the digital sphere because of restrictions on internet access. Furthermore, false narratives or stigmatising content may aim at marginalised communities, furthering the stereotypes and exclusion that already exist about them.

The role of the Internet in marginalisation can be observed through the lens of either cyber-pessimism or cyber-optimism. Cyber-pessimism has a more sceptical view of the Internet than cyber-optimism, which praises it as a free, interactive, democratising medium. Cyber-optimists argue that the rise of digital technology will lead to beneficial political, economic, and social shifts. They highlight the Internet's potential for democratisation, its capacity to link people worldwide, and the chances it provides for new forms of thought and action to emerge from the resulting connections. Cyberoptimists typically see technology as a driver of development, social inclusion, and expanded opportunity for everybody.

However, cyber-pessimism points to the effects of digital technologies more sceptically and fears the consequences of rapid digitalisation. Cyber-pessimists worry that people and communities may suffer due to the widespread use of these technologies. They voice about data breaches, surveillance, false information, the digital gap, cyberbullying, online harassment, and the consolidation of wealth and power in the hands of a few firms.

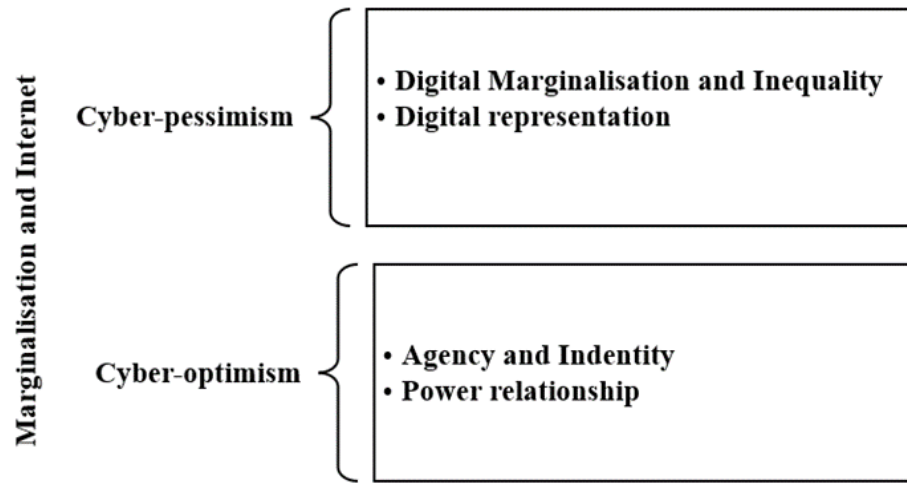


Fig.1. Cyber-pessimistic vs. cyber-optimistic views on the Internet

Source: Author's compilation

A wide range of user capabilities, such as computer literacy, technical skills, psychological aspects, and social elements, are required to use digital technology. Most developed nations have invested considerable resources at the governmental level to bridge the digital gap. The goal of these intervention programmes is frequently to ensure that all people have equal access to facilities and services. However, underlying issues with the excluded community's digital inclusion exist, such as a need for more demand-driven and contextualised interventions. Lack of content creation also contributes to digital marginalisation on an individual level.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Explain the concept of “marginalisation”.

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2. How can you use Crenshaw's intersectionality framework to understand marginalisation across internet platforms?

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3. What is cyber-optimism?

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4. Explain the Marxist approach to "internet and marginalisation".
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15.5 INTERNET AND MARGINALITY: PESSIMISTIC VIEW

Hoang et al. (2020) put forward a pessimistic viewpoint on digital technologies, stating that technology benefits advantaged groups more than those in need. In line with Hoang et al., marginalised populations are particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of digital development. For marginalised identities, a lack of participation in digital platforms and the use of digital media frequently results in further marginalisation.

Exclusion, invisibility, misrepresentation, and hate speech are all challenges that marginalised communities face, and these problems are becoming more prevalent in the digital sphere due to technological advancements. Recognising these problems can contribute to advancing digital inclusion by promoting diverse online representation, providing support, and mitigating harassment and discrimination online.

15.5.1 Digital Marginalisation

People without access to diverse digital technologies and the Internet are often the focus of the idea of digital marginalisation. It refers to exclusion or limited participation in the digital sphere, encompassing various technological and online-based aspects. Due to barriers, specific individuals or communities cannot completely access and benefit from digital technologies and online platforms. Digital marginalisation can exacerbate existing social and economic disparities. Those who are already marginalised due to factors such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, or geographic location may experience exacerbated disadvantages in terms of educational opportunities, employment prospects, and social connections due to inadequate digital access and skills.

Digital marginalisation manifests itself in numerous ways, and the Matthew effect has been noticed in its emergence in numerous domains of society. Addressing digital marginalisation requires bridging the digital divide, promoting digital literacy, and providing skills training. Besides, top-down inclusivity by addressing biases in algorithms and content moderation and creating inclusive digital environments that respect and amplify marginalised voices might be necessary to improve the condition.

Digital marginalisation can occur for various reasons, discussed as follows:

- **Access and Infrastructure:** Inequality in access to technology and the Internet can result in digital marginalisation. The ability of members of

marginalised communities to fully engage in online activities and make use of online opportunities and resources may be constrained by a lack of access to internet connections and devices.

- **Knowledge Gaps:** Although the Internet offers a wealth of knowledge, marginalised groups may have trouble accessing it because of linguistic obstacles, complex algorithms, or the predominance of particular viewpoints. This could exacerbate already-existing inequalities and limit their capacity to make accurate decisions.
- **Online harassment and discrimination:** Discrimination and online harassment may be more prevalent for marginalised people and groups, who may also experience higher rates of cyberbullying, hate speech, and harassment online. Online spaces can promote negative preconceptions, biases, and discriminatory attitudes, resulting in unfriendly situations that further marginalise and exclude particular communities.
- **Privacy and Security:** Privacy and security concerns can also contribute to digital marginalisation, particularly for vulnerable individuals. The fear of surveillance and data intrusions can inhibit online participation, especially among groups with fewer digital skills.
- **Representation:** The Internet can amplify power disparities and encourage marginalisation by promoting preconceptions and limiting representation. In digital representation, dominant narratives and powerful figures may have increased attention and influence, while some voices and opinions may be marginalised or underrepresented.
- **Algorithmic Bias:** The algorithms employed by social media platforms, search engines, and other online services can perpetuate discrimination and bias against marginalised communities. For instance, search engine results may reflect biased assumptions regarding race, gender, or other characteristics.

15.5.2 Digital Marginalisation: Indian Context

The impact of digital inequality on marginalised communities, especially those in rural or low-income areas, may cause them to encounter difficulties getting online, exacerbating already existing disparities. The digital divide between rural and urban inhabitants in India illustrates how the Internet may exacerbate social exclusion. Internet use is widespread in cities, but many rural areas still lack the most fundamental digital infrastructure, like consistent data connections. The digital gender divide in India is another prevalent case in point. Fewer women in India have access to and skills in using computers and the Internet.

Furthermore, linguistic limitations are a potential cause of digital exclusion. Although there are 22 recognised languages spoken in India, many resources on the web are written only in English or Hindi, which excludes millions of people. This can further contribute to the marginalisation of language minorities by limiting their access to online education, employment opportunities, and other digital resources. Because of the dominant languages and cultures, tribal populations face digital marginalisation in India. Cyberbullying and other forms of online bigotry amplify the effects of digital

exclusion in India. When people are harassed online because of who they are or what they believe, it can make the Internet a hostile place where people are less likely to express themselves and are less likely to feel safe doing so. Inequalities and exclusion in society may become even more entrenched as a result.

15.5.3 Representation of Marginalised Sections

Representation is the process through which the media portrays and shows people, groups, and events, influencing how we think about and understand the world. Media representations are mediated depictions of social realities through media text that refers to any media content, including written and visual content. The digital media representation of marginalised communities often creates discrimination and stereotyping that reduces the self-esteem, effort, and performance of people from that specific community.

Our understanding and experience of the world around us are shaped by the images, stories, symbols, and language chosen for media portrayal and presented using framing and priming. It affects how we perceive social categories, such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, disabilities, and socioeconomic class.

The idea of representation also draws attention to the power relationships that are prevalent in the production and distribution of media. Feenberg's (1991) critical theory of technology introduces the concept of 'technological rationality' to imply that the creation of technology is highly political and heavily directed by dominating groups, the elite. The prominent members of the Frankfurt School, including Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, argued that elites use mass media and other cultural mechanisms to maintain the status quo at all levels of society. The Frankfurt School criticised the media for reinforcing the established social order through cultural imperialism. Mass media or digital media representation of any community or group follows the dominant pattern of social order, making the marginalised more marginal by cultivating societal norms. However, when we talk about digital media, representation can reinforce stereotypes, biases, and inequalities or challenge and subvert them. For example, women are frequently portrayed in various nuanced ways in digital media narratives. While some storylines reinforce preconceptions and objectify women, others offer diverse, empowering images that go against tradition. Female-led narrative, which presents women as powerful, autonomous, and complex characters with agency and a range of experiences, is becoming more popular.

15.6 FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE INTERNET: OPTIMISTIC VIEW

The Internet, which stands for "interconnected network," is a global network of computers and other devices that are all connected. This lets people talk to each other, share information, and use different online services. It is a massive set of systems that lets people worldwide meet and share information. The Internet is decentralised, which means no one person or

group is in charge of it. Instead, it is made up of a network of networks that are linked through wired and wireless links and other technologies. The Internet offers various services and apps, such as email, social media platforms, search engines, online shopping, video streaming, cloud computing, and more. Parallely, the digital media act as alternative forums for marginalised communities because the mainstream media is frequently accused of only promoting the dominant frame by omitting or misrepresenting the oppressed.

15.6.1 Agency and Identity

Marginalised individuals' perceptions of themselves and their actions in the world are influenced and shaped by the interconnected concepts of agency and identity. Individuals with the agency are motivated and assured to shape their identities to reflect their autonomy and uniqueness. Identity can also affect the agency. The beliefs, values, and social roles associated with a person's identity can influence their sense of agency by providing decision-making and behavioural frameworks and standards.

Agency: Gillespie (2010) says that agency is the practice of choice, which is when a socially situated person acts independently of an immediate situation, weighing and choosing between different ways to respond to social demands based on goals that may be driven by things that are not related to the immediate situation. The Internet can give marginalised individuals agency in several ways, as follows:

- i) Through the Internet, disadvantaged people and groups can easily access previously unreachable or constrained information. They can learn about their rights, opportunities, and resources to advocate for their needs and make educated decisions.
- ii) Marginalised people can express themselves and share their thoughts, experiences, and stories with a worldwide audience through various internet facilities, such as social media, blogs, and other digital platforms.
- iii) The Internet enables marginalised people to interact with others who have similar experiences and identities.
- iv) Marginalised people can work with allies, join larger movements, and bring about more significant change using online channels.
- v) The Internet offers an economic opportunity, which leads to providing agency to people in need.

For example, women have received agency and opportunities for personal, social, and professional advancement. Digital technology provides entrepreneurship platforms, online markets, and freelance opportunities, enabling women to attain financial independence.

Identity Creation: Identity incorporates individual identity (unique characteristics that differentiate one individual from another) and social identity (affiliation with particular social groups based on shared characteristics such as culture, ethnicity, gender, or interests). The Internet

provides a platform where marginalised individuals and communities can find visibility and representation. It allows marginalised individuals to connect and socialise, which helps them create and maintain identity. It promotes social identity and community engagement, which can empower marginalised individuals. Similarly, the activities of ethnic minority groups on internet platforms enable them to cultivate their ethnic identities and achieve valuable results.

The Internet has made it possible for LGBTQ people to meet other people who have had similar experiences, identities, and problems. People can find support, share stories, and discuss things on online boards, social media groups, and LGBTQ-specific websites. LGBTQ people can use these online groups to learn more about themselves and be comfortable with their identity, especially if they cannot access supportive offline networks. Thus, it allows LGBTQ people to connect with global movements and allies, which makes their opinions louder and helps them create an identity.

15.6.2 Power Relationships and Dynamics

Power dynamics are how power is shared, used, and fought over in political, social, and cultural processes. It includes the connections, hierarchies, and exchanges between people, groups, and institutions that affect how resources are used, decisions are made, and the ability to shape and control what happens. Understanding how power works in society and how it can be changed to fix unfairness and inequality requires understanding power relations.

The power relations (between powerful and powerless) in the real world can also be observed in the online world. However, the Internet can be used by marginalised people to challenge hegemonic narratives and present alternative perspectives, as it allows them to communicate directly with a global audience. This visibility can challenge stereotypes, break down barriers, and foster comprehension and compassion.

The Internet has also become a powerful tool for marginalised people to advocate for their rights and engage in activism. New interactive technologies are co-designed and modified by the user, providing user-generated content while extending control and power mechanisms beyond those predetermined by the capitalist system. Marginalised communities use these online channels to maintain and promote their cultural traditions, heritage, and artistic expression. They promote their cultural practices through videos, music, blogs, and social media while enhancing community pride and visibility. In addition, they use the Internet to express their concerns, draw attention to policy issues, and call for change.

15.6.3 Digital Participation

Internet-enabled technologies now play a critical role in participation. Individuals from marginalised groups produce and consume content that reflects their authentic voices and languages, their concerns and conditions, and issues pertaining to their development. People in marginalised groups often use digital tools to deal with social, economic, and political problems.

The digital technologies used by marginalised people for participation are as follows:

- **Community-driven websites and blogs:** websites and blogs that are run by the community. Many people in marginalised groups make their websites and blogs to share information, tools, and personal stories. These tools allow people to express themselves, build communities, and speak out.
- **Platforms for online activism:** Websites like Change.org and Avaaz let marginalised groups start and spread petitions, campaigns, and funding efforts. These tools help them make their voices heard and give them chances to work together.
- **Messaging apps:** Instant messaging apps like WhatsApp, Signal, and Telegram make it easier for marginalised groups to talk to each other and work together. They offer safe ways to share information, plan events, and get people to support a cause.
- **Online tools for learning:** Online educational materials made by certain groups (for instance, Sathali blogs by Santhal) include a variety of subjects that interest them, including mythology, novels, traditional knowledge, community history, and culture.
- **Digital storytelling platforms:** Platforms like YouTube, Vimeo, and podcasts are often used by marginalised groups to share their stories and experiences. They want to challenge established narratives and advance more inclusive representation by expressing their personal viewpoints and living experiences.

15.6.4 Indian Context

In some countries, marginalised groups are identified by government policy. Thus, the government of the country makes digital measures for those identified groups. The Indian government has undertaken many programmes to bridge the digital divide and provide marginalised populations access to the Internet and digital technologies. Digital India projects attempt to connect broadband to rural areas while increasing digital literacy among underserved people. Another measure is the multilingual portal 'Vikaspedia,' which is being established as a single-window access to information, products, and services, with the explicit goal of addressing India's underprivileged groups.

15.7 VOICES FROM THE MARGIN

Marginalised communities use social media and other digital platforms to advocate for change and raise public awareness of social justice concerns. They share personal stories and confront discriminatory practices online through hashtags, viral videos, and online gatherings. Marginalised groups use social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to share their stories, connect with people who share their views, and bring attention to their problems. People often use hashtags and online efforts to get people to help and raise awareness.

15.7.1 Online Activism by Marginalised Sections: Global Cases

There are several instances of marginalised populations worldwide using internet channels to actively engage in social concerns and campaign for their rights. Through social media and online campaigns, these groups have been able to reach more people, build support networks, and make changes on a global scale.

There are some global cases of online activism, as follows:

Racism: The #BlackLivesMatter movements started in the US but swiftly spread worldwide as activists used social media to disseminate awareness of institutionalised racism against Black communities. Using hashtags like #BlackLivesMatter, people could share their experiences, plan protests, and call for justice.

Sexual harassment: The actress Alyssa Milano is credited with starting the #MeToo movement, which inspired people to share their stories of sexual harassment and assault on social media. The campaign gained momentum on a global scale, sparking extensive discussions about sexual harassment in the workplace, gender-based violence, and the need for institutional reform.

Disability concerns: To promote accessibility, inclusiveness, and the rights of individuals with disabilities, activists from the disability rights movement have used digital platforms. Online movements like #DisabledandCute have expressed the viewpoints of people with disabilities.

15.7.2 Online Activism by Marginalised Sections: Indian Cases

In India, people from marginalised groups have used digital platforms to discuss social problems and fight for their rights.

There are some national cases of online activism, as follows:

Dalit activism: People from Dalit communities who face discrimination based on their caste have used digital media to bring attention to violence, discrimination, and social inequality based on caste. Online platforms like Dalit Camera and Round Table India share the views and experiences of Dalits to challenge caste-based oppression and fight for social justice.

Feminist movements: In India, internet platforms have been used by feminist activists to talk about gender inequality, violence based on gender, and discrimination. Online campaigns like #MeTooIndia and #AintNoCinderella have started conversations and raised the views of women, which has led to meaningful conversations about gender equality.

Tribal rights: Tribal communities in India have used internet platforms to fight for their rights, land, and traditional preservation. Online groups like Video Volunteers, Adivasi Lives Matter, and campaigns against illegal mining have used social media to bring attention to indigenous communities, record abuses, and fight for justice.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What is digital marginalisation?

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2. How does the Internet help to create marginalised identity?

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3. Give two examples of digital participation by marginalised people.

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4. How do women in India use the Internet for online activism?

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15.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have learnt the causes, definitions, and dimensions of marginalisation, whether social, economic, or political. The cyber-optimistic and cyber-pessimistic views have been brought together to present holistic knowledge. The cyber-optimistic perspective on the Internet has been elaborated with the concepts of agency and identity, power dynamics, and digital participation. In contrast, the cyber-pessimistic perspective on the Internet has been discussed using the notions of digital marginalisation and digital media representation. There has been a reflection on the Indian scenarios of marginalisation, with particular reference to the Internet and digital tools.

Furthermore, the digital activism cases that can bring insight into national and international aspects have been discussed. We have also gained knowledge on the social theories incorporated into the concept of "internet and marginalisation." The unit has presented a fundamental understanding of the theories and practices of "internet and marginalisation" from multiple perspectives.

15.9 KEYWORDS

Marginality: Marginality refers to the condition of individuals or groups who are socially or economically marginalised, positioned on the edges of society, and lacking access to resources and opportunities, leading to exclusion and vulnerability.

Priming: Priming is the process through which media can impact people's thoughts and behaviours by triggering specific concepts or associations in their minds.

Framing: Framing in the media refers to the deliberate presentation or emphasis of specific aspects of an issue or event to influence the audience's understanding or interpretation of it, thereby influencing their opinions, judgments, and responses.

Media representation: Media representation is the depiction or portrayal of individuals, groups, events, or issues in media content, which influences how they are perceived, understood, and interpreted by the audience.

Digital Inequality: Digital inequality refers to the unequal access, availability, and utilisation of digital technologies and resources among individuals, groups, or communities, which leads to disparities in knowledge and opportunities.

Digital marginalisation: Digital marginalisation is the exclusion, disadvantage, or limited participation of individuals or groups in digital spaces and technologies, resulting in diminished access to digital information, resources, and opportunities.

15.10 FURTHER READING

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15.11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1. The process by which an individual or group is driven to the fringes or periphery of society, often resulting in their exclusion or limited participation in mainstream activities and decision-making processes, is referred to as "marginalisation".
2. Individuals at the intersection of multiple marginalised identities on digital platforms may face compounded forms of discrimination and marginalisation. For example, a person who is both a member of a racial group and a woman may face different kinds of exclusion in the digital space because of how race and gender interact.
3. Cyberoptimism praises the Internet as a free, interactive, and democratising medium. It argues that the rise of digital technology will lead to beneficial political, economic, and social shifts.
4. Marx's views on marginalised communities can be comprehended in his capitalism and class conflict concept. Marx examined society through the lens of economic relationships and unequal wealth and power distribution. It analyses the capital and power concentration within the digital economy. By analysing the concentration of digital capital and power, it is possible to comprehend how it moulds the digital landscape and exacerbates digital marginalisation by reinforcing class-based inequalities.

Check Your Progress 2

1. Digital marginalisation refers to exclusion or limited participation in the digital sphere, encompassing various technological and online-based aspects. Due to barriers, specific individuals or communities cannot completely access and benefit from digital technologies and online platforms.
2. The Internet allows marginalised individuals to connect and socialise, which helps them create and maintain identity. It promotes social identity and community engagement, which can empower marginalised individuals. Similarly, the activities of ethnic minority groups on internet platforms enable them to cultivate their ethnic identities and achieve valuable results.
3. Two examples of digital participation are: (i) Platforms for online activism: Websites like Change.org and Avaaz let marginalised groups start and spread petitions, campaigns, and funding efforts. These tools help them make their voices heard and give them chances to work together. (ii) Messaging apps: Instant messaging apps like WhatsApp, Signal, and Telegram make it easier for marginalised groups to talk to each other and work together. They offer safe ways to share information, plan events, and get people to support a cause.

4. Women have used Internet platforms to talk about gender inequality, violence based on gender, and discrimination. Online campaigns like #MeTooIndia and #AintNoCinderella have started conversations and raised the views of women, which has led to meaningful conversations about gender equality.

