CHAPTER 2: DECIPHERING GENDERED SPACES IN DIGITAL INDIA

With the growth of the I.T. Industry in India, individuals from distinctive social and economic backgrounds found their footing within the I.T. career space, which unarguably aided the upward mobility in their social stature across multiple geo-social scales. This phenomenon is visibly reflected in how particularly women I.T. professionals move up the social ladder (Shukla 2022). To that effort, the mobility-induced plunging of traditional gender notions and social barriers with the conceptualization of neo-gender roles are considered critical for the idea of progress, freedom, and opportunity, which has given rise to a new social, economic, and intellectual class of women (Kaur 2006). Consequently, the "socio-economic mobility" (Upadhya 2004) has loomed with strong gendered trends, and these gender rearrangements within the I.T. industries over the decades have been evolving under strong colonial influences (Sinha 1999).

Historically, and dating back to the late colonial era in South Asia, nationalists reacted to the colonial critique of the Indian patriarchy's nature. (Chatterjee 1993; Chakrabarty 1994); reproduction of the "New image of Indian women" was considered critical as it impacted public-private gendered spaces. As a result, the situation of women in society was inscribed as a political concern that was 'resolved' by building the gendered binary divide that reconstructed the Indian woman collectively (Chatterjee 1993). With the 21st century's digital revolution, gender binary division has influenced the workforce and intimate relationships. However, it is potentially impossible to ignore historical colonial constructions in the postcolonial present. Therefore, in this dissertation, I critically examine gender in the I.T. industry and use a postcolonial theoretical lens, "postcolonial intersections" (Chaudhuri and Thimm 2018). We also turn to an unavoidable global fact in modern times to investigate these new issues: mobilities and

intersectionality, assisting theories in sharpening the understanding of gendered spaces in Digital India.

In this chapter, I discuss the major theoretical frameworks that have inspired my research and examine them at two particular levels: Meta and Meso. By acknowledging the various 'altitudes' of theoretical frameworks, I intend to facilitate bridging major discourses and frameworks. My overall contribution in this dissertation is to propose an evidence-based framework that exemplifies this bridging and brings to the conversation two major discourses of contemporary Sociology: Intersectionality and Mobility Studies.

On the Meta level, I use a postcolonial gender lens as an analytical tool with Mobility and Intersectionality theories, while Gendered Geographies of power (Mahler and Pessar 2021), Polyvocality (Thimm, Chaudhuri, Mahler 2017), and Scaling Intersectionality (Mahler, Chaudhuri, Patil 2015) rest upon the Meso level to facilitate the research design of the study and interpretation of the data findings.

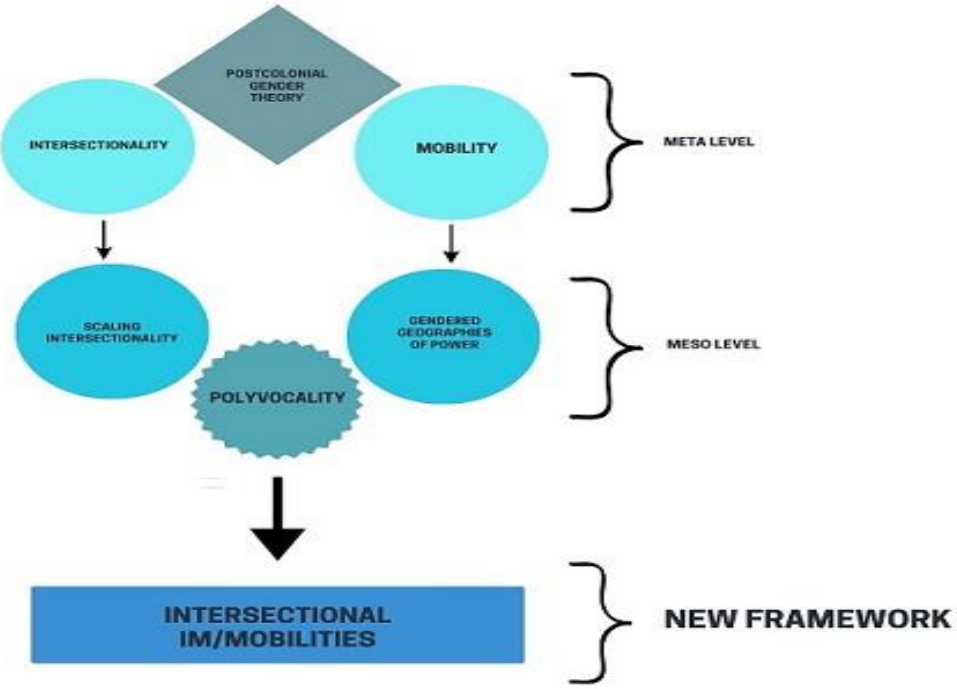


Fig. 2.1 Theoretical framework

To further elaborate on the theoretical frameworks mentioned above, I now turn to examine a central concept that is ubiquitous for all the frameworks above: Gender.

2.1 Conceptual Journey of 'Gender' as an analytical tool

Historically, "Gender" and "Sex" as variables have been used as synonyms and usually refer to Male or Female and Masculine or Feminine. However, the term articulate that "sex" is the biological difference between men and women, whereas "gender" socially produces a difference between being masculine and being feminine, percolated in the literature with the qualitative turn in social sciences (Young et al. 1981; Connell 1985; Holmes 1995; Lorber 2000). Oakley (2016) created the concept of sex as biological and gender as sociocultural, which eventually became the referencing standard for most sociologists (Ingraham 1994). Gender emerged as an analytic category in the late twentieth century. Gender was absent from the major bodies of social theory articulated from the eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries in sociological discourses (Scott 1986). These meanings of gender have continuously changed over time and are open for debate. To understand the remodel meaning of gender, we need to consider individual identity and its link with social organization. To develop a sharpened notion, both factors are essential to understanding how gender functions and changes throughout time.

In classical sociology works, we find less concern towards the social differences between women and men. For example, classical thinkers such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim did not explicitly consider for their vision of 'sex' inequality (the word gender was not in existence at that time), and interestingly, they assumed "women's subordinate social role as a natural given" (Sydie, 1994). It is important to note that these thinkers preferred to call "sex roles" biologically determined (Kemper 1975; Connell 2014), but they were ironically critical

about how social forces affect every aspect. In the late 1950s and early 60s, functionalism led the sociology arena. It augmented in believing that distinctiveness between women and men is socially constructed. American sociologist Talcott Parsons is a prominent figure in twentieth-century functionalism. He viewed women's and men's 'complementary roles' as considered vital standards in conceptualizing the functionalist ideas of gender (Parsons and Bales 1956). In the late 18th and 19th centuries, first-wave feminism was distinct by "its critique of dominant western thinking" and in favor of women's inclusion in the "liberal universal conception" (Wollstonecraft 1978). Naomi Wolf and Martha Nussbaum are currently stepping up the same liberal tradition.

With the emergence of second-wave feminism in the late 1960s, comparatively, to predecessors, they believed in the assimilation of women into society rather than emancipation in men's universal standard. Second-wave feminists talked about the theory of truth of power. Primarily, emphasize "to overthrow power, to overthrow men's authority" (Beasley, 2005) as a measure to hold a position of equality. In the 1970s, American feminists apt the word "gender" under the women's movement and revolutionized the meaning (Meyerowitz, 2008). Feminist social scientists were not satisfied with the idea of relating biological sex with behavior and intellect, unlike their predecessors. Rather than attempting to define "gender" as the "socially learned behavior and expectations that are associated with the two sexes" (Anderson, 2004); as "the psychological, social and cultural components…. An achieved status" (Richardson, 1981); gender as a "social process of dividing up people and social practices along the line of sexed identities" (Beasley, 2005). In the 1980s, "gender" was used as a synonym for "women" to denote the seriousness of work and neutral objective. This usage is profound that the world of women is part of the world of men (Smith, 1989).

The early 1980s marked the beginning of the ‘era of third-wave liberal feminists’; they argued that women should take responsibility and drop the victim status rather than collectivism. Furthermore, postcolonial feminism emerged as in branching of the third wave feminism, with numerous other racially rapt feminist movements with an approach to reflect on the dynamics of each woman's experience (Lorde 1984). Later on, many scholarly works investigated the homogenization of “third world women” following the narratives of western feminists laying the foundation stone of postcolonial feminism (Mohanty 1984; Spivak 1985; Chatterjee 1989).

From the 80s onwards ideology of Gender Difference feminism was created in the response of equality feminists (Scott 2018). According to them, “Equality takes for granted that ways of life associated with men and masculine are desirable… women and feminine as less worthy” (Beasley, 2005). Equality being able to provide justice eventually leads us to “erasure of difference, to women’s erasure” (Raymond, 1986). Further branching of Gender difference into psychoanalytic sexual difference focused on mother-daughter affiliation except for Lacanian feminists, who emphasized a re-evaluation of womanhood. Feminism is a broad concept talking from the singular point of gender difference takes away the primary purpose of defense. To respect and understand the multiple differences “between women or within the feminine and varied points of intersections between gender and other axes of power” (Beasley, 2005) concept of REI (Race/Ethnicity/Imperialism) feminism came into existence. REI Feminists like Gayatri Spivak and bell hooks are prominent figures in the present era.

Interestingly transition can be observed from gender in cultural-social view to gender as a subject from Queer theory. In the 1990s, Queer theory developed to destabilize identity politics and focused on the ambiguity of gender identity. Unlike REI Feminism discussing marginal and minority issues, Queer theory discarded the central or marginal distinction (Sedgwick, 1993). As

a key figure in Queer theory, Judith Butler linked politics of subversion with identity politics. She believed gender identity should not be considered fixed, but it is more Performative. According to her refusal of the set, identity essences help break the pre-conceived binary notion of gender in society.

With the discussion of the conceptual journey of "Gender" as an analytical tool, in the next section, I further extend the discussion using a postcolonial lens and as relevant to my data.

2.2 Gender and Postcolonial Theory

To understand postcolonial intersections and the nuances that such a lens carries with it, I turn, for a moment, to visit postcolonial theory. Scholarship notes that postcolonial theory has been beyond a singular theoretical formation, "an interrelated set of critical and counterintuitive perspectives" (Chaudhuri and Thimm 2018). Furthermore, over time, postcolonial theory as a knowledge system has evolved into a "complex network of interconnected concepts, and heterogeneous practices developed out of traditions of resistance to a global historical trajectory of imperialism and colonialism." However, as expected, the character of postcolonial inquiry has evolved over the last decade, implying newer potential possibilities. In gender and postcolonial studies dictated "notions of exile, displacement and migration have been critically set against the 18th- and 19th-century" the portrayal escorting the emblem of mobility (Knapp 2005). The movement bring forth the shift in identities. Postcolonial theory developed as a tool to analyze the cultural and political identities of the colonial era. The conceptual understanding of identity negotiations aftermath of colonization, postcolonial studies postulated as a theoretical attempt at the historical condition of colonial and particularly postcolonial states (Gandhi 1988). Postcolonialism is defined as an area of study reclaiming the theoretical sense of that past;

therefore, in the last few decades' feminist scholars extensively introduced the concept of postcolonialism for studying gender as a whole postcolonial state. The postcolonial states re-constructed women's image, and this ideology was formulated as the essential analytical parameter in recent research studies. The association of feminism with postcolonialism inspired to "produce a more responsive and self-reflexive account of cultural nationalism" (Gandhi 1998).

Postcolonialism deals with the repercussions of colonization and is best viewed as a useful acronym for expressing inequality in structure, which is, in reality, highly diverse because it always operates in tandem with other structures (Loomba, 1998). Therefore, postcolonialism is a process that examines the intellectual, political, economic, and societal repercussions of colonialism; prominently affecting the gender notions of the society. To advance the scholarship postcolonialism assembled feminism with the conceptual tool to examine multiple subversion sites and renounce universalisms around both genders (Guha 1982; Chakrabarty 1996; Chatterjee 1993) and collaborated on the perspective of the 'third world women' (Mohanty 1984). However, the consistent use of third-world women as a monolithic category perpetuated the cultural production that could not understand the 'difference' in global-local oppressions of women (Mohanty 1984; Chatterjee 1989). Therefore, postcolonial feminists defer from a singular approach and propose polyvocality, arguing that most research on intersectional analyses tends to include the perspective of researchers/analysts only and therefore tend to reflect partial and limited viewpoints. The corrective use of a polyvocal lens was proposed as an argument initially drawing on postmodern critiques of "writing culture" (Abu-Lughod 1992; Wolf 1994). The proposed framework developed on which intersectional constellations shift could be examined from one voiced interpretation to another, deepening, expanding, and complicating the same assessments (Thimm, Chaudhuri, and Mahler 2017). It thus becomes

increasingly critical to understand the polyvocality of postcolonial states, particularly concerning a myriad of transitional gender dynamics.

The conceptualization of gender in India and, by extension, South Asia, used as a lens in this thesis, is fundamentally grounded in the postcolonial socio-political paradigm. Therefore, the term "postcolonial" have implied both as a description and an explanation for various forms of gender inequality. As a descriptive lens it is utilized to analyze the aftermath of colonial legacies on gender and as well serve as an explanatory tool to understand specific manifestations of gender inequality within the context of the study. In the Indian context, one cannot overlook strong colonial influences despite new realignments over the decades: the critiques of colonialism and postcolonialism are continued to perplex the notions —where images of "new woman" influenced the practices to re-condition (Shukla 2022; Shukla and Chaudhuri 2021; Chatterjee 1989); pushed conformations to imbibe the "colonial masculinities" for upholding the dominance in the societal spectrum (Sinha 1989) that collectively act to construct a "new patriarchy" (Radhakrishnan 2009) that is continued to be contested and imagined on different scales – starting from the individual, to intimate, to regional, to national and international political agencies. Colonial reign denounced the social conditioning of women in India by confiscating views developed on scriptural tradition.

In response, nationalists strived to create the custom-built idea of women on the foundation of socially acceptable modernity (Sinha 1999; Trivedi 2007), which created the image of a woman on a par superior to western women, traditional and proletarian women. The concept of the modern woman was recreational to patriarchy. Nationalists adopted fundamental characteristics from native cultural identity but with the essence of "classicized" tradition, which was reconstructed and fortified against pre-irrationality (Mani 1986). The reformed patriarchy

persuades them to distinguish themselves from prolonged social and cultural practices. The redefined notion of "new" woman was conferred as quite the reverse of the pre-established concept of "common" woman. But despite the constant reconceptualization of women, one question that plagued colonial South Asia and continues to this day is what scholarship identifies as the ‘women’s question’.

The 'women's question' was a centrally important yet contentious issue that preoccupied colonial South Asia, particularly India, historically and continues to inform regional and national gender discourses, norms, and practices today (Mahler, Chaudhuri, and Patil 2015). Scholars argue that the women’s questions during the colonial moment focused on the centrality of the figure of the regional Indian woman within a culture. The ‘women’s question,’ over time, has found expression in the media and morphed into another but not surprising category – the ‘respectable’ Indian woman. The ‘respectable’ Indian woman was to the home what the Indian man was to the public sphere—a civilized, educated, cultured presence that was better than Britishers and a superior Indian. As a result, the respectable Indian woman became the most extreme domestic cultural expression and served as a model for society (Baviskar and Ray 2011; Sangari 1990).

Kumkum Sangari (2001:307) argues that there is an "astonishing consensus" regarding gendered domestic labor, domesticity, and the domestic sphere in general. On one side of a clear gendered boundary were the “respectable women,” and on the other were “unprotected” women. "Unprotected" was a term used to describe women who couldn't afford to stay at home and were thus exposed to public spaces. Their moving into the public for work, trade, etc., were deemed unprotected and therefore incapable of achieving a ‘respectable’ status. With the digital revolution, the distinction between the “respectable” woman and the “unprotected” women

continued to be contested. However, over the decades' the notion of respectable and unprotected got blurred and intermixed with each other creating an idea within the society where women could achieve the "respectable status" being "unprotected," leading to more and more women joining the formal labor force in an increasingly globalized world (Baviskar and Ray 2011).

From the ongoing discussion, I retracted that the interventions of gender, postcolonial theory and mobility have been critical to narrate the colonial status of inequality persisted in the postcolonial states at the multiple scales (Loomba 1998; Knapp 2005). Therefore, in the next section, I examine and reflect on this fundamental aspect of status: mobility.

2.3 Gender and Mobility

The study of the social phenomenon 'Mobility' helps understand the composition of and changing dynamics in society; this implies that using mobility as a framework integrates to "read" the transition in society (Kaufmann 2014). Mobility is defined as "all movement involving a change in the state of the actor or system," which refers to the social and spatial characteristics of mobility (Bassand and Brulhardt 1980). The conceptualization of mobility as a social transition with physical movements in the Chicago School of Thought (Mckenzie 1927). After the Industrial Revolution, society started valuing social mobility with spatial movement because it pushed to establish the collective dynamics of growth based on a desire to improve their socio-economic status (Kaufmann 2014). Mobility as a framework in sociology provided the tool to understand the dynamics of society correlating the spatial and social movements, promoting the relevance of empirical and theoretical considerations (Hannam et al., 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2016; Urry, 2007).

In gender studies, since the early 1990s, mobility studies emerged as a lens to understand the dynamics of 'Geographical, social and ideological relations of power' (Gabaccia 2013). Moreover, feminist scholars have understood the significance that gender and mobility are intertwined and continuously reshaping each other (Hanson 2010). In the earlier phase, scholars often utilized the notion of migration concerning gender studies. However, since the early 2000s, mobility and migration have increasingly been integrated into studies: a development that we regard as positive (Kronlid 2016). Earlier in theorizing gender in migration (or mobility), studies notably accepted the notion of the biological binary view, for example, that women by nature are more migratory than men. Still, they prefer movement at a shorter distance (Ravenstein 1885). In the 1970s and 1980s, efforts were made to re-produce a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary field of migration studies, but such research studies on migrant women (Morokvasic 1984; Brettell and Brettell 1986; Gabaccia 1989, 1992) had a slight impact on migration studies. Women's experiences are confined to the book chapter on social institutions like family, marriage, economy, politics/law, etc. Initially, scholars dealt with only half of the migrant population, and women-related problems were dismissed at the margin (Morokvasic 1983). In the migration literature, for the prolonged-time period, the study remains limited to 'sex-role constraint,' lacking the gender foreground (Cranford 2007).

Over the last decade, research in migration shifted more towards analyzing gender rather than sex as a dichotomous variable and integrating social mobility with geographical movement as in total. Gender relations are more crucial than biological sex in producing a migration system. "Gender as relational, and as spatially and temporally contextual turn into a tool of gendered analysis of migration" (Donato et al. 2006). Scholars believe in gender's dynamic character, as it gets influenced by an individual's social interaction with others and various social

institutions. Which inferred that gender analysis of migration takes place at diverse scales, from the local and familiar to the national and global. Thus the "gendered geographies of power" as a theoretical tool came into reality, examining mobility as it connects all the scales. (Mahler and Pessar 2001).

Lately, scholarly studies and government surveys also started valuing the role of gender in migration studies. Additionally, beginning the emphasis on the discussion of using the concept of gender in mobility as an analytical tool. That has added theoretical value to the studies on migration, revealing processes that were neglected for very long; "*Decisions to migrate are made within a larger context of gendered interactions and expectations between individuals and within families and institutions"* (Grasmuck and Pessar 1991). Therefore, gender is a crucial analytical lens to evaluate before formulating a theory about migrants (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1992; Sassen 1988). Keeping the evolution of the migration studies in mind, "*anthropologists proved especially important in nurturing interdisciplinary dialogue within migration studies and in encouraging gender analysis"* (Donata et al. 2006).

Analysis of gender is considered incomplete in isolation because, as a principal factor, it organizes social life, i.e., social interaction and social relations. The concept of gender is fluid, and it articulates with other axes of differentiation (Mahler and Pessar 2006), such as race, class, location, ethnicity, etc. The concept of gender came to the center from the periphery of discussion in mobility studies. Scholars have moved toward using gendered mobility as the theoretical framework for analysis of ensuing dynamics in the family, marriage (Grasmuck and Pessar 1991; Mahler 1999; Menjivar 2000) as well in nation-states, borders, and supranational institutions (Pessar 2001; Walton-Roberts 2004; Yuval-Davis, Anthias, and Kofman 2005). Feminist scholars need to demonstrate how "gender and sexuality each act as an axis of power

relations" (Mahler and Pessar 2001; Nawyn 2010; Gabaccia 2013) that "shapes and organizes processes of migration and modes of incorporation" (Cantu´ 2009). The approach of developing and re-produce methodological diversity and interdisciplinary for the totalitarian cultural production of gender and mobility studies to a greater extent.

2.3.1 Gendered Geographies of Power (GGP)

GGP was initially framed by cultural anthropologists Sarah Mahler and Patricia Pessar about two decades ago to examine gender in a particular type of mobility - transnational migration. The GGP framework draws inspiration from Pierette Hondagneu- Sotelo's (1994) study that gender organizes migrations. The GGP framework includes "three fundamental elements: (1) social locations, (2) geographic scales, and (3) power geometries" (refer to Mahler and Pessar 2001).

Social locations are akin to an understanding of intersectionalities – that understand people's experiences as representing various axes of differentiation (race, gender, caste, class, religion, etc.). Context is crucial to the salience of these axes. The second element, geographic scales, is a rudimentary form of what later became a multiscalar approach (Mahler, Chaudhuri, and Patil 2015). Perhaps the most significant potential of geographic scales is that it enables scholars to analyze people's social locations simultaneously along with different social scales, which becomes a substantial value-added to existing scholarship on intersectionality studies. The third element privileges individual agency and takes into account the "power geometry" concept adapted from Doreen Massey (1994). People's agency is highlighted by the fact that they engage, violate, change, and eliminate rules and conventions (Chaudhuri, Thimm, and Mahler 2015). Gender is, after all, socially constructed. As a result, power geometry serves as a constant

reminder to consider how people's actions develop and dismantle gendered notions, norms, and patterns, among other things. GGP focused on bringing gender "in" to an existing discourse of mobility and migration, particularly transnational migration, to emphasize its relevance compared to intersectionality (Mahler and Pessar, 2001). In research that focused primarily on sub-national phenomena, the intersectional framework was developed to meet the requirement to incorporate gender along with multiple axes of distinction (Mahler, Chaudhuri, and Patil 2015).

2.4 Intersectionality in Postcolonial Contexts

The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberly Crenshaw (1991). The idea of intersectionality came into existence as a criticism of early feminist scholars' practice of keeping women's life encounters under a single narrative. The approach was an attempt to acknowledge the experiences of marginalized women who were reluctantly trapped in the theoretical generalization paradigm (Hooks 1981; Min-Ha 1989). The intersectionality approach understood the differences among women of race, class, and ethnicity and argues for taking into account of heterogeneity at diverse points where social positions intersect (Crenshaw 1989).Therefore, Intersectionality is inclusive of axes of differentiation across diverse social factors among women of the same or different race (or ethnicity).

2.4.1 Scaling intersectionality

Scaling intersectionality is a theoretical framework that provides a foundation for theorizing the social positioning of a subject within an intimate (family and marriage) setup defined through animate experiences (Mahler, Chaudhuri, and Patil 2015). Therefore, the framework empowers feminist scholars to understand the diversified standpoints across multiple

social scales. While scaling intersectionality optimizes the analytical lens across geo-social scales. There is an urgent need to acknowledge another layer of complexity - that intersectionality faces a "historical dilemma." For instance, in India, where identity negotiations in a "postcolonial" era are often examined as, on the one hand, products of historical injustice (of colonialism) and, on the other, intersectional inequality negotiations that have not yet been attenuated or dismantled (Carastathis 2016). According to academic research, by the end of the twentieth century, the global rise of nation-states could mark the end of European colonialism. Still, the historical and cultural legacies of colonialism have endured into the new millennium, influencing socio-demographic and cultural processes.

Here, I adopt a postcolonial lens to understand such dynamics - an analytical and descriptive phrase to counter colonial and subordination discourses that emphasize polyvocality and the plurality of histories articulated alongside wider social dimensions (Knapp 2005). As a contestation of dominance and colonialism's legacy, these discourses give an appreciation of diverse points of view and realities (Loomba 1998). Therefore, colonial and postcolonial identity negotiations assign various socio-cultural notions across many geographic and social scales, where differentiation axes are constantly renegotiated with individual reality (Chaudhuri and Thimm 2018). Changing postcolonial trajectories, mainly as they involve power negotiations, can be found more pronounced in specific parts of the world than in others. The framework of Postcolonial Intersections facilitates engagement, examination, and analysis of such everyday power negotiations as contextualized in precise geographic scales across the world. In the next section, I will shed light on the theoretical framework of Polyvocality, extending the paradigms discussion.

2.5 Polyvocality

The polyvocal feminist theory attempts to hear the differences in and among women, their voices, and their worlds. The women's efforts to secure a voice in identity politics and literature have been central themes of recent feminist scholarship. It has become clear that gendered systems are built not only by a sexual division of labor and a set of symbolic images but also by distinct diverse voices across geo-social scales with opposing possibilities of expression in and among women (Thimm, Chaudhuri, and Mahler 2017). Since women are diverse and belong to different socio-cultural backgrounds: race, class, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and sexual preference, single feminist discourse will never be enough, and futile to understand the voices of multiple spectrums (Martindale 2002). Feminist Scholars find an imbalance, including women's voices from diverse socio-geographical locations. The feminist critiqued the malevolent universalization of incomplete and univocal narration (Schweickart 1985). Polyvocality is a tool to empower the voices and sustain the narration of geo-social scales. Polyvocality strengthens multiple thoughts to the same narrative, disrupts the existing notion, and puts a transformative front. When people can weave their tales from their personal experiences, they can help the narratives to flow in society as in the embodiment process.

2.6 Conceptualization of the Framework

In the context of postcolonial theory, "postcolonial intersections" refers to the recognition and exploration of the manners in which multiple systems of power, oppression, and identity intersect within postcolonial societies. It emphasizes the understanding that multiple forms of oppression, such as gender inequality, racial discrimination, class disparities, and colonial legacies,

are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. With the examination of these intersections, unveiling of the complex power dynamics can be explored within postcolonial societies. For decades, mobility has studied people's movements concerning material, ideal, and virtual flows. In the context of postcolonial theory, mobility often refers to the movement and flow of people, ideas, capital, and culture across geographical and cultural boundaries. In addition, trends in mobility research show that mobile people are being seen on the continuum: from developmental subjects to cultural subjects whose activities are structurally determined. Regardless of where an individual is located in the continuum: gender, color, ethnicity, class, religion, sexuality, and nationality impact the social structure, agency, and identity negotiations; defined as axes of differentiation, also refer to the intersectionality of people. For instance, in the people of the former colonies, the people's intersectionality has very long and non-negotiable historical roots where the transcendent power revolves around gender inequality and differences between the colonizers and the colonized people (Chaudhuri and Thimm 2018). The reflections of global historical trajectories of robust conditions (e.g., starting with imperialism and colonialism) (Urry 2000) often find navigating at multiple geographic and social scales explicitly nexus the axis of differentiation that is constantly reimagined and redefined by shifting subjectivity.

The bridge between "postcolonial intersections" and "mobility" lies in their shared focus on comprehension of the complex dynamics and consequences of colonialism, globalization, and power in the postcolonial societies. Both concepts recognize the interconnectedness of multiple forms of oppression, including gender inequality, and examine how these intersecting power structures are shaped and reshaped by processes of mobility. Therefore, postcolonial intersections, quip to process of how power dynamics interact and intersect with one another, such as how gender inequality intersects with work or social disparities. In such analysis, mobility provide foundation

to apprehend how power dynamics are perpetuated, challenged, and transformed as people, ideas, and capital transcend across social, cultural and geographical boundaries.

The outcome of the discussion is that, as we progress from regional to national to global analytical scales, the intersections of people can and do change. (Mahler, Chaudhuri, Patil 2015); this is when the "intersections become mobile" (Shukla and Chaudhuri 2021). Mobility can be informed and transformed by the power geometries, shaping new identities and people's intersectionalities. Therefore, it requires an in-depth understanding of the history, material and cultural forms, and social activities specific to power geographies.

The conceptualization of the new framework is based on two significant fields: (1) Intersectionality and (2) Mobility Studies. It yields a newly conceptualized framework of Intersectional Im/Mobilities (Shukla and Chaudhuri 2021) to comprehend (re)alignments of postcolonial interventions in digital India across multiple scales. The new framework of Intersectional Im/mobilities will be discussed in the next section.

2.6.1 Unraveling the Intersectional Im/Mobilities

Intersectional Im/mobilities core idea fixates on the linkage amid mobility and intersectionality with a postcolonial lens to explore predominantly the process by which gender is reproduced, negotiated, and mediated at diverse geographic and social scales (Shukla and Chaudhuri 2021). Intersectional Im/Mobilities aid in enhancing the understanding of multiple conjunctions among intersectionality, mobility, colonial history, and postcolonial livid experiences (Shukla and Chaudhuri 2021).

The framework is established with critical pillars of Geographic and Symbolic Im/Mobilities. Together, they yield an analysis tool to understand the power dynamics of gender

contesting throughout the scales that perpetuate from the people's mobility (non-mobility). The influence of Geographic Intersectional Im/Mobilities rests in the classic analytical tool of Gendered Geographies of Power (GGP). The GGP consists of three fundamental factors (1) social locations, (2) geographic scales, and (3) power geometries (refer to Mahler and Pessar 2001).

Social locations install grounded context and challenge scholars to recognize how people see themselves at any given time. They are also reflected to symbolize multiple axes of differentiation (consciously or unconsciously); therefore, power geometries and social locations are actualized as context-dependent. The second fundamental feature of the GGP framework is the multiscalar tendency, which enhances our comprehension of Intersectional Im/Mobilities. Geographic Intersectional Im/ Mobilities is a non-linear notion related to how we characterize negotiating often-high-and-low social places and expanding to include social statuses simultaneously. Additionally, Geographic Intersectional Im/Mobilities operate in interoceptive and retrospective situations with a global gender systematic oppression model frequently related to an individual's axes of difference.

In contrast, the adoption of Symbolic Intersectional Im/Mobilities reflects Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital or "soft power" (Bourdieu 1990). When addressed via the perspective of gender, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital administers us with an analytical frame through which we may explore what it means to be "respectable" in a broader context of society. As I have discussed through data (in chapters 4, 5 and 6), respectability across individual, family and workplace scales becomes significant in many, if not all, of the participants' decision-making processes. The notion of "respectability" as an essential part of the symbolic capital of Indian I.T. professionals becomes a junction for a higher status negotiation

due to the akin state of symbolic capital and gender. Historically and throughout many socio-geographic scales, status negotiation is similar to the tactic for negotiating a more elevated social place, vis-à-vis other groups. For example, the Indian families' stature is rooted in social and cultural hierarchies, global capitalism, and the nation's expanding class culture. Moreover, traditionally, symbolic intersectional im/mobilities suggest a negotiation of status that requires paying attention to symbolic, material, and economic privileges while also considering the dynamics of geographical mobility in establishing and upholding such privileges.

With the framework of Intersectional Im/mobilities constituting geographic and symbolic Intersectional Im/mobilities in hand, I will discuss next the research methodology and data chapters. I'll discuss the research design, process of data collection, and analysis procedures that followed.