

Student Internship Scheme – 2024
Cluster Innovation Centre

Project Title: Natural Disasters, Geography and Women's Vulnerability: An Interdisciplinary Exploration

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Abstract:

Natural disasters are increasingly frequent and severe, disproportionately affecting women due to pre-existing social, economic, and political inequalities. This research addresses the critical gap in understanding the intersection of natural disasters, geographic conditions, and women's vulnerability, focusing on six villages in Kerala, India. Kerala's susceptibility to floods, landslides, and other natural calamities, highlighted by major floods in 2018 and the 2004 tsunami, serves as a microcosm for broader patterns. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through surveys and in-person interviews with 120 women from disaster-affected areas. The findings reveal that women face heightened vulnerability due to limited resources, social and economic inequalities, and inadequate disaster preparedness. Geographic factors exacerbate these vulnerabilities, with distinct patterns of risk and impact observed in coastal and hilly regions. The study underscores the necessity for gender-sensitive disaster management policies and the inclusion of women in planning and decision-making processes. By addressing the specific needs and challenges women face, this research aims to contribute to more equitable and effective disaster risk reduction strategies applicable across India.