Review of: "The Complexity of Leaving No One Behind: Unmasking and Emphasizing Multiple and Intersectional Marginalisation in India"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

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(a) Content focus

This is a timely paper just coinciding with the halfway-period towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. As we mark halfway towards 2030 target, progress report of implementation of the SDGs shows that "*we are leaving more than half the world behind*" (United Nations, 2023). The authors have well noted in one paragraph quoted below on the context in India.

""""*As India prepares to achieve SDG goals by reaching the last mile, it is imperative to revisit the means to this end as well. As the successful strategies for the mainland are inadequate for the people at the margins, a novel approach to the exploration of the web of the causes of their underdevelopment is needed to devise contextual, acceptable, and sustainable solutions.*""""""

The authors have also shed light on what the country needs to do which aligns well with one of the *five key areas for urgent action*" outlined in the SDGs progress report 2023 – """*Governments should strengthen national and subnational capacity, accountability and public institutions to deliver accelerated progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*""" (United Nations, 2023).

The authors need to look into some existing country policies to see if they are inclusive enough to address the noted "marginalization" or they have some omissions which need to be addressed. For example, a recent paper related to issues of surgery and anesthesia has noted that "*for the years after 2010 there is less prioritization of surgical, obstetric, trauma, and anesthesia care in Indian national health policies*". (Shetty, et al., 2023), Pointing to such omissions in other policies can help to harness the efforts to disentangle the factors exacerbating marginalization as the country enter into the second half of SDGs implementation. The findings are also key to decision makers in India to reorganize and reflect on the situation and address it seriously. This will echo a note by Jayati Ghosh in a recent publication that we need to address inequality seriously (Ghosh, 2023).

The paper central focus is on "intersectionality" focusing on geography and socioeconomic characteristics including the "scheduled tribe (ST) and Scheduled Caste (SC)". I suggest to the authors to consider adding some (more) literature on intersectionality approach to beef up the paper focus. It is well known that intersectionality can also help understand

underlying power imbalances which may contribute to marginalization of population groups (United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) & UN Women, 2022; Ryder & Boone, 2019; Kelly, et al., 2021; Bauer, et al., 2021).

(b) Editorial/Typos focus

""""Revisiting intersecting margins

The people who experience multiple marginalities are generally outside mainstream socio-economic and geographical systems, reside in sensitive socio-ecological systems and are dependent on government-regulated resources like forests and hills. They, therefore, continue to remain affected by skewed development opportunities and outcomes and are excluded economically, socially, geographically, and administratively. Being in disadvantaged positions for generations, these exclusions do not merely add to them; they overlap and reinforce each other and create a peculiar and severe form of arginalizedon (*I hope the authors mean* **marginalisation**). This kind of intersecting arginalizedon (*I hope the authors meant* **marginalisation**) has made these communities invisible, unheard, and devoid of any influence over decision-making on issues that creates or alleviates the root cause of the multiple marginalisations. (Andreou, 2021) Addressing multiple marginalisations requires a comprehensive approach that acknowledges and addresses the intersecting forms of discrimination and disadvantage. This includes promoting inclusive policies, empowering arginalized (*I hope the authors meant* **marginalized**) communities, investing in infrastructure and development initiatives, and ensuring equitable access to services and opportunities.*"""""*

*"""""The socially diverse India is increasingly becoming a socially divided society with the most arginalizedd (*I hope the authors meant* **marginalized**) facing systematic discrimination, despite rights-based approaches to various developmental interventions. While such groups are found throughout the country in urban and rural settings, certain clusters face stagnation because of their unique intersecting inequalities. The traditional administrative governance has proven inadequate to recognize and address their most-disadvantagedarginalizedd (*I hope the authors meant* **most-disadvantaged and marginalized**) position. India needs to devise ways to see these places and people away from silos of district-state boundaries and socio-economic, i.e., caste and poverty identities. These clusters need to be studied from an intersectionality perspective by using group-based approaches. India needs to set up an autonomous agency to explore and address such complex issues.*"""""*

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