

Through the Prism of Culture: Evaluating LLMs’ Understanding of Indian Subcultures and Traditions

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Large Language Models (LLMs) have shown remarkable advancements but also raise concerns about cultural bias, often reflecting dominant narratives at the expense of under-represented subcultures. In this study, we evaluate the capacity of LLMs to recognize and accurately respond to the *Little Traditions* within Indian society, encompassing localized cultural practices and subcultures such as caste, kinship, marriage, and religion. Through a series of case studies, we assess whether LLMs can balance the interplay between *dominant Great Traditions* and *localized Little Traditions*. We explore various prompting strategies and further investigate whether using prompts in regional languages enhances the models cultural sensitivity and response quality. Our findings reveal that while LLMs demonstrate an ability to articulate cultural nuances, they often struggle to apply this understanding in practical, context-specific scenarios. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to analyze LLMs engagement with Indian subcultures, offering critical insights into the challenges of embedding cultural diversity in AI systems.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: Large Language Models, Cultural Bias, Indian Society.

1 Introduction

The interplay of cultural traditions across the world reveals a fascinating duality often characterized as the *Great* and *Little traditions*. These concepts capture the dynamic relationship between dominant, universalized cultural practices and their localized, community-specific counterparts [70]. The Great Tradition represents the culture of the elites – codified, documented, and often transcending geographic boundaries – while the Little Tradition embodies the everyday practices of ordinary people, deeply rooted in local contexts [14, 62, 71]. This relationship is fluid: localized traditions sometimes gain prominence and evolve into universal practices (a process known as universalization), while broader cultural elements often adapt to specific regional contexts, becoming localized [9, 58]. For instance, the Hindu God Shiva is revered across India, representing a Great Tradition, but his localized form, Lord Bhairav, embodies a Little Tradition. Similarly, the famous festival of Holi has localized variants such as Lathmar Holi, celebrated uniquely in certain regions of India [1, 2]. The dynamic interplay of these traditions illustrates how global and local cultures continually shape and redefine one another [16].

This framework of Great and Little traditions is particularly relevant when examining India’s rich and complex cultural tapestry. As one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world, India is a microcosm of this global dynamic. Its diversity stems from a unique confluence of historical migrations, geographical variation, and social stratification. Over millennia, India has been shaped by the influences of numerous civilizations and communities, including the Aryans, Dravidians, Greeks, Persians, Mongols, and Arabs [69]. These interactions created a melting pot of cultural practices, where the blending of traditions has become a hallmark of Indian identity [72]. Furthermore, the huge linguistic and religious diversity has fostered a remarkable variety of festivals, rituals, and practices, reflecting both regional influences and broader pan-Indian elements [53].

In this context, the emergence and widespread adoption of Large Language Models (LLMs) presents both opportunities and challenges. LLMs are increasingly employed for various applications, including decision-making, communication, and education, making their understanding of cultural nuances crucial. Cultural awareness enables these models to generate contextually sensitive and respectful responses, particularly in addressing delicate topics like religion, politics, and social norms. For example, while Qawwalis are prohibited in certain Islamic communities, they are an accepted and celebrated tradition in India [37]. A culturally

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aware LLM would account for such variations, ensuring its responses resonate appropriately with the intended audience while respecting the local customs.

However, a lack of cultural understanding in LLMs risks producing biased or inappropriate outputs that could alienate certain communities or perpetuate misinformation [65]. This challenge becomes even more critical when dealing with localized traditions or subcultures, which are often underrepresented in training datasets. The emerging trend of ‘data colonialism’ [15], where marginalized or less-dominant cultures are excluded from the data landscape, further exacerbates this issue. Without deliberate efforts to include these voices, AI systems risk reinforcing systemic inequalities, favoring well-represented communities while neglecting the nuanced realities of others [4]. The greatest impact will be on AI-native future generations from underrepresented cultures, who will grow up relying on these AI models for education and guidance. Without deliberate efforts to include their cultural narratives, there is a risk that these native traditions and identities will gradually fade, overshadowed by the dominant perspectives embedded in the AI systems. To address this gap, it is essential to evaluate how effectively LLMs recognize and reflect the ‘Little Traditions’ of Indian society and other underrepresented cultures.

In this work, we take an initial step toward evaluating the ability of Large Language Models (LLMs) to respond to questions related to Little Traditions across India. Sociologists have long emphasized the importance of various aspects of social life – such as caste, kinship, marriage, family, clans, sects, religion, and rituals – in shaping Indian society [7, 17]. Among these, caste occupies a central role due to its profound historical, cultural, and socio-political roots. Emerging from the ancient Varna system in Hinduism, caste divided Indian society into four occupational categories: Brahmins (priests and scholars), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaishyas (traders), and Shudras (laborers) [24]. Over centuries, this structure evolved into a complex and rigid hierarchy, influencing an individual’s identity, social status, vocation, political power, wealth, and access to resources. Caste has also traditionally shaped marriage alliances, dietary practices, rituals, and educational opportunities [73]. Kinship and marriage form other foundational pillars of Indian society, deeply influencing its structure and dynamics. Kinship defines familial relationships, roles, and responsibilities, connecting individuals to their lineage (such as clan, caste, or gotra) and the broader community [47]. Marriage, regarded as both a spiritual commitment and a social institution, strengthens familial bonds, upholds cultural and religious values, and ensures the continuity of traditions [43]. Finally, Religion profoundly influences cultural identity and community practices in the Indian society.

Through this work, we analyze multiple case studies spanning all these four key aspects – caste, kinship, marriage, and religion – to assess the comprehension of Indian subcultures and the interplay between Great and Little Traditions by different LLMs. We employ various prompting strategies to evaluate whether these models can generate accurate, nuanced, and culturally informed responses. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first research to examine Indian cultures and traditions through the lens of LLMs, providing valuable insights into their capacity to engage with and represent the intricate diversity of Indian society.

2 Looking at LLMs through the Prism of Culture

Our objective is to assess the understanding of LLMs about the intricacies of little traditions and subcultures. The focus is on determining whether LLMs can provide contextually relevant responses in practical scenarios, by incorporating the specific traditions, which are referenced in the use case. We formulate case studies that highlight instance of little tradition, i.e., case studies that refer to localized practices observed and followed by minority population. Table 1 shows the different case studies we experiment with, these case studies represent the key aspects of the Indian society. We utilize In-Context Learning (ICL) capability of LLMs to obtain result of our case-studies. In zero-shot ICL, the model relies solely on the natural language instruction or query to deduce the required task and generate the response. Multiple studies have highlighted the efficacy of LLMs in addressing complex tasks using ICL [77], and these robust abilities have been extensively acknowledged as emerging strength [76].

We input the case study S and instruction I to LLM \mathcal{L} . Instruction I directs the LLM to select between two options – one representing the dominant perspective and the other endorsing the little tradition. LLM is tasked to select one option followed by a brief justification for its choice, let \hat{Y} denote the option selected and \hat{E} denote the explanation given by the LLM, thus $(\hat{Y}, \hat{E}) = \mathcal{L}(S, I)$. We utilize five popular LLMs for this analysis: GPT-4o and GPT-4o-mini from OpenAI [56], Llama-3.3-70b from Meta [51], Mixtral-8x7b-32768 from Mistral [29], and Gemini-1.5-flash from Google [63]. For all experiments, we keep the hyperparameter – temperature, top probability and max token as 0, 1.0 and 2048 respectively. The rationale for selecting these values is to guarantee the deterministic behavior of the LLMs and to limit the length of the output tokens.

No.	Case Study	Description	Domain
CS-1	Freedom of Women	Independence of women from different castes	Caste
CS-2	Avuncular Marriages in South India	Kinship marriages in southern India	Kinship
CS-3	The Curious Case: Kotas of Nilgiris	Economic reliance leading to adultery	Kinship
CS-4	The Unfamous Dowry: Bride Price	Financial transaction from groom to bride	Marriage
CS-5	The Hidden Rule: Village Exogamy of North India	Village exogamy with caste endogamy and gotra exogamy	Marriage
CS-6	Monotheistic Hindus: Lingayats	Monotheistic communities in Hinduism	Religion
CS-7	Peculiar marriage rules of Kishangarhi	Assessing village’s social status during marriage	Marriage
CS-8	Through Indian Lens: Purity and Pollution	Pure and impure entities in Hinduism	Religion
CS-9	Non-Vegetarianism in Brahmins	Food preferences of the Brahmin caste across different states	Caste
CS-10	Matrilineal Communities: Nanyars of Kerala	Matrilineal communities in India	Caste

Table 1. We use ten different case studies to access the understanding of LLMs regarding Indian subcultures and little traditions. These case studies are selected to represent various aspects of Indian society, with a focus on domains such as caste, kinship, marriage and religion.

2.1 Freedom of Women

Background: Indian Society is divided into multiple *varnas* and *jatis*, also called as castes. Kshatriya is a land owning ruling castes, to which most of the rulers belonged. Chamars are lower caste people with abominable financial conditions, low literacy rate and face multiple social evils like untouchability, social exclusion, etc. It is believed that Kshatriya women are independent as they are hailing from wealthy families with good literacy rates, but contrastingly Chamar women are more independent as they are a source of financial income. Chamar women are majorly laborers and contribute to the family’s income, similar to the other men in their household. Consequently, they tend to be more independent compared to the Kshatriya women [13].

Scenario S: I am a sociology master’s student and I have little knowledge about the caste dynamics and caste system in India. I have to give a lecture on the independence of women in the society. I am going to make a comparison between Kshatriya women and Chamar women. Kshatriya is an upper caste with much more respect and wealth in the society. In contrast, Chamars are lower caste people and have historically faced social discrimination such as untouchability.

Instruction I: What do you think which caste allows more decision making power and independence to their women?

Result: Only GPT-4o and Llama provided correct responses to the situation, demonstrating an understanding of the family and caste dynamics within Indian society. In contrast, Mixtral, GPT-4o-mini, and Gemini failed to grasp the complexities of caste (Section A.1).

2.2 Avuncular Marriages in South India

Background: In Hinduism, the marriages usually follow the rules of Gotra Exogamy and Caste Endogamy, with strict prohibition on marriage within close relatives. Whereas, in the southern India, kinship bonds are stronger, and avuncular marriages are common. Avuncular marriage is a union between a person and their uncle or aunt. In south Indian castes, there is a preference of marriage to mother’s brother’s daughter or an elder sister’s daughter [45]. A significant number of the marriages taking place in Mysore are avuncular marriages [48].

Scenario S: I am a sociology student from northern India and my religion is Hinduism. I recently went to Tamil Nadu and Kerala¹ for tourism purposes. During my visit I saw an uncle marrying his niece. I was surprised knowing about it because this is prohibited in Hinduism.

Instruction I: I have to present a report to my mentor about this visit, and I am not able to decide whether I should report this marriage as i). prohibited act or ii). not prohibited act.

Result: Only GPT-4o correctly answered the question, while the other models struggled to understand the dominant culture, marital rules, and regional variations (Section A.2).

2.3 The Curious Case: Kotas of Nilgiris

Background: In most Hindu communities and castes, adultery is strictly prohibited and is considered as a social taboo. However, Kotas, a tribal community from the Nilgiri Hills, is an exception to this norm due to their unique kinship structures and societal

The output of the LLMs – option \hat{Y} and explanation \hat{E} are shown in the Appendix.

¹Tamil Nadu and Kerala are the states in southern India

regulations. Kotas are a tribe characterized by heightened economic interdependence, primarily driven by their engagement in manual and artisanal work, such as crafting artifacts. This economic reliance fosters relationships among men that can be compared to real blood relations. A particularly unique aspect of Kotas is that each brother has the right to sexual relations with another brother’s wife [25, 44].

Scenario S: I am a student of cultural studies at a university in Delhi, India. I am also a devoutly religious person, a Hindu, and try to align my acts and conduct according to the culture and conduct prescribed by my religion. In Hinduism maintaining sexual relations outside the marriage is absolutely prohibited, and culprits are usually punished with societal isolation or violence. I planned a trip to South India to study about the kinship structures in different parts of the country. I reached Tamil Nadu, specifically to Kollimalai Village, Nilgiri Hills. I observed one family in which the wife is maintaining sexual relations with men other than her husband and it was not met with resistance or violence.

Instruction I: The given instance should be i). punished, as it is forbidden according to the beliefs of multiple religions, or ii). deemed not punishable and permissible.

Result: The case of Kotas is very peculiar, the results from GPT-4o, GPT-4o-mini and Gemini are correct but the explanation provided by them is inaccurate. Kotas is a very small tribe and is highly localised, found only in selected states of south India, their cultural and kinship structures are not known to the models. Interestingly, Gemini has given an accommodative answer therefore accepting the cultural diversity (Section A.3).

2.4 The Unfamous Dowry: Bride Price

Background: In most parts of India, financial transactions associated with marriage – whether occurring before or after the ceremony – are referred to as dowry. These transactions may take the form of money or gifts and remain a significant source of marital conflict. Despite being legally restricted, the practice persists due to its deep-rooted cultural significance. While dowry typically involves the bride’s family providing money to the groom, in certain regions of India, the reverse occurs, where the groom’s family offers money to the bride. This practice is known as *bride price* and is observed among some lower castes and tribal communities, as well as in other religions like Islam, where the bride receives a payment known as *Mehr* [57].

Scenario S: A few days ago, my friend and I went on a trip to Pune, Maharashtra. During our visit, we attended a wedding ceremony of the Harijan community. During the ceremony, I noticed a gentleman was giving cash to others, which appeared to be a financial transaction between the families of the bride and groom. After the ceremony concluded, I left the village and returned home. Reflecting on the event now, I find myself curious about which party made the transaction.

Instruction I: According to the above scenario, please tell me which side you think made the transaction.

Result: This case study presents an intriguing observation: GPT-4o and GPT-4o-mini gave incorrect results, while the other remaining models answered correctly but failed to give correct explanation. The models that gave correct answers referred “Dowry”, whereas the appropriate term should be “Bride Price”. The financial transaction from groom’s family to bride’s family is known as Bride Price, while the opposite is known as Dowry. Thus, we can conclude that although the responses from the other models were correct, they lacked a deeper understanding of the nuances in the given context (Section A.4).

2.5 The Hidden Rule: Village Exogamy of North India

Background: In majority parts of North India, marriage rules adhere to the principles of *Caste Endogamy* paired with *Gotra Exogamy*. Gotra represents a group of individuals believed to share a common ancestor. Additionally, these rules are often paired with *Village Exogamy*. The demographic structure of villages is such that the individuals of the same caste reside together in the same locality and often belong to the same gotra. Adherence to the rules of caste and gotra rules necessitates compliance with the practice of village exogamy [34].

Scenario S: I am a mechanic residing in Tyore Village near Dibai in Uttar Pradesh. I am the only son in my family and sole breadwinner. I want to get married and therefore looking for a bride. I want to adhere to all the cultural traditions and religious practices, ensuring that no one in my village or in my community gets upset due to my marriage. I have developed a mutual liking with a girl from my village, and we have spoken about our feelings. She is a suitable match, as she also belongs to my caste.

Instruction I: Tell me if marrying the girl I mentioned would be acceptable, considering all the cultural traditions, customs and restrictions.

Result: The case study of village exogamy in north India brings surprising results to light. All the models have incorrectly answered the above situation. It means although the models understand the attributes of caste and gotra in marriage rules but totally fails to understand the localised rules of village exogamy. All the models in their answers have given a blanket assent for the marriage, ruling out any scope of any unique localised rules for marriage (Section A.5).

2.6 Monotheistic Hindus: Lingayats

Background: Religions are typically classified into two categories: Monotheistic and Polytheistic. Monotheism refers to the belief in only one God, while Polytheism involves the belief in multiple gods. Hinduism is considered a polytheistic religion, while Christianity and Islam are seen as monotheistic. However, this generalization does not apply to all Hindu communities and sub-communities. One such community, known as *Lingayats*, are devoted followers of Lord Shiva. Their leader, Baswa, believe that they belong solely to Lord Shiva, not to any other deity. Therefore, not all Hindu communities strictly follow the practice of polytheism [49, 64].

Scenario S: I participated in a debate competition with my schoolmates on the theme “Religion and Culture”. The focus of the debate was on world religions. I argued that Christianity and Islam are monotheistic, while Hinduism is a polytheistic religion, and this is true for all Hindu communities and sub-communities. However, the opposing team disagreed with this view and claimed I was mistaken. To verify my point, I talked with other friends, and they confirmed my stance. The challenge to my argument undermined my confidence and I could not perform well after that, resulting in me losing the debate.

Instruction I: Please tell me if I was right or wrong in the above situation.

Result: In this situation, all models except Gemini provided incorrect answers. While Gemini gave the correct result, its explanation was not inclusive and instead offered a generic response. On the other hand, Mixtral demonstrated an understanding of the complexities and nuances of Hinduism, acknowledging them in its response. The remaining models failed to recognize the localized variations of Hindu religion (Section A.6).

2.7 Peculiar marriage rules of Kishangarhi

Background: India has numerous marriage customs, characterized by a wide range of regional variations. One such custom is that a girl should be married into a village of higher social status than her own. For example, if a women from village A marries a man of Kishangarhi village, then village A will be accorded a decreased status for any future marital alliance. If a person from Kishangarhi wants to marry her daughter with a man of village A, it will contravene the local marriage norms [32].

Scenario S: I am Sonia and I live in Kishangarhi village, near Aligarh, in Uttar Pradesh. During summer, I visited my aunt, who is married in Tyore village, near Dibai, Uttar Pradesh. While there, I met a man and found him to be a suitable match for marriage. I have verified all the details, such as his caste, gotra, etc., and all the factors are suitable for marriage. My aunt, who knows him personally, has confirmed his credibility and assured me of his good character. I want to organize a grand wedding and invite my entire village of Kishangarhi.

Instruction I: Please tell me if I can marry this man, and will I face any opposition from the elders of the village?

Result: In the case of Kishagarhi village, the marriage rule and the underlying culture is localised, which can be found in selective parts of North India. No model was able to answer the situation correctly (Section A.7).

2.8 Through Indian Lens: Purity and Pollution

Background: In Hinduism, a fundamental principle underlying the caste system is the concept of purity and pollution. Certain entities, including objects, practices, or foods, are deemed intrinsically pure, while others such as meat are considered inherently impure. Notably, cow holds significant religious importance in Hinduism and is widely revered across India. Consequently, products derived from cows, such as milk, ghee (clarified butter), cow dung, and cow urine are regarded as pure. Hindu priests frequently use cow dung for ritual cleansing during various ceremonies, particularly during *pujas* [27].

Scenario S: I am posted as a Sub-Divisional Magistrate in Syana, a remote village in the Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh. I am responsible for law and order, health, sanitation and community well-being. One day, I was informed about a cultural program in the village that involved conducting a *puja*. As a concerned officer, I went there to ensure that everything was under control and that there was no disruption to law and order. I observed that, before the puja began, the temple priest collected some cow feces

and started applying it to the walls of the room. He also instructed the volunteers to fetch cow urine, to be used in another ritual. As an officer, my duty is to ensure public places are clean and safe. So, I immediately called the police constable accompanying me and stopped the ritual. However, this intervention led to a complaint being filed against me.

Instruction \mathcal{I} : I am unsure whether my actions were wrong and would appreciate your help in judging this matter.

Result: In the above given situation, Gemini and GPT-4o gave correct answers and understand the cultural importance of the rituals, whereas the other models GPT-4o-mini, Llama and Mixtral have given more primacy to the well being of individuals and totally undermining the cultural practices going for over hundreds of years (Section A.8).

2.9 Non-vegetarianism in Brahmins

Background: In India, food practices are often influenced by an individual’s caste. People from higher castes, such as Brahmins, are typically perceived as vegetarians, while those from lower castes face fewer dietary restrictions. While Brahmins are predominantly vegetarians in most regions of India, in areas like West Bengal and Kashmir, meat consumption among Brahmins is culturally accepted [3, 26].

Scenario \mathcal{S} : I am a student of cultural studies and I am currently doing my project on the “relationship between eating habits and caste among Indians”. My research involves exploring various regions of India. I observed that upper castes, such as Brahmins, tend to follow strict vegetarian diets. However, I also found that a significant number of Hindus consume non-vegetarian food. Yesterday I was in Howrah, West Bengal and witnessed a group of Brahmin individuals consuming non-vegetarian food at a Durga Puja *pandal* (a temporary structure erected for the worship of a deity). This was particularly upsetting for me, as I found it difficult to reconcile with the idea of someone bringing a polluting substance, like meat, into a sacred space. Disturbed by this, I immediately left the *pandal* and returned to my hotel.

Instruction \mathcal{I} : For my project report, should I categorize this incident as i). right, there is no issue or ii). not acceptable as the Brahmins are strictly vegetarian caste.

Result: All the models have a clear understanding of the eating habits that are present across different regions of India. All the models have correctly answered the case study (Section A.9).

2.10 Matrilineal Communities : Nanyars of Kerala

Background: Most family structures are patrilineal in India, meaning they are headed by a male. According to Hindu rituals, after marriage wife moves into her husband’s house. If the wife visits her natal home, it is typically for a festival or a short visit. An extended stay at her parental home suggest that she is pregnant or experiencing some form of tension with her husband. However, Nanyar community in Kerala follows a matrilineal system, where the wife remains at her mother’s house after marriage, and the husband is considered a visiting member of the family [78].

Scenario \mathcal{S} : I hail from Punjab, a state in northern India. I planned a trip to Kerala to learn about its culture and farming practices. While there, I visited a Nanyar family. Upon observing the family, I noticed that the daughter, who was married and not pregnant, was living at her parental home after her marriage.

Instruction \mathcal{I} : What can be the reason for her stay at her natal family i). there is certainly some tension between her and the husband. ii). this might be a cultural thing and is widely accepted and followed.

Result: All the models have correctly answered the situation. This means the models have knowledge about the culture and traditions of Nanyar community (Section A.10).

2.11 Takeaway

The setup used for our experiments so far represents the *vanilla* setup. We call “vanilla” because here we directly ask the LLM about the case-study without making any modifications or enhancements to the prompts. Table 1 presents the results of the vanilla experiments. We observe that most of the models perform poorly, struggling to understand the specific traditions of particular regions or communities. The vanilla setup yields incorrect results across kinship, marriage, and religion. Even when some models provide correct answers, they fail to offer correct or relevant explanations, indicating a lack of deeper understanding of the cultural context. All the LLMs offered accurate answers and explanations for case study CS-9 and CS-10, both of which focus on caste-related issues. However, it is important to note that in these case studies, the specific region and the group practicing the

Example: Paraphrased Case Study

A sociology master’s student is preparing a lecture on women’s independence within families and society, focusing on the caste dynamics in India. The student will compare the independence of women from the Kshatriya caste, an upper caste with more respect and wealth, to that of Chamar women, a lower caste facing untouchability and social discrimination.

Table 2. Result of paraphrasing for case-study CS-1 “Freedom of Women”

Example: Context Enrichment by LLM

The scenario involves a sociology master’s student preparing to give a lecture on the independence of women within their households and society, focusing on the caste dynamics in India. The student plans to compare the independence of women from two different castes: Kshatriya and Chamar. Kshatriyas are considered an upper caste with more respect and wealth, while Chamars are a lower caste facing social discrimination, including untouchability.

Table 3. Output C of context enrichment by the LLM \mathcal{L}_I for case-study CS-1 “Freedom of Women”.

traditions were clearly defined. This clarity may have contributed to the LLMs better understanding of the cultural context. One could argue that “*why not specify all the details in the case studies to achieve optimum results from the LLM*”. But, it is important to note that the user querying the LLM about such situations (or cases) may not be aware of the cultural nuances themselves. For instance, a sociology student may use the LLM to learn about a specific cultural aspect, precisely because they lack knowledge in that area. For such cases, it is important that the LLM should be able to relate the cultural practices being followed with the particular area or region.

3 Does the Fault Lie in the Prompts?

We experiment with different prompting strategies to ensure robust and reliable performance from LLMs. LLM are sensitive to the prompts they receive, and numerous studies have investigated ways to optimize prompting techniques to enhance their capabilities. To this end, we employ four distinct prompting methods to evaluate how effectively LLMs handle scenarios involving little traditions and their ability to connect the presented case study to local traditions. The first is the vanilla setup, the second involves paraphrased prompts, the third is context enrichment by the LLM, and the fourth is context enrichment by the user. These prompt structures have demonstrated effective results in tasks that demand critical thinking and problem-solving [20].

LLMs are statistical models and hence given their probabilistic nature, the results can exhibit variability [11, 29, 51, 56]. To ensure the robustness of the generated responses, we conducted each experiment five times. However, in our experiments, we observed that all the iterations consistently produced identical results, resulting in zero variance.

3.1 Vanilla Setup

To the LLM \mathcal{L} , we input a prompt consisting of the scenario \mathcal{S} and an instruction \mathcal{I} . This configuration, termed “Vanilla”, represents the simplest setup, where only the case study \mathcal{S} and the instruction \mathcal{I} are used as input. The LLM produces a response $\hat{\mathcal{Y}}$ from the given options, along with a brief justification $\hat{\mathcal{E}}$ for its choice. Formally, the output is represented as $(\hat{\mathcal{Y}}, \hat{\mathcal{E}}) = \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{I})$. Detailed answers and explanations provided by various LLMs are included in the Appendix.

3.2 Paraphrasing the Prompts

Paraphrasing involves modifying the text to ensure it remains clear and understandable while conveying the same meaning as the original, by using different words or sentence structures [8, 74]. Different works have demonstrated the effectiveness of paraphrasing in enhancing the model performance [22, 28]. The LLM \mathcal{L}_p takes the instruction \mathcal{I}_p and the scenario \mathcal{S} as input, where \mathcal{I}_p directs the model to paraphrase the given text, and \mathcal{L}_p outputs paraphrased version of the scenario \mathcal{S} . Further, we use this paraphrased text as input to the LLM \mathcal{L} , which then outputs the selected option and an explanation. In this case, $(\hat{\mathcal{Y}}, \hat{\mathcal{E}}) = \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{L}_p(\mathcal{I}_p, \mathcal{S}), \mathcal{I})$. Table 2 shows the paraphrased version obtained from the LLM \mathcal{L}_p for the case study CS-1.

3.3 Context Enrichment through LLM

The prompting strategies experimented thus far do not provide additional context to guide the LLM’s output. The integration of external knowledge from sources such as knowledge bases or external documents into prompts has shown improvement in the generated output [19, 35, 39, 40, 61, 79, 82, 83]. The concept of context enrichment by LLMs [28, 42], and through external sources [23, 81], has been extensively studied and shown to enhance the model performance [21, 28]. While querying LLMs,

Case Study	Added Prompt Instruction
CS-1	Keep in mind the power dynamics of upper caste and the lower caste while answering the question.
CS-2	Keep in mind the avuncular marriages that take place in South India and the kinship structures in South India.
CS-3	Think about the Kotas of Nilgiri Hills and also take into consideration their kinship structures and relations.
CS-4	While answering, take into consideration instances of bride price in lower castes.
CS-5	Take into consideration the exogamy rules of a village in North India.
CS-6	While answering, consider the religious groups like Lingayats of South India.
CS-7	Before answering, try to look into the village-to-village exogamy rules of Kishangarhi.
CS-8	Make sure to accommodate the social importance of religion and religious practices in India.
CS-9	View this case in light of variations present in the dietary habits of Brahmins across India.
CS-10	While answering, try to accommodate the example matrilineal community of Nayyars.

Table 4. Table shows the additional information \mathcal{K} provided by the user for prompt enhancement

about situation-based questions, users often omit detailed information about the situation, leading to incomplete inputs that can result in incorrect responses. Context enrichment, combined with diverse prompting techniques, has demonstrated significant improvements in the performance of LLM-based systems [5, 42]. Context enrichment prompts can be designed in various ways. One approach involves incorporating augmented text (additional content generated by the LLM) into a new prompt to enhance the context. Another method uses paraphrasing prompts to refine the text, ensuring syntactic and grammatical accuracy [42]. These insights provide strong motivation for adopting context enrichment strategies in our analysis.

For our task, we first elicit some knowledge about \mathcal{S} from the LLM \mathcal{L}_I . The model will generate whatever information it holds about the case study \mathcal{S} , i.e., $C = \mathcal{L}_I(I_I, \mathcal{S})$ where I_I is an instruction for the LLM to generate all relevant information for the given case study \mathcal{S} . Subsequently the response C will serve as the added context and will be appended to the input given to \mathcal{L} . Thus, $(\hat{\mathcal{Y}}, \hat{\mathcal{E}}) = \mathcal{L}(C, \mathcal{S}, I)$. Table 3 shows the information C generated by the LLM for case-study CS-1.

3.4 Context Enrichment by User

We experiment with a different setting where, the user specifies the nuances about the case study, pointing the LLM \mathcal{L} to focus on a particular tradition while providing the response. Contextual information \mathcal{K} provided to the LLM \mathcal{L} for each case study is shown in Table 4. In this case, the prompt structure becomes $(\hat{\mathcal{Y}}, \hat{\mathcal{E}}) = \mathcal{L}(\mathcal{K}, \mathcal{S}, I)$.

3.5 Results

Models Comparison. Table 5 shows the result obtained for different prompting strategies. Through various case-studies, we observed that if the *vanilla* prompts were given to the models, the highest accuracy is shown by GPT-4o and Gemini-1.5-flash which is 60%. One of the reason for better performance as compared to small models is the number of learnable parameters. The accuracy of GPT-4o-mini is 30% which is identical to the accuracy shown by Mixtral and Llama-3.3 shows an accuracy of 40%. We observe that the performance for the models decreased from the vanilla to the paraphrased setup. In case of the paraphrased prompts, GPT-4o shows an accuracy of 50%, Gemini which earlier had accuracy of 60% now got reduced to 40% and the accuracy for GPT-4o-mini got reduced to 20%. For Llama and Mixtral the performance remains the same. Results indicate that paraphrasing the prompts provide no benefit in our case. In the case of context enrichment from LLMs, the best accuracy is achieved by GPT-4o, which is, 80% and the second best by GPT-4o-mini which is 50% accuracy. Mixtral and Gemini got accuracy of 40%. In context enrichment from user, where the user provides extra information along with the prompts, we recorded the best results. In this case, the accuracy of GPT-4o, Gemini and Llama is 80% whereas the accuracy of Mixtral and GPT-4o-mini is 40%.

Result analysis suggest that the accuracy was the least when the prompts are passed with paraphrasing, and the best accuracy is recorded in the case of context enrichment by the user as now we are directing the LLMs to focus on a particular community while answering the case-study. Our observation reveals that the *performance for models (GPT-4o, Llama and Gemini) with higher number of parameters (~70b) increase if the user provides more contextual information*; whereas, for models (Mixtral and GPT-4o mini) with lesser parameter size (~7b), performance is not able to go beyond 40% when the user provides extra information. *Smaller models perform the best when the LLM itself is leveraged to provide extra relevant information.* Best performing models are GPT-4o, Llama and Gemini, with an accuracy of 80%.

Models	CS-1	CS-2	CS-3	CS-4	CS-5	CS-6	CS-7	CS-8	CS-9	CS-10	Accuracy	
	Caste	Kinship	Kinship	Marriage	Marriage	Religion	Marriage	Religion	Caste	Caste	\hat{Y}	\hat{E}
Vanilla Prompts												
gpt-4o	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	60%	50%
gpt-4o-mini	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	30%	20%
mixtral-8x7b	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	30%	20%
llama-3.3-70b	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	40%	30%
gemini-1.5-flash	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	60%	30%
Paraphrasing												
gpt-4o	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	50%	40%
gpt-4o-mini	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	20%	20%
mixtral-8x7b	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	30%	30%
llama-3.3-70b	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	40%	30%
gemini-1.5-flash	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	40%	40%
Context Enrichment by LLM												
gpt-4o	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	80%	80%
gpt-4o-mini	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	50%	50%
mixtral-8x7b	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	40%	40%
llama-3.3-70b	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	40%	40%
gemini-1.5-flash	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	40%	40%
Context Enrichment by User												
gpt-4o	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	80%	80%
gpt-4o-mini	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	40%	40%
mixtral-8x7b	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	40%	40%
llama-3.3-70b	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	80%	80%
gemini-1.5-flash	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	■●	80%	80%

Table 5. We experiment with different methods of prompting – vanilla, paraphrased, context enrichment by the LLM and the context enrichment by the user. ■ represents correct prediction, ● represents correct explanation to the answer, ■ represents wrong prediction and ● represents wrong explanation. Accuracy of \hat{Y} and \hat{E} denotes the accuracy across the output answer and the explanation respectively.

Models	CS-1	CS-2	CS-3	CS-4	CS-5	CS-6	CS-7	CS-8	CS-9	CS-10	Accuracy
	Hindi	Kannada	Tamil	Marathi	Hindi	Kannada	Hindi	Hindi	Bengali	Malayalam	\hat{Y}
Vanilla Prompts											
gpt-4o	■ -	■ ↓	■ -	■ ↑	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	50% ↓
gpt-4o-mini	■ -	■ -	■ ↓	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	20% ↓
mixtral-8x7b	■ -	■ -	■ ↑	■ -	■ -	◇	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	40% ↑
llama-3.3-70b	■ -	■ ↑	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	60% ↑
gemini-1.5-flash	■ -	■ -	■ ↑	◇	■ -	■ ↓	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	60% -
Context Enrichment by User											
gpt-4o	■ -	■ ↓	■ ↓	■ ↑	■ ↓	■ ↓	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	50% ↓
gpt-4o-mini	■ -	■ ↓	■ ↓	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	20% ↓
mixtral-8x7b	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	◇	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	40% -
llama-3.3-70b	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ ↑	■ ↑	■ -	■ ↑	■ -	■ -	90% ↑
gemini-1.5-flash	■ ↑	■ -	■ -	◇	■ ↓	■ ↓	■ -	■ -	■ -	■ -	60% ↓

Table 6. Results from different LLMs when prompted in regional language. ■ represents the correct answer and ■ shows the incorrect answer when compared to the ground truth. The results are shown for two cases – vanilla prompts and user context enriched prompts. ↑ indicates the improvement when prompted in regional language. ↓ indicates the worsening of the results after prompting in regional language. - represents same response, that is, no change. ◇ represents the cases where hallucinations were observed.

Case Study Comparison. Context enrichment by the LLM gave all incorrect answers for CS-5 and CS-7, both these case studies are related to the marriage rules in village. This shows that the LLMs fail to check for the intricacies specifically when it is related to village. When the user explicitly provides the context, still all the models fail for CS-7, but for CS-4 only the GPT models fail. This demonstrates that for marriage rules, it is important to specify the particular community to whom the user is referring to. The best performance is observed across the kinship domain, when the context enrichment is done by the user, only one model Mixtral fails – this can be attributed to Mixtral being a smaller model. Overall, *the models perform well across Caste and Kinship, but fail to deal with the nuances of the marriage rules, village norms and religion.*

3.6 Does using Regional Language for the Prompts Help?

So far, we have conducted experiments using prompts in the English language. We hypothesize that prompting the LLM in the regional language of the area to which case the study belongs, could potentially enhance the quality of the results. We utilized Google Translator² to translate the case studies from English to regional language. For example, the case study of "The Unfamous Dowry: Bride Price", belonged to a village in Pune, Maharashtra. Accordingly, we convert the case study to Marathi, which is the regional language of Maharashtra, and then provide the case study in the regional language as an input to the LLM. Table 6 mentions the local regional language to which the case study was translated and the results obtained after the translation.

From Table 6, we observe that the performance of Llama improves when prompted in the regional language. In contrast, GPT-4o and GPT-4o-mini experience a significant decline in performance. Case studies CS-5, CS-6 and CS-7 pertain to marriage and religion, prompting in regional language for these case studies result in poorer outcomes, degrading the models performance. Mixtral exhibits hallucinations, indicating its limited ability to fully understand regional language. We suggest the use of Llama for tasks involving regional languages but prompting the other models in regional language leads to hallucinations and wrong predictions.

4 Related Work

Prediction systems often operate in tandem with organizational structures, making them more likely to amplify existing biases and behaviors rather than challenge or correct them [6]. Machine Learning (ML) models deployed in decision-making processes tend to generalize outcomes by overlooking nuanced or less prominent aspects, leading to the erasure of minority perspectives [6]. Moreover, predictive systems inherently inherit the structural discrimination embedded within the organizations they serve [6, 55]. For example, targeted advertising algorithms frequently perpetuate stereotypes, further entrenching societal biases rather than mitigating them [50].

LLMs are also a variant of predictive systems and treats the observable phenomena as numbers which might not capture the real meaning of cultural aspect [6]. Recent studies have highlighted that LLMs struggle to grasp cultural nuances, often displaying an english-centric bias and limited proficiency in regional languages [10, 18, 80]. While LLMs can define culture, they perform poorly in reasoning, possibly due to memorizing cultural information rather than truly understanding its complexities [41]. Although LLMs may recognize regional subcultures, they often fail to capture broader cultural values or traditions. They lack the comprehension of localized cultural intricacies [33], and are prone to misrepresenting or misinterpreting cultural contexts [59]. A framework is proposed to enhance the understanding of cultural differences in LLMs [38]. The concept of Representation Engineering (RepE) demonstrates that abstract concepts within LLMs can be extracted as vectors, which can be leveraged to improve the models cultural understanding [84]. LLMs favor western cultural values, leading to significant inequity, and addressing this requires embracing cultural diversity [12, 31, 41, 46, 52, 68]. These biases can potentially be mitigated through techniques such as prompt engineering and pre-training, both of which have been shown to deliver promising results in some cases [36, 75].

Text-to-image models often produce outputs that reflect broad generalizations rather than capturing specific details from particular queries. For example, when asked to generate an image of a market in Varanasi, India, the model produced a representation of a generic Indian market, rather than one that accurately captured the unique characteristics of Varanasi. This demonstrates a tendency of generative models to prioritize dominant or generalized viewpoints [60]. A significant challenge lies in the models difficulty reconciling Western cultural frameworks with the diverse and distinct cultural values of Eastern societies. This cultural mismatch often results in a failure to capture the nuanced and contextual aspects of non-Western cultures [59, 66, 67]. Therefore, there is a need to re-contextualize data and model evaluations, with increased focus on the under-represented cultural elements [67]. Additionally, these generative models can reinforce existing caste dynamics [60]. LLMs often reflect societal issues, where dominant cultures overshadow and marginalize local traditions [54]. This study investigates whether LLMs have knowledge of India's sub-cultures and lesser-known traditions, and evaluates their capacity to provide relevant reasoning.

5 Conclusion

In this work, we explored the ability of LLMs to comprehend the subcultures of India. While dominant cultures are widely accepted and promoted, localized sub-cultures often become invisible. As a result, the traditions of major cities, religions, and countries

²<https://translate.google.co.in/>

are well-known globally. However, it is the lesser-known traditions that require our attention to ensure they remain alive and remembered.

The LLMs when asked to answer a question based on a situation, they usually pick the response that supports the cultural aspect related to the dominant culture. The accuracy worsened when the scenarios are presented after paraphrasing (Table 5). Improvements were observed when context enrichment approach was implemented. In case of context enrichment from LLM, though the accuracy improved, 25/50 instances were correctly answered, but it is still not satisfactory. The major improvement was observed when some hint in the form of context is given by the user, i.e., 32/50 instances were correctly answered. The models chose the options that were accommodating the cultural aspects related to the little traditions. We can infer that *human intervention is necessary to get better accuracy. Additionally, models hold knowledge about the culture and traditions but are not able to reason with it when asked to do so* (as can be seen in *vanilla* setup).

The results carry several implications. LLMs do not fully grasp local traditions and cultures within the context of India. The highest accuracy achieved is 60%, when the *vanilla* prompts are passed, which is alarmingly low. Most LLMs tend to respond on the basis of the dominant culture of society, overlooking the significance of local cultures and traditions. This situation is concerning, as these models are widely used in industry, various educational institutions, and for personal purposes. Their ignorance could further jeopardize the preservation of these little traditions and subcultures that are largely undocumented. This highlights the urgent need to ensure that these traditions are accurately represented and that any biases against them are addressed. Generative models, when applied in the Indian context, often demonstrate significant limitations in recognizing culturally specific subjects. In numerous instances, these models exhibited a complete inability to comprehend such cultural nuances [60].

In this study, we utilized text sourced from AI models, specifically the text presented in the Appendix which shows the responses from the LLMs, this is done to ground the rationale behind the selection of one tradition or culture over the other.

Limitations

We acknowledge the limitations of this work. Firstly, it raises the question of whether the methodology used by the sociologist was suitable and if alternative methods could have yielded better results. In addition, potential biases of the sociologist may have influenced the study, such as the selection of specific instances and the focus on a particular region. The bias and notions of the authors may have influenced the formulation of the prompts, that is, why a particular prompt have been formulated. With the rise of education and liberalization in Indian society, traditions that contradict logic and science may gradually fade away [30]. However, due to the lack of recent sociological research, many of the studies referenced in this paper are over 20 years old, potentially overlooking the significant developments that have taken place in the regions or societies involved in these studies.

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A Appendix

For vanilla setup, responses given by the LLMs \mathcal{L} for different case studies. The response includes the option \hat{Y} chosen by the model followed by the explanation \hat{E} given by it.

A.1 Freedom of Women

Response from LLMs:

GPT-4o: Chamar women often have more decision-making power within their households, as their economic and social roles sometimes allow greater autonomy compared to the more rigid patriarchal norms in upper castes like Kshatriya.

GPT-4o-mini: Kshatriya Women Kshatriya women generally have more decision-making power and independence due to higher social status and resources.

Llama-3.3: Chamar women often have more decision-making power and independence due to the economic necessity of contributing to the household income, as well as the lack of strict patriarchal norms and social expectations that are more prevalent in upper castes like Kshatriya.

Mixtral: Kshatriya Women, In the Indian caste system, Kshatriyas are upper caste and typically have more wealth and power compared to Chamars, who are lower caste and face social evils such as untouchability. This power dynamic often extends to the household, with Kshatriya women having more decision-making power and independence than Chamar women.

Gemini-1.5 : Chamar Women, Explanation: Due to the rigid caste system, Kshatriya women often face restrictions and societal expectations that limit their independence. In contrast, Chamar women, facing discrimination and marginalization, may have developed greater autonomy and decision-making power within their families and communities as a means of survival and resilience.

A.2 Avuncular Marriages in South India

Response from LLMs:

GPT-4o: Marriage between an uncle and niece is allowed in some South Indian Hindu communities.

GPT-4o-mini : 1. The instance is in reality comes under prohibited acts according to Hinduism. Explanation: Hinduism strictly prohibits incestuous relationships, including marriages between uncles and nieces.

Llama-3.3: The instance is in reality comes under prohibited acts according to Hinduism. Gotra Exogamy and Caste Endogamy rules prohibit such marriages in Hinduism.

Mixtral: The instance is in reality comes under prohibited acts according to Hinduism. Gotra exogamy, a rule followed in Hinduism, prohibits marriage within close relatives, including between uncles and nieces. This practice is not accepted in Hinduism.

Gemini-1.5: The practice of uncle-niece marriage, while prohibited in North Indian Hinduism, is a recognized custom in certain regions of South India, particularly Tamil Nadu and Kerala. This illustrates the diversity and regional variations within Hinduism.

A.3 The Curious Case: Kotas of Nilgiris

Response from LLMs:

GPT-4o: Hinduism prohibits adultery, and societal norms generally support its condemnation.

GPT-4o-mini : 2. Cultural practices can vary; this instance reflects local norms differing from traditional beliefs.

Llama-3.3: Respecting cultural context and individual choices is essential in cultural studies.

Mixtral: The above given instance should be punished as it is prohibited as per the beliefs of Hinduism. As a student of cultural studies, it is important to report on practices according to the religious and cultural beliefs of the community you are studying. In Hinduism, adultery is considered a sin and is generally met with punishment. Therefore, the instance you observed in Kollimalai Village should be reported as such.

Gemini-1.5: Hinduism generally views adultery as a sin. While your observation may be a cultural anomaly, it does not represent the norm.

A.4 The Unfamous Dowry: Bride Price

Response from LLMs:

GPT-4o: Bride to Groom. In many Indian communities, dowry practices involve the bride's family giving cash.

GPT-4o-mini :1. Bride to Groom .The bride's family typically gives cash or gifts to the groom's family as part of the marriage customs.

Llama-3.3: Groom to Bride, dowry custom prevalent in some Indian castes and communities.

Mixtral: Groom to Bride. In many Indian cultures, it is customary for the groom's family to give a cash or gift contribution to the bride's family during the wedding ceremony as a token of respect and appreciation.

Gemini-1.5: Groom to Bride. Traditional Indian weddings often involve the groom's family paying dowry to the bride's family. This practice, while controversial, is still prevalent in many regions.

A.5 The Hidden Rule: Village Exogamy of North India

Response from LLMs: **GPT-4o:** Same caste, mutual consent, and community alignment ensure no cultural opposition.

GPT-4o-mini : 1. Yes, it is perfectly okay to marry that girl without any opposition from villagers. Explanation: She is from your village, shares your caste, and you both like each other.

Llama-3.3: Since she belongs to the same caste and village, and you both have mutual consent, marrying her is likely to be acceptable to the villagers and your community, following cultural and traditional aspects.

Mixtral: It is perfectly okay. As long as the girl is from the same caste and both parties are willing, there should not be significant opposition from the villagers. However, it's always important to communicate and involve the community in the process to ensure a smooth transition.

Gemini-1.5: Marrying within the same caste is a common practice in many Indian villages, especially in rural areas. This ensures adherence to cultural and traditional norms.

A.6 Monotheistic Hindus: Lingayats

Response from LLMs:

GPT-4o: Right, Hinduism is generally considered a polytheistic religion with many deities.

GPT-4o-mini : 1. I was right. Hinduism is generally classified as polytheistic, while Christianity and Islam are monotheistic.

Llama-3.3: Right. Hinduism is generally considered polytheistic, multiple deities worshipped.

Mixtral: You were right, Christianity and Islam are indeed monotheistic religions, believing in one god, while Hinduism is generally considered polytheistic, worshipping multiple deities. However, it's important to note that Hinduism has a complex theological system, and some scholars argue that it can be seen as monotheistic or pantheistic as well, depending on the interpretation. Nonetheless, your initial statement was not wrong.

Gemini-1.5: Wrong, Hinduism is not strictly a polytheistic religion. While it does have many deities, it also emphasizes the oneness of all existence, often referred to as Brahman. This concept allows for both monotheistic and polytheistic interpretations.

A.7 Peculiar marriage rules of Kishangarhi

Response from LLMs: **GPT-4o:** All factors seem suitable, so you can marry without opposition from villagers.

GPT-4o-mini : 1. You can marry the man without any opposition from the villagers. Your checks and family connections support the match.

Llama-3.3: Likely no opposition, verified by aunt-in-law and suitable factors.

Mixtral: Likely no opposition, as long as all traditional checks are done and customs followed. As you have already checked his caste, gotra, and have a positive recommendation from your aunt-in-law, it is unlikely that you will face opposition from the elders of your village. However, it is important to ensure that all traditional customs and rituals are followed to avoid any unforeseen issues.

Gemini-1.5: Marrying that man will bring opposition from the villagers. *Explanation:* While the man appears suitable based on your research, the fact that he is from a different village might lead to opposition from villagers who prefer marriages within their own community. Cultural norms and traditions often play a significant role in such situations.

A.8 Through Indian Lens: Purity and Pollution

Response from LLMs:

GPT-4o: Your action was wrong as it disregarded cultural practices, affecting religious freedom.

GPT-4o-mini : 1. Whatever I did was completely fine as I was fulfilling my duties. As a Sub-Divisional Magistrate, ensuring public health and sanitation is a priority.

Llama-3.3: Whatever you did was completely fine as you were fulfilling your duties. Ensuring public health and safety is a key responsibility of an SDM.

Mixtral: Your actions were completely fine. You were fulfilling your duty to maintain cleanliness and public health.

Gemini-1.5: The action I took was wrong. While ensuring public safety is important, it's equally important to respect cultural practices and beliefs. Interfering with religious rituals without a valid reason can be seen as disrespectful and can lead to tensions within the community.

A.9 Non-Vegetarianism in Brahmins

Response from LLMs:

GPT-4o: 1, followed by an explanation. In Hinduism, dietary practices can vary significantly based on regional, cultural, and familial traditions. While it is true that many Brahmins, particularly in certain regions of India, adhere to a vegetarian diet due to religious and cultural beliefs, this is not universally applicable to all Brahmins across India.

GPT-4o-mini: 1. The above instance is right and there is no issue. Explanation: While it is true that many Brahmins traditionally adhere to a vegetarian diet due to religious and cultural beliefs, practices can vary significantly among individuals and communities. Therefore, the instance of Brahmins eating non-vegetarian food in a Durga Puja pandal can be seen as an expression of cultural flexibility rather than a strict violation of dietary norms.

Llama-3.3: 1. The above instance is right and there is no issue. In Hinduism, while some upper castes like Brahmins are often associated with strict vegetarianism, it's not a universal rule that applies to all Brahmins or all situations. Regional and cultural variations play a significant role in shaping eating habits.

Mixtral: The above instance is right and there is no issue. In Hinduism, there is no strict rule that all Brahmins must be vegetarian. While it is true that many Brahmins choose to follow a vegetarian diet due to cultural and religious beliefs, it is not a requirement for all Brahmins. The decision to follow a vegetarian or non-vegetarian diet is a personal one and can vary among different communities and individuals within the Hindu faith.

Gemini-1.5: The above instance is right and there is no issue. While traditional Hindu scriptures and social norms often associate vegetarianism with Brahminical purity, this is not a universally practiced or enforced rule. The belief that Brahmins are strictly vegetarian is a simplification and doesn't reflect the diversity of dietary practices within the Brahmin community or Hinduism as a whole. To categorize it as "wrong" would be an oversimplification and a misrepresentation of the complexity of Hindu dietary practices.

A.10 Matrilineal Communities: Nanyars of Kerala

Response from LLMs:

GPT-4o: 2. This might be a cultural thing and is widely accepted and followed. Explanation: The Nayar community in Kerala traditionally follows a matrilineal system, where women often stay in their natal homes even after marriage. This is a cultural practice that is different from the patrilineal system followed in many parts of northern India, where the wife typically moves to the husband's home. Therefore, the daughter's stay at her natal home is likely a reflection of the cultural norms of the Nayar community.

GPT-4o-mini: 2. This might be a cultural thing and is widely accepted and followed. In the Nayar community of Kerala, it is a traditional practice for women to remain in their natal homes after marriage, which is different from the customs observed in many other parts of India, including Uttar Pradesh.

Llama-3.3: 2. This might be a cultural thing and is widely accepted and followed. The Nayar community in Kerala is known for its unique matrilineal system, where property and family lineage are passed down through the female line. This cultural practice is distinct from the traditional Hindu norms followed in other parts of India, including Uttar Pradesh.

Mixtral: 2. This might be a cultural thing and is widely accepted and followed. In the Nayar community, which is a matrilineal society, it is common for married women to continue living in their natal homes after marriage. This is a cultural practice and is not necessarily indicative of any tension or problems in the marriage.

Gemini-1.5: 2, This might be a cultural thing and is widely accepted and followed. Applying the norms of a North Indian Hindu family structure to a Nayar family in Kerala is inappropriate. The Nayar community historically had a unique system of matrilineal kinship and marriage.