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CALL FOR PAPERS

The *NSOU Journal of Social Sciences* (Volume 6, No. 1) December 2025 invites submissions of original research papers. This double-blind peer-reviewed online journal (ISSN: 2581-5512) is published by the School of Social Sciences, Netaji Subhas Open University, West Bengal, India.

Theme:

Identity, Governance, and Civic Unrest: Legacies, Contemporary Challenges, and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Concept Note

Identity, Governance, and Civic Unrest: Legacies, Contemporary Challenges, and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

The twenty-first century has witnessed profound transformations in the ways societies negotiate identity, exercise political authority, and articulate demands for justice and democratic participation. Globalization, technological innovation, migration, economic restructuring, environmental crises, and rapid digitalization have significantly reshaped the relationships among individuals, communities, and the state. Simultaneously, the resurgence of identity politics, democratic backsliding, political polarization, civic mobilization, and contestations over citizenship have positioned identity, governance, and civic unrest at the forefront of contemporary social science scholarship. These interconnected developments extend beyond political processes to encompass broader historical, social, cultural, economic, and institutional transformations that call for sustained interdisciplinary inquiry.

Identity is increasingly understood as a dynamic, multidimensional, and socially constructed phenomenon shaped by history, culture, religion, language, ethnicity, caste, class, gender, nationality, and region. Echoing Benedict Anderson's influential conception of nations as

imagined communities, contemporary scholarship recognizes that identities are continuously produced, negotiated, and redefined through institutions, public discourse, and everyday social interactions rather than existing as fixed or immutable categories. These evolving identities profoundly influence citizenship, political participation, inclusion, and belonging. While identity can serve as a powerful source of social cohesion and democratic engagement, it may also become a basis for exclusion, polarization, and conflict when mobilized for partisan or exclusionary political purposes.

Governance, likewise, has evolved far beyond the formal institutions of the state. Contemporary governance encompasses the complex interactions among governments, civil society, markets, international organizations, and citizens. Drawing upon Michel Foucault's understanding of power as operating through institutions, knowledge, and everyday practices, governance may be viewed not merely as the exercise of sovereign authority but as a network of power relations that shapes public life and social order. Effective governance increasingly depends upon transparency, accountability, participation, responsiveness, and institutional legitimacy. Yet democratic and non-democratic regimes alike continue to confront challenges arising from political polarization, declining public trust, institutional fragility, and growing demands for inclusive and equitable governance.

Civic unrest constitutes one of the most visible expressions of the evolving relationship between citizens and political authority. Rather than being viewed solely through the lens of disorder or violence, it is increasingly recognized as an important manifestation of democratic participation and collective action. Charles Tilly's concept of *contentious politics* provides an important framework for understanding how protests, social movements, civil disobedience, digital campaigns, and community mobilizations emerge as legitimate forms of political engagement when institutional mechanisms fail to address citizens' aspirations and grievances. Historically, such collective actions have contributed significantly to democratization, constitutional reforms, the expansion of civil rights, and broader processes of social transformation.

Historical perspectives remain indispensable for understanding these contemporary developments. Colonialism profoundly reshaped political institutions, administrative structures, territorial boundaries, and social identities, leaving enduring legacies that continue to influence postcolonial governance, citizenship, and identity politics. Anti-colonial struggles, nationalist movements, decolonization, and constitutional development have significantly shaped modern conceptions of statehood, democracy, collective memory, and political participation. These historical experiences continue to inform contemporary debates surrounding governance, social justice, minority rights, regional autonomy, and civic resistance across many societies.

Globalization has further complicated conventional understandings of identity and governance by intensifying the transnational movement of people, capital, information, technology, and ideas. Migration, displacement, multiculturalism, and transnational networks have transformed the politics of belonging, citizenship, and national identity, raising important questions concerning social cohesion, inclusion, democratic governance, and public policy. The growing interconnectedness of societies has simultaneously generated new opportunities for cooperation and new forms of inequality, insecurity, and political contestation.

The rapid expansion of digital technologies, social media, and artificial intelligence has fundamentally transformed political communication, governance, and civic engagement. Manuel Castells' influential concept of the *network society* highlights how digitally connected networks have reshaped political participation, collective action, and the dissemination of information across national boundaries. While digital platforms have expanded opportunities for democratic deliberation, civic mobilization, and public participation, they have also facilitated misinformation, hate speech, algorithmic bias, surveillance, and political

polarization. These developments call for a critical examination of the ethical, institutional, and democratic implications of emerging technologies.

Questions of citizenship, constitutionalism, human rights, and social justice have acquired renewed significance amid widening socio-economic inequalities, identity-based discrimination, and increasing demands for inclusive governance. T. H. Marshall's influential framework of civil, political, and social citizenship continues to provide a valuable lens for understanding contemporary debates on rights, equality, inclusion, and democratic participation. Simultaneously, environmental sustainability and climate governance have emerged as integral dimensions of public policy, democratic accountability, and social justice in the twenty-first century.

The South Asian region offers a particularly rich context for examining these issues. Its diverse historical experiences of colonialism, partition, nation-building, democratic transition, identity-based mobilization, migration, constitutional change, and civic movements provide valuable insights into the evolving relationships among identity, governance, and public participation. Comparative studies from South Asia and other regions can significantly enrich contemporary social science scholarship by illuminating both shared historical trajectories and context-specific political experiences.

Understanding these complex and interconnected processes requires an interdisciplinary approach. Political Science, History, Sociology, Public Administration, Law, Anthropology, Economics, Development Studies, Gender Studies, Media and Communication Studies, International Relations, Environmental Studies, and other allied disciplines each contribute valuable theoretical and methodological perspectives for analysing the intersections of identity, governance, and civic unrest. Such interdisciplinary engagement is essential for advancing nuanced understandings of democratic resilience, institutional transformation, citizenship, public policy, and social change.

This issue of the **NSOU Journal of Social Sciences** invites original research articles, review papers, theoretical essays, and case studies that critically engage with these themes from historical, empirical, comparative, conceptual, and policy-oriented perspectives. By fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and encouraging diverse methodological approaches, the journal seeks to deepen scholarly understanding of the evolving relationships among identity, governance, and civic unrest while contributing meaningfully to contemporary debates on democracy, citizenship, constitutionalism, social justice, public policy, and inclusive governance in an increasingly interconnected world.

Objectives of This Issue

- The issue, **"Identity, Governance, and Civic Unrest: Legacies, Contemporary Challenges, and Interdisciplinary Perspectives,"** seeks to provide a scholarly platform for critical engagement with the complex and evolving relationships among identity, governance, and civic action across historical and contemporary contexts. By bringing together diverse disciplinary perspectives, the issue aims to deepen our understanding of the political, social, historical, cultural, and institutional processes that shape contemporary societies.

The specific objectives of this issue are to:

- Examine the changing nature of identity and its intersections with citizenship, belonging, culture, gender, ethnicity, religion, migration, and nationalism in diverse historical and contemporary contexts.

- Explore the evolving dynamics of governance by analysing democratic institutions, public policy, constitutionalism, accountability, legitimacy, and state–society relations in both democratic and non-democratic settings.
- Investigate the historical and contemporary dimensions of civic unrest, protest, and collective action, examining their causes, trajectories, outcomes, and implications for democratic governance and social transformation.
- Analyse the historical legacies of colonialism, state formation, decolonization, and political institution-building, and their continuing influence on identity formation, governance, citizenship, and civic engagement.
- Encourage interdisciplinary dialogue by integrating theoretical and empirical perspectives from Political Science, History, Sociology, Public Administration, Law, Anthropology, Economics, Development Studies, Gender Studies, Media and Communication Studies, and other related disciplines.
- Examine the impact of globalization, migration, digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and social media on identity construction, political participation, governance, and civic mobilization.
- Promote comparative and cross-regional scholarship, with particular attention to South Asia while encouraging contributions that offer broader global and comparative perspectives.
- Advance research on democracy, constitutionalism, human rights, social justice, inclusion, and sustainable governance, highlighting their significance for addressing contemporary societal challenges.
- Bridge historical scholarship with contemporary policy debates by encouraging research that connects historical experiences with present-day governance challenges, democratic resilience, conflict resolution, and public policy.
- Foster innovative, evidence-based, and policy-relevant research that contributes to scholarly debates and offers meaningful insights for policymakers, practitioners, civil society organizations, and academic communities engaged in promoting inclusive, participatory, and democratic societies.
- Through these objectives, the issue aims to stimulate critical reflection and interdisciplinary scholarship on one of the defining concerns of contemporary social sciences, while encouraging fresh theoretical insights, comparative analyses, and empirically grounded research that contribute to both academic discourse and public policy.
- This version is more formal, academically rigorous, and aligned with the style of Scopus-indexed and international social science journals. It clearly communicates the intellectual goals of the issue while emphasizing interdisciplinarity, historical depth, comparative analysis, and policy relevance.

Research Questions

This issue seeks to advance critical and interdisciplinary scholarship on the complex relationships among identity, governance, and civic unrest across diverse historical and contemporary contexts. While the issue welcomes contributions beyond the following areas, prospective authors are encouraged to address one or more of the following indicative research questions:

1. How do identities based on ethnicity, religion, caste, class, gender, language, nationality, or region shape political participation, citizenship, and democratic engagement?
2. How have historical processes such as colonialism, decolonization, state formation, and nation-building influenced contemporary governance, identity politics, and civic unrest?
3. In what ways do governance structures, public institutions, and policy frameworks influence democratic legitimacy, accountability, and social cohesion?
4. What political, economic, social, and cultural factors contribute to civic unrest, protest movements, and collective action in different historical and contemporary settings?
5. How do constitutionalism, human rights, and the rule of law promote inclusive governance, democratic resilience, and social justice?
6. How do migration, displacement, border politics, and transnational mobility reshape identity, citizenship, belonging, and state–society relations?
7. What role do historical memory, collective remembrance, and cultural heritage play in constructing identities, shaping political narratives, and influencing civic mobilization?
8. How do globalization, economic inequalities, and social transformations redefine governance, citizenship, and political participation?
9. How have digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and social media transformed political communication, civic engagement, public opinion, and protest movements?
10. What explains democratic resilience or democratic decline in the face of political polarization, populism, institutional crises, and social conflict?
11. How have social movements, popular resistance, anti-colonial struggles, and freedom movements contributed to political transformation, democratic development, and social change?
12. What insights can comparative and interdisciplinary approaches offer for understanding the changing relationships among identity, governance, and civic unrest across different regions and societies?
13. How do environmental crises, climate justice, and sustainable governance reshape contemporary debates on citizenship, public participation, and social justice?
14. What lessons can historical experiences of conflict, peacebuilding, reconciliation, and transitional justice provide for addressing present-day governance challenges and strengthening democratic institutions?
15. How can interdisciplinary and policy-oriented research contribute to developing more inclusive, participatory, equitable, and resilient systems of governance in an increasingly interconnected world?

Sub-themes

I. Identity, Citizenship, and Social Inclusion

- Identity, Citizenship, and Belonging
- Identity Politics and Democratic Governance

- Migration, Displacement, and Identity Formation
- Gender, Diversity, and Inclusive Citizenship
- Religion, Secularism, and Communal Relations
- Historical Memory, Heritage, and Identity Politics

II. Governance, Democracy, and Political Institutions

- Governance, Public Policy, and Accountability
- Democracy, Political Institutions, and Public Participation
- Human Rights, Constitutionalism, and Social Justice
- Political Polarization and Democratic Resilience
- Environmental Justice and Sustainable Governance
- Media, Digital Technologies, and Civic Engagement

III. Civic Unrest, Social Movements, and Collective Action

- Civic Unrest, Protest, and Social Movements
- Popular Resistance, Anti-Colonial Struggles, and Freedom Movements
- Conflict, Peacebuilding, and Reconciliation
- Youth, Education, and Democratic Citizenship

IV. Historical Perspectives on Identity, Governance, and Society

- State Formation, Colonialism, and Decolonization
- Historical Evolution of Political Institutions and Governance
- Historical Legacies of Governance and Civic Unrest
- Partition, Borders, and Nation-Building
- Peasant, Tribal, and Labour Movements in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

V. Comparative and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

- Comparative and Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Identity, Governance, and Civic Unrest
- Comparative Studies of Governance, Democracy, and Political Institutions
- Regional and Global Perspectives on Identity and Civic Participation
- Interdisciplinary Approaches to Society, State, and Collective Action

Paper submission

- ✓ The title of the research paper should be bold, centred and typed in capital letters in a 14-point Times New Roman Font.
- ✓ The author(s) details i.e. full name, designation, name of the organization, city, pin, state country e-mail ID, contact details i.e. mobile/landline phone numbers, in 11-point Times New Roman should be centred below the title.
- ✓ Abstract including keywords must not exceed 250-300 words, 12 Times New Roman, double-spaced. It should be in fully justified and italicized text. It should highlight research background, methodology, major finding(s) and conclusion in brief.
- ✓ Authors must mention 6-8 keywords. Key words should be listed alphabetically separated by commas and full stop at the end.
- ✓ The research paper should be written in 5000-7000 words, 12Times New Roman, double-spaced
- ✓ **Citation style:** APA 6th Edition
- ✓ **Language:** Only English

Language

- **Language and Editorial Style**
- The Call for Papers adopts a more scholarly, internationally oriented, and interdisciplinary style that aligns with contemporary academic publishing standards. The language has been refined to enhance conceptual clarity, academic precision, and readability while appealing to a broad community of researchers across the social sciences.

The CFP is designed to:

- Present a clear and intellectually coherent rationale for the issue.
- Employ internationally accepted academic terminology and conceptual frameworks.
- Emphasize interdisciplinary dialogue and comparative scholarship.
- Integrate historical, theoretical, empirical, and policy-oriented perspectives.
- Encourage submissions from both established and emerging scholars across diverse geographical and disciplinary contexts.
- Promote research that advances theoretical innovation, methodological rigor, and evidence-based policy discourse.
- Enhance the international visibility and scholarly impact of the **NSOU Journal of Social Sciences** by attracting high-quality contributions from India and abroad.
- The editorial style has been carefully revised to ensure that the Call for Papers is:
- **Scholarly** in tone and grounded in contemporary social science discourse.
- **Internationally oriented**, inviting contributions from diverse regional and global contexts.

- **Interdisciplinary**, fostering dialogue among Political Science, History, Sociology, Public Administration, Law, Anthropology, Economics, Gender Studies, Development Studies, Media and Communication Studies, and related disciplines.
- **Conceptually rigorous**, with clearly articulated themes, objectives, and research questions.
- **Concise and coherent**, avoiding repetition while maintaining intellectual depth.
- **Professional and polished**, reflecting the standards expected of reputable peer-reviewed academic journals.
- **Accessible to a global academic audience**, ensuring clarity without sacrificing analytical sophistication.
- **Suitable for indexing and wider scholarly dissemination**, consistent with the expectations of internationally recognized abstracting and indexing services.

Important Dates

- **Last date for full paper submission: 30th September, 2026.**
- The full papers should be mailed to:
njss@wbnsou.ac.in

General Instruction for the Authors:

- **Plagiarism must be checked in accordance with the UGC regulations. The similarity index of the submitted manuscript should not exceed 10%. A plagiarism report must be attached with the soft copy of the full paper.**
- The Editorial Board will publish all the selected papers in the Journal (with ISSN: 2581 5512). The Editorial Board will reserve the right to accept/reject any paper for publication.
- The paper may be rejected at any stage by the team of the Reviewers after blind paper review.
- The author must be ready to make all the necessary revisions if suggested by the Reviewers.
- Once the paper is accepted, the authors must complete the work of proof checking very carefully and on an urgent basis immediately after they receive the processed manuscripts.
- Referencing must be done following strictly the citation style. Any aberration from the standard framework will not be allowed.
- The author declaration form to be duly signed and submitted along with the final paper.
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- **The Journal is committed to publishing original, high-quality, peer-reviewed research of the highest academic standards. No fee is required for either manuscript submission or publication.**

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