



CALL FOR PAPERS

Annual Academic Conference 2025
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Madras
15th -17th March 2025



Deadline
7th Jan, 11.50pm



Submission Link
<https://forms.gle/13BdNX7d87eB5qg16>



For Queries



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In an increasingly interconnected and volatile world, the confluence of risk, precarity, and vulnerability has become central to understanding the shifting dynamics of power, survival, and identity. Precarity has become increasingly prevalent in both individual and collective lives as a result of global and local events, thereby intensifying the state of risk and vulnerability for many. These concepts form a complex web, perpetuating a cycle of fragility that influences futures on both personal and societal levels. Importantly, they cannot be viewed entirely in isolation, as they intricately weave into the fabric of everyday life, affecting individuals, communities, and institutions alike.

Risk, for instance, can be understood as the likelihood of sustaining harm or adverse consequences from an action or phenomenon conceived by studying historical processes and projecting potential dangers. In today's world, where institutions and problems are analyzed in a multi-faceted manner, examining risks—how they are created and their broader implications—has become crucial. Scholars like Ulrich Beck have explored risk as a future-oriented concept, tied to present movements such as modernization, particularly within postcolonial contexts. In this framework, risk evaluation is key for policy-making and literature generation across fields like sustainability, development, population studies, and economics, where it is quantified in relation to systemic risks, power, agency, and ecocritical concerns.

Moving from risk to precarity, the latter is defined by a lack of predictability, security, and welfare, often tied to temporary, flexible working conditions in post-industrial societies. In Marxist scholarship, the "precariat" refers to a social class with no job security or prospects of stable employment. Precarity also reflects collective perceptions and behaviors arising from uncertainties like economic insecurity or embedded socio-cultural processes. It spans across disciplines, from economics and development studies to public policy, where labour precarity is a growing concern for future policy. Scholars like Judith Butler have emphasized how precariousness is inherent to human life, with degrees of precarity shaped by social factors like gender and class, intersecting with vulnerability and marginality in demographic and urban studies.

Vulnerability encompasses physical, emotional, social, and epistemic dimensions that intersect with cultural, political, and societal structures. It is not only individual but deeply interwoven into broader social dynamics. Scholars like Judith Butler and Martha Fineman have significantly contributed to this discourse. In *Precarious Life* (2004), Butler argues that vulnerability is an inherent aspect of being human, emphasizing interdependence and shared susceptibility to harm. She reframes vulnerability as a site of ethical potentiality rather than weakness. Similarly, Martha Fineman, in *The Vulnerable Subject* (2008), critiques legal frameworks that prioritize autonomy, advocating for systems that acknowledge universal vulnerability to ensure equitable access to resources. In a postcolonial context, Pramod Nayar's work explores vulnerability through biopolitics, emphasizing how systemic inequalities disproportionately affect marginalized populations.

The intersection of risk and precarity ultimately contributes to the formation of vulnerable identities, shaped by causes like economic instability, cultural marginalization, geopolitical threats, and ecological crises. Understanding the functioning of these concepts together allows for a deeper investigation into how states of risk, precarity, and vulnerability are navigated, both in individual and collective contexts. This conference aims to explore not only the conditions that produce risk and precarity but also the unique forms of resistance, resilience, and solidarity that emerge from within vulnerable identities. Through this exploration, we seek to understand how individuals and communities navigate the complex, interwoven dynamics of risk, precarity, and vulnerability, ultimately shaping both present and future responses to these challenges.

This conference invites scholarly engagement from a broad spectrum of disciplines within the purview of the Humanities and Social Sciences, encouraging critical reflection on the following sub-themes, though not limited to them:

- **Precarious Labour and Economic Instability:** Job Insecurity, Informal Sector, MSMEs, Labour Devaluation, Occupational Health Risks, Economic Inequality, Wage Suppression, Class Stratification, Employment Rights, Workforce Flexibility.
- **Agriculture and Vulnerability:** Agrarian Distress, Distress Migration, Climate Vulnerability, Debt Trap, Subsistence Farming, Crop Insurance Penetration, Informal Economy Absorption, Price Volatility, Food Insecurity, Rural Poverty, Seasonal Unemployment, Smallholder Insecurity, Agricultural Dependency.
- **Risk Society and Globalization:** Risk Society, Cultural Homogenization, Transnational Movements, Global Supply Chains, Brain Drain, Loss of Local Industries, Dumping and Anti-dumping, Identity Hybridization and Erosion, Resource Depletion.
- **Health, Pandemic, and Social Vulnerability:** Epidemiological Risk, Social Health Determinants, Pandemic Response, Healthcare Accessibility, Public Health Ethics, Structural Vulnerability, Community Resilience and Coping Mechanisms.
- **Gender, Disability, and Vulnerability:** Intersectionality, Structural Oppression, Social Stigmatization, Ableism, Accessibility Barriers, Gender-based Violence, Gender Fluidity, Care Economy, Advocacy and Activism, Feminization of Labour, Pink Economy, Rainbow Capitalism, Queer Theory, Gender and Disability Studies, Psychosocial Marginalization, Social Isolation, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion [DEI].
- **Race and Vulnerability:** Critical Race Theory, Systemic Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, Colonial Legacy and Postcolonial Identity, Decoloniality, Subalternity, Ethnic Minorities, Cultural Alienation, Social Hierarchy, Anti-racist Praxis.

- **Precarity and Memory:** Precarious Memory, Cultural Memory, Collective Memory, Traumatic Memory, Transgenerational Memory, Postmemory, Mnemonic Insecurity, Affect Theory, Psychological Vulnerability, Cultural Amnesia.
- **Kinship and Risk:** Familial Obligation and Dependency, Generational Hierarchies, Intergenerational Conflict, Gendered Kinship Roles and Expectations, Economic Burden, Transgenerational Trauma, Kinship Ethics.
- **Commodification of Bodies:** Child Labour, Forced Labour, Surrogate Labour, Body Capital, Human Trafficking, Biopolitical Exploitation, Exploitative Markets, Ethical Consumption.
- **Digital and Posthuman Precarity:** Data Privacy and Breach, Algorithmic Bias, Cyberbullying and Cyber Crimes, Cyborg Identity, Identity Fragmentation, Human-Machine Interaction, AI-assisted Technologies, Cyber Ethics, Digital Necromancy, Automated Labour.
- **Urban Marginality:** Social Exclusion and Displacement, Urban Informality, Socio-spatial Segregation, Gentrification, Ghettoization, Inaccessibility of Resources, Housing Policies, Infrastructural Insecurity.
- **Migration, Displacement and Precarity:** Forced Migration, Refugee Rights, Humanitarian Crises, Geopolitical Conflict, Border Politics, Statelessness, Socio-economic Displacement, Identity Discontinuity.
- **Biopolitical Risk and Vulnerability:** Biopolitical Control, State Surveillance, Institutional Exclusion, Population Management, Health Governance, Necropolitics.
- **Risk and Economic Displacement:** Mass Labour Migration, Welfare Monetization, Economic Refugees and Migrants, Livelihood Vulnerability, Economic Dispossession, Community Displacement, Livelihood Recovery, Disaster Resilience.

- **Risk and Precarious Markets:** Market Fragility, Financial Volatility, Liquidity Risk, Operational Risk, Economic Deregulation, Risk Modeling, Financial Exclusion, Credit Vulnerability.
- **Vulnerability in the Age of Disinformation:** Media Literacy, Disinformation and Misinformation, Echo Chambers, Fake News, Digital Divide, Information Overload, Narrative Framing, Cognitive Dissonance, Fact Checking, Public Discourse, Propaganda, Identity Politics, Disruption of Civic Engagement.
- **Embodied Vulnerability:** Body Image, Body Dysmorphia, Embodied Gender Identity, Body Positivity, Body Neutrality, Fat Studies, Health Normativity, Health At Every Size (HAES), Cultural Body Ideals, Aesthetic Labour, Eating Disorders.
- **Environmental Justice and Vulnerability:** Ecoprecarity, Slow Violence, Climate-induced Displacement, Environmental Dispossession, Eco-anxiety, Anthropocene Risks, Vulnerable Ecologies, Ecofeminism, Extractivism, Environmental Racism, Sacrifice Zones, Fenceline Communities, Ecological Citizenship.
- **Vulnerability in Literature, Media, and Culture:** Representation Ethics, Cultural Trauma, Media Spectacle, Testimonial Literature, Discursive Power, Symbolic Violence, Affective Labour, Emotional Capital, Cultural Hegemony, Media Bias, Subaltern Narratives, Cultural Commodification, Counter-Hegemonic Discourse, Resilience Narratives.
- **Language Vulnerability and Cultural Preservation:** Linguistic Minority, Language Vitality, Language Loss, Language Shift and Maintenance, Language Planning and Policies, Linguistic Chauvinism, Decolonization of Languages, Glottopolitics.