



## **Empowering Nyishi Women: Weaving as a Tool for Cultural Preservation, Financial Autonomy and Reclaiming Identity**

**Tabia Massum**

Masters in Gender studies, Amity Institute of Social Sciences, Amity University Noida, Uttar Pradesh

**Dr. Shruti Singh**

Professor, Amity Institute of Social Sciences, Amity University Noida, Uttar Pradesh

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### **ABSTRACT**

For Nyishi women in Arunachal Pradesh, weaving is more than just a craft; it is a significant aspect of their self-expression, cultural identity, and economic independence. With intricate designs that symbolise social status and community identity, Nyishi weaving is deeply ingrained in tradition and reflects the tribe's history, beliefs, and aesthetic values. In addition to its cultural significance, weaving gives women economic empowerment by enabling them to support their families and gain independence in a patriarchal society. Because women take pride in their work and preserve traditional knowledge while adjusting to contemporary demands, the technique fosters self-identity. However, the tradition's long-term survival is threatened by problems like waning interest among younger generations, competition from mass-produced textiles, and limited market access. This article explores methods for revitalising and maintaining this invaluable tradition as well as how weaving increases Nyishi women's sense of cultural pride, financial independence, and self-worth. By promoting indigenous artists and creating venues for traditional textiles in contemporary markets, Nyishi weaving can be brought back to life, improving the well-being of both



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individuals and communities and guaranteeing the survival of this art form for upcoming generations.

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## INTRODUCTION

Arunachal Pradesh, India's northeastern frontier, has vast cultural diversity, rich traditions, and thriving Indigenous people. More than 26 major tribes and more than 100 sub-tribes, each with its unique language, rituals, and traditions, call this state, which is tucked away in the Himalayan range and borders China, Bhutan, and Myanmar, home. Despite outside influences, these tribes have maintained their distinctive ways of life for generations by living in relative isolation. In Arunachal Pradesh, the Nyishi tribe is one of the biggest and most important of the state's many indigenous groups. The center and western regions of Arunachal Pradesh, especially the districts of Keyi Panyor, Papum Pare, and Kurung Kumey, are home to most of the Nyishi population. The Nyishi tribe has made major contributions to the social, political, and cultural fabric of the area. It is well-known for its tenacity, rich cultural legacy, and close-knit community. The Nyishi people have long had a close relationship with the land and the natural world. They practice agriculture and animal husbandry, placing a high value on sustainability and independence. Nyishi women have a crucial role in the community, particularly in maintaining traditional customs and culture. The ability of Nyishi women to weave, an age-old craft that has been handed down through the centuries, is one of the most important facets of their cultural heritage. Weaving is a way to express creativity, spirituality, and cultural identity in addition to being a craft. Weaving is more than just a useful craft for Nyishi women; it is a representation of their culture and a fundamental component of the formation of their social and cultural identities. The elaborate designs and vivid hues of the traditional textiles they produce, frequently with materials that are acquired locally, tell tales of their forebears and capture the distinctive customs of the Nyishi tribe. Beyond its cultural importance, weaving is essential to Nyishi women's financial independence. Weaving offers a significant revenue stream, enabling women to achieve financial independence in a society where women have historically been responsible for taking care of the home and cultural duties. Nyishi women now have more options to engage with the local and regional economy because of the commercialization of their woven goods, which include things like shawls, bags, and traditional clothing. In addition to improving their financial situation, weaving empowers them and strengthens their place in the family and community, granting them autonomy and dignity. As both local and international markets have



changed in recent years, Nyishi women have discovered more and more ways to sell their woven goods, frequently through self-help organizations and cooperatives. In a world that is changing quickly, this movement has given people the opportunity to regain both their identity and economic independence. Thus, weaving has developed into a vehicle for both financial empowerment and cultural preservation, enabling Nyishi women to act as guardians of their culture while also establishing new avenues for their economic involvement in society at large. This study demonstrates how weaving has evolved into a crucial component of the narrative of Nyishi women's empowerment by examining its dual function as a means of financial independence and cultural preservation. It offers a prism through which to view how tradition and modernity converge, with weaving acting as a link between communities, generations, and economic environments. The tale of Nyishi women and their relationship to weaving is a monument to the timeless value of traditional customs in promoting fortitude, solidarity, and self-determination as Arunachal Pradesh develops.

### **The Interplay of Gender and Tradition: Understanding the Role of Weaving in Empowering Nyishi Women for Cultural and Economic Autonomy.**

The Nyishi community in Arunachal Pradesh is the subject of this study, which focuses on the important connection between gender roles and cultural activities, especially the way that weaving is linked to women's empowerment. An essential part of preserving Nyishi women's cultural legacy is weaving, a craft that is typically taught from mother to daughter. But it also plays a vital role in promoting women's financial independence. Recognizing how this practice influences women's responsibilities in their homes, communities, and the larger socioeconomic environment requires an understanding of how gender interacts with it. Weaving is one of the most significant cultural expressions, and women have historically been the keepers of cultural activities in the Nyishi culture and many other indigenous societies. Because they oversee making the elaborately woven clothing, shawls, and other objects that are emblematic of Nyishi women's identity, women are at the center of cultural preservation because of this gendered division of labour. The history, customs, and rituals of the tribe are represented by these textiles, which are more than just useful objects. Therefore, weaving is not only a commercial endeavour but also a significant cultural obligation that women are proud to uphold. By doing this, Nyishi women demonstrate their responsibility as guardians of cultural heritage and guarantee that their customs are upheld and passed down through generations. Gender plays a crucial role in this process since weaving skills are specifically passed down in environments where women predominate. Weaving is taught to the next generation of Nyishi women by their mothers and grandmothers, strengthening the ties that bind



women and ensuring the survival of traditional customs. As a result, weaving turns into a crucial tool for identity development and socialization, teaching young women the value of preserving their culture in addition to talent. This also emphasizes how gendered cultural preservation is, with women leading the charge to preserve traditions due to their major position as carers and cultural transmitters. But it's important to recognize that weaving is a practice that faces difficulties in the contemporary day as well. Mass-produced commodities have the potential to eclipse traditional crafts like weaving as globalization brings forth new economic dynamics. Furthermore, weaving might not be as attractive or profitable to younger generations of women as it was for their ancestors due to the availability of new educational and professional alternatives. The generational transfer of weaving knowledge and abilities may be impacted by this change in interests. Notwithstanding these obstacles, Nyishi women's continued importance in weaving demonstrates the adaptability of gendered cultural practices, as they continue to modify the trade to fit shifting conditions while maintaining its cultural and financial value. In conclusion, the way that gender and tradition interact in Nyishi women's weaving is a potent illustration of how cultural customs can be used as a tool for resistance against conventional gender norms as well as for empowerment. Nyishi women acquire social respect and economic freedom while preserving their traditional legacy via weaving. Weaving's dual function as a cultural and economic instrument emphasizes how gender plays a crucial part in forming Nyishi women's lives and their ability to impact both their local communities and larger socioeconomic systems. To advance gender equality and preserve the rich cultural legacy of the Nyishi community, it is essential to comprehend how gender, tradition, and empowerment relate to weaving.

## OBJECTIVES

- to investigate the cultural relevance of weaving among Nyishi women and its function in tribal identity preservation.
- Investigate the economic impact of weaving as a means of financial independence for Nyishi women.
- Investigate weaving as a means of self-expression and its impact on personal and collective identity.
- Determine the challenges faced by Nyishi women weavers, including market competition and waning youth interest.
- to make suggestions for how Nyishi weaving can be developed and preserved while retaining its traditional qualities and remaining relevant in contemporary markets.



## METHODOLOGY

The Nyishi people of Arunachal Pradesh places great socio-cultural and economic value on weaving, which has long been an integral component of the cultural history of the indigenous communities in Northeast India. Through generational knowledge transfer, mostly among women, the Nyishi, one of the state's largest tribal groups, have maintained their traditional weaving techniques. In addition to being a useful art for the home, weaving contributes to social identity, financial stability, and cultural preservation. Using only secondary data, this study aims to investigate the complex interaction between Nyishi women and weaving. The research heavily depends on published sources, such as academic studies, ethnographic research, government reports, NGO publications, and digital archives, rather than on direct fieldwork or primary data collecting. The research attempts to give a thorough grasp of the historical development of weaving traditions, their socioeconomic significance, and the difficulties Nyishi women encounter in maintaining this cultural activity by utilising these well-established sources.

### Ethical Considerations:

Credibility, dependability, and appropriate attribution are the main ethical considerations because the research is dependent on secondary data. The following actions are done to protect academic integrity:

1. Ensuring the Credibility of Sources: Relying solely on official reports, peer-reviewed studies, and respectable publications.
2. Appropriate Citation and Attribution: To prevent plagiarism, all data and idea sources are properly cited.
3. Respect for Indigenous Knowledge: Without exploitation or deception, the study recognises the contributions made by Nyishi women to the art. These ethical protections guarantee that the study is conducted responsibly, transparently, and with respect.

## LIMITATIONS

Although the study benefits greatly from the use of secondary data analysis as its main methodology, there are a few drawbacks to this strategy that should be considered:



### **Lack of Contextual Depth and Personal Insight**

The contextual, personal, and nuanced information that can be obtained from primary sources such as surveys or interviews is frequently absent from secondary data. Understanding the personal narratives, life experiences, and daily lives of women who weave could offer a deeper understanding of their empowerment and difficulties while researching a group such as the Nyishi. By its very nature, secondary data is frequently generalized and might not fully convey the complexities of individual experiences. This dearth of comprehensive, first-hand data might make it more difficult for the study to thoroughly examine how weaving affects specific Nyishi women, their sentimental attachment to the art form, or the difficulties they encounter in their community.

### **Outdated or Incomplete Data**

Secondary data may be out-of-date or lacking, especially in government reports, scholarly journals, and NGO publications. The most recent developments in technology, local or international markets, and socioeconomic conditions that affect Nyishi women and their weaving customs may not be reflected in studies done years ago. Furthermore, secondary data frequently fails to present a complete or current picture of the situation on the ground. The contemporary socio-economic situations may be distorted or inaccurately represented as a result, making it challenging to make conclusions that accurately reflect Nyishi women's realities today. For instance, earlier research could not fully account for changes in the demand for traditional crafts or new market opportunities.

### **Lack of Personal Perspectives and Voices**

Secondary data sources usually show how an institution or researcher has interpreted the data, frequently with little direct input from the study's subjects. The personal voices of Nyishi women, their reasons for weaving, and the difficulties they encounter are not adequately conveyed by secondary sources. It might be more difficult to fully comprehend Nyishi women's lived experiences if there are no direct voices from them in the study. Additionally, it might overlook chances to showcase individual triumphs or grassroots transformations facilitated by weaving, which could enhance the results and offer a more comprehensive perspective on empowerment.

## **ARTICLES AND JOURNALS**



- **"Traditional Handloom Practices of Nyishi Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, Eastern Himalaya" by Govinda Pangging, C.L. Sharma, and Madhubala Sharma (2020):**  
This study documents the traditional handloom practices of the Nyishi tribe, highlighting the skills of Nyishi women in weaving culturally significant attires, especially worn during festivals like Nyokum and marriages.
- **"Byopa: A Traditional Headgear of Nyishi Tribe from Arunachal Pradesh, India and Its Relevance to Geographical Indication" by Govinda Pangging, C.L. Sharma, and Madhubala Sharma (2019):**  
While focusing on the traditional headgear (Byopa) of the Nyishi tribe, this paper also touches upon the weaving skills of Nyishi women in crafting traditional attires for significant socio-cultural events.
- **"Weaving Arunachal's Textile Legacy" by The Voice of Fashion:**  
This article explores the textile traditions of Arunachal Pradesh, including the contributions of the Nyishi tribe. It discusses how fabrics, mostly cotton, wool, and silk, have been woven by tribes like the Nyishi using traditional backstrap looms.
- **"Textiles of Arunachal Pradesh" by the Indian Culture Portal:**  
This resource provides an overview of the textile traditions of various tribes in Arunachal Pradesh, including the Nyishi. It describes the use of the Rubing Ruekio (loin loom) by Nyishi women to weave garments like the Gale, a lower garment for women, made of cotton, silk, or wool.
- **"A Perspective on the Role of Women in India with Special Reference to the Nyishi Tribe" by the International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention:** This article examines the role of Nyishi women in traditional practices, noting that while not all are experts in weaving, some practice the art to produce podu fibre and cotton-made cloths, skirts, and blankets.
- **"The Domai Weaving of Vast Region":** This paper discusses the use of Endi cloths by Nyishi men and women, noting that these cloths, typically sourced from Assam, are about three meters in length and are worn differently by each gender.
- **"Exploring the Nyishi Tribe: Culture of Arunachal Pradesh":** This article highlights the artistic prowess of the Nyishi people, emphasizing their exquisite crafts, including bamboo and cane work, pottery, and handwoven textiles.





- **"Education: Its Positive Effects on the Nyishi Women of Arunachal Pradesh"** by John Pudussery and Dr. Philomina M.J (2022): While focusing on the impact of education, this study provides context on the socio-economic aspects of Nyishi women's lives, which may influence their participation in traditional weaving practices.
- **Preserving the Weaving Heritage of Arunachal Pradesh**  
**Blog By - Team MyGov, Arunachal Pradesh MyGov**
- Many cultures highly value weaved textiles, which are vital to religious and social ceremonies. Weaved clothing serves as an identifying sign in several communities. Weaving patterns, colours, and styles can reveal a person's age, social standing, tribe, and marital status. For instance, a person's social position increases with the complexity and opulence of their weaving. Traditional woven cloths are frequently worn during significant cultural occasions like weddings, harvest festivals, and other religious ceremonies. Additionally, weaving is connected to several rites of passage, such as rituals for birth and burial, in which specific fabrics are utilized for ceremonial purposes. In many parts of Arunachal Pradesh, weaving is not just an art but also an important economic activity. Women are often the primary weavers, and their handwoven textiles provide a source of income for families. These textiles are sold in local markets or even exported, helping sustain the livelihoods of many families in the region.
- **"The Role of Textiles in Ethnic Identity and Cultural Continuity in Arunachal Pradesh"** (International Journal of Indigenous Studies, 2018)
- The authors of this study look at how textiles are an essential part of ethnic identity and cultural continuity in the northeastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. With an emphasis on indigenous groups, such as the Nyishi, the study examines the complex interrelationships of traditional textile manufacturing, social systems, and ethnic identity. It highlights the importance of textiles as symbols of ethnic pride, cultural preservation, and communal membership in addition to their use as practical objects and artistic expressions. The importance of textiles as cultural identifiers for Arunachal Pradesh's numerous indigenous communities is covered in the study. It emphasizes how the distinctive weaving materials, patterns, and techniques of each community aid in setting them apart from nearby ethnic groups. In this sense, textiles represent more than just their material use; they reflect the history, values, and traditions of the people who make them. The fabrics' colour schemes and design elements frequently have profound symbolic connotations associated with customs, myths, or rituals. The Nyishi group, for instance, has a strong cultural connection to weaving, and the textiles they produce frequently feature symbols





associated with the tribe's traditions and religious beliefs. The article examines how weaving in Arunachal Pradesh is strongly related to social stratification within groups in addition to being a source of income. Since women are largely in charge of producing textiles, their function is particularly highlighted.

- **"Empowering Women through Handloom Products: The Case of Arunachal Pradesh"**  
(Journal of Rural Women's Studies, 2019)
- The paper examines how weaving enables women to express and preserve their cultural identity, even while economic empowerment is a central subject. Handwoven fabrics have cultural significance and are more than just goods in Arunachal Pradesh. The distinctive ethnic character of the weavers and their communities is frequently reflected in the textiles' patterns, colours, and materials. The traditional weaving patterns of the Nyishi tribe, for instance, include unique motifs and techniques that are culturally significant and help the weavers feel a connection to their ancestry. According to the article, women help to preserve the customs of their society by taking part in the creation of these textiles. They are strengthening their position as cultural information bearers in addition to carrying on a long-standing custom. The article discusses various challenges experienced by women weavers in Arunachal Pradesh, even if handloom products have a positive effect on women's empowerment. The rivalry from mass-produced fabrics, which are frequently more affordable and accessible, is one significant problem. The local handloom sector is in danger due to these mass-produced commodities, which makes it hard for women to make a living only from weaving.
- **Weaving And Tribal Folklore of Arunachal Pradesh**  
**The Indian Tribal, Proyashi Barua, June 23, 2022**  
The Nyishi, Galo, Apatani, Adi, Tagin, Bori, Bokar, Idu Mishmi, Monpa, and other tribes in Arunachal Pradesh are thought to share forebears and are hence regarded as ethnically similar. In Arunachal Pradesh, weaving is mostly done by women and is a vital source of economic empowerment. It enables them to support their families while maintaining their cultural identity through elaborate designs and age-old methods that have been passed down through the generations. It is regarded as an essential component of their way of life and communal life. Every tribe in Arunachal Pradesh

These resources offer a broader understanding of the weaving traditions among Nyishi women and their cultural significance in Arunachal Pradesh.



## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For Nyishi women, weaving is a traditional craft that reflects their social identity and artistic heritage. The traditional handloom customs of the Nyishi tribe are examined by **Pangging, Sharma, and Sharma (2020)**, who concentrate on how women create culturally significant clothing, particularly for marriages and festivals like Nyokum. **The Indian Culture Portal (n.d.)** states that these handwoven fabrics, which are primarily produced on the Rubing Ruekio (loin loom), symbolise collective identity. Clothing such as the Gale, a lower garment made of cotton, silk, or wool, and the distinctive patterns that hold cultural significance are the main subjects of this study. Additionally, the significance of the Byopa, a traditional headdress worn by Nyishi men, is examined by **Pangging, Sharma, and Sharma (2019)**. They highlight how Nyishi women work in tandem to produce textiles that complement the tribe's ceremonial attire. **Shiva Tells (n.d.)**, which offers a more thorough cultural portrait of the Nyishi tribe and describes their proficiency in crafts like bamboo work, pottery, and handwoven fabrics, further emphasises the importance of weaving. According to the document, the tribe's unique identity is preserved in part by these artistic practices, especially weaving. **The Domai Weaving of Vast Region (n.d.)** examines the use of Endi fabrics, which are typically sourced from Assam and are approximately three meters long, by Nyishi men and women. The study emphasises the adaptability of native crafts by examining the effects of resource sharing and interregional trade on Nyishi weaving traditions. For Nyishi women, weaving has always meant financial stability. According to **The Voice of Fashion (n.d.)**, indigenous textiles—particularly those woven by Nyishi women—help people become financially independent by offering opportunities to sell their handmade clothing at neighbourhood markets. Like this, **the International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (n.d.)** examines the socioeconomic role of Nyishi women and notes that although not all of them are skilled weavers, those who do make blankets, skirts, and clothing made from Podu fibres to help support their households. Additionally, **Pudusserly and Philomina (2022)** look at how education affects Nyishi women and observe that although formal education expands professional options, it also alters the extent to which women participate in traditional weaving. The study suggests that educated Nyishi women might pursue other careers, which might affect the continuation of the weaving tradition.

Nyishi weaving faces many challenges despite its great cultural and economic significance. **The Voice of Fashion (n.d.)** highlights how the survival of handwoven textiles is threatened by industrialisation and the accessibility of mass-produced fabrics. Due to its labour-intensive nature and the allure of new career opportunities, weaving is less popular among younger generations. Additionally, **the Indian**



**Culture Portal (n.d.)** acknowledges that two significant obstacles to sustainability are the limited market reach of Nyishi textiles and the challenges of acquiring high-quality raw materials. According to the study's findings, Nyishi women's primary source of income is weaving, which is declining due to modernisation, urban migration, and shifting social priorities. To ensure their survival, scholars stress the importance of maintaining Nyishi weaving traditions. Geographical Indication (GI) recognition, as advocated by **Pangging et al. (2019)**, would shield traditional Nyishi textiles from commercialisation while boosting their value in larger markets. To attract (sharma, 2020) younger generations, the **Indian Culture Portal (n.d.)** suggests including instruction in traditional weaving in school curricula. Furthermore, the importance of digital platforms in promoting indigenous textiles is examined by **The Voice of Fashion (n.d.)**. The study found that social media and online marketplaces can assist Nyishi women in expanding their clientele and bridging the gap between traditional and contemporary economic demands.

## DISCUSSION

For Nyishi women, weaving is a traditional craft that reflects their social identity and artistic heritage. The traditional handloom customs of the Nyishi tribe are examined by **Pangging, Sharma, and Sharma (2020)**, who concentrate on how women create culturally significant clothing, particularly for marriages and festivals like Nyokum. **The Indian Culture Portal (n.d.)** states that these handwoven fabrics, which are primarily produced on the Rubing Ruekio (loin loom), symbolise collective identity. Clothing such as the Gale, a lower garment made of cotton, silk, or wool, and the distinctive patterns that hold cultural significance are the main subjects of this study. Additionally, the significance of the Byopa, a traditional headdress worn by Nyishi men, is examined by **Pangging, Sharma, and Sharma (2019)**. They highlight how Nyishi women work in tandem to produce textiles that complement the tribe's ceremonial attire. **Shiva Tells (n.d.)**, which offers a more thorough cultural portrait of the Nyishi tribe and describes their proficiency in crafts like bamboo work, pottery, and handwoven fabrics, further emphasises the importance of weaving. According to the document, the tribe's unique identity is preserved in part by these artistic practices, especially weaving. **The Domai Weaving of Vast Region (n.d.)** examines the use of Endi fabrics, which are typically sourced from Assam and are approximately three meters long, by Nyishi men and women. The study emphasises the adaptability of native crafts by examining the effects of resource sharing and interregional trade on Nyishi weaving traditions. For Nyishi women, weaving has always meant financial stability. According to **The Voice of Fashion (n.d.)**, indigenous textiles—particularly those woven by Nyishi women—help people become



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### Weaving as a Form of Self-Identity and Cultural Expression

Weaving is more than just a craft for Nyishi women; it is a symbol of cultural affiliation, self-identification, and heritage preservation (**Pangging et al., 2020; Indian Culture Portal, n.d.**). Weaving is a crucial component of their collective identity since the designs, hues, and methods used in their textiles are typically connected to tribal traditions and religious beliefs. However, cultural dilution is a



risk as younger generations embrace more contemporary lifestyles. The challenge is to ensure that traditional knowledge is preserved while allowing for contemporary advancements.

### **Weaving as a Financially Viable Livelihood**

Although weaving has historically been a domestic hobby, many Nyishi women use it as a source of income. Financial independence is made possible by selling handmade textiles, particularly in rural areas where there are few other employment options (**International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, n.d.; The Voice of Fashion, n.d.**). However, research indicates that limited market access, a lack of raw materials, and competition from mass-produced fabrics continue to make financial viability difficult (**Indian Culture Portal, n.d.; Puduserry and Philomina, 2022**). The profitability of Nyishi weaving may increase with the expansion of market opportunities, such as involvement in fair-trade networks or digital platforms.

### **Impact of Modernization and Changing Societal Roles**

The duties of Nyishi women have changed because of urban migration and modern education. **According to Puduserry and Philomina (2022)**, education has made it possible for many women to work in occupations other than traditional weaving, which has reduced the number of skilled weavers in the community. Although formal education encourages socioeconomic mobility, it also results in a generational divide in the transmission of indigenous knowledge. Closing the gap may be facilitated by initiatives to integrate weaving into academic programs or career training courses.

### **The Role of Policy Support in Sustaining Indigenous Weaving**

Policies like Geographical Indication (GI) marking, government initiatives, and NGO interventions could all be crucial in preserving Nyishi weaving customs (**Pangging et al. 2019**). By taking these actions, traditional weavers can establish exclusive market niches, protect indigenous textiles from exploitation, and authenticate their products. But there are still challenges in putting these policies into practice, especially when it comes to funding, outreach, and educating Nyishi women. The craft might be preserved with a greater push for financial support systems, community-led cooperatives, and policy lobbying.

### **Revitalizing Weaving Through Digital Platforms and Market Expansion**



One of the main conclusions of our study is that digitalisation is becoming more and more significant in promoting traditional crafts. Nyishi women can market and sell their woven textiles outside of their local communities thanks to social media and online marketplaces (The Voice of Fashion, n.d.). However, technological availability, marketing expertise, and logistical support are necessary for digital interaction to be successful. Nyishi women could compete in the larger textile industry while maintaining their traditional skills by participating in training programs in digital literacy, e-commerce strategies, and brand development.

According to my research, Nyishi weaving faces significant challenges in the modern era, despite being deeply ingrained in cultural identity and economic resilience. A multifaceted strategy that incorporates digital integration, policy support, financial initiatives, and cultural preservation is needed to address these problems. Long-term solutions that enable Nyishi women to preserve their traditional weaving customs while adjusting to contemporary socioeconomic demands should be the focus of future research.

## CONCLUSION

Weaving is a complex, culturally based activity among Nyishi women, as the evidence and discussion show, with links to gender norms, economic structures, and the forces of globalisation. Among the significant findings are Weaving is an important part of Nyishi identity, even though cultural transmission is declining. Women weavers contribute significantly to household income despite the undervaluation of their labour. Even though commercialisation opens new business prospects, there are still challenges in the market. Traditional weaving is under threat from modernisation, but specific interventions can help modernise and preserve the craft. For Nyishi weaving to remain viable, strong cultural preservation programs, sustainable business models, and government support are required. Weaving is more than just an artistic or commercial endeavour for Nyishi women; it is a way of life, a symbol of cultural identity, and a social status indicator. This study, which used secondary data, found that weaving had a significant impact on Nyishi women's social, economic, and private lives. Weaving has an impact on women's roles in the community, their capacity for self-sufficiency, and the preservation of Nyishi traditions in addition to just crafting. The commercialisation of weaving creates both opportunity and challenges for Nyishi women. On the one hand, weaving provides a form of financial independence, allowing women to earn money in an otherwise male-dominated economic landscape. Women who sell woven textiles in local and national markets receive access to economic



resources, which can help them advance in the household and community. However, weaving remains a part of the informal economy, where women's labour is frequently underpaid and undervalued. Many Nyishi women experience exploitative market conditions in which middlemen set pricing, giving them little negotiating power. This echoes broader feminist critiques of women's labour in patriarchal economies, where even skilled, time-consuming employment is sometimes rejected as "domestic" or secondary to male-dominated industries. Nyishi women still employ weaving as a powerful form of self-expression and cultural resistance despite these obstacles. It represents their capacity to maintain customs, make financial contributions, and exercise power in a patriarchal society. By implementing feminist economic policies, educational reforms, and market protections, weaving could become a real force for women's empowerment rather than a burden of outdated labour demands. Efforts must be made in the future to balance gender equity with traditional preservation so that Nyishi women can weave not only fabric but also their own futures without being subjected to oppressive gender norms and economic exploitation. The continuation of Nyishi weaving is dependent on a balanced strategy that values history while encouraging innovation. A coordinated effort combining weavers, researchers, legislators, and digital entrepreneurs is critical to preserving this rich history for future generations.

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