

Unpacking Indigenous Women’s Knowledge



Perspectives on gender and intersectionality in Food-Land-Water systems governance



Unpacking the term ‘indigenous’

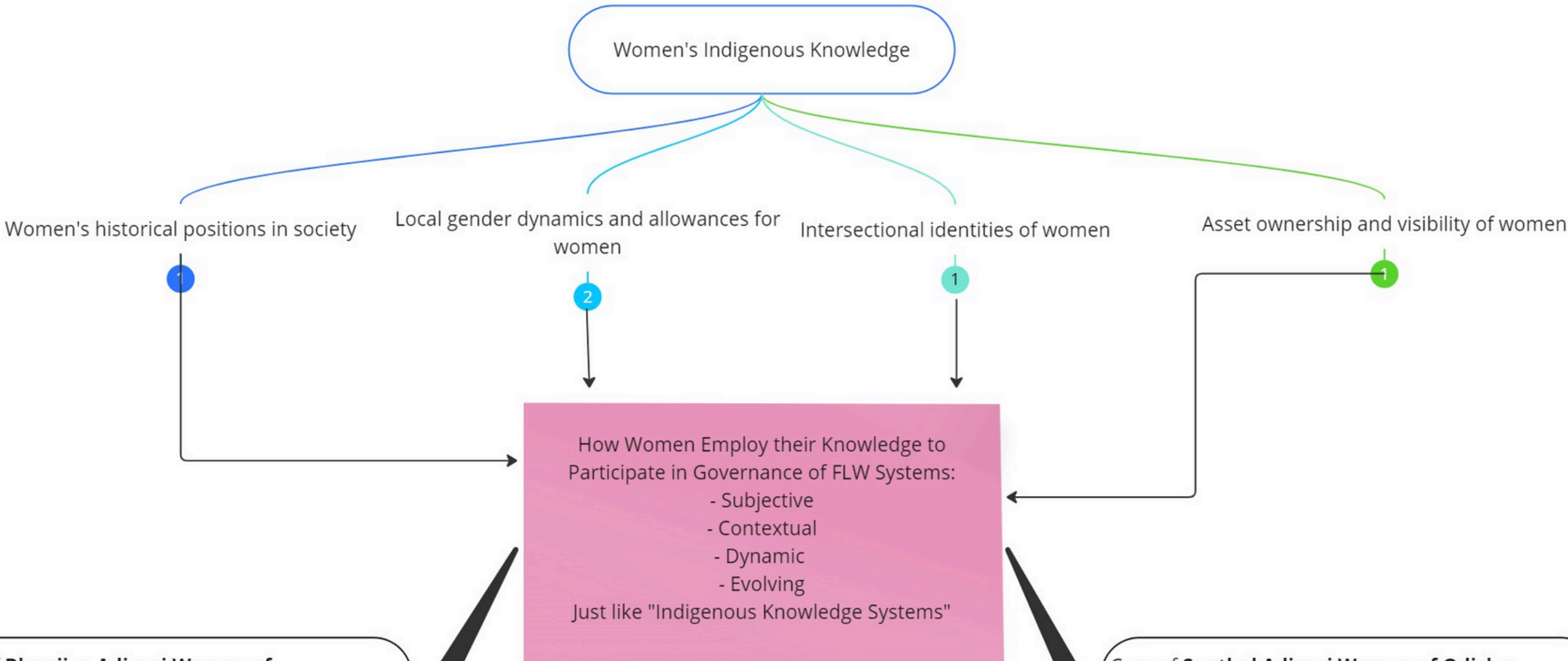
Understanding women’s lives through an intersectional lens, critically exploring and examining women’s indigineous knowledge as a ever evolving socio-political system rooted in the context

Gendered nature of indigenous knowledge systems

- Looking at the linkages between women’s work, generation, preservation, practice and reproduction of knowledge
- Civil society interventions
- Resultantly both women as a gender category as well as indigenous knowledge as a category produced by women get frozen and abstracted - loosing their organicity, subjectivity and therefore dynamicity and proneness to evolve.

Land Rights of women in India:

Connection between access and control over resources with food security - there is a gap between the development program’s objectives and orientation towards women’s empowerment and the way that empowerment can be realised and experienced by women in their given contexts. This gap is symptomatic of an abstraction of women from their context, to suit a certain development jargon - which empahsises that women know and practice governance of FLW systems naturally - as a virtue of their gender, and not their gendered (intersectional and power) positions.



Case of Bhunjia Adivasi Women of Chhattisgarh:
The intervention is designed around the lived realities of women in the community and is therefore popular among women, leading to sustainable empowerment and change.

Case of Santhal Adivasi Women of Odisha:
Top Down jargonistic perspective of indigenous knowledge and women as essential carriers of it, resulting in alienation of women and communities from their contextual realities and inviting a utilitarian interest from the development sector.

Case Study: Odisha

- Santhal Community, OBC
- Environmental Context
- Program Centric Approach
- Community empowerment through Forest Rights Act



Case Study: Chhattisgarh

- Bhunjia Community
- Geo-political context
- Necessity of a Community Centric Approach
- Emic transformations and empowerment of women



Key Takeaways

- Highlighting the limitations of gender essential perspectives under SDG framework.
- Gender identities, interrelationships are a product of context and power and are therefore dynamic.
- Indigenous knowledge is an evolving body of knowledge.
- A gender essential approach leads to generation of ‘developed and modern’ subjects, alienating women from their diverse, intersectional realities.