

## **Survive, Effectiveness and Entrepreneurship among the Marginal Urban Women of Purulia, West Bengal**

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**Abstract:** Urban population is becoming greater than rural population in coming few decades, in acquaintance of this urbanization, socio-economic elements of our population is going through a transition. Urban women have a liberal, flexible, prosperous setting in their habitation as well as socio-economic atmosphere. People of Purulia town still suffer from caste constraints like untouchabilities, permissive job providing, stigmatized identity in mass interactions in domestic sphere. Women of under this study area keep them active through Mahila Samiti, club memberships, workers union, ceremonial committees, and member of political parties. Their organized behaviors, decision making processes, multifaceted social status come under analysis to delve out the elements, innovations and instrumentalised skill for enhancing women entrepreneurship and welfare in general especially in Indian situation.

**Keywords:** Community activities, liberal, entrepreneurships, organized behavior, scheduled caste women, stigma, poverty.

### **Resume**

Human resource development of a Nation gets a priority in integrated development of man, in respect to gender, class, credentials, and other categories and sections of our society. Women development enriched through its large body of academic cum research literatures, government and non-government reports, activities like different developmental policies, programs and schemes of various benevolent institutions. But the reality of women status and quality of life especially from middle and lower sections is not satisfactorily revealed ground level studies. Still we can find ardent disparities between dichotomized sections like urban and rural, upper classes and lower classes etc. Consciously or unconsciously women have less cooperation to elevate their own status or condition by helping their own co-gendered fellow. Socio-economic scenarios of urban setting is generally better than its rural counterpart, but more challenging with different type of conflicts, hazards emerging from urban complex social system.

In India, there are many towns with versatile natural resources as well as occupational network and have different socio-cultural niches. In this respect to get integrated knowledge and heuristic questions of region specific research in urban setting and surely from different viewpoints are essential. Here, researchers make an effort to grasp such type of objectives in a less popular urban setting.

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**Pioneers Work:** Women are effective entrepreneurs by which they maintain a balance in domestic sphere. As Kabeer (2001) states that gender interest is a potential force to change the social norms against the restriction of women. Contextual factors as group activities and achievements are more important than individual actions, this more relevant to understand the reality (Jejeebhoy and Sathar, 2001; Kritiz et al., 2000; Mason and Smith, 2003). Many qualitative studies revealed as households where women have more power create resources to child-centered expenditures (Dwyer and Bruce, 1988). The equal participation of women in urban administration and urban welfare works are not completely possible due to ignorance of municipal Acts, rules and regulations, urban administration. Their male counterpart of municipal service generally do not cooperate their female colleague or sub-ordinate employee from gender bias view point. Women face many difficulties regarding taking part in electoral politics also. Dominance of male social actions make encroachment in to women role and duties which make them recessive to enter the political arena and play their part of the role in social corrections, economic development. Masculinity of our society keeps women's voice gets drowned.

Women involvement and participation in government schemes as also in the schemes and programs for water and sanitation services is at very alarming rate due their social setting. Women in the slums take their intra family decision making in different matters like purchasing food, clothes, ornaments, children's education and performing of other social functions. Malhotra and his co-researchers (2002) applied some criteria in women empowerment as domestic decision-making, finance and resource allocation, social and domestic matters, child rearing matters. Stine and Hoyda (2003) present women empowerment is the gain of power to control over their lives and the strength for choosing the alternatives. Varghese (2011) considers different angles in measuring women empowerment through income, education, employment, media exposure and acquisition of assets, knowledge of legal rights, political rights and land ownership.

There are prevailing inter regional and intra-regional disparities in the social, economic, cultural and political empowerment of men and women (Panda, 1997). Development works are aimed at environment for women to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives with the accordance to their needs and interests and ultimately help of educational attainment, material possession, decision making. The 73rd Amendment of our Constitution in 1993 and the Women's Reservation Bill 2010, are big efforts, is to cater more political space to the women with active in processes.

The government and non government sectors emphasizes on education, health. Decision making processes should be practiced through proper environment. Regional perspectives of women empowerment strategies such as incorporation of gender issues topics in school level text books, identification of the targets according to micro level regional analysis. Critical actors -political process; women's political influence – critical structures; critical junctures are important to our decision making processes.

**Objectives:** There are two objectives to peruse this study:

- (i) Examine the status of women in an urban setting of district head quarter town of Purulia, West Bengal.
- (ii) Detect the factors and processes in development related group and individual decision making of urban women.

**Way of Study:** To fulfill the objectives we go through a series of literature from development sectors and review of social science. Planed literature review indicates a rational methodology to find out the empirical data as well as analysis. This empirical study has been conducted with structured tested schedule, systematic interview on the basis of snowball sampling. We have applied the group discussion to clarify the available field experience and extraction of individual

comments on collected data. For the purpose of this study we took sixty elderly (60% of these female were of above 40 years age) women for interviewing by structured and tested schedule, from Ward no -1. This ward of Purulia municipality expresses some difficulties in development process though a good number of entrepreneurship is also available.

**Perspectives:** Purulia town (23.33° N, 86.37°E) is the district headquarters of the Purulia district, under West Bengal. The town is located at an average altitude of 228 meters from mean sea level. As it is drought prone area having average annual rainfall of 1300 mm. The town dwellers often suffer from scarcity of water during spring and summer. Rapid growth of population creates an alarming future for water for everyday life.

Sixty families out of 530 were taken through purposive sample for this study from ward no. 1. People under this area mainly belonged to families come from scheduled caste communities mainly of Bauri, Sahis and few come from Backward Classes. Bauri community is to be found mainly in Purulia, Bankura, Birbhum and Burdhaman districts of West Bengal. They are also to be found in Bihar and Orissa. In 1981 their population in West Bengal was 7, 32,205. They are considered low status in the caste hierarchy. The Bauri is a cultivating and earth-working caste. The socio-economic status and literacy rate of Bauris is very low (Risley, 1981). Sahis Community is also getting lower Social status with their Harijan identity. In this urban setting they occupy themselves mainly with monthly salaried household works, daily labour in their town and small business.

#### ***Discourses from the Informants (an abstraction)***

**Present situation of Domestic Violence:** Women empowerment and decision making are on the way of drastic change through their activities. Basically the familial envies are predominantly found among the nuclear extent families. Mostly the young boys and girls are suffering from familial envies because their guardians did not distribute equal portion of food, cloth, other material goods, etc. The joint family consists of the grandfather or grandmother, but they did not distribute property or asset equally among their inheritances which create envies among the two or more brother and sisters. The familial envies of personal are not so much affected. Almost two and more other persons have a small scale of familial envies and if two or more brothers of family, occurrence to land and economic problem, this family's has a large scale of familial envies. On the ward no. 1 of slum area, at first they organize a meeting and then solve the problem honestly. If the problem of familial envies is not solved then some of people of the ward and some politician organize a meeting and take an authentic decision. To control the familial envies, the clubs never take any step to solve it, but *Pooja* committee and also Mahila Samiti try to solve this problem. The women members of the NGO come to the meeting and get an authentic decision. To control the familial envies, the family members normally do not take any hard decision. Sometimes they solve the problem in their own house but if this problem is not solved then Mahila Samiti try to solve the problem.

#### ***Women to Women Relationship to Mitigate of Problems***

Here women always helped another woman and *Mahila Samiti* always tried to solve the individual and extent family problems also. The women went to the Mahila Samiti office and told their problem. After hearing everything, Mahila Samiti took an authentic decision. A woman always understands the sadness of other women. So, when a woman faced problem like economical problem for marrying her daughter then Mahila Samiti fully helped her. Without it, Mahila Samiti dis-

tributed the medicine for poor people. And they also protested the dowry system and arranged an awareness programme of dowry. Few days ago, Mahila Samiti had provided some work to the poor people. Sometimes Mahila Samiti also distributed some books to some meritorious and poor students. Recently the local clubs and Mahila Samiti combinedly organized a seminar on child and women.

### ***Decision making Processes***

Decision making processes among women of this study area were very slow and recessive nature which was the main hindrance to get effectivities. They had less information and instances to make decision and peruse in their family or community. ***Motivations of women***

Clubs and Mahila Samiti gave the motivational speech for awaking women strength. Mahila Samiti also told that all women should definitely watch the women strengthen programme through TV, radio etc. Some times Mahila Samiti tried to solve the problems. If any woman or child seeks for help to the Mahila Samiti, then they always tried to help them economically etc.

### ***Discussion and Analysis***

Data of time spending in household revealed that working male had to go for long time in their income, they also had more complex situation in uncertainty of job, which promoted women to take major household decisions. As the male became unable to attain these tasks, they tend to get rid off any negative repercussion regarding the decisions taken by the women however. Through this practice the women enriched themselves as decision makers.

Both the male and female members of the family of this study area earned their family income. Women had their particular share in household expenditure like small marketing, expenditure for children, worshipping elements, gift items for guests and ceremonies. Decisions related to these expenditures were taken by the women and enjoyed the liberty from income related to masculine dominances.

Sudden crisis in paucity of water, minute feuds, quarrel, health problems of the elders and children gave scope to existing women in families to take decision and empowered them to manage these situation with better capacities. Women unity through Mahila samiti, club, and friends group also used their network to enjoy more credibility and come to solo decision making in absence or inability of others. These clubs and Samitis provided some healthy social atmosphere against the monotonous male dominance, inferiority complexes of women and lethargic factors in decision making. These types of unity prevented the women in inactiveness due to isolation and induced compartmentalization. Information available in this discussant group acted as plethora to broadening the visions of women and provided more confidence and rigidity.

Information sharing in educational institutions, work places, easy communicated zones, electronic and literate media elevated the career projectile. They realized a plenty of experience and got the selective advantages from not only by them but also their friend and seniors. Apart from institutional trainings, they acquired mode of behavior to the outsiders as friend, facilitators, and employers for getting a success. These helped them to decide among available alternatives and chances.

The heroic actions, decisions, ideology, thoughts imparting through electronic, oral, literate media support the urban women to decide against discriminations, disparities, harassments and other vulnerable situations. They come to know legal information, instances, consequences, and ways of bravery in self protection. Small elements and processes of decision making often occur in their mind are generally latent, main outcomes are intelligible. This is one of the difficulties to understand decision making procedures. Researchers have rare chance to unearth these actions without intensive case studies. Psychological factors are also played an important role to take a

decision. Interactions of information, past experiences, personalities, domestic environment and skill of decision making by their elements and processes help us to analyze minutely and develop our research.

**Potentialities with the Study:** This study helps us to left some suggestions to betterment of women development in this urban setting. Peer group formations may be come in information circulation, sharing their experience providing confidence and rigidity in taking decision, decreasing their introvert nature in discussing and expressing opinion in sensitive issues like gender disparities, domestic violence. To get more free space and platform for discussion of their private matter a meeting place may be constructed or located in their ward, where completely female maintenance should be done. Potentialities among the urban women may be traced from effective workshop and draw a blue print of ushering these geniuses from their own rout. Mahila Samiti may maintain craft, cottage industrial innovation cum production to help their young generation. Government institutions and department may take initiatives to run these centers. In promotion of education and professional training some core group may be formed among the clubs members or inside Mahila Samiti to facilitate the drop out, needy and unable students. They can rehabilitate the problem trodden women in their ward.

### **Conclusion**

Several studies advocate many more suggestions and corollaries at the vintage points of women empowerment and development, we are trying to grasp some uniqueness of region specific situation which may be compared to general picture after completion of this research. Women under this study area are very much influenced with culture of two industrial cities like Jamshedpur and Dhanbad though it has no such resources to generate their income or advance communications. In this regards, women also get impact at higher degree which is one of hindrance to proper women empowerment. In case of decision making the young generation expresses a notable steadiness and swiftness from their elderly generations is explained from educational progress and adjustment of increasing urban elements.

Newly created university get many local students especially from municipal area gives a booster effect to advancement of women education, where they take their own decision not only for their education but also their further life. Increasing participations in municipal politics enable them to learn and experienced veered in the benefits of current on forthcoming development programs in their own development. Taking responsibilities in local ceremonies like Durgapuja, activeness in solutions of local crisis like waste management, paucity of water, health services indicates a prosperous achievement of women empowerment. These phenomenons are the silver line of future generations.

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