

Feminism Poverty and Globalization in the Context of Assam

Edited by
Akashee Bhuyan & Mallika Bora



Feminism, Poverty and Globalisation in the Context of Assam

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The volume is an anthology of selected papers presented in a UGC funded seminar, held in Dr. B.K.B. College, Puranigudam on 16th February 2012 on 'Feminism, poverty and Globalisation in the Context of Assam'.

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Preface

The present volume is the product of a UGC sponsored state level seminar on 'Feminism, Poverty and Globalisation in the context of Assam' held at the premises of Dr. B K B College on 16th February, 2012. Except slight modification, the papers printed here appear in the original form and order of presentation. Moreover, some of the resource persons well experienced in their respective professions preferred an oral delivery on certain vital aspects to what was originally expected of them as theme papers on the subject. Nonetheless, their speeches could impress the audience with fresh insight into the subject proposed. Thus, it was somewhat difficult for us to forge uniformity to the entire deliberation and finally decided to introduce some of the papers and speeches in a modified form without strictly enforcing exercises of research documentation.

Any critical comment, if the volume deserves, is specially reserved for whom it is published. As editors, our task has been limited to putting some dots and comas here and there. Besides, we would like to share some of the presumptions we had in mind while organising the seminar on such a topic. Firstly, feminism far from being a mere academic discourse and

innuendos about a woman's dress and manners can explore the dimension of socio-economic and cultural realities faced by the women. Tradition and modernity has to be reviewed on sociological perspectives where the one stands compatible with the other. Secondly, we should consciously avoid the monotony of a gender discourse full of clichés, abstractions and accumulation of facile data without any critical insight; for, the interface of globalisation and poverty may be further pursued to the extent of identifying the real menace that lurks behind the development politics. Thirdly, mere accumulation of some shaggy facts and figures in utter disregard to peripheral realities leads us nowhere. Fourthly, gender issues need to be deciphered carefully as a part of the wider socio-economic phenomenon. Womanhood is but a part of the humanity at large having required to tread along a difficult path and to face the precipice. What is important in such a situation is to stand steadfast and develop effective democratic machinery.

With this brief note we invite our esteemed readers to see to what extent the seminar has been a successful exercise. The shortcomings of the volume which are obviously there shall jeer at our own limitation. Finally, we are thankful to the principal of our college, Prof. Kamal ch. Saikia, colleagues and all the contributors for their support and cooperation throughout the process of bringing out this volume.

Editors

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Key-note address

Feminism, Poverty and Globalization in the Context of Assam

Bineeta Dutta

The concept of Feminism may be traced back to 1689 when John Lock mentioned it in his book '*Second Treatise of Government*' which is followed by French Philosopher Condorcet's '*Admission of Women to Full Citizenship*' (1790). According to Lock, both men and women as a part of nature are equal and follow natural laws. Marriage is a social agreement and both husband and wife have equal right on their children. The concept of equality was supported by philosopher Descartes, John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor and many others. But it was Marry Wollstonecraft who was the first lady to establish gender equality through her book name *A Vindication of The Right of Women*. She recognized woman as a human being having every right to fulfil her life in her own way like her male counterpart. She advocats the right to vote for women and need for equal education. Though many of the pioneering thinkers and philosophers advocated the idea of equality of men and women, still it is not a reality in the true sense of the term.

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Women have a long history of struggle for equality starting in eighteenth century drawing attention of various nations worldwide. The United Nations had declared 1975 as International women's year and a decade for woman development followed. Various International Conferences were organized for women development, creating awareness and undertaking various programmes and action plan. But gender discrimination has not been fully eliminated from the society even today. India in general and Assam in particular is not an exception to this.

At present Globalization has become a buzzword. It also has become an idea for business theory and practice and entered academic debates. Globalization has been defined by many experts in various ways. Some of them may be summarized as follows.

- i) Globalization as internationalization may be described as a cross border trade and capital investment moving towards international economy when national economies are subsumed and rearticulated into the system by international process and transactions. (Hirst and Peters, 1996)
- ii) Globalization as liberalization refers to a process of removing Government imposed restrictions on movement between countries in order to create an 'open' 'borderless' world economy (Scholte, 2000)
- iii) Globalization as universalization refers to the process of spreading various objects and experiences to people at all corners of the Earth.
- iv) Globalization as westernization or modernization is understood as a dynamic whereby the social structure of modernity (Capitalism, rationalism, industrialism,

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bureaucratism etc.) are spread the world over, normally replacing pre-existent culture and economy.

- v) Globalization as deterritorialization as defined by Anthony Giddens refers to intensification of worldwide social relations which links distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (1990).

These five definitions describe globalization from five different angles. Each of them is partially correct but none of them is completely correct carrying the full meaning and spirit of Globalization. From the last decade of the 20th century we have seen that Globalization has affected life and living of individual and group in different societies. Different nations have signed General Agreement on Terrif and Trade (GATT). In 1995 the world Trade Organization was established for the benefit of International Trade and Commerce. Consequently another historical 'General Agreement on Trade in Service' (GATS) was accomplished. GATS agreement has extended the scope of Globalization by identifying 19 services including education for international exchange programme. Thus, the process of commoditication of human life and services was started. Globalization though basically an economic process, it has influenced our personal as well as social life and its impact is values and existence. Globalization has intruded in our life together with its concomitant forces of liberalization and privatization.

Globalization has influenced our life, living and intellect. Our thought process has to accept some new ideas. Karl Marx said long ago that liberty is not complete without economic independence. The economic process influences our social and cultural existence and development. The present global economy is not only scientific and technology based, but also knowledge

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based. Knowledge Capitalism which is a drive to generate new ideas and turn them into commercial product and services according to the needs of the consumers, has become the most important determining factor in the international economy. Globalization brings with it liberalization and Privatization and have led to commodification of our everyday existence. It has created consumerism with its new values and culture. Education becomes a source for commercial investment.

Management of knowledge and acquisition of knowledge and skill for material development have resulted in more individualizing tendencies in society. According to Erich Fomm modern man becomes lonely and gradually has been detached from society and nature. Commercialization of education has commodified individual. His/her life energy is diverted towards acquisition of highest profit in the prevailing market economy. Globalization has dramatically changed the human relationship, family structure and mind set of the individual and society. Consequently the status of woman, her relationship with other members of the society, her socio-economic position has also been influenced by Globalization.

As we all know, a society consists of men and women. Social development is possible only when all the members of the society work together with equal responsibility, efficiency and commitment. Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, our former president in his book India-2020 – A vision for the new Millennium 'identifies three factors of development :

- Development of Human Resources : Change in people's mind set and skill so that the population becomes an asset.
- Development of Economy.
- Sustainability of Development.

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All these three factors are interlinked. If we attempt to address all these factors simultaneously then the quality of life will improve. International Organizations like World Bank, Asian Development Bank etc. apply some broad parameters for assessment of the quality of life. Though there are controversies over the parameters, they signify the quality of life to a great extent.

These parameters are :

- Longivity or Life expectancy
- Level of Literacy
- Infant Mortality rate
- Gross national product

If we analyse the post liberalization scenario in India and particularly in Assam, we will find some significant gender specific variations.

The Impact of New Trade Rules on Women, Men & Gender Relations

New multilateral trade systems are the institutional face of economic globalization. They seem to be 'gender free' having no special implication for men and women. But in reality it has different impact on both. For example, in agriculture, new trade rules may cut subsidies on food productions and encourage farmers to switch over to export production. On the other hand, women are generally engaged in production of food crops for family consumption and local market. So the cut in subsidies in agriculture will affect more women than men who may be engaged in large scale export production.

Under the globalization policy, the state is bound to cut investment in social welfare activities like health, education etc. Women are primary care givers in the family. If state welfare

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expenditure are withdrawn, women will have to provide home based alternatives. This gives them a higher burden of work within the household and may reduce girl's access to education where they have already face discrimination.

In United Nations System of National Accounts (UNSNA) national economies are defined in terms of market consumption, investment and saving measures in addition to income and production totals. A vast amount of work performed by women is for household consumption or unpaid work in the informal economy. A woman in Indian society works for 7-8 hours per day at home and 12 hours in family agriculture. But this work is not counted in UNSNA. It remains invisible and therefore her contribution to the economic, social and political field is considered to be in-significant. It has led to inequality and gender discrimination. As such, Globalization has also ignored her economic contribution which has aggravated her disadvantageous position and has pushed her to poverty.

Impact Globalization on Women in Assam

The socio-economic scenario of Assam cannot remain free from globalization, privatization and liberalization. The trend in the per capita state income both at current and constant prices for 1980-81 to 2000-01 shows that per capital state income in Assam continued to be lower than the all India average. But in the pre liberalization period there was a definite reduction in the gap in 1992-93, the difference was only Rs. 198.00. But in 2000-01 the average per capita income in Assam was only Rs. 10,198.00 where as the national average per capita income was Rs. 16,487.00 with the difference in thousands of rupces.

In Agriculture which is one of the main livelihood for the people in Assam, we have seen that the share of state income

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in agriculture was approximately was 50.55% in the eighties which declined to 35% in nineties. Women who are engaged in domestic production are the worst sufferer in terms of income from agriculture.

Whether the globalization process has aggravated the problem of poverty or not is a debatable question. According to Planning Commission estimate in 1999-2000, the percentage of people below poverty line in India was 26.10% and it was 36.09% in Assam, being 46h state in terms of poverty ratio. According to the Draft Tenth Plan of the state, the incidence of poverty is even higher in Goalpara dist. Having the highest p.c. of BPL families (75.25%) followed by Dhuburi (75.03%) and Jorhat and Tinisukia districts having lowest p.c. of BPL (41.00% and 41.31% respectively). Incidence of rural poverty in Assam continues to be higher than national average. Incidence of poverty on women is higher than that of men. Women contribute to 1/10 of total labour force but they won only 1/100 property. Women are worst sufferer of poverty having no access to property and income. Many of the women are deprived of their own income. In many tea garden areas and in urban unorganized sectors women's income are snatched away by their illiterate drunkard husbands to meet their liquor expenses. These tendencies are aggravated as a result of growing industrialization and liberalization.

Some of other indicators of economic status of a society are monthly per capita consumer expenditure, expenditure on food, percentage of total workers etc. The percentage of total workers to total population in Assam has slightly declined from 36.1% in 1991 to 35.9% in 2001. The percentage of rural female workers decreased from 13.3 to 9.9. But in case of marginal workers among both men and women there has been

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an increase in pc from 1.2 to 8.3% in male and from 10.0 to 12.4% in case of female. This is a reflection of casualisation and informalisation of labour under globalization. The growth rate of employment of rural female in Assam slowed down between 1993-94 to 1999-2000 but for urban female it was little better.

In Assam we do not observe improvement of the economy through industrial growth and food production after globalization. Some negative impact is seen in increased poverty, unemployment and food insecurity. Women are always first victims of these incidences.

Globalization resulting in consumerism and ever changing life style and high expectations has created a sense of social insecurity. Individualistic attitudes has made men more lonely leading to frustration, conflict, domestic violence like rape, dowry death even suicide are some of the extreme examples of complex and competitive life under globalization. The crime rate in the state has increased by nearly 36% between 1997 and 2002 (NCW : 2005).

In India in every 56 minutes one woman die in rape, in every one minute one woman die of child birth, one die in dowry case. Out of the 12 million children born annually 3 million die before they attain their 15th birthday. Women are victims of war as well as of peace. Domestic violence goes unreported. Globalization has not relieved her but rather enhanced her suffering both physically, economically and mentally.

Globalization and free market economy lead to competition in many areas. Women who are mostly engaged in small scale cottage industry like weaving, poultry etc. are uprooted from their occupation. Being deprived of their livelihood, they are looking after alternatives. Extreme poverty along with illiteracy has pushed her to a very critical condition.

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New trends under globalization has created new avenues of employment with specialized training and education. If women are to emerge as a powerful and determining factor in the new socio-economic scenario, she must be equipped with relevant education and skill. If we can relieve her from depressing poverty, the society will blossom with peace and happiness. Like Mahatma Gandhi we all believe that poverty, illiteracy and disease are the greatest curses on the society. Though education is not the panacea for all, it is only education which may empower her to live a full and complete life. Education will develop her skill to participate in a highly specialized technological society and will foster the sense of dignity as a man. □

** Bineeta Dutta, Retd. Principal of B.Ed. College, Jorhat delivers the Key-note address in the inaugural session of the Seminar.*

Globalization Policy and Poverty with Special Reference to Women in North-East Women India

Kuntala Deka

Introduction

Globalization is a term widely used to express the idea of making the whole world follow one culture, that is, the consumer culture. The nature of globalization is to incorporate the world into the capitalist market. In the process the diverse local cultures are being replaced by the uncultured dynamics of a market.

Globalization— the growing integration of economies and societies around the world— is a complex process that is variously affecting different regions, countries and areas and their populations. To some, globalization is an inevitable, technologically driven process that is increasing economic and political relations between people of different countries and areas.

Globalization and its impact on Women :

Globalization of trade played a vital role on women's employment opportunities in a developing country like India when women are yet one of the deprived classes in the society. It may result in improvement of income earnings capacity of women, which in turn strengthen the incentive of investment in human capital of women. But there is both positive as well as negative aspect that may be seen attached to it.

An overview of Legislative provisions and the Lacunas in it:

Globalization creates space for the market forces to operate in a way that the concept of human welfare is jeopardised. Despite various legislations that our law makers have enforced in our legislative system Indian society in the globalised era has failed to ensure social justice. The question still remains whether legalisation has been profitable in its attempt to achieve better opportunity for women in India. Some of the protective legalisations are -

- The minimum Wages Act.
- The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.
- The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.
- The Domestic workers (Registration social security and welfare) Act. 2008.

I would like to elaborate on each of these legislations and the lacunas in them in meeting its objective.

The Minimum Wages Act :

In the era of globalization, attempts to enforce this law have come down even more. Regardless of whether they work in the formal or the informal/home-based sector/s women suffer from a significant pay differential. The forms however vary. In the

formal sector there are laws to protect equal pay, but due to lesser access to education and consequent lower skills, women could not always get the better paid jobs.

In the informal sector, there is a straight forward pay differential, based on several assumptions - that men have a greater responsibility of feeding the family, that women are necessarily less skilled even when doing the same kind of job, and cultural constraints and life cycle factors making prolonged work for women more difficult.

The Maternity Benefit Act. 1961 :

It covers benefit during childbirth, miscarriages, abortions and tubectomy. But substantially large number of establishments employing less than ten persons are excluded from this Act as well as the employees State Insurance Act. Under the former Act, the woman before availing the leave must have worked for eighty days in that establishment or organization.

Talking about informal sector also, major discrepancy severely persists as a result of poverty, women workers surrender themselves to the pressure of being 'cheap labours'. The most sad part is in the informal sector. They have neither contracts nor social security, and have to work with low wages and in unhygienic working conditions. Poverty, lack of medical insurance, forceful overtime and the culture of self-denial often make health the first casualty. Women suffer from malnutrition, chronic anaemia, TB, respiratory problems, pelvic inflammatory disease, severe cases of dehydration and miscarriages are common. The lack of income security for women in the informal sector also means children's lack of access to education. As a result the children also get pushed into the informal sector themselves.

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Globalization and its impact of North-East part of India:

Female participation has increased in most of the North-Eastern States in between 1991 and 2001.¹ However, majority of the women workers are in low-paid occupations such as in farms, handloom, sericulture, jute craft, silk industry, terracotta and pottery, brick klin, factories and sometimes as saleswomen and number of self employed women are relatively low. Although women wage earners are increasing in most of the cases they do not have control over what they produce because of poor education and technical skills, poor social status, etc. Lives of women are changing rapidly along with the process of globalization in North-East India. They are no more dependent totally on traditional dresses, rather started depending more on readymade garments. Their work pattern started changing to tailoring, embroidery and related works.

In North-East India, Silk industry where majority of workers are women across the world. Women in rural areas particularly in India consider it as one of their source of livelihood. Although many of the problems they are facing are location specific, some of them are common across rural areas in India and even related to other activities. However a few specific problems prominent in North-East India in particular are described here.

First of all, the escape rout for the vast majority of weavers in the state from the cocoon exploitation or from village money lenders is essential. As credit facility to the small weavers are not easily available, there is scope for exploitation of weavers by local money lenders.

Moreover lack of education aggravates the situation as well. Female literacy rate in most of the north-eastern states except Mizoram are below the national average.

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Last but not the least, non-existence of a special legislative act focusing specifically on development of women in North-Eastern part of India has been apparent evidence of negligence of the Central Government towards this part of the country.

Conclusion :

To conclude with, North-East part of the country is a land blessed with immense opportunities to commercialize in terms of the global market. Just that in order to bring it up the global scenario, the Government is yet to put its hands in some major efforts to encourage the women section of the North-East to stand up in the global market. For the law makers also have equal and very vital role to play. If these lacunas are eliminated, then one day this God-blessed land would be shining as a rich star in the global market worldwide and its women will set example to the entire women race for more integrity and empowerment. □

* *Kuntala Deka is an advocate of Gauhati High Court.*

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Dr. A.K. Saikia

Introduction

Though the concept of feminism came into being as a movement or theory supporting women's rights on the grounds of equality of the sexes, the term has often been misused. It is often questioned whether feminism has reduced itself to a mere slogan in the changing first world scenario. In place of male chauvinism there has been talks of female chauvinism in an environment of emerging economic independence enjoyed by the well educated women holding high profile jobs. Leaving aside all sort of inequalities the most important one remains to be the inequality of the economic status with a big urban rural divide. Urban women are evidently in a better position than their counterparts in the village. As poverty and feminism can't go shouldering each other the preaching of feminism has sometimes become an urban woman's luxury.

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Poverty may be regarded as the most dangerous of all social diseases. It bars a person to be economically self dependent and force a person to be a social parasite. Though poverty doesn't have any sex or religion, the females are affected much more than their male counterparts. The status of women in society is directly linked with social and cultural traditions, stages of economic development achieved, educational levels and political achievements of women in society.

Factors influencing economic status of woman :

1. Socio-economic and cultural factor determine broadly the natures of economic and non-economic role played by women in the society.
2. Demography of female population like age composition, age at marriage, fertility rate, rural-urban composition of population, health and nutrition, religion and caste determine the potential labour force and women's share in it.
3. Any appraisal of women's economic roles and their opportunities for participation in economic activities are closely linked with the society's stages of development and social ideology concerning the basic components of status.
4. According to one International Labour Organization report, out of total female activities included in labour force only 34 percent are the market activities and the reverse is true for male labourers.

These are the factors posing difficulties in using any uniform indicators to assess the economic status of women. Indian economy is characterized by heterogeneity in socio-economic

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situations and inequality in the rates of development in different regions.

Economic Status of Women in Assam :

In Assam the rural sector is dominant with 85% of its population living in more than 24000 villages and char areas 77% of its workers are engaged in agriculture and its allied activities. The share of domestic product by the agricultural sector is about 45 per seat.

Percentage of female population and sex ratio in Assam as in three consecutive census reports is as follows :

Females per thousand males.

1981 - 896

2001 - 932

2011 - 954

This trend of increasing female ratio is a bit encouraging though it can't be a sole factor for upliftment of status of women in Assam. If we have a look at the child sex ratio of 2001 & 2011 it is indeed much more encouraging. It has been a big leap from 845 per thousand male child in 2001 to 957 per thousand male child in 2011.

In case of female literacy also it has been a big leap forward from 51.85% in 2001 to 67.27% in 2011. Though these are encouraging features the fact that 58 infants die in every 1000 live births in Assam where more than 60% deaths occur to female child only speak volumes regarding the rearing up of female child in rural disadvantageous households. Infant mortality rate in Assam is also shocking and there is a big gap suggesting insufficient health delivery system in rural Assam. When national average of infant mortality rate is 47 in the rural areas of Assam it is 60 and it certainly effects the lives of the female children.

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The female population itself can be a yardstick for knowing status of women in a particular state like Assam. As per studies a female child has got abilities more than a male child to survive in a hostile environment. But still the number of female child in the under-5 children category is much less than expected. Though female foeticide was not even reported or heard in this part of the country decades back this social evil of practising female foeticide has become a regular phenomenon here also counting for less number of female child. Under eighteen bride rate is also very high in Assam with 8.8%. Still now the practice of dowry is not so prevalent in Assam comparing to the other north Indian states but the fast changing social order and embracement of pan-indian cultural practices have brought in lots of evils not heard otherwise here in Assam a few years back.

The poverty of the women workforce here in Assam is due to non-improvement of agricultural sector in matter of its produce, under developed arena of allied agricultural activities like live stock farming and animal husbandry, less number of demand based and resource based small scale enterprises, underdevelopment of handloom and weaving sector, non-revival of sericulture industry, food processing industries and limited avenues of tailoring embroidery and knitting etc. Feminism is a distant thing to happen here with this dismal economic scenario.

As per state-wise female participation rates, 1971, against India's total female participation rates 13.18% it was only 6.15% in Assam. A high percentage of women work in home supplementing the family budget and taking care of children and other members of the family. But such home-based workers don't figure in either the Census or other official statistics. Domestic works like cleaning, washing, cooking and distribution of prepared food items by the women are not taken in account.

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Lakhs of women work in tea plantations as regular employees. In tribal areas the percentage of women workers is equal to men or even higher. But in spite of all these the gap of economic status between male and female workers still remains.

Though the modern health care delivery system has revolutionized a lot, the benefit has not been percolated down to the needy in the rural area, specially the womenfolk residing there. There may be a few reasons for this discrimination against women. Firstly, women in general have to bear extra responsibility in society as the producer and sustainer of life. Unfortunately most of the women have to find their own resources to meet the expenses of responsibility. In a state like Assam where major chunk of items are to be imported it is quite scarce and with little education to support them, these responsibilities make a heavy toll on the health of women. Secondly the low social status of women prevailing in general is responsible for the neglect shown to the affairs related to women be it health, food or education.

Co-relation Between Feminism and Globalization :

There are contrasting views. Many critics fear that globalization in the sense of integration of a country into a so-called world society will exacerbate gender inequality. It may harm women -especially in the developing countries in several ways.

- 1) Economically, through discrimination against male workers, marginalization of women in work places, impoverishment through loss of traditional sources of income like 'gamocha' once made in village looms in Assam are now being produced in a large scale basis in some large industrial hubs of the country.

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- 2) Politically, through excluding the women from the domestic political process.
- 3) Culturally through loss of identity and autonomy to a hegemonic and all engulfing global culture.

Positive effects of globalization

For some globalization has got some positive effects also in the cause of feminism.

- 1) It creates new standards for the treatment of women, helping women's groups to mobilize
- 2) In situations where women have been historically repressed or discriminated under a patriarchal division of labour, some features of globalization may have liberating consequence

Conclusion

Feminism, to be an effective tool for women emancipation, the status of women must be uplifted in all fronts. Today women of the world in general or of the state of Assam in particular are plagued by so many problems. Illiteracy, economic slavery, political non-empowerment, lack of social support system, unhealthy and unhygienic working conditions, under payment in workplaces, under employment, domestic violence, early marriage and early motherhood are some of the issues crippling the women folk in urban and rural areas alike. If we go deeper to the problems poverty comes out to be the prime factor working behind the scene. Without bringing the fair sex at par economically with their male counterparts feminism will remain a farce, like building castles in the air.

The rural women folk of Assam are in the most disadvantageous position. They are not given their dues in their work place for their inability to assert their rights.

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Though the sex ratio has been improving gradually over the decades and female literacy rate being increased day by day in the state there is no room for complacency. The menace like infanticide unheard of earlier is to be fought at the earliest. There is enough scope of improved health delivery system for taking care of rural women's health.

Globalization has brought in various changes in realization of the self in the pan cultural and multi ethnic scenario. Integration of a country into a world society is apprehended to exacerbate gender inequality.

Amongst positive effects of globalization - setting of new standards or liberating consequences in a repressive patriarchal society may well be enumerated. □

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* A.K. Saikia is a renowned short story writer in Assamese and a practising eye-specialist.

Role of Media in Women Empowerment

Gurmail Singh

No society is said to be progressive unless the women population is empowered. Without proper empowerment of women the development process is incomplete. It is indeed a matter of fact that the media has always been extremely helpful in protecting the rights of the women and its empowerment. The media has been doing so as part of their commitment to social responsibility. The media through its relentless effort highlighted the basic problems of women and contributed to upholding the cause of the community. Being a responsible part of the society it is expected that media will always contribute positively as regards to the development and empowerment of women. However it has been observed that sometimes a section of media willingly or carelessly indulged in such activities which is nothing but against the spirit of their commitment. They are liable to own responsibility for any negative impact on the society while highlighting a news item or program. Anyway, before going to

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discuss it in details, let us have a glance at the media and its ethics.

What is a Newspaper ?

Reporting : What is news? Whatever the daily papers report is 'news', else we wouldn't buy and read them day after day. But, sex, crime and violence, sports and politics are not the only material that make news. Nor do big names alone mean news. Disaster stories e.g. accidents, famines gain its due place in the daily press, and these provide 'human interest' stories. Developments in science, industry and agriculture are increasingly gaining weightage as interesting news as in the same fashion the exposure of corruption in high places, the exploitation of the lower classes and workers, and social injustice and inequalities resulting from social, economic and political structures have done.

Of course, all the news reported is not news of the highest interest to everybody. Politics interest some, sports others, crime still others. That is why papers carry different types of news about various subjects of interest so that the information needs of different readers are fulfilled. However it is rare that our papers touch on the information needs and interest of the poorer section of society.

Type : News reports are classified into two broad types—straight news reports and investigative or interpretative news reports. Straight news reports present what has happened in a straight-forward, factual and clear manner. They draw no conclusions, do not offer any opinions. There is no attempt to probe deeper into the surface happenings, or to provide elaborate background information or even to examine the claims made.

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Both these news stories merely present the claims, without trying in any way to question or rebut, or ask why. Investigative report, on the other hand, would make an effort to go behind the claims to see how valid they are. They report happenings in depth, present fairly all sides of the pictures in the context of the situation, and generally, put some meaning into the news so that the reader is better able to understand and analyze the event.

So, investigative or interpretative reporting is not necessarily getting 'scoops' and sensationalizing them but it is rather situation reporting in place of event or personality reporting. It is indeed a calm, restrained and detached manner of arriving at the conclusions or at studied opinions from factual bits of evidence at hand. It may be reflective, even speculative, but always based on hardcore evidence.

An investigative report begins with a hunch as there is something more than meets the eye. Ashwini Sarin or *Indian Express* had heard of wretched conditions in the Tihar Central Jail, but felt there was much more than mere hearsay in the reports. He wanted to do an investigative report on the jail and so got arrested on a flimsy charge and refused bail. In mid 1979, the *Indian Express* carried four investigative reports by him on the inside story of Tihar Jail. More recently, the same reporter disguised himself and 'bought' a girl to acquire first-hand knowledge of, and report on the 'flesh trade' in an area not far from Delhi. The Calcutta weekly, *Sunday* too excels in such reporting. With the help of its ever alert reporters, it has exposed the Bhagalpur buildings, and other police atrocities (often termed 'encounters') in many parts of the country.

Newspapers are turning more and more to investigative and interpretative reporting, as TV and radio have a clear edge over them in giving up-to-the minute developments in news

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around the world. The morning's papers of course provide news in much greater detail, but it is all the same yesterday's news, which is in fact stale news. This leads to some sort of a competition between the electronic and print media. There would have been no objection had the competition been a healthy one. But unfortunately it is not. Sometimes, we observe that in order to get cheap popularity, both the media without any hesitation get involved in such activities which may stand against their ethical values.

Now what is the ethical value of a journalist ? It is said that the journalists have clear responsibilities to their own convictions, but more so to the public. The following are the responsibilities.

1. Contractual responsibilities in relation to their media and their internal organizations.
2. A social responsibility entailing obligations toward public opinion and society as a whole.
3. Responsibility or liability deriving from the obligation to comply with the law.
4. Responsibility towards the international community relating to respect of human values.

Concepts of Press Ethics : Journalistic codes usually take into account the following concepts :

- (a) Safeguarding freedom of information.
- (b) Freedom of access to information sources.
- (c) Objectivity, accuracy, truthfulness or non-misrepresentation of facts.
- (d) Responsibility to the public, and its rights and interest and in relation to national, racial and religious communities, the nation, the state and maintenance of peace.

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- (e) The obligation to refrain from calumny, unfounded accusations, slander, violations of privacy.
- (f) Integrity and Independence.
- (g) The right of reply and of correction.
- (h) Respect for professional confidentiality.
- (i) Consideration for cultural, social or ethnic codes of individual countries.

In spite of these high moral values, the media is sometimes indulging in such activities that it would not be improper to say that there might be erosion in the credibility of the media soon. Without going to national perspectives, let us have a look into the role of media in our state.

In this regard I would like to refer to two incidents that took place in two districts of Assam. One was in Morigaon and the other was in Jorhat.

In Morigaon town, one house of two rooms was under the occupation of a young boy. The boy was a college student. Many of his friends including boys and girls used to assemble in his house frequently. Sometimes they came in a group or alone. People of the locality had no good impression about the boy and his friends as they created a little nuisance in the name of having party. One day the boy came with a girl of his age and locked the door from inside. They were being noticed by few local people. Sensing some sort of foul play they gathered outside the house and informed the local police. Accordingly a local police party under the supervision of a Sub-Inspector arrived at the spot. The police party found both the boy and girl in an objectionable condition after forcefully entered into the house. The duty of the police party was to take both of them to the local police station immediately. But it was not done. Instead of that, the Sub-Inspector informed the local media who spent no

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time to reach that particular house. One reporter from an electronic media found the news rather dull since the game was over. The reporter insisted the police to make them at least half naked in that particular bed so that the news become attractive and hot. The Sub-Inspector without raising any objection agreed to his proposal and ordered his juniors to do so. The hot shot was taken and as soon as the news reached the channel treated it as one the hot item in their news bulletin throughout the day.

Somehow the incident came to light and few NGOs including some local women organizations raised their voice against the police action. The protest put pressure on top brass of Morigaon police, who later placed the Sub-Inspector along other two constables under suspension. The protest against the police and the action taken by the authority of Morigaon Police was published in the print and electronic media. But no one has ever heard of any action taken against the said reporter who insisted the police to make the news hot by that particular news channel. Does the authority of the news channel have no responsibility? Do they think that they have got every right to do what they intends irrespective of its moral and ethical values?

Similar kind of an incident took place in a district of Assam. A school teacher of an M.V. School of Jorhat District, was accused of misbehavior towards the little girl students under the influence of alcohol. The teacher, as alleged, was asking the girl students whether they know about the importance of bras and subsequently advised them to wear bras as it is helpful in shaping their breasts, Embarrassed and feared, the girls later informed their parents about the incident. Annoyed parents assembled at the school campus next day and demanded action against the accused teacher. They even shouted slogans outside the Head Master's office chamber. The local media got the news

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and rushed to the spot immediately. They not only passed the news to their respective Head Quarters but one reporter of an electronic channel went forward to take the byte from the shaky little girl students. The reporter did not even hesitate to ask the girl students whether the teacher at any point touched their breasts or not. Surprisingly the news channels allowed the news to be viewed by their viewers without bothering to edit the same. What otherwise would have remained within the four walls of a school class room was never bothered to think before telecasting this sort of news that it could affect or have negative impact on other students of tender age ? Don't they have any moral responsibility?

This sort of behaviour on the part of the media degenerates values associated with the empowerment of women and its role as such is definitely not healthy. Let us hope that the friends in media would be kind enough to behave more sensibly so that a healthy atmosphere regarding empowerment of women can be nurtured. □

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* Gurmail Singh is a writer, journalist and the former information and public relation officer.

Women's Economic Rights in a Globalized World

Sumi Bora

Introduction

Conceptual frameworks of globalization have been contentious and diverse views circulate regarding its meaning. However, before making an attempt to discuss women's economic right in a globalized world it is pertinent to offer some views regarding globalization. The Human Development Report of South Asia, 2001, has defined globalization as 'the free movement of goods, services, people and information across national boundaries. It creates and in turn, is driven by an integrated global economy, which influences both economic as well as social relations within and across countries.' Globalization is regarded as a complex 'web of interconnectedness' (Heywood : 2002) and also seen as 'a historical process which involves the widening, depending and speeding up and growing impact of worldwide connectedness.' (Bayles, Smith & Owens : 2008)

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Poor women help to drive the global economy through both their paid and unpaid work, but millions see their ability to claim their economic rights and make a decent living undermined. A glance at world poverty figures indicate that some regions are gaining more out of globalization than others. In the struggle to earn a livelihood for themselves and their families, poor women in the developing countries face profound, often unacknowledged, discrimination as women. The present paper would deal with the complex and diverse experiences women face in the economic arena due to globalization and offer some suggestive measures to eradicate its menacing effects.

The Brighter Facet : In recent decades women's share of formal paid jobs has increased in almost all regions of the world and especially in the developing countries. Earlier, most women of these countries were engaged in income generating activities at a very limited level and they remained dependent mainly on the males for their subsistence. By opening up multifaceted avenues of employment, globalization has brought welcome changes to women's economic life, especially to those women living in conservative countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Thailand and Indonesia. A wide range of reports suggest that in the last twenty years, trade liberalization has created ample employment for millions of women. According to Oxfam Reports, 2004, in Kenya 75%, in Sri Lanka 85%, Cambodia 90%, India 48%, the Philippines 74% and China 80% of workforce are women. Globalization which leads to privatization and liberalization of the economy has led to the burgeoning of the informal sector in the developing countries. This provides employment avenues for large number of unskilled and semi-skilled women labourers. This prospect attracts women because it provides better opportunities of combining paid work with domestic responsibilities.

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The Darker Side : The imperialist offensive on state regulated economies began by Reagan and Thatcher, intensified from the late 1980s. Globalization as an ideology and strategy involves using the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO to transfer wealth from poor to the rich and from the peripheries to the core countries. Hundreds of millions have been impoverished since the late 1980s across the world. For women, the impact of globalization has been uneven. A small layer have gained work opportunity in terms of newly emerging forms of employment, especially in the IT, service and food-processing sectors, but the semi/unskilled ones have lost control over their natural resources (land, water, forest etc.) as well as in traditional industries, resulting in the loss of traditional livelihood and sustainability.

Feminization of Employment : Women are still concentrated in jobs associated with their traditional role as caregivers and providers, such as nursing, teaching or cleaning, or with imputed feminine characteristics such as 'nimble fingers'*, the patience to do repetitive tasks all day, and docility. Such work tends to be seen as low skilled, perhaps because women often do this type of work as part of their unpaid domestic responsibilities. As a result, it is undervalued and badly paid. Discrimination against women in the job market contributes to world poverty; of the world's 550 million 'working poor', an estimated 330 million are women*. For example, on farms in South Africa's Cape Province, which supply Europe's super markets, women prune, and sort and pack the fruits, all tasks that are paid less than the irrigation, driving and supervisory jobs men tend to be given. The growing predominance of international trade in the economy has meant a growing power of exporters and importers. Both Indian and transnational companies seek more women workers

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to gain flexible workers with cheaper wages. Women workers are seen as more subservient to male managers' authority, and hence hired more. They are also perceived as anti-union/lesser capability to organize unions, more willing to accept poor working conditions and easier to dismiss using lifecycle criteria such as marriage and childbirth.

Low Wage and Insecure Jobs : The value of world's exports almost doubled between 1993 and 2003 and developing countries' share in these exports surged. Most of this increased share comes from the sweatshops and assembly lines of China and East Asia, where many workers are young, single women, usually migrants from rural areas. They are the ideal fodder for the worldwide production networks that characterize today's trade in electronic goods, textiles and garments, providing cheap and flexible labour. In China's Guangdong Province, one of the world's fastest growing industrial areas, 60% of women garment workers have not written contract and 90% have no social insurance*. Meanwhile, women working in manufacturing in other parts of world such as, Peru, Mozambique and Morocco, have either lost their jobs altogether or been force into informal, inferior work due to the increased competition that trade liberalization has brought. The reality is that many have little choice but to endure low pay and harsh conditions due to absence of effective labour protection and the denial of their right to organize as workers. Together with the removal of trade barriers and controls, and improvements in communication and transport, it allows the big retailers and brand companies, such as Wal-mart in the US, Tesco in the UK or world brand Nike, to shop around the best deal from all over the world. This farms that supply them, too, are free to move around; the director of a big transnational company has likened

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the factory of today to 'a ship that drops anchor wherever wage costs are lowest'. *Under pressure to maximize short term profits for their shareholders, retailers and brands demand ever-faster turnaround times for orders, higher quality and lower prices, putting the squeeze on their suppliers and at the far end of the supply chain, the women making the goods. Factory managers know all too well that, if they refuse an order, or fail to deliver on time, the buyer may go elsewhere and never come back. Rather than protecting the rights of their women workers, governments all too often turn a blind eye to labour law violations. In some cases, for example in Bangladesh, Colombia and Nicaragua, they have actually started to weaken labour legislation, so as not to loss out to competitor countries.

Assam is no different to this grim situation where women in the informal sector are earning lower wages than their male counterparts. The existing secondary data about the farm workers indicate that among unskilled labourers in the agricultural sector (Reaper and Harvester), the daily wage of women during 2001-2002 was Rs. 40.73, while that of male workers was Rs. 50.71*. Thereafter there is continuous increase in average daily wage of both male and female workers; but the wages earned by female workers is found it be always less than that of male workers. During 2008-2009, the average daily wage of male workers became Rs. 82.55 and that of female workers became Rs. 66.76. The same situation prevails with the workers in the agricultural sector. Among the agricultural workers the average daily wage of Rs. 47.02 during 2001-2002; which increased to Rs. 83.47 during 2008-2009; while for the women workers the average wage during 2001-2002 was Rs. 42.16 and Rs. 66.6 during 2008-2009*.

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Pressure on Workers : Rohini Hensman argues that an 'anti-globalization' agenda would actually deprive third world women of job opportunities and improving their conditions. According to her the talk of alternatives at the present juncture is but a dream and reality demands recognizing that some job is better than no job. Even if trade unions have collapsed due to capitalist offensive, jobs for some women enable them to survive, to be independent of male relatives and feed their families. However, the NGO Shadow Report (2006) on CEDAW shows a considerable decline and in some cases closure of employment opportunities for large number of women. Work participation rates for women fell from 444 per thousand in 1993-1994 to 419 in 1999-2000 in rural India and from 154 per thousand to 139 in urban India in the same period.

Inter-capitalist competition under neo-liberal free market conditions mean intense pressure on workers viz. (a) Labour flexibility - a shift in many sectors from full time, pensionable, medical benefit, enabled jobs to part time, temporary, sub-contracted and home-based work, (b) Casualization of labour - companies use a small amount of permanent labour force, and hire casual workers depending on the expansion of work, (c) Feminization of certain types of labour, especially home based and low skill jobs. The consequences are : (i) decline of regular social security based work, (ii) Fragmentation of labour processes - the creation of a small layer of well-paid skilled workers and a large segment of low-salaries workers, mostly women. Labour flexibility tantamount to supper-exploitation of women who have to do both household work and 'flexible' production, with no flexible time for themselves.

Weak Legislations : In spite of protective legislations and Minimum Wages Act, the workers in the organized sector are

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not adequately better off as there is lack of political will to implement them. While, the minimum wages fixed by the Indian government are low (Rs. 80 per day), even that basic level is denied to many workers. Creches in workplaces are often not maintained in violation of the Factories Act. (1987), where according to the act crèches are supposed to be maintained only when there are 30 women employees. Women activist in India are demanding for the clause 30 women to be replaced by 30 men and women employees. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 is seldom implemented in India. The definition and evaluation of the same work or of a similar nature often makes gender discrimination very easy. In the formal sector there are laws to protect equal pay, but due to lesser access to education and consequent lower skills women cannot get the better paid jobs. In the informal sector women workers have neither contracts nor social security, and have low wages and unhygienic working conditions. The lack of income security for women in the informal sector also means children's lack of access to education. As a result the children also get pushed into informal sector themselves. The worst of among all the unorganized sector women are the women employed across urban India as domestic maids. Since 1959, there have been repeated, but abortive attempts to legislate their security, (the latest being the Domestic Workers Registration Social Security and Welfare Act. 2008) because the ruling elite in India, as well as the more comfortable layer of the salaried population, all depend on exploiting such people, most of whom are women. Formally, the new Act provides for implementation of the Minimum Wages Act, 15 days a year paid leave and 10 hours of rest time per day. But the phrase 'as far as practicable' leaves a leeway for flouting its provision under any pretext.

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Exploitative Working Environment : Poverty, lack of medical insurance, and forced overtime and the culture of self denial often make health the first casualty. Women suffer from malnutrition, chronic anemia, TB, respiratory problems, pelvic inflammatory disease, severe cases of dehydration and miscarriages are common. Globalization in particular has led to the rise of Export Promotion Zones (EPZ) and the Free Trade Zone (FTZ), all more recently renamed Special Economic Zones (SEZ). In these areas, women's employment is more precarious. To avoid payment of maternity benefits, women are thrown out of job if they get married, and certainly if they are found to be pregnant. One example of exploitation of women labour is found in the Noida Export Processing Zone, which is 24 km. from New Delhi. The zone prefers to hire women who have to work in unhealthy environment. There are no maternity benefits and minimum wage is never enforced. Women workers are fired if they happen to marry or get pregnant. This at time leads to unsafe abortions by many women workers. Overtime is compulsory but women are paid lower rates than men. The issue is that, rather than having to endure exploitation that takes advantage of their weak bargaining position, women worker should be able to enjoy at least the basic labour rights set out by the ILO.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The above discussion effectively drives home the point that globalization has both brighter and darker aspects, but the darker often surpass the brighter ones. As it is not possible to avoid the global forces at this stage, attempts should be made to minimize the adverse effects of globalization. In this sphere, the NGOs can play a role by creating awareness about women's rights. They can hold regular workshops and seminars

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to sensitize women regarding their economic rights. A network of working women across the globe should be built up by harnessing the benefits of global information technology to fight for the legitimate rights of women. They should pressurize the law-making bodies to create gender-sensitive laws. The government should also strictly adhere to the existing law and remove the loopholes which weaken them. Strategies need to be designed to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts, which are the output of globalization. In order to ensure benefits of globalization women's equal participation in the democratic process is indispensable so that they can play a major role in the decision-making process. Advocacy for UN primacy in addressing the lack of institutional democracy and transparency in the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO along with reviewing trade related negotiations and treaties to identify gender biases should be done at the earliest. □

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Violation of Women's Human Rights : An Indian Perspective

Deepa Saikia

Introduction

Human rights are often understood as the rights that everyone has by virtue of his/her humanity . Human rights violations against women in India are often complicated by discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, sexual identity, caste, religion class or age.

There has however been a celebration of the contributions that the woman makes in every sphere of life; be it at home as a mother or a wife or a sister or a daughter, or on the job as in any profession and conducts that you can imagine her to take up, also being a leader that rules and conducts public affairs. She is also viewed differently by the sciences, biology has pronounced her weak, psychology has deduced her to be inferior and sociology has only shouldered her with the taboos and the dogmas, and the fact that she has always been man's

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subordinate. Indian society has often been a silent witness to the shocking tales of behaviour against them. Sexual abuse, violence, dowry and denials have always been a regular feature. Violence against women is not confined to any group or caste. There is violence from the womb to the tomb. Violation of Women's Human Rights is a significant phenomenon in understanding the negative trends of Indian society. In fact, history of Women's Human rights is a history of violence in India.

Infants are denied food, or drowned, or suffocated, simply because they are born as girls. Women and girls are tagged with rate cards in the flesh market. They are burnt to death because of their inability to pay for their existence! They are denied to plan for their own families, and this includes forced abortions, or sterilizations against their will. This is an insult to the foundation of human rights!

“Human rights are women’s rights - and women’s rights are human rights.” This is the message that echoes forth in the fourth World conference on women in Beijing in 1995 ‘a women must enjoy the right to participate fully in the social, political lives of her own country; if we want freedom and democracy to thrive and endure.’

Factors responsible for violation of women’s human rights

The paradox of our social behaviour is that the people worship women as goddess Durga, Kali, Laksmi on the one hand and in the same household she is tortured, beaten and burnt to death. The roots of violation of Women's human rights penetrate deep into the social psyche of Indian people, because of some socio-cultural and religious factors. In Ramayana Sita has to undergo Agnipariksha to prove her purity. She was exiled by her husband under social compulsion even when she was

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pregnant . In Mahabharata Dharmaraj Yudhisthira lost his wife in a game of dice, and finally could not protect her from the trauma of Bastraharana. A wife, a daughter was treated not as a human being but as a movable property. During the time of Manu, the position of women became so miserable that even woman battering, widow burning etc were customs. At that time a woman was nothing but a domestic slave. Again in Muslim rule in India the customs of Pardah, child marriage, keeping Harem by rich persons were the factors responsible for the violation of women's human Rights. Other example which proves sorrowful condition of women was the traditional practice that prevailed in India called Sati Pratha. It was believed that a wife has no meaning of her life after the death of her husband and so with his dead body she too was forced to die. These are the clear pictures of violation of women's human rights in ancient India

Even now in Indian society a wife is expected to give all kinds of satisfaction to her husband and to her in-laws. She must learn to suppress her voice.: In many societies, rape victims, women suspected of engaging in premarital sex, and women accused of adultery have been murdered by their relatives because the violation of a woman's chastity is viewed as an affront to the family's honor (Honour killing). This practice is much common in Tamil-Nadu. Early marriage is a common practice that is prevailing in most of the villages of India . This is a form of sexual violence, since young girls are often forced into the marriage and into sexual relations, which jeopardizes their health, raises their risk of exposure to Venereal diseases / AIDS and limits their chance of attending school.. Parents and families marry off their younger daughters as a means of gaining status for themselves as well as for their daughters

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In Indian society, gender discrimination has been an alarming phenomenon. The sense of inferiority robs a woman of her basic human rights. There are innumerable customs and social mandates, where parents of the bride are obliged to offer to in-laws family in the name of rituals. If she resists, that is proved to be provocative and uncivilized. India is a society where the male is greatly revered. Women get very little standing in this country. Since women do not take nutritious diet, it causes malnutrition, especially among pregnant or nursing women.. This is one of the main reasons for the increasing maternal as well as infant mortality rates. Starting from birth girls do not receive as much care and commitment from their parents and society as the boys. The literacy rates among women is low compared to men. All the females in a household have the responsibility of the house work. Most women are over worked with no maternity rest or special breaks. But, the work performed by women is unrecognized and invisible. Reality is that violations of Human rights against specific groups of women are more vulnerable, including minority groups, indigenous and migrant women, refugee women and those in situations of armed conflict, women in institutions and detention, women with disabilities, female children, and elderly women .

Educational status of common Indian women is below standard. Education is required as an equipment to struggle with life, which lends a woman the strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, acceptance and courage– the priceless, intangible entity. It gives her the heart of a lioness, so that she is not forced to remain silent for fear of any religious, political or social persecution.

Another factor responsible for violation of women human right is economic deprivation and unemployment. Poverty is a ruthless task master; it exacts an exorbitant price in terms of

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denial of basic human rights i.e. food, shelter, clothing, education, healthcare etc. Poverty push some girls and women to engage in sex work, almost always the desperate, last choice of people without other choices. The provisions of funds for the welfare of women under government schemes are too little to meet out the desired results.

The political status of women in India is also unsatisfactory, particularly their representation in higher political institutions—Parliament and Provincial Legislatures remain under-representation which hampers their effective role in influencing the government initiatives and policies regarding women's welfare and development.

Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of women's human rights. Violation of women's human rights is rooted in a global culture that discriminates against women and denies them equal rights with men. This global culture legitimizes the violent appropriation of women's bodies for individual gratification. The human body is commodified. Some middle class girls choose this profession for money. This is also manifested in the form of nationalist pride exhibited through Indian women winning international beauty pageants .

This erosion comes through media and other means of communication. This impact of western values has contributed to dating, celebration of valentine day, night clubs, living together etc, and resulted in rising number of call girls and make them more prone to sexually transmitted diseases. Now a days, there are more scandals and scams compared to pre-globalization era. Girls being blackmailed by their ex-boy friends using MMS.

Role of Indian Constitution

The Indian constitution guarantees the equality of rights of

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men and women, but because of certain situational factors it is imperative to discuss the women's human rights separately. The women's human rights can be categorized as under— Right to equality, Right to education, Right to life with dignity, Right to liberty, Political rights, Right to property, Right to equal opportunity for employment, Right to free choice of profession, Right to livelihood, Right to work in equitable condition, Right to get equal wages for equal work, Right to protection from gender discrimination, Right to social protection in the eventuality of retirement, old age and sickness, Right to protection from inhuman treatment, Right to protection of health, Right to privacy in terms of personal life, family, residence, correspondence etc. and Right to protection from society, state and family system.

The women's human rights have been elaborated in various provisions of the Part three of the Indian Constitution that is Fundamental Rights and Part four that is Directive Principles of State Policy. Indian legislatures have enacted relevant laws for the promotion of welfare and empowerment of women from time to time. Some of its enactments are—

1. The Factory Act, 1976 (amendment in the Factory Act of 1948)
2. Minimum Wages Act, 1948
3. Employees State Insurance Act, 1948
4. Garden Employees Act, 1951
5. Mines Act, 1952
6. Special Marriages Act, 1954
7. Hindu Succession Act, 1955
8. Hindu Succession Act, 1956
9. Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
10. Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956

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11. Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956
12. Maternity benefit Act, 1961
13. Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
14. Christian Marriage Dissolution Act, 1966
15. Family Courts act 1984
16. Foreign Marriages Act, 1969
17. Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act
18. Protection of Muslim women rights Act
19. Equal Wages Act, 1976
20. Contract Labour (Regulation and Eradication) Act, 1979
21. Interstate Migrant Labour (Regulation of Employment and Condition of Work) Act, 1979
22. People Related to Film Industry and Theatre (Regulation of Employment) Act, 1981
23. Family Court Act, 1984
24. Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
25. Protection under criminal Procedure Code Amendments to Criminal Laws
26. Juvenile Court Act, 1986
27. Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987
28. Mental Health Act, 1987
29. National Women Commission Act, 1990
30. Baby Milk Substitution, Milk Feeding Bottles and Baby Food (Regulation Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992
31. Pre-Natal diagnostic Technology Act
32. Protection of women from domestic violence(Protection) Act 2006
33. Protection Of Human rights Act 1993 etc.

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The 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Acts, 1992 have provided 33 per cent reservation of seats to women in Rural and Urban local bodies. This reservation also applies to the post of chairpersons in such bodies. This provision has facilitated the entry of one million women as members and chairpersons in Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies.

The following main committees are related with development and welfare of women directly and indirectly upon whose suggestions various schemes have been designed.

1. National Committee on the Education of Women (1958-59)
2. National Committee on the Status of Women (1974)
3. National Committee on the Role and Participation of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (1977-78)
4. National Committee on Women Prisoners
5. National Committee on Working Women in the field of Self Employment and Informal Sector (1988).

Apart from these schemes, Central and State governments are striving for the welfare of women through various departments and agencies.

In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. India has ratified various international conventions and human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of women. Key among them is the ratification of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993.

Conclusion

But in spite of all these legislations and amendments and endeavour to protect women's human rights; the criminals are frequently escaped through the web of law because of inadequate police investigation, absence of special magisterial machinery and above all the sociological factors which encourage such criminals. To stamp out this menace an awareness in the society regarding human values and the rights of women and their enforcement is the need of the hour.

Crimes like rape, bigamy, bogus marriage, dowry deaths are increasing because of socio-economic status of women. Ignorance of law, absence of courage are factors for which most of the women are tortured physically, mentally, and socially. A girl or a woman in this tradition bound society is extremely reluctant to admit any incident which is likely reflect her chastity. She is conscious of the danger of being ostracized by the society, of being looked down upon. She would face the risk of losing love and respect of her matrimonial house and happiness being shattered. If she is unmarried, she would apprehend that if these things are published, it would be difficult for her to secure an alliance with a suitable partner from a respectable family. So the criminals escape from the nemesis of law. More over a woman in Indian society usually is not prepared to bring an incident like rape to the notice of police authorities since she knows that it means nothing but a beginning of her untold humiliation. In court she has to undergo the most humiliating, nerve shattering experience of cross examination by defence counsel. These procedures are nothing but adding salt to her injury. Justice is rarely meted out to the victims of forced cohabitation, molestations and sexual harassment who do not

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lodge a complaint for the fear of a social stigma. Thus sexual abuse and flesh trade are gnawing evils, which threaten the existence of women as independent entities.

In India, though various mechanisms such as the National Human Rights Commission, State Human Rights Commissions, and Women's Commissions have been constituted at the Centre and in the states, for upholding human rights and multifarious laws such as Human Rights Act, 1997 etc., yet human rights violations are the order of the day and the above 'law- enforcement' arsenals fall short of implementation. Without proper consciousness among common people; rights of women are merely enumerated on paper and hence remain a dead letter. So education becomes a must for every woman. Mere Knowledge of rights is not sufficient she must come with proper courage to enforce it, So that she will be able to defend, protect and attack like any creature of this truly equal world!

We have to keep pace with the globalization and scientific development, but at the same time have to safeguard our young generation from the influx of western culture which is devoid of any morality and human sensitivity. We should not forget that, women are primary caretakers of children. Mother is the fuel that encourages a human being to create a better nation. Because, the hands who rock the cradle can rock the world.

In the words of Swami Vivekananda "There is no chance for welfare of India unless the condition of women is improved .It is not possible for a bird to fly only on one wing." □

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Role of Women Self Help Groups in Poverty Alleviation and Employment Generation in Nagaon District

Pingki Sarma

Introduction

India is an agrarian country where 72.2 percent of the population live in rural areas (2001 Census Report, GOI) and a large number of them live in the state of underdevelopment and poverty. Alleviation of poverty and all around development of rural areas have been major objectives of planning in India. Therefore it becomes imperative to formulate situation-specific employment generation and poverty alleviation programmes to raise the level of income of the rural areas. Poverty can be defined as a social phenomenon in which a section of the society is unable to fulfill even its basic necessities of life like food, clothing, shelter and water. Poverty is one of the peculiar problems with which many developing countries are suffering.

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The financial requirement is one of the basic needs to the poorer section of the society for socio-economic development. Microfinance through Self Help Group (SHG) may be considered as vital option for meeting financial need of the poor section of the society. The planning commission as the nodal agency in Government of India for poverty has been estimating the number and percentage of poor at state and national level. According to the report of planning commission 2002-2005 the poverty line in rural and urban India are Rs. 356.30 and Rs. 538.60 per capita per month respectively. While in case of Assam the poverty line is Rs. 387.64 in rural areas and Rs. 378.84 in urban areas.

Till today, seventy two percent of the total population of our country live in rural areas and Assam is not the exception. Most of the rural people are unemployed. Various programmes such as National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Training of Rural Youth for self employment, Ganga Kalyan Youjana (GKY) etc were undertaken during 80's in order to alleviate poverty and increase employment opportunities by making the people self dependent. But most of the programmes have failed to bring a desirable change in living condition of the poor. The Self Help Group scheme is one of these measures started in the year 1992 with the introduction of Bank Linkage programme by NABARD. The concept of SHGs got a major impetus after the launching of Swarnajayanti Gram Swarajgar Youjana (SGSY) by the government of India in 1999 aiming to bring families above poverty line by increasing since the launching of SGSY. Till March 2006, 2.23 million SHGs were found in India while they crossed the mark of 5 million in the year 2008 out of which 90,000 SHGs belong to Assam.

Self Help Group

Self Help Group (SHG) is a small, economically homogenous affinity group for resource poor people, voluntarily formed to save small amount, convenient to all the members who mutually agree to contribute to a common fund and lend it to the members as per the decision of the group, to meet the emergent consumption and production needs. One of the most important functions of Self Help Groups is to promote small saving among its members. The savings are kept with a bank as common fund in the name of Self Help Groups. Hence the motto of SHG may be termed as "Saving First Credit Later". The ideal size of a Self Help Group is 10-20 members. The scheme SHGs have achieved success in bringing the women to the mainstream of decision making. SHG is also a viable to set up to disburse micro credit to the rural women and encourage them for entrepreneurial activities. All the credit needs of the rural women are fulfilled through the SHGs. SHGs encourage women to take active part in socio-economic progress of our nation.

Importance of the study

The Self Help Groups are playing a very important role for the promotion and mobilization of social resources. It creates employment opportunities and empowers the members and thereby helps them to improve their socio-economic status. Various Self Help Groups are trying to transform the socio-economic condition of the poor people. The numbers of unemployed people are increasing day by day in Assam. Self Help Groups may provide employment opportunities for such unemployed people. The unemployed housewives and farmers are participating actively in the group. The SHGs are not only increasing the income level of their families but also forming the

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habit of saving among the poor. The Planning Commission as the Nodal agency in the Government of India for estimation of poverty has been estimating the number and percentage of poor at national and state levels.

Performance of Self Help Group

Level of Education :

The performance and skill formation of the members depend to a great extent on the level of education of the members. The level of education of the members selected for interview are shown in the Table 3.4.

Table 1.1 : Education Level of the members

Levels	Number	Percentage
Illiterate	10	10
Primary	5	5
M.E.	11	11
Below HSLC	24	23
HSLC	37	36
HS	7	7
Graduation	8	8
Total	102	

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of primary data)

Marital Status :

Poverty is one of the factors that determine the marital status of the adult persons. The marital status of the members is shown in the following table 3.5.

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Table 1.2 : Marital status of the Self Help Group Members

Type	Numbers	Percentage
Married	77	75
Unmarried	25	25
Total	102	

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of primary data)

Type of Family :

There are mainly two types of families - (i) Nuclear (ii) Joint. By nuclear family we mean the family consisting spouses and their children. In joint family father, mother, brother and other relatives may live together in a house with common roof, take food from the same kitchen. The type of families are shown in the following table 3.6.

Table 1.3 : Types of Family

Type	Numbers	Percentage
Nuclear	63	62
Joint	39	38
Total	102	

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of primary data)

Occupational Pattern :

Table 1.4

Occupational Pattern of the Self Help Group members

Type	Numbers	Percentage
Agriculture	46	45
Business	22	21
Service	15	15
Artisans	6	6
Other	13	13
Total	102	100

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of field survey)

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Household Income :

The change of household income before joining of SHGs at present reveals that the per capital income of the group members has increased after joining SHGs.

Table 1.5 :

Per Capita Income of the respondents (Per Month)

Income Level (Rs)	No. of Respondent	
	Before SHG	After SHG
0-200	2	---
201-400	53	24
401-600	18	22
601-800	16	18
Above 800	13	38
Total	102	102

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of field survey)

From the above table it is clear that the per capital income of the group members has increased after joining SHGs.

Employment Generation by SHGs :

After formation of SHG, employment opportunities have increased and as a result, many family members also got employment opportunities. (Table 3.9)

Table 1.6 : Employment Generation by SHGs

Type of Worker	No. of Persons	
	Before SHG	After SHG
Unemployment	52	---
Work 1-10 days in a month	9	17
10-20 days in a month	39	53
20-30 days in a month	2	32
Total	102	102

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of field survey)

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Sustainability of the Enterprise :

While asking the groups whether employment generation through their enterprise is sustainable, slightly over 72 percent of the respondents feel that the employment generated through their enterprise is sustainable. (Table 3.10)

Table 1.7

Opinion of the members regarding sustainability of their enterprise

Type	No.
Sustainable	72
Unsustainable	30
Total	102

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of field survey)

Employment Generation for Family Members :

SHGs can also create employment generation opportunities for their family members also. 44 percent respondents replied affirmative in this issue. (Table 3.11)

Table 1.8

Members created opportunities for employment to their members

Participate	Numbers	Percentage
Members creating opportunities	45	44
Members not creating opportunities	57	56

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of field survey)

Performance of Self Help Groups :

A comparison is made here regarding the performance of male and female SHGs by taking certain parameters like, no. of groups whose monthly saving is regular, no. of groups linked with bank whose repayment is regular etc.

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Table 1.9 : Performance of Male and Female SHG

Particular	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage
No. of Groups whose monthly saving is regular	29	63	48	86
No. of Groups linked with Bank whose repayment is regular	32	70	50	89
3 Year moving average profit are –				
(a) Continuous rising	32	70	53	94
(b) Fluctuation	10	22	7	13
Attendance of the members in meeting	38	83	50	90
Systematic record keeping	33	72	50	90

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of field survey)

Main Activities of SHGs :

The SHGs are engaged in different types of activities like– agriculture, weaving, poultry, horticulture, fishery, medicine, piggery etc. (Table 3.13)

Table 1.10 : Main Activities of SHGs

Activities	No. of SHGs	Percentage
Agriculture	13	12
Weaving	18	18
Poultry	7	7
Horticulture	9	9
Fishery	12	11
Medicine	1	1
Piggery	9	9
Goatry	4	4
Cane & Bamboo	2	2
Consumable Goods	6	6
Suphari	3	3
Dairy	8	8
Power Tiller	8	8
Pottery	2	2

(Sources : Compiled by the researcher on the basis of field survey)

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From the study, it is found that the Self Help Groups have a positive impact on poverty alleviation. Before formation of groups 75% families belonged to BPL Groups, but it was reduced to 40% in 2007-08. Similarly per capita income of the members has also been increased. The burden of high rate of interest charged by the money lender (10 percent monthly) was reduced. SHG charges 2 to 6 percent rate of interest monthly from the borrowers of SHG members. There is also a positive impact on employment generation. Before joining SHGs out of 102 samples 52 respondents were unemployed. But after joining SHGs all of these got employment opportunity. It also reveals that the people who get employed for a few days are now able to get employment opportunity at least some days in a month. Slightly over 72 percent of the respondents feel that the employment generated through their enterprise is sustainable. Further it is seen that the performance of the Female Groups is comparatively better then the Male Groups.

From the analysis of the aforementioned information it reveals that financial position of most of the SHGs portage an average economic scenario. The rural people who are not able to get banking loans due to complex banking procedure and unable to provide sufficient security have of late been able to get the required amount of credit as members of SHGs. The unemployed housewives and farmers are participating actively in the activities of the groups. The SHGs are not only increasing the income level but also creating employment. The Self Help Groups in this area can be regarded as a growing social phenomenon for the present and future generation.

Suggestions and Conclusion

The successful working of SHGs in the right direction needs proper guidance. The financial banks as well as the government should take necessary step in this regard. Some suggestions as remedial measures to solve their problems may be put as :

- (a) Infrastructure Facilities : It is noticed that various infrastructure facilities in this area are not well developed which create lot of problems for well functioning of business enterprise. So, my first suggestion is that necessary steps in order to provide proper infrastructure facilities like road, power supply, water supply etc should be taken.
- (b) Proper training facilities : A large number of training centers or institutes should be established for imparting training to the people. Only a few SHGs of the area are able to get training. That is why the Government should establish some training institutes in various parts of the district, so that all the SHGs are able to get proper training. In this context of micro enterprise skill based practical training should be provided to the members.
- (c) Role of NGOs : NGOs can take various measures for the promotion of the SHGs. They can perform the following :
 - (i) Organization of Entrepreneurship Development Programme.
 - (ii) Motivational Campaign to motivate the educated unemployed youth for self employment.
 - (iii) Management Development Programmes.
 - (iv) Skill Development Programmes.
 - (v) Quality Control & Upgradation.

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- (d) **Marketing Facilities** : During my survey I have noticed that most of the SHGs consume their product by themselves. Some of the SHGs sell their product through middlemen/brokers. They also advertise and sell their product in different exhibitions. Still their marketing system have not been found good in my study. To improve the marketing system the SHGs should be trained or guided properly. Also the RRBs and SHIPs should provide necessary marketing facilities. So, that these groups may receive proper gain from their works.
- (e) **Co-ordination** : Proper Co-ordination among various SHGs should established. If they perform their common activities in coordinated way then they can enjoy the economy of large scale.
- (f) **Micro Finance** : It is obvious from the survey that members of SHGs are unable to take loan from different financial institution. Though some SHGs have received loan from different banks they are in great problem of refunding at high rate of interest. Micro Finance should be geared up so that the poor community may have the chances to borrow easily at very low rate of interest. They should be a separate bank for only dealing with SHG
- (g) **Harmonious Relationship** : A systematic and harmonious relationship between SHG, Government and bank should be maintained. So, that duplication of works and wastage of resources can be avoided.
- (h) **Transparency and Record keeping** : Record keeping has emerged as a very weak aspect of the SHG functioning. As a starting point for financial analysis,

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one has to look at group records. Self Help Group records should be maintained by SHG office bearers, SHPA staff, locally recruited book-keepers (paid a monthly honorarium by SHG) or other (unpaid) non members (relatives of leaders or other well-wishers).

- (i) **Equity** : All the members of an SHG save the same amount at each meeting. The question of equity refers to whether access to available credit is equitable. 'Equitable' here does not mean 'equal'. Since, as noted earlier, all members of an SHG are not economically equal, it follows that all members do not have equal credit absorption and repayment capacity. Group members should be well aware of this and generally prefer to allocate credit according to individual demand and capacity.
- (j) **Improvement in Techniques** : The SHGs should be familiarized with new and more economic methods of production. Modern tools should be popularized. Technical guidance and advice should be available.

Conclusion

The Self Help Groups can play a positive role in the rural development and people's participation in development programmes. They exhibit a high degree of flexibility. They are families with local condition and problems. Perhaps, for that reason they are the best agencies to organize the rural poor.

At a time, when people are getting increasingly accustomed to the failures of government schemes and programmes, a silent revolution is slowly taking place in the villages of the country. Similar phenomenon is also taking place in the study area. The spirited function of hundreds of SHGs engaged in organizing the

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rural poor through income generating activities is having a positive impact in improving the socio-economic life of the villages. The majority of these groups are working tirelessly to bring about a change for the betterment of the rural economy. The successful working of these Self Help Groups in the district establishes at least one thing that the beginning has made the right direction which can lead to a positive change in the state's rural economy. However proper guidance is required to make these Self Help Group healthy, good and sound. Self help is the best help. The Self Help Groups can play a positive role in the rural development as involvement of Self Help Groups ensures people's participation in development programmes. Any scheme may become successful if the members are motivated in the activities. This is a period in which our unemployment problem among the youth has been resisting the socio-economic development of the state. But it is most essential to motivate the youth for better living and socio-economic mobility. In this field the SHGs must play a vital role. Involvement of the youth in the SHGs may result in economic development of the society. □

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Women Education in Five Year Plans and Its Implementation

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Introduction

Education is the back bone of a society, because it ensures progress and development. The Indian Constitution attaches high priority to education. It plays an instrumental role in shaping the destiny of an individual and future of mankind.

In India, women had high social and religious status during Vedic Period. In Buddhist period women education followed very strict rules. Purdah System and child marriage were prevalent during Muslim period. Hence, the states and education among women went down rapidly from Muslim period.

Before independence missionaries were the pioneers of earliest modern schools for girls. The educational policy of 1854 Charles Wood laid stress on the spread of female education. After that various education commission gave importance on woman's education.

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The education of girls increased considerably after independence yet women and girls receive far less education than man. The country has a large number of populations of non school going and drop out girls. Eradication of female illiteracy has been one of the major concerns of the Govt. of India since Independence.

After independence, National Planning Commission was appointed in 1951, the year in which the first Five Year Plan was launched. (So far XI Five Year Plan has been formulated by Planning Commission for in various aspects of our development Country.) For the upliftment of education, welfare and empowerment of women planning commission has been formulating since its inception various schemes. Educated women not only tend to promote education of their children but also can provide better guidance to their children and promote the nation. In India education is still a distant dream for girls in the interior and remote villages. So this paper tries to focus on the five year plan and women education and various other problems in the field of implementation.

Objectives

1. To discuss the provision of women education in the five year plan.
2. Impact of five year plans on women education in India.
3. To trace out the problems in the implementation of five year plans in women education.
4. To give some suggestions to eradicate the problems.

Historical Review of Five Year Plan

Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of planning in India set up the national planning committee towards the end of 1938. The

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Committee considered all aspects of planning and produced a series of studies on different subjects concerned with economic development. The Committee aimed at doubling the standard of living of the people in 10 years.

Just after the attainment of independence the government set up the planning commission in 1950 to assess the country's needs of material capital and human resources so as to formulate a plan for their more balance and effective utilization. Consequently, the country embarked on an era of planning. The first five -year plan commenced in 1950-51 and was followed by a series of five year plans. So far eleven five year plans have been formulated by the planning commission. The members of planning commission realized the significance of women's education of our country and adopted special plan for women education.

Women Education

Education is the back bone of a society, because it ensures progress and development. Women play a prominent role in the cultural, political, religious and social life of a country. The ancient people of India fully realized this fact and accorded a reasonable status to women and encouraged their education. According to Vedas, women should have opportunity to attain knowledge of the Vedas from all the four courses. At that time Appla, Ghosha, Maitreyi, Gargi etc were highly qualified women.

In Buddhist period women education followed very strict rules. Purdah system and child marriage were prevalent among Muslim as well as Hindu people. The status and education among women went down rapidly from Muslim period.

Before independence missionaries were the pioneers of earliest modern schools for girls. The educational policy laid

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down by the despatch of 1854 laid stress on the spread of female education with regard to women education the despatch observed- 'The importance of female education in India cannot be overrated; and we have observed with pleasure the evidence which is now afforded of an increased desire on the part of many of the natives of India to give a good education to their daughters.' After that various education commissions gave importance to women's education.

After independence women education increased considerably. The constitution of India promised liberty, equality, fraternity and justice to all the citizens of India, regardless of religion, caste, gender. The Kothary Commission 1964-66, stated that for full development of human recourses, the improvement of human beings and for moulding the character of children during the most impressionable years of infancy, the education of women is of great importance than that of men.

Progress of Women Education Since Independence

Table 1: Women Literacy Rates since 1950-51(%)

Category	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Total	16.67	24.02	29.45	43.67	52.21	65.38	74.04
Females	7.93	12.95	18.69	29.85	39.29	54.16	65.46
Males	24.95	34.44	39.45	56.50	64.13	75.85	82.14

Importance of Study

India is now in transition. The 21st century is the 'knowledge century era'. A knowledge driven generation will be an asset for the progress and development of the nation

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as the social and economic development should match the growth rates. To achieve and sustain the high growth rates, access to education should be open for the entire population of the country without any discrimination. Education unlocks the doors for progress. As women are the dynamic prompters of social transformation, their education is must. So this paper tries to focus on the five year plan and women education and various problems in the field of implementation.

Five year Plan and Indian Education

India is now record of over 11th plan. The plans of Central and State Governments and the public and the 'private' sectors are coordinated and finalized after detailed discussions by the Planning Commission which is a national body. The Planning Commission draws up a long term perspective plan and a more immediate five year plan of development. These plans are approved by the National Development Council which comprises inter alia the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers of different states. The approved plan thus becomes the highest policy declaration of what is proposed to be achieved in next five years and how. The five year plan specifies the allocation for education chalks out the policies and the programmes and sets targets of achievements. There is a provision for periodic appraisal of plan performance and every year 'Annual Plans' are grown up with due modifications but within the framework of the five year plan. The first four years of independence witnessed great educational expansion on a year budgetary planning till the birth of the National Planning Commission in 1951, the year of launching the First Five-Year Plan.

The following paragraphs outline the form and nature of women education in our country under the successive five year plans and show the concern of planners with regard to women/girls education:

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Table No: 2

Sl. No.	Five Year Plans	Views on Women
1	First Plan (1951-1956)	Sets up the central social welfare board in 19953 to promote women welfare work through voluntary organizations, charitable trusts etc.
2	Second Plan (1956-1961)	Supported the development of mahila mandals to work at the grassroots.
3	Third, Fourth and Interim Plan (1961-1974)	Had provisions for women's education, pre-natal and child health services, supplementary feeding for children, nursing and expectant.
4	Fifth Plan (1974-1978)	A major shift in the approach towards women from welfare to development.
5	Sixth Plan (1980-1985)	Accepted women's development as a separate economic agenda. Took a multi disciplinary approach with a three-pronged thrust on health, education and employment
6	Seventh Plan (1985-1990)	Had the objectives of bringing women into the main stream of national development
7	Eighth Plan (1992-1997)	Show a paradigm shift from development to empowerment and benefits to women in the core sector of education, health and employment. Outlay for women rose from Rs. 4 corer in the first plan to Rs. 2000 corer in the Eighth Plan.
8	Ninth Plan (1997-2002)	Had Empowerment of women as its strategic objective. Accepted the concept of a women's component plan to assure that at least 30% of funds/benefits from all development sector flow to women.
9	Tenth Plan (2002-2007)	Suggests specific strategies, policies and programmes for the empowerment of women.
10	Eleventh Plan (2007-2011)	Special measurers for gender empowerment and equity will be an essential component of the 11 th Plan. The Plan will have a special focus on four aspects- violence against women (VAW), economic empowerment, political participation and women's health.

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Problems of Implementation

Educational planning needs to be linked to man power planning by setting up mechanisms for assessing the needs of the industry, commerce, professional services, agriculture in the context of the technological trends and growth strategies based on different assumptions indicating the level and structure of income and income distribution, nature of technologies likely to be used in different capital-labour coefficients, structure of employment and job/skill profiles required, alternative scenarios of development for the next 15-20 years and the task for education derived from such scenarios will require to be formulated. At present no agency has either the capacity or the responsibility to undertake any other kind of exercise required even in quantitative terms, to link long term planning of education to match development and manpower needs in the country. Though government has provided many facilities for the development of women education, yet the condition of women education is very poor. This can be proved from the following table :

Table No: 3

Year	Primary (I-V)			Upper Primary (VI-VIII)			Elementary (I-VIII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1950-51	60.6	24.8	42.6	20.6	4.6	12.7	46.4	17.7	32
1960-61	82.6	41.4	62.4	33.2	11.3	22.5	65.2	30.9	48
1970-71	95.6	60.5	78.6	46.5	20.8	33.4	75.5	44.4	60.9
1980-81	95.8	64.1	80.5	54.3	28.6	41.9	82.2	52.1	67
1990-91	114.0	85.5	100.1	76.6	47.0	62.1	100.0	70.8	86
2000-01	104.9	85.9	95.7	66.7	49.9	58.6	90.3	72.4	81.6

Most of the states implement incentive schemes for education of girls, but generally with very limited coverage. Measures will be undertaken to overcome obstacles to girls'

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education posed by factors such as poverty, domestic/sibling responsibilities, girl child labour, low preference to girls' education, preference to marriage over the education of girls, etc.

Causes of Slow Progress

1. Economic backwardness of the rural community.
2. Lack of proper social attitudes in the rural areas for the education of girls.
3. Lack of educational facilities in rural areas.
4. Lack of woman teachers.
5. Lack of proper supervision and guidance due to inadequate women personnel in the inspectorate.
6. Lack of proper incentives to parents and children.
7. Lack of adequate incentives.
8. Lack of suitable curriculum.
9. Co- educational aspects.

Suggestive Measurers

1. Free uniform and free books to the needy and deserving girls should be provided.
2. Mid-day meal should be provided free of cost.
3. Separate school for girls should be established.
4. Separate sanitary facility should be provided for girls.
5. Free education for girls upto the school leaving certificate examination.
6. Woman teacher should be appointed in girls' schools.
7. Developing positive attitude towards women education.

Conclusion

The role of women outside the home has become an important feature of the social and economic life of the country

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and in the years to come this will become more significant. From this point of view greater attention should be paid by the government to the problems of training and development of women. The education of girls, therefore, should be emphasised not only on grounds of social justice, but also because it accelerates social transformation. □

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Women Education and Empowerment- A Pathway Towards Emancipation of Women in Indian Context

Khijumoni Saikia

Introduction

Though women constitute about half of the population in the world, yet from the prehistoric times women were denied equal opportunities and had to suffer for the hegemonic masculine ideology. The rise of the feminist ideas has led to the improvement of women's condition throughout the world to some extent in recent times. But even today a woman's life and her dignity have continued to be disregarded. In this context education not only works as an agent of change in the status of women but also it promotes the empowerment of women. Education makes a woman empowered in different context of life and makes them eligible to promote the overall development and progress of the country.

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In a developing country like India, woman's education plays a very significant role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of the half the human resources, but also improves the status of women at both indoor and outdoor. Moreover educated women can promote education of their girl children and provide better guidance to their children. Jawaharlal Nehru has rightly said that– *"Educate a man and you educate one person. Educate a woman and you educate the whole family"*.

But still due to the persistence of gender discrimination in India, a lot more needs to be done in the field of its women education. Associating with different major obstacles the negligence towards the girl child of the parents should eliminate from our society is the first adoptable step in the path of making the Indian women educated and empowered. There cannot be an educated nation without educated its women, because mother is the first educator of a child, which builds the future nation.

This piece of work is an attempt to peep into the status of women in India and their journey through education, empowerment to present condition.

Empowering women and rebuilding the society

"To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves."

– Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

In India, today, women appear to rule the roost. India as a nation is revered in a feminine form i.e. 'the Bharat Mata', the first citizen of our country presently is a women, many important government posts are occupied by women and educated women are pouring into the professional workforce with

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profound implications for national and multinational corporations. But, ironically, these are accompanied by news about dowry killings, female infanticide, domestic violence against women, sexual harassment, rape, illegal trafficking and prostitution and myriad others of the same ilk. Gender discrimination prevails in almost all areas, be it social, cultural, economic or educational. An effective remedy for these evils needs to be sought in order to ensure the Right to Equality guaranteed by the Constitution of India, to the fairer sex. Gender equality facilitates the empowerment of women. Since education begins at home, the upliftment of women would be accompanied by the development of the family, the society and in turn, would lead towards a holistic development of the nation.

Among these problems the foremost that needs to be addressed is the atrocity committed against females at birth and during childhood. Female infanticide i.e. killing of the female child is still a common practice in many of the rural areas. Further female foeticide is common in some parts of India, despite the passage of 'Prenatal Diagnostic techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act in 1994. In case they survive, they are subjected to discrimination throughout their lives. Traditionally, since sons are supposed to take care of their parents during old age and daughters are considered a burden because of dowry and other expenses that have to be incurred during their marriage, female children are neglected in the matters of nutrition, education and other important aspects of well-being. The Sex ratio in our country is abysmally low. It was only 933 females per 1000 males according to the 2001 census. The Sex ratio is an important indicator of development. Developed countries usually have Sex ratios above 1000. For instance, the USA has a Sex ratio of 1029, Japan 1041 and Russia 1140. In India, Kerala is

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the state with the highest Sex ratio of 1058 and Haryana is one with the lowest value of 861.

During their youth, females face the problem of early marriage and childbirth. They are not cared for properly during pregnancy leading to many cases of maternal mortality. The MMR (Maternal Mortality Rate) i.e. the number of females dying during delivery per one lakh persons, in India is 437(as in 1995). In addition, they are subjected to harassment for dowry and other forms of domestic violence. Further, at the work place, public places and elsewhere, acts of violence, exploitation and discrimination are rampant.

Various steps have been taken by the government to prevent such abuses and to empower women. Criminal laws against sati, dowry, female infanticide and foeticide, 'eve teasing', rape, immoral trafficking and other offences relating to women have been enacted in addition to civil laws like the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act 1939, the Hindu Marriage Act 1955 and other Matrimonial enactments. The Prevention of Domestic Violence Act has been passed in 2005. A National Commission for Women (NCW) has been set up. Other measures by the government include provision of reservation in representation and education, allocation for the welfare of women in the five year plans, provision of subsidized loan facilities and so on. The year 2001 has been declared as the 'women empowerment year' by the Government of India and 24th January as the National Girl Child Day.

The 108th Constitutional Amendment Bill, popularly known as the Women's Reservation Bill which seeks to reserve 1/3rd of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies has been a highlight in the recent times. It was 'passed' in the Rajya Sabha on March 9th 2010. Though well

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intended, it can have, if any, tangible consequences for the real empowerment of women since it does not touch upon the core issues which plague them. The solution must envisage a two-pronged attack, on the one hand, on tradition which is responsible for assigning a low status for women in the society and on the other hand, the outrages perpetrated against them. The proposed 'Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace' Bill, 2010 is a good move in that direction. Mass campaigns need to be organized especially in the villages in favour of survival of the female child and provision of human rights for her, including education and health. It is essential to dispel the ghost of the past and place women on an equal footing with men in order to pave the way for their empowerment, social, economic and educational. Empowering women and thus rebuilding the society would take the nation on a path of greater development, as Swami Vivekananda says, "Countries and Nations which do not respect women have never become great nor ever be in future".

Empowerment of Indian Women

If we are judging the empowerment of Indian women through Jayalalitha, Congress President Sonia Gandhi, Burkha Dutta, Indira Nuyi, Sushma Swaraj and women belonging to the same category, we are leading towards a wrong conclusion. However, it does not mean that women empowerment has not shaped up in a positive in direction the post independence era. There are many examples like P.T. Usha, Sudha Murthy, Kiran Bedi, Medha Patekar etc. who came from the grass root of the Indian society, fought with every negative aspect of chauvinistic attitude and proved their worth in different walks of life.

Need of women empowerment in a billion plus populous

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India is required for several reasons. Women empowerment does not mean reserving seats for women in Parliament and state legislatures. Because implementation of women reservation in several state's three tier Panchayat Raj system has proved the whole reservation system as a blunder. The husband becomes the power center and the elected wife remains the rubber stamp only. If we really need to empower Indian women, we need to empower them economically, educationally, and provide them health care and proper platform to show up their potential.

To empower and improve the status of women in real, the Policies, programmes and systems will be established to ensure mainstreaming of women's perspectives in all developmental process, as catalysts, participants and recipients. Wherever there are gaps in policies and programmes, women specific interventions would be undertaken to bridge. Coordinating and monitoring mechanisms will also be devised to assess from time to time the progress of such mainstreaming mechanisms. Women' issues and concerns as a result will specially be addressed and reflected in all concerned laws, sectoral policies, plans and programmes of action.

Economic empowerment can gain through-Poverty eradication, introducing micro-credit mechanisms and micro-finance institutions, designing and implementing macro economic and social policies, adopting the benefits of growing global economy (globalization), programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. Moreover the provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including facilities, including crèches at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled will be expanded and improved.

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Social empowerment can gain through the development of Education, Health, Nutrition, Drinking water and sanitation, Housing and Shelter, Environment, Science and Technology

Education and Empowerment of Women: Empowerment of women is one of the main reasons as to why female education is necessary in India. If a woman is educated than it will build self-confidence and among them this will result in empowerment. Moreover if woman are educated and empowered they will also be a source of income for the family. This will not only raise the standard of living of the family but also the economic condition of the country. After all the economic conditions of a country will grow only if all the citizens are prosperous.

For the empowerment of women, the benefits of education is enormous –

Increase in the Revenue of the Family- If a girl is educated then she can also opt for a job if the need arises. So she would not be considered as a burden on the family. This would also control female infanticide.

Check on Social evils- Education, in reality, is the most valuable gift that parents can give to their daughter .As an educated wife she would be interested in family planning as well. Studies have shown that illiterate women have high fertility and mortality rate. Many women prefer to have more children so that they could look after her in old age. But being educated she would certainly understand the advantage of a small family which will help in dealing with problems like over-population and poverty. Also infant mortality is inversely related to the educational level of the mother. For example, in Kerala female literacy ratio is highest (87.86%) and has lower infant mortality rate with highest life expectancy. On the other hand in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar where female literacy ratio is lowest, life expectancy is also the same.

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Part in Household Activities- Also being educated she would be able to participate in the day to day proceedings of the family. This would only add up one more voice and an opinion. An educated mother would be more conscious about the health and hygiene of the family than her illiterate counterpart.

Other reasons- Studies have proved that lack of education affects the general health of the family. Besides general health inculcating good moral values in her children would be one of the top priorities of any educated mother. In the long run, well brought up children is an asset which any society would love to possess. This is how the civilization progresses and grows.

Female Education in India

Female Education in India is not a gift of modern civilization. India has always been a relentless champion of the cause of women at all international and national front. The policy makers have become conscious that real development cannot take roots if it bypasses women, who represent the very essential part around which social change must take shape. The past few years have seen unprecedented changes in the political, diplomatic, economic and ideological spheres, but certainly a lot of developments have also taken roots.

In independent India, illiteracy is the second most important problem following poverty.

Female literacy rates are very low nationally. A look at the statistics relating to female literacy reveals a grim picture. Though the female literacy rate has progressively increased from 8.86% in 1951 to 15.34% in 1961 to 21.97% in 1971 to 29.75% in 1981 to 39.42% in 1991, it is still below the desired level (*Maitr and Sinha*, 1993). Comparing these rates to male literacy is 63.68%, it is clear that female literacy is neglected. This gap

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ultimately contributes to the subordination of women and greater dowry demand in the marriage market. Among the literate women only a handful of women obtain their education in order to acquire economic independence; for the majority, literate women receive an education only to become more eligible for marriage (Johnson and Johnson, 2001). The link between female literacy rates and development is obvious and has received much attention in the development literature. For example, Rajasthan, which has a very low female literacy rate, is still burdened with widespread practices like-sati, female foeticide and child-marriage. On the other hand, Kerala, which has a high female literacy rate, is almost devoid of all these practices except the practice of dowry. Although the government has undertaken many programmes for the development of women, and in spite of the equality of status guaranteed under the Indian constitution, double standards prevail in every sector of society and in the crucial sectors of health, education and social development.

Actually economic problems are the main hindrance deterring women from getting an education, coupled with early marriage and parental negligence playing an important part in the ultimately deteriorating status of women.

Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

In increasing living standards, sustainability and livelihoods and eliminating poverty, gender equality and education are seen as some of the main means. This is further recognized in the Millennium Development Goals, as goal Promote gender equality and empowers women. Women empowerment includes 3 basic aspects- education, health and self-reliance. The social evils related to women will also decrease if women are empowered. But gender discrimination still continues to be an enormous

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problem within Indian society. Traditional patriarchal norms have relegated women to secondary status within the household and workplace. This drastically affects women's health, financial status, education, and political involvement. Women are commonly married young, quickly become mothers, and are then burdened by stringent domestic and financial responsibilities. They are frequently malnourished since women typically are the last member of a household to eat and the last to receive medical attention. Additionally, only 54% of Indian women are literate as compared to 76% of men. Women receive little schooling, and suffer from unfair and biased inheritance and divorce laws. These laws prevent women from accumulating substantial financial assets, making it difficult for women to establish their own security and autonomy.

In case of Rajasthan, all of these problems are aggravated by high levels of seasonal migration. For many men in Rajasthan, migration is required since rural parts of Rajasthan often lack a sufficient economy to provide income for a family year-round. Women are commonly left behind to care and provide for the entire household. This is increasingly difficult because it is estimated that an average women's wage is 30% lower than a man's wage working in a similar position. While these mothers work, they must also tend to domestic responsibilities. This formula for supporting Rajasthani families leaves little resource for the growth and development of women's rights and education levels. Moreover a 'son preference' exists in the region, as it does throughout the country, and high rates of female infanticide and female foeticide plague the area. Having sons is economically advantageous to families due to cultural institutions; these institutions serve to drastically devalue the roles women play in the traditional society. Women continue to struggle to achieve equal status to men, making gender equity an issue of particular importance for Rajasthan.

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Actually empowering women is a way to create a stronger India. The reliance of rural women on the older men in the family is very high. They dictate terms of livelihood. This dwarfs their self esteem and they are submissive in nature. They are not allowed the privilege of communal mingling and a lot of restrictions are still a problem. The emancipation of the women has to be held on a large scale. Though the government is giving many facilities towards educating the rural women and night schools are also conducted for them to realize the power of education yet the benefits are far beyond from them. Again it is mention able that most women in the rural area face severe health problems. With a hand to mouth existence and large family to feed, women sacrifice their meals. The result is that women get anemic and this manifests into major health issues.

Government Strategies

Rights and Privileges: The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing the socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages that they could be facing. The Fundamental Rights, among others ensure equality before the law, equal protection of law, prohibit discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and grant equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment . Article 14 confers on men and women equal rights and opportunities in the political, economic and social spheres. Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, etc. Article 15(3) makes a special provision enabling the State to make affirmative discriminations in favor of women. Similarly, Article 39(a) further mentions that the State shall direct its policy towards securing all

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citizens, men and women, equally, the right to means of livelihood, while Article 39(c) ensures equal pay for equal work. Article 42 directs the State to make provision for ensuring just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. Above all, the Constitution imposes a fundamental duty on every citizen through Articles 15 (A) (e) to renounce the practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

Women and 5 yr Plan: The concept of Women's development was mainly oriented in the first Five Year Plan (1951-56). The Centre Social Welfare Board (CSWB), set up in 1953 worked for the welfare of women voluntarily. In the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) women were organized into Mahila Mandals to act as focal points at the grass-root levels for the development of women. The Third, fourth and other Interim Plans (196-74) accorded high priority to educate women. In the Fifth Plan (1974-78) there was a change in the approach of women's development from "welfare" to "development". It aimed at integration of welfare with development services. The sixth Plan, adopted a multidisciplinary approach with a three pronged thrust on health, education and employment. In the Seventh Plan (1985-90), the developmental programmes for women continued with the major objectives of raising their economic and social status and to bring them into the mainstream of national development. The Eight Five Year plan (1992-97), which was launched in 1992, promises to ensure that the benefits of development from different sectors do not bypass women and special programmes will be implemented to complement the general development programmes.

Plans: The National Plan of Action for Women (NPA) adopted in 1976 became a guiding document for the development of women till 1988 when a National Perspective

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Plan for Women was formulated. The National Perspective Plan for Women (NPP) drafted by a Core-Group of experts is more or less a long term policy document advocating a holistic approach for the development of women. 'Shram Shakti'- the report of the National Commission on Self-employed and Women in the Informal Sector (1988) examines the entire gamut of issues facing women in the unorganized sector and makes a number of recommendations relating to employment, occupational hazards, legislative protection, training and skill development, marketing and credit for women in the informal sector. The National Plan of Action for the Girl Child (NPA) 1991-2000 is an integrated multi-sectoral decadal Plan of Action for ensuring survival, protection and development of children with a special gender sensitivity built for the girl child and adolescent girls. In addition to these, there are many other women-related policies like the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1966, National Health Policy (NHP) 1983, National Commission for Women's Act (NCW) 1990, which have been influencing the welfare and development of women and children in the country.

Suggestive Measures

- People should be made aware about the value of education in life
- Measures should be adopted to erase the gender discrimination-a social evil from the society
- Govt. should take proper initiatives to make women empowered through education
- Guardian of girl child should be conscious about their fulfillment of education
- Media can play a vital role through various effective programmes.

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- **Women organization can create awareness on women's education and right.**
- **Mentorship programmes should be enhanced to enlighten the girl child.**
- **NGO can play a vital role in the development procedure and empowerment of women.**
- **Govt. can set small scale industries and provide fund for the self help groups.**
- **Finance and loan schemes can support the small scale units.**
- **Adult education and NGO's work for the upliftment of the backward classes in the villages would be beneficial for the empowerment of women.**

Conclusion

Equality and empowerment of women are the most critical points and gender equality is not an agenda of women versus men, rather men should be partners in the empowerment of women...., (President Pratibha Patil, delivering a lecture at Punjab University). Female education and empowerment is necessary for the development of a country. The female population in India is almost 50% of total population. Female empowerment and development can be propagated through help of education, mass media, employment opportunities and increasing the self-confidence as living a life of dignity is her right. Women education includes three basic aspects-education, health and self-reliance. Women can be empowered only if they are financially independent. Education and health are the other aspects of empowerment of women. An economy depends on the prosperity of all the people living in the country. So, both men and women should be empowered. The social evils related to women will also

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decrease if women are empowered. Development of women will not only be a social benefit but also an economic benefit. It increases the Gross national product, National Income of the country; it will also increase the per capita income. Female education is one of the most vital needs in today's world since it will help the country progress. The role of women in the world is significant and hence we must give them what they deserve. Thus we can say that empowering women is empowering the country. The first step towards education of women is self-learning, which is most important. □

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A Study on the Women Empowerment through Higher Education in India

Ramji Yadav & Harakanta Nath

Introduction

Higher Education (H.E.) plays an important role in the overall development and growth of a country. It imparts in-depth knowledge and understanding so as to expose the students to new frontiers of knowledge in different walks of life. In the present day knowledge-Society where the world is highly competitive, it is only the higher education that provides qualified and trained human resources to keep pace with the fast changing world. While elementary and secondary education fulfill the needs of a general man, H.E. takes a man ahead of others in this competitive world and its benefits are, in turn, disseminated to the people for strengthening the society and the nation as a whole. The government of India has been quite concerned to ensure progress through formation of a knowledge society on the fabric of higher

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education. There are number of commission and committees set up by the Government to suggest ways and means to overcome the problems of H.E. The various reports were :

1. The Radhakrishnan Commission Report (1949)
2. Kothari Commission Report (1964-66)
3. National Policy on Education (1968)
4. National Policy on Education (1986)
5. Acharya Ramamurthy Committee Report (1990)
6. Programme of Action (1992)
7. National Knowledge Commission (2005)
8. Report of the Committee on Renovation and Rejuvenation of H.E. (2008) etc.

These commissions and committees have deeply studied the issues, challenges and problems of the Indian HE system including the financial aspects also. As per the 2001 census of India, women constitute about 48.2% of population of our country. But they are not adequately represented in social, political and economic life as per their numerical strength. The great reformist of India, Swami Vivekananda, says that there is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is only possible if status of women is upgraded through empowerment and proper representation in all walks of life. A nation cannot progress if the women are left behind. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian constitution in its preamble. The constitution not only grants equality to women but also empowers the state to adopt measures in favour of women. Women's empowerment is directly related to overall development of the nation.

Empowerment implies a state of mind, it reflects self-confidence and self-reliance. Empowerment essentially means decentralization of authority and power. Empowerment enables

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autonomy and control over their lives. Hence women empowerment being crucial for the development of any country, has been a global issue. The issue of empowerment of women came to light when United Nations declared "International Women Year" in 1975, an International Conference in Nairobi was organized in which women from the developing and underdeveloped countries introduced the concept of empowerment as a counter project to the integration concept for advancing women. Government of India celebrated the year 2001 as "Women Empowerment Year." Several Programmes like Mahila Samridhi Yojna (MSY). Balika Samridhi Yojna (BSY) etc. were implemented and seen as the step towards empowerment of women in India.

Progress of a nation is possible only when its citizens are dynamic, resourceful, enterprising and responsible . Without such citizens, progress of a society or nation cannot be achieved in any other fields. Education herein helps in creating such type of citizen. In the development of a country, Primary Education helps creating the base while HE is important for providing the cutting edge. Thus HE is considered to be one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process. HE for women has gained a wider role and responsibility all over the world.

The new challenge before India is to become a developed country. Education is an important input for development and higher educational institutions are the key to initialing the process of national development. Through various programmes of teaching and research HE is of great significance for all round development of a country, especially a country like India. Women are required to play an important role in the development of the country. The main objectives of the study are-

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- To know the status of the female students enrolment in H.E.
- To examine the trend of female learners pursuing course of studies in Higher Educational Institutions.

Female Students Enrolment :

Economic independence of women can follow only if they are allowed a larger participatory role in the over all social scenario. In sustainable development of a country there is a need to involve women of all sections of the society in functioning of the state. It is possible only if women are provided good opportunity of getting higher education in large numbers. Higher Education in India is defined as the education attained after the completion of twelve standards. The total women students enrolment in H.E. during the year 2006-07 was 47,08,876 (40.55%), during 2007-08 was 50,24,945 (40.60%), during 2008-09 was 56,49,102 (41.40%) and in 2009-10 was 60,80,373 (41.80%). It shows that every year there was a marginal increase in the women students' enrolment in higher education.

Faculty wise female students' enrolment :

In higher education there are several areas of disciplines which are offered through various faculties. The faculty wise position of women students are analysed in the following tables:

Table 1
Enrolment in Arts Faculty

Year	Men Enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	28,37,731	3401,996	52,40,727	45.83
2007-08	29,46,668	25,62,219	55,08,877	46.57
2008-09	31,02,952	27,72,580	58,75,532	47.18

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31,2010)

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Table : 1 reveals that in the year 2006-07, a total of 24,01,996 (i.e., 45.83%) female students were enrolled against the male students of 28,37,731 (54.17%) in the faculty of Arts. During 2007-08, the total enrolment of women was 25,62,219 (46.51%) against the male students enrolment of 29,46,668 (53.49%) in the faculty. In 2008-09, female students enrolment in the arts faculty was 27,72,580 (47.18%) against the male students enrolment of 31,02,952 (52.82%) in the faculty. From the analysis it is clear that there was a marginal increase of female students in the faculty of Arts every year.

Table 2 : Enrolment in Science Faculty

Year	Men Enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	14,73,449	9,01,309	23,74,758	37.95
2007-08	15,29,382	10,14,034	25,43,416	39.86
2008-09	14,83,151	11,29,255	26,12,406	43.22

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

Table 2 shows that a total of 9,07,309 (i.e., 37.95%) female students were enrolled against the male students of 14,73,449 (62.05%) in the faculty of Science, during the year 2006-07. In 2007-08, the figure of female students enrolled was 10,14,034 (i.e., 39.86%) against the total male students of 15,29,382 (i.e., 60.14%) in the faculty. During 2008-09, the position of women students was 11,29,255 (i.e., 43.22%). It is a good sign that the number of female students are increasing in the Science faculty.

Table 3 : Enrolment in Faculty of Commerce/Management

Year	Men enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	13,56,251	7,35,160	20,91,411	35.15
2007-08	14,16,291	8,27,608	22,43,899	36.88
2008-09	15,71,182	9,15,719	24,86,901	36.82

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

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Table 3 states that a total of 7,35,160 (i.e., 35.15%) female students were enrolled against the male students of 13,56,251 (64.85%) in the faculty of commerce & management in the year 2006-07. During 2007-08, the number of female students enrolment was 8,27,608 (i.e., 36.88%) whereas the male students enrolment was 14,16,291 (63.12%) in the faculty. In 2008-09 it was increased to 9,15,719 (i.e., 36.82%) against the total number of male students' enrolment of 15,71,182 (63.18%). Above figures show that faculty had slightly decreased in the year 2008-09 as compared to the previous year 2007-08.

Table 4

Enrolment in Faculty of Engineering/ Technology

Year	Men enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	7,51,461	1,85,800	9,37,261	19.82
2007-08	7,05,099	2,09,540	9,14,639	22.90
2008-09	10,36,900	2,76,806	13,13,706	21.07

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

Table 4 describes that the year 2006-07, a total of 1,85,800 (19.82%) female students were enrolled against the total male students of 7,51,461 (80.18%) in the faculty of Engineering/ Technology. During the year 2007-08, the female students' enrolment in this faculty was 2,09,540 (i.e., 22.90%) whereas male students' enrolment was 7,05,099 (i.e., 77/10%). A total of 2,76,806 (i.e., 21.07%) female students were enrolled in the faculty whereas the male students' enrolment was 10,36,900 (i.e., 78.93%) in the year 2008-09. It is clear from the data that there was a big gap between the male-female students enrolment in the faculty of Engineering/Technology. Further, the p.c. of female students' enrolment decreased in the year 2008-09 compared to the previous year 2007-08.

Table 5
Enrolment in Faculty of Medicine

Year	Men enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	2,04,379	1,62,575	3,66,954	44.30
2007-08	2,21,309	1,83,410	4,04,719	45.31
2008-09	2,43,284	2,02,803	4,46,087	45.46

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

Table 5 highlights that in the year 2006-07, a total of 1,62,575 (i.e., 44.30%) female students were enrolled against the total male students of 2,04,379 (i.e., 55.70%) in the faculty of Medicine. The number of female students' enrolment was 1,83,410 (i.e., 45.31%) against the total male students' enrolment of 2,21,309 (i.e., 54.69%) in the year 2007-08. The position of female students' enrolment in the faculty during the year 2008-09 was 2,02,803 (45.46%) against the total male students' enrolment of 2,43,284 (54.54%). It becomes clear that from the above data analysis the female students' enrolment in the field of Medicine did not increase much but was good as compared to other subjects.

Table 6
Enrolment in Faculty of Education

Year	Men enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	86,915	82,627	1,69,542	48.17
2007-08	95,165	92,961	1,88,126	49.41
2008-09	1,05,707	1,80,771	2,86,478	63.10

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

Table 6 reflects that a total of 82,627 (i.e., 48.73%) female students were enrolled in the faculty of Education against the

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total of male students 86,915 (i.e., 51.27%) during the year 2006-07. In the year 2007-08, the position of female students enrolment male students 95,165 (i.e., 50.59%) in the faculty. During the year 2008-09, the women enrolment was 1,80,771 (i.e., 63.10%) whereas the male students' enrolment was 1,05,707 (36.90%). The data reveals that the percentage of increase of female students' enrolment was good. From the discussion, it becomes clear that education was the favourite discipline of such students as it provides good opportunity of teaching job, which is liked most by women in India.

Table 7

Enrolment in Faculty of Agriculture

Year	Men enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	56,633	10,719	67,352	15.91
2007-08	60,964	12,059	73,023	16.51
2008-09	65,229	15,253	80,482	18.95

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

The table 7 reflects that a total no. of 10,719 (i.e., 15.91%) female students were enrolled against the total male students of 56,633 (i.e., 84.09%) in the faculty of Agriculture. The number of female students was 12,059 (i.e., 16.57%) against the total male students' enrolment of 60,964 (i.e., 83.49) in the faculty in the year 2007-08. Again the total number of female students' enrolment in the concern faculty during the year 2008-09 was 15,253 (i.e., 18.95%) against the total male students of 65,229 (i.e., 81.05%) in the faculty. It is clear from the above figures that though there was low increase in the female students' enrolment in field of agriculture but there was big gap as compared to the male students' enrolment.

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Table 8
Enrolment in Faculty of Law

Year	Men enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	2,80,935	73,248	3,54,183	20.68
2007-08	2,97,556	82,409	3,79,965	21.68
2008-09	2,92,715	89,256	3,81,971	23.36

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

Table 8 highlights that during the year 2006-07, a total of 73,248 (i.e., 20.68%) female students were enrolled in the faculty of law against the total male students' enrolment of 2,80,935 (i.e., 79.32%). In the year 2007-08, the number of female students' enrolment was 82,409 (i.e., 21.68%) against the total male students' enrolment of 2,97,556 (78.32%) in the faculty. During 2008-09 the figure of female students' enrolment in the faculty became 89,256 (i.e., 23.36%) against the total male students' enrolment of 2,92,715 (i.e., 76.64%) in the discipline of Law. It is seen from the above figures that though there was a small increase in the women students' enrolment in the faculty of law every year but it was very low as compared to the men students' enrolment.

Table 9
Enrolment in Faculty of Veterinary Science

Year	Men enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	13,845	3,573	17,418	20.51
2007-08	15,783	4,019	19,802	20.29
2008-09	17,308	4,519	21,827	20.70

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

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Table 9 shows that a total of 3,573 (20.51%) female students were enrolled in the faculty of Veterinary Science against the total enrolment of male students of 13,845 (79.49%) in the year 2006-07. The figure of female students' enrolment in the year 2007-08 was 4,019 (20.29%) against the total male students' enrolment of 15,783 (79.71%) in the faculty. During 2008-09, the position of female students' enrolment in the faculty was 4,519 (20.70%) against the total male students' enrolment of 17,308 (79.30%). The analysis shows that the female students' enrolment in the field of Veterinary Science was more of less during all the three years as compared to the male students' enrolment.

Table 10
Enrolment in Other Faculties

Year	Men enrolment	Women Enrolment	Total Enrolment	%of women enrolment
2006-07	59,848	33,051	92,899	35.57
2007-08	63,566	36,686	1,00,252	36.59
2008-09	74,278	62,140	1,36,418	45.51

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

Table 10 states the figure of female students' enrolment, male students' enrolment and total students enrolment relating to the year 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09 respectively in other faculties. As per table 10 a total of 33,051 (i.e., 35.57%) female students were enrolled against the total male students of 59,848 (i.e., 64.43%) in other faculties during 2006-07. The figure relating to female students' enrolment during 2007-08 and 2008-09 was 36,686 (39.59%) and 62,140 (45.55%) whereas male students' enrolment was 63,41% and 74,278 (54.45%) respectively. It is clear from the above mentioned statistics that the female students' enrolment was good in other faculties. It is

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also clear that the enrolment of female students in other faculties gradually increased as compared to previous year.

Table 11
Enrolment of Women Students in Different Faculties during 2009-10

Faculties	Women students' Enrolment	% of Total Women Enrolment
Arts	27,76,289	45.66
Science	12,14,864	19.98
Commerce/Management	9,67,392	15.91
Engineering/Technology	4,67,392	7.69
Medicine	2,34,702	3.86
Education	2,24,974	3.70
Agriculture	16,417	0.27
Law	84,517	1.39
Veterinary Science	4,256	0.07
Others	89,381	1.47
Total		100

(Source : University News, Vol. 48 No. 43, October 25-31, 2010)

Table 11 highlights the female students' enrolment in different faculties during 2009-10. A largest number of women students were enrolled during 2009-10 was 27,76,289 (i.e., 45.66%) in the faculties of Arts and the smallest number of female students were enrolled was (i.e., 0.07%) in the faculty of Veterinary Science. Similarly, Agriculture, Law, Education, Medicine and Engineering/ Technology faculties, the enrolment of female students were comparatively low than Arts, Science and Commerce/Management faculties.

Based on this study and literature a little suggestion has been put forward for consideration :

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- (Other than in Arts and Science where female enrolment is seen less an adequate number of seats reservation (e.g., 33%) may be allotted to encourage the growth of their enrolment.) Seats for female learners should be reserved.
- It is strongly suggested to the parents that wherever a daughter wants to pursue higher education she must get total support from the family member to find her own carrier in life.
- There is a need to establish dedicated higher education institutions for women by the central government as well as the state government.
- The government should come forward for financial support to female students who are enrolled in HE as a long term investment.
- Further, Govt. and Private educational institutions should make some fee relaxation for female students to encourage enrolment.

Conclusion

Almost half of the population (48.20%) of the country is constituted by women, which is required to play important role in the development of the country. A nation cannot go ahead without women contribution. It is true that a number of initiations have been taken for the empowerment of women and a significant change is seen in this status of women in India. But, to fulfill our sweet dreams of becoming a developed country, there is a need for mobilization of women in large number by empowering them.

It is an established fact that higher education plays an important role in empowering women. Women should be equal

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partner in the field of higher education. During the year 2008-09, only 41.40% female students got enrolled in higher education whereas male students' enrolment was 58.60%. It becomes clear that still there is a big gap between the male and female students' enrolment in higher education which need to be addressed. Further, data says that the female students' enrolment was good in the faculties of science but was very low in the subjects of Engineering/ Technology, Commerce/Management and Law as compared to the male students' enrolment in the field of Agriculture and Veterinary Science also needs to be enhanced. Therefore women are required to be encouraged continuously for pursuing higher education for empowering them so that they participate equally in the development of the country. Inclusive growth in the students' enrolment can bridge the gap between female and male in higher education. □

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Specific focus

Problems and Prospects of Women Entrepreneurs : A Case Study in Morigaon District of Assam

Ranju Gogoi Chutia

Introduction

Women play a great role in the development of the economy. One cannot think of an economy devoid of women because of their substantial contribution to aggregate production. The Indian society is now experiencing a drastic change in economy, social structure and family structure. The women are enjoying more liberty and equality than before. A growing number of women are taking up non-traditional projects and succeeding as entrepreneurs. However, the success story of women entrepreneurs is not much encouraging.

Women Entrepreneurs

The word 'women entrepreneur' as defined by the Govt. of India as 'women entrepreneur is one who runs an enterprise

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owned and controlled by her and having minimum financial interest upto 51 percent of capital and giving at least 51 percent of the employment of women.' In terms of Schumpeterian concept of innovative entrepreneurs, women who innovate, imitate or adopt a business activity are women entrepreneurs. In nutshell "women entrepreneurs are those women who think of a business enterprise, initiate it, organize and combine the factors of production, operate the enterprise and undertake risks and handle economic uncertainty involved in running a business enterprise." As an entrepreneur, a woman has to get herself involved in the function of idea generation and screening, determination of forms of business organization, completion of promotional formalities, raising funds, procuring men, machine and materials and operation of business.

Study Area

The area chosen for the study is Morigaon district of Assam. The geographical area of the district is 1551.00 square km. as per 2001 census. The district is bounded by Nagaon district on the East, the Brahmaputra river on the North, Karbi-Anglong district and Maghalaya state on the South and Kamrup district on the West. The district has one subdivision, 5 community development blocks, 85 gaon panchayats as on 31-03-2005. Total population of Morigaon district is 7,76,256 out of which 3,98,926 are males and 3,77,330 are females. Sex ratio is 946 and density of population per square km is 500. The percentage of SC population out of the total population is 12.93% and ST population is 15.55% according to 2001 census. Male literacy is 65.15% and female literacy is 51.15%. The rural literacy is 57.09% while urban literacy rate is 84.21%.

Objectives

- i) To study the problems faced by women entrepreneurs.
- ii) To examine the prospects of women entrepreneurship in Morigaon district.

Problems of the Women Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship generation has the major role to make women economically empowered. But, as entrepreneur, women face so many problems both internally and externally. The following are the major problems faced by the women entrepreneurs in the district.

- i. **Low Female Literacy Rate** : In Morigaon district, total female literacy rate is 51.51% according to 2001 census. Schedule Caste female literacy rate is 49.80% and Schedule Tribe female literacy rate is 50.17% out of total population. Due to their illiteracy they are unable to think what to do and how to do to be an entrepreneur. Moreover, they are unaware of technical knowledge, marketing knowledge etc.
- ii. **Immobility** : For the business commitment a female entrepreneur has to travel from one place to another. She has the problem to travel long distances because of physical fitness, family attachment, outside staying etc. Moreover, they are more reluctant to move from place to place and many of them feel shyness to take up some kind of business activity.
- iii. **Preoccupation with Household Activity** : Women being attached to the family spend much time for husband, children and other family members. So, they do not get sufficient time to manage business.

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- iv. **Poverty** : Women perform major portion of economic activities but they are one of the poorest sections of the society. They are unable to start their business with their own capital. Finance is the life-blood of all types of business, big or small. But, women are just marginally covered by banking system.
- v. **Lack of family support** : Traditionally women's duty is to look after the children and other family household activities. Men play secondary role in household management. Due to preoccupation with household works they get little time to manage business.
- vi. **Inadequate bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit** : Women do not generally have property in their names to use those as collateral for obtaining funds from external sources. The banks generally consider them less credit-worthy and unfit for business.
- vii. **Lack of Vocational Training** : Vocational training is must for establishment of agro-based, textile-based, polymer and chemical based industries and service sector industries. There is vast scope for establishment of such type of industries. But training programmes are organized generally in urban areas due to which the female of the interior villages hardly get necessary information though they are highly interested in getting training.
- viii. **Lack of sound health** : Women are the victims of so many diseases due to her biological structure. Good health is essential to run business. It is found from field survey that a woman cannot be an entrepreneur without a good health.

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- ix. **Lack of Leadership Quality** : It is found from the survey that some of the women entrepreneurs lack the quality of a leader due to which they cannot run a business enterprise effectively and efficiently.
- x. **Customs and Traditions** : The field survey reveals that rural women suffer more from customs and traditions of the society. Rural people consider women as 'helpers' of the family.
- xi. **Exploitation of the Middle men** : In marketing the products of the women entrepreneurs, they have to be at the mercy of the middle men who eats up a lion's share of profit. Moreover, they deny their discount or pay the minimum discount in the purchase of raw materials. The picture is same in the study region.

Prospects

The following are the prospects for the development of women entrepreneurship in Morigaon district :

- i. It is observed in field survey that femals are engaged in weaving in the study region. Weaving is customary to Assamese women folk and it supports domestic needs. They manufacture Eri Chaddar (Endi), Pat Clothes, Mekhela Chaddar, Muga Plain Thaan. These products have international markets in Germany, Japan etc. They also manufacture traditional dresses of Tiwas and Bodo communities. Due to the availability of raw materials, local talents and skills, weaving has a bright future for its development.
- ii. Females are also engaged in cutting and tailoring in many places and earn their livelihood taking this as main occupation in this region. So, there is an immense potentiality for the development of this business.

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- iii. Cloths store is one of the business areas that females are engaged in this region. They are in Jagiroad area of the region. This particular avenue creates employment for the local females of the district.
- iv. Cottage pottery industry is another area of employment generation avenue to the women community in this region. A large number of SC females are engaged in this occupation. It can be further developed to generate income and employment avenues with proper training and support from Govt. Institutions.
- v. Pork is one of the important food item of the Tiwas, Bodos and Karbi communities of the district. Now-a-days, other people also take this item in their menu. So, there is a god demand of pork in this region mainly in Jagiroad area.
- vi. Grocery is another business area of the females in this region. By providing easy finance by the banks and incentive by the govt. more females can be attracted towards this business.
- vii. The people now-a-days have gradually realized the necessity to honey for its nutritional and medicinal value. Demand for honey is increasing day-by-day. A good number of females are engaging in bee-keeping, mainly in the rural areas of the district. By providing entrepreneurial training and loan by the banks the bee-keepers can be encouraged in the district.
- viii. Morigaon district accounts for 2.5 percent of total fishery resources of Assam. There are beels, swamps and low-lying areas, rivers and tributaries, individual ponds, water-logging paddy fields where fish can be cultivated. A sizable women population are engaging in

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- fishing. They are also engaged in dry fish business. Dry fish has great demand in North-Eastern Region.
- ix. Morigaon district is highly rich in animal wealth. The district is endowed with pig, sheep, cow, goat etc. Women are mainly engaged in sheep rearing, pig rearing, goat rearing and poultry farming. Pork, mutton, chicken and eggs, duck, milk have great demand in the market. The govt. may take up many schemes for the improvement of this sector also.
 - x. Morigaon district is rich in jute production. A good number of females are engaged in jute industry like carpet weaving, hand bag making, table mat making, door mat making, wall hanging, shopping bag making, floor covering, carry bags making, gift articles etc. By providing proper training facilities by the government and concerned agencies in the rural areas, its skill can be improved which will help to capture the international market.
 - xi. Supari processing is another business where large number of females have been engaged. There is a great demand of supari in and outside the district. Govt. should fix a proper policy so that females are not deprived of their due share because of the exploitation of the middlemen.
 - xii. Beauty parlours are the fast expanding enterprises in this region. Parlours are not only centred in Central Jagiroad or Central Morigaon, it is found even in semi-urban and rural areas.
 - xiii. A large number of women are engaged in cutting, tailoring and embroidery training centre. This centres help in creating new generation of entrepreneurs.

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- xiv. Flower making and training centres are another area of women employment in the study region. These centres also have been giving a source of employment avenues to a group of females.

Conclusion

The above prospects require changes in the mindset of the male counterpart. Women entrepreneurs should be released from their extra household burden by the family members. It is urgently required to impart quality education to girl child in rural and backward areas so that they become educationally fit to take any type of business. There should be provision of bank loans specially to women entrepreneurs in feasible and viable projects. The Govt. should provide necessary training to women entrepreneurs through related agencies and institutions like Panchayats, Rural Development Agencies, Public bodies, DRDA, DIC etc. In a nutshell, proper education and training will change the women entrepreneurial scenario of the district. □

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Incense Stick Small Enterprise Beneficial to Women Empowerment: With Special Reference to Nagaon District

Pinaki Das

Introduction

Self decision regarding education, participation, mobility, economic independency, awareness and exercise of rights, political participation and many more factors ensure women empowerment. In short women empowerment is the breaking of personal limitation. This means that they have the ability to choose their own destiny, job, vote, and do anything that a man can do. When we talk about woman's empowerment, we talk about women taking more of a leadership role.

The Working Principle

I have taken my field study at Raidingia area of Nagaon District. The economic status of the people of this area is very

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poor. By taking the Raidingia area of Nagaon District which is at a distance 10kms from the district headquarter situating towards the west of Nagaon district, I have studied this area as my field survey and have furnished here with what I have obtained about that area as the result of my study.

The main objective of our study is to see how the women of that area had made themselves organized and involved in incense industry and established themselves economically and socially leaving an example to others.

Subject Matter

In economics, entrepreneurship is regarded as a factor of production together with land, labour, natural resources and capital. Entrepreneurial spirit is characterized by innovation and risk taking, and an essential component of a nation's ability to succeed in an ever changing and more competitive global market place.

From latin 'incendero', 'to burn' is composed of aromatic biotic material, which release fragrant smoke when burned. The term 'incense' refers to the substance itself, rather than to the odor that is produce. It is used in religious ceremonies, ritual purification, meditation, for creating a mood, and for masking unpleasant odors.

Use of incense : Incense fragrance can be of such great strength that they obscure other, less desirable odors. This utility led to the use of incense in funeral ceremonies. Another example of this use is the giant Botafumeiro thuribole which swings from the ceiling of the Cathedral of Santiago de compostel. It is used in part to mask the scent of the many tired, unwashed pilgrims huddled together in the cathedral of Santiago de compostela.

Firstly, some workers of another industry at Haiborgaon sought our study's source person for some women workers to be engaged in their industry. Instead, the source personal

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acknowledged the whole idea of the incense industry who came for the purpose of hiring the women workers for their industry. After, the source person herself keen to developed the stick of incense enterprise by her own and begun to study for her enterprise.

At early stage, she made engagement to the economically backward women together with the other women of that area to help themselves by setting up the industry. The husbands of the women basically are farmer or worker. They have number of children and so they are suffering from poverty too.

Meanwhile, the person bought total 34 numbers of small machines costs at the Rs. 67,200/-, 11 numbers of large machine costs per machine Rs. 300/- in turn total costs Rs. 10,200. And one large machine costs Rs. 9,500/-. Among these machines with the help of the cross cutting machine a bamboo is cut down into number of peaces and after, with the help of slivering machine the pieces of bamboos are to be cut down more small pieces and finally by cutter machine the resultant bamboos are to be cut down, which is similar to the shape of incense stick.

Sl. No.	Name of the Machine	Number of Machine	Amount
1	Stick Cutter	34	10,200.00
2	Slivering	11	22,000.00
3	Cross cutting	01	9,500.00
Total = 46			Rs. 41,700.00

Moreover, they have invested rupees 13,500.00 for industrial house, wooden furniture and power supply bill and etc. They also dug a pond which cost Rs. 12,000 to wet the bamboos. The daily expense includes plastic rope costs near about Rs. 10 only. They sometimes invest Rs. 120 or 150 for buying the bamboos. They can use the bamboos for one week if they buy one ton bamboos at a time. They also buy plastic bags from market which cost Rs. 8 for packing up the incense stick. They daily produce 100kg of

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sticks. If the produce stick is polish stick they sell by Rs. 20 per kg gaining Rs. 3. And if the sticks are non polish stick they sell by Rs. 14 gaining Rs. 2. They sell the product by themselves. The women workers work from 8AM to 4PM daily for 25 days in a month and they earn Rs. 2,200 in this way they do profit of about Rs. 15,120 per month.

Collection :

Sl. No.	Raw Materials	Amount	Rupees	Source
1	Bamboo	1 ton for 7 days	120/- or 150/-	Market
2	Bags of plastic	About 20	10/-	Market
3	Rope of plastic	About 20	10/-	Market

Produced :

Production	Stick	Amount	Total Amount
About 100kg	Polish	50×20	1000.00
	Non-polish	50×14	700.00
			1700×@30 days
			51,000.00

Monthly Expenses :

Material	Amount
Electricity	2,000.00
Mechanical	2,000.00
Labour Charge	31,000.00
Bamboo	480.00
Bags of Plastic	200.00
Rope of Plastic	200.00
Total = 35,880.00	

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Monthly Profit :

Total Produced	Monthly Expense	T/P – M/E	Monthly Profit
100kg (51,000.00)	35,880.00	51,000 – 35,880	15,120.00

From the above discussion we can project that either establishing this kind of enterprise or by working in this enterprise which is set up with a little capital amount, the women can be self sufficient.

Suggestion and Conclusion :

Hence, the women now can realize themselves and they have come forward in all sides. Through my paper I have tried to analyze and have discussed how a woman can make other women employed eventually to help them to overcome their economic imbalances etc. by implementing small enterprises of this sort.

Suggestion :

1. The women can be self sufficient if educational institutions promote handloom and other training aiming of skill generation.
2. It is also possible to arrange workshop on handloom and handicraft education.
3. It is necessary to organize a handloom exhibition once in a year in every education institution.

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Annexure-1

(The List of Various Committees)

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Mr. Kamal Saikia, *Member*
Mr. Jatin Sharma, *Member*
Miss Juli Thakuria, *Member*

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

Shri Santonu Bordoloi, *Coordinator*
Mrs. Debita Kemprai, *Assistant Coordinator*
Miss Khijumoni Saikia, *Member*
Miss Nilima Hazari, *Member*
Shri Jitya Ranjan Saikia, *Member*

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Shri Bipul Chakraborty, *Member*
Md. Abdul Hashem, *Member*
Shri Nakul Chandra Sarmah, *Member*
Shri Somnath Bora, *Member*

ARRANGEMENT OF SEMINAR HALL & OTHERS

Mrs. Akashee Bhuyan, *Coordinator*
Mrs. Anurupa Bora }
Miss Juli Thakuria } *Assistant Coordinators*
Mrs. Gayatri Gope, *Member*
Mrs. Anjana Goswami, *Member*
Mrs. Anjumoni Bora, *Member*
Mrs. Biju Bora, *Member*
Mrs. Mallika Bora, *Member*
Mrs. Debita Kamprai, *Member*
Miss Nilima Hazari, *Member*
Shri Jitya Ranjan Saikia, *Member*
Miss Banashree Saikia, *Member*
Md. Kutubuddin Ahmed, *Member*
Mrs. Meghali Gayan, *Member*

RECEPTION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Anjana Goswami }
Mrs. Biju Bora } *Joint Coordinators*
Dr. Assaduz Zaman }
Shri Pallav Pratim Saikia } *Assistant Coordinators*
Mrs. Lakhimee Kakoty, *Member*
Mrs. Gayatri Gope, *Member*
Shri Nakul Chandra Sarmah, *Member*
Mrs. Anjumoni Bora, *Member*
Shri Santanu Bordoloi, *Member*
Mrs. Debita Kemprai, *Member*
Mrs. Khijumoni Saikia, *Member*
Miss Nilima Hazari, *Member*
Shri Jitya Ranjan Saikia, *Member*
Mrs. Mina Bhuyan, *Member*