Women Empowerment as catalyst of overall development of Slum settlement – pilot study area, jokalandi, cluster I to VIII, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Partha Pratim Karmakar¹, Bagmi Khuntia²

¹ College of Engineering Technology, Bhubaneswar  ² College of Engineering Technology, Bhubaneswar

Abstract

Women represent the compassionate half of humanity, often viewed as emotional and social anchors and the home makers. But we often forget that they are irreplaceable in creating our future generation and are social pillars of moral and emotional strengths. Gender inequality particularly in developing economies like India has created a huge developmental and policy vacuum. Both Government and policymakers are still trying to respond to the different needs of women in rural and urban area. Women as catalyst of social renaissance can bring in a paradigm shift in development of society.

India, with population of around 1.3 billion, is poised for exponential growth and is slated to overtake China as biggest economy of World. This has lead to rapid urbanization and massive migration creating hazardous growth of slum and squatter settlements particularly in urban hubs and capital cities across India. Slum and squatter settlements with inadequate access to physical and social infrastructure have become regions of compromised social ethics and inferior health standards. Bhubaneswar has a long history of migration. This study assesses women empowerment as a tool for overall development of Slum settlement in Jokalandi, Bhubaneswar. For the purposes of this report, the urban poor population is defined as those persons belonging to the lowest quartile on this wealth index.
INTRODUCTION:

Bhubaneswar, the planned city was designed by the German architect Otto Königsberger in 1946, with grid –iron road network pattern. Bhubaneswar has seen growth of exponential proportion with its geographic area increasing almost 20 folds in last 70 years. Along the planned growth is the parallel growth of slums and squatter settlements along arterial corridors. These sporadic growths of slums and squatters on vacant government lands have created new challenges for policy makers, planners and development authorities. Social exclusion and substandard infrastructure accompanied by uncontrolled growth have created imbalance in social and developmental standards. Participatory approach is seen as a way to address these imbalances. Women are seen as equal stakeholders in participatory approach and empowering them is seen as a sustainable model for overall development of society.

Different Categories of Slum in the city of Bhubaneswar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Authorized slum</th>
<th>Unauthorized slum</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of slum pockets</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>89,485</td>
<td>219129</td>
<td>308,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>17,897</td>
<td>42,229</td>
<td>60,126</td>
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Source: Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation, Project office 2001 - 11

We are focusing here one of the rehabilitation schemes initiated by Government which is unit-6 and unit-7 slums to house the government quarters at the centre of the city. Unit-6 and unit-7 slum dwellers were shifted to Jokalandi Mouza, which is exactly opposite side of the city where they were before in the year of 1998.
DATA OF PREVIOUS SETTLEMENT:

Location: unit -6, unit-7
No. of Household: 404
Population: 2476
Male Female Ratio: 1000:810
Literacy level: Male: 45%, Female: 36%
Nearby Infrastructures: Capital Hospital, O.U.A.T. Campus, Raj Bhawan, Govt. staff quarters
Housing status (1998-2000): 0% Pucca houses, 25% Semi Pucca houses and 75% Kutcha houses.

DATA OF NEW SETTLEMENT:

Location: Jokalandi cluster VI
No. of Household: 512
Population: 3074
Male Female ration: 1000: 898
Literacy Level: Male: 68%, Female: 55%
Nearby Infrastructures: IMS SUM Hospital, Kalinga Studio, Kalinga Nagar housing complex, Sericulture Institute, Duck farm
Housing status (2010-2014): 60% Pucca, 10% Semi Pucca and 30% Kutcha houses
AREA OVERVIEW:

- There are around 512 households in Cluster VI of Jokalandi Slum Area
- As the study area is a slum rehabilitation project, the settlement pattern of the existing colonies are very geometric with grid iron pattern road network with regular residential plot arrangement of 20’ x 30’

After 16 yrs of migration to Jokalandi (During-2010-2014)
- Government provided funds under BSUP (Basic services for urban poor) and RAY (rajiv Awaas Yojana) for construction of dwelling units. Therefore most of the houses in the slum Pucca and Semi pucca.

- Most of the household in sector V of Jokalandi slum area have electricity and water supply connections. Government has also developed motorable concrete road. These infrastructure facilities boosted the overall development of the settlement colonies. Government has yet to developed proper drainage and sanitary infrastructure in 16 years old settlement colony.

- The community area is only earmarked but even after 16 years of settlement, the slum dwellers don’t have a community hall for their use. An attempt to make RCC structure for community centre/hall is visible with the structure complete upto plinth level.

- There is no government initiated co-operative trade / business hub to intervene the overall occupational development of the slum dwellers.

- There is no institutional intervention to develop bank, health care centre, post office, public facility, etc. to put the slums in to the right track and overall development.

**HYPOTHESIS:**

The proposed study will test the followings:

- Institutional intervention for women empowerment.
- Availability of funds (Govt. Institutions, micro finance, NGOs, etc) for development of entrepreneurship skills of women
- Contribution of women in household income and general hygiene in Slum area.
- Women’s contribution in upliftment of living standard of the slum dwellers after rehabilitation and development of Jokalandi Area

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

- The present study attempted to strike a balance between an objective and subjective approach in analyzing issue of women empowerment among slum dwellers.

- Apart from study of the occupational and income pattern of male and female, the questionnaire had separate sections for different age group mainly, 16- 25 age group, 26 – 35 age group and 36 – 50 age group.
Questionnaire was made for the slum dwellers those who are still residing in previous or close to previous encroached slum area where from they were brought.

- Institutional facilities extended time to time for women upliftment and empowerment.
- Desired entrepreneur skills by women are mapped to understand individual and community needs of women in the slum.

### Sample Questionnaire on study for Women Empowerment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro Level Parameters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male - Female Ratio</td>
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<td>Age - Sex ratio</td>
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<tr>
<th>Micro level study</th>
<th>% of women between 16 - 25 age group</th>
<th>% of women between 26 - 35 age group</th>
<th>% of women between 36 - 50 age group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married/Unmarried</td>
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<td>Education level ( upto class 5, upto class 10th, 10+2)</td>
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<td>Interested to work (Yes/No)</td>
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<td>Interested in skill development programs (Yes/No)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Already working (yes/no)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major source of income (Agriculture, Construction, service sector)</td>
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<td>Tentative monthly household income (Rs. 2500 - Rs.5000, Rs. 5000- Rs 7500, Rs. 7500 - Rs 10,000, Above 10,000)</td>
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<td>No. Of children</td>
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**Day today problem faced by women**

- financial dependency on husband
- stringent budget
- no money for children’s education
- social stigma attached with working women
- lack to support from husband

**Desirability Index**

- Desire to contribute to household income
- desire for different vocational training
- desire for education
- desire to participate in government schemes
- desire to participate in NGOs/ SHGs

**Types of Household industry**

- Papad making
- Agarbatti making
- paper plate making
MAJOR FINDINGS:

- Sector V of Jokalandi Slum area has one Mahila Samiti. It’s a government undertaking and promotes micro – finance and co-operative schemes for women empowerment.

- There are around 300 women who are part of this Mahila Samiti. The membership fee of joining the co-operative scheme is INR 500 and monthly fee is INR 100. This Mahila Samiti helps women SHGs (Self – help Groups) with minimum member of 10 by providing financial aid in form of loan of INR 100,000 per group.

- As per Mrs. Gita Muduli, one of members of such SHGs, the loan money is divided equally among all the members since most of them prefer to invest this money individually or with their husbands.

- At present there are around 30 SHGs, but not a single one has started any business venture. Beneficiaries claim that starting any household industry needs space, since there is no community space; they are unable to start the same. Most of the individual payback both principle and the interest of the loan on monthly basis.

- Through institutional initiatives, around 10% women are given training in sewing, papad making, agarbatti making and spice packaging. But most have not started it as business venture.

- 65% of women feel that Initial cost of investment to start household industry is more than the loan provided to them.

- Women of age group of 25 - 35 are most active in this slum. Around 30% of women are working as daily labourer, 28% are vegetable vendor, 12% work as maid in nearby residential colonies and around 10% work in industries.

- Almost 45% of women are proactive and are contributing as a helping hand in household income but doing business independently is still viewed as difficult due to lack of group cohesiveness as well as family constraints.
65% of women want economic upliftment and are very interested in learning vocational skills that can be helpful in starting their own business. Paper plate and carry bag making followed by agarbatti making emerged as the most desired vocational training options.
CONCLUSION:

- Though there is active participation by women in micro finance schemes promoted by institutional setup availing easy access to loan and financial incentives, but true empowerment in terms of financial independence is still a long road ahead for women of the slum settlement.

- Although institution intervened in giving vocational training to the women, but they have not kept any fund for purchasing machine, tools, materials, etc., for the trained women. This is one of the major reasons why none of the women could start or apply their knowledge for further development.

- Women as part of SHGs, have not been able to capitalise on the financial incentives provided by institutional setups due to various reasons such as family constraints and group constraints. Therefore it is imperative that individual module for women empowerment should be designed to address individual needs. Financial model for slum dwellers should similarly be designed either on individual or household basis which can uplift their economic standard.

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REFERENCES:


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9. Government of India, Ministry of Housing and urban poverty Alleviation (2010), *Rajiv Awas Yojana Guidelines for slum-free city planning*


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<td>Prof. Partha Pratim Karmakar has completed his undergraduate (B.Arch) course with first class in the year 1987 and stood first in post graduate, M.Arch. in 1989 from Jadavpur University, Kolkata, West Bengal. He has been professing in the Department of Architecture, College of Engg. &amp; Tech, B.P.U.T, Odisha since last twenty five years. Currently he is Head, Department of Architecture, C.E.T. He is an active member of Council of Architecture (COA) and also Indian Institute of Architects (IIA). He was honored for his research works on housing and Urban Design discipline and he also won many national level design competitions and executed the projects successful in India &amp; abroad. He is one of the pioneer architects to spread green building concept in India and also a qualified green building evaluator of the country.</td>
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<td>Ms. Bagmi Khuntia has completed his undergraduate (B.Arch) in Architecture from College of Engg. &amp; Tech, B.P.U.T and is gold medalist of 2002 batch. She did her M. Planning from School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) in 2005 with specialization in Environmental Planning. She is a visiting faculty to Department of Architecture, CET Bhubaneswar. She has more than 10 years of experience in Architecture and Planning and has worked as consultant/advisor in many projects for both Government and Private sector firms. She has been involved in the various urban infrastructure projects and feasibility studies, project investment and demand assessment studies for spectrum of clients such as Ernst &amp; Young (E&amp;Y), Price Waterhouse Coppers (PWC), Department of Tourism, Govt. of Odisha, IT &amp; Communication Department, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, SP Biotech Park, IL&amp;FS, Railway Land Development Authority (RLDA, etc. She has exposure in both Development sector projects as well as infrastructure projects.</td>
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