

**Five Day National Workshop on Feminist Methodology  
18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017  
on**

**Democratizing Space, Norms and Values: Understanding  
Feminist Methodology**

**Organized by**

**Department of Political Science  
University of Delhi  
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**Concept Note**

Feminism seeks to address the hierarchical power relations between men and women in different spheres of life. It challenged the patriarchal structures and institutions which suppressed women's voices and strives to end to sexism and misogyny. It struggles for women's rights to ensure her dignity and respect as an individual based on the idea that the personal is political.

**The Context**

The past few decades have interrogated the dominant epistemologies which have proved inadequate understanding women's lived realities. The dominant scholarship has failed to address the persistent gender bias in knowledge production and hence, a multidisciplinary approach is required to gauge the experiential reality of the silenced voices. There exists a deep nexus between power and knowledge as the latter is justified in terms of objectivity, value neutrality, validity etc. The feminists argue as to whether knowledge can be standardized as there exist multiple levels of subjectivities. Is it possible to penetrate the gaze of 'masculinity' which pervades our histories, politics, life narratives and theoretical frameworks?

The feminist perspective seeks to locate the 'subject' at the fulcrum of knowledge production. This raises many interesting possibilities. Does the sex of the subject attain significance epistemically? How does social location influence our paradigm choices? The feminists do not approach 'women' as a homogenous category but try to shift through the myriad experiences

of caste, religion, ethnicity, class, disability and sexual orientations. Decoding the monolith of women help to trace the intersectionality of multiple ways of knowing and opened up fresh avenues of research.

The workshop would try to grapple with different questions beginning with whether feminist research requires their own methodologies.

- What makes a research feminist?
- How does the feminist paradigm interrogate existing social theories?
- What does feminism require of an epistemology?
- Explore research methodologies based on multidisciplinary and intersectionality?

The broad themes of the workshop would revolve around the following

- a) Exploring Feminist Methodology- is it possible to incorporate feminist ideas while doing fieldwork? What are the possible risks involved in such an endeavour?
- b) Marriage/Family/Parenthood- These values have structured women's lives since time immemorial. However, economic changes and the market, including the media have dramatically changed the normative nature of these institutions. The women's movement have challenged these normative structures and also brought changes in these structures.
- c) Violence Against Women- The narrative of violence against women does not proceed in a linear fashion. It is institutionalized in terms of caste, class and masculinity and one requires an understanding of the intersectional underpinnings of such violence in order to address it. This narrative of violence also brings to light how women use their agentic capacities in a strategized manner to navigate the violence.
- d) Gender and Migration- Women have been uprooted from their habitus due to many reasons, ethnic conflicts and state formation which force them into a status of refugees, migration for work or marriage, trafficked for sexual labour etc. All these experiences need to be theorised to plan policies to better their situation.
- e) Feminist Legal Jurisprudence- One sector which has witnessed major interventions by feminist research is the legal system. The feminists

protested against rape laws, dowry deaths, reform family law, sexual violence against women and children etc which gradually led to changes in the legal apparatus. However, gender bias still prevails within the judiciary which is reflected in many judicial judgements.

The workshop will enable young researchers to present their work to resource persons and get their feedback. It will also explore possibilities for engaging in new themes for research.

## Programme Schedule:

Day	Theme	Session Morning & Session Afternoon			Lunch 1:00-2:00	Session Evening 2:00-5:00
Sep 18 <sup>th</sup> 2017, Monday	Exploring Feminist Methodology	9:30-11:00 am Registration				<b>Session on Gender and Migration</b>  Prof Navnita C. BeheraHoD, Dept of Political Science, DU)  Prof. Paula Banerjee, University of Calcutta  Dr. Nasreen Chowdhory (Dept of Political Science, DU)  Dr. RukminiSen (Ambedkar University Delhi)
		10:00-10:15 am Introduction Prof N. C. BeheraHoD, Dept of Political Science, DU)				
		10:15-11:30am Key Note address Prof. Paula Banerjee, University of Calcutta Title: What is Feminist About Studying Women's Forced Migration.				
		12:00-1:00pm Meeting with participants				
September 19 <sup>th</sup> , Tuesday	Plenary Session: Gender, and Labour	Chair: Prof. Ujjwal Singh, Dept of Pol Sc, DU  Prof. RanabirSamaddar (Calcutta Research Group)  Prof SamitaSen, (Director, School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University)  Prof Savita Singh(School of Gender and Development Studies, IGNOU)				Lecture:1 Chair:Dr. Rajesh Komath, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam  Dr. SamataBiswas, (Bethune College, Kolkata)  <b>Presentations</b> Dr. AnshuSrivastava Chaitanya AanchalDhull Skylab Sahu Anu Rani Bhoopendra Kumar
Day	Theme	Session Morning 9:30- 11:00	Tea 11:00- 11:30am	Session Afternoon 11:30- 1:00pm	Lunch 1:00- 2:00pm	Session Evening 2:00-5:00pm

<p><b>September 20<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday</b></p>	<p><b>Feminist Epistemology and the Discourse on Development and Environment</b></p>	<p>Chair: Prof. Sanjeev H.M Dept of Pol Sc, DU</p> <p>Prof. Mary John Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi Title: Researching Gender Biased Sex Selection</p>		<p>Chair: Prof. Sunil Choudhary, Dept of Pol Sc, DU</p> <p>Dr. AnupDhar (AUD) Title: Feminist Epistemology</p>	<p>Lecture:2 Dr. Richa Kumar (IIT Delhi)</p> <p>Prof. Madhulika Banerjee Dept. of Pol. Sc., DU Title: Gender, Knowledge, Medicine: recipe and formulation, song and text.</p> <p><b>Presentations</b> Pushpa Singh Smita Aggrawal Ananya Sharma Anup Bali Shyamolie Singh</p>
<p><b>September 21<sup>st</sup> Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>Gender, Sexuality and Marriage</b></p>	<p>Chair: Prof. ShriPrakash, Dept. Pol. Sc., DU</p> <p>Prof. Patricia Uberoi (ICS)</p>		<p>Chair: Dr. RekhaSaxena, Dept Pol. Sc., DU</p> <p>Dr. ShailajaMenon (AUD) Title: Gender, State and the Law.</p>	<p>Lecture3: Prof. Anupama Roy (JNU)</p> <p><b>Presentations</b> Dr. Sangita Dhal Garima Megha JyotiDiwakar RamneetKaur NamreetaKumari</p>

<p><b>September 22<sup>nd</sup> Friday</b></p>	<p><b>Law, Property and Citizenship,</b></p>	<p>Session Morning Chair: Dr. SarojGiri, Dept. Pol. Sc., DU</p> <p>Prof. Samir Das, University of Calcutta Title: Women, Citizenship and Public Sphere.</p> <p>Chair: Prof. N. Sukumar Dept. Pol. Sc., DU Dr. Anita Tagore, Kalindi College, DU</p> <p><b>Presentations</b></p> <p>Dr. BhartiChibber PoojaBakshi PallabiBarah Simple Rajrah AmreenNafisa Komal</p>		<p><b>Round Table Discussion between activists and academics</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Prof. Madhulika Banerjee Dept. of Pol Sc, DU</p> <p>DrSadhnaArya (Satyawati College, DU, core member, Saheli)</p> <p>MaduMehra (Partners in Law &amp; Development)</p> <p>KalyaniMenonSen, (National Coordinator, WSS and Feminist Learning Partnerships. Title: Feminist methodology: a work in progress</p> <p>Prof. Anita Ghai, School of Human Studies, Ambedkar University.</p> <p>Dr. SadhnaSaxena (Central Institute of Education, DU)</p> <p>Dr. AjitaRao (Women against Sexual Violence and State Repression and PUDR).</p> <p>KarthikBittu, Associate Professor, Ashoka University, Transgender Activist and works with WSS</p>
		<p><b>4:30-5:30- Vote of Thanks</b></p>		

## Abstracts

### Session on ‘Feminist Epistemology and the Discourse on Development and Environment’

#### Gender, Seed Sovereignty and the Discourse of Development in India

Pushpa Singh

The proposed presentation intends to critique the dominant discourse on development in agriculture in India particularly the innovations in new plant varieties from the perspective of the politics of knowledge. In traditional agriculture, women everywhere in the world have been the custodians of seeds, working to preserve, exchange and innovate with them. The politics of knowledge around seed sovereignty therefore, necessarily has an important gender dimension.

The presentation will have in three parts dealing with three important and interlinked aspects. The first segment will look at the gender dimension of agriculture, particularly seed. The second part will talk about the the current pattern of Innovations and the related IPR policies that how they are shaped by and are serving the interests of global capital, rather the common masses. At global level, there has been aggressive industrialisation of agriculture promoted by formidable agro-business giants. This part will problematise the existing approach and methodology of these capital conglomerates in the field of innovations in seed sector. International agribusiness giants employ technologies in vicious ways to aggrandise their capital by further marginalising the poor and vulnerable of the developing societies by manoeuvring the policies and rules of the game. In this way, the politics of accumulation by displacement and disparage is continued by the present world order.

However, many ground initiatives are challenging such monopolising tendencies of global conglomerates, as will be discussed in third section. Since the 1980s, a number of new social movements mobilising around the issue of seed sovereignty have emerged. Critical analysis of how these movements have evolved and what their processes of mobilisation and contestation has been, from a gendered perspective shows mobilisation of people for right to food sovereignty. This proposal aims to do precisely this, based on a study of Navdanya (the Nine seeds Movement) in India.

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#### Forward – Backward: Contemporary Middle Class Indian Women and the question of Morality

Smita Aggarwal

Morality and respectability hold an important place in Indian society. In fact the difference between India and west has constantly evolved around this aspect usually clothed under the banner of what is called culture distinctiveness. The onus of carrying forward the culture has largely fallen on women. Today the academic debates revolving around globalization have always focused on how it is pushing forth universal values and in turn eroding the cultural differences. This fear has met with fierce conservative responses in the name of protecting its indigenous culture. New researches however are showing how when the universal meets the particular in a particular context produces something new which is neither universal nor

particular. It in turns leads to negotiations by the actors on which it is enacted. This can largely be seen in the case of middle class Indian women. With globalization new opportunities became available to Indian population and women also got some part of the benefits. This in turn opened a new Pandora box of meanings of culture. This had a large bearing on morality and respectability. The meanings of culture mostly revolved around conservative responses of adhering to strict meaning of ancient Indian culture on one hand on the other openly embracing modernity through western lens. However a large section of response tried to re-define it by assimilating the critical understanding of both traditional and western. This paper tries to see how the notion of morality and respectability is understood in an educational institution situated in upcoming industrial town of Rajasthan, where the population in large number hails from traditional family structure who have got benefitted due to globalization (seen mostly in terms of material benefits due to steep rise in land prices making them look for opportunities for their children through education enhancement). This in turn pushed their children out of clutches of traditional work and household activities and exposed them to new careers in the emerging service sector. Exposed to whole new world, this paper attempts to see how this new group understands morality especially for women who comprise a sizeable section in this institution. The sample consists of students studying here. Ethnography approach with stress on interviews and group discussions formed major part of this research to discuss watch and see their understanding. Since this kind of topic involves trust and constant interaction the sample was confined to this institution only.

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## **Remembering, Resisting, Re-writing: Unpacking Subjectivities and Gender Relations in Conflict Zones**

**Ananya Sharma, JNU**

Collective identities formed out of the violence of exclusion and displacement are typically fixed to a particular place both real and imagined. Meanwhile, mobility is linked to ideas of cosmopolitan citizenship with the freedom to move within and outside sovereign borders constituted in international law. But how does mobility or its lack thereof relate to the subjectivity of those who experience displacement and (un)belonging? The purpose of this paper is to explore how spatial violence in the form of displacement, ghettoization and peripheralisation engenders the relationship between mobility and subjectivity. The theoretical origins of the relation between mobility, displacement and collective identity will be traced and empirically the experience of displaced minority communities in Kashmir will be used to uncover the relationship. The paper will explore the possibility that a focus on gender, struggles over power and (in)security would provide a more nuanced analysis of the gendered consequences and possibilities of war, peace and (in)security.

Key Words: Subjectivity, Gender, Collective Identity, Kashmir

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## **The women question in tribal poetry: the unity for subsumption or relationality of non-relational**

**Anup Bali**

The literature has its on politics within the ambit of its own specificity. On the one hand we have seen the reductionism of literature as an instrument for political struggles in political movements and on other hand we also have been the spectator of art for art sake kind of conception from long time which clenched literature within the identitarian fortifications of aestheticism on other extreme. While rejecting both the formulations of art, contemporary Marxist philosopher Alain Badiou emphasizes on art as itself is a truth-procedure and this truth-procedurality of art is irreducible to other truths. “ This also means that art, as a singular regime of thought is irreducible to philosophy” (2005, pp. 9). Here it is important to point that from Badiou’s conception of art, the truth is immanent and singular within art. In this way it is important to emphasize that my understanding of relationship among literature and politics is, neither literature for politics nor it is politics of literature rather it is politics inherent in literature which manifests itself as a literature in politics. (Ghosh, 2016)

This idea becomes more pertinent when we look into the women writings in contemporary Indian literature. The functionality of women writings in politics unfold the diverse antagonisms and overcoming of those antagonisms in a perpetual process of identity clashes. The women question in Indian society is unlike western feminist discourse because of the interaction and antagonism of diverse subject-positions within the identity of women-subject. In this way the feminist standpoint confronted on one hand with Dalit feminist standpoint and on the hand diverse interpretations of feminisms come into existence. These differences reflect the specificities of oppression, exploitation and unjust of these very identities. To bring these differences into some sort of unity inevitably transforms to some kind of reductionism. Whether it is in form of class reductionism or in form of caste reductionism. This complexity demands the nuance studies of feminist epistemology with other epistemologies. Emancipatory and revolutionary Literature as an epistemological premise cofounds the infinite constellation of infinite deployment of infinite differences which no longer pursue the never-ending antagonism among identities and subject-position but contrary on the other hand by asserting the difference at the same time literature offers the possibility of relationality of non-relational.

Through My research paper ‘the women question in tribal poetry: the unity for subsumption or relationality of non-relational’ my objective is to ponder upon abovementioned complexities of feminist standpoints with regard to Santhal tribal feminist poet Nirmala Putul. It is interesting that through her poems she continually asserts her feminist voice against patriarchy but at the same time she also raises her voice against the upper caste upper class tendencies of feminism. In this way she accepts feminism while asserting her difference within feminism. There are diverse colors and glimpses which renders her tribal worldview against mainstream developmental assault. But the central pillar of her poetic-world is primarily emphasizes on her feminist stand point. Through my paper I want to look into the interaction and antagonism between her woman subject-position and tribal subject-position in her poetry. Hence, while problematizing the ideological frameworks of epistemological standpoints my aim through this paper is to emphasize on generalizability of universal-singularity (Badiou, 2003, p.14-15) within the differences of identities and subject-positions. In this way, through this paper I want to look upon the illumination diverse feminist politics within their specificities.

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## **Saving Hindu Women: Desire, Islamophobia and Love Jihad**

**Shyamolie Singh**

The paper attempts to explore the history of how certain forms of desires – whether they culminate in marriage or other forms of intimate relationships – have been stigmatised and termed deviant, dangerous and have been categorised under the bogey of “love jihad”, not merely in contemporary India but also in the early twentieth century. The desire to “save” Hindu (and also Christian) women from the figure of the Muslim man (and the many stereotypes and labels associated with it) has had a long history. This project of saving has also not been the exclusive domain of the right wing/Hindutva forces, especially in contemporary times, a strand that I wish to explore in detail – but instead cuts across many “progressive” forms of politics of ideologies as well. The violence of the discourse of love jihad has torn apart and affected many lives, such as in the recent case of Hadiya and Shafin Jahan, and this discourse consequently can be seen to have much power even in the so-called constitutional and objective powers such as the judiciary, even the highest levels of it. Charu Gupta’s work on Arya Samaj pamphlets in the 1920s and the contemporary claims of love jihad provide a good historical background to the discourse in question, but in my paper I would like to go beyond that and explore questions of agency, Hindu self-fashioning, and how desires – beyond the legal criminalisation of same-sex desires in India that is clearly visible – are criminalised, penalised and create intense anxiety when they cut across religious and caste boundaries.

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## **Session on ‘Gender & Labour’**

### **Debates on Measuring Empowerment Through Paid Work**

**Dr. Anshu Srivastava**

“Women in South Asia have the lowest paid jobs, if at all they are paid. Even those at the ‘top’ there are few in the decision making managerial and executive positions.” says Kamla Bhasin. The paper looks at problems and debates on methods employed for measuring empowerment keeping the gender relations of power particularly in paid workforce.

Oxaal and Baden (1997), state that power is at the root of the empowerment. Power, they categorize, as operating in a number of different ways. First, is *power over*-this power involves either/or a relationship of domination/subordination. It is based ultimately on socially sanctioned threats of violence and intimidation and requires a constant vigilance to maintain. It also invites active and passive resistance. The second is *power to* –this power relates to having decision making authority,

power to solve problems and can be creative and enabling. The third is *Power with* –the power involves people organizing with a common purpose or common understanding to achieve collective goals. The fourth is *power within*-this power refers to self-confidence, self-awareness and assertiveness. Through this power individuals can recognize through analyzing their experience how power operates in their lives and gain the confidence to act to influence and change this. The feminist movement in particular has been influential in developing ideas about ‘power within’.

The elusiveness of power in the light of gender operates at different levels

- the determinants of power vary in different contexts
- the determinants even when identifiable, weave together in complex ways that are difficult to unravel
- survey research may fall short because respondents do not divulge family dynamics
- even if data is yielded, it is qualitative and therefore difficult to measure

This paper throws light on ‘power within’ since it signifies the person’s capacity to combat ‘*power over*’, makes use of ‘*power with*’ and thereby generates ‘*the power to*’ take action through a case study of Noida Special Economic Zone’s women workers.

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**HOME BASED WOMEN WORKERS IN INFORMAL ECONOMY:  
Limitless Insecurities and Everyday Struggle  
Chaitanaya**

Women have always been a part of production process in the economy. Sometimes, their work is visible, the other times it is just below the visible layer. Nevertheless, manual, unskilled, less paid jobs have historically been done by women in many manufacturing sectors in our economy. In informal economy, women workers make a significant part of the labour force. Out of which large number of women workers are concentrated in home based work which captures a range of work under its umbrella starting from rolling *beedi* to pasting *bindi* and stretches to pasting stones on bangles, cutting thread of jeans, shirts and *kurtis*, making small parts of electronic items, making aluminium wires and packing compasses and other similar items at home.

Through a primary survey on home based women workers in a specific urban setting of north-east part of Delhi- Nandnagri, the paper argues that though the reasons for working for home based work may differ for each age group and with the condition of the household; for some, this work may be the primary source of income; for others, it is an additional support to the family. Coming from different social and cultural backgrounds, having migrated largely with their husbands from various States of North India to Nandnagri for work, has brought all these women to a common platform of misery, poverty and everyday struggle. Bound with the limits of household, sharing more or less similar social insecurities and economic instability, these women are part of the geographical area and space of Nandnagri, and are understood in the vicinity as ‘women workers of Nandnagri’ who are ‘available’ for work at precarious working conditions and at low wages. There is a structural pattern that can

be observed for ‘choosing’ home based work as an ‘option’ for paid activity by these women workers.

With the help of detailed semi-structured interviews, the paper attempts to put forward the fact that these women workers do not have enough options to choose their work, instead they work under given constraints. What are those factors that govern or impact participation of women in labour force and how do they negotiate with these constraints in daily life? This paper is an attempt to understand women’s work in informal economy, their daily struggles and the negotiations they make, their working conditions and the expectation of better living, with respect to home based women workers in the context of Nandnagri.

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**Unpacking ‘Work’ in Housework: A Methodological  
Reconsideration  
Aanchal Dhull**

The paper seeks to explore the different ways in which housework has been approached and theorized. Starting from domestic labour debates in the 1970s, the nature of questions around housework has changed. While the earlier question was whether or not housework plays a role in capitalism, the debate has moved on how to map housework and its contribution to the economy. A host of methods such as time use surveys are being used to bring visibility to household services. Apart from quantitative methods, a sociological lens explains how housework is organized along gender, caste, class, and race. However, despite a fair knowledge of housework, our dominant framework to understand housework remains that of paid work. Therefore, the narratives around housework usually focus on work, tangible tasks, omitting the grey areas of housework which don’t qualify as ‘work’; for example, the planning and mental labour around housework are not thought of as a part of housework. Also, there are chores that are difficult to label, for example, while describing their daily routine women would often use the expression “I do things” or “Do this, do that” which reflects the incongruity between women’s experiences and their social knowledge of work.

The paper is essentially a reflection on the narratives gathered from a small field study, which ask pertinent questions on methodology of housework. The narratives gathered, suggest that our understanding of work is culturally embedded, which ascribes value to paid work. While doing the survey, as women shared about housework, they would often start with disclaimers like “I don’t do much” or “What is there to know”. This suggests that our frame of reference for work comes from the domain of a public world, where work is paid for. As a result, women share only a part of their daily chores, which ‘seem’ like work to them. The literature around housework gives us a fair idea of what women do throughout the day, however the narratives tell us that housework is more than an aggregation of different tasks. The everydayness of housework lies between work and leisure both. In fact, work and leisure in case of housework blur and intersect through the day.

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## **Gender, Work and Sexuality: Experiences and Narratives of Sex Workers in India**

**Skylab Sahu**

The issues of the gender, work and sexuality are interrelated discourses operating in the context of sex workers In India. A majority of sex workers are female, belong to different, class, caste and religious groups. A majority of them are from poor class background and are forced to be in the profession driven by poverty. A few of them are from lower middle class and middle class and hence choose the profession on their own.

‘Work’ is a socio-economically and culturally constructed concept, while a few works in our society are never perceived as work such as sex work, some other works are called as dirty work (scavenging). Of late, the scale of sex work has increased to such an extent that a few scholars called it as ‘commercial sex sector’. Despite the economic contribution that the sex workers have towards the national economy, the contribution is hardly taken into account by the state while estimating the national income. The work done by the sex workers therefore remain invisible and unaccounted. Such an apathetic attitude towards the sector also helps in reinforcing the vulnerable status of the sex workers.

The sex workers provide the sexual services to the people in need of such services. The sex workers’ sexuality and work is however, often perceived as deviant in nature. When a female body performs the profession of the sex work, her identity, sexuality and work, either remain in disguise or invisible, or punishable. When the sector of sex workers is considered as non-existing or as out caste community, several problems and violence faced by sex workers remain unaddressed.

The state while dealing with the sex workers plays a paradoxical role and to a large extent fails to address the complexities of the issue related to sex work. The paper intends to analyse the socio, economic, and political issues of sex workers in two selected states. It furthermore critically analyses the role of the state towards sex workers.

The study is based on qualitative methodology for data collection. Case studies and narratives are used for presentation of the findings.

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### **A Case Study of Women Bus Conductors in Delhi**

**Anu Rani**

This paper looks at the labour market through the lens of gender and based on the case study of women bus conductors in Delhi. The transport sector is a gendered work space dominated by masculine values and practices. The female workforce in India was mostly excluded from this sector till the 1980s.

While over the past couple of decades, more and more women are seen in the transport sector, whether as auto rickshaw drivers, taxi drivers or as metro drivers but their number are still miniscule in the preponderantly male industry. Within the rubric of public transport, this study focuses on the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) bus service. The DTC bus service has been chosen as the field site’ so to say, because it is at once an example of the systemic shifts ushered in by neoliberal capitalist globalization vis-à-vis labour.

Around 2010 there was drastic changed took place in the Delhi transport infrastructure. Lots of new low floor buses were introduced in Delhi and Delhi became one of the first states to induct women into bus services in greater number in comparison to Gujarat, Kerala, and Rajasthan.

This paper will be looking into inclusion of women into male dominated field of public transport in general and women bus conductors in particular. The objective of this paper is to

explore the factors behind the inclusion of women in this sector from the point of view of demand side that may be created by the society and from the point of the bureaucrats, government, institutional factors and also to explore the problems and challenges these women are facing in this industry. Since the last two- three decades women have gradually entered the transport sector as clerical jobs and in Compare to earlier years, the number of women applicants for bus conductor positions has risen over the years in Delhi. Interestingly, while over two thousand Delhi women have been trained over the last couple of years, very few of them actually are recruited into employment as bus conductors.

So it is interesting to explore the gap between the women trained and actually employed in bus services. This study is based on the field work at the Ambedkar Nagar terminal in South Delhi. The semi-structured and in-depth interviews were conducted with the women employed in DTC buses as well as in the cluster buses (orange low floor buses) which are operated by the DIMTS (Delhi Integrated Multi- Modal Transit System under the public private partnership with the DTC. It is interesting to explore the experience of women bus conductors employed by two different institutional authorities.

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## **Understanding Bundeli women's migration; quest for survival and self-respect**

**Bhoopendra Kumar Singh**

**Key words- migration, industrialised society, subjugated labour, feudalism and patriarchal.**

The objective of the women movement has not only been struggling for the women's right but also creating an egalitarian society. In Indian case, its need is because of the complex structure of Indian society and cultural practices. In my proposed study on the women's migration from Bundelkhand region to the national capital will explore the complexities of oppressive culture of Bundelkhand and its impact on women in this region. This study also explores how migration of these women in the national capital territory helps in getting rid-off the feudal practices. Furthermore, this study tries to unfold the complexities of the modern capitalist spaces and the ways through which these migrated women adjust themselves.

The proposed research will make an attempt to understand the different spaces like rural and urban and how they are differently gendered. And how labour relations work in the non-capital to capital wage relations in the feudal and industrialised society? The need of the interrogation becomes important when it comes to the question of subjugated and bonded labour of women in the rural society and its legitimacy from the cultural justification. On the other hand, when we talk about the industries and capitalist accumulation, it comes on the premise of contractual free labour, but we could not find the Indian realities same as Marxist interpretation.

While interrogating Indian mode of production, one can find the multi-level complexities in labour relations in general and gender and labour relations in particular. Here, it becomes important to problematize the category of wage labour relation in class relations of Bourgeoisie and proletariat but also recognising the caste and labour relations in unique caste system of Indian society. The society, where we will find the multi-level division of labourers among caste and gender. Although, the women as general has been long denied of their

public and private rights in terms of labour but the Dalit and tribal women is most oppressed and subjugated in both feudal and capitalist mode of production.

The promise of free contractual labour in industrialised society of India has remained distant dream due to existence of feudalism in the rural India society. As a result of which, labour migration is intertwined with gender and caste. The nature of work makes women and lower castes vulnerable to face multilevel discrimination in the modern and urban spaces. In rural society, women are not allowed to exercise their labour freely due to obstacle of cultural practices, whereas in modern spaces, women facing harassment and oppression and the nature of industrial society do not allow them to get rid-off from the patriarchal and feudal oppression.



## **Session on ‘Gender, Sexuality and Marriage’**

### **'EXAMINING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ROOTS OF GENDER VIOLENCE: A CASE STUDY OF TRIBAL WOMEN IN ODISHA'**

Dr. Sangita Dhal

Violence against the vulnerable sections of the society arising due to multitude factors in the era of globalization is a serious matter of social and academic discourse. The growing incidence of violence perpetrated against women in contemporary times is a testimony to the fast eroding idea of human security in a globalised world, which originates from the patriarchal power structure existing in the society. Women at large are proving to be the most vulnerable section of the society, who bears the maximum brunt of the ongoing process of social and economic transformations in the 21st century.

Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goals of women's equality and justice, the gender impact of which has not been systematically evaluated fully. This paper examines the socio-economic roots of gender violence against tribal women in Odisha with reference to globalization. Violence against tribal women as a legitimate human rights issue is examined within four broad parameters of globalisation, development, displacement and migration.



### **Individuation of women-subject: trajectory of contemporary women-centric ‘alternative-commercial’ Hindi cinema**

**Garima**

Hindi cinema, Bollywood, has been a big industry. From the perspective of business as well as from the perspective of market, Hindi films have established itself as Golden age from 1940s to 1960s. Even today if we see from business perspective, Bollywood films are making the business of hundreds and crores. Apart from the business, Hindi films also have represented the desires and sentiments of the Hindi belt people. It has been a part of people's fantasy. From this perspective, on the one hand, Bollywood films based only on

entertainment also have been produced (such as *Entertainment* (2014, directed by Sajid-Farhad), *Housefull 3* (2016, directed by Sajid-Farhad), *Mastizaade* (2016, Milap Milan Zaveri), and so on in contemporary era. It is noticeable that, in these kinds of films, women always work as a showpiece for the male characters in the film as well as for the audience outside of the film as said by feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey. However, on the other hand, meaningful parallel or artistic cinema has also developed. Even though, the monopoly has been with the commercial cinema in which social issues is shown with some entertainment and in more glorified manner. However, in past few years, these two polarities seem diminishing. On the place of alternative cinema, a new kind of cinema is developing which is making its market and also stand confidently from the point of meaningful expression. So we can say that under the ambit of commercial Bollywood cinema, a new segmentation is emerging. And women issues are one of the central and crucial aspects which one can trace from these 'alternative-commercial' films.

The purpose of my research paper is to envisage feminist discourse and their representation in contemporary commercial cinema. It is highly crucial to understand the image of women in this commercial cinema which is providing a central or dynamic place in this cinema. The important fact of feminist discourse in contemporary Bollywood cinema is that, on one hand, the women character is struggling in order to find its own identity and individuality (*Queen*, directed by Vikas Bahl, 2014). She learns to take decision for herself and questions the institution of marriage (*Queen*, directed by Vikas Bahl, 2014 and *Shudd Desi Romance*, directed by Maneesh Sharma, 2013 ). And on the other hand, while looking for her own individuality, she has been exploited physically and psychologically in the patriarchal society (*Phobia*, directed by Pavan Kirpalani, 2016; *Uda Punjab*, directed by Abhishek Chaubey, 2016) however, while searching her own individuality, she raises a voice against her physical exploitation inside her 'family'. (*Highway*, directed by Imtiaz Ali, 2014). The desire to find the individuality is the only aspect which makes feminist discourse in contemporary cinema differentiates from feminist discourse in earlier cinema. If we notice closely the earlier cinema which talks about women issues such as *Lajja* (directed by Rajkumar Santoshi, 2001), *Zubeidaa* (directed by Shayam Benegal, 2001), *Kya Kehna* (directed by Kundan Shah, 2000). These kinds of films definitely challenges the patriarchal society in their own way, however, it does not question on the individuality of a woman. Whether it is Priya Bakshi of *Kya Kehna*, Zubeida of *Zubeidaa* or Janki from *Lajja*. All the three women characters reveal the problem in life of a woman as well as inhumanity of the patriarchal structure. However, we do not get to see them looking her individuality away from this patriarchal structure. In *Kya Kehna*, Priya Bakshi, unconsciously limits her individuality while glorifying the motherhood whereas Zubeidaa from *Zubeidaa* does not find any other option to come out from the institution of marriage. In a similar way, Janki from *Lajja* argues to have Agni Pariksha for Ram also. On the other hand If we see the feminist discourse of today's 'alternative-commercial' cinema, we find its roots exist in films like *Fire* (directed by Deepa Mehta, 1996) and *Astitva* (directed by Mahesh Manjrekar, 2000) where women identity has been asserted with strength. These films, by giving importance to women's individuality, reveal the contradictions of marriage institution.

However, is it only the differences in discourses regarding individuation of women-subject? Was that time ready to accept the independent identity of women? If not, what differences have come in political economy, social psychology and cultural construction in the feminist discourse of now and of that time? Have some differences taken place in cinema alone? Or, what is its relation with the inception of neoliberal economic policies in India? This would be the purpose of my research paper.

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## **Problematizing Marriage with Women's Experiences: A Critical Intervention in Indian Rape Law**

**Megha**

**Key Words:** Marital Rape, Legal Linguistic Strategy, Masochistic Heterosexuality, Socio-Legal Matrix.

Marital rape has not been criminalized in India, for marriage is conceived as a sacred union and sacramental as well. This paper is an attempt to interrogate sacrosanct idea of marriage which justifies rape within marriage and for this purpose it critically evaluates the Indian rape law—its language and the techniques—as based on the socio-cultural contexts which emphasises husbands' unquestionable rights on their wives' body.

The paper intends to problematize Indian rape law from feminist perspective on three aspects. a) It presents a critical account of the exemption maintained in Section 375 of Indian Penal Code<sup>1</sup> whereby marital rape is not a criminal act and comes up with some recent cases where women's experiences of rape by their husbands has been pitted against the masculine legal language. b) It argues that the impossibility of criminalization of marital rape emanates from the language used by the Judges in the rape cases. Some cases are discussed to show the linguistic strategy of the Judges that insists the masculine interpretation of rape victim's sexuality emphasizing the natural instinct of male to rape and shame and honour associated with rape victim creating grounds for non recognition of marital rape in India. c) In contrast to the state and judicial paradigm which does not incorporate and emphasise absence of language of sexual danger for wife within marriage, the paper comes up with experiences of women who are suffering from rape by their husbands. These incidents question and challenge the knowledge created by Indian socio-political and legal parameters about the sacred institution of marriage where rape does not exist.

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## **Rape as Socio-Culture Opprobrium: Common Trauma in Dalit Women's Life**

**Jyoti Diwakar**

This paper investigates the causes of rape committed against dalit women. Since, woman does not have an autonomous identity; her individuality is controlled by caste, religion, class, region and race. These identities perpetuate women's subjugation under social forms of patriarchy. Violence replicates the caste, gender subordination and power relation. However women's movement in India addressed the violence against women issues nationally, but excludes dalit women violence. The feminist discourses never address dalit women violence as a separate category of violence. The mainstream considers economy or poor condition make women faced more violence as per their economic condition, but not as their caste identity. Though, dalit women are more likely to face collective and public threats or acts of social violence from dominant caste men. This paper particularly highlights the reasons of violence against dalit women which is different from violence against women in general. The sexual violence on dalit women needs to be understood through particular phenomena of

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that section 375 of Indian Penal Code deals with Rape Law.

caste violence. Thus, historically prevailing caste hierarchies and caste conflicts prepares ground for intentional caste based rape. Along with this, dalit women are directly affected by the systemic structure of caste, class and gender discrimination, compared to women in general. Due to these systemic hierarchies, dalit women are socially-economically vulnerable. Consequently, they are easily available to sexual offenders (dominant caste men). Hence, the normalization of rape or sexual violence becomes part of dalit women's everyday of life. Therefore this paper attempts to discuss the following questions: what are the major reasons of dalit women's rape, or can caste violence be a fundamental reason of dalit women's rape? How upper caste men use rape as an instrument to take avenger from dalit men/community?

Keywords: Dalit Women, Rape, Caste, Violence, Dominant Caste.

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**Motherhood: A Feminist Understanding**  
**Ramneet Kaur**

In a patriarchal country like India motherhood plays an important role in constructing women's identity. In patriarchal societies, reproduction is regarded as the primary function and purpose of women's life through which women gain status and justify her existence. In a patriarchal set up motherhood is the criteria of attaining complete womanhood. After marriage, it is sort of obligatory for women to produce children and preferably son for the continuation of lineage. It is by controlling and regulating women's reproduction the patriarchy sustains itself. Motherhood act as a source of enslavement for women when they are forced and coerced for attaining motherhood for serving the interest of patriarchy ideology. It is the societal pressure and control which often deprive women of their right over their body. In this context, the notion of women's choice in deciding to be mother or not, her autonomy in expressing herself is curbed. When women are forced to become mother for maintaining her marriage, when women are coerced for producing son for attaining the ideal of complete motherhood, women's right to make her choice is denied. When women are coerced to go through multiple pregnancies for having desire number and sex of children, women are denied the right of being the autonomous individual. In these circumstances, women's body is used as means for serving the needs of patriarchal society.

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**Surrogacy: Laboring Motherhood**  
**Namreeta Kumari**

Motherhood is considered as normative for every woman once is she is married, it is considered that essence of womanhood lies in motherhood. Though this is a patriarchal construction of womanhood which needs to be deconstructed and challenged. A woman is doomed if she is unable to procreate as she stigmatized as barren land and often there is risk of getting abandoned by her in laws as she would be replaced by another women who can provide them with a child. Development in technology and medicine resulted in Assisted Reproductive technologies. These reproductive technologies came as a cure to problems of infertility. Among these reproductive technologies the most radical among then was in-vitro fertilization and surrogacy which changed the meaning of human reproduction. Gestation

which was inherent to motherhood was separated from the biological mother of the child. This gestational form of surrogacy was slowly commercialized and motherhood which was an intimate affair for a woman was brought in the market. The bodies and the gametes were available in the market for sale. This paper seeks to challenge the normative construction of motherhood. Secondly it challenges that development in technology and medicine were not a solution for the women, whether it was intended mothers or the surrogate mothers. How commercial surrogacy becomes a business which basically is a trade of lives and the surrogate mothers bodies are commodified along with the child which would be born.

**Key words:** normative motherhood, surrogacy, assisted reproductive technologies, commodity

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## **Session on ‘Law, Property and Citizenship’**

### **Women’s Struggle for Equality through Socio-Legal Reforms in Post-Colonial India Dr. Bharti Chibber**

The paper reflects on the women’s struggle for equality through socio-legal reforms in the post-colonial India. The paper argues that even after seven decades of independence, women rights are violated in day-to-day life, in family, households and public domain. Violations of women human rights include violence against women whether in the form of bride burning, female foeticide, infanticide, child marriage, child abuse, domestic violence, sexual harassment at workplace or eve teasing. Most of the time women suffer in silence in a patriarchal society deprived of personal liberty and bound by rules made by so-called superior male.

In post-colonial India according to Article 15 of the Constitution no discrimination can be made among citizens on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. Likewise, the Constitution prohibits forced labour and trafficking in human beings but these practices are flourishing. Article 39 of the Constitution stating Directive Principle of States Policy argues that states shall secure equal right to livelihood for women and equal pay for equal work. However, women are paid much less for the same work. We have an elaborate system to protect rights of women including Dowry Prohibition Act and (anti)Sati Act and Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act. Need is for their proper implementation. Moreover, laws do not automatically change social structure, they only set a code of conduct.

The paper is in two sections. After a brief introduction to the issue of violence against women, the first section examines women’s struggle for equality and women movements and the demand for human rights in India. The second section analyses women’s rights through socio-legal reforms in post-colonial India. The arguments are supported by some case studies. In the final, paper provides some policy implications to bring about an awareness through education and work on the culture of equality and non-bias.

**Keywords:** Equality, Human Rights, India, Legal Reforms, Women's Rights

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**A Post-colonial Feminist Approach to Textual Analysis: Case study Justice Verma  
Committee Report and Justice Usha Mehra Commission Report.**

**Pooja Bakshi**

This study is part of a larger doctoral work on 'Patriarchy and the Democratic State in Contemporary India: Sexual Violence and State Responses' which argues that the response of the Indian State to December 2012 gang rape as articulated through modalities of State bodies, State Committees and Commissions and State actors has been heterogeneous in nature. This research adopts a post colonial feminist methodology to textually examine the two reports; the Justice Verma Committee (JVC) and the Justice Usha Mehra Commission (JUMC) which informed the Indian parliament in the formulations of the Criminal Law Amendment Act 2013.

For the purposes of the current research the two critical aspects relied upon from post colonial feminist theory and methodology are- firstly, an attempt has to be made to contextualize the struggles of post colonial women in and across the Nation States which they inhabit (Mohanty, C. T., 2003, pp. 17-42). Secondly, engagements between women and the State are not linear in nature implying simultaneous progressive change and regressive tendencies (Mills, S. 1998, pp. 98-112).

An attempt has been made to address the following dilemma. The JVC and the JUMC were constituted in December 2012 by the central government in response to the public protests against the gang rape which took place in Delhi. The mandate of these two State instituted bodies differed but they were instituted by the central government at the same historical juncture to deal with aspects pertaining to the same crime. Yet there are significant differences that exist in the manner in which the crime was dealt with, finer aspects of the methodology followed by both the bodies, and the recommendations made for change.

For instance, the JVC engaged extensively with representatives of groups working with survivors of sexual abuse, including women, children and sexual minorities. Working on the suggestions made by feminists, it argued for recognition of marital rape, recognition of crimes of stalking and acid attacks, recognition of sexual minorities, recognition of sexual abuse of sexual minorities, need for legislation on sexual harassment at the workplace, need for acknowledging and legislating on child sex abuse and trafficking of women and children, repeal of Armed Forces Special Powers Act, etc. The use of coercive force by the police to manage the public protests which took place after the crime, has been criticized. In spite of the limitations of this document, it has been acknowledged for having made some progressive inroads to the understanding of sexual violence.

The JUMC on the other hand, oscillates between critically examining the role played by the police during the investigation of the said crime and applauding the police for the same. There has been no mention of the use of coercive force by police in response to the public protests which took place in the aftermath of the crime in Delhi. Rather than understanding that crimes of violence against women take place because of misogynistic attitude prevalent in society whereby men don't respect the bodily integrity of women; it has been argued that

had a series of events gone 'right' that night (such as if the victims got an auto, if the vehicle in which the crime took place did not have black tinted glasses, if the police patrol cars were able to stop the vehicle) then the crime could have been averted.

The argument that this paper seeks to make is that these differences pertain to the difference in the fact that the JVC engaged extensively with the feminist presence in the post colonial State of India and their research on the aspects of sexual violence and hence this analysis and recommendations reflected this engagement. The JUHC on the other hand seemed to have been driven by the Statist agenda of engaging with the police and other agencies, and absolving them of any significant critical reassessment. Thus, some progressive inroads were made into engaging with sexual violence in a gender sensitive manner whilst foreclosing other possibilities.

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**EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS: A  
CASE STUDY OF BODOLAND TERRITORIAL AREA DISTRICTS (BTAD)**

**Pallabi Barah**

Empowerment as a process included a range of resources, agents and resulted in achievements. The agents of empowerment are of various types. Some of them are present within individuals; some are institutions. The debates around women empowerment were first raised within the development debate in the context of economic terms only. As time passes, the empowerment of women started including a range of organizations, processes and started using the word in multiple contexts. In fact, the word empowerment constitutes a significant part of development paradigms. Moreover, the urge for women empowerment has been one of the intrinsic elements of development policies across the world. Along with the other aspects of empowerment, the most important in case of women is the agencies or sources that bring empowerment to them. So, taking BTAD as an area of study, this paper tries to look into the levels of steps taken by civil society organization while keeping in mind the spatiotemporal conditions. Moreover, an ethnographic approach has been taken while studying about these organizations of BTAD and a range of interviews have carried out as most of the members of these organizations are women. So, empowerment of women by women is the most intriguing part of the paper that further opens up scopes for in depth study. Moreover, the area of study, i.e., BTAD which is a conflict prone region and full of ethnic clashes is also a peculiar part of the study as the organizations in this region are not only doing development related works but also play a unique role in promoting peace.

Keywords: Empowerment, development, conflict, and women

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**'Article 35A and its gendered implications- feminist interaction with law, property and citizenship'**

*Simple Rajrah*

Feminist inquiries into the legal domain have often been about transgressions and absence. The paper attempts to understand the implications of Article 35 A of the Indian constitution which transgresses the commitment towards gender equality by allowing the state of Jammu

and Kashmir to define its 'permanent citizens', and as an illogical and sexist extension allows the violation of the right to property of the female citizens who choose to marry 'non state subjects'. While the lawful descendants of such matrimony are absolutely denied the right to inherit property from the state or apply for scholarships or any other welfare schemes, the male members who choose to marry outside the state are granted with naturalized citizenship for their spouses and children, thus highlighting the patriarchal notions of this law. The paper also attempts to comprehend how the modern state with its sacrosanct constitutionality and legal legitimacy, often criminally disenfranchises the female citizens by reducing them to the status of secondary citizens, worthy only of conditional welfare. The complex interaction between the domain of marriage in patrilocal and patrilineal societies, and property and land rights further embeds the female body in dislocation and dispossession. Underlying this disinheritance is the oversimplified notion that infantilizes women and refuses to acknowledge the female desire of property or possession and hence the paper also aims to comprehend a feminist perspective of property. Whether or not article 35A can be done away with and how it is intricately associated with article 370 and the autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir is a legal tenet and one outside the purview of this paper but what is imperative to mention is that despite the complicity, the gender violence committed by such laws is definitely a matter of academic and political inquiry.

Keywords- feminism, law, property, land rights, inheritance, citizenship, desire, marriage.

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## मुसलमान औरतें तथा उनका संघर्ष :निजी कानूनों में सुधार

Amreen Nafeesa

जहां मुस्लिम स्त्रियों को कुछ खास समस्याओं के संदर्भ में समझने की कोशिश की जाती है जैसे -बहू-विवाह, पुरुष के लिए आसान तलाक, गुजारे-भत्ते का प्रावधान न होना आदि पर इन समस्याओं के लिए विशिष्ट प्रावधान या समाधान को तवज्जोह न दे कर समान नागरिक संहिता की बात कही जाती है जबकि इस बात को नज़रअंदाज़ नहीं किया जा सकता कि यह समस्याएँ केवल मुस्लिम स्त्रियों की ही नहीं है बल्कि अन्य धर्मों की स्त्रियाँ भी कही न कही इन समस्याओं से पीड़ित हैं; इसे मुस्लिम स्त्रियों तक सीमित तो किया जाता है पर इन समस्याओं से निपटने के विशिष्ट संदर्भों को समझने या अपनाने की ओर कभी ध्यान नहीं दिया गया । यहाँ मुस्लिम स्त्रियाँ आंदोलन से अलग थलग पड़ जाती है जहां उन्हें किन्हीं दो विकल्पों) binary) में से किसी एक को चुनने के लिए विवश होना पड़ता है और क्योंकि वह अधिकांश समुदाय की ओर जाती है तब यह अत्यंत आवश्यक हो जाता है कि समुदाय के भीतर स्त्रियों के लिए गुंजायश को नज़रअंदाज़ करना उचित नहीं है इसलिए यह ज़रूरी है कि मुस्लिम स्त्रियों के प्रयासों को इस्लामिक फ्रेमवर्क में समझने और विश्लेषित करने का प्रयास किया जाए । इस बात पर भी ध्यान दिया जाना चाहिए कि धर्म के मुद्दे को विरोधी स्वर में न उठाया जाए बल्कि सांस्कृतिक प्रथाओं और परम्पराओं में विविध व्याख्याओं के तरीकों तथा बहुलता को विकसित किया जाए; धर्म

की समरूपता के मिथक को तोड़ने का प्रयास किया जाए तथा यह भी मान्य हो कि जब भी लैंगिक न्याय की बात हो उसका धार्मिक अस्मिता के साथ जुड़ाव हो अन्यथा स्त्रियों के समानता के अधिकार का दावा इनकी धार्मिक अस्मिता व अधिकारों के विरोध में खड़ा नज़र आयेगा ।

भीतर से सुधार के विकल्प को समझते हुए मुस्लिम स्त्रियों की विशिष्टता को समझने का प्रयास जोकि सेकुलर फ्रेम से शायद बाहर है । मुस्लिम स्त्रियों का यह संघर्ष अपने आप में महत्वपूर्ण इसलिए भी प्रतीत होता है कि इस्लामिक विमर्श के अंतर्गत सुधार के इनके दावे के चलते धर्म के बहुल रूपों को समझने का अवसर मिलता है यह संघर्ष न केवल सार्वभौमिक होने के एक खास दावे से आगे ले चलता है बल्कि यह धर्म के अंतर्गत समरूपता और प्रभुत्व को भी चुनौती देता है । इस प्रकार यह एक खास दायरे की बात करते हुए एजेंसी को स्पष्ट तो करती ही हैं साथ ही साथ यह इस दायरे के अंतर्गत प्रभुत्व को चुनौती देते हुए स्त्रियों के लिए अधिकारों तथा धर्म में बहुलता की बात कहती है जोकि अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है तथा इस्लामिक नारीवादियों के इस तर्क के निकट ले जाता है कि इस्लाम ने स्त्रियों को अनेक अधिकार दिये हैं पर इनकी पितृसत्तात्मक व्याख्याओं के चलते इन अधिकारों से स्त्रियों को वंचित कर दिया गया है इसलिए यह ज़रूरी है कि इस्लाम में स्त्रियों के लिए अधिक गुंजायश को समझा जाए और स्त्रियों को उनके अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूक किया जाए । यद्यपि इस बात को ले कर कई मुस्लिम कार्यकर्ताओं में सहमति नहीं है कि वह स्वयं को नारीवादी कहलाना चाहती हैं या नहीं पर मुस्लिम स्त्रियों के लिए उनका संघर्ष है और वो सक्रिय हैं इस बात में कोई दो राय नहीं है ।

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### **Democratizing Citizenship: A study of Hindu Code Bill Komal**

This paper discusses about a hypothesis whether Hindu Code Bill conceived with an idea of democratization of the concept of citizenship through granting women rights of their ownself. To be more precise, how the Hindu Code Bill ensures the citizenship for women? As far Indian women's case is concerned, women are denied from property rights since ancient period. Denial of the right to inherit ancestral property goes against the women's rights as citizens, and against the principle of gender egalitarianism which has been conserved in the Constitution wherein Ambedkar laid down the foundations of social justice and without gender equality social justice cannot be achieved. From this egalitarian perspective, women's inheritance right is the subject of much scrutiny and investigation. To understand it, the dichotomy of tradition and modernity would be interrogated in this attempt.

Through HCB Ambedkar recognised women as an individual and politically equal citizens as equal to men. This bill was to undermine the practices like compulsory endogamy, absence of women's absolute right to property, indissolubility of marriage for women etc. which reproduce the brahmanical patriarchy. Ambedkar reframed the bill with his passion to the liberal values of liberty, equality, fraternity and the dignity. The seamless entanglement of

overture of the women's absolute share in property, purge of caste restrictions in matters of marriage and adoption, elimination of the polygamy and overture of monogamy would restore these values of social democracy. As a consequence, this bill was to democratizing the phenomenon of women's property rights in India and thus citizenship rights since evidences show that the women who do not own any assets are subject to threats of violence and other inequalities within the household and unable to get access to citizenship rights freely.

