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## **New Dimension of Unskilled Women- A Case Study on New Town Action Area-1, Kolkata**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

This research paper delves into the underexplored realm of unskilled women entrepreneurship, investigating the factors that drive women with limited formal education and skills to venture into business. Despite facing numerous challenges, including lack of education and resources, unskilled women often exhibit remarkable resilience and resourcefulness in their entrepreneurial endeavors. Through a qualitative approach, this study aims to uncover the motivations, strategies, and obstacles encountered by unskilled women entrepreneurs. By shedding light on their experiences and contributions to the economy, this research seeks to inform policy interventions and support mechanisms to foster the empowerment and economic inclusion of unskilled women in entrepreneurial activities.

Keywords: Unskilled Women, Women Entrepreneurship, Social Awareness, Gender Equality

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### **Introduction:**

India is seeing a rise in women entrepreneurship, driven by economic reforms and globalization. Government policies and programs offer training and education, expanding women's economic opportunities. Despite this progress, women still own only a third of businesses. However, many successful women entrepreneurs exist in both social and economic sectors. The government launched initiatives in 2009 to equip the workforce with skills and promote entrepreneurship. Yet, this responsibility shouldn't fall solely on the government.

Traditionally, Indian women have been revered for their strength, but in reality, they've often faced limitations. Interestingly, more women are leaving traditional jobs to become entrepreneurs. This growing presence of women in business is changing the economic landscape. Businesses owned by women are playing a more significant role, sparking academic interest in this phenomenon. This paper will explore the challenges women entrepreneurs face, how to overcome them, and analyze Indian government policies in this area.

One of the lady Puchka seller belonging to the age bracket of 40-49 belonging to the same area in which the study has been conducted shared her experience with me. Earlier she used to work in different households as a cook. She felt she could improve her opportunities, use her own resources and do something of her own. Thus, she entered this business. She had 3 daughters, 1 had completed her Graduation, 1 had given the Class 12<sup>th</sup> board examinations and the other is still in school. She and her husband both work in the same stall and they jointly provide for their daughters' education. They work endlessly day and night making ends meet, still there's always something left out. The couple work very hard and as per customer review they provide hygienic and delectable Phuchkas. The couple is quite famous around the area and there's always a buzz around her stall. The lady stated that she felt the need of a proper stall along with electricity and water supply for proper commencement of her business. As this work is labor intensive it would have been easier for her if she could have hired an assistant. Due to financial constrains her family members like her daughters and husband help her out. Even after being exposed to such discrepancies, she cannot conduct her business smoothly because the govt is threatening her to vacate the place.

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### **Review of Literature:**

State of women employees in India:

It has been found that the gender wage gap could be negatively correlated with the gender gap in employment. For instance, the employment gap is much smaller in the United Kingdom than in Italy, and the wage gap is much smaller in Italy than in the United Kingdom. This is caused by effects of selection into employment, as shown by Olivetti and Pietrangelo (2008).

Despite growth in economy, increase in woman education throughout the country over the past three decades, the women employment saw a decline in participation rate in work places. In urban areas the participation rate saw fall about 2% from 26% to 24% and in rural areas a huge fall of about 23% from 54% to 31% from 1987 to 2017. An aggregate and sectoral trend in WFP, worrying future point is that women of India are missing out on structural transformation. Men of the country found jobs in other sections than agriculture but women have not.

In a country with the largest democracy where the goddesses are hailed and worshipped one might think women too are protected and enjoy safety. The reality is far from that. Women face problems on a daily basis that men cannot comprehend, they are stared at by others and judged for their choice of

clothes, behavior and everything connected to them, at homes they are expected to be caretakers, mothers, cooks, nurses, a good wife, a daughter-in-law.

It is so sad to see that so much inhuman and machine level expertise is expected from them and yet nobody is happy with them. They are ill-treated on roads, public transports, at the workplace and even in their own homes and personal relationships. The problems are many like dowry-related harassment, right from childhood young girls are neglected and not encouraged for personal growth which creates a weak foundation for their entire love. When girls from such toxic environments grow up, they tolerate domestic violence, marital rape and even they do not speak up when they encounter abusive behavior in a relationship.

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### Objective of the Study :

- To analyze the structure and pattern of women's work participation as the mobile food selling vendors of New Town area in Kolkata
- To determine the factors that affect the above-mentioned female working conditions in the study area.
- To highlight the constraints faced by the above women vendors in the study area.
- To examine the daily work pattern of the above-mentioned women in the study area.
- To analyse the socio-economic effect of these women after initiation of their present venture
- To study the various Govt support and initiatives that these workers receive and their consequences

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### Research Methodology:

The Research methodology that was used in the project is the Primary Method of Research. Alongside I have also reviewed sources like books, journals, articles and websites. The project search has been focused on Primary Method of Data Collection. I had provided interview schedules to the women street vendors of the study area. To provide ample support to my research, I have reviewed various sources like Books, Articles, Journals and Websites.

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### Analysis:

- While doing my survey, I found out that **10** of the respondents were from the age group **30-39**, **7** of my respondents were in the age bracket of **20-29**, the rest belonged to the age group **40-49**.
- **18** of my respondents were born and brought up in Kolkata while the rest were born and brought up outside Kolkata. To be specific, **2** of them were from Bangladesh, **1** was from Uttar Pradesh, **1** from Bihar, and the other from Medinipur.
- All of my respondents were married and had children. **1** respondent didn't have a family, she was the only member, **12** respondents had **3** family member, **8** respondents had **4** family members and **4** respondents had **5** family members. All of them had nuclear families.
- All of my respondents had been to school and only **2** of them were completely uneducated. **2** of them had done their schooling till class **4**, **18** of them had studied till class **7**, the rest of them had given their 10<sup>th</sup> boards examination. All the family members of my respondents had been to school as well. Out of **25** respondents the children of **23** respondents were getting educated.
- **15** of my respondents join up with their husbands to provide for their children's education, **6** respondents alone provide for their children's education, the rest cannot provide for their children's education so their husbands provide for the same
- **All** of my respondents started their businesses mainly due to financial crisis.
- **18** of the respondents liked doing the work, the rest of them didn't.
- **15** of the respondents had taken a loan to start their business, while the rest of them hadn't.
- **12** of the respondents had their shops open all day long, **5** of them had their shops open all evening, rest of them had their shops open both in the morning and evening.
- Except **2** respondent all get support from their families. They get financial, mental, emotional and moral support from their families.
- **6** respondents said that their income was more or less sufficient to support their families, while the rest said that their income wasn't at all sufficient to support their families.
- **None** of them get any advantage as a woman in the business.
- **8** of my respondents said that they don't have proper electricity supply and proper washrooms. **5** said that they don't have sufficient supply of water, and the others said that they don't have proper shops.
- **None** of the respondents gets any support from the govt for being a woman vendor.
- They need facilities like electricity, properly constructed shops, washroom, water supply, support scheme for families, along with education schemes for children. All of the respondents stated to receive no help what so ever from NKDA other than **1** respondent who stated NKDA clears the garbage from in front of the shop.
- Additionally, they stated that they face tons of problems in their business, like raising children during working hours, due to financial constrains they cannot afford to keep any labor, they were willing to work if they get proper basic facilities from the govt, in worst cases NKDA forces them to vacate the places.

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**Findings:**

- Most Of the women vendors belong to the age group of 30-39.
- Most of the women vendors belong from Kolkata, West Bengal.
- All the women vendors were married and were living in a nuclear family.
- Most of these women vendors had completed their education till class 7.
- Most of these women vendors jointly support their children's education.
- Most of these women vendors had started their business ailing to critical financial conditions.
- Most of these women vendors like their business.
- Most of these women vendors haven't taken a loan to start this business.
- Most of these women vendors keep their shops running all day long.

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**Suggestions:**

- The govt should take initiative to provide them basic facilities like electricity and water supply and proper sanitation.
- The NGOs should reach out and help these workers.
- There should be wise investment of the capital.
- There should be welfare facilities for their families and especially their children.
- They should not be vacated from their particular places.

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**Limitations:**

- There was a massive time constraint. I did not get enough time to take ample interviews.
- Many of them were hesitant to speak because they thought that their reviews might be used against them in some or the other way.
- If there were any men in the shops along with the women, then the men did not let the women speak clearly which showed a valid and clear reflection of the predominating patriarchal view.
- The time during which I went, was one of the rush hours, so they were having problems in answering while working.
- Some of the respondents were not at all cooperative

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**Conclusion:**

Diversity and inclusion are crucial for success in today's globalized world. This is especially true for India, where women's empowerment is gaining momentum. The #MeToo movement has given voice to women who previously faced silence. This has sparked a national conversation about women's empowerment.

Empowerment means giving women the tools they need to be self-sufficient and participate in society. This includes economic independence, self-esteem, and the ability to make decisions. The Indian government has taken steps to achieve this through various ministries and initiatives. These include reserving seats for women in local government and ratifying international conventions on women's rights.

There has been progress, particularly in women's participation in village councils. However, significant challenges remain. The literacy rate for women in India is much lower than for men, especially in rural areas. This lack of education limits their opportunities and makes them more vulnerable to abuse.

Despite these challenges, Indian women are making strides in various fields, from politics and business to social work and entrepreneurship. Examples include successful politicians and business leaders. Women are also playing a vital role in rural development and family well-being.

Overall, India is on the path to greater women's empowerment, but there's still a long way to go. Closing the gender gap in education and opportunity is essential for India's future growth.

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**Appendices****Questionnaire**

- Q1) What is your name?  
Q2) What is your age?  
Q3) Are you from Kolkata?  
Q4) If yes, which district and village are you from?  
Q5) If no, which state, district and village are you from?  
Q6) Are you Married, If yes – What does your husband / wife do?  
Q7) Do you have any child, If yes How many children, age and gender  
Q8) How many members are there in your family?  
Q9) Is your family a joint or nuclear family?

- Q10) Name the family members?  
Q11) Who is the main earning member of your family?  
Q12) Have you been to school?  
Q13) If yes, till which class did you study?  
Q14) What are the qualifications of the rest of the members of your family?  
Q15) Are your children studying now?  
Q16) Who provides for their education?  
Q17) Why did you plan to start this business?  
Q18) Do you like doing this work?  
Q19) Did you take loan to begin your business?  
Q20) What are your normal working hours?  
Q21) Do you get any support from your family in this business?  
Q22) What type of support do you get from your family in this business?  
Q23) Is this profession providing you sufficient income to support your family?  
Q24) Do you get any special facility being women in this business?  
Q25) Do you face any particular disadvantage in this business?  
Q26) Any special help that you get from the Gov't for being women vendor?  
Q27) Any special facility that you want Govt to provide?  
Q28) Any special facility given to you by NKDA?  
Q29) Any other comment

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