

**THE CASE FOR WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL
LIVELIHOODS: A SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRY**

NISHA DHAWAN



**DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI**

JUNE 2020

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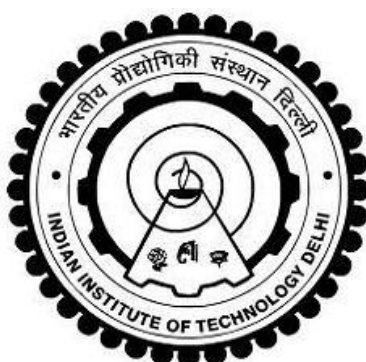
by

NISHA DHAWAN

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Submitted

**in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
to the**



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI

JUNE 2020

For Inayat and Armaan

May you challenge the social structures that limit you, and those around you.

May you always be 'disruptive.'

Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**The Case for Women in Non-Traditional Livelihoods: A Sociological Inquiry**” being submitted by **Ms. Nisha Dhawan** to the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi for the award of **Doctor of Philosophy** in department of Humanities and Social Sciences is a record of the bona fide research work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance. I am satisfied that the thesis presented by Ms. Nisha Dhawan is worthy of consideration for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The material contained in the thesis has not been submitted in part or full to any other university or institute for the award of any other degree or diploma.

Dr. Ravinder Kaur

Professor Sociology & Social Anthropology

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

Acknowledgements

To begin, I want to thank all of the drivers and trainees that I met on this journey, your determination, grit and willpower is admirable. Thank you for sharing your lives and your journey with me. A special thanks to Rabbunisha, Shabnam, Sunita, Savita, Kaajal, Lalita and Ripu –for your intimate reflections, it is my most profound hope that I have been able to do your narratives justice. You are an inspiration.

An extra thank you to Ripu, for keeping me continuously connected to all my respondents despite their ever-changing phone numbers, for playing the role of Research Assistant – through all your photocopying, printing, reading Hindi texts and for your follow-ups with your peers for village names, family member names and dates.

Thank you to the girls from EMpower’s Adolescent Girls Learning Community in Mumbai and to the 16 fearless girl leaders from EMpower’s Girls Advisory Council. You are my faith and the source of so much wisdom. I can’t wait to see how your future unfolds.

In the journey of a PhD your most powerful ally and your biggest critic is your thesis supervisor. I am lucky to have shared this journey with Dr. Ravinder Kaur. Thank you for your insight, for pushing me and for making me question my own work. Thank you also for your wisdom, it is with complete humility that I say I am lucky to have had the opportunity to work with a feminist, a great thinker and a thought leader in this space. Thank you also for enabling me to push the boundaries of academic research and let me be my ‘whole’ person – a researcher and a practitioner – because of you I have not had to edit who I am and for that I am grateful. You have enabled me to claim my place. My work reveals the importance of role models, and in this journey you have been mine.

Thank you to my all female advisory team. Dr Radhika Chopra and Dr. Farhana Ibrahim – thank you for your comments as I conceptualised this work, your tough questions and suggestions.

Meenu Vadera, I have no words. You are ahead of your time. Thank you for being disruptive and for challenging social structures. Your vision and insight knows no bounds. Thank you for trusting me with your story and for opening the doors to me at

Azad Foundation and Sakha Consulting Wings, your ingenuity has transformed the life course of so many women. I am in awe of all that you are and all that you do.

To the whole Azad Foundation and Sakha Team, thank you for your time, your insights and for bearing with me as I occupied your offices, took part in training sessions, caused all kinds of disruptions in the training centre, took over your rooms for my interviews, trespassed through all of your documentation and for the many cups of *chai* and snacks over 5 years. You have been so warm, inviting and honest – and for that I am grateful. A special thank you to Shrinivas Rao, a true ‘enabling man’ – you stand for so much and I have learned so much from you. Thank you to the Research, Advocacy and Communications team, past and present - Amrita Gupta, Nilanjana Sengupta and Padmakshi Bodoni – thank you for never saying ‘no’ to my strangest and most obscure requests for information.

Cynthia Steele, this work would not have been possible without you. Thank you for pushing boundaries ten years ago in the non-traditional livelihoods space, thank you for not accepting the status quo in civil society programming. Thank you for your conviction in centring the voices of girls in decision-making. You are my mentor, my teacher and guide. I am who I am (professionally and otherwise) because of you.

To the whole EMpower team, thank you for being part of this journey with me. Marta Cabrera, Kristen Woolf and Cynthia Steele, thank you for leading change in relation to the flexible work, you have enabled me to pursue this work, raise a family and still be part of the formal labour force – a privilege that very few women have because of the societal expectations of what work looks like. To the EMpower Programs Team, past and present: your voices, ideas and wisdom are in this work. I have received so much clarity from you, through our 1:1 conversations and through our team meetings. A special thank you to Jayanthi Pushkaran for stepping in and stepping up while I was on sabbatical. To Gritt Richter and Carmen Morcos for your expertise in livelihoods and to the whole EMpower India team, Jayanthi Pushkaran, Alifya Loharchalwala and Tanvi Mishra for all the conversations, ideas about readings, translations and conceptual discussions – I am blessed to be working with a powerhouse of amazing women.

Thank you also to our grantee partners, for the work that you do. You are contesting the gender regimes of society on a daily basis and are paving the way for so many to do the

same. A special thank you to Sonal Shukla and Medhavinee Namjoshi at Vacha Trust, Aangan Trust, Equal Community Foundation, and to Dr. Nandita Shah and Dr. Nandita Gandhi at Akshara Centre for your suggestions about framing this work.

To Dr. AK Shivakumar and Poonam Muttreja had it not been for you, my pursuit of a PhD would have likely been on my bucket list of things that I would like to do one day. Thank you for urging me to return to academia after an 8-year sabbatical.

As a part time student, Dr. Swati Mantri has been central to my navigating through everything at IIT from progress reports, to research proposal submissions. I would have been lost without you. Thank you for all your suggestions and wisdom.

Sameen Shahid – my most enduring and profound friendship, thank you for your relentless edits and comments, thank you for taking time to help me achieve my dreams. You are the smartest person I know.

I am a product of my habitus and who I am today is because of the social structures that defined my life course: the love, hard-work and dedication of my parents. To my mother, Asha, who was in a non-traditional career, who in the 80s had to contend with men who did not accept her authority or leadership, who created a sisterhood of women like her – who believes, what is written on her key chain - that ‘the best man for the job is a woman.’ To my father, Pawan, who is one of the greatest feminists I know, thank you for instilling in me that it is more important to chase ideas as opposed to things. Thank you for being a proud father of a daughter. Thank you for being my harshest critic and strongest advocate. Thank you for challenging social structures on my behalf. Thank you to my Nani, Radhika Dhingra, who raised me and taught me to question instead of merely accepting culture.

To Rakesh and Kavita Dewan, my in-laws, for re-writing the *doxa* of my habitus on so many levels. Thank you for your love, your support and your friendship. I cannot express how thankful I am for you and for what you stand for as human beings. Culture is a social structure, I am proud to be co-creating the ‘culture’ that we stand for as a family. One that is equitable, where everyone’s opinions matter and where everyone has a seat at the table. Thank you to Krishna Dewan, my grandmother in law, for accepting me for who I am.

Thank you to my dog Pinot, for being my companion through countless hours of reading, writing, re-writing and editing.

The biggest thank yous are often the most difficult to put into words, there are no words to convey my gratitude to you Atulya. You are an ‘enabling man’ in every sense of the world – you are my conviction, my strength and my hope. Thank you for this partnership, thank you for working a ‘double day’ as I locked myself up to write. Thank you for standing by my side, no questions asked. Thank you for co-authoring the meaning of this marriage with me.

Inayat and Armaan, you have been part of this journey with me; from being 7 months pregnant with Inayat while delivering a work-in-progress presentation to writing the first full draft of this thesis while pregnant with Armaan, you are at the centre of this work. You are the passion behind this work – you are the reason that I believe in the importance of this work. It is my hope that you are not limited by structures and that you can be all that you want to be in your life.

Nisha Dhawan

Abstract

This work aims to answer the following question: What is the impact upon women and their surroundings, when women engage in non-traditional livelihoods, and to what extent does their negotiation with and the disruption of patriarchal structures constitute a transformation in these structures? In this thesis, I focus on women from resource-poor urban communities who are engaging in non-traditional careers such as car driving, careers that have been traditionally reserved for men in the Indian context. This research aims to understand what the issues facing these women are as they engage in non-traditional work and what strategies they have employed to negotiate with or disrupt systemic gender norms through their engagement with a livelihood that historically has been performed by men. In order to do so effectively, I explore how work is defined as male work and female work in relation to social structures and gender regimes. This thesis aims to take a holistic view of these women's lives and their agency to understand how or if they have negotiated or challenged systemic constructions of gender, work, femininity and mobility as a consequence of their chosen livelihood. This thesis is explicitly feminist and locates itself within the gender studies discourse around work, but also in relation to feminist inquiries in relation to social norms, marriage and the body.

The narratives reveal a transformation on an individual level as illustrated by the ability that my respondents have had to negotiate with and challenge their habitus. They are using their agency, which they have derived from their career in driving in order to drive change within their own lives and they are serving as role models to others. Additionally, they are, through their actions and resistance, breaking down the binaries that organise society. In conclusion, it has been revealed that in order to disrupt social

structures it is imperative that the tools used in this disruption are not merely manifestations of existing social structures, the tools in and of themselves, must be disruptive in order to effectuate transformative change.

गैर पारम्परिक आजीविकाओं में महिलाओं के लिए हिमायत : एक समाजशात्रीय जांच

सार

इस अध्ययन का उद्देश्य है निम्नलिखित प्रश्नों का उत्तर देना: जब औरतें गैर-पारंपरिक आजीविकाओं में संलग्न/शामिल होती हैं, तो उन पर और उनके परिवेश पर क्या असर होता है? पितृसत्तात्मक संरचनाओं के साथ परक्रामण और उन संरचनाओं का सकारात्मक व्यवधान किस हद तक इन संरचनाओं में परिवर्तन लाने का कारण बनते हैं?

इस थीसिस में, मैं कम संसाधन वाले शहरी समुदायों की महिलाओं पर ध्यान केंद्रित करती हूँ, जो गैर-पारंपरिक आजीविकाओं - जैसे की गाड़ी चलाना - में शामिल हो रही हैं, जो अक्सर भारतीय संदर्भ में परंपरागत रूप से पुरुषों के लिए आरक्षित किया गया है।

इस संशोधन का उद्देश्य है यह समझना कि गैर-पारंपरिक आजीविकाओं में शामिल होने की वजह से महिलाओं को किन चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ता है और प्रणालीगत लिंग भेदभाव से जुड़े मानदंड को भंग करने के लिए या उनसे परक्रामण करने के लिए उन्होंने कौनसी रणनीतियों को अपनाया है, एक ऐसी आजीविका में शामिल होने के लिए जिसे ऐतिहासिक रूप से पुरुषों ने किया है। प्रभावी रूप से ऐसा करने के लिए, मैं

अन्वेषण करती हूँ कि सामाजिक संरचनाओं और लिंग भेद व्यवस्था के संबंध में काम को किस तरह पुरुषों का काम और महिलाओं का काम के रूप में परिभाषित किया गया है। इस थीसिस का उद्देश्य इन महिलाओं के जीवन और उनकी एजेंसी का समग्र दृष्टिकोण लेते हुए, यह समझना है कि कैसे या अगर उन्होंने अपनी चुनी हुई आजीविका के परिणामस्वरूप लिंग-भेद, काम, स्त्रीत्व और गतिशीलता के व्यवस्थित निर्माण को चुनौती दी है। यह थीसिस स्पष्ट रूप से नारीवादी है और काम के जुड़े लिंग-भेद अध्ययन संवाद के भीतर ही अपने आप को रेखांकित करती है। लेकिन इसके साथ ही यह थीसिस, सामाजिक मानदंडों, विवाह और शरीर के संबंध में नारीवादी पूछताछ के संबंध में भी अपने आप को रेखांकित करती है।

आख्यानोँ में व्यक्तिगत स्तर पर एक परिवर्तन का पता चलता है, जो कि मेरे उत्तरदाताओं की हैबिटस को चुनौती देने और उससे परक्रामण करने की क्षमता से सचित्र है। वे अपनी एजेंसी का उपयोग कर रहे हैं, जिसे उन्होंने अपने जीवन में परिवर्तन लाने के लिए, ड्राइविंग में अपने कैरियर से प्राप्त किया है और वे दूसरों के लिए रोल मॉडल (प्रेरक) की भूमिका अदा कर रहे हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त, वे अपने कार्यों और प्रतिरोध के माध्यम से, समाज को संगठित करने वाले बायनेरिज़ को तोड़ रहे हैं। निष्कर्ष में, यह पता चला है कि सामाजिक संरचनाओं को भंग करने के लिए यह ज़रूरी है कि इस व्यवधान में इस्तेमाल किए गए उपकरण, केवल मौजूदा सामाजिक संरचनाओं की अभिव्यक्ति ना होते हुए, परिवर्तनशील बदलाव को प्रभावित करने के लिए उपकरण स्वयं विध्वंसकारी होने चाहिए।

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List of Abbreviations

- APMED - Asia Pacific Meeting on Education Summit
- CCTV- Closed circuit television
- CRPF – Central Reserve Police Force
- CR Park – Chittaranjan Park
- DTC – Delhi Transport Commission
- ECF – Equal Community Foundation
- FLFP – Female Labour Force Participation
- GBV – Gender Based Violence
- IIPS - International Institute for Population Sciences
- IMAGES – International Men and Gender Equality Survey
- ILO – International Labour Organisation
- ITI – Industrial Training Institute
- JNU – Jawaharlal Nehru University
- LFPR – Labour Force Participation Rate
- LGBTQ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (or Queer).
- MLA – Member of the Legislative Assembly
- NFHS – National Family Health Survey
- NGO – Non Governmental Organisation
- NTL – Non Traditional Livelihoods
- PAN Card – Permanent Account Number, it is a 10 digit unique identifier that is issued by the income tax department of India
- PAR – Participatory Action Research
- PRIA – Participatory Action in Asia
- RTO – Regional Transport Office
- RWA – Residents Welfare Association
- SRHR – Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
- SUV – Sport Utility Vehicle
- UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

Glossary

Aadhar – ‘Foundation’ or ‘Base’. Aadhar is a unique 12 digit identity number for all Indian citizens of residents. It is collected and administered by the Unique Identification Authority of India.

Aanganwadi - is a government sponsored child care centre. They were started by the Indian government in 1975 as part of the Integrated Child Development Services program to combat child hunger and malnutrition. Anganwadi means "courtyard shelter" in Indian languages.

Aatmavishwas – Faith in yourself

Asli Aadmi – Real Man

Asli Mard – Real Man

Atta – Durum Wheat Flour

Azad Kishori – ‘Free Adolescent Girl’, the name of Azad Foundations program that focusses on adolescent girls in the communities where they work

Azad Parinde – ‘Free Birds’ Azad Foundation’s Quarterly newsletter

Badlav ka Safarnama – The Journey of Change. Azad Foundation’s Tool to track and measure progress and change for their Women on Wheels Trainees.

Basti – Slum communities

Bechara – ‘poor guy’

Betiyan parai hoti hai – Daughters are never yours

Bhaiyya - Brother

Bidi – Hand-rolled tobacco

Chacha – Father’s younger brother

Chachi saas – Husband’s Father’s younger brother’s wife

Chai - Tea

Chauraha - Crossroad

Chawal - Rice

Chhapri – Hooligan (male)

Dal - Lentils

Dalia – cracked wheat

Dhobis – washer man

Dupatta – Shawl like scarf worn by women

Durga Puja – Annual Hindu Festival which reveres and pays homage to Goddess Durga

Ek din toh apne hi ghar jaana hai – One day every girl has to go to her own home

Ghare – bhair - Home and outside (or inside outside)

Hijab – Veil worn by Muslim women to cover hair and chest

Hijras - Eunuchs

Holi – Hindu festival of colour and spring. Holi is celebrated by adorning friends and family with coloured powder.

Izzat – Honour or Respect

Jaisa desh vaisa bhes – whatever the country, so should be your attire. Akin to when in Rome, do as the Romans

Jeth – Husband's elder brother

Jhuggi – Shanty Town

Kaali Peeli – Black and yellow (refers to black and yellow taxis)

Lakshmi - The Hindu goddess of wealth, love, prosperity (both material and spiritual), fortune, and the embodiment of beauty.

Maama – Mother's brother

Majburi - Obligation

Mardangi - Masculinity

Maulvis – A learned teacher in Islam

Naam bhuj Jayega – Your lineage will be blown out (if you do not have sons)

Nanad – Husband's sister

Naqaab – Veil that covers the face in addition to the hair

Panchayat – Village Council

Papad - Popadum

Pardah – Social practice of female seclusion

Pati Parmeshwar Hai – Husband is God

Roti – Flatbread made of atta (durum wheat flour)

Safarnama - Journey

salwaar kurtas – Long shirt with pants, traditional North Indian attire

Sirf baat chit karne ke liye – Only to chit-chat

Tapori - Hooligan, vagabond or rowdy in Hindi

Vadi – Deep fried snack