

Critically Analysis the Women Empowerment in Siddharthnagar District of UP

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Abstract

The district Siddharthnagar came into existence on 29 December 1988 by incorporating parts of the Bansi, Itwa, Naugarh, Shohratgarh and Domariaganj. It is one of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh state in Northern India. Siddharthnagar district is a part of Basti division. The district is known for the ruins of the Shakya Janapada, at Piprahwa. 22km from the district head quarters Naugarh. Siddharthnagar is from The Buddha's given name Siddhartha. The name Siddharthnagar was given by Komal Dutta Tiwari. The history of the district is related with life of Gautam Buddha. His father's capital KapilVastu is in this district. The total geographical area of district Siddharthnagar is 298855 hectare. It is bounded by Nepal state in North, Maharajganj in the east, Basti in the South and Balrampur district in the west. Gonda district is also touches it on the triangle south west area. The district is divided into 5 tehsils and 14 development blocks, 1015 Gram Panchayat. The district falls in the Tarai belt of the state with Rapti, Budhi Rapti, Banganga, Kuda and Ghoghi as the major rivers. The district is adjacent to neighboring country, Nepal. It is surrounded by many other districts of Uttar Pradesh, on East by Mahrajganj district, South by Basti and Sant Kabir Nagar districts and in West by Balrampur district.

Reference to this paper
should be made as follows:

Received: 28.05.2019

Approved: 16.06.2019

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*RJPSSs 2019, Vol. XLV,
No. 1, pp. 201-208*

Article No.28

Online available at:

[http://
rjpss.anubooks.com/](http://rjpss.anubooks.com/)

Introduction

The district Siddharthnagar came into existence on 29 December 1988 by incorporating parts of the Bansi, Itwa, Naugarh, Shohratgarh and Domariaganj. It is one of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh state in Northern India. Siddharthnagar district is a part of Basti division. The district is known for the ruins of the Shakya Janapada, at Piprahwa. 22km from the district head quarters Naugarh. Siddharthnagar is from The Buddha's given name *Siddhartha*. The name Siddharthnagar was given by Komal Dutta Tiwari. The history of the district is related with life of Gautam Buddha. His father's capital KapilVastu is in this district. The total geographical area of district Siddharthnagar is 298855 hectare. It is bounded by Nepal state in North, Maharajganj in the east, Basti in the South and Balrampur district in the west. Gonda district is also touches it on the triangle south west area. The district is divided into 5 tehsils and 14 development blocks, 1015 Gram Panchayat. The district falls in the Tarai belt of the state with Rapti, Budhi Rapti, Banganga, Kuda and Ghoghi as the major rivers. The district is adjacent to neighboring country, Nepal. It is surrounded by many other districts of Uttar Pradesh, on East by Mahrajganj district, South by Basti and Sant Kabir Nagar districts and in West by Balrampur district. The district occupies an area of 2752 km. The district lies between 27°0'N and 27°28'N latitude and 82°04'E and 83°10'E Longitudes. Due to its location in the Tarai belt, almost every year the district has to witness devastating floods because of heavy rains in the Nepal hills. This has affected the economy of the district badly. Being a flood prone district and lack of proper drainage system many of the blocks viz. Uska Bazaar, Shohratgarh, Bansi, Jogia and Naugrah remain mostly water logged.

Divisions

The district has 5 tehsils; Naugarh, Shorathgarh, Bansi, Itwa and Domariaganj. There are 5 Vidhan Sabha constituencies within the district. These are Shorathgarh, Kapilvastu, Bansi, Itwa and Domariaganj.

The only Lok Sabha constituency in this district is Domariaganj. A small village SHAHPUR is located 2km away from Domariaganj on the bank of Rapti is famous for "kala namak" rice and kalhans kshtriyas. Naugarh is the seat of administration of Siddharthnagar District, Uttar Pradesh. It is located. about 130 km north of Varanasi Kapilvastu at Piprahava near Birdpur is a only major tourist interest in the district.

History of Population

The history of the population of District Sidharthnagar from 1901 to 2011 is given below according the census of the government in table form-

Year	Population	% in change the
1901	701,884	—
1911	695,902	+0.09%
1921	731,947	+0.51%
1931	790,038	+0.77%
1941	830,952	+0.51%
1951	907,736	+0.89%
1961	962,262	+0.59%
1971	1,089,054	+1.25%
1981	1,300,583	+1.79%
1991	1,607,964	+2.14%
2001	2,040,085	+2.41%
2011	2,559,297	+2.29%

Topography:

Siddharthnagar district is a part of indo- Gangetic plain of north- east India. It is a level with gradual slope from north to south. The middle part is deep in the east area.

Rivers:

The main rivers of the District are- Rapti, Budhi Rapti, Baan Ganga, Parasi, Kooda, and Ghoongi. Rapti is flows down from Nepal. The color of this river is brown in color. This river rises in the foot hills of Nepal to the north of Behraich and after course of about 130 km. from that district traverses to the northern portion of the Gonda and first touches Sant Kabir Nagar in the north-west. The rivers often take a changeable course and floods the neighboring areas during rainy season. The flow of river is from west to east or north-west to east direction. The tributaries and affluent of the Rapti are very numerous, especially those on the left bank. Those on the south represent merely old bends of the river and as such are of little importance, save as local drainage channels. The main canals are- Jamuaar, Tilaar, Phagihatwa, Paraasi, Sotva, Ghorahi, Boodha and Dooiya etc. The fertile land in the district is irrigated by canals and tube wells. The area of district, which is irrigated by canals, is 7471 hectare.

Jheels and Ponds

There are several permanent and temporary ponds through out the area. The main are – Mahla, Marathi, Majholi, Siswa, Bajaha, Pathra Taal, Lavad Taal,

Sahari Taal etc. These jheels and ponds are full of water through out the year and show a rich growth of aquatic vegetation.

Geography

Siddharthnagar district lies between 27°N to 27°28'N and 82°45'E to 83°10'E. It is part of Purvanchal. The district borders Nepal's Kapilvastu district on the north and Rupandehi district on the northeast. Otherwise, it is surrounded by other districts of Uttar Pradesh: Maharajganj on the east, Basti and Sant Kabir Nagar on the south, and Balrampur on the west. Siddharthnagar's area is 2,752 km.

Economy

In 2006, the [Ministry of Panchayati Raj](#) named Siddharthnagar one of the country's 250 [most backward districts](#) (out of a total of 640). It is one of the 34 districts in Uttar Pradesh currently receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (BRGF).

Case study of Siddharthnagar

Women Workers-Illiterate and Ignorant: In the study area women workers are not only illiterate but are ignorant also. Whatever skills have been acquired by some of them is outside the formal school system. Without any job experience, they enter as new entrants.

Small Size of Establishments: In the study area small establishments employ casual workers with no job security. The size of employment in these establishments is very small. There is a single worker in some of the self-employed establishments. Local inputs are mostly used by these establishments because of small sector operations.

Family Ownership of Enterprises: There is no structural organization in family ownership enterprises in the study area. It has been observed that in many cases, the head of the family or a member of the family does the work himself with the help of other members of the family. In these enterprises there is neither an employee nor an employer.

Traditional Technology: The informal sector in the study area uses indigenous technology of production which is a labour intensive and low level technology. They do not have enough financial resources to put modern technology at the desired level. The old technology is cheaper for them.

Unhygienic Conditions of Work: The working conditions of informal sector workers in the study area are miserable. In most of the work places there is no sufficient ventilation and natural light. Thus, the workers suffer from eye strain. In some cases they do not have proper sitting arrangements. Thus, there are no minimum facilities

at work place. The workers under these conditions are exposed to several health hazards.

Low Wages: In the study area the informal sector workers are paid very low wages. In this matter, women workers are differentiated from men workers as they are paid much less than their counter parts even for the same work. In most of the cases the contractors assume wage rate determination as they directly recruit the workers. In such cases contractors ensure a higher margin of remuneration for themselves.

Lack of Workers' Unions: In the study area there are no trade unions of informal sector workers. Thus, they always live with uncertainty of not knowing how much would be available and when. Lack of organization or unions hampers the bargaining power of both men and women workers and their power to resist exploitation. The workers, therefore, suffer as they have no voice to put their grievances before the employers.

Long Hours of Work: In study area, the working hours of informal sector workers are not fixed. Sometimes, they work for long duration i.e. from 9 to 12 hours continuously and there are no regular holidays for them. For women workers, there are no crèche facilities for their young and nursing children. The status and quality of life of women workers has worsened due to dual work-house hold work and work at the employment place.

Exploitation and Harassment of Workers: In study area, the employers exploit the women workers. These workers also face ill treatment from the employers. It was reported by the women workers that their children were also exploited, especially their daughters. In some cases sexual harassment with domestic women workers was reported. Rural women and girls who become domestic for families are no more than slaves are, while at work, they are paid negligible pay and provided with very low quality of food. In most cases daughters are rarely sent to schools because they help their mothers at work and home.

Lack of Safety and Security: There is no system of social security on which informal sector workers can fall back. The position of women workers in the study area is worst in this matter. The women labour force is particularly excluded from social security benefits as the nature of their employment is casual.

Suggestions:

Thus, the following steps are suggested to improve the economic and social life of women workers in the district:

1. The women workers should be ensured of limited working hours. They should also be given weekly rest with pay/wages, maternity benefits, regular holidays

and medical facilities. The district administration should carefully ensure that these facilities are provided to the women workers. These facilities will improve the working efficiency of these women workers, which will directly or indirectly benefit the employers also.

2. The problems of getting credit are big one for these women workers. Due to burden of family members and poverty, they are forced to work in low paid jobs. The self-employed women workers are not able to increase the scope of their work due to this impediment. Thus, credit facilities at reasonable rates on regular basis through banks and government schemes should be provided to them so that they may improve their skills and enhance the scope of their jobs or works.
3. Women workers should make their livelihood need to produce regularly and sell and earn income at regularly intervals. There is need for adaptation to the changing trends, organized way of production and accurate costing. In other words the right combination of human, financial, physical and social capital is essential.
4. Uncertainty of work is the reason of dissatisfaction among the women workers. Lack of job security is the greatest problem of women workers that keep them confined to low wages, irregular and local employment. The fear of losing the job decreases their efficiency in work. Thus, steps should be taken by the government and the non-government organisations (NGOs) in this direction so that some sort of job security is provided to them. The NGOs should try to improve employer-employee relationship in the study area.
5. There is no organization of women workers in the study area. Thus, they have no bargaining capacity. The organization of women workers can help them in strengthening their position in employment. These organisations can enhance the scope of collective bargaining. The social organizations should help women workers in forming their organisations and developing leadership among them.
6. NGOs can help them by providing funds for their organisations.
7. The women workers who are living below the poverty line should be provided basic facilities such as food, clothes and housing or shelter at cheaper rates. The government should specifically make policies and programmes to meet the needs of working women in unorganised sector. In policymaking bodies, these women should be given increased representation. It will help to improve the status of working women.

8. In addition to the above, a comprehensive review of the existing policies, programmes, schemes, legislation and social set up is needed so that women participation in work and at home is recognised. It is also essential to promote a new social attitude towards women workers. The key factors to achieve this objective are education and skill development training of the working women.
9. The media people should also be approached so that they cover the problems of working women in the district and highlight them. More publicity should be made of the national laws to foster equal wages, better working conditions and more benefits for women workers in the unorganised sector.
10. To stop harassment and violence of women, broad-based campaigns are needed. Harassment of women on the way to work or at work should be publicized to promote action against it.
11. The domestic work should be recognised as a work, and they should be issued an Identity Card or/and letter of appointment.
12. Working hours for domestic workers should be fixed at 8 hours a day.
13. They should be paid overtime allowances in case they have to work longer.
14. They must be entitled to some personal free time during the day.
15. They must be entitled to a night's rest.
16. They must be entitled to one paid holiday in a week, and 15 days leave with wages after one year of service.
17. They should be allowed 15 days sick leave every year.
18. They should have access to the provisions of PF, and gratuity, and be provided with uniforms.
19. They should have living quarters which are strictly hygienic, and have security.
20. The employer should give one month's notice if he wants to dispense with the services of the worker.
21. There should be provisions in the law for periodic ' inspection to verify that the conditions in which domestic workers are employed are consistent with what the law lays down.

In the end it is suggested that concentrated and deliberate efforts should be made by various agencies such as government, trade unions, employers' associations, NGOs etc. to improve the employment status of women workers in the study area.

These agencies should launch a joint programme to achieve the desired objectives. One of the reasons for the failure of this sector is gender inequality and

lack of empowerment of women. There is a need to introspect the kind of programmes, including structural adjustment, which much of Africa was made to undergo in the past few decades, and the impact of such externally imposed policies on agriculture and much of the social sector.

Researcher has firm opinion, that these measures will go a long way in improving the living and working conditions of the poor workers in the unorganised sector and inculcate in them the feeling of self-esteem, dignity and security.

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