

***Panel (WCIN): Integrating women's knowledge creativity and innovations in the
innovation ecosystem***

Papers: 8

Chair:

AshaKaul

Faculty, IIM-Ahmedabad

Co-Chair:

UshaJumani

Member, Governing Council, ETASHA Society, New Delhi

Time: 16:00-18:00

Venue: CR, RJMCEI

1.

**“Home Kaizen- an unique experiment of involving workmen's wives and families in
workspace ambience improvement”**

**Capt Mohanram and
V Kovaichelvan (TVS)**

Post-1991 economic reforms, Indian companies faced competition from global entrants to their markets. To survive and grow, they had to scale up rapidly to world class standards. TVS Motor Company (TVSM) adopted Total Quality Management as its mantra for reaching global competitiveness. Two key elements of the model were Total Employee Involvement and Continuous Improvement (Kaizen). World class production standards demanded very high levels of order and cleanliness in the workspace, which was achieved with active employee participation.

In India workmen often stay in squalid and unhygienic ‘third world’ surroundings and homes. In stark contrast, they are expected to maintain and operate ‘first world’ factory environments. Such a drastic change in behavior day in and day out creates tensions.

TVSM realized that this severe disconnect had to be bridged before world class factory ambience was achieved and sustained. Substantial improvements in the habits and living environments of workmen were necessary, before they could be expected to adhere to high standards of hygiene and discipline in the plant. This could be achieved only with the active support and enthusiastic participation of workmen's families, especially their wives.

Shortly after Kaizen processes were implemented at the workplace, workmen were encouraged to share the concepts with their families to improve their homes and surroundings. The company implemented a novel program of training and assisting the families, to bring order, systems, and cleanliness and continues improvement in the households. Classes and demos were held on relevant aspects of Japanese 5-S systems and to explain Kaizen for workmen's wives. After initial hesitation, the wives keenly embraced the

idea. They effected dramatic improvements in their homes and colonies. They came out with creative and innovative ideas to improve their homes, increase safety and ensure hygiene.

TVSM encourages them by arranging a separate exhibition showcasing the innovations done by the families to improve their standard of living and ambience of the households, during annual Founder's day celebrations. Prizes and certificates are awarded to best kept homes and innovative ideas. The winning families, especially the home makers, are honored and recognized by the Chairman and Managing Director in front of over fifteen thousand people participating in the function.

This has resulted in superior adherence to workplace hygiene in the plant, which is now renowned world over, for order, cleanliness and ambience.

Positive change does not occur automatically. Someone had to make it happen. It happened when people were made to believe in their intrinsic ability to change – individually and collectively; when they listened to the good ideas embedded within their hearts. It needed encouragement and a positive ecosystem of appreciation. Change occurred when people started believing that it was possible to live a fuller life.

TVSM's Home Kaizen initiative is the story of a journey which achieved positive change in the homes and hearths of workmen by harnessing the creativity and innovation of their wives and its positive impact on work place ambience.

2.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER FOR INCLUSIVE INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Lindile L. Ndabeni

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In a gendered society, men and women are socialized for different tasks and are expected to develop different rationalities. Indeed, the attributes, relationships, and opportunities are socially constructed. Typically, gender is an important source of inequality as it often determines unequal access to socio-economic opportunities. Accordingly, mainstreaming gender is used to refer to integrating gender in policy development and analysis. Likewise, a gender perspective shifts our attention from the individuals to interactional and institutional structures and thereby open up opportunities for change. That is to say, the discourse on innovation and gender should shift the focus from individuals to the system which reproduces inequalities and make women invisible in the economy. The objective in this paper is to highlight that gender mainstreaming can actually support the achievement of socio-economic goals; and disclose how women become invisible in a discourse that is framed in a neutral language but is male coded and focuses more on male coded production. Overall, this paper views gender equality as a development goal; and as a means of achieving other socio-economic development goals.

3.

Governance by Women Leaders in Union Parishad in Bangladesh: Unheard Voices and Grim Realities from the Grassroots

Md Mizanur Rahman

Union Parishad (UP) has been serving as the lowest rural local government in Bangladesh since 1870. Women's representation in the UP first began with the nomination system in 1976. Again women's representation in the UP received further momentum in 1997 with the provision of direct adult franchise. Within these 2 decades time span, women leaders (WLs) have failed to ensure their effective participation in the UP. But it is deemed that through their ceaseless struggle and limited participation, WLs have contributed to governance in the UP. Against such a context, the paper is aimed at unraveling the research questions: how do WLs contribute to governance in the UP in Bangladesh? The paper is based on qualitative research methods that include hermeneutic phenomenological analysis, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), case study, content analysis and observation methods. The findings of the paper reveal that the WLs are promoting governance through establishing transparency, accountability, social justice and reducing corruption in the UP. WLs are also trying to transform rural governance through increasing pro-poor benefits for the community people and maintaining better quality of development projects and following participative management style in the UP.

Key words: local government, Union Parishad, women leaders, transparency, accountability.

4.

CADS' strategies in expanding opportunities for women and worker innovators in Zimbabwe

Lillian Machivenyika

Director, CADS, Zimbabwe

The knowledge of women and other workers such as innovator farmers has generally not been acknowledged by societies across the globe. Where they have tried to contribute, in many instances, their contributions have been given far lesser importance. Important innovations and discoveries by innovator farmers have gone undocumented. This paper discusses and shares some strategies which CADS has used to expand opportunities for women and innovator workers.

Documentation including publishing the work of local innovator farmers in technologies as fruit and vegetable drying, water harvesting, natural pest management, and food processing has seen a rise in usage and adoption of these. This documentation has resulted in the increase in scientific research in these techniques by post-graduate at tertiary institutions. It should be noted that the great advantage of these local innovations by women and innovator farmers is that they use locally available resources. Through publicizing local innovation by women farmers and other innovator farmers, using media such as the national television, CADS has also successfully managed to lobby for policy change with regards to appreciation

and adoption of the work by women innovators. Working with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development has resulted in the ministry stepping up its efforts to empower women through training women at different levels of society including the training of teachers, nurses, government personnel, and community members on the processing and value-addition of foods for improved nutrition. Adoption of the women's innovations is evidenced by the increase in coordinated efforts at national and sub-national levels in holding events such as food fairs for nutrition awareness, and the increase in participation by women farmers across the country in such shows. By holding events such as food fairs, this has not only enhanced the visibility of women and innovator farmers but it has created market linkages for them with corporate companies that participate alongside other stakeholders such as researchers and other innovators who have identified potential innovations for scaling up.

Reward systems to acknowledge the role of local innovator farmers such as the local Phiri Award in recognition of the outstanding contribution to sustainable agriculture by local farmers have been set up through the facilitation of CADS. Such platforms have encouraged innovation among innovator farmers and build up their confidence to showcase their innovations at higher levels. Facilitation in creating platforms where innovations are showcased and ideas shared have been done by CADS including the participation by women farmers at food festivals and district and provincial shows, resulting in disadvantaged women showcasing their innovations at national level and in the process realizing income by selling their products.

CADS has also successfully implemented its programs with a gender lens. Extensive business management and marketing training have been carried out to help women farmers increase farm income, select high-value crops for production and be aware of high quality standards. Women have also been mobilized into forming savings clubs which enable them to start income generating initiatives. Some of the groups have grown to form Savings and Credit Cooperatives, (SACCOs) through the facilitation of CADS. These SACCOs have managed to secure startup capital with local enterprise development associations and acquired equipment for processing which has enabled them to generate income from food processing and marketing. To further adapt the knowledge of women CADS created a scholarship training program for the education and training of women on food processing with a bias towards recruiting women for the program which has seen empowerment of women enabling them not only to perform their roles as caregivers in a better way but creating employment opportunities for them.

The success stories of how CADS has worked to expand the opportunities for women and innovator workers will be presented in this paper.

5.

Role of Micro Financial Institutions in enhancing Entrepreneurial skills among Minority (Islamic) Women: An empirical study

Hema Srinivasan

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Dr. Padma.Srinivasan

Indian women have been assuming the role of a homemaker taking care of their children, doing their household activities and also managing to make small savings to contribute to the family's well-being. Islamic women, as a minority ethnic group, are allowed to participate in business space with purdah. As the business environment is vibrant, these minority women have realized the need to step out of their homes and empower themselves. Due to socio-economic reasons these women do not undergo minimum formal education which poses a problem. If this problem can be resolved, Islamic women can be made economically and financially independent. The positive aspect of their lives is that they cooperate with each other while at work at home or outside.

In this context, Microfinance Institutions have been playing an important role in empowering women Entrepreneurs. Yet, there are certain issues such as lack of proper education and technical knowledge which are posing hindrances in these women's business endeavors. This paper will study the extent to which Microfinance institutions are helping these Islamic women overcome their financial and technical challenges. Having started the business, when she faces problems, support comes from her fellow workers within the group. Yet there are other types of problems and issues faced by these women. To compete with the growing business needs is another challenge for these women. How to overcome these issues and bring about a holistic approach to the problems will be the basis of study. Data will be captured through interviews with minority women who are based in South Bangalore District, Karnataka. The research will be based on primary data, mainly by interview method where 50 women will be interviewed. Other sources will be the secondary sources such as books, website and resources.

6.

MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY FARM WOMEN TO CURE DISEASE AND COMMON AILMENTS IN AFRICA

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Background: Medicinal plants are those plants that are used (parts, extract etc) in treating and preventing specific ailments and diseases that affect human beings. Hence the important role of medicinal plants in health care delivery (services) cannot be over emphasized. The local people have a long history of traditional plant usage for medicinal purposes. Despite the increasing acceptance of traditional medicine in African rural communities among farm

women, this rich indigenous knowledge is not adequately documented. Documentation of plants used as traditional medicines is needed so that the knowledge can be preserved and the utilized plants conserved and used sustainably. The primary objective of this paper is to summarize information on traditional uses of medicinal plants used by farm women in some parts of Africa to cure diseases and some common ailments. In this paper fifty (50) medicinal plants with their scientific (species), family, local, common names and parts used for malaria therapy in Okeigbo, Ondo state, southwest Nigeria by farm women was identified. Also fourteen (14) medicinal plants that are used alone (not in combination) for malaria therapy and their method of extraction was reported. Trees (38%), shrubs (38%), herbs (21%) and climbers (3%) were the characteristics of the plants used as herbal medicines in south-central Zimbabwe. Among the eighteen (18) major ailments and disease categories and plant species reported Gastro-intestinal system and Sexually Transmitted Infection ranked highest. Finally in this paper twenty six (26) medicinal plants with their scientific name, family, growth habit, Vernacular name, part(s) used and use(s) and reported biological/pharmacological activities was identified.

Methods: This study is based on a review of the literature published in scientific journals, books, reports from national, regional and international organizations and other grey materials.

Conclusion: The efficacy of any plant as medicine cannot be determined through guessing, but by knowing the major active principles (ingredients) in such plant and what it is capable of curing. This calls for further research and analysis of the popular medicinal plants and consequent integration of traditional medicinal plants by farm women in the nation's health sector.

Key Words: Medicinal plants, Malaria, Gastro-intestinal system, Sexually Transmitted Infection, Okeigbo Southwest Nigeria, South-Central Zimbabwe

7.

Policy Discourses & Ground Reality: A Need of Social Justice for Innovative Practices at Grassroots

Dr Tanu Shukla
BITS Pilani

Any configuration that is enforced in a pertinent context might suffer from deficiencies and inefficiencies. In recent times, there have been greater commitments by government and international organization to curb gender inequality for which we require innovative practices at grassroots for sustainable development. The suppression of women is identified by UN as one of the crucial apprehensions that claim an affirmative action. Education is viewed as an acute instrument to uplift the marginalized sections, empower the subjugated; thereby enabling a society to achieve the MDG's at an accelerated rate. The progression in approaching the MDG's for a developing nation is basically firm by the improvement of women's capabilities. Gender stereotypes in the society have led to the construction of

normative certainty about the diverse roles expected to be performed by both gender. The descent of these normative dogmas may be ascribed to sexual division of labor in the society. Determination of such normative credence in the society is armored by the element that individual in the society irrespective of their gender practices gender stereotypes. The impression of social roles on behavior are predominantly robust in settings with encounter in role related expectations. It is evident that the capability approach has potential for addressing feminist concerns but it delivers a very generalist outline and no distinct list of capabilities are existing in the capability approach framework. This paper strives for larger implications for gender equality and considers capability approach as theoretical framework to investigate the objectives of study. Hence, this paper is an empirical inquisition with qualitative and quantitative method, attempts to develop the list of capabilities which is important in measuring gender inequality for sustainable development. The findings of this paper will be useful for policy makers to make more meaningful normative frameworks to relocate gender inequality in outline of capability approach which could be referred as innovations for grass root practices.

8.

'Semiformal' as a Link between 'informal' and 'Formal' Systems in Society

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There are two concerns which need to be understood at deeper philosophical levels:- One is the use of the term 'informal sector'.- Two is explaining the organising principle/s for society. "Informal" and "formal"TM are two ends of a continuum which depicts the extent of verbal-written life transactions of a person in society. The greater the life transactions of a person are based on written transactions, the greater is the shift to the formal end of the continuum. "Organised" and "unorganised" are two ends of another continuum which reflects the extent of people being organized. Organising is a slow continuous process of enabling a group of people to perceive common interests and act collectively. This is quite different from verbal and written transactions, yet the two terms "informal sector" and "unorganised sector" are used interchangeably, which also reflects a lack of clarity. Is "informal sector" an appropriate term to explain the socio-economic reality of a country like India? Researchers have moved from referring to large proportions of the Indian population as belonging to the "informal sector" to calling it the "informal economy" but have not yet attempted to understand this phenomenon as a systemic process. There is an informal system and a formal system both of which encompass work, trade, money and finance, enterprises, justice, governance, property rights, social protection, insurance, service provision like education, health, water and sanitation, to list some facets of life. "Informal" and "formal" are systems, a way of structuring society, a philosophy of life and living. The appropriate term should be "informal systems of society" and "formal systems of society". Both the systems have their organizing processes, their ways of functioning, and their own validity. The efforts to establish the formal system as superior to the informal system is what causes issues of

exclusion, invisibility, and being ignored for large sections of our population. The institutional innovation of the “semiformal system” can provide an effective mechanism to understand the linkages between the informal and formal systems. In fact, such linkages exist and are being used increasingly to include more and more people on various life transactions in society. What is the semiformal system of society? How has it developed? How does it function? What is its efficiency, effectiveness, and equitableness? What role can it play in building low cost institutions which are necessary for all-round systems sustainability in society? What role can it play in meeting the societal challenge of providing an organizational umbrella for all people? How does it emerge as an organising principle for society? This paper explores these questions by studying real examples of semiformal systems in selected facets of life from the Indian context to develop greater conceptual clarity about this institutional innovation.