

CHAPTER - 6

Status of Women

“The human race is a two-winged bird. One wing is female the other is male. Unless both wings are equally developed, the human race will not be able to fly .Now, more than ever, the cause of women is the cause of mankind.”

- Boutros Boutros Ghali- erstwhile Secretary General of the United Nations

I. Introduction

1. The questions surrounding women's empowerment, the condition and position of women, have now become critical to the human rights based approaches to development. The Cairo conference on Population and Development organized by UN in 1994 called attention to women's empowerment as a central focus. It called for advancing gender equality and empowerment of women, elimination of all kinds of violence against women, and ensuring women's fertility as the cornerstones of population and development related programmes. The UNDP Human Development Report 1995 was devoted to women's empowerment and it declared that if human development is not engendered it is endangered. Equality, sustainability and empowerment were emphasized and the stress was on the understanding that women's emancipation does not depend on national income but is an engaged political process.

2. Uttar Pradesh has had an interesting record in terms of its gender report card. There is a great tradition of women poets, scholars and fighters and it also had the first woman Governor and first Chief Minister. Uttar Pradesh declared its Women's Policy expressing its commitment to gender justice in 2006. The policy purports to work towards giving control to women over their own lives in terms of both resource and ideology.

3. According to 2001 Census in Uttar Pradesh 26.5 million women are still illiterate. It has a high maternal mortality rate at 517. Official statistics reveal that Uttar Pradesh recorded 2059 dowry deaths during 2000 which is the highest among the States and constitutes 30 percent of reported cases across the country. On the positive side, in the last decade Uttar Pradesh recorded a healthy growth in female literacy and recent encouraging trend in female to male ratio in the population. Women, have benefited from the expansion of higher education and made their mark in cultural, educational and administrative fields. A significant development has been the networking of women's groups. Issues of domestic violence, livelihoods, caste oppression, and communal divisions have been raised in women's activism. Increased participation of women in Panchayats has also raised hope.

4. A detailed study of the State with reference to gender development during the nineties revealed a dismal picture (Preet Rustagi). According to this study, UP's sex ratio stood at a low of 879 in 1991. There was a huge gender gap of 33 percentage points in female literacy. IMR was recorded at 100 with a gender differential of 10. Child mortality rate recorded at 149 with a gender difference of 3. Mean years of Marriage was reported 17.27 and total fertility rate at 5.60. Female work participation was recorded at 11% with a gender gap of 52. The study also revealed very large variations in the gender related indicators across districts of the State. Faizabad, Bareilly, Badaun, Etah, Mainpuri, Aligarh, Mathura, Rampur, Shahjehanpur, Bahraich, Agra, Gonda, Lalitpur, Pilibhit, Bulandshahar, Siddhartnagar, Sultanpur, Moradabad, Etawah, Banda, Sitapur, Kheri and Ghaziabad emerged as UP's most backward districts on these parameters. It is revealing to note that majority of these districts belong to western region of U.P., which is economically more developed.

5. Though the situation has improved in many respects since then, the situation of women in the State remains a cause of concern. This chapter looks at various aspects of status of women in Uttar Pradesh like literacy, health, political and economic participation, domestic violence, crime against women, government programmes and policies, etc. and underlines the measures which need to be taken to improve their status and involve them in the development process.

BOX 6.1 Measuring Gender Disparities; the GDI and the GEM

The Human Development Report 1995 evolved two indicators i.e. Gender Related Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) to quantify gender disparities. The GDI focuses on the inequalities in basic capabilities, that is health, education and access to resources. The HDI is discounted downwards or adjusted for gender inequality, so that a high GDI value indicates lesser inequality while a low GDI value would mean lower

achievement levels for women in the three basic sectors mentioned above.

The Gender Empowerment Measure seeks to measure the degree to which women and men command economic, professional and political power. Three indicators measure this: per capita income, share in professional, technical, managerial and administrative jobs and share in parliamentary seats. However, caste, community, access to fuel and fodder, control over land and other assets, inheritance rights, and violence and the threat of violence also have a direct bearing on women's status, but do not get reflected in the GEM.

II. Educational Status

6. Women empowerment involves self assertion which is closely related to formal and informal sources of education. The principal strategy suggested for this by a large number of intellectuals and activists was education for women. As the Human Development Report 1995 observed the returns from educating girls have few parallels in any other type of social investment.

7. Table 6.1 highlights the gender gap in education in U.P. in terms of various indicators like literacy rate, enrollment ratios, drop out rates, school attendance etc.

Table 6.1: Indicators of Gender Gap in Education

Indicators	Value	Remarks
1. Literacy rate, 2001		
- Total	57.3% (65.4%)	Decadal growth in female literacy rate : 18.61% Gap between Male & Female literacy : 27.25% Gap between rural and urban female literacy : 24.31% No. of girls enrolled per 100 boys : 57
- Male	70.2% (75.85%)	
- Female	42.9% (54.9%)	
2. Gross Enrollment Rate (Primary), 2003		
- Total	91.2%	Transition from primary to upper primary = 62.12%
- Male	93.0% (95.7%)	
- Female	89.3% (85.9%)	
3. Net Enrollment Rate, 2001		
- Total		Dropout rate has decreased by 25.9% compared to 2000-01
- Male	82.9% (90.3%)	
- Female	81.9% (81.5%)	
4. Dropout rate, 2003		
- Total	23.5% (53.7%)	In 2003-04, 5.49 million children in Class I, and 2.96 million children in Class 5
- Male	24.2% (50.3%)	
- Female	22.7% (57.7%)	
5. School Attendance, 2000		
- Total	69.3% (85.0)	25.7% schools with TPR more than 100. 16.1% schools are single teacher schools 32% teachers are female teachers
- Female	58.0% (66.0)	
6. Survival Rate, 2004 (Class V)	54.1%	
7. Teacher : Pupil Ratio, 2004	1 : 55 (1.40)	

Source:

- 1: Census
- 2: Selected Education Statistics, 2002-03, MHRD, GOI
- 3: Selected Education Statistics, 2000-01, MHRD, GOI
- 4: Selected Education Statistics, 2002-03, MHRD, GOI
- 5: NSSO Fiftieth Round, 1999-2000
- 6: State Report Cards, NIEPA
- 7: State Report Cards, NIEPA

8. Low literacy rates of women, low enrollment rates in schools and high drop out rates of the girls highlight how women have been denied the empowering touch of education. House hold responsibility and domestic chores are a part of the life of a young girl in the rural area. There is inequality within families evidenced by long hours of unvalued domestic work.

9. Despite positive trends, UP's classrooms continue to display an appalling extent of neglect of all children including girls. It does appear that the children of the poor are treated minimally and differentially not only by the caste hierarchical society but also by the State. Children are crammed in small rooms sitting on the floor with one teacher minding up to 150 students of various levels.

10. Close micro studies show that in the classrooms boys often take privileged spaces. Girls sit in last rows- especially in classes of algebra and arithmetic. Sometimes when it is not so, boys walk up front and stand up. Girls also crane their necks but cannot muster enough courage to walk up to the teacher (usually a male in most remote areas). Almost invariably girls are not addressed by their names, are asked to sing but not debate. In some cases both boys and girls are beaten. But in those schools where girls are spared, it is with the belief that they need no challenge and their education is only a certification required for marriage.

11. Private schools rarely show any initiative for gender concerns. *Madarasas* have large number of girls, but gender transformation is not on agenda. Moral science textbooks still have a preponderance of men. Women as agents of social reform are not mentioned. Girl's self esteem has been enhanced by efforts like those of Mahila Samakhya and girls education projects, but there is huge challenge about cognitive learning in all non-formal efforts. Poor linguistic skills and computation skills cannot be compensated by apparent self-confidence.

12. State initiatives in curricular reforms, training and decentralized structures are appropriate steps which could give desired results if combined with the States promise to construct school buildings with 5 open rooms supported by 5 school teachers and a head teacher. Empowered teachers in disempowering circumstances cannot be expected to give heroic performances. Tasks on time monitoring and M.L.L. achievement monitoring need to be made more effective.

13. Residential schools run by voluntary agencies have had mixed success. Funding for Kasturba Gandhi Schools need to be more realistic. Hostels for intermediate and degree colleges are pitifully small in number. 95% of State's total Blocks have female literacy rates below the State average. The urban rural divide continues to be often greater than the overall gender gap. More women teachers need to be recruited and

provided with safe housing facility. Efforts of most civil society organizations are episodic though very useful. Delhi Government initiative of making 25% enrollment of poor free in private schools can be looked into.

14. The State should take the initiative of making primary education compulsory, which will have remarkable structural impact for sexes. Centres of higher education have done nothing to promote girls' education so far. Technical training institutes for women are very few. Serious review of educational curriculum at secondary and higher level is necessary. This was a commitment made in the National Policy on Education. No State funding for faculty recruitment or faculty promotion programmes in Women Studies Centres of the State universities have been done so far.

III. Health Status

15. Women in U.P. as in other parts of India fall far short in terms of fully functional capability in terms of their capability to have a long and healthy life. Their existence is threatened through the unholy alliance of technology with tradition manifest in sex determination tests and selective abortion of female foetus. UP has also passed a regulating law on prenatal diagnostic techniques but there have been no convictions so far. U.P. has one of the lowest sex ratios in the world and third lowest among the major States of India. UP has however recorded a trend of declining infant mortality confirmed by NFHS I, II and III (see chapter 4). Surveys show that IMR in UP declined from 99.9 deaths per 1000 live birth for the five year period preceding the 92/93 survey to 86.7 deaths per 1000 live birth for the corresponding five year time interval preceding the 98-99 survey, to 73 deaths per 1000 live births for the five year time interval preceding 2005/6 survey. This is reason for considerable optimism for the future. Gender differentials in IMR is still 76 for male to 84 for female - considerably higher than all India average which is 62 for male to 65 for female (PSMS II).

16. The NFHS III findings highlight that in U.P. 53 percent of the respondent women (between the age of 20-24) were married by the age of 18. While this figure was 30 percent in the urban area, it was a high 60.1 percent in the rural area. This indicates a breach of law regarding minimum age of marriage. 14.3 percent women between the age of 14-19 were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the Survey. Marriage of girls before the legal minimum age of 18 is a widespread phenomenon in Uttar Pradesh. Nearly 49 percent girls are married below the age of 18 years in Uttar Pradesh. The position is alarming in Lalitpur and Maharajganj districts where over 80 percent of girls are married off before they reach the age of 18. Early age of marriage is both the symptom as well as a cause of women's subordination in the society. Girls are married off early for a complex array of causes. Socially and

culturally perceived as "paraya dhan", premium is put on virginity and therefore restrictive controls are imposed on her mobility and sexuality. Girls are thus seen to be protected from violence in society by an early marriage.

17. In U.P. sex specific mortality differential moves in an unnatural direction. The female death rate for the age group 0-4 exceeds the male death rate by 22%. This works out to 1.22, 0.88, 1.08 and 0.88 for the 0-4, 5-14, 15-49 and 50+ age groups respectively. The very high value for the 0-4 age group is notable. Differential treatment of boys and girls is the most likely explanation for higher female mortality (UNICEF, 2006). 41% urban & 37% rural women report reproductive health problems (NFHS 3).

18. Maternal mortality rate has reportedly come down from 707 per 100,000 live births to 517, though it

is still too high. Fertility rate has shown decline from 4.1 in NFHS 1 to 3.8 in NFHS 3. The rural fertility rate stands at 4.13 while urban stands at 2.95. Maternity care evidenced by 3 antenatal visits for their last birth for rural women is only 22.6, for urban areas it is 40.9. Mothers who consume IFA for 90 days or more at the time of their last pregnancy stood at 6.7% in rural areas and 16.4 in urban areas. Institutional births have a rural urban differential too. 50.5 percent urban women and 23.8 percent rural women received assistance of a trained health worker. Only 31 per cent urban and 9.9 per cent rural women have received any sort of post natal care within two days of delivery (NFHS 3, 2006). These figures point to a large short fall in maternal care services even in urban areas. The Rural Health Mission is still to register any visible presence on *the ground*.

Figure 6.1: Trends in Institutional Deliveries (%)
(Births in the last 3 years)

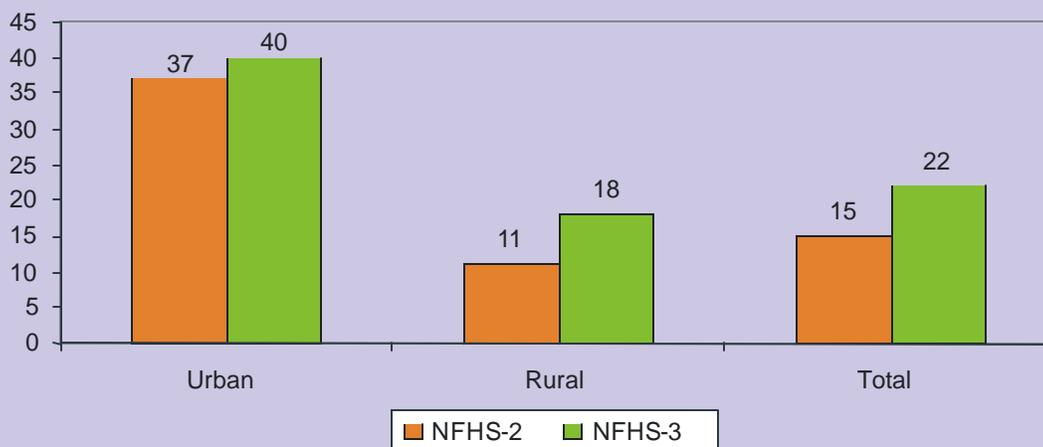
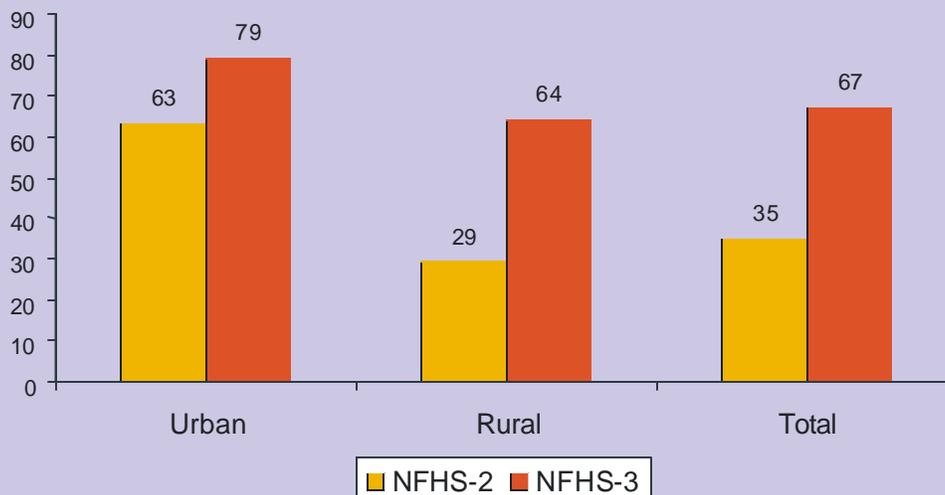


Figure 6.2: Trends in Any Antenatal Care (%)
(Births in the last 3 years)



19. However, PSMS II reports that only half of all expectant mothers among the poorest one fifth of the population received full or some ante natal care (Fig. 6.2). The coverage among the wealthiest was reported to be 80 per cent. Use of private providers for antenatal care by both rich and poor is showing an increase. This is being appreciated and incorporated in the State Health Policy. The low use of public service suggests the absence of government service widely as well as the perception of their being of low quality. An overwhelming majority of deliveries still occur at home, although wealthiest women avail of Government and private services. PSMS II also reports that only 16 per cent of births were institutional deliveries. Social disadvantage and low incomes are proportional to percentage of institutional deliveries. Government schemes about financial support to expectant mothers does not seem to have any significant reflection in terms of better or more institutional service utilization in pre and ante natal care.

20. The use of Family Planning measures is generally low in U.P. NFHS 3 findings indicate an increase in use of contraceptive measures by women between 15 to 49 years (Fig. 6.3). Compared to NFHS 2 findings, the new data shows that contraception use has increased from 44% to 56% among urban women and from 23% to 40% among rural women. Female sterilization still remains the most utilized method adopted by 18.7% urban and 16.8% rural women. Male sterilization is a dismal 0.2% while it is much simpler in terms of health risks involved. This is related to myths related to male virility and strength. In terms of choices and exercise of their reproductive rights, women continue to be constrained. Their consultation in limiting family size or

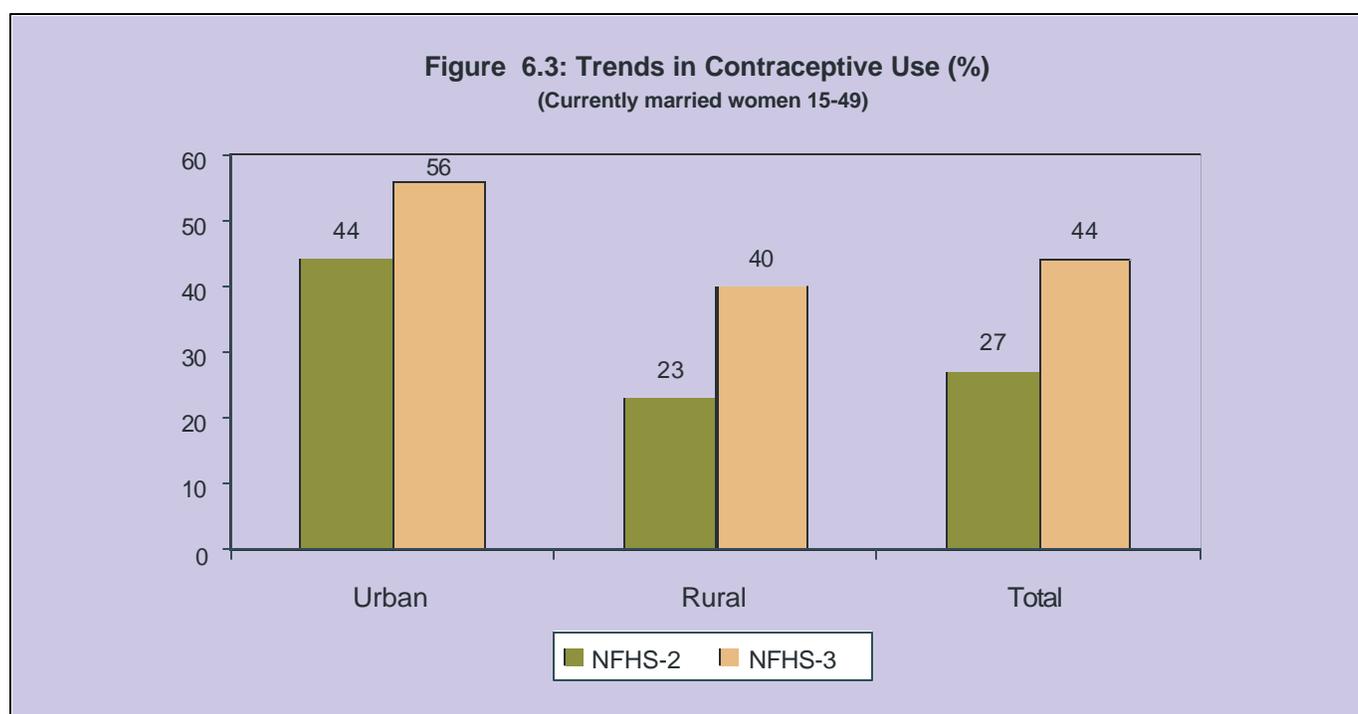
spacing is minimal as is reported by many organizations working on the ground.

21. It is an important point to note that 64.2% married women were satisfied with 2 living children and wanted no more as reported by NFHS III. Of these 76.3% were urban based and 58.6 percent were rural women. The finding of NFHS II pointed to 43.7% who were satisfied with two living children. This indicated women's increasing awareness of advantages of small family. However, a closer examination of responses reveals that it is women who have 2 sons or a son and a daughter who do not want more children. Only 30.8% women with 2 daughters do not want more children. Of these 51.9% belong to the urban area and 21.3% to rural areas. This may also be correlated to women's educational status. 52% of women satisfied with 2 daughters have had more than 10 years of schooling.

22. Malnutrition among mothers is high. It is estimated that 80% women marry and give birth before the age of 18. Maternal mortality rate in Uttar Pradesh is 8 times higher than in Kerala and 70% higher than the national average. That UP has the third highest rural female death rate, after MP and Chattisgarh, is an area of grave concern.

IV. Economic Empowerment

23. Economic empowerment holds the key to womens empowerment as it provides them with the means and opportunity to exercise their choices independently. Economic empowerment is related to the employment opportunity, earning levels, property rights and asset ownership. The situation with respect to these issues is discussed below.



Women and Work

24. Women's work is statistically less visible, non monetized and relegated to subsistence production and domestic side. The non paid work includes domestic chores like cooking, cleaning, child care and care for the elderly and the handicapped-traditionally understood as women's work. Subsistence activities like kitchen gardening, post harvest processing, feeding farm hands, live stock maintenance, gathering of fuel, forest produce, unpaid family labour in family farm or enterprise are all done by women who are reported to be "non working housewives". If women's work is rendered visible, especially unpaid household work, there will be dramatic change in perspective towards perceiving women's work.

25. As discussed in Chapter 5, employment opportunities seem to be much lower for women in U.P., which restricts their economic empowerment. As per 2001 Census, work participation rate (WPR) was very low for females at 16.5 percent as compared to 46.8 percent for males. Only 19.0 percent of rural women and 6.8 percent of urban women in U.P. were found to be economically active. Very sharp variations in female CWPRs are observed at the district levels ranging from a low of 6.3 per cent in Saharanpur to 36 per cent in Chitrakoot district (see Appendix 5.5 and 6.2). In general female work participation rates are higher in the poorer regions of Bundelkhand and Eastern U.P. as compared to the other two regions.

26. NSS surveys are more representative of the reality in this respect and show higher WPR particularly for females. According to NSS 61st Round, WPR for males and females were 50.2 percent and 21.6 percent respectively. The corresponding rates of WPR at the national level were 54.7 per cent for males and 28.7 for females. The latest NSS round shows an improvement in WPR between 1999-00 and 2004-05 for both males and females in rural as well as urban areas (see Table 5.6).

27. As compared to males more females are crowded in lower paid manual work. According to NSS 61st Round (2004-05) still 80 per cent of female workers are engaged in agriculture against 53.4 per cent of male workers. 10.7 per cent of female workers were employed in manufacturing sector and only 8 per cent in services sector. The corresponding figures for males were higher at 13.1 per cent and 25.0 per cent respectively (see Table 5.8). Women workers comprise only one tenth of the total organized sector workers in the State.

28. Restriction on women's mobility, complete child care responsibility, ideology of female seclusion, vulnerability to abuse, low access to information and mass media, low literacy, assumption that women's work is supplementary and confined to largely manual untrained tasks, leads to women's poor access to income.

Ownership of Property

29. Access to productive resources is critical to enhancing women's economic choice. Ownership of properties in the name of women is a strong evidence of women's economic strength and offers a platform for her to exercise her agency. An independent ownership is important in case of widowhood or divorce or separation. According to a recent study of Kerala, women's risk of physical violence from husbands is dramatically less if they own land or a house. The incidence of violence is 49 percent among women without property, but 18 percent among land owning women and 7 percent if they own both land and house (Bina Agarwal, 2005).

30. A study on women's empowerment commissioned by the Planning Department, U.P. Government highlights that only 2.6% women, both rural and urban respondents, own property in their own name (Manoj Agarwal, 2006). The 21.1% and the 29.8% "No response" among the rural and urban respondents points to the ambiguity which may arise from women's location in the family where property is held and seen as a common resource for the family well being (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: Status about Property Right of Women (Per Cent)

Age-Group	Rural				Urban				All			
	Yes	No	NR	Nos.	Yes	No	NR	Nos.	Yes	No	NR	Nos.
15-19	0.5	77.8	21.8	185	-	61.9	38.1	42	0.4	74.9	24.7	227
20-29	1.8	79.3	18.9	619	0.9	85.0	14.2	113	1.6	80.2	18.2	732
30-39	2.4	78.8	18.8	590	0.9	58.3	40.7	108	2.1	75.6	22.2	698
40-59	4.9	73.9	21.2	551	4.3	65.5	30.2	116	4.8	72.4	22.8	667
60+	1.1	49.5	49.5	91	28.6	14.3	57.1	7	3.1	46.9	50.0	98
Total	2.7	76.2	21.1	20.36	2.3	67.9	29.8	386	2.6	74.9	22.5	2422

Source: Manoj Agarwal 2006

31. The same study also reports that the percentage of women holding bank accounts in single name is 7.1, while that of women holding accounts in joint name is 5.9. 58.1% women have no account singly or jointly (Table 6.3). 28.9% respondents did not give a response. This indicates women's low participation in decision making regarding utilization of the money she helps to generate and maintain by her household labour in the family.

Age Group	Single Name	Joint Name	Do Not Have	No Answer	Total Sample
15-19	0.4	-	52.4	47.1	227 (100.0)
20.-29	5.3	3.6	62.8	28.3	732 (100.0)
30-39	7.6	7.2	60.5	24.8	698 (100.0)
40-59	10.8	9.4	57.3	22.5	667 (100.0)
80+	6.1	5.1	25.5	63.3	98 (100.0)
Total	7.1	5.9	58.1	28.9	2422 (100.0)

Source: Manoj Agarwal 2006

32. In February 2006, the State Government took an important decision in favour of women empowerment by reducing stamp duty by two per cent in case the registration is done in the name of women. This is likely to prove beneficial to women in the long run and will also improve their economic and social status as well as self respect and confidence. The response to this scheme has been very encouraging (see Box 6.2). The popularity of the scheme is evident from the fact that within 5 months of passing of the ordinance almost three lakh registrations were done in the name of women. A rebate of Rs.265 crore has been provided under the scheme in different districts till February, 2007. Details can be seen at Appendix 6.3.

Box 6.2 Lowering of Stamp Duty in Case of Women

Recent initiative of the State (Ordinance of 23 Feb. 2006) regarding reduction of stamp duty on purchase of land from 8 percent to 6 percent has worked in the direction of more land being bought in the name of women in the family. This transfer of assets in favour of women, though initially used by male members of the family to save family money,

will gradually contribute to build women's empowerment. 2,97,715 transactions have been done in the name of women in 68 districts of Uttar Pradesh between April 2006 and August 2006. When women move out of their homes to sign the papers in Tehsils in many cases it is their first exposure to an office. This initiative will go a long way towards women's empowerment.

Source: Government of U.P.

Land Pattas

33. Land is a source of security, food sustenance and livelihood for poor women. Granting land pattas in the name of women can be seen as a powerful empowering strategy for gender equality and for encouraging the development of women's autonomy. *Pattas* for women should also be seen in the light of the fact that about 20 percent of rural households are headed by women, where the woman is responsible for family survival. *Pattas* for women are important also because of the fact that the interests of women are mostly ignored in the implementation of inheritance laws. Women's vulnerable position as a result can be strengthened in case of widowhood or desertion.

34. The granting of the *patta* or legal title of land ownership has been an important policy of the State to assist rural landless and marginalised to earn their livelihood. The issue of women being granted *pattas*, singly or jointly, or in groups, has found mention in various plan documents of the Central Government. The State has been giving land ownership or *patta* jointly in the name of the husband and wife as the State presumes congruence of interests and of the equitable sharing of resources in the household. However, in such cases there is little likelihood of any change in the women's position and status at home. But ownership of land in the woman's name often serves to increase her status and dignity within the family, leading to an increased share in the household decision-making in matters such as the children's education, credit and agriculture related matters. Thus, women can negotiate their role within the family.

35. Support and linkage with Self Help groups voluntary or governmental organizations, may help women to build awareness and increase their mobility. It may also strengthen the sense of empowerment which accompanies land ownership. Thus, individual *pattas* may go a long way in reversing the unequal gender relations which exist within families.

36. A recent legislation of the Central Government, the Hindu Succession Amendment Act 2005 is also a step in the right direction towards women's equality in property rights (Box 6.3). It makes Hindu women's inheritance rights in agricultural land legally equal to those of men. All daughters including married daughters

are coparcenary in the joint family property. Daughters now have the right to claim partition and to become 'karta'. All daughters, married or unmarried can reside, seek partition of the parental dwelling place. This law of the Centre will have the power to displace any conflicting laws of the State which are unequal to women. This is a far reaching measure to assure women's control over property.

Box 6.3: Agricultural Land Rights for Women

Women's rights received a shot in the arm with the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Bill, 2004, passed in the Lok Sabha on August 29, 2005, which guaranteed over 400 million Hindu women in India equal rights over agricultural land and joint property in the Hindu undivided family (HUF). The Bill grants women coparcenary in the Hindu undivided family; they have equal rights even in their grandfather's property, which was denied to them earlier. The Bill was approved by the Rajya Sabha on August 16, 2005, and awaits the President's approval.

"This is a landmark legislation as it allows women access to her and her family's livelihood through ownership over agricultural land", says a legal expert. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956, denied women's claim over agricultural land through succession to prevent fragmentation of land and avoid complications in fixation of ceilings and devolution of tenancy rights. Based on medieval Hindu 'Mitakshra' system, it gave primacy to male linear descendants in the male line descent.

Being lucrative property in rural areas, agriculture land was always a male privilege. Even when communist West Bengal tried land reforms in 1977 by distributing lands to the landless, it did not consider women. "This was because women were not considered land-tillers. Thus, although they performed major agriculture work, they had little right over agriculture property."

This situation was worse in States like Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, where tenurial laws were completely against women. But the new laws will over ride all discriminatory State laws. In southern States, the laws favoured women slightly; Kerala had abolished the Hindu Undivided Family property system.

It is believed that this amendment will bring gender justice and improve women's socio-economic status. Earlier studies have shown that gender inequality in agricultural land is a precursor to poverty in rural areas. "As women had no rights over farmlands, they had little say in mortgaging and its other uses by the male." This endangered their livelihood, increased domestic violence and compromised care for their children.

Source: Down to Earth, Sept. 2005 in UP Voluntary Action Network Newsletter May - Aug 2005

Self Help Groups

37. Self Help Groups (SHGs) have emerged as an important strategy to achieve the objective of empowering women and alleviating poverty. SHGs are based on the idea of small groups, which function at developing collective consciousness. Linked with micro credit, these groups are able to access credit and subsidy to meet urgent needs, reducing their dependence on moneylenders. The basic agenda of making credit available to the economically vulnerable women forms the core objective. Thus, SHGs can expand by linking in the form of collectives, clusters and federations. While embracing issues of common concern to the group wider than only credit, such as domestic violence, reproductive rights and political participation, SHGs offer an important dialogic space for women. SHGs are tools, which will reflect the ideology of their initiators, and in many cases they have an important potential to enable women to come together, form collectives and work for social and economic issues which are meaningful in their lives.

38. Though slow to pick up in the beginning, the SHG movement has spread rapidly in last few years in the State. U.P. Government has conceptualized an innovative approach which attempts to ensure a sense of ownership of government programmes among the community by involving SHGs in the implementation of government run development programmes in the rural areas. This would also contribute to the sustainability of the self-help groups. This initiative was mooted in the mid term appraisal of the Tenth Plan. It attempts to build upon the large number of women SHGs currently operational under the initiatives taken by government and non-government organizations, which presently are largely thrift and credit groups with some of them linked to income generation activity.

39. It is envisaged that the rural population below the poverty line will be linked with micro finance activities through the setting up of a Micro Finance Equity Fund in collaboration with commercial banks which could provide loans on a priority basis. It envisages that at least 50 per cent of the groups participating would be women's Self Help Groups. The plan is to federate thrift and credit societies. There would be asset creation at the *Nyaya Panchayat* level. A group would be identified to take care of a particular development scheme or programme. Capacity building of the SHGs would be carried out in activities such as skill development, business administration, quality control, sales and marketing, entrepreneurship development, bargaining skills/negotiations, advocacy, communication, knowledge, management etc. At the *Nyaya Panchayat* level there would be a shop set up by a SHG through a bank loan. This retail outlet would help in asset creation through the marketing of products made by women.

40. It is estimated that there are approximately 3.7 lakh SHGs operational in U.P. of which 1.25 lakh are

women SHGs (See Appendix Table 6.4). These SHGs have helped in increasing the income of poor women and contributed to their economic and social empowerment (see Box 6.4).

Box 6.4: Self Help Groups Set UP Under UP Sodic Lands Reclamation II Project: Some Success Stories

The project under the UP Bhumi Sudhar Nigam is operational in 18 districts of the State. The Programme has been run on a participatory basis in which the beneficiary farmers have been involved in the entire process of decision-making, planning, monitoring and evaluation. The project initiated a movement to set up SHGs comprising of both men and women to address the issue of poverty alleviation. Major economic and social benefits have emanated from the SHGs. Women's participation in agriculture and other livelihood related activities has been ensured through organizing them in saving and thrift groups which have been set up under the project. Some success stories of women SHGs under the programme are highlighted below:

The Story of Savitri Devi: Savitri Devi resides in the village of Johvasharki of Harchandpur block of Rae Bareilly. She is a member of the Bindeshwari Mahila Bachat Samooh. Savitri Devi's personal life was a difficult one. Village Johvasharki was identified by the UP Bhoom Sudhar Nigam and 6 groups were constituted. These were linked with bank to help the members to meet their needs. Gradually the conditions in the village also began to show improvement. Villagers were also given different kinds of information regarding agricultural practices and techniques. After training Savitri Devi began the planting of dhan (coriander) in one bigha of land with loan from the group. Six quintal produce was obtained. The sale price for this is about Rs. 35-40 per kilo. Thus, a gross earning of Rs. 24,000 was generated.

The Story of Guddi Devi: Guddi Devi resides in Nazarpur, a village 30 kilometer from Allahabad. She is the owner of 0.456 hectare land, which is totally unfit for agriculture. The Bhumi Sudhar Nigam had chosen the village for the Sodic Land Reclamation Project. The villagers were convinced that their land could not be improved. The functionaries met the villagers regularly and persuaded them to form 5 water users' groups. Guddi Devi's land fell in group one. The group decided that the boring to be done by the Nigam would be done in Guddi Devi's land. Guddi Devi and her husband worked day and night to level the land, strengthen boundaries and ensure effective drainage. In the month of June the leaching process was done and gypsum was spread on the land.

Mixing and leaching was done with the water taken from the boring. A rich paddy crop was eventually produced. Guddi Devi received a certificate from the District Magistrate of Allahabad for Best Productivity. The water made available through boring has enabled her to make a tank for fishes. The income has helped Guddi Devi and her family to lead a prosperous life. Source: Dastak : Anthropology of Stories of Success from the Sodic Land Project, UP Bhumi Sudhar Nigam, Lucknow, September 2006.

41. A number of NGOs are actively engaged in organizing poor women in the State. Through their efforts a large number of women have been able to improve their economic conditions. These efforts have also helped in empowerment of women in other ways through improvement in literacy, awareness about social issues and collective action to fight injustice (see Box 6.5)

Box 6.5: Voluntary Effort in Building Women's Entrepreneurship through Self Help Group

Network of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (NEED) is a Voluntary Organisation established in 1995 as a network of people-driven development models. NEED started working in village Khusurna in the Mahmudabad Block and as a result of the motivation a Self Help Group named 'Ganga' was formed in January 2001. 18 women joined the group as members. While usually SHGs are homogeneous groups drawing members from one caste, interestingly, this was a heterogeneous group with members from diverse castes. Out of 18 members, 8 members belonged to the Verma community which is a backward community, 7 belonged to the Scheduled Caste, 9 to the Nai (Barber) community and one was a Brahmin. In the traditional set up prevalent in the villages of Uttar Pradesh it is unusual even think about such a diverse group coming together breaking the caste barrier.

Initially the group started with collecting Rs. 20/- per month and within 2 years they made a total collection of Rs. 9,000/-. The SHG got linked to the Bank. They have taken a loan of Rs. 20,000/- out of which they have returned Rs. 11,000/- to the bank. The SHG has also organised a number of training programmes for its members on a variety of subjects such as management, income generation, health, agriculture, animal husbandry. As a consequence several members have been motivated to start micro-enterprises. Today members are also making some collective efforts to mobilise funds for community activities. During festivals, women members put up stalls to sell home-made sweets as profit making venture. The SHG has utilised the money to improve the facilities in the village.

In the initial period of the functioning of the SHG caste distinctions and barriers were visible. However, gradually a social revolution has taken place. The village once divided on class, caste and communal lines has emerged from these divisions, broken social barriers and surfaced as an instance of social harmony.

26 year old Urmila Devi who belongs to the Nai caste was living a life of poverty. She has a large joint family and limited income from an irregularly run pan shop. Urmila got a credit of Rs. 2000/- from the SHG "Ganga" of which she is a member. She was able to start a General store with the support of her husband and father in-law and within six months she started earning between Rs. 600 to 700 per month. Soon she saved Rs. 500/- and has re-opened her husband's Pan shop which has closed down. Urmila has paid back her credit to the SHG and is planning to expand her shop and open one more in coming future.

Source: Anil K. Singh, *SHE Did It! Stories on How Entrepreneurship Changed Women's Life*, NEED, Lucknow, July 2003.

V. Political Participation

42. Women's presence in governance is a crucial indicator of women's empowerment. Historically very few women have been rulers or decision makers in public spaces. U.P. has had two women chief ministers and a Governor in the post independence era. The first legislative assembly had 13 women members. This number went up to 29 in 1957 and to 30 in 1985. It has come down sharply since then. There were only 10 women members in the U.P. assembly in 1991 and 14 in 1993, while 20 were elected in 1996 (Table 6.4). This figure rose to 26 in 2002 elections. These numbers are abysmally small. The women members have also a low presence in the Assembly (Figure 6.4). The money and muscle associated with the electoral process inhibits a large number of women from joining politics. Restriction on mobility, lack of control over resources, low literacy may seem to be obstacles but the correlations are complex. Across the globe as well as within the country more women in elected bodies is not necessarily related to better health care, education, security and income for women.

Table 6.4: Women Contestants and Winners in Lok Sabha and Assembly Elections (N0s.)

Institution	1993		1996		2002	
	Women Contestants	Women Elected	Women Contestants	Women Elected	Women Contestants	Women Elected
Lok Sabha	56	9	61	9	61	7
State Assembly	259	14	190	20	344	26

Source: Election Commission

Figure 6.4: Women in the U.P. Legislative Assembly



Source: Election Commission

43. Another important dimension of political participation is to what extent the decision about women is taken independently by the women voters. According to a recent study, decision making in the exercise of one's ballot is influenced by the men in the family (father / husband) in about half of the sampled women in the rural as well as the urban areas (Table 6.5). About one-tenth of women reported some other external influence. The remaining 46 percent women exercised their independent choice. These figures are reflective of the increasing autonomy of women in exercising their choices.

44. Another noteworthy development towards women empowerment has been their increasing presence as elected representatives to the Panchayati Raj Institutions at various levels. The 2005 Panchayat elections have resulted in a phenomenally large number of women elected leaders, much beyond the reserved one-third seats (Table 6.6). Earlier the compulsory presence of women was compromised by the operation of the phenomenon of the *pradhan patis* of female proxy candidates or the surrogate candidates who are actually being regulated by the male family members. Areas where civil society organizations have empowered women at large, the elected women are found to be very articulate, vigilant and practical. Women have used the opportunity to improve ICDS centres, primary schools, sanitation and have also publicly dealt with issues of misbehaviour with girls, violence & alcoholism as well as sensitive issues of widows dressing in coloured clothes. Increasingly the elected women are demanding not only basic literacy but also land & legal literacy. Women are

also expressing their desire to have longer trainings instead of short orientations. More women in grassroots organizations will ensure more meaningful engagement of women in decision making. A more active *gram sabha* which is sensitive to women's issues is the desirable goal as a woman sarpanch alone in a gender hostile panchayat may not be able to accomplish and sustain much for the benefit of women or the village community at large.

Table 6.6: Percentage of Women Representative Elected in the Panchayat Elections of 2005

Elected Posts	Percent Posts Held by Women
Adhyaksh Zila Panchayat	76%
Member of Zila Panchayat	40%
Pramukh Kshetra Panchayat	51%
Member of Kshetra Panchayat	37%
Pradhan Gram Panchayat	50%
Member of Gram Panchayat	38%

Source: Panchayat Raj Department, Government of U.P.

45. Voluntary organizations such as Mahila Samakhya working to conscientise and organize women in groups and *sanghas* are able to address the issue of women and their participation in a two fold manner. On the one hand they organize intensive training programmes for women PRI representatives to make

Table 6.5: Who Governs the Decision to Vote (In percent)

Religion/ Caste	Rural				Urban				All			
	Self	Father/ Husband	Others	Total	Self	Father/ Husband	Others	Total	Self	Father/ Husband	Others	Total
Hindu	46.9	45.1	8.0	100.0 (1418)	42.1	44.2	13.8	100.0 (240)	46.2	45.0	8.8	100.0 (1658)
Upper castes	59.5	35.5	5.0	100.0 (279)	53.3	36.7	10.0	100.0 (30)	58.9	35.6	5.5	100.0 (309)
OBCs	43.5	48.8	7.2	100.0 (635)	41.2	42.2	16.7	100.0 (102)	43.1	47.9	9.0	100.0 (737)
SCs	44.2	45.9	9.9	100.0 (504)	39.8	48.1	12.0	100.0 (108)	43.5	46.2	10.3	100.0 (612)
Muslim	40.4	47.1	12.5	100.0 (104)	41.4	45.7	12.9	100.0 (70)	40.8	46.6	12.6	100.0 (174)
Total	46.5	45.3	8.3	100.0 (1522)	41.9	44.5	13.5	100.0 (310)	45.7	45.1	9.2	100.0 (1832)

Note: Figures in brackets denote size of sample.

Source: Manoj Agarwal, *Impact of Women Empowerment Programmes on Socio-Economic Conditions of Women in Uttar Pradesh*, study sponsored by State Planning Commission, Uttar Pradesh, 2006 (Mimeo.).

them effective functionaries and, on the other hand, their own programmes with their members within their collectives serve to build a culture of questioning, critical thinking, collective decision making and mobilization on public issues. A mobilized community of women is thus able to raise issues of significance to the local community within the meetings, demand accountability from representatives and administrative officials regarding financial and procedural matters and intervene with creative suggestions. It is clear that the dominance of patriarchy, money power, party politics, muscle power are getting steadily undercut and eroded and women's concerns are gradually being pushed to the forefront of local politics.

46. Drawing from intensive discussions at the level of *sanghas* and *mahasanghas* and the experiences culled from functionaries and from trainings, Mahila Samakhya has drawn out lessons to strengthen women's participation in the Panchayats. A memorandum incorporating these points, which has been presented to the Panchayat Raj Department, states:

- It is imperative to inscribe the budget for the village on the walls of the Panchayat Bhawan.
- There should be rules and strategies to train and activate women members who have been elected to the post of Pradhans or members.
- There should be strict rules for ensuring the participation of 2/3rd voters in the open meeting of the Gram Sabha.
- The signatures of the people in the executive register of the open meeting should be ensured.
- It should be compulsory for the Pradhan / Secretary to sit in the Panchayat Bhawan.
- The development plan should be widely disseminated so that it can reach the general public.
- The dates and time of the Panchayat meetings in the State of U.P. should be decided in advance.
- The venue of the meeting should be either the Panchayat Bhawan or a public place, to enable all Gram Sabha members to present their problems.

**Box 6.6: Struggles Have Culminated In Success:
The Story of Gram Pradhan Sonia**

Sonia hails from the Kol community and belongs to the village of Neeti Charhi where the life of the people is difficult. The area is also terrorized by dacoits. Illiteracy, low wages and exploitation have characterized the life of the people. Sonia has had a long association of over 16 year with Mahila Samakhya and has also worked with Akhil Samaj Sewak Sangha. Her linkage with Mahila Samakhya led her to pick her education from the Mahila Shikshan Kendra.

She worked as a Sahyogini and Anudeshika, has helped educate women and has also been proactive in linking women to the sangha.

Widowed in 1998, Sonia has married off two of her children, overcoming personal hardship, social traditions and patriarchy. In 2000 she was elected as Sarpanch. Sonia's achievements have been manifold. She has led a struggle to ensure the minimum wage of Rs.58 for the agricultural worker. Exploitative practices like giving one and a quarter kilo of poor quality grain for a day's hard labour have been challenged. She has been able to establish the control of the landless adivasis to the land given to them by the government, which had been occupied by the heavy weights of the dacoit-infested region. Even the police was on the side of the local powerful group. Sonia mobilised the local populace who took control of the grain in the fields. Her struggles resulted in restoration of the land to the real holders.

Today, owing to her efforts, there is a hand pump in every house. Pucca drains and paved (kharanja) roads ensure health and sanitation in the village. Two primary schools have been started in the village.

Women are being encouraged to seek education and improve their lives. A fortnightly paper "Khabar Lahariya" is also being published. While Sonia's life is a beacon of encouragement to other women, her personal struggles continue. To discourage and preempt her initiative to stand for elections, the local power lobby got her name struck off from the voter list. When her name was restored after much effort she found that she was listed as Sumitra instead of Sonia. She fought her election under this name. Today her struggle to recover her name Sonia is on.

Source: Bhavna Srivastava. Adapted from "Unnati Ke Path Ki Nayi Saathi", *Bhoomija*, 5 No. 4, October-December 2005, Mahila Samakhya U.P. Lucknow.

47. Thus, it is apparent that women see effective and efficient functioning of panchayats closely linked to the issue of active women's participation (*Mahila Samakhya* U.P. Annual Report 2004-05). Entry into public space, utilization of authority in practice, trainings by government and non-government agencies are all part of a process of gradual growth of knowledge, self-esteem and empowerment which gives women the agency to function effectively in the political process. Even proxy and dummy candidates may experience this process of empowerment. Women who stand and win from general seats are more likely to have a higher commitment towards and an understanding of the political process. Having a high participation of women at the local self government level can create an environment which is enabling for other women, receptive to the idea of

gender friendly initiatives and can serve to monitor and implement government community and gender- based programmes related to education, nutrition and health. It offers a potential opportunity, which can be utilized at an optimum level by appropriate trainings -both capacity building and information enhancing - by government departments and the NGO Sector. However, this effectiveness is greatly linked to the willingness of the State administration to devolve effective administrative and financial power to the local self-governing units and the responsiveness and sensitivity of the lower echelons of the administrative machinery to the aspiration and needs of the local population.

VI. Domestic Violence

48. The crime data which highlights violence against women in society can hardly capture the prevalence of violence in the private space of the family or the vast array of crimes against women which operate in the guise of widely prevalent social customs and traditions. The numbers that fall under the category of cruelty of husband and relatives or under the Dowry Prevention Act may not reflect the reality. Acts of violence, which take place in the private area of the family, are often not reported at all.

49. Family counseling cells deal with many such cases of violence in families which are not reported to the police as they are seen as family matters. These cases range from small and infrequent acts of violence to more frequent assault. Great efforts are made by the victim to keep the family intact. Verbal violence and mental cruelty are often not seen as sufficient reason to put family life at stake by reporting them to the police. The physical and psychological violence devalues women. The numerical data can hardly capture the systemic violence that is prevalent in a patriarchal society where social power is unequally tilted towards the male. Violence is used as a tool to maintain women's subordination.

50. According to the NFHS III, 44.3 percent of married women in rural areas and 36 percent of women in urban areas have experienced some form or other of spousal violence. The Survey points out that women who have had education of ten years and more, experience least spousal violence. Spousal violence steadily declines as years of schooling increase. Girls who are married early and girls who drop out from schools and thereby denied education, are also deprived of the valuable tool of building agency and autonomy.

51. Caste Panchayat decisions and social ruling on cases regarding women's choice of spouses and punishing young people for making independent choice of spouses are a mockery of justice. 'Honour killings' by family members to revenge family honour when girls make independent decision to marry outside one's own caste, highlights the presence and power of traditional custom over State sanctioned laws and rights.

52. The intermeshing of women's social subordination with economic deprivation makes the poorest women an extremely vulnerable section of the population. Thus migrant women are more vulnerable to sexual harassment, trafficking and bodily harm. Work sites may also become sites of sexual harassment and rape.

53. In the recent past there have been some positive steps to use law as a tool for women's social equality. The government is in the process of making rules and appointing appropriate officers for implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act which has been notified by the Central Government in November 2006. The Act gives relief to married women and women in other relationships within the family, relief in cases of domestic violence which is defined as physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic abuse. It provides women access to courts, medical facilities and shelter homes. It upholds the right of the woman to reside in the matrimonial home.

54. In February, 2006 the Supreme Court of India called for compulsory registration of marriage in a case Seema versus Ashwani Kumar. Uttar Pradesh has initiated a Bill for the Compulsory Registration of Marriages in 2006. Its passage is awaited. The positive impact of the passage of this bill will be far reaching. It can lead to effective enforcement of the minimum age of marriage and prevention of child marriages, for checking illegal bigamy and polygamy and enabling women to claim their right to live in the matrimonial homes. Registration of marriage can help women claim inheritance rights and other benefits which they may be entitled to after the death of their husband. It would also prevent the desertion of wives after marriage by men. The disposal of litigation relating to marriage issues would also be assisted by such legislation.

Box 6.7: From the Files of the Family Counseling Cell-- Suraksha

Suraksha was registered in 1984 as an Anti Dowry Demand Organisation in Lucknow. It acquired the status of a Government recognised Family Counselling Cell in 1986- the first in Uttar Pradesh. It registers on an average 75 to a 100 cases a year which cover a broad range of issues such as marital disputes, dowry harassment cases, cases of rape, mental and physical torture, dowry deaths, maintenance, divorce, bigamy, abandonment of female infants etc.

A recent study of *Suraksha* analysed the 822 cases registered at its office in the 11 year period between September 1994 and October 2005. The highlights of the study are:

The maximum number of cases (42%) are of women who fall between the ages of 26-35. These are young women who at this age are adjusting to a marriage.

76 % cases are of women who have about 11 years of schooling i.e. they have passed their intermediate examination.11% of the complainants have completed some professional training.

39% cases are of women who have completed their graduate degree. This figure includes women who have a post graduate degree and also working women.

The cases are drawn from a wide cross-section of society. They include doctors, teachers, nurses, engineers as well as labourers, domestic help and housewives.

Marital disputes comprised a high 66.54% of cases, followed by *dowry harassment* cases and cases of *dispute with in-laws*, both at 33%. Cases, which report conflicts arising from *personality clashes* are 31.02 %. 27.61% cases report the husband's *extra marital affairs* as the reason for the conflict.

Parental interference in the life of the married daughter is another reason for conflict cited by 16.54% cases. Cases of *exploitation by parents* are at 2.06%. Cases of *exploitation by siblings* are also a cause of conflict in 1.82% of the cases.

Maintenance and Divorce cases are 11.55% and 7.17 % cases respectively.

6.20 % complaints relate to the *restitution of conjugal rights*. *Mental torture* is at 1.94%.Cases of *Dowry deaths* are at 1.09 % and complaints of *physical torture* is listed as 6.08 %.There are 1.94% cases in which *mental torture* is cited as the reason of the complaint.

Rape cases account for 1.33% of the registered cases.

The study cites that 81.7% Hindu women, 16.5% Muslim women, 1.4% Sikh women and 0.4% Christian women have used the services of Suraksha in the 11 year period studied. This broadly reflects the texture of the city population.

Source: Suraksha, Lucknow

VII. Crime against Women

55.It is well known that the official crime statistics suffer from a high degree of under reporting. This is especially so in case of crime against women as there is reluctance on part of the victims to register the crime, which is often committed within the family. Moreover, police also often fail to register the reported cases. Police reporting of crime is a problem especially when the number of cases registered adversely reflects on the career of the personnel. UNDP supported efforts to make police change agents has had encouraging results but the number of officers trained is very small.

56.But analysis of crime data, no matter how unreliable, may still be useful for a broad picture of crimes against women. The crimes against women identified under the IPC are the following: Rape (Sec. 376 IPC), Kidnapping and abduction for different purposes (Sec. 363-373 IPC), Homicide for Dowry, dowry deaths or attempts to commit such crimes (Sec. 302/304B IPC), Torture both mental and physical (Sec. 498 A IPC), Molestation (Sec. 354 IPC), Sexual harassment (Sec. 509 IPC) which was referred to as 'eve-teasing' in the past and Importation of girls upto 21 years of age (Sec. 366-B IPC). Crimes against women also include various crimes which are identified under special and local laws (SLL), e.g., Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987; Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956; Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 and Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.

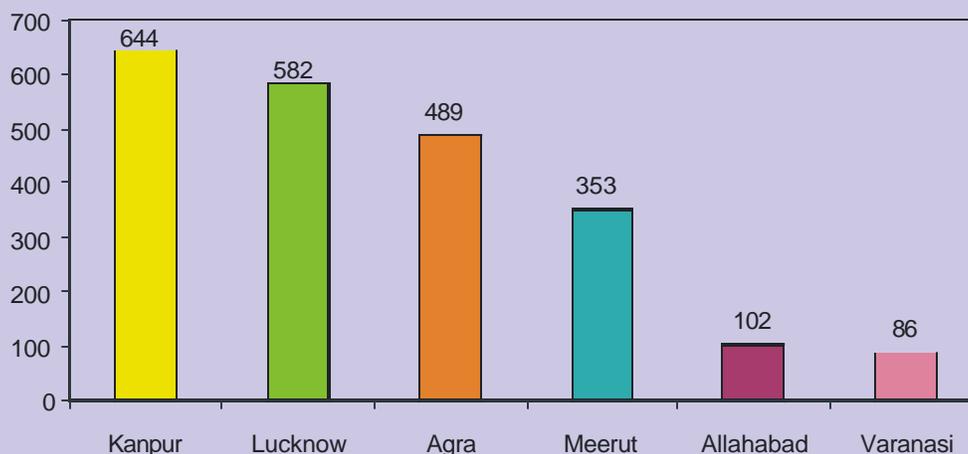
57. According to official statistics, a total of 14,875 cases were reported as crimes against women in 2005. U.P.'s percentage contribution to the all India total is 9.6. It ranked 2nd among the States after Andhra Pradesh. An analysis of the Crimes against Women in UP in 2005 highlights that the highest percentage of crimes comprises of cruelty by husband and relatives, followed by sexual harassment and eve teasing, cases of kidnapping and abduction, molestation, dowry deaths and rape (Table 6.7).

Table 6.7: Incidence of Crimes Committed against Women in U.P. During 2005

Type of Crime	Numbers	Per cent to Total
Cases of Rape	1217	8.18
Kidnapping & abduction	2256	15.17
Dowry Deaths	1564	10.51
Cruelty by Husband & Relatives	4505	30.29
Molestation	1835	12.34
Sexual Harassment & Eve teasing	2831	19.03
Cases of Immoral Traffic Prevention Act	31	0.21
Cases of Dowry Prohibition Act	586	3.94
Total	14875	100.00

Source: NCRB 2005 (<http://ncrb.nic.in/crime2005/ciiPDF>).

Figure 6.5: Incidence of Crime Committed Against Women in Large Cities of U.P. 2005



58. According to the NCRB data relating to the incidence of crime committed against women given for the cities of U.P., the most unsafe cities for women in the State can be ranked in the following order: Kanpur, Lucknow, Agra, Meerut, Allahabad and Varanasi (Figure 6.5).

VIII. Government Programmes

59. The Department of Women and Child Development, Government of U.P. has five organizations under its umbrella, viz. Directorate of Child Development Services and Nutrition, Directorate of Women's Welfare, State Social Welfare Board, U.P. Control Board and U.P. Women's Welfare Corporation Limited. The State Government has attempted to address the question of gender inequality through several schemes and overarching policy reconsideration.

60. State has declared its intent through a *Mahila Neeti* or Women's Policy and is poised to initiate an apex body to monitor and implement programmes which impact positively women's position and condition *Announced in the year 2006. UP Women's Policy is a concrete step in formalizing its commitment to gender justice and equity.* It expresses its commitment towards empowering women and ensuring their equal participation in all decision making in the area of development. Empowerment is understood as control over material and intellectual resources and ideology. The policy observes that women's empowerment is not based on charity or welfare but it is a strategy to ensure women's human rights. State understands that if women are to be empowered then it is necessary to constantly struggle against forces, which keep them subservient. The State would ensure a just and fair distribution of social economic, cultural and political resources of the

society so as to ensure women's rightful share. The State recognizes women's productive and reproductive labour and their equal right to work and property. The State in its policy recognized women's need for a safe environment where their contribution is recognized.

61. Under the I.T.P. Act 1956, the Women's Welfare Department U.P. is running 6 District Shelter cum Reception Centers in the State. At present 62 inmates are residing in these homes. Under the ITP Act 1956, the Women's Welfare Dept. U.P. is running 5 Protective Homes. In these women are provided entry only through court order. At present 139 women are residing in these Homes.

62. The State has initiated schemes for women in difficult circumstances such as those arising from social neglect in old age, widowhood or destitution. A number of social security schemes for women have been operating in the State (see Box 6.8).

Box 6.8: Social Security Schemes for Women

Grant in Aid to Destitute Women

In this scheme destitute widows/ women, whose annual income is below Rs. 12000/- p.a., are provided a grant of Rs.300 p.m.

Marriage Incentive to Persons for Marrying Widows Below 35 years of Age

Widows below 35 years. who remarry are given Rs.11000/-.

Maintenance Grant to Women Victims of Dowry

A woman who is victim of dowry harassment and is below poverty line, receives Rs.125/- p.m. as grant.

Legal Aid to Women Victims of Dowry

Women Victims of dowry whose case is under consideration of the court and who is below poverty line is provided Rs.2500 as legal aid.

Establishment of Women Empower Centres.

Implementation of Domestic Violence Act.

Federating Women SHG's.

Health Insurance for women.

Residential Facilities for Working Women

This scheme provides well maintained, protected and inexpensive residential facilities for working women.

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This scheme provides well maintained, protected and inexpensive residential facilities for working women.

63. The following Centrally Sponsored Schemes for the welfare of women are in operation in the State:-

- (1) **Support to Training and Employment Programmes for Women (STEP):** The objectives are to extend training for upgradation of skills and sustainable employment for women through a variety of action oriented projects which employ women in large numbers. The scheme covers 8 traditional sections of employment i.e. agriculture, small animal husbandry, dairy, fisheries, handlooms, handicrafts. Social forestry and Waste land development have also been added within this scheme. 25 NGOs are working in U.P.
- (2) **Women Dairy Extension Project:** This project was started in U.P. from April 1991 under the STEP programme with assistance from the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India. Up to March 2005, 6214 Women Dairy Cooperative Societies have been organized. 54205 Women members are participating and getting employment, out of which 9957 women numbers belong to SC/ST category. At present, approximately 41053 litres milk per day is being procured from the functional societies at an average procurement price of Rs. 12.50 per litre. Rs.5,13,162 is being paid per day directly to women members (see Box 6.9).
- (3) **Construction / Extension of Working Women's Hostels and Day Care Centers:** The objective of this scheme is to provide accommodation for single working women, unmarried women, widows, divorced and separated women.
- (4) **Working Women Hostels:** This scheme is run in collaboration with Government of India and Government of U.P. Under this scheme, institutions are being run in six districts.
- (5) **The Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD):** This is a Centrally

Sponsored Scheme. Within this scheme, women of rural and urban areas who are financially weak are provided free training in traditional and non traditional trades by NGOs.

- (6) **Swayam Siddha Scheme:** This is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme run by NGOs in 94 Blocks in 54 districts. The main objective of the scheme is the establishment of self-reliant women's Self Help Groups.
- (7) **Swa-Shakti Scheme:** The overall objective of the World Bank and IFAD assisted projects is to strengthen the process of promoting social and economic development of women and creating an environment for social change to improve their quality of life. The scheme is being implemented in 18 districts and is now run by UP Land Development Corporation.
- (8) **Swadhar Scheme:** The objective of the scheme is to provide the primary need of shelter, food, clothing and care of the marginalized women/girls living in difficult circumstances who are without any social and economic support, and to rehabilitate them socially and economically through education, awareness, skill upgradation and personality development. At present Swadhar Center / Aashraya Sadan for destitute women is running at Mathura with the help of Government of India.

Box 6.9 : U.P. Mahila Dairy Pariyojana

The U.P. Women Dairy Project was started in April 1991 under the STEP programme with assistance from the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India. The aim of the MDP (Mahila Dairy Pariyojana) is poverty eradication and employment generation at the village level by organizing rural women through the medium of milk committees/cooperatives. The project is operational in Aligarh, Bulandshahar, Saharanpur, Agra, Kanpur Dehat, Badaun, Mujaffarnagar, Barabanki, Fatehpur, Hardoi, Sitapur, Shahjahanpur, Etah, Mainpuri, Lakhimpur Kheri, Bahraich, Chandauli, Sultanpur, Kannauj, Farrukhabad, Firozabad, Bareilly and Ghaziabad.

Milk cooperative committees aim to free milk producers from the clutches of middle men and encourage animal husbandry, improve cattle fodder technique, create and encourage investment at the village level, and raise awareness for active participation in the social development process. Up to March 2005, 6214 Women Dairy Cooperative Societies have been organized and 54205 women are participating and getting employment, of these 9957 women members belong to the SC/ST categories.

Presently approximately 41053 liters of milk per day is being procured from the functional societies. An average procurement price of Rs.12.50 per litre is being paid directly to the women members.

Evaluation by Sarvodaya Gramya Vikas Sansthan, Rae Bareilly and State Planning Institute (U.P.) have pointed to the success of the MDP in generation of employment opportunity for the rural poor women. MDP villages show higher income than non MDP villages enabling beneficiaries to rise above the poverty line. SCs and Backward Castes have been adequately represented in this programme. Barriers of religion and caste have eroded. Family money is being spent for education of family. There is a rise in social consciousness and social change is evident in these villages where many cases of child marriage have been prevented. There is increase in the number of beneficiaries who are acquiring better breed of cattle.

The Study Report of the Evaluation Programme conducted by IIM Lucknow also gave a positive feedback. It is pointed out that 40% societies have formed SHGs. Average number of members per SHG is found to be 11. Average savings per member was found to be the maximum in Saharanpur with Rs.325 and minimum in Bulandshahr at Rs.150. The overall average annual income per household of society member from dairy and other sources are Rs.9220 and Rs.6898 respectively. Maximum average annual income per household from dairy i.e. Rs.10719 was observed in district Saharanpur and minimum of Rs.7375 in district Aligarh. In comparison with private businessmen, MDP was paying an average Rs.2.00 per litre higher price for milk. The trainings for the Committee members helped to build confidence among the personnel. Women have developed an attitude of positive thinking.

Source: Government of Uttar Pradesh

64. Government children homes for females have been established for the reception of children in need of care and protection during the pendency of any inquiry and subsequently for their care, treatment, education, training, development and rehabilitation. About 198 inmates between 10-18 years of age are residing in 4 such homes which are situated in Ballia, Allahabad, Lucknow and Kanpur Nagar. A Special Home for juvenile females has been established at Barabanki for the rehabilitation of female juveniles in conflict with law under J.J. Act. These after care organizations are established for taking care of those juveniles or children above the age of 16, who leave Juvenile homes and Special Homes for the purpose of enabling them to lead an honest, industrious and useful life. These homes are run by the State Government in Raibareilly, Varanasi,

Saharanpur and Meerut. Government Children Homes (SHISHU) have been established for the reception of children who are 0-10 years of age and in need of care and protection during the pendency of any enquiry and subsequently for their care, treatment education, development and rehabilitation. These homes are running in 5 districts and about 136 children are residing in these homes.

65. The inmate children, women and juvenile of above mentioned institutions and homes are provided facilities of boarding, lodging, education, vocational training, medical facilities and entertainment. The female juveniles and women, who are above 18 years are rehabilitated through marriage and self employment through vocational training and private and government service. Rehabilitation grant to them by the Department is Rs.15000 for marriage and Rs.7000 for self employment.

66. With a view to ensuring capacity building through training and upgradation of skills and provisions of employment and income generation activities for women, a number of schemes are being implemented. Self Help Groups (SHGs), which act as social change for development and empowerment of women, have been associated with and encouraged in different schemes.

67. *The Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana* is mainly based on community empowerment. The community based organizations include Neighbourhood Groups (NHGs); Neighbourhood Committee (NHCs) and Community Development Society (CDS). However, the schemes do not stipulate any norm for women beneficiaries, as in the earlier years the target of a minimum 30% reserved jobs for women was not met. Within the Urban Self Employment Programmes a sub-scheme called Development of Women and children in the Urban Area (DWACUA) gives assistance to groups of urban poor women for selling their produce of gainful self employment ventures. This assistance is given to a group as opposed to individual effort. Groups of urban poor women (a minimum of 10) shall take up an economic activity suited to their skill, training, aptitude and local conditions. DWACUA group shall be entitled to a subsidy of Rs.125,000/- or 50% of the cost of project, whichever is less. DWACUA group shall be entitled to a lump sum grant of Rs.25000/- as a revolving fund.

68. *Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana* aims at establishing a large number of micro-enterprises in the rural areas, building upon the potential of the rural poor. At least 50% of the Swarozgaries will be SCs/STs, 40% women and 3% disabled. For the Tenth Plan, the total target includes 11.25 lakh SC, 1350 ST and 9.00 lakh women beneficiaries.

69. *Mahila Samridhi Yojna* is implemented with the cooperation of the National Scheduled Caste Finance and Development Corporation. Self employment projects

costing up to Rs.25,000 are financed for poor and unemployed scheduled caste women wherein a sum of Rs.10,000 is given as subsidy and Rs.15,000 is given as loan by the Corporation at the interest rate of 4% per annum.

70. The target for *Indira Awas Yojana* for the Tenth Plan 2002-2007 was to construct 14.40 lakh dwellings. In the year 2002-2003, the target outlined was 1.90 lakh constructed houses, of which 1.77 lakh were constructed. By the end of 2004, 1.90 lakh additional dwellings had been constructed. The anticipated achievement for the year 2005-2006 is 2 lakh. Thus the total number of dwellings completed during the Tenth Plan is 9.67 lakh. Houses under the *Indira Awas Yojana* are to be allotted in the name of the female members of the household or alternately in the joint name of the husband and wife. Under the scheme, priority is extended to the widows and unmarried women.

71. To comprehend the impact of programmes on the ground, it is essential to see the **level of awareness about government programmes** among women. An evaluation study highlighted the level of awareness about government programmes for women among the 1888 households surveyed (Manoj Agarwal 2006). There was high awareness of the programme of Grant to Helpless Widows and the Old Age Pension Programme. Of the total households surveyed, 62.7% knew about the grant to helpless widows and 64.2% knew about Old Age Pension Programme. 57.2% households were aware about the Nutritious Food Programme. The Maternity Benefit Programme was known to only 44.9% households. Awareness regarding schemes relating to economic empowerment like the Professional Training Programme was available to only 22.1% households. Just 20.1% households knew about the scheme of economic assistance to widows' daughters. 76.9% households are not aware about *Balika Samridhi Yojana*. Information about various poverty and unemployment elimination programmes is not available to 70.7% households. 89% households are not aware about the *Kishori Shakti Yojana*. Awareness regarding other schemes such as *Mahila Dairy Yojana* and *Working Women's Hostel* is poor, as only 6.3% and 1.7% households knew about them respectively. Awareness regarding *Swayam Siddha* is 3.2%, Regarding the *Swashakti* programme, it is 2.6%. The *RCH* Programme is known to only 3.1% households. Information regarding Grants to Tortured Women is 1.9%. Regarding the *Swavlamban* Programme only 2.3% people are aware. Awareness about the *Indira Awas Yojana* is present among 28.9% households. This suggests the need of programme for increasing the awareness of government schemes among the beneficiary groups through various means.

IX. Concluding Remarks

72. There are several critical issues which require attention of the State government if Uttar Pradesh is to

emerge as a just, equitable and developing State with reference to gender. These issues are highlighted briefly below.

73. First and foremost, the State needs to look at its programmes not in the mode of welfare for women but in terms of human rights. This would have implications in many areas where women are treated minimally and given pittance like widow pension, old age pension and marginal wages.

74. Another major area of policy lacunae both at the State as well as the central level is that the unit of poverty alleviation programmes is the family and not the individual. This creates an extremely difficult situation as the greatest inequity with reference to gender exists within the family. Unless individual is taken as the unit of addressing poverty like in the case of education and health we cannot be said to have a human rights approach to development nor can we be said to be gender responsive in our planning. Special and close attention should be given to female headed households. There is a lacuna in data and schemes for single women across classes.

75. There is need to deliberate and design a gender audit system for all government and non government programmes which would look at targets, trainings, recruitments, promotion, infrastructure and decision making opportunities. The conscious effort of the State to mainstream gender issues through gender budgeting is a right move but requires participation of all departments including power, irrigation, revenue, home, I.T. and others.

76. An effective MIS system for monitoring women welfare programmes needs to be developed with a check list which is simple and transparent and which can be handled by both government and non government functionaries. There needs to be a regular updating of gender segregated data to assess the impact of all government schemes. All ministries, departments and programmes after a gender audit must clearly project a gender segregated list of beneficiaries and recruited officials.

77. The overall decentralization of planning process needs a system where village and block level plans are made ensuring participation of women and are integrated into the State plan.

78. More effective publicity of government welfare schemes needs to be undertaken using multimedia and participatory processes.

79. Care should be taken to ensure that all income generation programmes achieve the target of 30% women beneficiaries. Any shortfall in the number of women beneficiaries in a year must be carried forward in the next year.

80. Hostels for secondary and high schools need to be constructed and more institutions of technical

training need to be set up at block level for girls. Short stay homes with counseling centres are required at the block level with counselors who are qualified with degrees in social work, women's studies or psychology.

81. Clear budgetary allocation is necessary for the publicity, training and monitoring with reference to laws like Domestic Violence Prevention Act, Sexual harassment at work place guidelines and compulsory marriage registration bill. Schemes to encourage women in non stereo typical occupations do not exist. Training of women in leadership is necessary at all levels and gender sensitization should no more remain tokenistic.

82. Gender Resource Centres need to be funded and set up with active participation of academics and activists.

83. The State requires a full fledged mechanism to ensure gender sensitive policy and implementation

through a participatory apex body. Department of Women and Child Welfare should now be renamed as the Department for Women's Empowerment.

84. Joint *pattas* for men and women made compulsory for women's better control over resources.

85. Women's concern for security, families and care need to be handled with sensitivity and beyond the blind call of procedural justice. Women's agency needs greater recognition in all government policy. For a full functioning of women's capabilities the State needs to look beyond the parameters of mere service delivery of education, health and income. Women's experiences need to be perceived as legitimate in the larger public discourse. More time and space needs to be devoted to allow for their expression, whether it is in training or in data collection efforts.