MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN WOMEN'S LIVES?

Case Study of Women's Empowerment Programme in Rajasthan

Jenni Taipale

Master's Thesis

Social and Public Policy

Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy

University of Jyväskylä

Spring 2015

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN WOMEN'S LIVES?

Case Study of Women's Empowerment Programme in Rajasthan
Jenni Taipale
Social and Public Policy
Master's Thesis
Department of Social Sciences
and Philosophy
University of Jyväskylä
Instructor: Teppo Kröger
Spring 2015
79 pages

Abstract

The study is placed in an Indian NGO working for women's empowerment by the means of informal education, vocational trainings and awareness-raising activities. The goal is to find out to what extent this NGO managed to reach gender justice in practice. The evaluation answers to the questions of what the understanding of gender equality and empowerment was among the people working for the NGO, what the conditions of the chosen participants were and how they influenced participation and then how successful the NGO was in terms of changing gender division of labour and women's cultural value.

My theoretical framework is focused on the Empowerment (GAD) approach, and the gender planning framework of Caroline Moser is used as the basic foundation with its tools of gender analysis and gender needs assessment. However, this will be used with the emphasis on the two-dimensional conception of gender (Nancy Fraser) and on the transformatory potential (Kate Young and Saskia Wieringa). In addition to these points, the issue of intersectionality will also be addressed because gender inequality is strengthened by the additional challenges in the women's lives. The contextual component follows thoughout the evaluation.

The study is done as an ethnographic case study evalution.The data consists of observations done at the NGO between November 2011 to April 2012, by survey interviews done at Kathputli Nagar in Jaipur with 17 of the NGO's chosen participants, and by analysing organizational documents and website. The analysis is completed with the help of a simple logic model (resources, activities, immediate results).

Based on my research, I argue that the transformatory potential of the NGO programme is greater in improving women's cultural value (self-esteem, decision-making power) than in challenging the gender division of labour (occupational segregation, women's sole responsibility over housework and childcare). In many ways the gender division of labour was taken for granted leading to helping women to cope with what they are already doing instead of creating new ways of challenging unequal structures. Due to the different additional issues present in the participants' lives, it became also clear that there is a need for greater role of the state in supporting the basic needs of the people together with additional focus on the specific gender concerns of the women.

Key words: gender justice, empowerment, transformatory potential, intersectionality, case study, non-governmental organization, India

II

Acknowledgements

I am more than grateful for the assistance and patience of the staff members (especially that of the project manager), interns, volunteers and participants of the NGO Saarthak for tolerating my ideas, papers and irritating habit of questioning everything and coming late.

It would not have been possible to finish this study without my supporting family. Especially, my mum and grandmother were vital for meeting my biggest "practical gender need" together with some down-to-earth advice and a cup of coffee. You often kept me going when I was already so close to give up – thank you!

The life story of Uma Singh (1988-2010) guided me throughout this study.

1 Contents

2 Introduction

The main theme of my study is gender justice and how to reach it in practice. My theory starts with the importance of political commitment for gender equality and of the frames given by the cultural context. After it I will discuss my approach towards gender equality which is the Empowerment (GAD) approach. Within this approach I highlight the importance of women's different level of empowerment in resources, agency and outcomes (Kabeer 1999, 438) to begin with and how intersectionality is an important factor to take into consideration in policy and planning. I will treat the issue of gender equality as a multilayered one having to focus both on gender division of labour and on women's cultural value at the same time (Fraser 2007, 25). Another key element in my study is that of 'transformatory potential' of interventions; do they make a difference (Young 1997b, 370; Wieringa 1994, 842)? However, before going to the theory, I will give some grounds why women's empowerment should be considered as a matter of high importance and which are the specific manifestations of gender inequality in India.

Gender Inequality in India

One way of telling the story of gender inequality is by numbers, which in the case of India are revealing enough. In this context the numbers would logically start with the twisted sex ratios which in India are measured by the number of females per 1000 males. According to the latest Indian Census (2011), the overall sex ratio in the country is 943 and the child sex ratio measured in the population age $0 - 6$ is 919. Compared with the previous census (2001) the national and state level (i.a. Rajasthan) trend becomes clear; the overall sex ratio has slightly risen however the child sex ratio has declined further. (Census of India 2011). In an UN document, it is explained that these sex ratios are a clear sign of inequality because more female babies generally survive due to their minor biological advantage compared to male babies, and because women tend to have a longer life span (UN Women & UNFPA 2014, 2). To give the reader some understanding of the scale of the problem of survival, one can refer to Amartya Sen who estimated back in the 1990s that with the same average sex ratio as Africa India would have 30 million missing women (Sen 1990, 124).

Vani K. Boroaah sums up how there are two kinds of inequalities behind the missing women phenomenon. Firstly, the sex selective abortions which are the product of son preference combined with modern techniques to determine the sex of the foetus lead to

natal inequality. Secondly, females can be in a disadvantaged position in terms of their diet and access to and utilization of health care facilities which translates into mortality inequality. (Boroaah 2004, 1719.) As highlighted by Sen on the issue of twisted sex ratios, gender should be treated as an important factor and to understand that the social action and public policy have an impact on the survival of individuals (Sen 1990, 124).

Inequality could be approached directly through diet, health care and health outcomes for women. According to the analysis of Sunita Kishor and Kamla Gupta, the socioeconomic factors such as money, transportation and distance of the health facility are intensified by gender-related factors of needing a female health practitioner, limited freedom of movement and access to income. (Kishor & Gupta 2009, 64). Vinod Mishra, T.K. Roy and Robert D. Retherford, on the other hand, point out how the gender discrimination e.g. in childhood feeding and treatment- seeking is largely dictated by birth order and the sex composition of older living siblings, meaning that the discrimination is most visible in families which have no sons and more than two daughters (Mishra, Roy & Retherford 2004, 289). According to Boroaah, the gender discrimination in terms of nutrition and health care is inconclusive and there are other factors besides gender involved such as being born in impoverished parts of India, mother's illiteracy and religion (Boroaah 2004, 1729).

One could approach the issue of gender inequality by focusing on education when the literacy rate of women e.g. in Rajasthan is 52. 12% (Census of India 2011) and the percentage of women in India having at least secondary education is 26. 6% (UNDP 2013, 158). However, as revealed by the National Health Survey, the higher education level of the mother is not enough to erase son preference. Surprisingly even, the better educated women are using more ultrasound testing for sex selection meaning lower sex ratio at birth than other groups of women. (Kishor & Gupta 2009, 12.) Neither does the income give the explanation on the sex ratios, for instance in Punjab (one of the wealthy Indian states) the overall sex ratio is 895 and child sex ratio 846 compared to the sex ratios of 928 and (CSR) 888 in Rajasthan (Census of India 2011).

One could approach the issue of gender inequality also through employment lens and refer for instance to Indrani Mazumdar and N. Neetha who tell that if unpaid labour is taken out of participation count, only 15% of women in India receive wage or income for their labour (Mazumdar & Neetha 2011, 25). One could mention how women's freedom of

movement is severely limited with only one-third of women age 15–49 been allowed to go alone to the market, health centre, and outside the community (Kishor & Gupta 2009, 63). When making international comparisons as made easy with Gender Inequality Index (GII), India gets a further blow as the country ranks lower (0.610) than its neighbouring countries Bangladesh (0.518) and Pakistan (0.567). If making a quick comparison between India and Finland in GII indicators for better understanding the scale; in India the maternal mortality is 200 deaths per 100 000 live births (Finland: 5), adolescent fertility rate is 74.7 per 1000 women ages 15–19 (Finland: 9.3), and seats in the national parliament is 10.9% (Finland: 42.5%). (UNDP 2013, 158.)

The list above could be easily extended further, for example, with violence against women, but no matter how many topics are covered or valid numbers given, the numbers can only reveal one face of gender inequality. The numbers do not reveal the whole extent of attitudes and expectations that Indian girls and women face, which lead to the limited set of opportunities available as well as lower level of well-being. I think it is important to emphasize that I do not believe that all families in India mistreat their girls and women. As Uma Narayan tells the roles of wife and mother are highly respected in India and women are believed to have higher moral, religious and spiritual qualities. There is a catch though. The strong discourse of women's value only applies if she stays in what is considered as the woman's place. (Narayan 1989, 259.) According to R.S. Tiwari, respect and protection for women are conditional for staying as the honored property of males with the requisites of following modest dress code, limited movements and living under restrictions. Tiwari insists that without honour and dependency the woman is " an ordinary impersonal entity for whom nobody bothers." (Tiwari 2001, 37–38.)

Here we get to the deep essence of gender inequality in India, the patriarchal values of which are manifested in many different ways, present in norms and attitudes, as well as implicitly maintained by social and public policies (see e.g. population policies, schemes and BPL targeting in UN Women & UNFPA 2014, 14; attitudes towards care work in Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1063–1064). Gender is in many ways an issue in India as proven above. It can be matter of pure survival, constraints in health, education and employment options as well as reflected in norms of respectable womanhood in the form of a virtuous and obedient mother, wife and daughter. Gender inequality is also linked to and at times intensified by other inequalities created by class, caste, religion and even geographical location (e.g. rural/ urban). However, there cannot be oversimplification over the

connections, for instance the higher level of education or income does not guarantee for instance normal sex ratios, which takes us to the women's cultural value.

Structure of the Study

After the theory part, I will talk about my methodological choices, research design with research questions, methods of data collection and analysis. Then I will continue to the empirical part of my study (the case study evaluation), where I go through what is actually being done and how at the non-governmental organization working for women's empowerment in Jaipur, India. After that I will connect the theoretical and empirical parts in the discussion. I end my study with conclusions and with a suggestion for policy development based on the study. From the social and public policy point of view, I wish that my case study can provide some minor insights about the hidden norms and practices which impact the empowerment initiatives at the NGO level and also about the interconnections between the activities of the NGO and the social policies of the government, in order to improve the policy and planning by focusing on the quality of change in gender relations, its reach and sustainability.

3 Gender Justice by Empowerment Approach

My study can be interpreted as fully centered on the Gender and Development Approach also known as Empowerment approach. According to Nalini Visvanathan, this approach dates back to the 1980s when there was a effort to combine different feminist perspectives in development policy (Visvanathan 1997, 23). Kate Young explains that GAD tries to connect holistically reproductive, productive and political aspects (Young 1997a, 52). In other words, as Saskia Wieringa tells, the approach focuses on the families, work, legistlation and state structures (Wieringa 1994, 832). Besides the holistic point of view, the approach sees the issue of gender equality being effectively addressed with the focus on gender relations and not solely on women (Young 1997a, 51).

In this chapter, I will discuss the importance of the political, cultural and societal context where the study takes place. After that I'll start gender analysis of women's different roles, responsibilities and status while talking about the different dimensions related to gender justice, namely gender division of labour and women's cultural value. This section will be followed by the planning for social change with the focus on transformatory potential of interventions.

3.1 Political Aspect of Change

According to David Reisman (based on the writings of Richard Titmuss), policy is by no means value-free and that all policy reflect the values and ideologies of what is considered to be a good society. Therefore, all policy includes choice for what kind of change is wanted in the society. (Reisman 2001, 29.) Anna Maria Holli mentions about the constructed nature of political problems reflected, for instance, in the way gender equality is framed in the public discussion and political programmes, which in turn impacts what are seen as possible means to solve the problems (Holli 2012, 89).

According to Gita Sen and Karen Grown feminism can be understood as a political movement that has internal differences in its issues and immediate goals depending on the needs and issues of women in different places and time. However, Sen and Grown explain that despite the differences the basis of feminism is the same; getting rid of the structures of subordination and seeing women as equals with men at all spheres of life.(Sen & Grown 1987, 79.) Maxine Molyneux conceptualizes the subordination by giving a whole list of

what she calls as strategic gender interests; " the abolition of sexual division of labour, the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and child-care, the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination, the attainment of political equality, the establishment of freedom of choice over childbearing and the adaption of the adequate measures against male violence and control over women" (Molyneux 1985, 232-233).

3.1.1 Gender and Gender Relations

To capture the most common error about gender one could quote Tiwari who claims that " gender relationship is complex and based upon human nature" and argues that there are emotional and behavioral differences making women best suited for the domestic and men for the public sphere (Tiwari 2001, 38–39). However, as Naila Kabeer explains, one should differentiate the concepts of biological sex and gender, because the first is related to biological difference mainly obvious by the reproductive organs, and the second is related to the social difference created by different norms, values and practices (Kabeer 2000, 4–5). On the contrary to Tiwari's claims gender relations are not based on "human nature", instead as Kabeer points out (2000, 6) they are based on how different societies have transformed the biological difference into social difference by setting different expectations and conditions for women and men.

Gender relations is another key concept because in these social relationships between men and women the gender inequality is created, as Kabeer tells. She points out how the inequalities are not only played out at the domain of the family and kinship but also in the community (neighborhood networks, NGOs), the market and the state (legal and administrative organizations). In these institutional sites the inequalities are explained e.g. by natural difference, culture or by being based on the market logic and being merit-based. (Kabeer 2000, 12–13.) Kabeer explains that there is a risk that if the political aspect of gender relations is not understood men or women are for instance restricted from doing certain things or receiving certain benefits simply because they are men or women and not based on any proven ability or inability (Kabeer 2000, 5).

Young point out that because the unequal structures are so deeply in the minds of people, women are not always aware of their situation and neither all men are aware of their male bias or actively promote male dominance. Therefore, in GAD there is an emphasis that women can be wrong too and that men can also do right. (Young 1997a, 51-52.) Diane

Elson comments how unawareness of male bias has its foundations in underlying perceptions and habits which are not questioned and which lead to mistaken assumptions (Elson 1995, 7). The attitudes and expectations that women face create a difference in matters of gender division of labour and how women are valued affected both by the women's own perception of their worth and the worth in eyes of others (also on the structural level). I will come back to this "two-dimensional conception of gender" (see Fraser 2007) in the section of Dimensions of Gender Justice.

3.1.2 Women's Empowerment

According to Kabeer, empowerment can be understood as process of change, where people who have been unable to make choices obtain such an ability. She tells how this ability to make choices can be understood through three inter-related dimensions of resources, agency and achievements. (Kabeer 1999, 438.) She defines the resources in broader sense including economic, human and social resources. Kabeer points out that the individual and structural changes are interconnected meaning that the structures shape individual resources, agency and achievements. (Kabeer 1999, 437.)

Kabeer tells how agency is more than the noticeable actions that it is rather based on 'the power within'. Therefore, agency can be seen as decision-making, which can also take forms such as bargaining, manipulation and even violence, however in the positive sense it refers to people's capacity to define their own life-choices and pursue their own goals, even in the face of opposition from others. (Kabeer 1999, 438.) Kabeer mentions that achievements (outcomes) can be approached e.g. through an idea of universally-valued functionings which refers to basics of survival and well-being for instance proper nourishment, good health, and adequate shelter. Kabeer refers to Sen's strategy by stating that in case of systematic gender differences in these functionings it can be understood as evidence of inequalities rather than matter of preferences. (Kabeer 1999, 439.)

3.1.3 Change or Status quo

It matters how the issue of gender equality and empowerment is understood; as an issue of overcoming all structures of subordination and seeing women equals with men at all spheres of life (Sen & Grown 1987, 79), or simply as a technical fix to enable women to do better in what they are already doing (Moser 1993, 88). Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay points out that there is a problem in development practices where feminist concerns are addressed

without contextual understanding and as simple technical matters while leaving the unequal power structures the same (Mukhopadhyay 2004, 100). White describes well this shift in the related issues of participation and gender: "What began as a political issue is translated into a technical problem which the development enterprise can accommodate with barely a falter in its stride. " (White quoted in Cornwall 2003, 13-26).

The whole concept of women's empowerment can be understood as a buzz word which has lost it's original emphasis on the fundamental and collective transformation (see e.g. Cornwall and Anyidoho 2010, Batliwala 2007) however I will use it by understanding its limitations and seeing the issue of gender equality as a political project following to Mukhopadhyay (2004) who argues how the link between equality and politics should be reinstated " the messy business of creating voice, articulating demand, carving out rights, insisting on participation and mobilising the women's constituencies to demand accountability" (Mukhopadhyay 2004, 102).

3.2 South Asian Cultural Context

Holli points out how gender inequality can be seen as bound to the operating context of certain time and place. She argues how demands for equality are connected in what is seen as unjust and possible to be changed in the society. (Holli 201, 83.) Jeannette Kloosterman, Ester Benning and Rex Fyles, emphasize the collective nature of cultural change which means that a whole community should acknowledge and reflect the change. They also highlight how structural cultural and ideological changes need to be understood in the light of their own context. While women voting in Afghanistan would be considered as a significant change, for instance, in the Netherlands this would be taken for granted. (Kloosterman et al. 2012, 536.)

Kabeer mentions how the processes of empowerment happen in a more systematic manner within the specific context and are influenced especially by the gender-related structures in that context (Kabeer 2011, 500). According to the classification of Deniz Kandiyoti, South Asia belongs to the category of classic patriarchy where the patrilocally extended household has the key importance (Kandiyoti 1988, 278). In other words, as Kabeer explains, in South Asia the family and kinship structures are important in shaping gender relations (Kabeer 2011, 501).

Which principles govern the gender relations in the family within the classic patriarchy? Kabeer talks about purdah (female seclusion) that restricts women's mobility and opportunities in the public domain which is combined together with their status of a protected group. According to Kabeer, it is the patriarchal contract that dominates in the family. (Kabeer 2011, 501.) Cain et al. define the concept of patriarchal contract as men's power over women however they are also expected to provide women with food, clothing and shelter (Cain et al. quoted in Kabeer 2011, 501). Kandiyoti points out that women are protected in exchange for submissiveness and propriety, therefore if women are for instance working outside the house, they must use every symbolic means (such as veiling) to prove that they are still worthy of protection (Kandiyoti 1988, 283).

What are the implications of the principles of purdah and protection? Paula Kantor points out that because of the female seclusion and norms of male breadwinning, men do not let women to work and even if they do, these norms may dictate women's choices of work locations; home-based work being the compromise option (Kantor 2009, 195). According to Kabeer the limited material resources and social interactions translates into women's dependency on the male family members and kinship (passing responsibility from the father to husband and son). She argues how women are vulnerable to patriarchal risk which is used by Cain et al. to describe the decline in women's welfare and social status if they end up without male guardianship. (Kabeer 2011, 501.) Kandiyoti (1988, 279) on the other hand points out that, even though married sons are woman's most important resources for labour power and old-security, they also control the younger women in the family.

3.2.1 Quest for Substantive Equality (intersectionality)

Holli defines the concept of substantive equality as equality of results meaning how people, who to begin with have different starting points in life (whether in education, working life or power) can achieve the same results as people more fortunate. According to her, in order to reach substantive equality one must take into consideration the real obstacles in women's participation and develop actions which enhance women's participation despite the obstacles. (Holli 2012, 78-79.) Mukhopadhyay emphasizes also the importance of taking the real life situation of women into account so that substantive equality of women, who are most marginalized can be reached instead of settling in formal rights (Mukhopadhyay 2004, 101-102).

Wieringa explains how gender has additional connections to struggles against oppression due to the class, race, ethnicity and sexual preference (Wieringa 1994, 834). Holli refers to this idea of combined struggles with the concept of intersectionality which means that a person has also other important identities besides that of gender such as e.g. class, ethnicity, sexual orientation and state of health (Holli 2012, 87-88). Moser highlights that, because women's backgrounds and needs are diverse the general idea of women's needs is not entirely adequate in specific planning interventions (Moser 1993, 38).

Because one of the key elements of my study is the creation of substantive equality, it means that there is a need to focus on the resources which create different opportunities and restrictions to different people. Here we get to the level of the social and public policies, thus to the role of the state. As Young mentions the state has important role to play in increasing gender equality in the related matters of education, health and training (Young 1997, 53). Reisman reflecting the ideas of Titmuss, tells how the state has the key role in creating equity in public health care, education, childcare facilities and social security (see Reisman 2001).

According to Young, the first precondition for equality that needs to be met is overcoming poverty. However, she points out that the GAD approach emphasizes the need to create an element of consicousness-raising even into welfare and basic needs programmes so that instead of settling in welfare the equity aspect would also be met. (Young 1997a, 53-54.) Mukhopadhyay, on the other hand, highlight that the limited view on gender seen only as the problem among poor women and the solution for it is self-help groups (microfinance), leaves patriarchal institutional practices intact as well as frees the state for any further responsibility in alleviating poverty (Mukhopadhyay 2013, 364).

3.2.2 Social Policy related to women in India

Rajni Palriwala and N. Neetha tell how in India the social policy related to women has been focusing on child welfare and child development since the 1950s when small child centers were set up for children of 'ailing and working mothers' (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1060). According to them in the 1980s an understanding of women's productive potential emerged which was based on the assumption that women's informal income earnings would improve the conditions of poor families and children. Therefore, the income-generation programs were supporting women in earning an extra income by preferably

home-based, self-employed or informal work. (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1064-1065.) Palriwala and Neetha comment that when India went through liberalization there was only a slight shift in the policy; now women were to be empowered through self-employment transformed into small businesses with the help of microcredit and the formation of Self-Help Groups aided by NGOs (Palriwala &Neetha 2011, 1065).

Palriwala and Neetha highlight how the increase in low-paid, casual home-based self-employment does not only follow the economic policy but is in odds with the social policy built on the gendered familialism and male breadwinner model (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1051-1053). They point out that on the policy level such things as maternity and other benefits e.g. leave provisions are not considered needed, and that women's rights to crèches or any formal childcare services are not even discussed (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1065).

3.3   Dimensions of Gender Justice

According to Nancy Fraser, there are two dimensions in the issue of gender justice; gender division of labor and women's cultural value. She is advocating for a broad conception of gender which would include both of these aspects (class and status), because even though both aspects focus on an important part in women's subordination, both need to be dealt with simultaneously in order to reach gender justice. (Fraser 2007, 24-25.) Fraser explains how only focusing on one of them can actually make the other dimension of sexism worse while trying to remedy the other (Fraser 2007, 33).

According to Moser, women balance three roles (reproductive, productive and communal responsibilities) and they would need integrative strategies which cut across sectoral lines (Moser 1993, 54). Wieringa, on the other hand, criticizes Moser's identification of women's different roles by emphasizing that the issue is women's lack of power to fight for more equal gender division of labor and that they work harder than men; not the number of roles as such. Wieringa also expresses her concern that helping women to manage their roles better may end up strengthening their subordination. (Wieringa 1994, 844.) I interpret that Moser is more focused on the issue of gender division of labour, whereas Wieringa is more concerned about the status of women. In my study, I will take both aspects into consideration.

3.3.1   Gender Division of Labour

There are two main issues in the matter of gender division of labour. Firstly, there is the division of labor into what is labeled as paid productive and unpaid reproductive and domestic labor (Fraser 2007, 25–26). To justify women's responsibility of childcare and the housework, people have the common perceptions of women's caring, neat and simple nature compared to men's rational, strong and responsible one. These perceptions lead to assumptions over women's skills and aptitudes also in working life, for instance, women are considered to be better fitted for fine work as well have a natural ability for care work. (EIGE 2013, 4.) Amartya Sen mentions how among other factors such as education and training there is also the view in the society that women are too fragile to certain types of jobs (Sen 1990, 138).

These matters translate also into occupational segregation meaning the division within the paid work between higher-paid male-dominated and lower-paid female-dominated occupations (Fraser 2007, 25–26). Paula Kantor points out that it is due to the occupational segregation that women end up in less paid occupations and even in the case they get the same type of work as men, they will earn less (Kantor 2009, 195). As Elson points out, the work can be labeled so deeply into either women's or men's work that it would be considered shameful for men to do women's work and by doing men's work women would lose their feminine side (Elson 1995, 1).

According to Moser, women are expected to already have or at least should have skills e.g. in dressmaking and this could be used not only at home but also to earn money (Moser 1993, 50). Mayra Buvinic mentions how on the income-generating programmes there are attitudes of women having traditional skills in sewing, knitting and cooking with the assumption that only thing needed is donations of cash, sewing machines or materials. She adds how programs like this are still running because they are technically simple and politically safe to implement, even though they are very time-consuming, bring little or no income to women participants and cannot easily be upgraded for higher profits. (Buvinic 1983, 25.)

Reproductive Role

According to Palriwala and Neetha, the attitude towards care work in India can be described as gendered familialism meaning that care work is seen as private responsibility of the family's women. They report that policy thinking in India is family-centric with the belief that family is essentially good, women's place is in the home and women are seen as dependent mothers and wives; not as workers or citizens. (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1063-1064). Kabeer affirms that in the Indian context women have the main responsibility for housework regardless what other work they undertake (Kabeer 2000, 21). Kantor mentions the same finding in her study that women should only work if reproductive tasks are complete and ideally the work is placed in home in order to balance the reproductive and productive work. As one can expect, age increased a woman's probability to work. (Kantor 2009, 197- 198.)

Palriwala and Neetha highlight that the problem is not only that care is not seen as public responsibility, but the attitude does not take into any consideration that women have to combine paid work with care work (especially childcare) and this can be challenging (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1066). On the other hand, as Irene Tinker explains, there can be assumptions over women's use of time meaning that they are supposed to have plenty of time to walk long distances to attend clinics or receive food (Tinker 1990, 37). Moser mentions that in planning also the timings are important. For instance timings of the meetings have to be planned so that they accommodate women's needs to fulfill their reproductive duties; otherwise they cannot attend (Moser 1993, 54).

Palriwala and Neetha (2011, 1054) point out how the 'gendered familialism' in India has consequences such as combining paid work (e.g. teaching or domestic service) with the needs of their own families by either coming home before children come back from school or working at or near their homes and children. They also mention that because in the policy discourse only the 'ailing and working' mothers are considered needing crèches formal childcare facilities are insufficient and poorly funded (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1065). According to Palriwala and Neetha, these anganwadis (community-based childcare centers) have inadequate opening hours and lack of facilities, including space, teaching materials and workers which means that parents don't trust the care provided (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1069-70). Moser comments that providing childcare facilities are essential for women to undertake waged labour (Moser 1993, 53).

Productive Role

Sen (1990, 137) argues how by getting better education and being free to work outside the house may contribute to the immediate well-being of women, but also improve their future bargaining position in case of problems in the house. According to Sen this is because outside earnings have potential for creating a clearer perception of the woman's individuality, as well as to a higher perceived contribution to the family's economic position (Sen 1990, 144). Sen believes that outside earning is a strong factor in creating a difference within the family based on the comparison of women's outside earnings and sex ratios in different Indian states ; Punjab and Haryana against Southern Indian states where women work more outside the house (Sen 1990, 139). According to Naila Kabeer, Simeen Mahmud and Sakiba Tasneem access to paid work does make a difference to women's lives. However, they also emphasize that the impact is strongest for those women whose work is characterized by some level of regularity, visibility and social benefits. (Kabeer et al. 2011, 38-39.)

3.3.2 Women's Cultural Value

According to Fraser (2007, 26), when seeing gender from the status point of view, one must understand the there are institutionalized patterns of cultural value which devaluate everything seen as feminine. These can be seen in laws, policies, in popular culture as well as in everyday life. She continues that the consequences include violence against women (sexual assault, domestic violence) as well as exclusion or marginalization in public spheres. Fraser points out that women's sense of self gets damaged by this way and this needs to be changed so that women would have a positive relation to oneself (Fraser 2007, 30). Sen tells that the perception and communication of personal welfare is so poorly developed in the rural areas of India that a typical rural woman would find it difficult to reply to the question of her own personal welfare and only talk in terms of the family (Sen 1990, 126).

One way of approaching the matter in practice is by promoting change in attitudes. Patricia Engle, Charles Yarbrough and Robert Klein report in their study about a nutritional supplement program's impact on the mental development of girls, that the supplement itself was not important, but that more crucial were the unexpected social impacts which the program had caused in the community. The behavior and attitudes of the mothers was

changed by providing new female role-models (staff members) and by giving special attention to the girls and their families. Based on the study, they conclude that girls need awareness of new social options and recommend more positive role models for females in development programs. (Engle et al. 1983, 214-215.)

3.3.3 Combined Issues of Class and Status

Sen points out how the possibility to earn money outside the house has importance in changing women's perceptions because it increases the value on their own well-being as well as increases their (and family's) sense of contribution (Sen 1990, 136). Srilatha Batliwala and Alexandra Pittman (2010, 13), however, give examples about the difficulties faced in the successful income-generating programmes such as men shifting the responsibility for the household's economic security onto women, taking control of women's income and even increased violence. The same trend becomes clear also in Kantor's study finding that women's employment is not enough to make a difference in women's decision-making within the household because the power of the social norms is not overcome as a female participant interviewed was saying: "It is not so that women who are earning are respected more. I am earning now and am not respected more." (Kantor 2009, 203). Aruna Rao and David Kelleher mention how there are reports showing that women who have started and maintained micro businesses are more self-confident. However, they mention that it is also possible to have money but no influence or freedom from violence. (Rao & Kelleher 2005, 61.)

Therefore, one aspect in understanding women's poverty (class) in general is by its conncection to gender relations. Irene Tinker highlights that it is essential to understand the internal dynamics within the family, for instance, who controls both the labour and income. She points out that there are two factors in play. Firstly, the poor women are already working hard and might not want to get involved in more time-consuming activities and actually prefer direct assistance to meet their daily needs. Secondly, they might end up with more work without even reaching economic independence. (Tinker 1990, 43.) Joanne Sharp, John Briggs, Hoda Yacoub and Nabila Hamed tell about a similar finding in their study how women were already heavily burdened by work and that improvement suggestions about animal quality would have only added their workload. They also point out that women who had an economically stable family situation were happy to leave the selling business to men and focus on other household activities; only those women who

didn't have adult men in the family sent women to the market place. (Sharp et al. 2003, 292.) According to Kantor's study, the women who belonged to the poorer households were more likely to work for household survival (Kantor 2009, 198).

Kabeer et al. conclude that using an economic entry-point (provision of regular and reasonably well paid and protected work) has potential for more than for economic matters. It can also have potential in other aspects such as women being more optimistic about their future, having sense of control over their lives as well as relational aspects e.g. being able to look after their own and their family's needs and also help to support aging parents. They emphasize that for sustainable change there is a need for combination of efforts in changing women's consciousness and understanding; their material security and well-being and their bargaining power. (Kabeer et al. 2011, 38-39.)

Reproductive Responsibilities and Informal Sector

Kantor concludes that occupational segregation and social norms (home-based work as often the only option), mean that women do not enter the labour market as equals with men. She states that home-based work generally means lower quality work conditions and poorer outcomes. (Kantor 2009, 205.) Palriwala and Neetha, on the other hand, describe informal employment as lacking social security benefits, absence of unionization and characterized by long hours and low and irregular wages/income especially for women (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1051-1053).

Why the social norms over women's reproductive responsibilities (housework and childcare) are creating higher poverty-risk for women? Firstly, Nancy Birdsall and William Mcgreevey (1983, 5) argue that women's and children's time is seen to be flexible, which means that women have to choose certain occupations only for instance weaving, dressmaking and food processing that either allow flexible hours or permit them to bring kids along. Second aspect is, according to them (1983, 7-8), that the housework and especially child-care affect women's decision about what work to do and for how many hours with the consequences of not being able to earn that much. Kantor (2009, 206) mentions that there is a need for child care assistance among women from poor households particularly, because the presence of young children blocks entry to work and reduces the household members overall ability to earn sufficient income to escape poverty.

Based on her study, Kantor states that women's work is important for household survival however because the work is done in such conditions it does not enable women to become economically independent or provide income security and long-term improvement in household well-being. She states that one long-term solution involves access to education, which is the strongest and most consistent factor that supports women's access to better quality salary work. (Kantor 2009, 205-206.) Another factor to take into consideration is that of unintended consequences. For instance Aparna Sundaram and Reeve Vanneman point out that women's access to work has also other implications such as when adult women work ouside the house, it sometimes leads to that the girls will end up doing the housework and be withdrawn from school. They comment that girls' schooling is already considered less important due to gender reasons, therefore their ability for instance to read and write might get additional challenges. (Sundaram & Vanneman 2008, 141.)

3.4   Planning for Social Change

Wieringa defines gender planning as an approach in the field of development planning that is based on the understanding of the unequal gender relations between men and women (Wieringa 1994, 829). Moser's gender planning framework helps in focusing on women's different roles, responsibilities and status in the society which often translates into different needs compared to men. In this framework women's needs are divided into practical and strategic gender needs. (Moser 1993, 15.) I started the gender analysis earlier in this chapter, therefore here I will discuss the problematic of measuring positive social change in general and then go into the gender needs assessment with the transformatory component, and how this can be used in evaluation.

3.4.1   Measuring Positive Social Change in General

According to Rao and Kelleher (2005, 59-60) in order to reach gender justice the rules of the game need to be changed, meaning the implicit and explicit rules that determine who gets what, who does what and who decides. The Gender at Work Framework of Rao and Kelleher is built on the understanding that there are four different clusters impacting each other; women's and men's individual consciousness (knowledge, skills, political consciousness, commitment); women's objective conditions (rights and resources, access to health services and safety, opportunities for a voice); informal norms (unequal

ideologies, and cultural and religious practices) and formal institutions, meaning laws and policies.

In the review of Jeanette Kloosterman, Esther Benning and Rex Fyles over success stories of gender mainstreaming, they use the Gender at Work Framework as a tool. They point out that based on the stories the transformation of culture and its fundamental structures are complex; circular, unexpected even backward movements can happen. (Kloosterman et al. 2012, 537.) According to their analysis, in 39 of the 47 organizational change stories the change started in the second cluster of the framework (women's access to resources in the form of gender training or awareness-raising sessions). The most frequent pattern was then the box 1 (women's and men's consciousness about gender justice) which led to box 4 (change in people's attitudes to women and gender justice) and which in turn translated into shifts in informal cultural norms and women's higher probability to be included in decision-making and other aspects of community life. (Kloosterman et al. 2012, 538.)

Kloosterman et al. (2012, 537) mention that it seemed to be the individual or small-scale changes that caused more collective changes in the culture. For instance, individual women who had started to participate in political parties or income-generating activities found strength to withstand resistance at the community level. They mention how based on their analysis it became clear that transformations in gender relations are about small steps which can start in different ways. According to them, their review confirmed that gender mainstreaming is more a question of starting somewhere, keeping it going and having persistence. They believe that the changes in consciousness, attitudes and behaviour are the most important when promoting gender justice. (Kloosterman et al. 2012, 531-542.)

Vandana Desai points out how the success of projects and interventions in Mumbai in addressing gender inequality have usually been evaluated by counting numbers of women participants and not identifying changes that had a positive impact on gender relations (Desai 2005, 95). Wieringa argues, likewise, how the quality of change might be more important than how many people were reached, courses given or sewing machines donated (Wieringa 1994, 843). Kabeer tells how it is difficult to measure empowerment because access to a resource means that the assumptions about the potential agency or entitlement embodied in that resource need to be correct. She argues that there needs to be evidence or a realistic guess on whose agency is involved and how much it can change inequalities in resources instead of reinforcing them or leaving them intact. Kabeer also points out that by

giving women e.g. access to credit, or equalizing educational opportunities are unlikely to be automatically empowering in themselves, but they can create alternatives which in turn can translate into a more transformatory consciousness. (Kabeer1999, 461-462.)

3.4.2 Combination of Strategic and Practical Needs

According to Molyneux (1985, 232-233) the strategic gender interests are based on the analysis of women's subordination which is reflected in the issues of gender division of labour, women's reproductive responsibilities (domestic work and childcare), institutionalized forms of discrimination, political equality, choice over childbearing and men's violence and control over women. Molyneux states that practical gender interests, on the other hand, take place due to the concrete conditions of women's positioning in the gender division of labour and that these do not generally have goals of gender equality. Moser (1993, 40) clarifies how practical gender needs are related to everyday problems in living conditions, water provision, health care, and employment. Young (1997b, 368) classifies women's practical gender needs as needs of having a reliable income, safe contraception, and access to education, training and credit.

According to Moser, meeting practical gender needs is a technical matter that helps women to do better what they are already doing whereas meeting strategic gender needs is political in nature (Moser 1993, 88). Wieringa mentions that there are hierarchical implications in the distinction between strategic and practical and arguing that strategic gender interests are easily considered to be more advanced than practical gender interests (Wieringa 1994, 841). According to Young the strict categorizations are useless because they limit the understanding of the potential dynamism of a situation as well as distract from realizing that very practical gender needs can be highly required for structural change. Young gives an example how the need of ending violence against women can actually be a practical need, because for instance if a woman has to fear for own safety outside her home or village how are they supposed to be realizing their economic potential. (Young 1997b, 369-370.)

3.4.2.1 Transformatory Potential

Young (1997b, 370) suggests that in order to better grasp the potential dynamism between strategic and practical gender needs, the concept of transformatory potential can be useful. She defines the concept as " the capacity or potential for questioning, undermining or

transforming gender relations and the structures of subordination". Wieringa (1994, 842) makes the same argument by saying that the basic question of gender planners should be: does it make a difference? She continues how it should be important to assess the capacity of the project or programme to redistiribute power and wealth, or raise women's awareness of their situations and change social relations (Wieringa 1994, 842-843).

According to Moser it matters how gender issues are dealt with, for instance, how far training can reach women's strategic needs will depend on whether it leads to economic independence and what is the type of the training in question (Moser 1993, 48). Moser mentions that even though skill training in primary school teaching, nursing and dressmaking often meets income-generating needs, this does not challenge the gender division of labour. Moser highlights how training in areas traditionally considered as men's work increases employment opportunities for women as well as breaks down occupational segregation. (Moser 1993, 50.) Moser also points out how the planning of childcare facilities can meet women's practical gender needs when situated at the same location to her workplace but when at the father's work place it can also reach women's strategic gender interests by involving the father in taking some responsibility for childcare (Moser 1993, 53).

Elements of Transformation in Practice

According to Wieringa there can be a transformative element in any project concerned with women even in sewing courses, literacy programmes or cooking lessons. However, these need to be given in a way that makes it possible to talk about the gender division of labour, women's control of finances or of sexual violence. (Wieringa 1994, 843.) Desai gives an example of a non-governmental organization SPARC by telling how women's immediate practical concerns were met together with more transformative work to raise women's awareness of gender inequality by providing skills, support and resources to participate in a more formalized intervention to provide low-cost housing which had increased women's self-confidence. She also points out that whereas many NGOs providing health and sanitation education were focusing on the service delivery or delivery of technical information only, they were also raising awareness among poor people about equality and social justice. (Desai 2005, 93.)

According to Young, there is an assumption behind transformatory potential that when women e.g. work together, solve problems and learn by doing this leads to both collective and individual empowerment. She adds how women involved in welfare-oriented programmes, such as providing better nutrition for their children and community-improvement projects, often through their collective experience became more active in questioning the status quo and organizing themselves to end the inequitable practices. (Young 1997b, 371.) Tinker (1990, 43) stresses the same by saying that the simple fact of organizing is in itself an empowering experience as women begin to share problems and to recognize that they are not the only ones having difficult life situations.

Young argues that due to the collective aspect of empowerment, it matters how for instance the practical need for a cash income is organized; by providing piece-work in isolation within the home, by providing factory employment or by setting up a small collective which enables women to meet together within a work context (Young 1997b, 370). Tinker points out how even smaller steps may have important long-term effects such as attending a meeting outside the woman's own neighborhood can actually widen the woman's world view (Tinker 1990, 44).

Karen Monkman, Rebecca Miles and Peter Easton (2007, 451) report about a NGO programme which had a non-formal education, problem-solving approach, concerning issues of community hygiene, reproductive health, and women's rights. According to the approach, the participants were encouraged to identify concerns and collectively implement solutions. In the programme the collective action was started with "easy" activities that didn't require much time or behavioural change, and then moving into more difficult activities that required continuous behavioural change or that challenged the status quo. Monkman et al. mention how a participant had said in the final evaluation interviews how the sessions had been like an exchange between the facilitator and participants and how the facilitator presented problems that touched them and then to be involved in it, they must change. They also mention how participants shared their new information with family and friends. (Monkman et al. 2007, 455-456.)

3.5 Theory meets Empiria

Kabeer mentions that correct assumptions (based on evidence or a realistic guess) are needed concerning the potential agency or entitlement of a new resource; otherwise there is

a risk that, instead of having positive change, the resource is reinforcing inequalities or leaving them intact (Kabeer 1999, 461). Therefore, in gender planning it is essential to have a good idea of what is considered a success, how to evaluate it and what is its relation to the wanted social change. There are different ways of doing this, but I will use Empowerment (GAD) approach with Moser's gender planning framework as the basic foundation. This means that I will use the two main tools of gender analysis based on the idea that women have different roles, responsibilities and status in the society; and then the tool of the gender needs assessment where gender needs are divided into strategic and practical (Moser 1993, 15).

I will, however, add Fraser's idea of two-dimensional conception of gender, meaning that the issues of class and status are both tackled at the same time (Fraser 2007, 33) to the gender analysis. To emphasize the political nature of planning for women and the dynamism between strategic and practical gender needs, I will also add the idea of transformatory potential meaning the potential for questioning and transforming gender relations (Young 1997b, 370; Wieringa 1994, 842) to the identification of gender needs.

Women and girls are also facing additional difficulties such as inequalities in the provision and access to quality health care and social security, which can however be connected to and stregtened by gender. There are also issues due to the caste status and differences in educational opportunities for both women and men. Therefore, a more "intersectional gender analysis" is needed meaning that the different life situations of the women would be included in the planning process. This would not only lead to practical gender needs assessment but that of more "basic needs" assessment and therefore in the end to the social policies in the society. Of course, the cultural component needs to be added, because the cultural norms and attitudes both impact the process of empowerment and they also impact what can be considered as a success.

Second key issue in evaluation is how to measure and evaluate the impact of activities. Should it be done by focusing on the numbers (participants, courses given, and sewing machines donated etc.) or by focusing on the positive changes in gender relations? Another question is how the different changes or successes should be treated in relation to each other; should meeting one type of gender need be understood as more advanced or important than the other?

4 Methodology

In this chapter, I will go through my methodological choices which lay the basic foundations for my study and discuss my possible biases. I will also discuss the reasons for choosing a case study as my research strategy as well as report about the research design, methods, the process of data collection, and methods of analysis. I will also shortly discuss the ethics of my study.

4.1 Qualitative Interpretive Research

According to Jane Richie and Liz Spencer, the role of qualitative research is to bring about different viewpoints, explanations and theories of social behavior (Richie and Spencer 1994, 174). Pertti Alasuutari, on the other hand, describes data in qualitative analysis as a complete structure which has an internal logic to shed light on a certain phenomenon. He adds how in qualitative analysis there is a need for absoluteness, which means that all matters considered reliable and part of the 'mystery' will need to fit in with the interpretation. (Alasuutari 2000, 38.) David Silverman mentions how there is a certain conviction among qualitative researchers that they can provide more profound understanding of the social phenomena than would be possible using exclusively quantitative data (Silverman 2000, 8). One of the reasons why I chose to do qualitative research is that wanted to provide insights of my research topic. I also do my best to solve the 'mystery' by making an interpretation that can be justified and that is internally coherent. I do not, however, completely agree with the statement that by using qualitative methods a researcher can get somehow deeper understanding of a social phenomenon. I see it more as a matter of a research problem and what kind of approach is needed to answer it.

In the quantitative analysis the importance is in the systematic statistical connections (Alasuutari 2011, 34). Alasuutari also states that even a researcher doing a qualitative research can reason with percentages and statistical connections between different factors. However, as he points out, there needs to be enough cases to do this kind of reasoning. (Alasuutari 2011, 203.) During my time at the NGO Saarthak I conducted survey interviews for my own study purposes and for the interest of the NGO in question. In my study, the survey forms a part of my data in the way of shedding light on the women's lives, their needs, motivations leading also to different interests in terms of activities. I will treat the survey as a sample of the group of chosen participants (beneficiaries), and I will

use percentages to give the reader a view of the overall situation. However, as the survey interviews were only conducted with part of the beneficiaries of a small NGO, my survey data would have been far too small to do statistical analysis and I won't claim to be able to make any generalizations based on them. I will return to the survey interviews later on in this chapter.

But even in the case of adequate data for statistical analysis, I would still have chosen to do qualitative research. This is because of my research problem, which has a focus on the women as well on programme and how things get done in this particular NGO. If I had conducted a study, for example, about the attitudes held by the beneficiaries and trying to explain the causal relations of those, then it would clearly have been a different story.

Interpretive methodology

One could argue that persons coming from Western countries cannot understand women's position in India and that they fail to understand that Indian women are already much respected, protected and 'empowered' in the house. Tiwari emphasizes how foreigners are just bringing with them ideas of Western feminism and empowerment that will just make women even more disempowered in India (Tiwari 2001, 39). However, according to Sen, the personal interest and welfare are not only matters of perception for example morbidity and undernourishment does not require persons reply and one could not say that there is no inequality based on the lack of protests (Sen 1990, 126). Even if a person only sees the trends of Indian sex ratios (Census of India 2011), gender inequality in India cannot be left unnoticed.

Narayan points out how the perspective on the world is shaped by the person's background (class, race, gender, historical situation) and therefore nobody can claim to be neutral (Narayan 1989, 262). According to her, the contextual nature of knowledge means that a person who lives within a specific context has a better understanding of it having faced different oppressions many times before; however, it doesn't mean that an outsider couldn't have any knowledge at all (Narayan 1989, 264). According to Norman K. Denzin, researchers should tell about their prior interpretations of the phenomenon because without that their effects on the research cannot be assessed (Denzin 1989, 23).

In my study, I will understand the social reality through the interpretive paradigm because I acknowledge the difficulty to obtain purely objective knowledge. I believe that it is often difficult for a researcher to assess all possible biases, especially when the research is done in another country and from a topic that one feels strongly about. Therefore, I do not claim that I recognize all of my biases when doing research in India with the topic of gender equality. However, I find it important to strive for it, and then let the readers assess the trustworthiness of the research. In the process of revealing my prior interpretations I will use the themes of history, power and emotionality described by Denzin (1989, 28-30).

According to Denzin, history has an impact on the research process in many ways. Events happen within a larger historical social structure, which includes e.g. language and taken-for-granted cultural meanings that have impact on the social interactions and social experiences. (Denzin 1989, 28.) I believe that the knowledge of the language and a cultural understanding are highly useful when doing research outside one's own country. Unfortunately, on the language side I cannot claim to have any great expertise in Hindi. In the last months of my stay in India during 2012, I could catch the level of politeness in speech (aap/tum), understand the main theme of discussion, as well as some simple phrases, comments and questions. To follow a discussion in detail would have been impossible and talking in Hindi even more so. However, I think that even my limited knowledge of the language had some practical use in the field locations, where I could sometimes understand how things went off-topic, or to understand a comment from a staff member or a beneficiary that gave me a better understanding of the situation.

On the side of taken-for-granted cultural meanings in India, I have become familiar with them over the years. For instance, assumptions of marriage, children, the hierarchies (age, gender, position) both within family and in work place, and the expected virtues of Indian women are matters I have already plenty of 'silent knowledge' of. For example, there was a situation during my internship, when another intern had had a discussion with the beneficiaries about birth control, and some girls had commented how they wouldn't want to have any children. She mentioned about this and was thinking hard how to give the information they needed for that. I mentioned how basically impossible that would be considering the expectations of having children in India even within the richer highly-educated women's group. When asked whether I wanted to be the one to break the news for them, I said that they already know these things. On the other hand, I don't share the

same knowledge as the natives which became, for instance, clear during a discussion with the staff members over how to get a beneficiary with an unsupportive husband to attend an event. When I asked couldn't the project coordinator just go to talk to the husband as a man to man, they had an expression of amused pity on their face and said how that would make things even worse.

Denzin mentions how the individual history of the people as well as the personal history of the researcher will influence the interpretive process (Denzin 1989, 28-29). I can honestly say that at the beginning of my thesis process I did not plan to get my data from India and even less so to do a case study from an Indian non - governmental organization. This was due to my previous experience in India which had made me skeptical about Indian NGOs and their women's empowerment programmes. During my time at the NGO Saarthak, I was highly critical about everything. Basically, my attitude was that everything was bad unless proven otherwise, which was certainly not the best attitude for the team- work at the NGO, however it might still have been better for the research that the other extreme of an overly positive attitude.

Denzin tells how interpretive research involves power in the way of being allowed to enter the situation and to make interpretations, and how the researcher is accountable of the interpretations to another person of higher-rank (Denzin 1989, 29). In my case, the project manager gave me the permission to use observational data for my studies, and in the end directly told the field worker to take me to conduct the survey interviews at the time more appropriate for me. I did do a report of the survey findings for the NGO hoping it would help to modify some practices and to give quotes and examples which could be used for marketing purposes. I constructed the surveys while keeping in mind the NGO's interest. However, it must be remembered that I was not paid in any way by the NGO or any other instance to do the survey, or the thesis. This meant that my bread and butter did not depend on giving the 'right answers'. For the internship itself, I did get a grant by Centre for International Mobility (CIMO).

Denzin states that the emotionality is also present in everywhere in the interpretive research, because of the feelings the researcher brings to the study, the feelings of the persons who are studied, in the interactions between the researcher and subjects, as well as in the observation that are gathered (Denzin 1989, 29-30). I admit that the topic of gender equality is something I feel strongly about. My experience in India has shown me what

gender inequality is concretely and, for example, how it is reflected in the decisions and attitudes in the working life as well as in the private sphere. My experiences in India have not always been positive. However, this doesn't lead me to think that all men are the problem and all women are their passive victims. For me the problem is more the patriarchal society with its structures and beliefs, not the individual men. Neither do I think that women in India are simply helpless victims who somehow need to be saved. I believe that women in Indian society are used to manoeuvre in the space they have, and they do have power, even though often hidden and within limits.

4.2   Case Study Evaluation

At the beginnig of my thesis process, I planned to do my thesis about climate change adaptation of Bangladeshi women. However, I was kindly inquired by my thesis instructor, why not collecting data from India as I was going there for six months anyway and that if I wanted to continue with my original plan I would actually either need to go to Bangladesh or to get my data from e.g. existing written documents. Therefore, one could argue that the real starting point of my study is not the theoretical framework, data, not even the research problem but that of bottom up approach because I didn't want to abandon my research plan and the idea of getting deeper knowledge directly from the field. So instead of being influenced by how things are seen in the old fixed way (Chambers 1997, 228), I wanted to learn from the lowers which is how Robert Chambers describes the poor, the marginalized, women, and the remote (Chambers 1997, 128).

Since the very beginning I wanted in some sense find out what the women are saying, doing, and participating in the programme themselves. I also wanted to get a better understanding of the NGO structures and boundaries of the work at grassroots level. I was also thinking that when collecting a data myself it is easier to assess my own biases in the research process, compared to data which has been provided by someone else which leads to more difficulties in assessing the data and the possible biases of its collectors. It is clear that my methodological choices together with my interest for bottom up approach and my chosen research problem dictated the set of options for methods. In other words, by which methods could I get the necessary data to answer the research problem while seeing the world from a certain position? The way I see it, I had the choice between doing a case study or an ethnographic research.

According to Colin Robson case study has the focus on the case itself while taking the context into account whereas in the ethnographic research the focus in on the group of people who share a certain culture (Robson 2002, 178) and the task is to learn about it in order to understand their world as they do (Robson 2002, 187). In my study, I use the method of observation which is clearly an ethnographic data collection method. However, I use also other methods of data collection and logic model is used in the analysis. These being some key features of case study research described by Robert Yin (2003, 14). As my research problem is focused on the NGO and its program and not on the lives of the individual women in detail and even though, I find women's opinions important I consider them only as one aspect when trying to get necessary information for answering the research problem.

Yin describes case study as a research strategy, which covers design, data collection techniques and approaches to data analysis (Yin 2003, 14). This is the way I have structured the below subsections. According to Daniel Stufflebeam and Anthony Shinkfield, program evaluation keeps its focus on the specific program and produces an elaborate description, analysis and synthesis of it. They point out that the goal is to shed light on the program rather than assess its worth. (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield 2007, 181-182.) B. Crishna, on the other hand, mentions that an evaluation is supposed to provide in a constructive manner the strengths and weaknesses of projects and use the information on improving planning and implementation (Crishna 2007, 224). I am going to do a focused description and analysis of the programme in question; however I will also tempt to evaluate its transformatory potential which was discussed in earlier chapter.

Richie and Spencer point out how in the social policy field, applied research instead of basic research occupies a more important place because of its focus on specific information needs and the possibility for outcomes which can be turned into action (Richie and Spencer, 1994, 173). I am not expecting that my thesis has any huge practical use, however this is one of the reasons that explains my interest for choosing the research problem in question and the approach to answer it.

4.2.1 Research Design

While there are several case study designs (see Yin 2003, 41-43) it is clear that my case is a representative case, because the NGO is in ways similar to that of an average NGO

working for women's empowerment in India. Yin states that the representative case has the goal of finding out the circumstances and conditions of an everyday situation and to be informative about the experiences of the average institution (Yin 2003, 41). This is the way I will treat my case; as an informative example. However, I believe that more case studies would be needed before any grand generalization could take place.

Research Problem and Questions

The goal of my study is to evaluate: How far was the NGO's women's empowerment programme reaching gender justice in practice?

To do this, I focus on three research questions:

1. What kind of political understanding and commitment there is for gender equality and empowerment among the people working for the NGO?
2. On which different conditions (resources) participants join the women's empowerment programme and how these conditions influence the participation?
3. How successful is the NGO in increasing empowerment in terms of gender division of labour and women's cultural value?

4.2.2   Data Collection

I collected my data at NGO Saarthak in Jaipur during an internship between November 2011 and April 2012, for a period of around five months. The NGO had two project areas in Jaipur, however as I was significantly more present at the slum Kathputli Nagar than in the other location, most of my observations and all of my surveys are done in this location.

Yin talks about six sources of evidence which are used in data collection of a case study. These six being documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artifacts. (Yin 2003, 86.) In my study, I will use three of these: documentation, survey interviews and participant observation.

Documentation

Yin emphasizes that documentation can only give clues, which should then be verified from other sources. He also reminds about the importance of crititicism of sources because all documents have been produced for certain reason, to a certain audience with a certain

goal. (Yin 2003, 87.) In my study I will use documentation in the form of administrative documents (survey forms, concept notes, monitoring reports), and the NGO's website. Especially, I use the data which Intern 2 got when conducting beneficiary background and empowerment interviews in the autumn 2011 in Kathputli Nagar. I use them as additional background information and also in highlighting the noticed changes which had happened when I did my survey in the spring 2012.

Survey interviews

Yin states that case study interviews most often have an open-ended nature (Yin 2003, 90). However, Yin mentions that formal survey with its structured questions can be used, nevertheless the results should be taken only as one component of overall assessment (Yin 2003, 91). This is the way I also see the data gotten from the survey interviews; as telling one side of the story. Even though I would have preferred to do open-ended interviews, I ended up doing a survey interviews for two main reasons. Firstly, I was told that it is difficult to get any opinions from the women and girls and secondly, I was thinking it would be easier from the language point of view both for me and for the interpreter to keep it simple.

I prepared and conducted the feedback survey at Kathputli Nagar between 22. 2. 2012 – 3.4.2012. The participants for the survey were selected from the list of persons who had been interviewed by Intern 2. First person was selected randomly and after that every fifth was chosen. One of the adolescent girls selected had just moved back to her village where she had gotten married, therefore instead of 7 girls planned only 6 were interviewed. There were also some changes with the (11) women selected; once a "wrong" woman was interviewed due to the same name, and twice it was impossible to get a hold on the woman (one had gone to visit her family at the countryside, another was working outside the house). In the place of these women two others were chosen based on the suggestion of the field worker. In total 17 of programme's chosen participants (beneficiaries) were interviewed. The classification between adults and adolescent girls is partially artificial, it is not based on the age instead to that of the marital status; unmarried classified as adolescents and married as adults.

The interviews lasted from 20 min to one hour, based on how much they had been involved in activities, how much they had to say and whether there were distractions

around. In general, the adolescent girls had clearly less to say than the adult women. In one occasion, it was impossible to get basically anything from one of the adult beneficiaries because many of her family members were around and especially her mother with strong personality controlled the situation the whole time.

There were several reasons behind conducting the survey. It had to accommodate three interests: organization's marketing purposes, the interest of the project manager to get more knowledge e.g about the programme's possible problems, and my interest to learn about the beneficiaries' opinions. The survey had first some basic background questions, and then there were questions related to motivation and participation in the organization's activities as well as questions to find out about certain attitudes, current life situation, information needs and knowledge about the organization's structure and goals. In the end of the survey, there were open-ended questions about their wishes for the organization, comments for improvement, and place to tell in their own words about their learning and general experience within this women empowerment programme.

(Participant) Observation

During the internship period, I kept a work diary where I wrote my observations both from the office and field locations. Especially in the first two months I was more in the role of a distant observer often seen scribbling my notes in some corner. Yin describes participant observation as a mode of observation in which the researcher is not only a passive observer but instead a researcher may take a variety of roles within a case study situation and actually participate in the events being studied (Yin 2003, 93-94) and when in December I started to plan for adolescent girls' class, my role changed from passive to this mode of observation.

Yin states that the problem with the participant observation is the possible biases produced such as becoming a supporter of the organization being studied, and becoming so much involved as a participant that there is not enough time to take notes in the role of an observer (Yin 2003, 96). I did think the organization was a nice place to work at, however, I did not become its ardent supporter in any way. The time issue on the other hand is relevant in my study to some extent, but for me being involved more meant having a meaningful role on the field locations and being in better situated to see what was

happening. According to my opinion, becoming a participant observer meant that I spent more time on the field and was more aware what was happening.

4.2.3   Analysis

Yin tells how a general analytic strategy will help to treat the evidence fairly and produce convincing conclusions. In my analysis I will rely on 'theoretical propositions' which is one of the general analytic strategies described by Yin. (2003, 111- 112.) Based on the strategy, I will follow my interest for gender equality and the workings of a non-governmental organization in India, which in turn is reflected in research questions and in literature.

As a part of this general strategy I will use the analytic technique of logic model, which is described as a technique that matches together events observed and events predicted by theory (Yin 2003, 127). Yin emphasizes how in a case study evaluation the relationship between the processes and outcomes are important, however, so is the role of the context. Yin tells how it is possible to estimate the potential causal links by the help of a logic model meaning how an activity will produce (or not) its preferred outcomes. (Yin 2012, 171.) The typical logic model follows a sequence of: inputs (resources), activities (implemented actions), outputs (immediate results of the actions), and outcomes (longer term benefit) (Yin 2012, 172).

4.3   Ethics of the Research

In a study which involves getting to know some details about people's personal lives it's important to keep ethical considerations in mind. Also, when doing an evaluative study about a NGO and its program it can be problematic how much a researcher can reveal without potentially harming the organization or the staff working in it. How to balance the need for respect and the need to get the study done? I want to respect the people (both the participants of the NGO and the staff members) and one simple way of showing this is not to share the real name of anyone. I think that protecting the rights of the vulnerable people should be taken even more seriously than the rights of the powerful who can in many ways take care of themselves if needed.

However, as a novice in research, I did mistakes during the data collection process. I did get permission from the project manager when I asked whether I could use this and that for

my studies. But as Tina Miller and Linda Bell write about the ethics when using gate-keepers in accessing those less powerful: it is the important to think who is actually giving consent and to what. Are those who are in a less powerful position able to say no to participation? (Miller and Bell 2002, 61.) The way I see it the gate-keepers were also the beneficiaries and in some cases their mothers or mother-in-laws (when doing the survey interviews). Mostly, they did not seem to mind, quite on the contrary, they seemed to welcome me in their homes. Nobody said no to the interview which would perhaps been difficult in their position, even though I did mention that they don't have to take part. However, they could either control the situation better by not wanting me to come to their house (survey was then done in the building that was used by the NGO in the slum), or giving answers only in the bare minimum.

Another clear mistake in the ethical matters was that when I was doing observation and conducting surveys in the project locations, I did not mention to the beneficiaries that I was also collecting data for my studies. At the time, I did not see it as important, because I was not collecting data about the individual persons and their personal lives instead I was concerned about the functioning of the NGO's women empowerment program. Also, I felt pressure when conducting the surveys: having a pile of papers and beneficiaries often little time while trying to explain everything through the interpreter such as all the reasons for doing the survey etc. I acknowledge that I could have been much more considerate towards the women and asked their consent. Besides treating the data anonymously, I will also show my respect for the women by not dwelling in their personal problems and only revealing as much it is necessary to make the analysis.

5 Findings

Saarthak is a relatively new non-governmental organization; founded in 2007 by the same people who own the travel company Idex. The company was also the main donor of the NGO at the time of the data collection, and it provided the working premises, field materials, partially paid for the salaries of the staff as well as provided NGO with free labour (volunteers and interns). According to the introduction leaflet of the NGO they "envision a society in which women are more valued, have a profound sense of worth and equal opportunities to unleash their potential". As their mission they say to be supporting the initiatives for girls and women in quality education, capacity building and empowerment.

In this chapter, I will first talk about the organizational context; how gender equality and women's empowerment were understood, what kind of activities the NGO had and where. After this I will talk about the different backgrounds and other issues of the chosen participants of the programme. Then I will go through how the approach of the NGO was tackling the issues of gender division of labour and women's cultural value. In other words, I talk about the resources, activities as well as the immediate results of the activities (see Yin 2012, 172).

5.1 The Ways of Thinking and Doing

There were many different categories of people working more or less directly for the programme of the NGO: staff of the NGO and its interns but also the workers of the company and its volunteers. The categories are not anyhow straightforward; who was responsible (and working) to whom, who got their salary from where, who got the possible praise (or complaints) of the programme's activities etc. Therefore, one could say that the internal dynamics were interesting and these had impact on the programme level too.

The project manager was a man who despite his young age (28 at the time) had a very extensive experience on projects for women, and he was also working for government projects. He had a higher education but what made him especially different compared to the average Indian man was his attitude. He had had an interest for gender equality since he was a boy when he had attended demonstrations, and his behaviour as well as the programme design confirmed this more gender-aware attitude. He joined the programme in May 2011 and created its more structured women's empowerment activities. The attitude

of the project manager became clear already on our first meeting in 2011, when he enthusiastically expressed himself as:

"This is not charity, this is empowerment!"
(Male 28, project manager)

There were also foreign interns and volunteers helping out with the program. Four interns worked at the NGO between 2011 and (April) 2012, among them Intern 2 and Intern 4 had both Master's Degrees in a related field and they were very focused on their work. Intern 2 made background and empowerment interviews with the programme participants and worked with volunteers to make changes in activities. Intern 4 was doing gender training to cover the family and community sections of project manager's empowerment model. Some volunteers were also doing much more than just teaching English and Maths which was their main task. They often had good ideas how to improve the programme such as creating new curriculum for English and computer classes as well as creating a new activity "Friday discussion" (with Intern 2). The volunteers also shared their ideas and observations such as girls needing female role models and how these women had succeeded in their life, inspirational themes and songs. One more example of a good volunteer was that of a dynamic young man (only male volunteer I met), who was committed to women's empowerment and wanted to make things work e.g. asking for more instructions for the work and more materials from Idex.

The volunteers' good will was obvious, even the ones who could only stay for two weeks put posters to the walls about hygiene (and painted the walls). Not all volunteers had a clear idea of what empowerment means, though. This was especially the case with some middle-age women volunteers who had a clear charity attitude. Even though it had been forbidden to give personal gifts to the programme's participants, there had been cases of women giving sarees and bracelets as gifts. This had also caused some disaccord among the participants because only the women who had been present on that day had gotten a gift. The volunteers often wanted concretely to do something such as painting and decorating the walls at NGO slum building in Kathputli Nagar where this "beautification" was done at least three times during my 5 month stay.

Before my stay at the NGO there had also been one intern (Intern 1) who had done lot of effort especially with NGO's website. There were interviews displayed on the website

from women who were mostly not participants of the programme and who had shared very private things, which were made public including the woman's name and photo.

One story on the website was telling about a woman whose husband was earning 15 000 rupees a month (in comparison the average salary of a person in basic waged labour is about 6000 INR), had a small healthy and supportive family and the woman in question had higher education in art. This family had a good situation in individual and household level, which had no relation to the NGO's activities. The woman expressed her concern about the water supply and safety at evening in the area because of the drunkards. Another story was telling about a woman facing many serious difficulties in her family life including domestic violence and poverty, and first sentence on top of the article was:

> *"Her husband is an illiterate, heavy drinking alcoholic and he has got no job."*
> *(Direct quote from the NGO website)*

5.1.1 *"A Woman's Place"*

The highest position of the NGO's management was occupied by a woman who was also the founder of the NGO as well as the mother of the company's manager. I was told she had a PhD and that she had been working for women's empowerment for 35 years.

There was also another woman working as the NGO's field worker; a woman in her thirties. She had a 12 year education background and she worked directly with the programme's participants at the field level, but she was not included on the planning of the activities. She talked at the slum about her own empowerment experience on her own family, and Intern 2 describing her as: "A strong woman at the field, not that much at the office", would capture her well. She always left before the official time because she needed to fulfill her duties as a wife, mother and daughter-in-law at home. Also, when there was a big volunteer group coming to the office for their introduction, the female cook was really busy and her four year old daughter was then given to the care of the field worker and she took the girl with her to the NGO slum location. At the field locations there were female project executers (translators and teachers when volunteers were not present); in Ambedkar Nagar a woman with a teacher personality, and in Kathputli Nagar a college student girl.

The project coordinator joined the NGO in November 2011. He had a degree but not so much comfortable with the matter of women's empowerment. We had plenty of informal

discussions in the office and we worked together more so I had a good chance to get to know his opinions. There were occasions when it became obvious what was project coordinator's attitude about women's and girls' capabilities and their responsibilities. For instance in November, I was asked by the project coordinator to help out in planning for adolescent girls' activities. When I mentioned how it could be good, if we asked the girls themselves also what they needed and what kind plans they had for the future, he said straight away that the girls don't know. Two months later we had an informal discussion and I was told how I won't be working for long in the field of social work, because:

"You will go to other fields such as teaching; you cannot keep up on going to slums when you need to take care of the family."
(Male 29, project coordinator)

During the same discussion he mentioned also about a Friday discussion which had had a women's rights as a topic and he told me that the women were saying things like "Cooking is my right". When I pointed out that it is their responsibility not their right, he admitted that I was right. When we kept on talking about women's work, it became obvious that it doesn't matter whether it is called woman's right or responsibility; she still needs to do it without any discussion:

"It is woman's responsibility to take care of the family, and if the job requires for long days and the need to come home late, it's the woman who needs to give up the job, not the man. It's okay for a man to come late and not to do anything in the house or play with the children, because it is the man's responsibility to support the family not the woman's. It's just the way it is."
(Male 29, project coordinator)

Case of Sexual Harassment

At the beginning of my internship, there was also a young man working as a project executer. When I met him for the first time, he showed up late at the girls' class, and did not seem to do anything except look around grinning; the girl project executer and field worker were there to do the translations. A bit later on I was told that he had made unwanted moves on the young volunteer girls and that he quit his job and started to work full time at his mother's small business. However, there was an incident in March that either meant that this same man had made a come-back or that there were more men

harassing women. This incident happened when Intern 4 had been left alone with the little children at Kathputli Nagar's NGO building and the company's employee had started to ask personal questions and then comments such as: "Where do you live? I want to have this kind of discussion with you at the evenings and on weekends". Intern 4 told me that she had first answered the questions because she didn't know to watch out as the person in question was a coworker. She said that when she noticed how the discussion had turned out to be, she had told the man that he is most welcome to come to the office during office hours to talk about his matters. However, it wasn't before she started to talk about her husband, when the message finally got through to him.

It was also interesting that the reaction of the project coordinator and project manager was totally different. When Intern 4 started to talk about the incident to the project coordinator his very first comment was: "Why did you answer him?". Intern 4 mentioned to the project coordinator that it would be good to ask the current volunteers also if they had had similar problems, because the young girls might be too embarrassed to talk about it if not asked directly. The answer of the project coordinator was that there is no need for it and that it would send a wrong message. Later however when the project manager finally got to know about the issue he directly asked the Intern 4 to write an email to him about the incident and told that he would take action within two days.

5.2   Holistic Model of Empowerment

The project manager had created a new holistic model of women's empowerment for the organization. The basic idea of the model was to take into consideration several different factors influencing empowerment of women; education, awareness-raising, self-esteem, economic empowerment and society.

Educational activities

There were educational activities provided for women (the main target group according to the project manager), adolescent girls and small children. The activities for women consisted of English class combined with Maths which was briefly followed by Hindi literacy 'class'. The educational activities were combined into one session of 1-1.5 hours; from which the Hindi part came as an afterthought. The adolescent girls (with few exceptions) were enrolled in formal school, and by the NGO they were provided with extra English and Computer classes as well as adolescent girls' training. Few adolescent girls

sometimes attended the women's class where they became help teachers and the women asked them for right answers. In the small children's group some basic English phrases (hello, how are you, what is your name?) were taught and they played games and sang simple songs.

Friday Discussions

The NGO was raising awareness through discussions (named Friday discussions). The list of topics that could be used in discussions were related to women's reproductive role (hygiene, health, family-planning, maternal and new born health, nutrition), topics related to women's productive role (paid work, entrepreurship, dream professions) as well as women's rights and issue of domestic violence and decision making in the household. There were also more political and abstract topics such as politics in India, sustainable development (equaled with population control), gender and gender division of labour.

Vocational trainings and Self-Help Groups

The NGO had two vocational trainings; sewing (called tailoring) and beautician class. There had been also ideas for other vocational training courses such as making puppets, candles and paper bags, even though during my stay at the NGO none of these had gone further. There were also Self-Help Group meetings where women were told about the idea and were encouraged to form groups of their own.

Events and visits

There had been some more entertaining visits such as visit to the zoo or a park. However, there was also a visit to the Women's Rehabilitation Centre which will be discussed later. During my time at the NGO, two bigger events were organized: a PR-event of the company and Women's Day Celebration. A day after I left the NGO the Women's Rights Event was held.

5.3   Better-off Neighborhood vs. Slum Environment

The NGO (or its company partner) had activities in three different cities in India. However, during my time at the NGO it was clear that the most structured activities were happening in Jaipur where Saarthak worked in two different locations. Idex had had activities in one of them for a longer time, since the founding of the NGO in 2007. This location

(Ambedkar Nagar) was an area which seemed good in many ways. It did not seem to be a slum; it looked more like a better-off neighbourhood with many big decent houses and wide streets. However, this is not to indicate that the participants of the program lived in these big houses, but the available infrastructure was already clearly better in this area. The other location, on the other hand, was a slum with small dwellings, narrow alleys, open sewage and it was surrounded by a big field which was full of garbage and animals such as pigs and dogs. This slum (Kathputli Nagar) was chosen as a project area for the NGO from the interest point of the new project manager.

The difference between the buildings where the NGO worked in the two field locations was noticeable first in the amount of space. In the better-of area the activities were held in a spacious room (around 40 m^2) compared with the small rooms of Kathputli Nagar where, at the beginning of my internship, the NGO had rented a tiny room of about 6 m^2, after a while the sessions were held at a bigger building consisting of two rooms, where the inner room was about 15 m^2 and the other one a little bit smaller. When there were more participants (7-12), as well as volunteers and staff members in the room, there were literally no space left. The inner room had a narrow bench, a book shelf and a fan on the ceiling while the participants were sitting on a big cloth. The tailoring class was held on a children's day care center, where there were two manual sewing machines.

Both locations had good amount of children's books (from pre-school to second class level in English consisting of easy fairytales, colors, animals etc.), games (bingo, big and small letter, memory games), and then crayons, pencils etc. Both locations had two computers which were used by the adolescent girls' computer class. During my time at the NGO, there were different posters on the walls such as giving hygienic information "Brush your teeth" or how to take care of hygiene during menstruation. What was missing were any sanitary facility (toilets, functioning washing basins).

It was not only matter of infrastructure in the different areas in question or the size of the rooms that already made a different starting point. There were also different attitudes for instance towards the tailoring class; in the slum the participants were bringing their own materials so they could practice e.g. make clothes for their daughter or other relative, whereas in the better-off area the women needed materials provided for them, otherwise they couldn't practice. Also, the students whose school fees were paid by the NGO were from the better-off area. In spring there was some fuss about these students because many

of them had failed in their exams and some had dropped out like one girl who had gotten married and had a baby. In events (Company's PR- event and Women's Day Celebration) there were clearly more participants from the better-off neighborhood and for instance the exact timings of the Women's Day Celebration reached the women only one day before the event, and most women from Kathputli Nagar could not get permission from their husbands in such a short notice.

5.4 Participant Profiles

The NGO programme was planned to reach 50 women participants. When the project manager joined the organization in 2011 there were already 16-18 women chosen as beneficiaries and after his identification-assessment survey 20 more were chosen. I was more present in Kathputli Nagar where my own feedback survey was also carried out. Therefore, from here on the evaluation is mainly focused on the participants of this area. As the project manager had a specific wish to empower women who had more difficult life situations the new women and girls were selected to the program based on their perceived vulnerability in the assessment survey some indicators being the education level (highest points when illitereate - less than 5th class), sickness in family, low self-esteem, number and age of children (highest points if up to 5 years old), and income (highest points if earning less than 500 INR per head).

My survey was a small one and there cannot be any generealizations based on it, however the sample will describe well the differences and also the similarities in participants' lives. My survey reached 17 of the chosen participants (11 adults and 6 adolescents). 82% of the adults and 33% of the girls belonged to scheduled castes (Khatik, Bairwa, Bheel). The age range in the women's group was 20 – 50 years and in the girls' group 15 – 20. All the women were married except one who was a widow and all of them had children (1-4).

Majority of the women (73%) had not gone to school at all, two women had dropped out after the 2nd and 5th class, and only one woman had completed 10th class. In the girls' group the least educated had completed the 5th class, and she most likely had ended her studies as she was the only breadwinner of the family after the death of her father. Other girls had not yet finished their education, which currently ranged from 9th class to 2nd class in college. Most women were housewives (55%) and most adolescents were students (83%). Other

occupations were tailor (2), vegetable market workers (2), beautician (1) and a day care centre worker (1).

5.4.1   Participation

When I started at the NGO, I was told by a volunteer that on average there was 2-3 women participating in the educational class, and that Mondays were the 'lazy days' when only 1-2 women came. By April 2012, the number of participants had been increased for average being 5-6 women. However, sometimes there could be as many as 12 women in the class. In the adolescent girls activities the number of participants was often 10 - 12. In the tailoring class there were on average 3-4 women and one adolescent girl, and in the beautician class many older girls (from about 13-19 years old) usually 6-10 girls. In my survey I asked the three most important reasons for participating in the programme and the most quoted motives for the adults were; getting more education (64%), learning new skills (64%) and meeting other women (55%). In the girls group, it was new skills (83%), education (66%) and meeting foreign volunteers (50%) as the most important reasons

Based on the background survey of Intern 2 and my own observations during the survey interviews, some participants of the programme despite living in a less advantaged area had good health, supportive families, adequate amount of money, owning their own house, and ability to send their children to private schools. However, then there were those who were suffering from one or several problems. In addition to the different starting points, the women also had different interests.

Housewives Participation and Interests

By observation it became clear that the women who were regularly participating in activities were all housewives. There was a connection between the participation in the educational and vocational (tailoring) class; the ones coming to the tailoring class were taking also part in the educational class. Based on my survey, six women (housewives) were taking part in the educational activities more or less regularly and three of them had taken part regularly also in the tailoring class

Working Women's Participation and Interests

Paid work was one of the reasons that were limiting women's participation in the NGO's activities. One woman who was working at the vegetable market said that her work timings

had been from 6 am to 2 pm that's why she couldn't attend the class before. She also mentioned that her work ends nowadays already at 12 so she could perhaps participate *(Woman 30, Vegetable Carrier)*. Another woman in my survey interview described her normal day;

> *"I start working at 6 o'clock at the vegetable market for selling vegetables, before that I have already cleaned the house, washed the clothes and taken bath, my work is finished at 12 o'clock, and at 5 o'clock I start preparing the dinner."*
> *(Woman 28, Vegetable Seller)*

One of the participants was a young woman in her early 20s living together with her mother. She had her own small tailoring business, and even during our survey interview she was continuously sewing with a manual sewing machine at the same time. She was the breadwinner of the family as the father had died and she was also giving money to her married sisters whenever possible *(Adolescent 20, Tailor)*.

From these women two (the vegetable market workers) had not participated in activities besides one trying vocational trainings (1-4 times), another had attended a SHG meeting once. The most educated woman *(Woman 28, Tailor)* took part only in SHG and social events, and one woman had previously taken part in both vocational trainings offered *(Woman 32, Beautician)*. Not surprisingly, the women who were already earning money by working outside the house, expressed their interests for vocational trainings and SHGs. One participant directly emphasized that the vocational trainings are the best activities and only ones beneficial for the women in the slum compared to any other activities *(Woman 30, Vegetable Carrier)*. It also became clear by observation that some participants, like the woman working in the day care centre, could have been encouraged to participate in Hindi class even though they didn't have that much interest for learning English as the time showed when a field worker saw the woman passing by the NGO building and encouraged her to come by saying that she will teach Hindi soon, and the woman did come for the whole 15 min session.

Most Vulnerable's Participation and Interests

One of the participants *(Woman 35, Housewife)* had gotten married and lived together with her husband since adolescence from around the age of 12 and had had her first child at the approximate age of 16. She had health problems and during survey interview she

mentioned that the doctor had said her needing full-time rest, and her daughter was also suffering from a liver problem. She could be described as having very low self-esteem, and a husband who definitely was not supporting her participation in the programme. In the survey she mentioned that the three most important reasons for her to participate were; getting more education, spending time with other women and meeting people from other countries. The possibility to earn money was one of the lasts ones on her list.

Another woman *(Woman 32, Widow)* had moved backed to the relatives with her four small children (all under six years) after her husband had died from tuberculosis. One of her children was seriously sick with a heart condition that would have required 1000 rupees worth of medicine per month. She did not participate in any of the activities offered, even though her mother said she supported her participation.

5.4.2 Other Intersectional Issues

During my observations on the field, I could notice that despite some being presumably poor in the girls' class, they all looked cared for (clean, tidy clothes, brushed hair often braided). A striking difference was the two 10-12 year old girls who from the age point of view could have taken part in the adolescent girls' group. However, they never did instead they stayed with the small ones (ages up to around 8). What was noticeable was the difference in the level of hygiene and clothes; they looked like the street children often seen begging money on the streets of India. These two were also very needy for adult attention and they were literally hanging on the arms of the volunteers, especially the older ones. These girls clearly would have needed special attention.

Learning issues and learning habit

There were differences in the level of learning in the classes; for instance when more advanced women were already doing more difficult exercises (348+961, 659+387) the less advanced was still learning to write numbers from 1 to 10. The same was obvious in the Hindi literacy class where the quick learner was doing different exercises (writing words and sentences), while others were still learning the Hindi letters. The women participating in the educational class had had a similar starting point in respect of the previous educational level (often 0- 2nd class), however others were more gifted in studies. One of the women also seemed to have some kind of disability of the mouth which caused her

problems to pronounce certain words and she most likely had a learning disability as well which caused her beig a "slow learner".

Besides some being more quick learners than others, there were also unaddressed issues of school fear or unawareness of learning in school. One woman had told in the interview done earlier by Intern 2 that as she had never been at school, and she was afraid to join classes because she had always been afraid of school *(Woman 30, Vegetable Carrier).* In Ambedkar Nagar, this became clear during the adolescent girls' class where there was a little girl who on to contrary to the "children needing special attention" looked cared for, however she was different from the others seeing from the behavior and action point of view. This girl could not keep up with others at the English class assignments, not even seeming to know where to start, but more importantly when the girls were asked to draw something that was important for them, the others quickly started to do something, taking pencils and colors, asking others to give something, this girl didn't act at all. I felt she was very shy and not used to working in the group like the others, and I encouraged her by putting paper, pencils and some colors close to her, and asked her to draw. Still, she was hesitant about what to do, I said through the project coordinator that you can make anything, and only then she started carefully draw a mobile phone

Distrust for Officials

In my survey, there was a question about whether they had a difficult life situation and if yes, and who would they like to talk about it for getting advice (family and friends, group meeting, social worker). It was interesting that many of the adult participants expressed their doubts about the social workers. Like it was the case with one participant *(Woman 28, Vegetable Seller)* who said she had financial issues and would like to get advice how to deal with it, but even though she partially had interest in talking to a social worker, the other part was thinking that: "A social worker is an enemy who will just make a joke of what's told". In the case of the widow interviewed in my survey; her mother told directly that despite the difficult life situation, they need no advice and she would not give permission to ther daughter to talk to a social worker "who is an enemy". Another woman *(Woman 32, Housewife)* participated to the visit in Women's Rehabilitation Centre, and I was told that she had later wanted to share the information she had gotten with her neighbor facing domestic violence. However, she didn't know if the place was also for

women like them as the lady of the organization was an educated woman and she didn't even have her phone number.

5.5   Gender Division of Labour

In this part, I will talk about the elements related to the gender division of labour at the communal level. I will continue the analysis while dividing the issue into women's reproductive and productive role.

5.5.1 Women's Reproductive Responsibilities as Preconditions

At the communal level the reproductive responsibilities had an impact on attendance for the activities. According to my survey, the housework was stated as the most common reason for the adult women for not participating. This was the case for 73% of the women. From the rest three women all were working outside the house (Tailor, Vegetable Seller, Day Care Worker). Two out of them had another female (mother, daughter-in-law) doing the housework and one simply didn't consider housework being a big issue. In the girls' group, 67% saw housework as the most important reason for not participating.

 During the survey interview, 27% said childcare being one of the main reasons for not participating, all of which had one or more children under five years old. However, childcare did not only have an impact on participation, it did also impact the learning during the class. According to my observations, women having small children (less than 3 years) brought the children with them to the educational class. Most often there were only one or two children under 2 years at the class with their mothers. However, the number of toddlers in the class could be as high as four as on one occasion at the end of February 2012. On that day the small class room had six women studying, two volunteers, two staff members and an intern, and then four active toddlers all running around, taking pencils and markers, doing anything without any control; one draws on the walls, one draws on the blackboard with a marker, one taking mother's paper, another wanting attention.

In the survey interview a woman *(Woman 32, Beautician)* who was considered as one of the biggest success stories of the NGO, mentioned that she was doing only a half day at the moment because her children aged 10 and 11 had school exams and needed her in the house more. She also mentioned how her husband had expressed his preference of her staying in the house because according to him the children are too small and need her there.

5.5.2 Better Chances for Home-based Employment

There were two vocational trainings offered within the programme; beautician and tailoring. Based on the survey, it became clear that even though all girls (6) had a lot of interest for the beautician training, only one was considering a beautician career. The girls 83% were also thinking that the beautician class is better for unmarried girls, because they believed it is easier to get permission from parents than from husband in case they wanted to work at a beauty parlour. From the eight women replying to the question (75%) on the other hand were thinking that the beautician class is good for both, however; only 38% stated that they could work outside the house, 38% inside the house and 25% not at all, meaning that majority (63%) of the respondents believed that they could not work outside the house.

There was one adult woman who had attended both vocational trainings offered and was now working at a beauty parlour. There were also two adolescent girls who were earning money thanks to the beautician training. In the survey interview, one girl (19 years) told that she had learned a lot from the beautician training and was now earning some money while making eye threading at home. Another girl (17 years) told in an interview I had made earlier for marketing purposes that she was earning now 1500 rupees a month while doing beautician work (facial, henna, haircutting, eye brow threading) at home before the training she had also worked by helping her father in hair-cutting in the house. Tailoring class was also increasing skills of the women who were participating in it even if only few had been able to earn money by that. In Kathputli Nagar the participants had high motivation to learn so that they could make clothes for themselves and their relatives.

5.6 Women's Cultural Value

The way I understand it, it is not always easy to draw strict lines separating the educational and the awareness raising activities. The educational activities (English, Maths, Hindi) had sometimes a clear awareness raising aspect (awareness of own capabilities, working in a group with other participants). On the other hand, an activity that could be labelled as awareness raising (such as friday discussions) had sometimes more educational aspect (body functions, health information), even though some discussions were directly raising awareness through discussion on domestic violence and women's rights.

5.6.1 Awareness of own Capabilities and Self-Worth

How to assess changes in self-worth? By observation, I could notice some changes in the women's attitudes towards their own skills and capabilities for learning. A typical example was how women needed encouragement to try something new for them in the class, and then realizing that they could really do the assignment. For instance, this was the case with an older (about 40 years) woman who was in the class and telling how she didn't know how to do the calculation at all, however after only a little encouragement she went on to do not only that easier calculation but much more difficult ones too. On the other hand, others were already more empowered in terms of their capabilities and expressing needs like it was the case with one adolescent girl who got excited about first aid kit and directly wanted to know what and how many items and to get this information as soon as possible.

One woman told proudly during the survey interview that she had learned Hindi Alphabets and to write her own name *(Woman 50, Day Care Centre Worker).* Another woman *(Woman 35, Housewife)* had, despite having a very unsupportive husband, participated to the Women's Rights event organized in the other project area, after the husband had been specifically encouraged to give permission. I left the NGO just before this event, however seeing her in the photo taken from the event said a lot; she had an excited look on her face. She had gotten permission (even though it was difficult), she was sitting with the other women participants and this in a neighborhood other than her own.

The influence of the women working at the programme was clear. Like one adolescent girl pointed out in her speech in the company's PR- event that it was the encouragement from a long-term volunteer that had given her self-confidence to continue her studies and faith that her dream of becoming a police officer could come true despite her family's extremely bad financial situation. Another adolescent mentioned in a survey interview that she wanted to become project executer just like the other student girl from the neighborhood. According to my survey, the beneficiaries also felt very comfortable in approaching the female field worker if they had any problem with the program, or coming with her to the office building to meet the project manager.

5.6.2 Women's Rights Initiatives

Here I will talk about how the NGO was inceasing awareness of women's legal rights (women law) and that of reproductive rights.

Information about Women's Legal Rights

There was visit to Women's Rehabilitation Centre in March attended by six adult participants. The organization was said to be working on a holistic manner by giving counseling and guidance to women and their families suffering from domestic violence. The Head of the NGO was an impressive older woman. She first asked women to introduce themselves and then she explained to them what they were doing. Basically she said that a woman could come with her issue there directly or get to hold on them through police. If police is asked to come in a domestic violence situation, they will refer to this NGO, then a file will be created and counseling or advice given according to the woman's needs. Some will get family counseling 2- 6 sessions; some will be helped to do a police complaint and some to take legal action (to get support money from husband). When Intern 4 asked about the most common situation why they are approached she said that it is when a man throws his wife and children out without any means to support themselves.

Women's Rights Event in April had the content of constitutional rights for women and men and specifically women's rights (reproductive, child health, employment and child protection). This event was considered successful by Intern 4 and it gave the women more information and awareness of their situation and rights.

Information about Reproductive Health

To get a better understanding how an average Friday discussion would be like, I describe here one discussion in November with the topic of "hygiene, mother and baby health". The NGO field worker talked first about the diet during pregnancy and asked the participants what foods are good to eat during pregnancy. She then mentioned about three vaccinations for women during pregnancy. Women listened the information quietly while sometimes answering a direct question. There was more discussion in the end about the experiences on giving birth at private and government hospitals. Women mentioned that if done in a government hospital they get money (government initiative to increase hospital deliveries), on the other hand women mentioned how the hospitals are too crowded, the behaviour of the doctors is not always good, there are not enough doctors and caste causes problem at times. Some had had good experiences with government hospital, though. For the private hospital, they mentioned how they need to pay and they don't get the government money.

According to Intern 2 backgound interviews and my own survey it became clear that these women had two options if they didn't want to have more children; sterilization (tubectomy) or abortions. Family-planning was also the topic that the women wanted to know more and more about when asked what kind of topic they had interest for in the next time. In the family-planning discussion information was given over the contraceptive methods, importance of spacing, and talking about the costs of raising children etc.

In my survey, I had a question whether they felt comfortable with more sensitive issues such as birth control. All the women who answered the question were happy about this kind of information. One woman *(Woman 22, Housewife)* commented how she was happy about the birth control information because then there is no need for abortions. Her answer was especially interesting because, based on the earlier survey made by Intern 2, she had not been aware of reproductive health issues and was not even comfortable talking about them. The woman had been married for 3-4 years and during that time she had gotten one son (2,5 years), one daughter who had died directly after birth and during the feedback survey she was 7th month pregnant.

However, the family-planning information did not reach all the participants (and of course the decision-making is more than information, part of the gender relations and the power on the household). There was a woman *(Woman 27, Tailor)* whose situation in reproductive health became clear during my survey interview. On the survey of Intern 2 the woman was assessed as being familiar with the family planning and that she had been sterilized after her second child. However, during the survey interview it became clear that she had had a failed abortion which was repeated in April 2012 when she was 4 month pregnant. Among women she was very dynamic personality and had completed 10th grade which made her the most educated among participants, she was not participating in Friday discussions.

5.6.3 Women's Voice

Intern 2 mentioned in the autum 2011 how it was difficult for the women to express their opinions and that they were often saying the same as others. Intern 4 also mentioned an occasion when she had asked during the Friday discussion, what the women would do if they got lots of money from Norway, for instance, what kind of projects they would like to have. The women had wanted more pencils, a white board, perhaps a computer class for the children; nothing else. When I was doing the suveys I found that many women could

easily tell their opinions when asked direct questions and some were even very articulate by stating the problem points, suggestions, and their own learning points. For me, it was difficult to get opinions from most of the girls, but this did not apply to the women. However, I had tried to keep it simple, so I had not even tried to discuss issues other than those relating to practical matters. But even so, I think that from some women it would have been possible to ask even more abstract things, however some of these women might have been the ones who stayed outside from most if not all of the activities.

There was one manifestation organized for the Women's Day Celebration event in March 2012. The women who were mostly from the Ambedkar Nagar location walked from Kathputli Nagar to the NGO office buidning while holding placards; all written by the project coordinator. Unfortunately even, the project coordinator had not been aware that manifestations are not permitted on the main roads without prior permission, so the police had stopped the women and followed closely as they proceeded. During the Women's Day Celebration event and the Company's PR-event there were dramas acted by the participants over domestic violence.

There were two adult participants who showed clear signs of collective empowerment. One was a woman who wanted to help her neighbor (non-participant) with the information gotten at the Women's Rehabilitation Centre. Another woman wanted to share the information about contraceptives with others (non-participants) so they neither need to do abortions. One adolescent girl wished in the open-ended question in my survey that more activities would be given by the NGO to other girls and women too. Even in the talk about the health benefits of oats in February (based on the preparation of oatmeal at home which I had given to them at adolescent girls' class) there was a girl who was usually more quiet but now excitedly telling how her grandmother had used to have this porridge at her village when she was young.

6 Discussion

In this chapter, I will discuss the gender-awareness of the organization, the additional inequalities besides gender and the how the NGO was changing the rules of the game in the matters of gender division of labour and women's cultural value.

6.1 Gender-awareness of the Organization

What kinds of resources (political understanding and commitment) are there for gender equality and women's empowerment among the people working for the NGO? How did the ways of understanding gender and gender relations affect the work both on the organizational and the communal level?

Reisman writes how policy is always bound to values and ideologies of what is seen as a good society, meaning that policies can always be created differently depending on the change wanted (Reisman 2001, 29). If the change wanted is the true equality between women and men in all spheres of life (Sen and Grown 1987, 79), and meeting women's strategic gender needs (Molyneux 1985, 232-233), then it is necessary to understand the structures (basis) that cause these inequalities. This is why it is essential to understand gender as a created product of the society, and not as a biological absoluteness dictating one's life path (see Kabeer 2000, 4-5 vs. Tiwari 2001, 38-39). Another key concept is that of gender relations (the social relationships between men and women) and understanding that the inequalities are played out not only at the individual level, but also at the family, community, market and state levels (Kabeer 2000, 12-13).

So what was the woman's place in Saarthak? In the case of this NGO one could claim that there were different ways of thinking about gender equality, and the ways people talked and acted were reflecting their different viewpoints. The founder, the project manager as well as some of the interns and volunteers clearly had an interest and a good understanding of the women's empowerment. This was showed, for instance, by who was hired as the project manager, what kind of model of women's empowerment the organization had, how different ideas and suggestions for improvement were expressed and also included in the programme activities.

However, it seemed that when moving lower in the organizational hierarchy, the more traditional attitudes were met and there the gender division of labour was taken for granted. Elson (1995, 7) points out that the people are not necessarily even aware how they are comliant to the cultural norms in favour of the man. This is how I view the issue at the organization, especially among the NGO's own staff, as lack of awareness and not as an intentional attitude to promote the male power. Women's responsibility in taking care of the house and the children was seen as matter of fact as the project coordinator expressed: *"It's just the way it is"*. This refelcted the view of women as naturally gifted in childcare and housework with their caring and neat nature (see EIGE 2013, 4). Much more serious was the case of sexual harassment by the lower-rank company worker which was a clear sign that not all had understood women's value and how equal colleagues treat each other. In this case, also the importance of the patriarchal contract (see Kabeer 2011, 501) appeared as only after mentioning the husband, the man took it as the real proof of the intern's lack of interest, nothing else was convincing enough.

One could also be tempted to assume that because the highest position in the organization was held by a woman (the founder), this power position must indicate that the organization is automatically gender-aware and breaking the traditional gender division of labour where women work either at home or in lower paid female-dominated occupations (Fraser 2007, 25-26). However, understanding the cultural context of India, where the family and kinship structures are shaping the gender relations (Kabeer 2011, 501) and where an adult son is the woman's most important resource (Kandiyoti 1988, 279), the founder's position in itself cannot be interpreted as a indicator of gender-awareness as she was the mother of the most powerful man in the NGO's company partner. I do not imply that the founder didn't have true commitment towards gender equality and perhaps excellent skills in this regard, however no attitudinal change was needed in the organization as her position was perfectly compliant to the cultural norms.

On the other hand, one could interpret that the only male volunteer was breaking the gender division of labour as he was doing work that was mostly done by women. He did show especially the girls a role model of a young respectful man and he was very good in his work. However, when trying to make things work better or giving a spontaneous speech at the company's PR-event, he (a tall, white, male, all attributes kept in high value in India) was applauded while the Intern 4 (female) doing improvement attempts was considered a bit difficult.

Understanding of Empowerment

It is important to understand the process nature of empowerment as shaped by the resources, agency and outcomes (Kabeer 1999, 437) as well as by the frames given by the specific context (Kabeer 2011, 500). Just like it was the case with the understanding of gender equality, the same kind of diversity in attitudes could be found. As the example with middle-age volunteers giving sarees and bracelets showed; instead of empowerment they seemed happy enough with giving hand outs to the "poor". There is a fundamental difference in receiving personal gifts or getting new resources such as information and skills to improve one's own lives. Therefore, the hand outs might not cause just disaccord between the participants as only part of them received gifts, but that could also lead to different expectations by the participants on what they can expect to get from participating in the programme.

Another example of the different attitudes was the intern responsible for the website content who seemed focused on the difficulties in the slum both on level of the available infrastructure as well as on the level of women's personal lives. The attitude that empowerment can miraculously happen after publicly telling about women's personal problems, is a far more serious one than giving hand outs. India belongs to the category of classic patriarchy (Kandiyoti 1988, 278) and gender relations are based on patriarchal contract and have a component of patriarchal risk (Cain et al. in Kabeer 2011, 501).

To openly publish a woman's serious familial issues online, can do much harm in this context especially if the resources (economic, mental etc.) which shape the empowerment are not simultaneously addressed. Therefore, telling openly in details a story about an alcoholic who steals his wife's money and beats her up, should perhaps be reconsidered.Would this kind of approach leave the man with any interest or wish to change his behavior, or would there be any activity the man could participate to learn to act differently? Would the woman get support from the NGO or elsewhere in case of increased violence or get more financial and mental support to leave the relationship? Even if she had been a participant of the programme and thus being entitled to its activities, should it even be needed to publicly display (sell) one's own misery in return of participation, or in chance for getting donations to the organization?

6.2   Gender Planning

I'm using the Moser's gender planning framework as the basic foundation to help in gender analysis and in the gender needs assessment (Moser 1993) with the additional emphasis put on the two-dimentional conception of gender (Fraser 2007, 24), on the transformatory potential (Young 1997b, 370; Wieringa 1994, 842), and intersectionality (Holli 2012, 87-88). Therefore, I will use these altogether in evaluating the NGO Saarthak's success in reaching gender justice based on their activities. The importance of the cultural context (Kabeer 2011, 500; Kantor 2009, 195; Kandiyoti, 1988, 278) is a theme that follows throughout the whole evaluation. I will also talk about the relation between different positive changes in the gender relations: should some changes be considered as more important than others?

6.2.1   Gender Inequality combined with other Inequalities

I start the analysis of the activities with the intersectionality or combined struggles (Holli 2012, 87-88; Wieringa 1994, 834), because it is the different starting points of people that create additional challenges for empowerment which need to be addressed, if the substantive equality is the goal instead of settling in formal equality (see Holli 2012, 78-79; Mukhopadhyay 2004, 101-102). The project manager of the NGO had the admirable goal of targeting especially those who had more difficult life situations. However, if the real daily constraints of different participants are not understood and taken into consideration, then it doesn't matter how admirable the goal is if it cannot be well reached in practice. As Moser (1993, 38) tells in planning interventions having a general idea of women's needs is not entirely adequate. I understand that the chosen participants of the programme had different resources to begin with and thus the real possibility of some people to enter the program or to be fully included in its activities had many different kinds of limitations, which in turn led to that the people who had somewhat better resources to begin with could get even more resources while the less fortunate could not be well reached.

Before going to the additional burdens of the participants, I mention that there were also inequalities between the different field locations, where the participants of the better-off area often got more, and were present more in big events. Was this because the better-off area had been a project area for a longer time, or because for some other reason the area and its participants were considered as more important or more easily reacheable? I do

acknowledge that some matters might have been purely practical in nature like the difference in room sizes as it most likely is more difficult to get spacious rooms at the slum because the rooms tend to be smaller in size and usually inhabitated, however it would be interesting to do more research about the matter to find out whether there were also some other factors which could be addressed in order to create higher equality among the participants from different field locations.

Similar Background Factors

There were similar background factors among the participants; such as 82% of the adult women in my survey belonged to what in India is called the scheduled castes, which are the lowest in the caste hierarchy, majority had low level of education (82% had done less than 2nd class) and based on Intern 2's survey, many had moved from the country side. I could only speculate about the connections of women's caste, regional origin, education, and the different state policies. What I can do, however, is to shed light on some of the issues the participants had which became clear during my internship. These manifestations I see as indicators of the available resources (preconditions) which created different starting points for the participants and their different level of agency to start with (Kabeer 1999, 438) even though I don't have any proof from their origins and relations to each other.

Health, Poverty, Familial Support

The issue of health became clear from the survey interviews. There had been a death of a husband *(Woman 32, Widow)* which meant that the woman had moved back to her parents and was dependent on them. Her life situation was even harder because her baby girl had a heart condition with the need of additional expenses and care. There had also been the death of a father of one chosen participant *(Adolescent 20, Tailor)* which had decreased the family's financial well-being and had meant that the girl had taken the responsibility for supporting the family. In these two cases the issue of patriarchal risk became an obvious additional component; meaning that the dependency on male family members translated into decline in women's welfare when ending up without the male guardianship (Kabeer 2011, 501). One participant *(Woman 35, Housewife)* had a sickness, her daughter had sickness, and she has an unsupportive (mentally, not financially) husband on top of these things. In her case, the health issues were combined with patriarchal contract dictating the

58

norms of male decision-making power and the aspect of women's submissiveness and propriety (Kabeer 2011, 501; Kandiyoti 1988, 283; Kantor 2009, 198).

Another participant woman who was actively taking part in activities had some kind of disability of the mouth as well as learning difficulties; however her family was supportive of her participation which meant that she was free to participate if she self wanted. There was also the issue of familial care for the girls who looked like child beggars on the street. The girls most likely were poor, I don't doubt that, however the way I see it, the main issue was not the lack of money but instead that of social capital which was reflected in the level of hygiene and behavior of the girls. It would be interesting to learn more about the family support and its impact i.a. on attendance, and also about familial care and its impacts on the girls' starting points in life.

Problems in earning an income were obvious for at least two working adult women (vegetable market workers) and the adolescent tailor who worked hard to make the needs met. Kantor (2009, 205) mentions how in the poorer households women work because otherwise the household can not cope, however in conditions that does not improve the women's economic independence or long-term well-being of the household. This can also be understood in these women; they worked hard however there were limits to how much they could work and earn. For the adult women the reproductive responsibilities were the preconditions that also had to be met. Tinker's comment that poor women are already working hard and might actually prefer practical help instead of being involved in more time-concuming activities (Tinker 1990, 43) could be said to be relevant especially to these women who were already earning money.

Additonal Factors of Education, and Distrust

There were issues related to education which could be seen as challenges in the activities such as different level of learning capacity (the women who were slower learners compared to the most gifted could not always keep up with the class), school fear and unawareness of school habit, which translated into the need for more motivation and support. Some of the adult women in my survey sample expressed also their serious doubts about social workers in general. It would be interesting to find out more about the reasons behind the attitude, for instance has there been caste and class-related issues (disrespect and ridicule) from the officials before, or has there been for instance government schemes

which have fallen the expectations, which has in turn made the women feel like their problems had been "made a joke". The foreigners working for the NGO were seen positively by all women and girls interviewed. However, if the foreign volunteers and interns were seen as some sort of solution it would mean going around the matter of trust instead of confronting it and making it right. How sustainable is an approach which relies on continuos flow of (committed) volunteers and interns from abroad?

Preconditions for Empowerment

Particpants expressed their different interests; the women with income-issues wanted more vocational trainings and to know more about Self-Help Groups, the woman with health and family issues wanted to spend more time with the other women. Some had an interest in learning Hindi even though not in other educational parts etc. It was not impossible to reach women with difficult life situations. For example, after a serious motivation one of the participants *(Woman 35, Housewife)* could be reached for Women's Rights event, the girl unaware of school habit could be encouraged to act (mobile phone drawing), and the adolescent girl who was planning to quit formal school and forget her dream of becoming a police officer, could be motivated by a long-term volunteer to attend the NGO's English class and continue also her formal studies. However, the more difficult the situation, the more support must be given and effort done to ensure that the person can fully participate in the empowerment activities. Would some participants have been better-off if there had been a less ambitious approach to increase their welfare, such as providing them some concrete nutrition, basic information about hygiene and health, or help with the health expenses? Could the meeting of basic needs be used as a starting point that could be expanded after a while to cover other needs, for example income-earning and knowledge about their rights?

According to Young, the first step towards empowerment is overcoming poverty and she points out how the state is the key actor in creating the conditions for empowerment in the provision of education, health care and training (Young 1997, 53). The way I understand it, the resources for women's empowerment are largely influenced by the state investment in people's well-being in overcoming poverty, sickness, equalizing the educational opportunities and working on the constraints in work participation such as childcare facilities. This leads to social policies and on which grounds they are created. Therefore,

the empowerment of women is not only the matter of individual women or of the gender relations in the household, but also strongly influenced by the structures of the society.

6.2.2 Challenging the Gender Division of Labour?

According to Molyneux, two of women's strategic gender interests are; "the abolition of sexual division of labour and the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and childcare" (Molyneux1985, 232-233). The interesting question is, therefore, how the empowerment activities were planned to meet these women's strategic gender needs of getting rid of occupational segregation as well as reducing the responsibility for domestic work and childcare? If seeing the issue directly through practical gender needs, then the interesting question is whether the activities were meeting women's practical gender needs of earning a reliable income (Young 1997b, 368), needs for childcare and having timings to accommodate women's needs to fulfill their reproductive duties (Moser 1993, 53-54).

Women's reproductive role was taken for granted in the educational activities. The timings were planned in accordance to the women's needs in taking care of the housework (cleaning, washing clothes etc.) at mornings. The women who had small children (under 3 years) brought them to the class, or presumately left them in the house with a female family member. There was no childcare arranged during the classes. One could claim that the activities were not challenging the rules that women have the main responsibility for housework regardless what other work they do (Kabeer 2000, 21; Kantor 2009, 197-198), or challenge the idea that care work is the private responsibility for the family's women (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1063-1064) or to take in any consideration that combining care work can be challenging (Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1066).

According to Moser it depends on two factors whether a training will reach women's strategic gender needs; increase in economic independence, and the type of the training (Moser 1993, 48). Therefore, if the training is in areas considered as men's work it has double benefits of both increasing the employment opportunities and breaking down occupational segregation (Moser 1990, 50). The vocational trainings of the NGO were following the tradional gender division of labour in two ways. First of all, the trainings (tailoring and beautician) were compliant to the common perceptions over women's skills and aptitudes (EIGE 2013, 4) and in areas where women are already supposed to have (or should have) skills in (Moser 1993, 50; Buvinic 1983, 25). Secondly, these trainings would

allow women to work at home. Therefore, they were implicitly helping women to combine the income-earning with women's reproductive responsibilities and at the same time following the norms of purdah and protection as what is the most suitable work location for women (Kantor 2009, 195; Kandiyoti 1988, 283; Kabeer 2011, 501) leading mostly to work at informal sector where the work conditions and outcomes are poorer (Kantor 2009, 205; Palriwala & Neetha 2011, 1051-1053; Birdsall & McGreevey 1983, 7-8).

Even though the trainings were not meeting the strategic gender needs of women, they were to some extent meeting the practical need for earning an income as was the case with the adult beautician (also the only one who had gotten a job outside the house), the adult tailor and the adolescent girls who were doing beautician work in the house and earning some money. Because I didn't interview all participants of the programme, there could easily be more girls who were doing beautician work and women working as tailors, however most likely they were performing that only at home.

According to Buvinic there are certain problems with the income-generating programmes with attitudes of women's traditional skills, these being e.g. that they bring little or no income and cannot be easily upgrades for higher profits (Buvinic 1983, 25). It can be assumed based on the cultural norms it could be easier to get permission from husband or father to work inside the house than outside, it could be also assumed that the work at vegetable market can be more physically demanding and with lack of respect from others. However, an interesting question is whether the trainings would allow women to earn more money than if they had been working at the vegetable market or in a factory. Or did the women just earn about the same mount of money, however, now "safely" inside the house. Secondly, how could a small sewing business be upgraded for higher profits, when you are working constantly by manual sewing machine, and do not have time for anything else as was the case with the adolescent tailor? When would there be time for marketing or finding new marketing channels etc.?

6.2.3 Improving Women's Value?

The way I see it women's cultural value (their status) is bound first of all to their sense of self (Fraser 2007, 30) which has been damaged by the society's devaluation of everything coded feminine (Fraser 2007, 26). Therefore, what is needed is to change women's attitude towards themselves and to their capabilities. Secondly, their status is related to agency

(decision-making power) meaning the capability to define own goals and act upon them even in case of opposition (Kabeer 1999, 438). In the study of Engle et al., they concluded that it was the unexpected social impacts of the programme (the new female role models and special attention given to the girls and their families) that had made the difference (Engle et all 1983, 214-215). I see this same to have applied in the Saarthak programme. The people (except the male who harassed women) and especially the women working for the NGO in the slum location had a positive impact on the participants who became more aware of their own capabilities, believed that they can do something (exercises, participation in an event outside their own community, become a police officer) and that they are equally worthy of some resource (Women's Rehabilitation Centre).

Some of the strategic gender needs that I consider to be part of the aspect of value on the list of Molyneux include; " the establishment of freedom of choice over childbearing, the adaptation of adequate measures against male violence and control over women, and the attaintment of political equality" (Molyneux 1985, 232-233). In the matter of decision-making power, the NGO programme helped women especially in two issues; reproductive health and domestic violence. The women had a need for both information given in Friday Discussions and during visit to Women's Rehabilitation Centre and in events organized, and they were happy with this information as shown by the participant (*Woman 32, Housewife)* sharing the information with a neighbor suffering from domestic violence, and *(Woman 22, Housewife)* sharing birth control information with non-participants. On the matter of improving women's voice (if seen as part of political equality), there was a demonstration on the women's day, however, it was not that much successful as it was mostly orchestrated by the project coordinator and even stopped by the police. However, there were other openings to increase women's voice such as dramas related to domestic violence and women's responsibility to domestic work in events.

6.2.4 Efforts to combine Class and Status?

How was the NGO addressing the combined issue of gender division of labour and women's cultural value, in other words, class ans status aspects? This can be approached by considering the unintended consequences of changing the gender division of labour (who does what, who decides). The issue can also be addressed starting from the other side, from women's cultural value. For example women might end up with more self-awareness and information but being more dependent on the husband and family both fincancially

and socially (hierarchies of respect; influence of the in-laws and husband), they cannot do much to change things.

Sen argues that when women work outside the house, it has the potential of increasing their own immediate well-being and improving their future bargaining position (Sen 1990, 137) because earnings have the potential of creating a higher level of self-esteem and higher perceived contribution to the family's economic position (Sen 1990, 144). I do not disagree about the importance of economic independence. However, reflecting the process nature of empowerment (Kabeer 1999, 438) and the different starting points of women, some women might have more resources (other than economic) at their use from the beginning. Therefore, a woman might already have a good self-esteem, a clear perception of her contribution as well as a supportive environment, and then perhaps be engaged in income-earning. On the other hand, women might work hard both inside and outside the house, and still be considered to do less than men by themselves and by other people, which takes the matter into women's cultural value.

If income-earning is taken as the entry point, then the big question is who decides about work, money and what are the unintended consequences (Tinker 1990, 43; Batliwala & Pittman 2010, 13; Rao & Kelleher 2005, 61). In other words, do income-earning activities lead to double burden for women who end up with more work (Tinker 1990, 43), while the decision-making power over how to use the money or over the big decisions in the household stays the same as before, as well as the responsibilities for the domestic work and childcare? Let's say the women are already working heavily, or have more difficult life situations as was the case with some of the participants of the NGO. On top of the difficulties there is the devaluation (conditions and outcomes) of "women's work" (Kantor 2009, 205). Should there be more thinking about the specific aspects of female poverty (informal sector, childcare issues) and the process of empowerment? Or on the other hand, do women who have a stable family situation get automatically more empowered if they start a small business, or work outside the house, compared to those women who prefer to leave the situation as it is and choose not to be engaged in more work (Sharp et all 2003, 292)?

It is good to discuss also which practical gender needs have more transformatory potential. Helping women to do better in what they are already doing (earning money in the informal sector and taking care of the housework and the family) or providing women childcare

facilities and good quality education and trainings in various fields to enable them to earn a better salary and to break the occupational segregation with benefits more visible for others? If informal sector is the one and only option, should there be at least other ways to organize the work? Could there be more collective ways such as setting up a small collective, which would give the women a chance to meet together within the work context instead of being provided piece-work in the isolation of the house (Young 1997b, 370)?

If starting from the women's cultural value, the NGO approach was more successful. By providing the educational class, visits and events, the organization enabled the girls and women to trust on their own capabilities and showing that they are not alone in their problems. There was a clear collective aspect (Young 1997b, 371; Tinker 1990, 43) in the programme activities. However, for instance the reproductive health information was still following more women's practical gender needs of how to do better in what they are already doing. For instance the birth control session mentioned earlier covered issues of healthy diet, vaccinations and hospital delivery. As there was a good discussion in the end of the session, the matter could have been taken further by asking could something be done so that women would get better treatment in hospital. Could the women themselves do something to ensure that they can get the healthy diet during pregnancy, ensure that they get the health care they need etc.? Or during the sessions about birth control methods, could there have been discussion over tubectomies vs. vasectomies, and overall more discussion over who decides what method is used, how many children to have, about son preference and about men's role in the care of the children? And talking about what are the women's real alternatives in decision-making, if the husband or family disagrees and whether there should be a change in these matters?

Moser gives an example how planning a childcare facility at the woman's workplace can reach practical gender needs of women, however if located at the father's work place, it could involve the men taking some responsibility for the care (Moser 1993, 53). I would consider it less likely in the Indian context that the men could be involved in taking care of their children during women's participation in educational and vocational activities because it would be considered shameful to do women's work (Elson 1995, 1). The quality childcare offered close by the women would probably be easier for everybody involved. However, could there be attempts to arrange a mutual activity for the men and children while the women would be doing some collective learning and sharing experiences, and then perhaps the other way around?

How to combine the different entry points so that they would support each other? Based on my data and analysis, it could be said that in every activity there would need to be a special focus on the available resources of the women and how their agency is supported, instead of ending up supporting traditional structures both in division of labour and in cultural value. The key transformatory elements of awareness-raising and collective empowerment could be included in every activity no matter what is the main content of the activity because sessions can be planned to sensitize women about gender division of labour, women's control over money or violence (Wieringa 1994, 843). As Desai mentions the meeting of practical needs can be combined with approaches to increase women's self-confidence (Desai 2005, 93). However, based on the observations on the field, this might need extra focus, because the more technical information delivery or vocational skills development is less complicated and easier to do in practice.

6.2.5 Measuring and Ranking "Success"

Another matter is how to measure and evaluate the impacts of activities. Should it be done by focusing on the numbers (participants, courses given, and sewing machines donated) or by focusing on the positive changes in gender relations (Desai 2005, 95; Wieringa 1994, 843)? The question whether the different changes or successes should be treated in relation to each other; should one change be considered as more important than another, or meeting one type of gender need more advanced or important than another? Also, some changes might be more visible and more easily "countable" like changes in gender division of labour (income-earning, or doing "men's work") than changes in cultural value.

Starting point of Empowerment

Kloosterman et al. descibe in their review of success stories that in most cases the change started in the access to a resource (gender training or awareness raising session) which led to changes in consciousness (Kloosterman et al. 2012, 538). They describe how the changes are like small steps which can start in different ways (Kloosterman et al. 2012, 531) and Tinker points out how smaller steps can have long-term effects such as attending a meeting outside the woman's own neighborhood can actually widen the woman's worldview (Tinker 1990, 44). According to Young, when women work together and solve problems and learn by doing, they often get active in questioning the status quo through their collective experience and start to organize to end the inequitable practices (Young

1997b, 371). Likewise, Tinker mentions that the simple fact of organizing can be an empowering experience when women realize they are not alone in their struggle (Tinker 1990, 43).

The way I understood it, the changes that followed from participation in the NGO's activities came about due to the participants' access to a resource, even though it is noticeable that the changes seemed to have happened in different ways for different people, based on their diverse starting points and needs. For the most successful beautician worker, it started with vocational training, for some women and girls it started in the educational class where they became more aware of their own skills in learning and capabilities to reach other goals, for some it started with more information of domestic violence measures and of Women's Rehabilitation Centre, or by information of birth control methods and reproductive health issues.

Ranking

Should some changes be considered as more important? How is the change in empowerment measured? If a woman with less resources, as a starting point, learns to write her name, attend a meeting outside her own community or learn about birth control, should it be equally valued (ranked) as the more obvious successes of women who, from better starting point, start to work outside the house, learn good sewing skills or learn quickly everything they are taught? If empowerment is seen as a process, the women who traditionally would make headlines might already have better-off starting point (stable life situation, some money, safe home, good health). I do not claim that their successes would not count; sure these would equally count, but those smaller changes that might not seem to be much might actually mean a huge step forward for the woman and perhaps for the woman's daughters in terms of empowerment.

6.3 Further Observation Points

During my stay at the NGO two more topics became clear, and even though these are not part of my evaluation, they are interesting in shedding light on the Indian working culture. These would include hierarchies at the organizational level related to the communication and coordination. One of these was the donor-NGO relation (who decides the frames of the activities; who hires the staff and on what grounds and who is responsible for the conduct

of the staff, who is overall responsible to whom, who gets the complaints or compliments). One fine example of miscommunication and misscoordination became obvious by the Company's PR- event. Even though the NGO and the company shared the same office building, the manager of the NGO had lunch at the same time with the company workers, however, the whole event was organized by the company (in the name of the company and the NGO both), while the NGO side got to know about it three days in advance by accident from a volunteer, and getting basically no role in the event.

There were also hierarchies based on the status at the organization. For example, when Intern 4 tried to get internet connection fixed, she was faced with an obstacle; "What does the project manager say about this?" Therefore, the status hierarchy had an impact on the concrete work performance, because something could not be fixed without an expressed permission from a person of higher rank. Also, miscommunication is connected to status hierarchy; when I asked why nobody else (as many at the office building must have known) had informed the project manager about the PR-event, I got the reply (as matter of fact) that it had been the responsibility of the company's field coordinator.

7   Conclusions

In this chapter, I put all the things together and evaluate how far the women's empowerment programme of the NGO was reaching gender justice in practice. I do this by arranging previously discussed themes into the form of a logic model. This means that I connect the processes, outcomes and the context together for explaining how the programme was producing certain outcomes, and why not others. I use the typical logic model of resources, activities and immediate results (Yin 2012, 171-172.) The resources will be evaluated at two levels by the gender-awareness, structure and locations of the organization and by the different starting points of the chosen participants.

Resources – Activites- Immediate Results

At the organizational level, the understanding of gender and gender relations varied impacting attitudes and expectations towards women's capabilities and responsibilities which in turn were reflected in the activities. The gender-awareness and commitment for empowerment of the project manager could to some extent outweight the attitudes of the lower-rank staff members. The diverse understanding of empowerment was reflected in the activities as was the case with volunteers giving personal gifts and with the ones painting the walls (charity mentality), and in the external communication shown by the website which was opting for a public confrontation with less cultural understanding for the real barriers in women's lives.

At the communal level, it became clear that the chosen participants had different life situations, talents and interests, which impacted the level of motivation and the real chances of participation in activities. Therefore, the ones with relatively more resources were in a better position to get even more resources. Three broad groups could be separated based on data; namely housewives, working women and the very vulnerable. In the housewives group the biggest barrier seemed to have been the issue of combining the reproductive responsibilities (housework and childcare) with the NGO activities. On the other hand, in the working women's group the biggest challenge noticeable seemed to have been their current double burden (paid work together with housework and childcare), leaving little time and energy to participate in the NGO activities (however combined with school fear, unsuitable timings, disinteresting activities). The group of the very vulnerable

had additional health and family issues combined with reproductive responsibilities and/ or to poverty.

The issues of the participants indicate a low level of public health care and social security in Rajasthan as well as the cultural component of patriarchal risk. Many of the issues the participants were facing seemed to be have been linked to each other especially the issues of poverty and sickness; however this was not always the case. Some women did have health issues, income issues, and responsibility for childcare as it was the case with the widow interviewed. On the other hand, some had money problems but enjoyed good health and happy family life, some were sick and had lack of family support but were not desperately poor etc. It would be interesting to find out the exact reasons behind these additional issues in the participants lives, their interconnections and connections to gender inequalites in order to support social policy initiatives more in tune with both women's gender needs and the basic needs of the people suffering also from other inequalities.

The project manager, with his holistic women's empowerment model, as well as the women working for the NGO (field workers. interns, volunteers), were a source of new role models and motivational support, and played a key role in how well the participants could be reached and their different gender needs met in the end. The issue of women's cultural value was addressed better than the issue of class. Especially, in raising women's awareness of their own skills (impact on self-esteem) and in raising women's decision-making power, in terms of women's practical gender need for reproductive health information and more strategic gender need in form of legal rights information, the NGO had success.

However, in the matter of gender division of labour there were some issues, because the women's reproductive responsibilities were taken as granted and the activities were mainly planned for meeting the interests of the housewives with more stable life situations. There were little consideration that it might be difficult for women to combine domestic work and childcare with programme activities, or with paid work outside the house with the activities. The vocational trainings were also describing to the ideal of home-based self-employment. In this aspect, women's strategic gender needs of breaking the gender division of labour and the sole responsibility to domestic work and childcare were not addressed at all. There did not seem to be any discussion over other kinds of vocational trainings to break the occupational segregation or involving men more in the work inside

the house. The women's practical gender need of earning an income was met to a certain level (even though perhaps more in helping women to earn a supplementary income or to cope with poverty than overcoming it) and the need for organized childcare during the activities was not considered important.

Thefore, the programme had success in changing women's cultural value at least to some extent, and also in case of some participants improving the income-earning, however, combining these two aspects seemed to have been more challenging, because giving for instance birth control information is an easier task than to question the women's sole responsibility on pregnancies, birth control methods and taking care of the children. Or on the other hand it is easier to help women earn more money than to raise their awareness over who decides about how to use the money or who decides where to work and why certain work places are considered more suitable.

From a Case to an Example

How could the case study be used in policy development? In the light of this NGO that had many entry points for empowerment (holistic women's empowerment model), it would be fair to say that as Kloosterman et al. (2012, 539) put it: "it's a matter of starting somewhere, keeping it going and having persistence". Despite the challenges of the programme many participants seemed to have gotten something whether by access to the educational class, the vocational trainngs or by the chance to attend an event or a visit. Therefore, the case showed that activities do not need to be perfect for making a difference in women's lives, even smaller changes can mean major changes for the women, and even the small changes may have potential for leading to bigger changes in the future. Based on my study, I would argue that some changes like the possible changes in gender division of labour (income-earning, doing "men's work") are more visible and more easily "countable" than changes in cultural value (self-esteem and decision-making). The way I see it, both aspects should nevertheless be equally valued, because both of them are needed for sustainable and positive change in the gender relations.

However, from another side, the case is an example of how the social norms and attitudes based on the patriarchal contract are so deeply imprinted in the minds of people (the targeted participants, their families, NGO workers) that the real transformatory potential in women's empowerment initiatives is sometimes replaced with helping women to cope in

what they are alredy doing instead of creating new ways of challenging, for instance, gender division of labour. Also, the different issues in women's lives showed that the NGO initiatives are not enough by themselves. Clearly, there is a need for greater understanding of the role of the state, social policies and on which basis they are built on, in order to support the process of empowerment on the structural level and interconnecting women's practical and strategic (political) gender needs. Without political commitment practical solutions to help women to cope better are not planned, and without the help of the practical side e.g. childcare or health care facilities, the strategic gender needs and also the substantive equality of women cannot be reached.

7.1 Suggestion for Policy Development

Gender justice cannot be reached by having a narrow-minded view of the issue. Through social and public policies it is possible to support changing the rules of the game that are against women. However, it has to be remembered that policy is never value-free and the way gender and other inequalities are framed will influence what are seen as possible means to solve them. Therefore, political understanding of gender equality and commitment towards its fulfillment is needed in a specific socio-cultural context; how inequality is created (gender, gender relations).

Based on my study I cannot claim any cause and effect relations. I can only speculate that besides the gender inequalities the women were already carrying burdens due to their caste status and that of their their geographical origin (rural) where the state provision of public health care and education are behind the urban development. One could also speculate whether the women had low trust in officials due to the disrespect they had faced due to their caste, or was it because the state government schemes had failed their promises earlier. Here we get to the big structural issues that impact gender equality in India (provision of public health care, education and social security). Let us say you are so poor that you do not have a roof on top of your head, or enough food to eat, or there is a serious sickness in the family (you or your child), your husband or father is dead (patriarchal risk see Cain et al. in Kabeer) and only things you get are some small hand outs from the government (BPL-card etc.) and some overcrowded low quality government hospitals. How can a NGO effectively work on the women's empowerment especially in those cases where there are other serious factors present in the participants' lives?

The way I see it, social and public policies should be improved and supported by the NGOs' new initiatives, programmes and ideas and not to be undermined by them. What are the boundaries of the NGOs? What should be the role of the state in provision of health care, education and social security? No matter how good approach or committed qualified staff the NGO has, they cannot take the responsibilities of the state because the NGOs are not held responsible of their actions; they can do what they want, how they want and as long as they want, and secondly, a NGO wanting to support truly holistic women's empowerment in terms of substantive equality, should provide conditions for good health care, quality education and enough money to live by (especially in cases where the husband has died/ left/abusive and in cases of serious illness or disability). How could this be possible in a large scale no matter how big the organization?

Should the NGOs (and their partners) start taking over the responsibilities of the state? Instead of improving the situation they can actually make it worse. Saarthak's company partner provided foreign volunteers for day care centers. Thus instead of improving the whole day care system, that needs qualified, paid, Indian staff who are trusted and liked by the children and parents alike and showing that this work is valued and sustainable, they implicitly supposed that anyone is able to provide good care of children and this for free.

In the educational class of the NGO, English was taking an important role because of the paying volunteers. One could ask how beneficial is it to start with the English alphabets and words, when some women were not even familiar with the Devanagari (the writing system for Hindi). It was surprising though that the most gifted participants learned to write Hindi (even in the limited time of 10-15 minutes of teaching), and their new literacy or strengthened literacy skills could be beneficial later also in the working life. For the adolescent girls English served most likely a higher purpose as most were still studying and their exposure to English interaction by often native speakers could only have a positive impact on their schooling as well as for their working life.

It was clear that the participants liked the presence of foreigners but, whether education or day care is concerned, I would argue that this approach is not enough and the foreigners should not be the appeal of any NGO programme. In Saarthak's case there was one woman who participated in social events and always came to see the new foreign volunteers and interns; however she never stayed to listen. As discussed earlier, there were many issues in the women's lives and also that of distrust for officials, which would need to be seriously

addressed. However, I would argue that if the programme is good, reliable, meets the women's needs and lasts for longer period of time, the women would surely come even without foreigners.

I would suggest that NGOs could take the role of providing informal education at first for women and girls to raise their awareness of school and studying in general, and on the other hand, raise their awareness of their own skills and streghten their belief that they have what it takes to learn. Based on my analysis this was where the NGO was the most successful. After a while, the motivated participants would be enrolled into good quality educational or vocational training programmes provided by the state taking women's practical gender needs seriously e.g. offering quality childcare. Or the NGOs could take the role of providing information and raising awareness of women's legal and reproductive rights, which, based on the data and analysis were the most needed by the women. However, it would then be the responsibility of the state to create a meachanism to support women in the legal process (counseling, victim support) and to improve the whole public health care system so that all women would have access to quality health care and different forms of contraceptives instead of being pushed into badly performed tubectomies or repreated abortions.

8 References

Alasuutari, Pertti (2011): Laadullinen tutkimus 2.0. Tampere: Vastapaino.

Batliwala, Srilatha (2007): Taking the power out of empowerment – an experimental account. Development in Practice 17 (4-5), 557–565.

Batliwala, Srilatha & Pittman, Alexandra (2010): Capturing Change in Women's Realities. Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID).

Birdsall, Nancy & Mcgreevey, William Paul (1983): Women, poverty and development. In Buvinic, Mayra & Lycette, Margaret A. & McGreevey, William Paul (eds.), Women and Poverty in the Third World. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 3–13.

Borooah, Vani K. (2004): Gender Bias among children in India in their diet and immunization against disease. Social Science & Medicine 58, 1719–1731.

Buvinic, Mayra (1983): Women's Issues in the Third World Poverty: A Policy Analysis. In Buvinic, Mayra & Lycette, Margaret A. & McGreevey, William Paul (eds.), Women and Poverty in the Third World. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 14–31.

Census of India (2011): Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner. New Delhi. Available in http://devinfo.org/indiacensuspopulationtotals2011/ , accessed in 19.10.2014.

Chambers, Robert (1997): Whose Reality Counts? Putting the first last. London: ITDG Publishing.

Crishna, B. (2007): Participatory Evaluation (II) – translating concepts of reliability and validity in fieldwork. Child: Care, Health & Development 33 (3), 224–229.

Cornwall, Andrea (2003): Whose Voices? Whose Choices? Reflections on Gender and Participatory Development.World Development 31 (8), 1325–1342.

Cornwall, Andrea & Anyidoho, Nana Akua (2010): Introduction: Women's Empowerment: Contentions and contestations. Development 53 (2), 144–149.

Denzin, Norman K. (1989): Interpretive interactionism. California & London & New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Desai, Vandana (2005): NGOs, gender mainstreaming, and urban poor communities in Mumbai. Gender and Development 13 (2), 90–98.

Elson, Diane (1995): Male bias in the development process: an overview. In Elson, Diane (ed.), Male bias in development process. Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1–28.

Engle, Patricia L. & Yarbrough, Charles & Klein, Robert E. (1983): Sex Differences in the Effects of Nutrition and Social Environment on Mental Development in Rural Guatemala. In Buvinic, Mayra & Lycette, Margaret A. & McGreevey, William Paul (eds.), Women and Poverty in the Third World. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 198–215.

Fraser, Nancy (2007): Feminist Politics in the Age of Recognition: A Two-Dimensional Approach to Gender Justice. Studies in Social Justice 1 (1), 23–35.

Holli, Anna Maria (2012): Kriittisiä näkökulmia tasa-arvon tutkimukseen. In Kantola, Johanna & Nousiainen, Kevät & Saari, Milja (eds.), Tasa-arvo toisin nähtynä. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.

Kandiyoti, Deniz (1988): Bargaining with Patriarchy. Gender and Society 2 (3), 274–290.

Kabeer, Naila (2011): Between Affliation and Autonomy: Navigating Pathways of Women's Empowerment and Gender Justice in Rural Bangladesh. Development and Change 42 (2), 499–528.

Kabeer, Naila (2000): From feminist insights to an analytical framework An institutional perspective on gender equality. In Kabeer, Naila & Subrahmanian, Ramya (eds.): Institutions, relations and outcomes: framework and case studies for gender-aware planning. London & New York: Zed Books, 3–48.

Kabeer, Naila (1999): Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. Development and Change 30, 435–464.

Kabeer, Naila & Mahmud, Simeen & Tasneem, Sakiba (2011): Does Paid Work Provide a Pathway to Women's Empowerment? Empirical Findings from Bangladesh. IDS Working Paper 375.

Kantor, Paula (2009): Women's Exclusion and Unfavorable Inclusion in Informal Employment in Lucknow, India: Barriers to Voice and Livelihood Security. World Development 37 (1), 194–207.

Kishor, Sunita & Gupta, Kamla (2009): Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in India. National Health Survey (NFHS-3), India 2005-06: International Institute for Population Sciences.

Kloosterman, Jeanette & Benning, Ester & Fyles, Rex (2012): 'Measuring the unmesurable': gender mainstreaming and cultural change. Gender & Development 20 (3), 531–545.

Mazumdar, Indrani & Neetha, N. (2011): Gender dimensions: employment trends in India, 1993-94 to 2009-10. Occasional Paper, 56. New Delhi: Centre for Women's Development Studies.

Miller, Tina & Bell, Linda (2002): Consenting to what? Issues of access, gate-keeping and 'informed' consent. In Mauthner, Melanie & Birch, Maxine & Jessop, Julie & Miller,

Tina (eds.), Ethics in qualitative research. Los Angeles & London & New Delhi & Singapore: SAGE Publications, 53–69.

Mishra, Vinod & Roy, T.K & Retherford, Robert D. (2004): Sex Differentials in Childhood Feeding, Health Care, and Nutritional Status in India. Population and Development Review 30 (2), 269–295.

Molyneux, Maxine (1985): Mobilization without Emancipation? Women's Interests, the State, and Revolution in Nicaragua. Feminist Studies 11 (2), 227–254.

Monkman, Karen & Miles, Rebecca & Easton, Peter (2007): The transformatory potential of a village empowerment program: the Tostan replication in Mali. Women's Studies International Forum 30, 451–464.

Moser, Caroline O.N (1993): Gender planning and development. Theory, Practice and Training. London: Routledge.

Mukhopadhyay, Maitrayee (2014): Mainstreaming Gender or Reconstituting the Mainstream? Gender Knowledge in Development. Journal of International Development 26, 356–367.

Mukhopadhyay, Maitrayee (2004): Maintstreaming Gender or "Streaming" Gender Away: Feminists Marooned in the Development Business. In IDS Bulletin 35.4. Repositioning Feminisms in Development.

Narayan, Uma (1989): The project of feminist epistemology: perspectives from a nonwestern feminist. In Jaggar, Allison M. & Bordo, Susan M. (eds.), Gender/Body/Knowledge. Feminist Reconstructions of Being and Knowing. New Brunswick & London: Rutgers University Press, 256–272.

Palriwala, Rajni & Neetha, N. (2011): Stratified Familialism: The Care Regime in India through the lens of Childcare. Development and Change 42 (4), 1049–1078.

A policy response to gender perceptions (2013): Discussion Paper: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

Rao, Aruna & Kelleher, David (2005): Is there life after gender mainsreaming? Gender and Development 13 (2), 57–69.

Reisman; David (2001): Richard Titmuss: welfare and society (2nd edition). New York: Palgrave.

Richie, Jane & Spencer, Liz (1994): Qualitative data analysis for applied policy research. In Bryman, Alan & Burgess Robert G. (eds.), Analyzing Qualitative Data. London & New York: Routledge, 173-194.

The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World (2013): Human Development Report: UNDP.

Robson, Colin (2002): Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner-Researchers - 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Sen, Amartya K. (1990): Gender and Cooperative Conflicts. In Tinker, Irene (ed.), Persistent Inequalities. Women and World Development. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 123–149.

Sen, Gita & Grown, Karen (1987): Development, crises, and alternative visions: Third World women's perspectives. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Sex ratios and gender biased sex selection: History, debates and future directions (2014): UN Women & UNFPA.

Sharp, Joanne & Briggs, John & Yacoub, Hoda & Hamed, Nabila (2003): Doing gender and development: understanding empowerment and local gender relations. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series, 28 (3), 281–295.

Silverman, David (2000): Doing Qualitative Research. A Practical Handbook. London & Thousand Oaks & New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Stufflebeam, Daniel L. & Shinkfield, Anthony J. (2007): Evaluation Theory, Models, and Applications. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.

Sundaram, Aparna & Vanneman, Reeve (2008): Gender Differentials in Literacy in India: The Intriguing Relationship with Women's Labor Participation. World Development 36 (1): 128–143.

Tinker, Irene (1990): The Making of a Field: Advocates, Practitioners and Scholars. In Tinker, Irene (eds.), Persistent Inequalities. Women and World Development. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 27–53.

Tiwari, R.S. (2001): Feminism and Globalization versus Indian Women Empowerment. In Avasthi, Abha & Srivastava, A.K. (eds.): Modernity, Feminism and Women Empowerment. Jaipur & New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 33–43.

Visvanathan, Nalini (1997): Introduction to Part 1. In Visvanathan, Nalini & Duggan, Lynn & Nisonoff, Laurie & Wiegersma, Nan (eds.), The Women, Gender and Development Reader. London & New Jersey: Zed Books, 17–25.

Wieringa, Saskia (1994): Women's Interests and Enpowerment: Gender Planning Reconsidered. Development and Change 25, 829–848.

Yin, Robert K. (2012): Applications of Case Study Research. Los Angeles & London: SAGE Publications.

Yin, Robert K. (2003): Case Study Research. Design and Methods. London: SAGE Publications.

Young, Kate (1997a): Gender and Development. In Visvanathan, Nalini & Duggan, Lynn & Nisonoff, Laurie & Wiegersma, Nan (eds.), The Women, Gender and Development Reader. London & New Jersey: Zed Books, 51–54.

Young, Kate (1997b): Planning from a gender perspective: making a world of difference. In Visvanathan, Nalini & Duggan, Lynn & Nisonoff, Laurie & Wiegersma, Nan (eds.), The Women, Gender and Development Reader. London & New Jersey: Zed Books, 366–374.