



NOMAD INC 1

Reclaiming our space, Rewriting our stories
Conference Report

Submitted by Praxis Institute for Participatory Practices

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PRAXIS

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1. Conference Context

Though the De-notified, Semi-nomadic and Nomadic Tribes (DNT & NT) constitute 10 per cent of the Indian population, they are excluded from development. The communities are scattered, most families are landless and their literacy rates are amongst the lowest in India. There is a lack of research and data related to these communities, making it difficult to visiblise their challenges in the policy space and for policy makers to develop programmes for their inclusion in the development process.

Set against this background, the aim of the first Nomad Inc. conference was to bring together civil society members, youth from the community, and other stakeholders to shape and guide the discussions on the multiple challenges that govern the lives of DNT & NT communities across our country today and to recognise strength in working collectively. For this, different stakeholders were invited to send in contributions.

The theme of the first Nomad Inc. conference was the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the context of Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNT) of India. Through the pledge to 'Leave No One Behind', the SDGs were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. The 17 SDGs are integrated — that is, they recognise that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. In particular, the conference will focus on three SDG targets in the context of Denotified and Nomadic Tribes in India:

- 1) **SDG 4.3:** Equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.
- 2) **SDG 5.3:** Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage.
- 3) **SDG 8.7:** Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

A call for papers was advertised in the Economic & Political Weekly and on various social media platforms in six different languages. 40 abstracts from various individuals across the country were received and **ten papers** from these were selected based on a few key parameters, including content, innovative ideas, conceptual clarity, etc. for presentation at the conference.

In a parallel engagement, as a bid to bring to the fore more voices from the community, Praxis and Partners in Change initiated a certificate course in participatory research for youth from Denotified and Nomadic Tribes in August 2019.

The objective of the programme was to generate narratives about the issues and challenges faced by these communities. Eight youth from the Nat (Bihar) and Bediya community (Madhya Pradesh) participated in a five-day workshop with sessions ranging from

participatory research, gender, law and basic video making. Following this, over the course of one month they collected data from their own community and other DNT communities living near their area. As a follow up, a three-day workshop was held in October to analyse, along with the youth, the data that they had gathered. Based on this data and their experiences in the field, the fellows developed ideas for four research papers. During their time in the field, the youth also made digital stories based on selected case stories.

2. Conference Inauguration and Keynote

2.1 Inauguration

The conference was inaugurated by Prof. Neera Agnimitra, Head of department, Department of Social Work, Delhi University; Tom Thomas, Chief Executive, Praxis – Institute for Participatory Practices and Prof. V. K. Srivastava, Anthropological Survey of India, who also delivered the keynote address.

In his opening address, Tom shared that these communities have faced marginalisation and neglect since ages. He remarked that the Denotified, Semi-nomadic and Nomadic Tribes earlier faced discrimination from the colonial ‘masters’ and now continue to face discrimination in our society. This, he highlighted, is also demonstrated in the political neglect that they have faced – with over 200 ‘criminal’ communities and 500 nomadic communities having only ten legislators. He shared that the lack of academic research and data on these communities is also a big gap and highlighted that this conference, being co-hosted by the Delhi School of Social Work, was a step towards undoing this neglect by academicians.

Prof. Agnimitra echoed this and shared the need for encouragement of this significant yet neglected research theme of nomadic and tribal communities. She was hopeful that this conference will provide food for thought and help expand knowledge about the Denotified, Semi-nomadic and Nomadic identity. She remarked that it will be important to brainstorm on how such an endeavour could be carried forward so that change continues.

2.2 Keynote address

About Prof. VK Srivastava:

Prof. V. K. Srivastava (M.Sc., Ph.D.) was a Professor in Department of Anthropology till December 2017. He was trained in anthropology and sociology at Department of Anthropology and Delhi school of Economics, University of Delhi. He earned his doctorate in social anthropology from University of Cambridge. Prior to joining the Department as a lecturer in 1985, he taught sociology in Hindu College and was the Teacher-in-charge of the Department of Sociology there. He was appointed as Principal of Hindu College from March 2010-2012 while on lien from Department of Anthropology. He taught courses on anthropological theory and methods, urban anthropology, medical anthropology, tribal and

peasant societies in the Department. Professor Srivastava was recently appointed as Director of Anthropological Survey in the month of March 2017.

Inaugural Speech by Prof V. K. Srivastava

Professor Srivastava started from his experience of both in-depth documentation as an ethnographer and his *expertise* at Marco policy oriented research work – no one knows better the limitation that language creates. The importance of language and terminologies was one of the primary focuses in his speech.

He brought in his experience of being in academics for over forty-one years along with being involved in macro level national projects, he asserted that the assumption that there's no information is a myth. He further suggested that, such assumptions would be wrong premise to begin our work and we should acknowledge that there is enough information, its just that we don't know about it. Through comparative lens he analyses his experience of 6 years (during his Phd) in Cambridge and decades of rigorous research in Indian universities, he shared that like Cambridge even our universities and even non university space has lots of documentation. Its just that we don't have digitized and organized literature as compared to world renowned universities.

He shared that he got to learn a lot in helping Renke Commission and it was first opportunity for him to know so much about these communities. He also shared his privilege of writing a chapter on 'definition' of De-notified and nomadic community which remains unedited to this date. He suggested that it would be worthwhile for everyone to revisit his work on the definition.

He shared further that, as a part of National Project with Anthropological survey of India he got opportunity to understand what is Ex-official member - he emphasis-ed that one is a member by virtue of one's position. He also shared his experience of working with Idaate Commission. He clarified that the objective was not to critically analyse it, as it was all documented and he urged everyone to read it.

National Project

Further, he explained the ideas behind 'Concept National Project - a macro level study' where objective was getting entire information and attempting generalization about existing literature on De-Notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Community.

He said that there was information about 13 crore to 15 crore people and 801 communities which are possibly part of this category and a lot of this is already documented. The challenge, however, was to now, bring all the information in 1 page. He shared about his project of creating a National Data Consortium and need for creating a monograph based on collated information. For instance if one wants access to all the available literature from both English and non English language, there would be one place to access all of it.

He emphasized for need of in-situ study. Since there was Governments support there was

scope for in-depth, analysis of data. He shared that work had already begun. Information regarding 80 communities has already been collected. The idea was now to convert the analyzed literature into 'Monographs', for instance, for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of Nicobar islands a lot of information has been collated and analyzed to create a monograph and update it as a continuous process.

He also shared his optimism when heard senior political leaders and ministers of stature like Shree Piyush Goyal talk about necessity to research about this community in his speech. He further shared that *Niti Aayog*, has given project to study 64 communities, 29 communities are on Andhra and Karnataka alone. He also shared that a lot of work was now digitized and can be accessed through websites and newsletters. He again emphasized that there was enough information, it is just that we don't have access to it. He also said that, this was why working with the community was very important.

Prof Srivastava further explained the scope of his ongoing work and said there were 3 levels in which work unfolds.

1st mandate is to study about marginalised community, for instance, our study on 4635 community in India and bringing out Monographs from grass-root documentation work.

2nd mandate is theoretical analysis of data based on trend and interpretation and

3rd mandate is restudy and updation of information.

Need for redefinition and rework on terminologies

He further explained that his work was based on approach suggested by Prof Edmond Leech – "*Society is a process in time*", highlighting that society is dynamic, it changes. He drew instance from his work on Sentinelese people and explained how the work with constant revisits has evolved over the period of time. He further illustrated that we assume Sentinelese people are un-connected. But in reality since they are affected by environmental crisis, they are impacted, so it would be unfair to suggest that they are isolated. Its just that we don't know enough and we need continuous updation of our information.

He went on to explain the importance of 'context' even when dealing with language. If we take words from one context to another, we may miss the historical context. Concepts are not empty: for instance 'stigma' term carries a certain image. He complained that we keep repeating the term 'stigma' without reading what Goffman had to say about it. He further explained Goffman's theory that, we don't need to literally translate a term but to understand the meaning in its axiological¹ context and interpret it accordingly. For instance, in North India, '*ghumakkar*' is used in a negative connotation; the term closest to it is '*vegabond*'. He further explains that, we forget that nomads have a cultural and civilizational history. He further encouraged students to do intense field work. He recollects his own experince and suggestion from DM Mazumdar who had then suggested to him that young students should get lost in community in long periods of field work. There was so much

¹the study of the nature of value and valuation, and of the kinds of things that are valuable

energy and enthusiasm in young people. He further recollects his long field work with Raikar Rehbari community, walking with them, riding camels with them, living with them, and learning difference between village and dhaani. He explained that while the village was a settled kind of civilization, on the other hand Dhaani was outside the settled village community, they were always ready to move, the state of mind is always on the move. He explained cultural significance of '*Flimsy hut*', which people always kept prepared be packed to move. He further quotes Marshall Sahlins to explain cultural value that is historically associated within indigenous culture and society and they were the most affluent class because of richness in their social value system. Professor encouraged post developmental concepts which challenges the idea of universality and alternatively suggests 'pluriversity'. He therefore asserted the need to go beyond the conventional history of the criminalization of the DNT communities and rediscover their lost historical narrative.

He further explained the necessity to redefine terminologies because some of the terminologies re-inforced stigma by recreating the stigmatized image. Illucidating further he said from his own experincethat he has seen phenomenon of constant movement in progressive direction within these communities with reliance of more on nature and less material hoarding. He therefore suggests *gatimaan* or *gatisheel* as better alternative terminologies for these communities. He emphasized on positive history rather than a negative, stigmatized and sometimes derogatory terminologies. He therefore demanded repealing of "habitual offenders act" as in its very definition it stigmatizes and otherises the community and such law has no meaning when there are already existing legal procedure to deal with criminality. He quotes Dsouza's work to explain that it was wrong to put a criminal label on entire community because of crime done by individuals and especially when some of these communities were criminalized just because of their contribution in fighting against colonial powers. He further quotes Ardener's terminology of 'muted groups' and explains that these are groups which have faced lot of historical oppression and subjugation to the extent that they have stopped articulating about their oppression. He emphasized on vulnerability faced especially by women, children and disabled members of the most disadvantaged community.

Perspective on Goffman's stigma

Addressing the issue of stigma, Prof. Srivastava quoted Goffman to explain the aspect of continuity, persistence and reproduction of stigma. From his everyday observation he draws everyone's attention to the manner in which people generally engage with the people that come to work or do household chores in their houses. He explains that the look of disgust that robs these workers of their dignity is best way to understand how stigma works. He further uses instances of everyday insensitivity in dealing with "*uncultured*" with a notion that "*they can't learn anything, they are dull, let's put them to more work.*" So they were put into work of cleaning the school. Law enforcement agencies treat people in the similar manner.

'Empathy' according to Prof. Srivastava is the most important, not only in academic work but also in our everyday life. He highlighted the need to understand the situation and context of

someone's life before passing a judgement and to understand the factors that contributed to those situations. The professor suggests that we have a biased historical perspective. He suggests the need to listen to oral narratives from these communities with an empathetic understanding. We need to work with idea that only when we listen can we succeed.

To conclude, Prof. Srivastava summarised his keynote by highlighting the following points:

1. We should not neglect literature that already exists. We need to go beyond English language, for instance Mahashweta Devi has written so much about the sabar community. One should not miss out on the knowledge in vernacular language by asking people for sources, newspaper articles, and photographs and learn everything that people have to offer. People have lots of stories, they are a repository of knowledge.
2. There is a need to examine concepts very closely. We need to do away with derogatory remarks and connotations, which become instruments for the reproduction of stigma.
3. We need to do extensive field work, despite challenges of timeline and deliverables. The best use of both quantitative and qualitative inputs should be done.
4. No society is homogeneous; there are different perspectives of truth. It is important to incorporate different perspectives when we undertake any study – be it children, disabled, etc. there is a need to understand these nuances. Society has contesting perspectives, and if so, there are different kinds of vulnerabilities and their experiences that must be understood from different perspectives.

He ended his lecture on a very optimistic and encouraging note of 'HOPE'. He said, "*Hope is motive force of life, let's start and collectively do the best that each of us can.*"

3. Paper Presentation

3.1 Issues of reproductive health after child marriage: A study among NT-DNT Community In Nashik District Of Maharashtra, authored by Rahul Sarwade, Dr. Jagruti Hankare, Trupti Chavan

Presented by: Rahul Sarwade

Research Methodology: The researchers triangulated qualitative and quantitative data to understand the issue of reproductive health after child marriage among Nomadic Tribal Women of Nashik District of Maharashtra. The tribal communities in the Nashik district selected for the sampling were Pardhi, Joshi, Vaddar, Mariaiwale, Vaidu, Laman, Vanjari, Madari, Sayyed from four villages from Nashiktaluka and one village each from Niphad, Dindori and Trimbaktalukas.

Paper summary: Quantitative analysis shows extremely high rates of child marriage with 43.5 per cent women marrying before the age of 14 and a majority, 54.5 per cent women marrying between the ages of 15 to 18 years. Quantitative analysis also proves the hypothesis that high child mortality rate is generally seen as one of the causal factors behind high rates of child marriage. 40.6 per cent respondents reported that they had lost their child in the past. Among them 52.6 per cent children died before completing the first month of their life, whereas 26 per cent children died before completing their fifth birthday. Ninety two per cent respondents knew at least any one method of family planning. Awareness was highest for female sterilization (92.5 per cent). In terms of birth control techniques, only 22.5 per cent respondents knew about condoms, 24 per cent about oral pills and 34.5 per cent about vasectomies.

The qualitative aspects of the research looked at respondents' perceptions about services available for maternal health care and socio-cultural practices, belief systems and health seeking practices.

3.2. Indian Constitution's Article 14, seldom applicable to semi-nomads and their children, authored by Advocate. R. Karunanidhi

Presented by: Advocate R. Karunanidhi

Methodology: Case studies of Kuravan and KalOttar communities in Tamil Nadu were researched. These communities are engaged as fortune-tellers, snake charmers, grindstone makers, jugglers, basket makers, 'Boom-Boom Maattukarar' (Oxen used as performing animals) and beaded ornament sellers.

Paper summary: Through case studies the researcher attempts to explain how the stigmatised identity is reinforced by the criminal justice system because of both

pre-existing biases and systemic persecution of the community. For instance, the paper argues that there is a clear trend in Tamil Nadu that the accused from these communities, are compelled to admit to the prescribed guilt and pay a minimum amount as fine to stay out of prison. Once the accused pleads guilty and pays the fine amount, the criminal records automatically place her/him as a convicted person. Thereafter, opinions of the judicial magistrates are always not favourable towards the convict.

In one of the cases shared, around fifteen policemen arrested two adults and an infant aged a year and four months from their house. They belonged to the Kuruvan community. All arrest guidelines were flouted and the mandatory procedure of informing nearby people on arrests wasn't undertaken. As a legal intervention, a Habeas Corpus Petition was made before the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court. The police responding to this petition, after a gap of few days, placed before the court that the infant's mother attempted to steal One Hundred Rupees.

3.3. Understanding the Intersection of Gender, Performativity and Patriarchy amongst the folk dancers of Kalbelia Community, authored by Arushi Raj, Ayndri, Sweta Dutta

Presented by: Arushi Raj, Ayndri, Sweta Dutta

Methodology: Qualitative study based on secondary literature and field based oral narratives of the Kalbelias (traditionally a snake charming community) largely dispersed in the western and south-western regions of Rajasthan.

Paper summary: The paper tries to understand complex phenomenon of the operation of patriarchy as perceived by the women of the Kalbeila community who make a living through performances. The paper attempts to use Sanskritisation as a theoretical basis to understand the inter-linkage between the patriarch, community aspirations and the historical social baggage by different stakeholders in the Kalbelia community. The paper argues that on one hand, norms of patriarchy are broken down because of women being bread-winners and at the same time the control lies in the hands of the non-working or dependant male members of the community. Since women are in an occupation which is oppressive, they face a lot of harassment and are at the receiving end of systemic violence, but it also gives them financial currency to negotiate with oppressive patriarchal practices.

The paper also discusses the dual emotionality of women feeling pride in their occupation, which has also given them their own identity and recognition globally and yet coping with shame and disregard for being in a socially stigmatised profession. The stigma is reinforced by patriarchal narratives, for instance the narrative of how 'Gulabo Sapera' was excommunicated for going out for the first time for dancing outside the community.

Discussion and suggestions: Discussions mainly consisted of debates on the need to go beyond colonial narratives, into pre-colonial history which is a gap in most of the articulation around Nomadic and De-notified communities and discussions around the phenomenon of sanskritisation, and how it operates; apart from suggestions on the scope of research on these themes.

3.4. Ensuring higher education is one step closer to stop child prostitution in the Bedia Community, authored by Ramani Ranjan

Presented by: Ramani Ranjan

Methodology: The research is based on oral narratives of life experiences of girls of the Bedia community with special reference to the ones who have completed higher secondary education. Through purposive snowballing sampling, 15 participants were identified for the study with representation from six districts of Madhya Pradesh.

Paper summary: The paper makes an attempt to understand how the participatory approach of the State government of Madhya Pradesh to promote education among the DNT helped the community with upward mobility in terms of occupation, and how education played an instrumental role in reducing the entry of young girls of the DNT community in sex work and its impact on child marriage.

The paper draws linkages between child marriage, lack of access to quality education and lack of fundamental citizenship entitlements as some of the biggest hurdles in access to education. It draws on some of the positive success stories where family members play important roles in helping children access and continue education. The researcher also discussed some of the possible solutions to the existing problem along with asserting how education has potential for transformation and emancipation of community.

The paper underlines how social stigma of criminalized history was still a reason that caused discrimination of children from this community and how such narratives are reinforced in day to day lives making it increasingly difficult for women to study.

3.5. The Child Marriage Conundrum: Learning from the Bedia Case, authored by Anuja Agrawal

Presented by: Anuja Agrawal

Methodology: Paper is based on the researcher's own ethnographic qualitative study with the Bedia Community in Madhya Pradesh.

Paper summary: The paper problematises the mainstream or conventional notion associated with child-marriage and asserts the need to understand nuances associated with complex structural phenomenon from within. The researcher uses her

in-depth study with the Bedia community to underline that there is need for reassessment of the conventional measuring rod and allow lived experience and survival mechanisms faced by community to understand and address the problem.

It was shared that the administrative/legal definition of child and adult is very limiting and distant from social perception of childhood and adulthood. It doesn't take into account the community's socio-cultural perception of adults to be someone who has reached the age of puberty. The law becomes an instrument, which works against agency of community as well as individual.

The researcher emphasised that child marriage and child sex work cannot be seen in isolation from one another. In many instances, child marriage is the only resort for women who don't want to indulge in sex work. It is an unfortunate fact that women have limited choice, but these limited choices need to be understood in a context where in reality it is about a negotiation for survival. Popular perception and campaigns are gendered and see only the girl child as victims of child marriage and participants in sex work, while the boy child who is a very important component and stakeholder is often excluded. The role of the boy child is central in society where gender roles are more nuanced and societal insecurity (shortage of marriageable girls and expectation for payment of bride price) as well as the withdrawal of their women from the marriage market make marriage a very insecure affair for the Bedia.

The paper does not support child marriage but provides a perspective in understanding it from a more nuanced and communities' viewpoint. The paper ends on a note that there is need for long-term engagement and that education can play a pivotal role in bringing transformation.

3.6. Securing livelihood in religious fairs: Study of Pardhi migrants in Kumbh (Prayagraj), authored by K. Nidhi

Presented by: K. Nidhi

Methodology: Qualitative method with in-depth interviews of 30 women from two clusters of the Pardhi community, who are seasonal migrants from Jalgaon district in Maharashtra.

Paper summary: The first part of the paper deals with the socio-economic and historical background in which stigma of criminality was gifted to the Pardhi community, beginning with the context in which the study has been conducted. In the second part of the paper, focus shifts towards understanding the nature and the process of migration of Pardhi migrants. The third and last part of the paper analyzes the everyday life world of pardhi migrants to understand the ways through which they face atrocities and agitations in finding their space in Kumbh Mela.

The paper explores history of criminalization in colonial period, their struggle after that, causal factors that pushes them to chose street vending and seasonal migration and everyday coping mechanisms in dealing with life. The paper also explores challenges faced by the changing nature of festivals like Kumbh, and challenges that the community faces because of the increased role of the admiration and State in these popular festivals.

3.7. Impact of introducing biometrics in Public Distribution System in Tribal outskirts of Udaipur, authored by Vaani Garg and Malvika Aggarwal

Presented by: Vaani Garg

Methodology: Observation from survey in tribal areas in the outskirts of Udaipur.

Paper summary: The paper explores the challenges faced by community members due to technological modifications in the public distribution system. The paper highlighted the lack of transparency and accountability because of new technology, which no one really understood. Places where fingerprints, hand written records were used worked more effectively, mainly because of peoples' familiarity with it. The paper also explains how the system has not been designed to ensure equal rights and entitlements to all.

4. Presentation by Community Research Fellows

4.1. “Hum Natt nahi hain”: ‘We are not Natt!’, authored by Shakila Khatoon

Presented by: Shakila Khatoon

Methodology: Survey of women between the age group of 15-25 in 5 villages was done in Arariya, Bihar. The paper is based on fieldwork where group discussions and personal interviews were held with a number of different community members.

Paper summary: The paper focuses on Amona Grampanchayat, Block Forbesganj, District Araria, where families of 500 Nat community members have chosen to change their name and live under the name of the Shekh (higher) caste. In this research what emerged is that due to this new identity, the community has better opportunities in education, jobs, as well as access to government schemes and services.

The paper begins with a brief history of criminalisation of the DNT community generally and specifically in areas of Arariya. In four out of the five villages, inspite of falling in the category of Scheduled Caste, women and children have negligible access to education. Less than 10 per cent girls go to school. Caste based discrimination by teachers, children and parents of other communities was seen as the main reason for parents not sending their children to school along with poor infrastructural quality of schools.

In Amona Village more than 80 per cent children have access to education. Their socio-economic condition is much better. On the basis of conversations, the researcher suspects that hiding their name and changing it to Shekh has helped the community a lot, especially socially. The researcher shared a strong desire to study this phenomenon in more detail in her subsequent research.

4.2. “Ek kadam siksha ki orr” (A step towards education): Resistance faced by Beria Community women in pursuit for education, authored by Jatin Chhari, Megha Chhari

Presented by: Megha Chhari and Jatin Chhari

Methodology: The study is based on the survey of 21 women from the Bedia community in Morena, Madhya Pradesh. Women were from age group of 12-24 years.

Paper summary: The paper explores the challenges in attending higher education by the Bedia community in Morena, Madhya Pradesh. This community is largely engaged in bar dance and sex work. Through interviews and group discussions with

various community leaders, NGO workers, school dropouts and teachers, the paper highlights four key factors that inhibit young children from enrolling in higher education. These factors are: caste discrimination; poverty; lack of awareness and access to proper documentation; and young girls being the main source of income for most families.

All the women were engaged in work earning a livelihood for themselves and family members. Only 1 out of 21 women was in the occupation of running a beauty parlour and the rest were in the occupation of bar dance or commercial sex work.

The reason for not continuing education mainly included financial constraints as well as the family not being interested in the sending girl child for education. There is also a lack of awareness about government schemes which was one of the major reasons for girls not studying. The paper also explored some important suggestions, for instance, awareness programs and campaigns, encouraging parents and anganwadi workers to educate children, entitlements of basic documents and employment guarantee etc.

4.3. Education, caste or poverty: The impact of child marriage in Bihar authored by Farida and Roshni Khatoon

Presented by: Farida Khatoon

Methodology: This research was carried out through a survey of 32 women within age group of 16-25 years spread across five villages of Arariya, Bihar.

Paper summary: (as quoted by researchers) “We both are from Bihar Arariya district. Farida is from the Nat community and Roshini is from the Kulahiya community. We wanted to write this paper specifically to understand two things - First, we wanted to understand the impact of Child Marriage on young girls and boys and secondly, we wanted to understand the reasons that forced families to marry their children off at such a young age. Through some of our interviews and group discussions, we also gained knowledge about the impact this child marriage has – especially on young girls. Most of the girls we spoke to shared that they did not even know what marriage was when they were married off. We want to make people understand that because of all the problems related to poverty, caste and traditions of our forefathers, there is a high percentage of child marriage in our villages. We want the government and society to stop this ill practice and we also want the government to take strict action against the caste discrimination faced by the Karodi community.”

Out of 32 women, 22 were married. 11 out of married women were married before the age of 17. There was only 1 girl in age category of 16-20 who was still continuing her education. 44 per cent women shared that they did not study

because they were married and 11 per cent women said that they didn't feel safe to go to school alone.

The research especially focused on the Karodi community which was most deprived. 10 out of 10 children were married as a child. The researchers felt that poverty, ancient traditions and family's honour were the main reasons for child marriage and discontinuity of education. The paper also shares a humiliating story of discrimination faced by girls at the hands of children of other communities and treatment they get from teachers.

4.4. Impact of education on Natt community in Bihar authored by Alam and Twinkle

Presented by: Alam

Methodology: The paper is based on survey of 91 women and narratives of their family spread across five villages.

Paper summary: (as quoted by the researcher) "We both are from the Nat community, we want to study why girls in our community are unable to study in school and for the few that do go to school, why they have to leave school in between? Why do girls in our community get married at such an early age? Why do girls in our community become sex workers? In today's world, why is our community still backward? These are a few of the questions that we want to explore through our research paper. Through our paper we want to highlight that unlike what most people of higher castes think, girls from the Nat community are not born to become prostitutes. If all the girls of our community are educated and receive a little handholding support in higher education, these girls have the potential to make their community and their parents proud and become successful in whichever field they want to work in."

The paper begins with an oral narrative of key stakeholders in the community where the researchers attempt to trace their own history through oral narratives of their fathers and village elders. Out of the sample of 91 surveys, 53 women were married and rest were unmarried. Out of 53 married women 31 were married when they were children.

Only 24 per cent girls were getting access to education while 76 per cent girl didn't pursue education. 44 per cent women stated poverty as the reason for not studying while 42 per cent women said that because of marriage they didn't pursue education. And 14 per cent women suggested that caste discrimination was the reason for not continuing education.

The paper also explores the possible solutions for problems including opening of schools, changing mindsets of parents and community members towards education and availing facilities for access to education.