CASE STUDIES

Case Study – 1. MANORAMA

Manorama was awarded The Right Livelihood Award in 2006. Considered the alternative Noble Prize and the world’s premier award for personal courage and social transformation, it got her the recognition as the sub-continent’s most effective organiser and advocate for Dalit women. She was also one among the thousand nominees for the 1,000 Peace women for Nobel Peace Prize in 2005.

As General Secretary of Women’s Voice Karnataka, an organization working for the rights of women of poorer sections, women living in the slums and working in the unorganized sector, she has never hesitated to take up their issues. During the 1980s and the 90s, she was in the forefront of mass struggles against eviction and Operation Demolition by the State Government of Karnataka and organized massive processions and fought legal cases on their behalf. She also enjoys the distinction of establishing the first trade union in the country in 1987 for domestic workers in Bengaluru and strived for inclusion in the Minimum Wages.

One among the numerous key offices Manorama holds is president of the National Alliance of Women. Pointing to the fact that it all begins at home, Manorama believes that the situation in some families is not a very happy one, with a level playing field still a distant dream.

“Many women do not enjoy autonomy. They are vulnerable and dependent on male partners who make all the decisions. Although it looks as if women are progressing on many fronts, in terms of power relations, it is still unequal. Our law application is unequal and our laws are patriarchal. One women become widowed; they are left to their own defence. Property is taken away. This scenario extends to public life and politics.”
If one is looking for solutions, Manorama spells out a blue-print for that. “How do people gain power? It is political power that gives you social power and economic power. Women miss to get into politics in order to acquire power not for themselves but for a whole lot of people. It was thought that through the Constitution, women will automatically get power and men will be out. The Panchayati Raj system, no matter however flawed, has its merits. Women make decisions and offer resistance. Democracy without women is non democracy without a woman is no democracy. I am not talking of politics for making money. Our generating is not for garnering wealth but for reclamation of the human spirit. Women have better brain capabilities and if it is put to use have such bright women, imagine what can be achieved.”

Manorama’s vision for the future is to start a Political academy. She has already prepared the ground through specific capacity building exercises and has been instrumental in training around 300 women in the country to equip them for community action and leadership positions at the Panchayat, Zilla Perished and State level.

Manorama is the president of the National Federation of Dalit Women. She “Grew up in a fairly progressive atmosphere with Christian values where you gave freely and treated people with respect.” Theirs was an open house and her parents extended all kinds of support to visitors from helping to fill out job applications, money order forms and for a consultation on sundry matters. Her parents’ lifestyle and dedication inspired Manorama, and the upbringing she received reminded her that whatever she did, she had to serve the poor.

**Early Days**

Initially Manorama wanted to become a doctor or a collector. While in Chennai she worked in slum, squatter settlements and realized that working for the urban poor could be her
vocation. At her father’s suggestion she enrolled for a Master in Social Work. Later she moved to villages, understood caste structures, land patterns and the problems of Dalits.

Right from the beginning of her foray into the social sector she set about organizing oppressed people, getting them to claim their rights and become stake holders in development. “I grew up on that kind of pitch,” she says.

Manorama closes with a pointer. “The situation of Dalits can’t be changed by Dalits themselves. Dalits must lead and other progressive people must join in this struggle. As Indian citizens we have a role to play in transforming pains into power.”

**Case Study – 2: NALUKURTHI VIJAYA**

She was president of Angalakuturu Grama Panchayati. This Grama Panchayati is reserved for Scheduled Caste General according to 73rd constitutional amendment Act 1993. She studied upto 5th class only. She got membership of Telugu Desam Political Party. She participated in Co-operative Society elections and she expressed she has exercised of her right to vote in all elections.

She is member in Self Help Group (SHG) and expressed that reason for join in SHGs is in promoting savings. In her SHGs group she had 10 members. She has an idea about banking before joining SHGs members. She was saving Rs.50/- per every month. Her group was taken revolving fund for Rs. 10,000/-. Her groups is taken a loan Rs. 1,00,000/-. Her group is maintaining attendance register, minutes books, group meetings are conducting every month and monthly savings are collecting in group meeting. The installments for repayment is in between 10 to 20 months were fixed. She expressed that she is using the money taken form SHGs for her childerns education.
Nalukurthi Vijaya is in between 41-50 years age group. She is one of the sample respondent Dalit women. She belongs to Madiga Dalit Sub-Section. She is living R.C.C. House and Nuclear family. She stays with her three children, husband and her occupation is as an agricultural labour. She is participating in their community activities of their village like community festival, cultural programmes and agricultural and other works. According to the information given by her that the village streets have arranged according to their caste. She expressed that she has been participating in all community functions, festivals and other meetings along with other caste people. She reeled that there is no discrimination in entering temples and water tanks and she reported no untouchability practice is there in their village. She expressed that the inter caste marriages will certainly bring changes in the society. She has accepted equal recognition to Dalit women and other women. She never faced discrimination on the name of the caste in their village.

She was aware about MGNREGS and having MGNREGS job card her family. She told had undergone Family planning and encouraged good number of women. She had awareness about the help rendering by Govt. to pregnant women until the delivery in the Government Hospitals and she informed that she aware about 108, 104 medical services in their villages provided by the government. She expressed that these services have been providing by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for any emergencies in every village. The patient will be picked up by just telephone call to the nearest primary health centre.

**Case Study – 3: DRAKSHAPALI DHEVAMANI**

Drakshapali Dhevamani is in between 31-40 years age group she was one of the sample respondent of Kativaram village. She belongs to Mala Dalit Sub- Section. She was living thatched house and nuclear family. She stays with her two childrens, husband and her
occupation is as an agricultural labour. She is an illiterate and she has been participating in community activities in their village community festivals. Her husband was take care of the family financial responsibility. She was told that their village having separate street for each caste and told did found could not practiced untouchability in their village. Dalit women are allowed into the temples and she expressed that the inter caste marriages will bring changes in society. She is not carrying the profession of their own caste and she felt that Dalit women have not looked down as comparing to the women in the society. She expressed that there equal opportunities to Dalit women in comparing to the other caste women and she accepted that equal reorganization is been getting to Dalit women in comparing with other women. She did not find discrimination on the name of the caste in their village. She has been earning her family livelihood through daily wages. She has been encouraging their family member for education and also to their relatives, neighbours and their community people. She has been exercising her right to vote in every election.

She joined in Self Help Group (SHG) and expressed the reason for join in SHGs for promoting savings and getting loans. Her SHG group consists of 10 members. She did not know an idea about banking before joining SHG members and saving Rs.50/- per every month. She informed that her group did not take any revolving fund. Their group was taken loan an amount Rs.1,50,000/-. Her groups is maintaining attendance register, minutes books, group meetings are conducting meetings for every month and monthly savings are collecting in group meeting. The installments for payment have fixed in between 10 to 20 months for repayment of loan amount. She has been using money withdrawing from SHG for her childerns educations.

She was aware about MGNREGS and having MGNREGS job card in her family. She knows about family planning and she was undergone family planning. She was aware about
Rajivee Arogyasri Scheme. Her family was having Rajivee Arogyasri card and her family members did not treated under Rejivee Arogyasri Card as there was no need. She was awareness about the help rendering by Govt. to pregnant women until the delivery in the Government Hospitals and she was aware about 108, 104 medical services in their villages provided by the government. These services have been providing by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for emergencies in every village. The patient will be picked up by just telephone call to the nearest primary health centre. She revealed that they could overcome from the social backwardness and reported that the high percent of the poorest in the poor in society could be found in the scheduled caste people. According to her hat the reasons may be lot of suppression to these caste people since generation together, though the constitution has provided equal rights and opportunities they could not come up financially as their poverty make them very poor again. Poverty is a viscerally to become poor and very backward incomparing other sections of people in the society.