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GENDER FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS OF KUDUMBASHREE IN KERALA ADDRESSING COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Authors: Monisha U* & Norvy Paul**

<p>Special Issue Editors ¹Norvy Paul ²Johnson Mavole ³Arya Chandran</p> <p>¹The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi ²St. Augustine University of Tanzania, Mwanza City ³Bharathamatha School of Social Work, Kochin, India</p> <p>Chief Editor Web: www.ijsc.org Email: info@ijsc.org</p> <p>Editing Oversight Impericals Consultants International Limited</p>	<p>Abstract: <i>The central government and the state government had declared a lockdown to prevent the COVID-19 outbreak. Due to these restrictions on passenger transport services, closure of all commercial establishments, the prohibition of a gathering of more than five persons, use of taxis, autos, or private vehicles had devastating effects on people's lives. Many NGOs and Government organisations had initiated several activities to beat this pandemic and lockdown issues. Here researcher attempted to undergo gender framework analysis among community organisations of Kudumbashree. Kudumbashree is the largest network of women collectives in India. The Community Development Society of Kudumbashree had initiated many community organisations to support the people to cross this pandemic situation of COVID-19-19. For this study, the researchers had adopted the Capacities and Vulnerabilities analysis Framework (CVA) developed by Anderson and Woodrow (1989), which is widely using gender analytical framework to analyse humanitarian interventions during disaster preparedness. The study has conducted among the Community Development Society (CDS) of Kudumbashree in Nadathara Panchayath in Thrissur district, Kerala state. Results found that Gender inequalities exist in society, and patriarchal attributes cause vulnerabilities of women. Kudumbashree activities build the capacities of women. During the period of COVID-19-19, preventive activities, CDS of Kudumbashree could initiate many Community organisations based on their capacities.</i></p> <p>Keywords: Gender, Community Organisations, Kudumbashree, capacities, vulnerabilities.</p>
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*PhD Scholar, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Email: mohan.monisha2@gmail.com

** Senior Lecturer in Social Work, The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Email: fnorbypaul@gmail.com

Introduction

On January 30, 2020, India's first COVID-19 case had reported in the state of Kerala. On March 23, Kerala state announced complete lockdown in the state till March 31, and the Central government announced the complete lockdown up to March 31. Later Central government declared four extensions of the lockdown period with few exemptions. The restrictions on passenger transport services, closure of all commercial establishments, the prohibition of a gathering of more than five persons, taxis, autos, or private vehicles have devastating effects on people's lives (Ramakrishnan, 2020). Public health and hygiene issues were the priority focus to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks around the world. Governments and non-government organisations have initiated several community organisations to beat this pandemic and lockdown issues. Kerala development perspectives based on the *Kerala model of development* have been hailed worldwide, and it is successive in the human resource development sector, health sector, and the education sector. These advantages resulted in the successful dealing of the COVID-19 pandemic. The approach of WHO on prevention of COVID-19 is based on "test, trace, isolate and treat" and has been followed strictly in Kerala from the very first incident of case. Kerala state has been successfully beating the shortage of public goods dealing with basic needs and services through the effective public distribution system. Kerala state has been organised various campaigns from break the chain campaign to the community kitchen to cross the crisis (Roy & Babu, 2020).

Here, the researchers attempted to take up gender framework analysis of community organisations organised by the CDSs (Community Development Societies) of the Kudumbashree mission during this crisis. Kudumbashree is the largest network of women collectives in India. For this study, the researcher had adopted the Capacities and Vulnerabilities analysis Framework (CVA), which is widely using gender analytical framework in particular to analyses humanitarian interventions during disaster preparedness. It is adapted from Anderson and Woodrow (1989). A crisis will become a disaster when society's capacity could not cope. Hence the emergency interventions should frame to increase the level of capacity of people to reduce the vulnerabilities. The term capacities used here describes the existing strengths of individuals, community, and social groups related to their physical, material, social resources, attitudes, and beliefs. It will determine the level of ability of people to cope with the crisis around them. The term vulnerabilities used here describes the factors that hinder people's ability to cope with the abrupt onset disaster. It

makes people more vulnerable to disasters. Vulnerability refers to the incapability of an individual, community, or social system to withstand the unfavourable effect of an environment. UNISDR defines, "vulnerability is the characteristics, and circumstances of a community, system or asset that make it susceptible to the damaging effects of a hazard" (UNISDR,2009).

Kudumbashree is a network of women. During the crisis of Covid, the NHG members of Kudumbashree have organised many activities to curtail the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic situation. Gender inequalities and patriarchal structures that exist in society lead to the vulnerabilities of women. Amidst these vulnerabilities, they tried to organise many activities by using their capacities. Most women have less decision-making power, less control over resources, lack access to credit, technology, markets, and less access to education and employment. Women are sufferers of environmental disasters as they are living very close to natural resources. Women's mobility for disaster relief works may be restricted by the family's patriarchal structure (Bloch, 2020).

1. Gender Analytical framework (CVA Matrix) of Community Organisation.

Community organisation is one of the primary methods of social work. It deals with the problems of the community through the collective involvement of people. It is considered the macro method of social work as it solves the social problems affected by a large number of people. Capacities and Vulnerabilities analysis Framework (CVA) has developed to help the agencies plan and implement strategies during emergencies and achieve long-term social and economic development. "CVA is based on the central idea that people's existing strengths(capacities) and weaknesses or (Vulnerabilities) determine the impact that a crisis has on them as well as the way they respond to the crisis" (March, Smith, and Mukhopadhyay,2010). For the present study, the CVA framework has been adapted based on the principles of community organisation.

2. Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis Framework (CVA)

In the CVA framework, needs are not considered practical or strategic gender needs. Instead, here used the need as an "immediate requirement for survival or recovery from the crisis" Anderson and Woodrow (1989). Analysis matrix of CVA distinguishes capacities and Vulnerabilities by using three categories, physical, social, motivational capacities, and vulnerabilities.

Physical or material capacities and vulnerabilities: It includes the environment of people they live in, their skills, work, housing, land, knowledge, technologies, food, water supply, access, and control over assets. Above all, things are different for women and men. Men and men undergo deprivation for resources during the crisis, but they will influence on gender inequalities to achieve the resources.

Social or organisational capacities and vulnerabilities: This category refers to the social fabric, including the formal political structure and informal social systems, including family and community systems and decision-making patterns within the family and community. Gender analysis is vital for this part because women's and men's roles vary in an organisation. Women may have excluded from the part of decision making, and women may have connected well with the network to exchange goods and services. Divisions within society in terms of race, culture, class, and ethnicity may weaken society's social fabric.

Motivational and attitudinal capacities and susceptibilities: These criteria include cultural and factors based on the religion, history of the crisis, and emergency relief expectations. A crisis can boost the community's extraordinary efforts and help increase the capacities of the people. However, when people are dependent and feel victimised, they cannot cope with the situation. For men and women, gender inequalities increase these vulnerabilities.

3. COVID-19 Outbreak and Community Organising (CO) by the Community Development Society (CDS) of Kudumbashree

The present study has adapted the Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analytical (CVA) gender framework to analyse the community organisations that have been initiated during the COVID-19 outbreak by the Community Development Society (CDS) of Kudumbashree at Nadathara Panchayath (Table 1). As women collectives, the gender framework has been adapted to analyse the status of women only. Focus group discussions have been conducted among Community Development Society (CDS) members of Kudumbashree to collect the data. The Kudumbashree CBOs are built on a three-tier structure at the Panchayath/Municipality level, which has democratically elected governance systems under the new Panchayath Raj. There are the Neighbourhood Groups (NHGs) with 10 to 20 members at the primary level, where eligible women can enroll themselves. These NHGs are then affiliated to an Area Development Society (ADS) at the ward level, and these ADSs are affiliated to the Community Development Society, which functions at the Panchayath/Municipality level. Kudumbashree is a program of the Government of

Kerala implement through the Community Development Societies (CDSs), and it serves as the community wing of Local Governments (Kudumbashree | Community Structure, 2020).

Table No. 1: Coverage of Kudumbashree all over Kerala

Community Organisation	Number	Community organisation	Number
Number of CDS	1064	Number of CDS	100
Number of ADS	19,489	Number of ADS	19,489
Number of NHG	2,99,297	Number of NHG	2,99,297
Number of NHG members	44,91,834	Number of NHG members	44,91,834

The Community Development Society (CDS) of Kudumbashree functioning in Nadathara Grama Panchayath in Thrissur district, Kerala State, is as follows (Fig.1).

- 327 SHGs (Neighborhood Group, NHG) are functioning in Nadathara Panchayath.
- 17 ADSs are functioning there.CDS is the apex body of this three-tier community network, and it coordinates the efforts of NHGs through ADSs.
- 5359 women are members of this Kudumbashree NHG. Moreover, there is only one representation from each household, so that 5359 households out of a total of 9212 households of Nadathara Panchayath became part of the Kudumbashree system.

Figure No.1: Three Tier Structure of the Community Development Society (CDS) of Kudumbashree

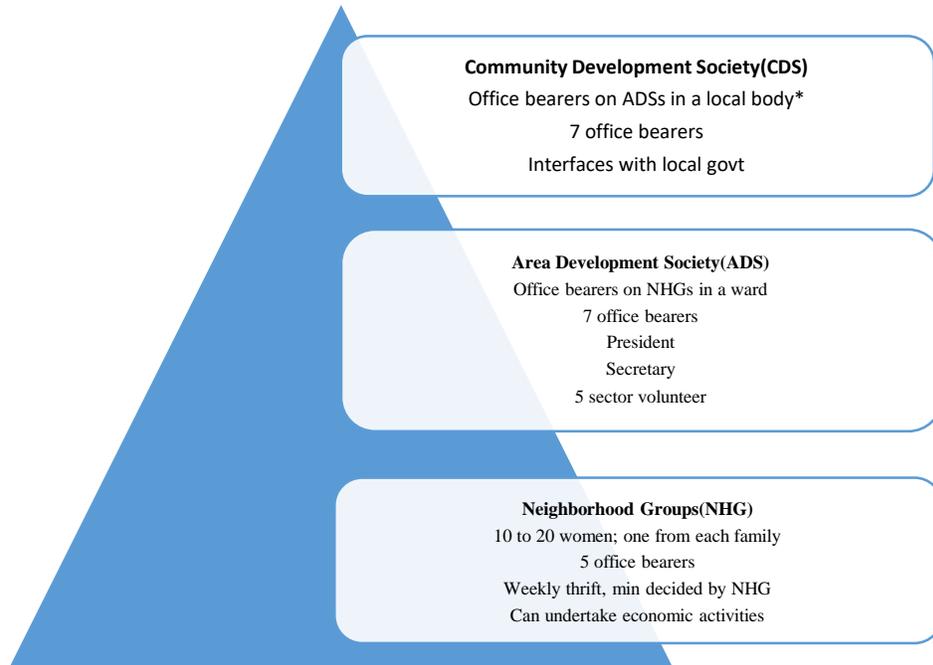


Table No: 2: Gender Analytical framework (CVA Matrix) of Community Organisation

Variables	Vulnerabilities	Capacities	Principles of Community Organisations (Ross,1967)		Referred Activities
<p>Physical/ material What productive resources, skills and Do the hazards exist?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the lockdown of all sectors related to the prevention of the COVID-19 outbreak, the income sources of women had ended because most of the women engage in traditional work, sales work in retail shops, domestic services, cleaning, and assistance work in various institutions rather than skilled work. So that most of the women depend on male members in the family to meet 	<p>Women's skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • income-generation activities making detergents, food products, garment productions) • agriculture and animal husbandry • Voluntary work, community work, and collective efforts 	1	<p>Discontent with existing conditions in the community must initiate and, or nourish the development of the association.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the lockdown of all sectors, the income sources of people had ended. CDS identified the people who need food. • There had emerged a high need for masks and hand washes liquid among people to prevent the COVID-19 outbreak.
			2	<p>Discontent must be focused and channeled into the organisation, planning, and action concerning specific problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDS had initiated to start a community kitchen to supply free food to the needy. • Farming groups of CDS (Joint Liability group, JLG) were supplied vegetables to the community kitchen. • Tailoring units have

	<p>their own needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a consequence, many women are forced to avail loans from NHGs. • Most of the women are technically unaware so that they had to depend on the male members in the family to know the information. 			<p>produced masks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro Enterprises groups of CDS had started to produce and distribute hand wash liquid.
<p>Social/organisational What are the relationships between people? What are their organisational Structures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Majority of women are overburdened with reproductive roles(caring of children and elderly, washing, cleaning, cooking, and other household activities) during the period of lockdown as most people are at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •NHGs acted as a communication platform for each woman, and they could inform their problems to the authority through the NHG network, and they have used the help of an official 	<p>1</p> <p>The discontent which initiates or sustains community organisation must be widely shared in the community satisfied the needs services reached to people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CDS had facilitated disseminating information to each household of the panchayath through the network of NHGs. •Collected the details of destitute and needy people through NHGs and frequently ensured food distribution to the needy people.

	<p>home for all time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement of women had been restricted due to transportation's unavailability as most of them depend on public transportation. •Female head households are unable to access their livelihood requirement and basic needs of a woman. 	<p><i>WhatsApp (social media)</i> group for communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Leadership ability they had achieved through the Kudumbashree system helped them to initiate activities <p>As a consequence, many women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •started to coordinate the micro-enterprise units. •Farming groups (JLG) were ready to provide vegetables and food grains to the Community Kitchen. 			
			2	<p>The organisation must involve leaders (both formal and informal) identified with and accepted by major subgroups in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CDS Chairperson took leadership to initiate Community kitchen production of mask and hand wash liquid. •CDS members from each ward had initiated the normal distribution of food and other items to the people. •Each production unit is led by a woman leader. They gave the details of functions to the CDS through the CDS members of each ward.
			3	<p>The organisation should seek to support and strengthen the groups which it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDS took the initiative to identify and strengthen the existing ME and JLG group to start production.

				brings together in cooperative work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDS also tried to mobilise the support of youth clubs, volunteers, and other institutions to support their efforts.
			4	The organisation should be flexible in its organisational procedures without disrupting its regular decision making routines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDS has many responsibilities, along with these new initiatives. CDS could successfully carry out the works without disrupting its regular activities.
			5	The organisation should develop a pace for its work relative to existing conditions in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CDS created a network among production units along with the support of volunteers. So that CDS can ensure the production and distribution of food, masks, and hand washes liquid amidst lockdown.

			6	<p>The organisation must develop active and effective communication lines both within the organisation and between the organisation and the community.</p>	<p>•CDS had formulated <i>WhatsApp</i> group among the CDS committee members to ensure the effective functioning of the activities, and they also formed <i>what's app</i> group among Micro-enterprise group which functions on community kitchen, farming, production of masks, and hand washes liquid.</p>
			7	<p>The organisation should seek to develop effective leaders.</p>	<p>•Each production unit of these activities are led by its group leader.</p>
<p>Motivational/attitudinal How does the community view its ability to Create change?</p>	<p>• Most of the women still follow the traditional customs and patriarchal attributes; as a consequence of that, they still</p>	<p>•Women groups started to communicate through social media and shared their problems. •Various activities,</p>	1	<p>The organisation must have goals and methods of procedure of high acceptability.</p>	<p>•All efforts and activities of CDS were much accepted and appreciated by the government officials and LSGI. The media had given special reports related to the</p>

	<p>believe that men are to engage in the community work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many women who lost income leads to low status in the family, as a consequence that they started to depend their husband and other earning members in their family again to meet their ends. • Many women experienced domestic violence. 	<p>online arts fests, and online classes organised by the Government of Kerala and Kudumbashree mission helped women to get engaged with their creativity ..</p>			activities of CDS.
			2	<p>The program of the organisation should include some activities with emotional content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CDS had given major focus to the destitute people, women-headed families, and elderly.
			3	<p>The organisation should seek to utilise the manifest and latent goodwill that exists in the community.</p>	<p>Among the public, there is high satisfaction with CDS activities so that many people came voluntarily to join the ventures of CDS.</p>
			4	<p>The organisation must develop strength, stability, and prestige in the community</p>	<p>CDS has started many community organisations to fulfill people's needs during the time of COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown. These practices had helped to strengthen the capacity of women to overcome unfavourable situations through collective efforts.</p>

Discussion

The present study has shown that most women are engaged in unskilled labour and working in the unorganised sector, the majority of them became unemployed, and few women have experienced domestic violence. According to Roy (2020), unemployment and economic hardship led to domestic violence, and men practice control over women. According to Gupte & Dalvie, "working from home" during the lockdown period is not the same for men and women. Women are overburdened with household activities, and women become the victim of domestic violence. According to Gupta, women have to devote more time to household chores, and the women have become invisible from the employment sector that it has devastating effects on the employment opportunities and economic participation of women. In this study, the community engagement of women had restricted due to the unavailability of transportation as most of them depend on public transportation. Women's mobility for disaster relief works may be restricted due to the patriarchal structure of the family. For example, women are the caregivers of children, and due to this responsibility, they are not permitted to leave home (Bloch, 2020). According to Sen, when evaluating people's well-being, commodities, wealth, and physical reactions of people are inappropriate if they are unable to use them. Sen argues that the most important focus should be given to their abilities. Thus, a person's capability represents the adequate freedom of an individual to choose between different functioning combinations – between different kinds of life – that she has reason to value". The present study enlightens that Kudumbashree mission enables the women to use their abilities to cross the crisis. The diagnosis of these interpersonal variations in capability determines the relevant causal pathways responsible. Moreover, these interpersonal variations will determine the ability of individual abilities to access the resources (Wells). Community Development Society of Kudumbashree at Nadathara panchayath has initiated many community organisations to support the people to cross this pandemic situation of COVID-19. They are:

- The network of women collectives (SHGs) were acted as a channel to deliver the messages of government to each household.
- Before the launch of Lockdown in Kerala, all households under the Nadathara Panchayath were educated on the importance of the "Break the Chain Campaign" and the need to take care of everyone, especially the elderly.

- CDS has facilitated the formation of *WhatsApp* groups and communicated regularly with the neighboring group membership to communicate the government decisions and other important messages during the lockdown period.
- Kudumbasree Volunteers from each ad (Area Development Society) were involved in preparing food kits as per their requirement.
- To address the shortage of masks in the market, tailoring units have produced masks and produced through Kudumbasree units. Three ME group units and 30 individual ME were involved in the production of masks. They also distributed masks to health workers, a bank official, and government officials on a free basis.
- Community kitchens were started functioning at the panchayath level to provide food for needy people. Four women member units undertook it, and they had prepared and distributed more than 5000 food packets.
- Farming groups of Kudumbasree donated vegetables, fruits, and other agricultural products to community outlets.
- CDS has mobilised food grains from NHG households and distributed the food packet of these collected items to the destitute and isolated people.
- CDS also initiated to prepare food for the people under quarantine.
- CDS has given a significant focus to elderly care. Volunteers from CDS have frequently called the elderly and assisted them in need of mental support, delivery of medicine, food, and other required items.

The study shows that Kudumbashree members could overcome the vulnerabilities due to patriarchal norms through the capacities they have gained through the Kudmashree mission's activities. Gender is the factor which constraints the life of many women in our society. Kudmbashree members face many issues due to gender inequalities. However, their capabilities lead them to overcome all the patriarchal constraints.

Conclusion

The term capacities used here describes the existing strengths of individuals, community, and social groups related to their physical, material, social resources, attitudes, and beliefs. The

term vulnerabilities describe the factors that hinder people's ability to cope with the disaster's abrupt onset. Gender inequalities and patriarchal structures exist in a society that limits the capacity of women. Most women have less decision-making power, less control over resources, lack access to credit, technology and markets, and less access to education and employment. Here researcher attempted to undergo gender framework analysis of community organisations were organised by the CDSs (Community Development Societies) of Kudumbashree mission. Gender framework analytical study used the capacities and vulnerabilities analytical matrix to analyze the community organisations initiated by Community Development Society (CDS) of Kudumbashree at Nadathara Panchayath addressing COVID-19 outbreak. Gender inequalities exist in society, and patriarchal attributes cause vulnerabilities of women. Kudumbashree activities build the capacities of women. During COVID-19 19, preventive activities CDS of Kudumbashree could initiate many Community organisations based on their capacities. According to Sen's Capability approach, the quality of life is based on capability and functioning. Thus, a person's capability represents an individual's effective freedom to choose between different functioning combinations.

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