

BREAKING NEW GROUND

Quantitative Evaluation of the Women on Wheels Programme for Resource Poor Women

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1. Introduction

Azad Foundation (Azad) was registered as a Trust in 2008 with the aim of giving resource-poor women access to non-traditional livelihoods. This involves breaking patriarchal norms regarding women and work and challenging the gender stereotyping of work as feminine and masculine, so as to create opportunities that will enable women to earn remunerative livelihoods with dignity. Azad started its core programme, Women on Wheels (WoW), for training and empowering resource poor women to become professional drivers. The programme also served the twin objective of providing safe transport solutions to women in cities. A decade of implementation has not only led to the achievement of these twin objectives but also established Azad internationally as an organization in the forefront of the campaign to eliminate discrimination against women in the work sphere. Azad has maintained a detailed record of its activities and resource use and has continually reviewed its performance to modify and improve it on the basis of the results. The present paper after providing an overview of the rationale and details of Azad's work over the past decade, analyses this extensive database to quantitatively review this unique journey.

2. Rationale of Azad's Work

The World Economic Forum in its Global Gender Gap Report, 2018, ranks India as 108 out of 144 countries in the Global Gender Index (WEF, 2018). It's rank has been lowered by 21 places since the ranking in 2016. This poor performance is primarily because of low and shrinking participation of women in the Indian economy. India is ranked amongst the ten lowest countries (136 out of 144 countries covered by the report) for women's work force participation. India's female labour force participation rate was only 28.5% in 2017 as compared to 82% for men according to the same report. The rate has declined over the last decade from 37% to 27%. Moreover, the Employment and Unemployment Survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation showed that in the period 2004-05 to 2009-10 women's labour force participation declined from 33.3 per cent to 26.5 per cent in rural areas and from 17.8 per cent to 14.6 per cent in urban areas (NSSO, 2011). In contrast, the rates in the neighboring South Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal have either remained constant or increased during the past decade, which reflects poorly on the Indian situation (Chaudhary & Verik, 2014). Women's participation in the workforce has been patterned on the overall unequal structures of society. The Report of the United Nations Secretary General's High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment mentions that social norms are an impediment in achieving overall development (UNHLP, 2017). These social norms, create obstacles for women to achieve their full potential. They are contained within their socially expected roles and women are often not able to move beyond them, given their lack of awareness of their rights and non-conducive environment for the same. Though these barriers and glass ceilings have been broken by a few, a majority of women (particularly from disadvantaged communities) continue to be deprived of equitable economic opportunities and perforce have to participate in gender stereotyped professions in addition to bearing the multiple burdens of domestic and reproductive responsibilities.

For poor and disadvantaged women in particular, the choice of economic opportunities is confined to the informal sector, with meagre and inequitable pay for physically and emotionally adverse work. Most of these options are considered unskilled, with few opportunities for training and access to or control over basic resources. Furthermore, the economic opportunities available to women usually are confined to the traditional sector of work which is often seen as an extension of their household work or care giving work.

The United Nation's World's Women 2015 statistical report states that in developing countries, women on an average spend 50 minutes extra time daily on paid work and 3.10 hour extra in unpaid work as compared to men (UNSTATS, 2015). These statistics clearly signify that women work longer hours than men and this includes the unpaid 'care giving' work which usually goes unrecognised. Further, as stated in the report from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, *The State of World Population 2017*, "Once in the paid labour force, women everywhere find themselves earning less than men for the same types of work; engaging more frequently in unskilled, low-wage labour; or spending less time in income-generating work and more time in unpaid caregiving work at home" (UNFPA, 2017). Women are able to earn only a quarter of what men earn in paid work. These reports provide ample evidence of the unequal socio-economic structures within which women's lives operate.

Women often live in violent domestic relationships with little recourse to articulating their grievances. The Report of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women states, " that violence is a major impediment to the achievement of women's economic empowerment and their social and economic development, often resulting in, inter alia, absenteeism, missed promotions and job losses, thereby hampering women's ability to enter, advance and remain in the labour market and make contributions commensurate with their abilities, and also recognizes that such violence can impede economic independence and impose direct and indirect short and long term costs on society and individuals" (UNCSW, 2017). The report of the National Commission on Self Employed Women and Women in the Informal Sector states that women in India continue to face significant mobility constraints; they do not have the independence of movement out of the confines of their house (NCSW, 1989).

Women's position of disadvantage arises not just because of their class identity but rather due to an intersectionality of identities such as gender, caste, class and habitat, which together create multiple burdens of oppression (Carasthatis, 2014). Women constitute an overwhelming majority of migrants, 70.3 per cent of internal migrants as per Census 2011 migration data, and 80 per cent of total internal migrants as per the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO, 2008). Marriage is given by women respondents as the most prominent reason for migrating with 70 per cent of women citing this as the reason in Census 2011. Migration uproots women from their social network and brings them to an unfamiliar environment. Studies have shown that, internal migrants, are excluded from the economic, cultural, social and political life of society and are often treated as second-class citizens (Kar & Dasgupta, 2015). The constraints faced by migrants are many - lack of formal residency rights; lack of identity proof; lack of political representation; inadequate housing; low-paid, insecure or hazardous work; extreme vulnerability of women and children to trafficking and sex exploitation; exclusion from state services such as health and education and discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, class or gender.

Women, especially those residing in urban slums, function within this web of intersectionality, often devoid of their rights. The decision and ability of women to participate in the labour force is the outcome of various economic and social factors that interact in a complex fashion at both the household and macro level. Based on global evidence, some of the most important drivers include educational attainment, fertility rates, the age of marriage, economic growth and cyclical effects and urbanization. In addition to these issues, social norms determining the role of women in the public domain continue to affect outcomes (ILO, 2018). Simultaneously many more privileged women are joining professions that offer high incomes. More women across age groups and income segments are becoming mobile on city roads. Yet, fear about violence against women in the public domain continues to threaten their mobility, security and presence in public spaces (Taylor, 2011). Delhi has the dubious distinction of being the third highest crime-ridden city in the world and it is the city with the most crimes against women in India (Trivedi, 2017). Therefore, there is need to address the need for safety of these women also.

This gendered nature of workforce participation and unequal labor market, limits woman's agency and control. Studies have shown that, working outside the home is associated with a number of positive empowerment outcomes for women. At the household level, women who participate in the labour force marry and have children later, and their children stay in school longer. Even the sisters of women who work marry later (Pande et al, 2016). More importantly, women who work have greater decision making power within the household and make more decisions jointly with their partners. In a research conducted in northern Madhya Pradesh, a correlation was found between participation in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and higher self-reported levels of empowerment. Women who participate in MGNREGA report higher levels of decision-making power within their households and higher levels of mobility than women who do not participate. Thus, once a woman starts working and earning, her negotiating and bargaining power increases within her household (Pande et al,2016).

Thus, since opportunities for work are limited for women it is essential for them to get opportunities in non-traditional livelihoods (NTL) which are at present male dominated. Non-traditional Livelihoods refer to livelihoods that help women break stereotypes emerging from the intersections of gender, caste, class, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities and other marginalities and oppressive structures, within a dynamic context of space and time. NTL increases the set of viable livelihood choices available to women and gives them access and control over skills, technology, market, mobility and resources. It creates economic stability along with psychological, social and political empowerment. Some examples of the same include training resource poor women to become drivers, masons, electricians and the like. Driving is one such profession as in India the proportion of women who are authorized to drive professionally is only 0.70 percent (Gol, 2018). This is the rationale for Azad to have initiated the WoW programme in Delhi and later extended it to other cities and simultaneously built up mobilization and advocacy campaigns to challenge patriarchy for facilitating entry of women into NTL.

3. Details of Azad's Work

Azad is a professional feminist organization working across social and religious divides among resource poor families and addressing gender inequality which pervades private and public spaces. It does this through creation of non-traditional, high return, livelihood options for women which challenge traditional gender roles that restrict women's capabilities and horizons. It engages with both men and women in their communities so that both can construct a safe and supportive space for their development (Azad, 2017). Azad is also committed to generate knowledge for various internal as well as external stakeholders and to advocate for improved policies for women especially in the domain of women, work and NTL and to challenge patriarchy overall.

Azad's mobilization and training programmes are designed to pursue economic and social empowerment simultaneously as women do not live in isolation. Azad engages with the families of these women and their community to create a supportive ecosystem. Consequently, the family is closely involved before enrolling women in the WoW programme. However, as a one time interaction is not enough to ensure sustenance of women in a six to eight month long training programme, a family faculty meeting is held once in a quarter to have continuous interaction with the family members of the trainees. This is also a medium to identify supportive family members of the trainee and counsel them if required to facilitate the trainee's training journey. In order to address the need to work with the community, Azad has initiated different programs such as Parvaz- Feminist Leadership Program (FLP), Men for Gender Justice (MGJ) and Azad Kishori to create community level change so that supportive structures for women to challenge

patriarchy can be built within their community as well. Azad works with both women and men in the community to create an enabling environment for social change and to work towards co-creating a gender just society.

Beginning from one center in South Delhi and nine WoW trainees in 2008, Azad has expanded to four centers in the capital of India, Delhi, South, North, East and West Delhi (2017) and the cities of Jaipur, Kolkata, Indore and Bengaluru. Currently Azad has three programs WoW, FLP and MGJ in Delhi. It has moved to new geographies within India, with a center in the Western Indian state of Rajasthan, in Jaipur and another center in the state of West Bengal, in Kolkata followed by work with partner NGOs in Indore in Madhya Pradesh, Ahmedabad in Gujarat and Bengaluru in Karnataka. The expansion to different cities in India was done after thoughtful deliberations and feasibility analysis. Before the Jaipur centre started, Azad had a center in Gurgaon which had to be closed down due to resource issues. However, the Azad resource person that was working in Gurgaon was originally from Jaipur and was ready to move to Jaipur and Azad was also able to identify the team lead for Jaipur (who had earlier helped Azad in designing its curriculum). Secondly, as Jaipur is a popular tourist destination and part of the golden triangle (constituting Delhi, Jaipur and Agra) it was seen as a potential market. Therefore, in order to capitalize on the city and available human resources, Azad decided to open its Jaipur center. This centre currently has 3 programs of Azad, WoW, FLP and Azad Kishori the programme for sensitizing adolescent girls.

The move to Eastern India had a different story, where the demand to replicate WoW had its origin with a local feminist NGO who wanted to initiate WoW in Kolkata. Azad decided to do a feasibility study in Kolkata for WoW to assess the potential for expansion there. Initially, along with the local NGO, Thoughtshop and Talash (the existing mobilization partner for Kolkata) had decided to take the lead of the Kolkata center and Azad was supposed to provide Training support (funded by a new funding organization which had agreed to provide funding only for the training component of the program). However, prior to its initiation due to internal changes in leadership, the local NGO, backed out and Azad decided to take lead of the Kolkata center to capitalize on the efforts that had been put in already. In the meantime, Azad was also able to identify the resource person to lead the Kolkata center and that's how Azad moved to the city of Kolkata. In Kolkata, Azad currently has only WoW programme. Another city that Azad did think of expanding to was Mumbai, however, this was not pursued as there were other players present in that market already. Later, Azad has partnered with other NGOs to initiate the WoW programme in the cities of Indore in Madhya Pradesh, Ahmedabad in Gujarat and Bengaluru in Karnataka. The flagship programme of Azad is the WoW.

3.1 Women on Wheels (WoW): Azad prepares women with meager economic and social capital to become professional and commercial chauffeurs, while its for-profit sister company Sakha provides remunerative and safe employment options to women trained by Azad. Simultaneously Women on Wheels also offers safe and alternate transport options to women travelers in selected cities. The programme strives to break gender stereotypes by supporting women to become 'drivers of change' literally and metaphorically. Azad aims at covering the various dimensions of empowerment such as economic, social and personal. The WoW program has two components-

1. **Outreach, Mobilization and Advocacy:** The prime purpose of the component is to reach out to urban resource poor communities living in slums and create an enabling environment for women to take up professional driving and give them the information and opportunity to enroll in the WoW program. Azad believes that a 'lot of progressive policies fail in the face of rigid, unchanging social and cultural attitudes especially when it comes to discriminatory practices based on gender, caste, religion and other differences'. It is a community level mobilization, a process of building Azad's identity in the community, building relationships with community leaders, local NGOs

working in the areas and finally families in the community to facilitate women to step out of their traditional roles. The process of mobilization is at the core of Azad's work as this process helps in creating 'trust' for Azad. This is important because there is considerable opposition to women becoming professional drivers, in the family and community and this leads to a very small number of women enrolling for the WoW programme as compared to the large numbers that are contacted and even after that the dropout rate before completion of training is quite high. Even after becoming trained drivers women find it difficult to continue in the profession because of the patriarchal mindset that shrouds the driving profession and so there is a need to undertake research based advocacy with the Government and Corporations to improve the work environment for women professional drivers.

2. **Training:** Azad believes that if underprivileged women are to challenge status quo at home, public place and workplace and emerge as professionals in a male dominated space, they need much more than hard driving skills. The objective of the technical component of the WoW program is to impart key skills to women to become professional drivers and the ability to handle road emergencies such as a flat tyre or sudden dysfunction of the vehicle. Azad believes that it is essential to give a comprehensive training to women so that they are aware of not just the technicalities of driving but the technicalities of the car as well. The component focuses on training women to become safe and efficient drivers who have sufficient knowledge about traffic rules, road signs and the road network of their respective cities. The idea is to enable women to become visible in public transport as drivers and occupy these "gendered" spaces. The training component of WoW is based on a transformative capacity building model encompassing:
 - Technical training such as driving skills,
 - Basic knowledge of the body of a car, road sense, map reading abilities etc.
 - Self-development modules such as English, Communications, Work Readiness, First Aid
 - Empowerment modules such as self-defense, gender and legal rights, sexual and reproductive health

Azad Foundation has successfully trained over 1250 trainees to become employable after attaining an important citizenship and skill certification document in the form of a Driving License. Over 300 women drivers have been facilitated by Sakha to be employed across private households, schools, hospitals, premier hotels, with the Delhi Commission of Women (DCW) and lastly as Sakha cab drivers. There are about 150 other women drivers who after completing their training with Azad are working independently of Sakha, as drivers with Uber, etc. The details of the various other programmes which buttress the WoW are as follows -

3.2 The Feminist Leadership Programme (FLP): Based on years of working on bringing resource poor women into a non-traditional livelihood, professional driving, Azad learnt that unless it is able to build a more supportive social network, they often are not able to struggle 'on their own' against all the odds. The intersectional nature of marginalisation and oppression demands that a supportive ecosystem is created to build an equally strong web of resistance. In addition to this learning, Azad's research study "Assessing Young, Resource-Poor, Urban Women's Livelihood Aspirations and opportunities", conducted across six slums in three zones in Delhi in 2014 identified that information and support is a key determinant enabling women to exercise their choices (Azad, 2014). The study reinforced the need for spaces that provide information and enable young women to make informed choices. Initially, the idea was to open a Slum Resource Center to bridge the information gap. However, it was realized that instead of investing in a physical infrastructure it will be more beneficial to build people's capabilities by providing them annual fellowships to enable communities to sustain themselves later as well through knowledge

and assistance gained by these young community leaders. These leaders help in creating a bigger pool of aware and informed individuals who help in bridging the information gap in communities.

Hence, using Azad's multipronged approach to capacity building, Parvaz program was launched in 2016 in Delhi and in 2017 in Jaipur. The program aims at building a cadre of young women feminist leaders who through their transformative leadership act as catalysts of change in their communities, bringing changes in women's access to and control over their income and available resources while ensuring women's rights in all spheres of their lives. It aims to build the capacity of women from communities, from which WoW trainees are recruited, to serve as a community resource providing information and support to women at the community level. Azad Foundation's outreach and mobilization team serves as a support structure and guides the fellows during their FLP training. The leaders actively engage with their communities to create an enabling environment for women to claim their citizenship rights, rights to live without violence and rights to remunerative employment with dignity. The leaders support women to access government schemes and acquire their citizenship papers, exercise their choices and deal with the violence they face, and also contribute towards recruitment for WoW. In addition, the leaders through their community projects, work on varied domains of community work such as creches, sexual and reproductive health, school enrollment, sanitation and others. In Delhi, 20 leaders successfully completed the training in the first year of the program. Presently, the program is being implemented in its second year in Delhi and its first year in Jaipur.

3.3 Men for Gender Justice Program (MGJ): Azad, in the course of its work with resource poor women either as trainees or drivers, repeatedly came across the need to work with the male members of their family as well. Especially those women who were facing situations of aggravated violence as they had begun asserting themselves more after joining Azad and becoming aware of their rights. The women said that Azad has trained them and made them empowered individuals but Azad has not engaged with the male members of their house. Further, Azad realized that men are often the prime channels of resistance in women's lives. Gender relations operate in unequal fashion for women who are often discriminated against and considered as inferior to men. Therefore, men are important stakeholders in the process of achieving a gender just and equal society. This laid the foundation of the MGJ programme. It aims to promote and build an environment for gender equality which supports women to adopt non-traditional livelihoods with dignity and men to challenge concepts of masculinity in their lives and reduce violence against women. The MGJ programme engages with young men in the age-group of 18-25 years in Delhi and Jaipur. It is rooted in the communities where Azad Foundation has been working and from which Azad enrolls young women for its WoW programme.

The first step is to engage with the WoW mobilization team and discuss the suitable slums for MGJ program, based on locations with strong potential for the enrolment of women for WoW. The MGJ team enroll men for the program from these slums. The members are then offered a series of trainings on gender, patriarchy, masculinity and the team ensures continuous engagement with these young men through community activities such as poster-pasting, meetings, sports events, campaign events. In the last two years, 293 young men have enrolled in the program in Delhi and Jaipur.

3.4 Azad Kishori Grades 9 to 12 programme: Azad's engagement with young women has shown that a significant proportion of these women had a paucity of information on significant life skills. Lack of information on reproductive and sexual health enhanced by unquestioning acceptance of gender stereotypes inhibits women to make choices and decisions to claim their rights and focus on their need for a brighter future. Their knowledge about 'self' impacts their life choices – whether it is seeking a non-traditional livelihood option or relationships within or outside of cultural, traditional and religious rituals and permissions.

Further as mentioned earlier, Azad's research study "Assessing Young, Resource-Poor, Urban Women's Livelihood Aspirations and opportunities", in Delhi, showed that aspirations of young women are curtailed by their limited knowledge of the world along with the limited access to opportunities and aspirations, lack of education, enforced marriage at an early age and family pressures (Azad, op cit). The study reinforced the need for spaces that provide information and enable young women to make informed choices. In Jaipur, specifically, Azad identified the need to work with adolescent girls in slums on building their life-skills and awareness on the issues, as there were no programmes facilitating this. Therefore, to reach out to women during their formative years, and open their horizons to new ideas, aspirations and gender roles, Azad adopted the schools in the slums as the medium to approach them. Azad initiated the Azad Kishori programme in Jaipur in 2016 with the aim of reaching out to adolescent girls in grades nine to twelve to develop their awareness on issues related to 'self', gender and work and help open up their aspirations for future life. It is aimed at girls from the same resource-poor communities in Jaipur, from which trainees for WoW are recruited. The programme works on co-creating an environment that supports girls to make informed life choices and consider non-traditional livelihoods for their future career.

3.5 Campaigns: Azad actively engages with the women's movement in the country and promotes the engagement of trainees with its ongoing processes and encourages their active public participation in these movements. Participation in campaigns not only builds solidarity networks for Azad, but enables women trainees, drivers, FLP leaders and the young men associated with the MGJ programme to further enlarge their horizons and become politically active on issues that affect their lives. They begin to build connections with larger social processes of change. Azad is an active participant in the Sixteen Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence Campaign from 25th November to 10th December and in the One Billion Rising Campaign from November/December to 14th February to stop violence against women. Often these campaigns are organized in the slums as well, which helps in building awareness amongst the community members about these crucial issues and further deepens Azad's identity and presence in the communities. Apart from this, the Azad teams, including the staff, take active part in local campaigns and movements being organized in their respective centers/states.

3.6 Research and Advocacy: Azad has a detailed Management Information System with data of all the activities mentioned above beginning with the outreach and mobilization and right up to the final placement of the trainees in jobs. This data is continuously analysed to gain insights that can further improve the design and conduct of these activities. Apart from this studies are carried out from time to time to better understand the prevailing environment with respect to women undertaking NTL. The results of these analyses and studies are utilized in advocating with the Government and Corporations to remove the patriarchal barriers that exist against entry and continuance of women in NTL.

4. Details of Azad WoW Training

The training process in Azad has been honed over the years with constant feedback from trainers, trainees and employers and it adequately addresses the common barriers faced by women entrants into NTL the world over (Women and Non-Traditional Livelihoods, Wider Opportunities for Women, www.wowonline.org) –

- Limited experience with tools and mechanical operations
- Limited experience with the laws and regulations that govern NTL
- Limited access to on-the-job training and apprenticeships
- Lack of support services such as child care and transportation
- Women in nontraditional jobs or training are at greater risk of sexual harassment and assault

This training process has to be described in some detail as it constitutes the largest outlay of expenditure at 45 percent of the total and is the key to successfully integrating women into NTL.

The road transport sector is governed by Central Motor Vehicle Act 1988 and Central Motor Vehicle rules 1989. Each state has its own Motor Vehicle Act based on the Central Motor Vehicle Act. There are State Transport Departments which have transport authorities at the district level in India which are authorized to issue different categories of driving licenses based on varied purpose and every category has different criteria of eligibility and subsequent tests. There are 3 types of driving licenses:

- Private Driving (PL) license – Non-transport for Light Motor Vehicle (LMV)
- Commercial license for transport vehicle and non-transport vehicle (LMV)
- Commercial license for Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) Transport

Any person 18 years and above, with a proof of age, address and identity can apply for driving license in India. The first step to get a private driving license is to clear a computer-based learners' license (LL) test which tests the applicant's knowledge of traffic rules and signs. The applicant has to appear for permanent driving test (LMV) between 1 to 6 months after the date of issue of learner's license as the learners' license expires after 6 months. Subsequently, once their PL is one year old and if they are 10th pass, they can also apply for commercial license.

As LL is the first level of test, WoW training program begins with imparting computer-based training for the LL test, which is followed by preparing trainees for the PL test and subsequently training to become a professional driver. As mentioned in the preceding paragraph the process has eligibility criteria of age and identity documents (residence proof, age proof, for commercial license education certificates are also required) are required to apply for the test. Therefore, age becomes the first selection criteria at Azad wherein every trainee should be over 18 years of age. Secondly, availability of official documents with interested and eligible women becomes very crucial and it is a critical challenge for the team to ensure that every interested and eligible woman has the necessary documents required to apply for a license. Identity and citizenship documents for a woman are not given enough importance and further due to the programme being run in urban slums, most of these women are internal migrants and so it is an even bigger challenge to locate their documents in their destination state and later alter them if required.

The technical training of the Women on Wheels program is designed keeping in mind this legal-official background. Every month the mobilisation team hands over a batch of trainees to the training team. A trainee is considered to be finally enrolled once she has submitted copies of all official documents, filled an enrollment form and a commitment form and has paid a part of her commitment fund of Rs.2000 which trainees can pay in installments. If either of the above conditions are not met, the trainee is considered as in provisional enrollment. In order to hold an interested trainee and if the probability of her enrollment turning into a complete enrollment within next couple of weeks is higher, she joins Azad as a provisional trainee.

The technical training of WoW consists of different structured training programs as well as on-the-road driving practice through a combination of strategies. In the learner module, the theory is conducted by in-house faculty. A month-long driving training (both theory and practice) is undertaken by a registered private driving school such as the Maruti Driving School, which includes both on-road driving practice and basic mechanics of driving. Further on road driving practice is conducted by in-house faculty to ensure trainees achieve confidence and control over the vehicle required for employment. This particular training encompasses three different modules - ground practice (depending on the availability of ground), road practice and self-driving practice (without the in-house faculty). Training on road/route identification and map reading is conducted using in-house resources

The trainees are mostly coming for the first time for this kind of training and so it is ensured that they are given an encouraging, appreciative, open and non-threatening learning environment. Prior to sending them for the actual test, practice tests are also conducted which are analyses to understand in what areas the individual learners are doing well or need more learning. Azad recognizes that driving is a skill which comes from practice and as the trainees come from a resource poor background they do not have access to a car for practice. Hence, in order to ensure that the trainees attain a level of proficiency required to acquire permanent license, the on-ground module was formulated. This training is conducted by Azad's in-house faculty trainers. These trainers are Azad's full-time employees. Till June 2017, Azad only had male faculty trainers, however, after that, Azad has employed 5 female trainers who have been trained by Azad and have later had experience of professional driving. The new initiative of induction of female trainers has yielded positive results in all the centers. Trainees are more open in talking to women trainers than male trainers. The former are role models for the trainees as well. Additionally, female trainers also break the myth that trainers can only be male. A supportive eco system reassures families who feel their women are in safe hands and there is less opposition. It also builds confidence of the families that girls can become not just drivers but training faculty as well.

The on ground module is designed to ensure transformation of the trainees into professional chauffeurs. The key objective of the module is to enhance trainee's driving skills and confidence on various types of roads and practice lane driving, driving on roundabouts, night driving. She also learns how to reverse and park a car in busy areas and market places. It also helps in enhancing learner's ability to anticipate traffic and adjust driving according to various traffic conditions. Trainees are provided driving practice on main routes of the city to get to know the routes. There are some 10-12 important routes in every city that trainee much go to during there on road training practices, such as bus stands, railways stations, airports, key residential areas, market places. Additionally, it is also ensured that they gain an understanding of how to maintain the car. After finishing the module, the trainees develop enhanced driving skills and ability to drive independently without instructions.

The self-drive stage is a 15-hour module wherein a group of trainees practice driving on rotational basis without the in-house faculty trainer. The module aims to build the ability of trainees to drive independently on various routes without any issue and gain confidence and ability to take on a job of a professional chauffeur. In this module, trainees practice finer skills important for employability such as parking in various conditions. However, Azad makes sure that the in-house trainer tracks the trainees on self-drive and the routes they are driving on. More importantly, he/she should be available in case of any problem /emergency. At the end of this module, the expected outcome is that the trainee is ready to move into a professional space and is prepared for the employability test.

The other technical training module that trainees undergo is Map Reading, which is a 15-hour module. The aim of the module is to familiarize trainees with how to read a map and identify key city routes using the map. Apart from working on a paper-based map, in order to ensure that trainees learn about city routes in an interesting way, a jigsaw puzzle game of the respective city map is also given to them. Additionally, trainees also visit a key city route in a bus and map it on a city map. With changing times and wave of digitization, Azad realized that it is important for trainees to learn GPS navigation on their phones as well. This has been incorporated in the map reading module. Within this, trainees learn how to fill location and destination on a google map and how to see the different routes.

In order to assess trainee's readiness to become a professional chauffeur and enter the market, an external panel test is organized. To avoid any conflict of interest, the test is conducted by an external panel of experts who can objectively assess the trainee's technical readiness to become a professional

driver. A trainee is eligible for the employability test once all her technical and non-technical modules are completed.

An integral component of Azad's training curriculum is the rights awareness and self-development training as this enables women to address the social and cultural constraints that act as barriers to their empowerment. This implies integration of rights based training on gender and legal rights, sexuality and reproductive health and self-development training in communications, self defence and first aid. These trainings run concurrently with the technical training. This ensures that women are able to exercise their agency in all domains of their lives - at home, at the workplace and in public spaces. Apart from this soft skills training is also imparted which facilitates effective communication with clients and other people.

Despite this comprehensive process there is still a very high dropout rate of 70 percent between enrollment and successful completion of training as the trainees are unable to negotiate with their families and community to complete it. So the training team ensures that the right environment is created at the training center which keeps up the morale of the trainees. They do this through the **Badlav ka Safarnama** (Journey of Change) sessions where trainees get inspired by listening to the stories of change of other trainees in monthly assembly sessions. They are able to appreciate the encouraging change in trainees such as increased mobility and participate in book reading sessions such as Lady Driver reading sessions. This works as role model-based motivation for them. Sometimes, peer motivation is also conducted by sending other trainees to the house of a trainee who is irregular to ensure she starts coming regularly. Even the trainees have shared how the support and environment at Azad encourages them every morning to keep fighting all odds and continue with the training.

5. Objectives and Methodology of Quantitative Evaluation

Needless to say this comprehensive programme of ensuring dignified employment in NTL for resource poor women requires considerable funding support. While a normal twenty day car driving training provided by commercial driving schools costs about Rs 3000 per driver only, the WoW training spread over six months, costs Rs 55,000 per trainee enrolled (Azad MIS, 2018). If the total expenditure of Azad including that on mobilization, research, advocacy and management in addition to the WoW training is considered, then the cost per trainee is Rs 1,35,000. Consequently, questions can be raised as to whether so much investment is justified or not. That is why a quantitative evaluation of the costs and benefits of the programme is being undertaken to test whether the Return on this investment (RoI) makes it financially sound in addition to its being socially very relevant.

Obviously, the much higher cost of the WoW training programme is because of the efforts that have to be expended to overcome the barriers that women from low income families face in breaking into a profession that is traditionally a male preserve. Considerable investment has also to be made in mobilization, research and advocacy also to counter the patriarchal, religious and economic barriers to women's participation in the labour force. The benefits are not only in terms of the better livelihood opportunities created for the women trainees but also their overall empowerment as citizens and the better social and economic contribution to the nation due to the easing of social and economic barriers to women's work in general that it results in. The quantitative evaluation quantifies the costs and the benefits and then estimates the internal rate of return (IRR) by discounting the costs incurred in the training and the benefits to be earned by the trainees, over a period of years, to the present, to test whether the investment in the training of women drivers is economically justified or not.

The methodology to be adopted for this quantitative estimation is as follows -

1. A statistical analysis of the Management Information System (MIS) data from the enrollment questionnaires and training performance of the trainees for the three years 2015-2018 for the

four centres in Delhi, one centre in Jaipur, one centre in Kolkata and the partner organizations in Indore, Ahmedabad and Bengaluru. The second centre in North Kolkata has just started out and so it has been omitted from the analysis.

2. First a regression analysis was carried out to determine whether a set of independent variables like education, income, previous work experience, assets held and age have any significant influence on the performance of the trainees.
3. This is followed by a comparison of means test to determine whether those trainees who have been discouraged by their family, neighbours or the community have performed worse than those who have not.
4. Then the data on discouragement of trainees that is there in the MIS, in a collection of case studies and that collected from a special survey for Azad Alumni was analysed to determine the extent and kinds of barriers there are to women entering NTL.
5. Finally, the data on the costs of the programme and the earnings of the employed trainees is analysed to estimate the IRR.

The results from the above analysis are then interpreted to arrive at a conclusion regarding Azad's programme for improving the access of resource poor women to NTL.

6. Statistical Analysis Results

The results of the various statistical procedures described above are given below.

6.1 Results of Regression Analysis: A regression analysis fits a model of the form given below onto a set of data -

$$D = a_0 + a_1 I_1 + a_2 I_2 + a_3 I_3 \dots + a_n I_n$$

D is the dependent variable which in the present case is the performance of the trainees and the I's are the independent variables which in this case are education, income, marital status, asset holdings and the like which are assumed to have a bearing on the performance of the trainees. There are two crucial results of the regression analysis which decide whether the model adequately explains the data or not. The first is the coefficient of determination or Adjusted R^2 and the second are the coefficients of the various independent variables $a_1 \dots a_n$. The value of the coefficient of determination varies between 0 and 1 with 1 being the case where the model explains the data completely and 0 being the case where the model does not fit the data at all. Generally a value of 0.5 and above is considered to be good enough as it is not always possible to determine before hand, which are all the independent variables that affect a particular dependent variable. The values of the coefficients vary according to the value of the independent variables themselves but generally the higher they are the better. Also there is a test of significance of these coefficients and their standard errors which determine whether they do have a significant influence on the dependent variable. The independent variables are considered to be significant if at 95 percent confidence level for rejecting the null hypothesis that the independent variable has no influence on the dependent variable the significance values are less than 0.025 and the standard errors are less than half the values of the coefficients.

The independent variables also known as predictors for our analysis are the education of the trainees, a composite index constructed for the education of the family members, the family income, marital status, a composite index of the previous work experience of the trainees and a composite index of the asset holdings of the trainees. The value of all these variables was modified in such a way that the higher they were the better they are. The dependent variable is a composite performance index constructed as a weighted average of the times taken to get a learning licence, a permanent licence, pass the Sakha test

and their employment status. The results of the regression done with data of all 1285 trainees who were enrolled and then either walked out midway after pursuing the training for some time, completed the training or were still undertaking it in the 2015-18 period are given in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Regression Model Summary for All Trainees

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.122 ^a	.015	.010	.9290

a. Predictors: (Constant), AssetIndex, Workexpindex, Education, Age, Fameduindex, Familyincome

Table 2: Coefficients of Independent Variables and their Significance for All Trainees

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.876	.122		7.154	.000
	Age	-.004	.004	-.030	-1.089	.276
	Education	-.007	.004	-.050	-1.805	.071
	Fameduindex	.056	.021	.074	2.618	.009
	Familyincome	3.744E-6	.000	.028	.987	.324
	Workexpindex	.005	.002	.065	2.285	.022
	AssetIndex	.007	.006	.034	1.216	.224

The coefficient of determination is very low at 0.01 and the significance values of the independent variables are much greater than 0.025 while their standard errors are more than half in value except in the case of family education index and work experience index. Thus, higher family education and previous work experience do seem to have a positive impact on performance. Even though normally one would expect the independent variables we have chosen to influence the performance of the trainees, in the present case since they are all from resource poor communities with similar incomes, there is not much variation in the values of family income and asset holdings and so they do not play an important part in influencing their performance. Moreover, generally it is difficult to get correct answers for income which poor people tend to answer on the lower side as compared to what they actually earn. People answer more realistically regarding their assets. Therefore, even though the asset holding index too did not show significance a further analysis was done to compare the mean performance of those who had more assets with that of those who had less assets and the results are given in Table 3 below.

Table3: Mean Performance Index Comparison by Assetholding

Assetholding Index	Performance Index				
	N	Mean	Diff.	Std. Error Mean Diff.	Significance
≥ 1.5	722	0.984	0.172	0.0525	0.001
< 1.5	563	0.812			

Thus, there is a significant difference in the performance of those who have a higher asset holding than those who have a lesser asset holding. Therefore, going forward the data on asset holding will have to be collected more systematically and the index adequately weighted for asset quality as this will certainly have a significant influence on performance. The performance of the trainees with different education levels was also compared and the results are given in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Mean Performance Index Comparison by Education

Education Level	Performance Index
-----------------	-------------------

	N	Mean
Less than 8 th standard	152	0.916
Passed 8 th standard	298	0.896
Passed 10 th standard	305	0.883
Passed 12 th standard	423	0.981
Graduate	94	0.763

Trainees who have passed 12th standard show a significantly greater performance than the other groups and those who are graduates show a significantly poorer performance and also much lower enrolment. Those who are graduates have higher aspirations and so do not like to pursue careers as drivers while those who have passed 12th standard appear to have greater skills and commitment to complete the training and become drivers. The performance of the trainees compared by caste category is given in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Mean Performance Index Comparison by Caste Category

Caste Category	Performance Index	
	N	Mean
Scheduled Castes	532	0.903
Scheduled Tribes	75	1.184
Other Backward Classes	229	0.929
General	407	0.886

The Scheduled Tribe trainees even though much lesser in number have performed significantly better than the other categories whereas the general caste trainees have performed significantly poorer than the other categories. Thus, there may be greater aptitude and commitment among the Scheduled Tribe trainees. The performance of the trainees compared by community is given in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Mean Performance Index Comparison by Community

Community	Performance Index	
	N	Mean
Hindu	407	0.886
Muslim	163	0.790
Christian	22	0.868
Buddhist	2	0.200
Sikh	11	1.518

Clearly the Muslim trainees have performed significantly lesser than the other groups and this may be attributed to the higher levels of patriarchy that they face. Even though the number of Sikh trainees is very less they have performed exceptionally well far outstripping the other communities. The performance of the trainees compared by their marital status is given in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Mean Performance Index Comparison by Marital Status

Marital Status	Performance Index	
	N	Mean
Married	567	0.892
Unmarried	747	0.927

Unmarried women have performed slightly better than married women but the difference is not significant and so prima facie marital status does not appear to be a major determinant of performance.

Most importantly, the constant has a high value and its standard error is half the value while the significance is less than 0.025. This means that there are other important factors that influence the performance of the trainees on which data has not been collected yet. Probably, the patriarchal barriers that they face, play a more significant part in hindering their performance and it is their personal attributes and desire to break into NTL that drive them to perform better, which are contributing to the high constant value. There are many case studies of successful trainees which show how they they have fought the barriers through their determination to succeed against all odds (Azad, 2018). Another regression analysis was done with only those 664 trainees who had got their professional licenses and once again the coefficient of determination is low at 0.008 and the coefficients of the independent variables and their standard errors are not significant, confirming the earlier result that the independent variables we have selected mostly do not have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

The low value of the coefficient of determination also indicates that the the data quality is poor. Thus, going forward not only have more data to be collected with regard to the barriers faced by women and their determination to overcome them but the quality of data collection for the two independent variables which have shown significance, family education index and work experience and another variable asset index, have to be better. Data also needs to be collected on the extent of domestic violence and the gender division of labour within the home for care work.

6.2 Testing of Performance Means of Those who were discouraged and Those that were not: An independent samples T test was conducted with those 664 trainees who had got their permanent licences to see whether the means of the performance index of those who had been discouraged by their families and those that had not been so discouraged were significantly different or not. The results are given in Tables 8 and 9 below.

Table8: Mean Performance Index of those who have got Permanent Licenses

Discouraged by Family	Performance Index			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Yes	109	1.456	0.7569	.0725
No	555	1.663	0.7692	.0327

The mean performance index value for those who were discouraged by their families is 0.207 less than those who were not. The result of the independent samples T Test below shows that this difference is statistically significant indicating that the discouragement suffered by the trainees mainly due to patriarchal pressures has an adverse impact on their performance in the training.

Table 9: Result of Independent Samples T Test Comparing the Means

t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
-2.579	662	0.010	0.207	.0804

6.3 Barrier Analysis: The analysis of the enrollment and training MIS yields the following outreach to employment conversion statistics for 2017-18 as shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Outreach to Employment Conversion

1	2		3		4			5		6	
Outreach (Nos)	Interested & Eligible (Nos)	Dropout between 2 & 1 (%)	Registration (Persons)	Dropout between 3 & 2 (%)	Enrolled (Nos)	Dropout between 4 & 3 (%)	Dropout between 4 & 1 (%)	Successful	Dropout between 5 & 1 (%)	Employed	Dropout between 6 & 1
35000	8210	76.5	1383	83.2	580	58.1	98.3	187	99.5	92	99.7

The data clearly shows that there is a very high rate of attrition at each stage and eventually only 0.3 percent of all those persons who have been contacted through direct outreach in 550 slums are eventually employed as drivers. This is a stark indication of the tremendous barrier to taking up driving as a profession even after a decade of continuous campaigning by Azad during which it has not only established its credibility among the target population but has also established women's professional driving as a viable and accessible livelihood option. Finally the overall dropout rate from among those few who have enrolled for training in the period 2017-18 is 70 percent. Moreover, only 16 percent of the trainees are able to pay the commitment fund of Rs 2000 and some have to be given travel subsidies and loans to enable them to continue with their training. This clearly shows that the barriers to entry into NTL by resource poor women are very high. The analysis of the Enrollment MIS shows that among those who objected to the women enrolling in or continuing with the WoW training, 65.7 percent were men. Thus, even though men are in a majority there are still a considerable proportion of women too who do not look on driving as a good career option. The various reasons for objecting and their frequencies are given in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Reasons for Objecting to Women adopting Driving as a Profession in Enrollment MIS

Reason for Objection	The Driving Profession is Not for Women	Distrust of NGOs	Women Should Do Domestic Work only	Training too Costly	Total
Frequency	176	5	68	5	254
Percentage	69.2	2.0	26.8	2.0	100.0

The patriarchal mindset comes out clearly in that 96 percent of the objections derive from it. The results of the survey conducted of Azad Alumna further confirm this as shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Reasons for Objecting to Women adopting Driving as a Profession in Azad Alumna Survey

Reason for Objection	The Driving Profession is Not for Women	Women Should Do Domestic Work only	Total
Frequency	109	37	146
Percentage	74.7	25.3	100.0

A quantification of the data in the case studies conducted by Azad reveals the following data about the objections to women entering NTL as given in Table 13.

Table 13: Reasons for Objecting to Women adopting Driving as a Profession from Case Studies

Reason for Objection	The Driving Profession is Not for Women	Women Should Do Domestic Work only	Total
Frequency	43	9	52
Percentage	82.7	17.3	100.0

7. Return on Investment

Finally, after having quantitatively established that the barriers to women entering NTL are high and that consequently considerable time, effort and funds have to be expended to facilitate this, we now estimate what is the economic return on the investment. This will be done by estimating the Internal Rate of Return (IRR) assuming an average working life for the women graduating in a particular year to be 35 years since the average age of successful trainees is 25 years. Since the programme has now reached a mature stage we take the costs incurred in 2017-18 as the investment for a batch and then estimate the expected rate of return on that from a period of 35 years. These costs are of two types. The major expenditure is that on the WoW programme for training purposes. The other expenditures on outreach and mobilization, research and advocacy and institutional governance are in pursuit of the larger goal of making society gender sensitive. For the purposes of the calculation of the IRR the expenditures on the outreach and mobilisation, research and advocacy and institutional heads have been excluded because these are broader expenditures against the patriarchal barriers which should be borne by the Government ideally. These costs are given in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Expenditures on Azad’s Programmes in 2017-18

Programme	PARTICULARS	Expenditures (Rs)
Mobilisation and Outreach	Activity 1 - OUTREACH	28,90,000
	Activity 1a - OUTREACH-Payroll	37,84,930
	Activity 2 - AZAD KISHORI	7,02,671
	Activity 2a - AZAD KISHORI Payroll	4,35,896
	Activity 3 -MEN FOR GENDER JUSTICE	11,08,252
	Activity 3a -MEN FOR GENDER JUSTICE-Payroll	11,52,145
	Activity 4 -FEMINIST LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME	57,47,168
	Total	1,58,21,062
Women on Wheels	Activity 1: Implementing WoW	1,50,04,324
	Activity 1a: Implementing WoW –Payroll other employees	95,39,913
	Activity 1b: Implementing WoW –Payroll women employees	11,40,000
	Activity 2: Establishing Strategic Partnerships for WoW	60,16,640
	Activity 2a: Establishing Strategic Partnerships for WoW-Payroll	4,49,952
	Activity 3: Piloting the residential Academy	6,548
	Total	3,21,57,377
Research, Advocacy and Campaigns	Activity 1: RAC Activities	19,99,523
	Activity 1a: RAC Payroll	16,84,821
	Activity 2a: NTL Network	3,62,862
	Total	40,47,206
Governance, Management and Fundraising	Governance and Management Team	38,42,729
	FUND RAISING	29,04,261
	INSTITUTIONAL PAYROLL	42,20,954
	INSTITUTIONAL OVERHEADS	30,93,812
	Support to Sakha	97,07,100
	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	23,52,727
	Total	2,61,21,583
GRAND TOTAL		7,81,47,228

The Azad MIS shows that the average monthly earnings of the 92 Azad trainees of 2017-18 who are employed is Rs 9,700. The Azad MIS also shows that 44 of these trainees who are employed were in some other job earlier and that their average monthly earning then was Rs 5,090. Thus, the total additional yearly income of the 2017-18 cohort due to the training received from Azad is as follows –

$$C_t = 12 * (48 * 9700 + 44 * (9700 - 5090)) = 80,21,280$$

The internal rate of return for the WoW programme has been calculated with the following formula

$$= \sum_{t=1}^T C_t / (1+r)^t - C_0$$

where C_t is the net cash inflow during the period t , C_0 is the total initial investment cost, r is the IRR and t is the number of time periods over which the initial investment will give returns.

C_0 in this case is the expenditure on the WoW programme in 2017-18 which is Rs 3,21,57,377

$t = 35$ years, since the average age of the successful trainee is 25 and we assume that she will work till she is 60 years of age.

By iteration for these values we get an IRR = 25 percent which is much above the market rate for capital of about 15 percent.

Even if we take the whole expenditure of Azad for 2017-18 instead of just that on the WoW programme, we get an IRR = 10 percent which too is quite good. In fact if all the 187 successful trainees of 2017-18 had been employed then the IRR even after taking the whole expenditure of Azad would be a very handsome 21 percent.

Clearly, the crucial requirement for greater success of the programme is to retain more of the enrolled trainees and get them to graduate from the training and then place them in employment. This is a tall order as other women's taxi services in this country have not been able to do too well despite being subsidized like the Azad Sakha combine (Rao, 2014). The main problem faced by women only taxi services is the lack of adequate investment that can help them to scale and make a bigger presence in the taxi service market. Matters are compounded by the fact that the aggregator services like Uber and Ola subsidise their fares and this results in an unlevel playing field for the women only taxi operators.

8. Returns to Government Through Taxation

The annual extra income being earned by the women drivers will be spent in consumption and so add to the GDP of the country. Additionally this consumption will generate revenue for the Government through GST on the purchases that the women make. The average GST revenue for the Government is 15% or so. Therefore, the annual revenue for the Government from the additional income of the women is, $80,21,280 \times 0.15 = \text{Rs } 12,03,192$. There is a huge shortage of professional drivers in India at the moment with 28% of the trucking fleet lying idle due to this (Neelkanta, 2018). This is mainly due to poor working conditions of truck drivers. This is adversely affecting the movement of goods and so the GDP. Consequently the Government's revenue is also going down. Thus, by creating an enabling environment for more women to become drivers and by facilitating the environment for men and women to drive trucks and taxis, the Government would only be doubly benefiting from increased GDP and tax revenue.

9. Conclusions

The foregoing analysis clearly establishes the tremendous barriers that resource poor women face in pursuing non-traditional livelihoods and the exemplary way in which Azad has helped them to break new ground in overcoming these barriers. Despite these barriers, Azad's Women on Wheels programme is economically viable apart from being hugely socially relevant. The major conclusions of this study are as follows –

1. The societal barriers to women entering non-traditional livelihoods are very high and despite Azad having honed its mobilization, training and placement processes to near perfection over the past decade, the enrollment, successful training and placement of trainees still remains a very big challenge. Therefore, these processes have to be critically reviewed and further perfected so as to reduce the high dropout rate.
2. The Government is not doing enough to promote women in non-traditional livelihoods and as a consequence women's taxi services are all struggling to survive. Azad has to make huge investments in mobilization, research and advocacy and in subsidizing Sakha to keep the programme going which adversely affects its economic viability.
3. The Women on Wheels programme by itself is economically viable as it has a very handsome internal rate of return of 25% despite its high unit cost per trainee. Even the whole Azad expenditure has an internal rate of return of 10% which is fairly good.
4. The Management Information System needs to be improved to collect more data on domestic violence, domestic gender division of labour and the commitment of the trainees to persevere against social barriers. The quality of data collection also needs to improve.

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