

Exploring the Intersections of Gender, Caste and Space in the Lifeworld of Musahar Women in Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) explains the concept of intersectionality as important not only to understand racial discrimination but differential experiences of women within such differences. She mentions, “there was no proper concept to use for the discrimination of black women. There were policies for black men and white women.” Further, Ruston and Lindstrom (2013) reiterate “intersectionality in different dimensions of social life, axes of differentiation, axes of oppression, social structures, norms and activities are intersecting, mutually modifying and inseparable.”

In the Indian context, women of so-called ‘lower’ castes face marginalities in various spaces at the intersection of caste, class and gender.

In the case of women in Musahar community¹ in Uttar Pradesh, they encounter challenges for survival and struggles on account of social differences and historicity of structural hierarchies. Conventionally, women are in a subordinate position in various social spaces and so are Musahar women, which further intersects with caste multiplying the marginalities.

This paper explores the lifeworld of Musahar women, their marginalities and their agency at the intersections of gender & caste identity across various spaces that get defined by hierarchical power relationships.

Keyword: Intersectionality, Marginality, Women, Lifeworld, Gender, Patriarchy, Caste, Agency, Spatial Practice

Introduction:

The historicity of caste-based hierarchical structures in Indian society and its intersections with gender marks the subordination and marginalization of women across multiple spaces including household, work, community spaces including education, health care, public spaces etc. The unequal status and deepening marginalization that gets manifested across various spaces is thus rooted in this power hierarchies of caste and patriarchy, which is also closely linked to the unequal access to resources, marginalities and stigma. Eswaran et al (2013) locates women's status in India in this understanding and perspective of caste and explains their experiences of subordination and denial of opportunities in society based on the same. Also, Rege (1995) talks about "the survival of so-called 'lower' caste and working-class women that gets invisible under rubrics of 'social problems' and the changing status of women in India." Brush (2007:12) uses "gender lens" to understand various aspects in society e.g. domination, politics and power relationships. In such a scenario, women's status and struggle, especially of those belonging to the so-called 'lower' caste is difficult to understand without using a gendered and intersectional understanding.

¹ A community belonging to scheduled caste, and their occupation is based on agricultural wage work and historically, this is landless community.

Bhasin (2003) specifically mentions that “gender is the key to understanding the power relationships between men and women”. “Gender as a structural feature of reality has been ignored and understanding of reality has remained partial and ‘gendered’” (Rege, 1995). Power dynamics in gender relationships are rooted hegemonically in cultural values of patriarchy. Walby (1989:214) says, “Patriarchy is the essential tool in the analysis of gender relationships”. It reflects the “subordination and disadvantageous position of women in various social institutions” (Mitchell, 2009:7). Further, family has been described as the primary space for patriarchal practice (Sonawa, 2001, Kapadia, 1982). The patriarchal practices further get entrenched within rural contexts in India with hierarchical division of labor between women and men and the practice of norms and values with little or no spaces for negotiation. Patriarchy has also been referred to as a system of governance in which man ruled society through their position of being the head of household” (Walby, 1989, Weber, 1947). Walby (1989) explains the existence of patriarchal practices across various spaces including household, workplaces, body & sexuality, cultural institutions etc. Intersectionality of caste, socio-economic status, gender and patriarchal hierarchy mediates women’s status creating multiple marginalization.

The Musahar community in Uttar Pradesh is situated largely in the eastern parts. They are one of the most marginalized communities and known as a traditional rat hunting and rat eating community who have been stigmatized for the same since historical times. However, in the contemporary context, this practice of rat eating is not so visible, but the stigma continues. Since historical times, this community has been landless agricultural labourers. Their contemporary source of income encompasses daily wage work as farm labourers, work in brick-kiln, construction site, loading & unloading work etc. They also migrate to the cities and other States where they work as daily wage labourers in the construction, iron and textile industries etc.

Within the overall context of marginality of the Musahar community, women face further layered and differential marginalities resulting from the intersections and interface of caste, denial of resources and

manifestations of both, public and private patriarchy across different spaces of household, work etc. In farm labour for example, women and men have differential wages, where men have a higher wage than women. The nature of work also differs where men are engaged in digging or cleaning mud with a spade while women only do with hand tools. While working as agricultural labourers or in other daily wage work, women also face harassment including sexual harassment, abusive language and sexually laced comments. Simultaneously within the household, they have to take part in reproductive responsibilities and caring activities for family members. In the Musahar community, women play a key role in survival activities, however her financial contribution is rarely recognized within the household. Thus, women not only work outside for wages but also have household chores and the responsibilities for reproductive work at home. So, along with multiple workloads, Musahar women face multiple challenges and complexities both within the household and outside. They struggle to voice out their concerns at community or larger societal spaces and their concerns are mostly invisibilized. Doeuff (2000) talks about various discussions over women's concerns about equality and daily life of a woman, irrespective of their social class or education. The normalization of women's existing lifeworld by various social norms and values due to historicity, rarely let them come out. Kumkum Roy (2016) says, "gender history can be extremely complicated and need to be sensitive to variations in terms of categories such as caste, class, region and communities".

This paper thus highlights the context of daily lives of Musahar women and their everyday struggles, concerns and issues at the interface of various spaces due to intersections of caste and gender including poor access to resources. This has been understood by locating the lifeworld of Musahar women within the context of the lifeworld of Musahar community as a whole and their daily struggles. Further through the various life stages of the Musahar woman, the nuances of her subjective experiences in daily life have been analyzed across various spaces of the household, work, community and society.

Methodology:

This paper is part of a qualitative research study about the lifeworld and livelihoods of the Musahar community from a gendered perspective. The study was conducted in Uttar Pradesh². Selection of location was based on socio-economic backwardness, lack of participation, limited work opportunities & source of income, agriculture landlessness, ineffective implementation of government policies and migration as a livelihood strategy. In-depth interviews were used as a method of data collection to get an understanding of women's life world, struggle and exclusion. The sampling technique used was purposive. The qualitative methodology provided a path to understand subjective experiences, views, perceptions and specifically the everyday experiences of Musahar women. Participant observation helped in getting clarity about various actions and practice. Data was collected in two villages of Kushinagar district in Eastern Uttar Pradesh to understand their experiences and situation and the nuances of their daily lives.

Key Concepts:

The paper is located in the key understanding of intersectionality and the various intersecting and interfacing perspectives including lifeworld, caste and patriarchy. Women's subordinate position in society is constructed by hegemonic social & cultural norms and values. The research not only highlights the struggle of Musahar women but also their agency in dealing with the situation, even though it's not free agency.

Alfred Schutz defines lifeworld as a social-phenomenon which is about understanding the lived experiences of people. Within this understanding, Musahar women's lifeworld could be located in multiple spaces including their daily work as labourers in farms etc., with less wages and poor work conditions, daily threats of sexual harassment, household work including supporting of family members, lack of control and decision making

² Two hamlet- Khadahi and Bhudevapur of Mainpur village and one hamlet-Mahiarva at Dudahi village in Kushinagar district

within the household, and indignity within the household and outside, daily caste stigma in the community and outside as both women and women belonging to Musahar community, lack of access to resources for survival etc. These points also emerge in the explanation of Karus (2015: xx) as he defines “lifeworld related to a person’s subjective experiences related to material and immaterial reality”.

In contemporary lifeworld, Musahar women are playing a significant role in raising children and feeding the family, meeting financial needs by doing wage labour and engaging in reproductive work. Their lifeworld comprises a busy schedule of household and labour work for wages in brick factories, in agriculture, supporting men in their wage work etc. Musahar women also face multiple challenges in their daily lives in accessing facilities of health, education for children, employment, inclusiveness in various processes within the family as well as in the society.

Intersectionality as a concept has emerged from the work of feminists of colour. Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) has looked at intersectionality from the understanding of race and gender emerging from the struggles of women of colour. “Premise of intersectionality is the acknowledgement of power hierarchies not only between two groups of ‘women’ and ‘men’, but determining whose experiences count and who gets to speak on behalf of ‘women’” (Wendy, 2013:4-5; Spelman 1988: 77-79). In Indian caste-based structure of society, Banerjee and Ghosh (2018:04) relate the idea of intersectionality to pre-independence times. Ambedkar (1916) also recognized that “caste and gender identities were not only parallel but also intersectional systems” that had tried to establish specific and hierarchical gender roles. Women’s lifeworld in various spaces of the household, community and larger societal spaces is not only unequal but also manifests into subordination, marginalities and lack of opportunities.

Locating Musahar women within the overall context of Musahar community in Uttar Pradesh:

“If women don't earn, Musahar will go hungry.”

This articulation by a Musahar woman highlights both the struggles she faces as well as the significant role she plays in the wellbeing of the family and community.

Kushinagar has one of the highest populations of Musahar communities and is also one of the socio-economically backward districts in Uttar Pradesh. Majority of the people from Musahar communities have been residing in rural areas. Their living spaces are segregated from other caste groups. They live in small houses made of mud, straw and bamboo. Only few houses constructed under Government schemes are made of bricks but without any basic facilities of toilet (majority houses are without toilets), bathroom, water and kitchen. Through the various government programmes,, they have received aid for constructing houses but this amount was not enough. Corruption and local politics play a significant role in downgrading the quality. People have mentioned that there are cases where PRI³ members have asked for money for constructing houses.

Ramesh says (name changed).

“My house is made of straw and bamboo. Even my parent's house is also made of mud and straw. We have not received any support for building houses under the scheme of Awas⁴”

Radhika (name changed) says:

“There are agents, they only decide who will benefit and who will not. So due to these agents, see the quality of the toilet. These toilets are made with very small pieces of brick. When I go to use the toilet,

³ Panchayati Raj Institutions

⁴Government support for construction of house under housing schemes

I am afraid that it may fall anytime. It is of that bad quality. People use it with fear of falling apart.”

This is an unsafe situation for women and children. “Women are mostly engaged in unpaid jobs inside the household or outside work including under-paid wage work, collecting firewood, grazing, helping husband/father in *brick-kiln* etc” also mentioned by Desai & Jain (1994) about typical unpaid domestic activities that consist of cooking and cleaning and “poor women spend considerable time collecting in firewood, preparing cow dung cakes, or cleaning grain” (Desai & Jain, 1994; Agarwal, 1986; Jain, 1985; Jain and Banerjee, 1985). Misra (1998) talks about a similar debate over the “unpaid work of women in the family including variations about the work and the time, women spend at home”. Further, Desai & Jain (1994:117) and Jahan & Papanek (1979) emphasizes that “these activities at home are rarely considered economic, either by the national assessment systems or by the women themselves.” Majority of the women spend more working hours than men for the family. This is very common in almost every family in the community.

In addition to the household space, social norms and traditional practices further subjugate and marginalize women.

Gayatri (name changed) says:

“Actually, when a cot belongs to my husband’s elder brother then I cannot sit on it, I can speak with him but I cannot sit on that cot where he sleeps.”

Radhika (name changed) says...

“My mother-in-law takes all the decisions in all the financial matters and other activities. All the outside household decisions are taken by her. My husband earns and I cook food but other things are taken care of by my mother-in-law. So, she goes out if there is anything needed to bring. When my father-in-law was alive, he used to take all the decisions”

An intersectionality of age is also visible here. It is not only patriarchy within the household but also in community spaces and with respect to other people and communities. Other caste groups in the neighborhood also look down upon Musahar women because of their caste and because they are women. This can be seen and understood in the oppressive behaviour and dominating and harsh ways of conversation at work and other spaces.

Suganti (name changed) says...

“They pressurise us to work quickly in harsh conditions and make us work till the work is finished no matter what time it takes. They also talk harshly.”

Rajbanti (name changed) says...

“I know if someone gets education till 10th in Musahar community, other community people do not like it. They think that s/he can go ahead of them.”

Women’s lives are also affected by local self-governance and its feudalistic nature of elected bodies. Local Self Governance body and political institutions seem to exist for getting more personal benefits through corruption⁵ rather than welfare. Women do receive some meagre benefits from government schemes like MGNREGA⁶, PDS⁷ etc., but often these programs are not implemented properly. Financial constraints and the busy schedules do not leave any time for the Musahar community as a whole and Musahar women, in particular, to think, reflect and understand the various strategies used by local self-governance representatives. There is no space for Musahar men and women in local governance.

Thus, we see that there is an overall context of extreme poverty and marginality for the Musahar community as a whole and differential

⁵ As mentioned above about corruption in housing scheme

⁶ Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

⁷ Public Distribution System

marginality for women in particular which gets multiplied due to the various intersections and interfaces.

Spatialization of power and practices at the intersections of caste and gender in the life stages of Musahar women:

The multiple intersections in the lives of Musahar women further disadvantage and discriminate against them. This understanding gets located in various spaces within the household, community and society, which further helps to understand how power as located in these various spaces overlap with gender and caste identities. Wendy Harcourt & Escobar (2002) "explains place-based politics of women that is related to their experience in the daily lives in various domains, for example, body, home, environment and public spaces. These intersections of gender, caste and power as operational in various spaces are further manifested through various gendered and spatial practices within the life stages of women.

a. Childhood:

Childhood of Musahar children is full of struggles. The girl child in particular is being controlled and monitored by male members within the household. Girls between the age of six to eleven years start to learn household work and help mothers in cooking and accompanying mothers and sisters to earn for the family. Financial constraints, inadequate resources for survival etc., forces girls at an early age to support family financially and either they drop out of schools or are not enrolled at all.

Naresh (name changed) says about his daughter....

My daughter says her teacher told her that if she does not have a notebook, she doesn't need to come to school.

Sonia (name changed) says about her childhood...

I have never gone to school. I was always at home and helping my mother at home. My parents wanted me to stay at home. So, I was

helping my mother most of the time. When I got a little older, I started to go for labour work in others' farms.

Parents are hardly able to pay attention to their children due to financial constraints caused by historical landlessness, continuous search for work for mere survival, being busy in meagre paying wage work from morning to evening etc. This situation leads children to experience financial and various constraints and they stay without the care of parents. In such a grim situation of struggle and household circumstances, children lack essential resources like proper food, education, clean clothes, washed bedding etc. It was observed that Musaher children happened to play inside or outside the house in dust the entire day devoid of proper care and attention. Adolescent girls are more engaged in household work e.g. cooking, looking after cattle or younger siblings in house than adolescent boys who just roam around.

Jhunia (name changed) says...

When I was young, we were having cattle at home so I used to care for them. I used to bring grass for them and feed the cattle. So, this is what I was doing when I was young for the entire time. My brother was learning to drive and he used to roam around. He did not help in the household work. All the household work is being done either by me or my mother.

Schooling is thus a distant dream for most children in the community. In the Musaher hamlets, boys are largely engaged in helping parents, going for wage work while girls are specifically doing either domestic work or going with their mother or any woman in the community to earn. Musaher children are especially the victim of contemporary situations and failure of state policy to provide children opportunity for schooling. Girls have more responsibility at home like their mother and also outside the home, to earn for the family. These are gendered divisions of work at childhood in the majority of the Musaher families. The ongoing practice of non-schooling makes them unaware about their situation and leave them

prone to face marginality at various spaces including workplace and political spaces.

b. Teenage and Young Adults:

Musahar girls aged between twelve to eighteen years encounter various challenges. At this age, it is considered that girls should be groomed for marriage and expected to learn cooking, cleaning, and should take care of their siblings. Also, the unspoken understanding is that the sexuality of the girls needs to be controlled. However, girls were observed to be curious about the world beyond their hamlets and aspiring to buy new clothes for themselves and go outside but do not get the opportunity to do so due to poverty, illiteracy, patriarchal structure and family's concern for their security. Hence, they are largely confined to the household spaces and kept away from social spaces. However, due to extreme poverty, girls are forced to go out of the home to earn or support their parents in most cases. Musahar girls in the majority of the cases engage in wage work in agriculture in spite of the restriction on their mobility. But apart from work for earning a livelihood for the family, they are not allowed to move outside of the home. This short time and space that the girls go out for wage work, actually exposes them to the dynamics of workspaces e.g. low wage, caste stigma and hierarchical relationships.

Other-caste (non-Musahar) primary school teacher from a neighboring village mentions...

“Musahar girls earn a lot of money but they are senseless”

Such is the stigma that the girls from the community faces and also other communities often think that the girls from the Musahar community could be sexually harassed and treated without dignity. Essentially, the underlying assumption is that their bodies can be controlled in public spaces because of their age, caste and gender. Some families in the hamlets where the study was conducted, make and sell liquor from home. This liquor making process demands a lot of effort. Women perform all the roles required for this process e.g. collecting firewood, buying raw stuff and selling it. Process of

selling consists of the⁸arrival of the customer at the door of the house, the customer asking for availability of liquor with symbolic language or in a slow voice and then the customer waiting outside for response. The seller from the house then gives the nod for availability, makes the customer to sit outside or sit inside the house as per instruction. The girls or daughters-in-law within the Musahar household mostly bring and serve liquor to customers as per the demands. This is a humiliating space for Musahar girls as many times, it is surrounded with gender-based abusive words, comments and dominant relationships. Musahar men's role in the process of liquor is limited to collecting money from customers and sending them back as soon as possible. This is a complex space of poverty, work and patriarchy that plays out where liquor selling is seen as a livelihood opportunity within a poverty-stricken context and young girls; daughters and daughters in law of the house are used to sell the products. This commodification of young girls in the household as sexual objects sells the product and therefore the restrictions on their mobility and concepts of patriarchal purity is lifted within this context. These are thus complex and dilemmatic spaces which at one hand leads to resources for survival of the family and on the other is humiliating and oppressive to the girls in the community. Further, there is an interesting interplay of public and private patriarchy here. Even when the mobility of the girls is restricted for reasons of security, they are allowed to interact with male customers who are often drunk, for earning livelihoods. The intersections of caste, class, gender, space and age are clearly visible.

Marriage is another patriarchal institution which impacts the lives of young girls and their families through various practices. Majority of parents are scared of any misconduct or misbehavior with girls, eve-teasing or girl's affairs or eloping with boys. Like other non-Musahar communities, Musahar family also consider girls as a symbol of patriarchal prestige. When girls reach the age of fifteen to sixteen years, parents prefer that they either stay at home doing domestic work and support in earning or arrange a marriage at the earliest. During the study, it was observed that there were rarely any unmarried girls more than sixteen to seventeen years old in the

⁸ Mostly customer belong to other caste community e.g. Yadav, Brahmin, Muslim Chamar etc.

village and the age of newly married women varied between fifteen to eighteen years.

In the Musahar community, marriage and its processes are based on patriarchal norms and values. The practice of dowry and marriage expenses creates challenges for parents to marry their daughters and forces parents to take loans and sometimes it leads to the loss of small agricultural land that they might possess as they are not able to repay their debts. Some parents explore the option of marrying their girls through the organised public group marriage or inter-caste marriage in other districts. This inter-caste marriage is different from conventional marriages due to many reasons. In some inter-caste marriages, boys were 5 years or much older than the girls. Also, in such other inter caste marriages, there was no public gathering and no specific marriage ritual which is usually the norm. There are also cases of money transactions (heard from many community people) in some of these marriages and therefore such marriages are hushed up.

Bharti (name changed) told...

My extended relative took me away from my hamlet in Sitapur a couple of days before my marriage and my marriage was performed in the temple there. I found out later that my husband and his family had given money for this marriage. Now if someone will hear this, they will say that my parents have sold their daughter. I didn't feel good for this money transaction in my marriage. Actually, my husband also comments many times that he has bought me by paying money. I really hate this and I don't like it when he says like this to me.

Such marriages are considered as a stigma for the exchange of money through mediators. This inter-caste marriage at far distant unknown villages/towns also makes girls vulnerable to get support or share their challenges after marriage.

Marriage makes girls dependent and, eventually it leads the man to control her. Married women are seen in fear of their husband, mother-in-law,

sister-in-law in the family. Private patriarchy plays out very strongly in this interface of the household space with the institution of marriage.

“I have been having lots of problems in the in-laws house. When I was in my native place, things were not like this. In my in-law’s family, if I make any mistakes people immediately abuse and beat me. It is just for the sake of small mistake like the amount of salt in vegetable and not bringing water immediately on call”

Girls have to struggle the most after marriage and most of them also face domestic violence. Most parents decide and fix the marriage of a girl. Girls have no space to make choices or decide in this matter. Dyson and Moore (1983:44) say, “marriage is often dominated by the search for intergroup alliances, and women usually have no choice in the matter of selecting partners as married girls are considered socially and ritually inferior in society”.

In such situations as mentioned above, women are unable to think about their position in society and become victims of oppressive societal structure and customs. Many Musahar men are addicted to liquor. This liquor addiction creates a lot of problems again in women’s lives. After marriage, any challenges and accidents with the husband and his family, any bad habits e.g. liquors or gambling indirectly or directly affects the women irrespective of women’s social position or role as wife or mother.

c. Old Age:

Old age for a Musahar woman is an experience of being left without support, food and housing. Mostly women during the study were found living alone in a hut or single room without any facilities. After marriage, a son in most cases lives separately with his wife and children while mother (parents) remain alone and cook for herself (themselves). Provision of pensions to support elderly persons can be a support system for Musahar. However, local governance institutions are not friendly in most cases with elderly people. The lack of effort of PRI members including the lack of State’s social security support further aggravates the struggle of elderly people in the community

including elderly women. During the study, it was found that many old age women were without any support and were searching for work and also going to farm for wage work and trying to survive.

Discussion: Intersectionality and Women's Agency:

Theoretically, Davies (1991:42) assumes “women’s agency as an agonistic relationship between the self & others and between self & society”. It is central to the individual. For a woman, “an agency is socially moulded by the notion of obligation and legitimacy and such as based on moral judgment” (Tripathi & Mishra, 2011:59; Sen, 1990). Hence, an agency represents the process by which choices are made and put into effect. It is central to the concept of empowerment (Kabeer 2005:14).

Musahar women largely spend their entire life in the village. They don't have much opportunity to go out of their hamlets. There is negligible migration amongst women, either along with men or without men for seeking work outside. They therefore couldn't even experience life in the nearest town that is emerging as space for 'development'. Women are thus confined to the hamlets and have limited exposure and opportunities. Their agency is thus restricted within the multiple intersections that they face. The poverty and the need for earning a wage for the survival of the family further forces women to go for wage work every day and support husband or father or other male members in the family. To fulfil the family's financial and other requirements, women are working at multiple levels with or without men. As Kabeer (2005:14) says “agency encompasses not only ‘decision making and other forms of observable actions but also the meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their action that is their ‘sense of agency’.”

Ferree (2018:127) explains “intersectionality as an academic approach that offers an agenda for theorizing inequalities as contingent, connected, and conflictual.” In Musahar women's lifeworld, experiences are about inequality and exclusion at various spaces as explained by Collins and Bilge (2016). Intersectionality is a way of understanding and analysing the complexities in the world. Ferree (2018:128) further explains that “intersectionality is not just a form of inquiry and critical analysis but also a

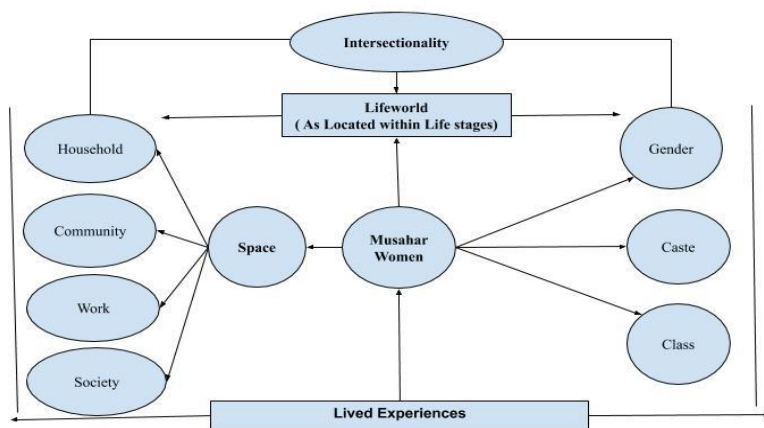
form of praxis that challenges inequalities and this approach opens a collective space for both recognising common threads across complex experiences of injustice”

The so-called ‘upper’ caste groups in the neighborhood view the current poverty and marginality of the Musahar community as a result of them being lazy, without considering the historical inequities. This leads to sharpening of stigma for the community, and an added stigma for women in the community. Women’s lifeworld at the interface of caste and poor socio-economic status leads to multilayered marginalities and complexities. This process further invisibilizes a woman's interest and limits her agency.

Agency is a concept to understand the process of empowerment, and intersectionality helps to understand the processes of exploitation and marginalization. Thus, the understanding of intersectionality and agency can together help find a pathway from ‘unfree’ agency to ‘free’ agency where agency is seen as a continuum towards the pathway of dignity, change and empowerment. In the case of women who are bargaining in public spaces, their capacity of dealing with society depends on various factors such as financial & social status, traditional support system (Agrawal & Bhasin, 2003). Musahar women, however, lack all these components. Women do not get good treatment during the interaction with officials e.g. Asha Worker, Teacher and Village Secretary. Village Panchayat Institutions have no space or opportunity for Musahar women to come and speak and participate. However, Musahars have been struggling in their own way, and often shout at and negotiate with government officials for their entitlements. In the household space, patriarchy is a social structure and ideology which keeps men at a superior position (Bhasin, 2003) and keeps women lowest in hierarchy in the family as well as in society due to their caste and gender identity.

Significance of spaces in understanding gendered intersectionalities: New directions and concluding reflections:

Women's lifeworld interfaces with intersectional marginalities leading to shrinking of their spaces at household, work, community and in the larger society. Their struggle is multilayered due to the historicity and the contemporary manifestations of patriarchy and caste and the mediating constructs including socio-cultural norms, stigma and practices. However, women are trying to emerge as creative and active members of the community. The relationship between the inter-sectionalities and spaces in the life world of Musahar women is explained in the figure below:



Women's identity and space thus intersects and multiplies their marginalities where intersectionality is not just about identity- caste, class and gender but also in terms of space-household, work, community and society. The spatialization of power and practices within these spaces' further interfaces with the intersections at different stages in a women's lifeworld leading towards a new direction and understanding of intersectionality within the context of marginalized women.

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