

**ICT & Women Empowerment : A study of the Embroidery
sector in the National Capital Region (NCR) with special
reference to Muslim & Dalit Women 2000-2005**

by **Shikha Mathur Kumar**

under supervision of
Prof. Mujtaba Khan ,
Centre for Dalit & Minority Studies -
Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi

The topic for research addresses the infrastructure area of development & globalisation which is Information & Communication Technology specially for the 'better half' of mankind if viewed from a gender neutral standpoint ! The interest it invoked enabled the researcher who had almost two decades of direct groundwork being an officer of the P&T finance service in the Department of Telecom, to witness the communications & IT revolution which overtook India from the 1990s from a fresh perspective. The Information & Communication Technology involves entire gamut of technology applications, mediums & methods ranging from the old faithful radio, T.V., internet & mobile & land line telephony.

The study of National Capital Region brought to the fore a large number of migrant labourers & their families who are mostly from marginalized class working in the embroidery sector which is a rich tradition & heritage of Indian textile sector having reached the fashion portals of the work through internet, e-commerce & e-bay. But the marginalized worker is still to reap the benefits of new technology. Though ICT is a great enabler & empowering factor specially in education & employment sector, the benefits are yet to reach the last end worker belonging to Muslim & Dalit sections of society. Mobile proved to be the most potent medium penetrating the burka clad Muslim women's world & bringing

down the walls of anonymity & exclusion. Mobile is a medium, which can reach out to the deprived & dejected Dalit women & give them a ray of hope.

The researcher visited the Swanky Showrooms & malls in fashionable Delhi upmarket as well went to underbelly where actual karigars work in inhuman conditions still creating beautiful pieces of embroidery for pittance. The same are then showcased into designer ware for thousands & lakhs of rupees. ICT can bridge the divide – economic, gender & digital between rural & urban India. The journey has just began & there is a long way to go.