

An Analysis of Impact of Gender Equality: Policies in Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the issue that India has the potential to lead the world in creating just and equitable societies. The head of United Nation's women empowerment body has emphasized and said men and boys can play an important role in achieving gender equality. Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of democratic societies. However, it is a fact that there still remain inequalities between men and women at regional level also. Though women constitute 49% of Karnataka's population, they lagged behind men on many social indicators like health, education, economic opportunities, etc. In this article more significance is given to assess present status gender equality in Karnataka state, legislative developments with regard to gender equality and also suggest measures to reduce gender inequality for the successful gender mainstreaming of public policies.

Key Words: Gender Equality, Gender Disparity, State Policy, Sex-Ratio, Work Participation Rate, Karnataka.

Introduction

Women's economic empowerment is widely recognized as essential to national development, both to advance gender equality and to reduce poverty levels. In the ancient Indian women held a high place of respect in the society as mentioned in Rigveda and other scriptures. But later on, because of social, political and economic changes, women lost their status. Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of democratic societies. However, it is a fact that there still remain inequalities between men and women. Though women constitute 49% of Karnataka's population, they lagged behind men on many social indicators like health, education, economic opportunities, etc. Karnataka Government has devised several policy-measures to reduce the gender inequality in state. This paper assesses the impact of policy-measures.

Review of Literature

Arjun. Y. Pangannavar (2013) concluded "In India, a woman is an equally efficient human being in development process but there is un-utilization and under-utilization of this precious resource." Further he quotes Late Pandit Nehru's statement "To awaken the people, it is the women who should be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the nation moves, he further adds that, the building India as a nation will also be judged by the position of Indian women." At this juncture Janaki.R.Krishnan (2006) says "Woman is the builders moulder of the nations 'destiny'; they seek integration into the national main-stream of equal partners in progress and development."

There was no scope for woman for freedom in anywhere in any form. It is an admitted fact that the economists were the late entrants in to the 'Gender studies'. In India the gender related disparities in development process are analyzed by Nirmal Banerjee, M Krishna raj, O.D.Heggade, Arjun. Y. Pangannavar and other. Amartya Sen. has identified seven types of gender inequalities viz.: Mortality inequality, Natality inequality, Inequality in basic facility, Special opportunities inequalities, Professional inequalities, Ownership inequality and Household inequality. In brief, according to

Arjun. Y. Pangannavar (2010) 'Rural poverty is worst hit and female is its centre' it means that woman be the center of solutions to all problems thus there need for sincere study efforts to identify the impact of gender-equality policies on eradicating of gender-bias in the society.

Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:

- (i) To assess present status of gender equality in Karnataka.
- (ii) To analyze the women centric policies.
- (iii) To recommend measures to reduce gender inequality.

Methodology

This research aims at to investigate the existence of information of gender inequality in Karnataka; for this research, data from secondary sources are used. The present study is based on official source of report and survey statistics of Census of India 2011, Research articles on Census of India 2011, government Acts, different issues of NCRB Reports, Yojana other books etc. Simple tabular and ratio methods are used to process data and to draw inferences.

Discussion and Result Analysis:

Sex ratio: A fundamental indicator of gender inequality in India and Karnataka, and arguably, one of the most powerful, is a preference for sons so strong that it is manifested as limiting the birth and survival of girls. The 2011 census data for India revealed a sharp decline in the sex ratio for the population age 0-6, from 914 females in 2001 to 927 females per 1,000 males. The sex ratio is defined as the number of females per 1000 males in the population and is an important social indicator to measure the extent of prevailing equity between males and females in a society at a given point of time. As per the 2011 census sex ratio in Karnataka is 973 i.e. for each 1000 male, which is above national average of 940. In 2001, the sex ratio was 964 female per 1000 male in Karnataka. Sex ratio is not same through-out Karnataka; the top five and bottom five districts are shown in table-1.

Table-1: Top 5 and Bottom 5 Districts by Sex Ratio:

Top Five Districts			Bottom Five Districts		
S.No	State/UT	Sex Ratio	S.No	State/UT	Sex Ratio
1	Udupi	1093	1	Bangalore	908
2	Kodagu	1019	2	Bangalore Rural	945
3	Dakshina Kannada	1018	3	Haveri	951
4	Hassan	1005	4	Bidar	952
5	Chikkamagalur	1005	5	Bijapur	954

Source: 2011 Census

The above table shows that as per Census of 2011, top five Districts which have the highest sex ratio are Udupi (1093) followed by Kodagu (1,038), Dakshina Kannada (1018), Hassan (1005) and Chikkamagalur (1005). Five District which have the lowest sex ratio are Bangalore (908), Bangalore Rural (945), Haveri (951), Bidar (952) and Bijapur (954). The child sex ratio in the country as well as in Karnataka has shown a declining trend since Census 1991. At national level, the child sex ratio (0-6 years) was 945 in 1991, 927 in 2001 but, now, it has declined to 914 in Census 2011. In case of Karnataka, it was 946 in 2001 and now stands at 948 in 2011. Child sex ratio (0-6 years) at country level has declined by 13 points and in the state it has been increased slightly in period 1991-2011. Table-2 has illustrated this aspect.

Table.2: Sex ratio in the age group 0-6

Sex ratio and Child sex ratio (0-6 years) India			Sex ratio and Child sex ratio (0-6 years) Karnataka		
Year	Sex ratio	Child sex ratio	Year	Sex ratio	Child sex ratio
1991	927	945	1991		
2001	933	927	2001	965	946
2011	940	914	2011	973	948

Source: Compiled data from various issues of Census

The table.2 graphs show the trends of sex ratio and child sex ratio (0-6 years) of India and Karnataka for 1991-2011. It is seen that sex ratio of India declining child sex ratio (0-6years) during the decade 1991-2011 whereas in Karnataka sex ratio of total population exceeded child sex ratio during the decade 1991-2011.

Gender Disparity in Education: A person (aged 7 and above) is considered as literate, if He or She can read and write, with understanding, in any Language. There is gender disparity in education. Table-3 shows the literacy-gap by sex in Karnataka:

Table.3: Literacy Gap by Sex in Karnataka (In %)

Sex	2001	2011	Difference
Persons	66.6	75.4	8.8
Males	76.1	82.5	6.4
Females	56.9	68.1	11.2

Source: 2011 Census

Of course, the literacy rate of the Karnataka State has increased from 66.64 % in 2001 to 75.36% in 2011 but the gap between female and male literacy is continued in spite of government efforts; some key points are noted as: (i) Male literacy has increased from 76.10% in 2001 to 82.47% in 2011, (ii) Female literacy rate has increased from 56.87% in 2001 to 68.08% in 2011, (iii) The Female illiterates exceeds the Female literates in Raichur and Yadgir Districts, (iv) 8 districts have Female literacy rate of less than 60%, (v) 12 districts Female literacy rates are in the range of 60 % to 70%, (vi) 7 districts Female literacy rates are in the range of 71 % to 80 % and (vii) Only in 3 districts Female literacy rates are above 80 % . The study focused on the fact that there is gender parity in education sector and also pointed out that the literacy rates as per the 2011 census has improved but the disparity among men and women as also the inter district differences are very much prevalent. Since education empowers women, it increases the economic, social and political opportunities available to women. Over the years the gender gap in education has been narrowing by government policies, yet substantial disparity still persists and need to be overcome.

Work Participation Rate in Karnataka: Work Participation Rate (WPR) is defined as the number of workers per 100 populations. There is significant relationship between level of women empowerment and women's participation rates in the labor force. Table-4 explains work participation ratio in Karnataka, both male and female.

Table-4: Work Participation Rate (WPR): 2001-2011

Sex	2001	2011	Change
Total	44.5%	45.6	1.1%
Males	56.7%	59.0%	2.3%
Females	32%	31.9%	-0.1%

Source: 2011 Census

In terms of WPR, the State has recorded marginal increase from 44.5% in 2001 to 45.6% in 2011. The male WPR increased by 2.3% but the female work participation rate has decreased from 32% in 2001 to 31.9% in 2011.

Women are in Low Level positions in Karnataka: The majority of women are in lower level positions. It is rare to find women in higher and mid-level positions and in professional and administrative occupations. Despite constitutional guarantees and other governmental initiatives to remove gender discrimination from the civil services of the country, women continue to fight against a variety of odds to attain career success. Table-5 shows the male dominance in higher rank or positions of jobs:

Table- 5: Women in Bureaucracy IAS,IPS,IFS

Service	2001		2013	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
IAS	34	230	44	187
IPS	5	138	6	135
IFS	9	148	15	132
Total	48	506	65	454

Source: DPAR (Services) Bangalore

The above table shows that female officers in Karnataka out of 554 only 48 working in different services in 2001 and out of 454 posts 65 female officers working different services in 2013. It indicates that there is need for woman-reservations in higher position posts.

Crime against Women: Crimes against women have been increasing over the years. As per the data of 2012-13, total number of police stations in Karnataka are 926 including RIP, of which women police station are 10 in number.

Table-5: Crime against Women in Karnataka 2011-2012

Sl. No.	Crime Head	Number of incidences in the year		Percentage variation in 2012 over 2011
		2011	2012	
1	Rape	639	621	-2.81
2	Kidnapping & Abduction	715	1070	49.65
3	Dowry Death	267	218	-18.35
4	Torture (Cruelty by Husband or relatives)	3712	3684	-0.75
5	Molestation	2608	2978	14.18
6	Sexual Harassment (insulting modesty)	81	100	23.45
7	Importation of Girls	12	32	166.67
8	Immoral Traffic (P) Act	351	335	-4.55
9	Dowry Prohibition Act.	1250	1328	6.24
Total		9695	10366	6.92

Source: SCRB Bangalore.

According to the State Crime Record Bureau (SCRB) statistics 2012, there has been a 6.92% increase in crime against women as compared to 2011 figures; 621 rape cases were recorded in 2012. 100 cases have been reported under sexual harassment, showing an increase of 23.45% over 2011. 1070 Cases of kidnapping were reported, showing an increase of 49.65% compared to 2011. Among the crimes committed against women, molestation shares the highest number. The woman-police-stations and woman-police force are to be increased.

Legislation policies against gender inequality: Several Ministries and Departments of the government of India and Karnataka are implementing various schemes and programmes for the benefit of Women. Some of the Schemes and programmes brief information are as under:

(i) Bhagyalaxmi Programme: The State Government introduces this programme in 2006-07 with the aim to empower the female child through the financial assistance of Rs.10,000/- for one girl child as fixed deposit. Parents with only two girl children are eligible to avail the benefit of this programme. And they can withdraw the amount only after reach of legal age of marriage i.e., 18 years.

(ii) Karnataka Mahila Abhivrudhi Yojane (KMAY): The KMAY Cell was started in the Directorate from 3-5-2003 with a view to monitor the scheme for inter-sector allocation of funds for women namely Karnataka Mahila Abhivrudhi Yojane to ensure gender equality and to integrate women in the mainstream of development. It is a land mark policy decision of the Karnataka Government as it was for the first time a conscious and positive attempt was made by Government to address gender issues. The strategy of the scheme is to earmark one third of resources for women in individual beneficiary oriented schemes and labour intensive schemes of various departments of Government. During the year 2013-14, 25 departments have identified 301 schemes. Out of total outlay of Rs.11334.27 crores, the 1/3rd allocation for Karnataka Mahila Abhivrudhi Yojane is Rs.4591.50 crores. An expenditure of Rs.4777.40 crore is incurred up to end of March 2014.

(iii) Kishori Shakti Programme: The Government introduced this programme in 2001-02. Totally 38 child welfare programme centers practiced this programme. In 2005-06 this programme was

extended to other 14.7 child welfare programme centers. Under this programme they identify from 11 to 18 years pre-mature girls and give training from central government grant and give supplementary nutrition food from state government.

(iv) Women Training Programme: Ministry of Rural Development organizes training courses, seminars, workshops for the development of women. The women training programme play a vital role in the empowerment of women. This programme will help women to ensure the economic empowerment. It gives training for interested women in establishment of small scale industries. It gives training through government and non government institutions. This programme gives more priority to widows, helpless, handicapped and SC, ST women. Age limit of beneficiaries must be from 18 years to 45 years.

(v) Santhwana (Console): Women who are victims of various atrocities such as Dowry, rape, sexual harassment, Domestic violence etc are subjected to Physical and Mental torture besides having to face social & financial problems. With a view to console these women and rehabilitate them, the scheme of Santhwana was launched during the year 2001-02. Objective of the scheme not only aims at providing legal assistance, financial relief, temporary shelter, protection to victims of atrocities but also helps them to be self reliant by providing training in order to empower these women to lead a life like other women in the society.

(vi) Support to Training & Employment Programme for women (STEP): in the year 1986-87 with an objective of extending training for up-gradation of skills and sustainable employment for women through a variety of action oriented projects which employ women in large numbers. The scheme was revised in the year 2009-10 and covers 10 traditional sectors of employment besides the option of supporting the locally appropriate sectors. STEP aims to make a significant impact on condition of women by upgrading skills for self and wage employment. It seeks to support women's work by providing a range of inputs with special focus on training for skill up-gradation, marketing and credit linkages to ensure sustainable employment.

(vii) Constitutional Privileges: The main constitutional provisions for gender equality are: (i) Equality before law for women (Article 14), (ii) The State not to discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them (Article 15(i)), (iii) The State to direct its policy towards securing for men and women equally the right to an adequate means of livelihood (Article 39(a)); and equal pay for equal work for both men and women (Article 39(d)), (iv) The State to make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief (Article 42), (v) To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India and to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women (Article 51(A) (e)), (vi) Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat to be reserved for women and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat (Article 243 D(3)), (vii) Not less than one- third of the total number of offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level to be reserved for women (Article 243 D (4)) and (viii) Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality to be reserved for women and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality (Article 243 T (3)).

(viii) Important social legislations relating to women are: (i) The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, (ii) The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971, (iii) The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, (iv) The Karnataka Marriage Act, 1976, (v) The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, (vi) The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, (vii) The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act,

1987, (viii) Equal right for women in parental property (Amendment) Bill 2004 and (ix) (xi) Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005.

Suggestions to improve the gender inequality:

Every problem has its own solution somewhere. In lieu of this gender inequality, the simplest solution lies at certain changes that can and should be made at the District level mechanism. In brief, the following measures are suggested for attaining gender equality in the state.

(i) A clearly demarcated administrative functionary should head the district level machinery that has the responsibilities to monitor and review the incidence of inequality against women. This district level machinery under the guidance of District collector should comprise of police officials, representatives of prosecution machinery, judiciary and prominent individuals of Women's organizations in the district. This committee should review progress of investigation and prosecution.

(ii) At least one special cell should be created at the district level for ensuring better registration and progress of investigation and monitoring of crime against gender inequality. This special cell should network with community groups and women's organization and help to create an atmosphere in which people should feel encouraged to freely report the cases of gender injustice.

(iii) The Equal Remuneration Act does not protect civil service employees. 'Equal pay for equal work' laws have been enacted but both exempt agricultural populations, the population that consists of 80% of the work force in India. Article 16 provides for quota system on the basis of caste the reservation of government jobs- only for those born under backward classes. But what about the quota system on the discrimination of sex? There can be a combination of religious and sex discrimination, if not in government jobs but in private sector? What does the legislation do in such a case? These basic questions are to be answered at government level.

(iv) Women's participation in the decision making process holds the key in answering most of gender related problems. An effective woman centered planning needs to be evolved to address most of the problems faced by women.

(v) Make industrial areas/estates women friendly. Include nursery school for children of working mothers. To make industrial estates fully equipped with a police station, school, crèche, green buffer zone with trees to reduce noise levels etc.

(vi) Build awareness on multiple schemes being run by the Government for women entrepreneurs. Many women are unaware of the schemes so are unable to avail them. Local bodies to conduct awareness camp.

(vii) Strengthening free legal aid societies and effective functioning of family courts and family counseling services etc.

The issue of the discrimination boils down to the role of women in Karnataka as well as India. Should they continue to play an inferior role and be treated as second class citizens? The final answer depends upon Indian women themselves. Fight or face injustice!

Conclusion

A number of legislations have been enacted to protect the rights of women keeping the constitutional spirit and global treaties in mind. However gender equity is far from being achieved. Eliminating gender differences in access to education and educational attainment are key elements on the path to attaining gender equality and reducing the disempowerment of women. To sum up, the growth of gender equality in Karnataka depends on effective Policies and supportive institutional agencies and its programmes/schemes. The recent governments have been given much attention for the improvement of socio-economic status of women and gender equality across the country. Gender equality would lead if the programs and agencies are continuously effectively working with better coordination and cooperation each other.

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