

Indicators and Trends in Empowerment of Women in Karnataka

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Abstract: “There is no hope of rise for that family or country where there is no estimation of women, where they live in sadness” these are the words of a great visionary Swami Vivekananda a century ago.

In India the developmental approach is changing from time to time from post independence. During 1950 developmental framework stressed on Community Development Programme followed by democratic decentralization, 1960-Agriculture development, 1970- rural poverty, development and equality for women, 1980-employment for youths, 1990- LPG 1991 towards liberalization, deregulation and market orientation brought a new era of faster economic growth. The systematic effort and accelerated development can be dated to the end of 19th century where in government policies and programmes revolved around the women development, women empowerment. NPEW-2001 initiated the women empowerment in India, followed by number of policies and programmes on education, health, nutrition, sanitation, employment, legislation and social welfare. Even then we observe discrimination among male and female in India. Karnataka, being the middle-developed state of India, experiences sharp gender inequalities and unequal gender well-being. This paper tries to highlight the trends in women empowerment indicators and women's status in Karnataka.

Keywords — *Discrimination, Empowerment, Indicators, LPG, Trends, Women.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indian society women and men do not play identical roles; further they do not have equal access to resources like education, work, and career opportunities. Gender issues play a very important role in providing equality through equity in all the spheres and concerns.

Gender disparity can be traced in various forms in Karnataka, the most important and essential indicator of women empowerment is sex ratio, which is continuously declining in the last few decades (1000M: 943F as per census 2011). Social stereotyping, social and domestic violence are some of the other areas. Discrimination against women is observed in all the levels that are before birth to death.

Gender equality through Women empowerment is enduring chronicle form many centuries. Historically it is observed that the role of women has been conflicting. In Indian context they were worshipped as god and on the contrary they are also subjected to social evils like Sati, Child marriage, child labour etc. Further women are even underprivileged of few basic facilities like food, nutrition, elementary freedom, freedom of education etc.

Naila Kabeer defines “empowerment as the process of gaining the ability to make strategic life choices by their own”. Sen’s definition, which is very close to Kabeer’s,

refers to “empowerment as capabilities, or the potential that people have for living the lives they want”. Empowerment literally means 'To invest with Power'. In the context of women empowerment the term has come to denote women's trends in identified indicators of empowerment in Karnataka. The UNO (2001: 04) has provided a broad and meaningful framework for women empowerment. It reads: “Empowerment is defined as the process by which women take control and ownership of their lives through expansion of their choices. It is the process of acquiring the ability to make strategic life choices in a contest where this ability has previously been denied”.

The definition of empowerment given by Batilwala (1998:01), It reads “Empowerment is the process by which the powerless gain greater control over the circumstances of their lives. It includes both controls over resources and over ideology. Ultimately it includes a growing intrinsic capability-greater self confidence and an inner transformation of one's consciousness that enables one to overcome external barriers”.

Karnataka, being the middle developed state of India, experiences sharp gender inequalities and unequal gender well-being. This paper tries to highlight the trends in women empowerment indicators and women's status in Karnataka.

II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study is based on secondary data collected from various sources like Men and women of Karnataka reports, NSSO, Census, directorate of economics and statistics at a glance. Paper focused to study the trends in most important indicators of women empowerment like sex ratio, literacy rate, work participation rate, maternal mortality rate, political participation, crime against women in Karnataka. Percentages and averages are the tools used in the study.

III. TRENDS IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS IN KARNATAKA

There are several women empowerment indicators of which some are: sex ratio, literacy rate, work participation rate, maternal mortality rate, political participation, crime against women, decision making power, ownership of household assets, freedom from domination, mobility and reproductive rights, media exposure and participation in development programmes. Under each of these indicators, a number of sub-indicators can be considered.

Let us study few indicators and recent trends of women empowerment in Karnataka.

3.1: Trends in Sex ratio of Karnataka:

As per Census 2011, Karnataka constitutes of 6.11 Crores population, an increase from figure of 5.29 Crore in 2001 census. Total population of Karnataka as per 2011 census male and female sex ratio of 973:1000. In 2001, total population was 52,850,562 in which males were 26,898,918 while females were 25,951,644, from 2001 to 2011 we observe decreasing and increasing trend in male and female ratio of Karnataka, there is an improvement in the sex ratio during the post reforms period. Plans, policies and initiatives taken by the government and other non-government agencies are changing the mindset of the people in achieving the sex ratio 1:1

Table 1. Trends in sex ratio of Karnataka 2001-2011

| Census Year | Female |
|-------------|--------|
| 1901 | 983 |
| 1911 | 981 |
| 1921 | 969 |
| 1931 | 965 |
| 1941 | 960 |
| 1951 | 966 |
| 1961 | 959 |
| 1971 | 957 |
| 1981 | 963 |
| 1991 | 960 |
| 2001 | 965 |
| 2011 | 973 |

Source: Census 2011- India

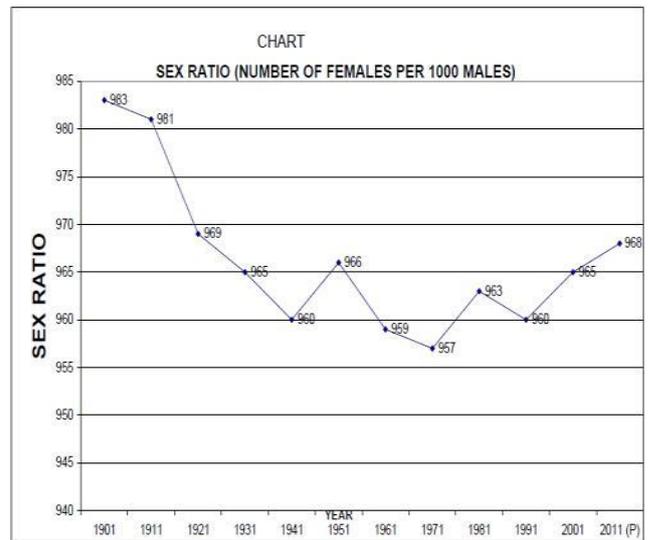


Fig 1: Trends in sex ration of Karnataka

3.2: Trends in Female literacy rate of Karnataka:

The literacy rates have been increasing since independence. As the data indicates the literacy rates are higher and increasing more for males than females. Today we are at rank 135 in the global HDI (World Bank Report). Unless women are educated they will not be able to appreciate, less use their rights and will continue to be exploited.

Monazza Aslam (2008): The study finds that Education can promote gender equality in the labour market by narrowing the gap in male female earnings. Also that the returns to women's schooling and to women's literacy and numeracy skills are higher than to men's in all occupations in the labour market.

Table 2. Trends in Male and Female literacy rate of Karnataka 1951-2011

| Census Year | Male (in Percentage) | Female (in Percentage) |
|-------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1951 | 29.00 | 9.00 |
| 1961 | 36.00 | 14.00 |
| 1971 | 42.00 | 21.00 |
| 1981 | 49.00 | 28.00 |
| 1991 | 67.00 | 44.00 |
| 2001 | 76.12 | 56.86 |
| 2011 | 82.85 | 68.13 |

Source: Men and Women 2014-15

In Karnataka it is observed upward trend in literacy rate of 75.60% as per 2011 population census. Of that, male literacy stands at 82.47 percent while female literacy is at 68.08 %.

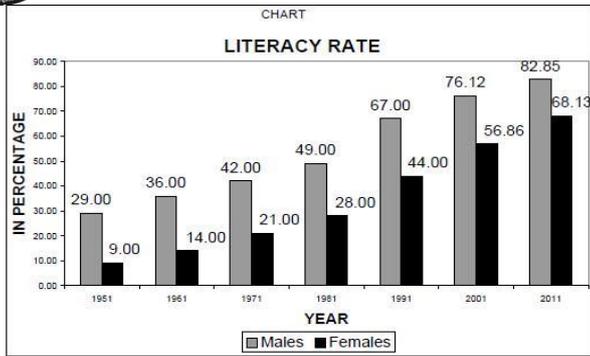


Fig 2: Trends in female literacy rate of Karnataka

In 2001, literacy rate in Karnataka stood at 66.64 percent of which male and female were 76.10 percent and 56.87 percent literate respectively. Government initiatives like Sarva shiksha abhiyana, free preliminary education for girls and many private education institutes in the state are working together to achieve 100% educated womenfolk in the society.

3.3: Trends in Female work participation rate of Karnataka

Women are always considered in under privileged category and their work is also unrecognized and unevaluated. Women work more than men in terms of quality and quantity, and take a responsibility of the major household and community work that is considered as unpaid care work and invisible. They're very few women in the paid workforce than men. There are more unemployed women than unemployed men. Women generally earn lower wage than men doing the same work. In no State do women and men have equal wages in for the same work and especially in agriculture. Women generally work more in the informal sector where wages are lower and they are not covered by labour laws. Within organizations, women workers are also engaged in piecework and subcontracting at exploitative rates.

A trend in work participation rate of non workers, marginal workers and main workers by sex is given below:

Table 3. Trends in Female work participation rate of Karnataka 1951-2011

| | YEAR | Rate (%) | |
|------------------|------|----------|--------|
| | | Female | Male |
| Main Workers | 2001 | Female | 20.63% |
| | | Male | 51.66% |
| | 2011 | Female | 23.39% |
| | | Male | 52.80% |
| Marginal Workers | 2001 | Female | 10.91% |
| | | Male | 4.97% |
| | 2011 | Female | 8.48% |
| | | Male | 6.20% |
| Non-workers | 2001 | Female | 68.01% |
| | | Male | 43.36% |
| | 2011 | Female | 68.12% |
| | | Male | 41.00% |

Source: Census of India – 2011

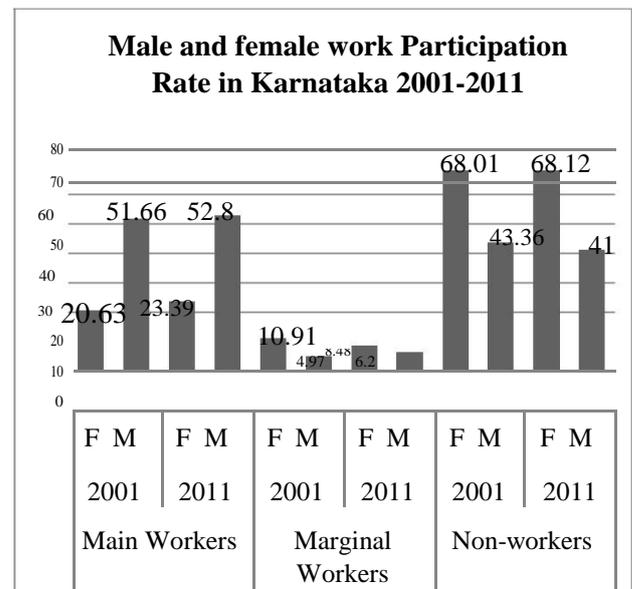


Fig 3: Trends in female work participation rate of Karnataka

As per 2014-15 data from the director of employment and training in the labour department, of the 23.85 lakh employed citizens in the state, only 7.72 lakh are women.

The 2015-16 workforce database reveals 38% of rural women are part of the workforce (about 70 lakh), while urban areas have 20.8% of women in the workforce (about 30 lakh). However, though a lot of women are employed in the agricultural sector, their presence is not recorded as part of the labour force because the sector is still unorganized.

According to the ILO, about 26% of women are employed in India as against 80% men. And it's the agricultural sector that accommodates most of these women (almost 80% of the total women workforce).

3.4: Trends in Maternal Mortality ratio (MMR) of Karnataka

There are many initiatives taken by the government of Karnataka for women health and safety, the following decreasing MMR indicates that Health and safety of mother before, during and after childbirth.

The **Maternal Mortality Ratio** is a key performance indicator for efforts to improve the health and safety of mothers before, during, and after childbirth per country worldwide. Often referred to as MMR, it is the annual number of female deaths per 100,000 live births from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management (excluding accidental or incidental causes).

Table 4. Trends in MMR of Karnataka 2004-2013

| Census Year | MMR |
|-------------|-----|
| 2004-06 | 213 |
| 2007-09 | 178 |
| 2010-12 | 144 |
| 2011-13 | 133 |

Source: Niti Aayog –India

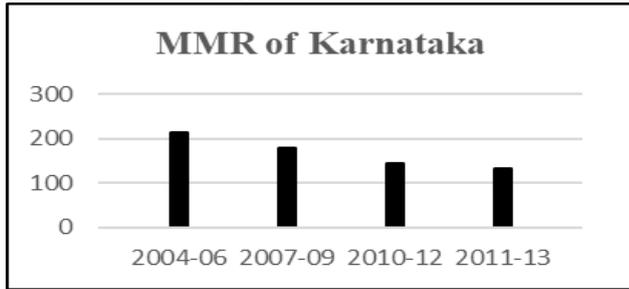


Fig 4: Trends in MMR rate of Karnataka

3.5: Trends in Female political participation in Panchayat Raj institutions in Karnataka

The 73rd and 74th Amendment to the Constitution provided the 33 percent seats for Panchayats in rural areas and urban local bodies are reserved for the women. This clearly states the direct involvement of women in positions of decision making. Elected women representatives are slowly bringing about a change in the rural countryside and urban areas, by bringing social development issues to the forefront.

The percentage representation of women in the three levels of Panchayat Raj Institutions Grama Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat and Zilla Panchayat are 51.14%, 55.15% and 53.21% for the year 2010 general elections. The following data provides clear view of the women versus male political participation in the in Panchayat raj institutions.

Table 5. Representation of Female and Male in Panchayat Raj institutions in Karnataka (General Election: 2010 & 15)

| | Gender | Gram Panchayat | Taluk Panchayat | Zilla Panchayat |
|------|--------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2010 | Female | 39,327 | 2,018 | 539 |
| | Male | 51,316 | 1,641 | 474 |
| 2015 | Female | 48,252 | - | - |
| | Male | 46,062 | - | - |

Source: Report on Men and Women of Karnataka 2014-15, 2013-14

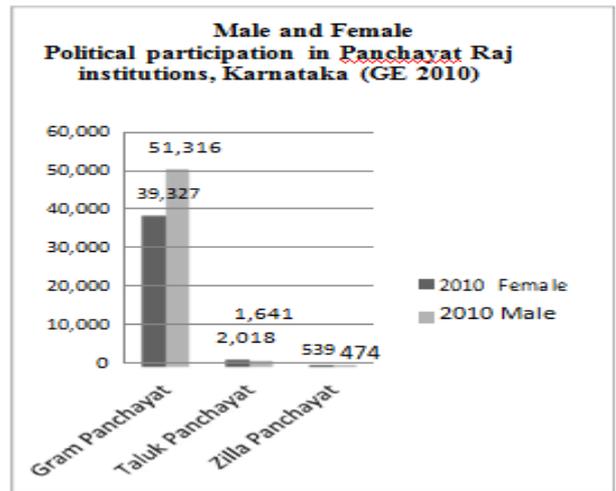


Fig 5: Trends male and female political participation in panchayat raj elections, Karnataka

3.6: Trends in Crime against women in Karnataka

Crimes against women have been increasing over the years. As per the data of 2014-15, According to State Crime Record Bureau, among the crimes committed against women, molestation shares the highest number.

There were 1319 victims of rape in 2014 when compared with 1030 victims in 2013, 566 victims in 2012 and 586 in 2011. The dowry deaths recorded are 297 in 2014 compared to 277 in 2013, 218 deaths in 2012 and 267 in 2011. Molestation cases recorded are 5250 in 2014 compared to 3913 in 2013, 2978 in 2012 and 2608 victims in 2011.

Table 6. Trends in crime against women in Karnataka from 2011 to 2014

| Year | Rape | Molestation | Dowry Deaths |
|------|------|-------------|--------------|
| 2014 | 1319 | 5250 | 297 |
| 2013 | 1030 | 3913 | 277 |
| 2012 | 566 | 2978 | 218 |
| 2011 | 586 | 2608 | 267 |

Source: Report on Men and Women of Karnataka 2014-15, 2013-14, 2013-12, 2012-11

Crime against women in Karnataka from 2011 to 2014

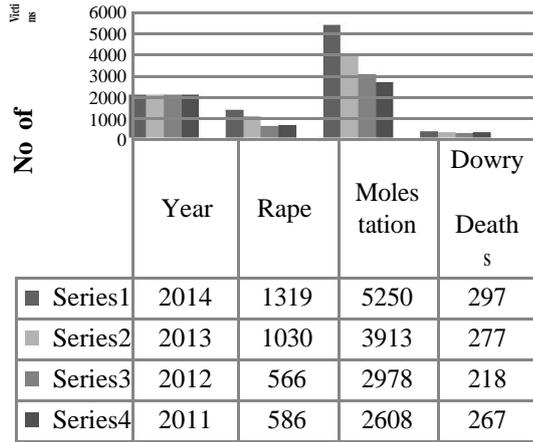


Fig 6: Trends in crime against women in Karnataka

IV. CONCLUSION

Women Empowerment is not about giving education, not about employment, not relative to number of rights to do xyz things, not about health but it's all about women leading independent and happy life. As per the UN-Report,2015 India ranks 135 on women empowerment among 147 member countries and India gets 87th position in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap report of 2016, this clearly states the need and importance of women empowerment that can be achieved through Gender equality which is the 5th goal of UN's SDG.

Through the data set it is observed that there positive growth in all the indicators of women empowerment. To achieve the target women should be given equal opportunities develop skills and expand resources by involving women in social and economic decision making process at all levels. This developmental aspect brings in a social inclusion among women, as well contributes to the development of the Society by utilizing the immense hidden and suppressed potential of the women. In simple terms, it is clear that in countries and companies that promote gender equality, progress is much more rapid and far-reaching. In the context of women empowerment the theory of capability approach for development can be applicable as it focuses on what people (Women) are effectively able to do and to be, that is, on their capabilities.

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