Regional Disparities in the Socio- Economic Status of Women in Karnataka

L.T. Nayak and D.S. Narayankar, Dharwad, Karnataka

Abstract

After independence India has made tremendous progress in socio-economic conditions of women. However the attainment of this progress has spread highly uneven particularly at urban and regional areas. The status of women varies from different society to society and region to region. Though women work more than men there exists large gender biases in India. The conceptual frame work to analyse women's status comprises the seven roles women play in life and work:- parental, conjugal, domestic, kin, occupational, community and as an individual. The role of women is not only important in economic activities, but her role in non-economic activities is also equally important. Despite of several economic, political and social changes women are still far behind, one of the most unflattering statistics concerning India's girl child shows that the preference for a son runs across rich as well as poor households, educated as well as illiterate families. These are very serious issues which have to be eradicated and bridge the balance between male and female. Hence, in the present paper an attempt has been made to evaluate and assess the socio-economic status of women in particular and social group in general, and correlation between different factors which leads to widening the regional disparities. To analyse the regional disparity of 27 districts of Karnataka 22 socio-economic, demographic and health indicators have been considered. The disparity in the socio-economic status of women is made with the help of composite development index (observed value divided by mean of the respective column) for the year 1991 and 2001census data. It has been observed that the female in north Karnataka particularly Raichur, Bellary, Gulbarga, Koppal, Bagalkot and other districts possess a low status than the south Karnataka owing to different geographical disadvantages and socio-economic conditions. The females from down trodden section of the society have low level of status as compared to privileged class females. It has been found that there has not been much change in the overall status of women in 1991 and 2001, but study region as a whole the status of women was moderate development.

Introduction

India is a land of diversity not only in respect of physical aspects but also in socio-economic and cultural aspects. In such a complex, multi- lingual, caste ridden and multi religious society, it is very difficult to measure the socio-economic status of women. India has made tremendous progress in social, economic, demographic and health fields. But there exists a very wide regional disparity in the development of socio economic status of women. The status of any social group is determined by its levels of health – nutrition, literacy-education and standard of living. The position of women varies from caste to caste, religion to religion and region to region. Socio- economic changes do not seem to be

taking place uniformly in different districts of Karnataka and there is growing disparity among different groups of women.

The Indian family makes discrimination between the sexes. It promotes a hierarchy of classification in which man takes dominance in central issues where as women derive their personalities from their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. Women play a secondary role in social life. Despite several economic, political and social developments, women still lag behind. One of the most unflattering statistics concerning India's girl child shows that the preference for a son runs across rich as well as poor and educated as well as illiterate families. The tragedy is that even women care for a male child. They feel that with a birth of a son, they will achieve higher status.

The general well being or position of women in the society may define the status of women (Krishna Chand. 1997).United nations has defined that the status of women as the "Conjunction of position a woman occupies as a worker, student, wife, mother of the power and prestige attached to these positions, and of the rights and duties she is expected to exercise'' (UN 1975)''. To what extent women compared with men, have access to knowledge, to economic resources and to political power, and to what degree of personal autonomy to these resources permit in the process of decision making and choice at crucial points in the life style'' (UN 1975). Status of women is generally measured by using three indicators education, employment and intra-house hold decision –making power. In general women with higher education tend to have a better position (Who 1989). In some cases, however, education alone may not be sufficient to enhance status unless it is associated with employment as well (Hogan et al., 1999). In addition, women's ability to convince their spouse or other members of the family in their decision –making shows, higher status in the households.

According to a recent United Nations estimation there are 334 crores of women in the world, which accounts for 51.90 per cent of the world population. As per 2001 census India had 56.40 crores women which contribute to 48.24 per cent of the total population and 2.95 crores of women in Karnataka which accounted for 48.63 per cent of the state's .They need good qualitative and quantitative food, shelter, house facilities, fuel for energy, avenues for education and employment.

Study Area

Karnataka is one of the 8th biggest in respect of area and 9th most populated state in India. It is situated in the western part of the Deccan Peninsular India with a geographical area of 1, 91,791 square kilometre which accounts 5.84 per cent of the total area of the country. The territorial limit of the study area lies between. 11°-31' North Latitudes to 18°-45' North Latitudes and 74°-12' East to 78° 40 East Longitudes and resembles (fig.1) the shape of the cashew nut. The study area is bounded by the Arabian Sea and Goa state on the west, Tamil Nadu and Kerla on the southwest and south respectively, Maharashtra state on the North and Andra Pradesh on the east. The area under study consists of 27 districts, 176 taluks, 254 urban centres and 27,683 villages and according to 2001 census the total population was 5.28crores which contributed to 5.1 per cent of the total population of India. The region under study is situated in the tropical
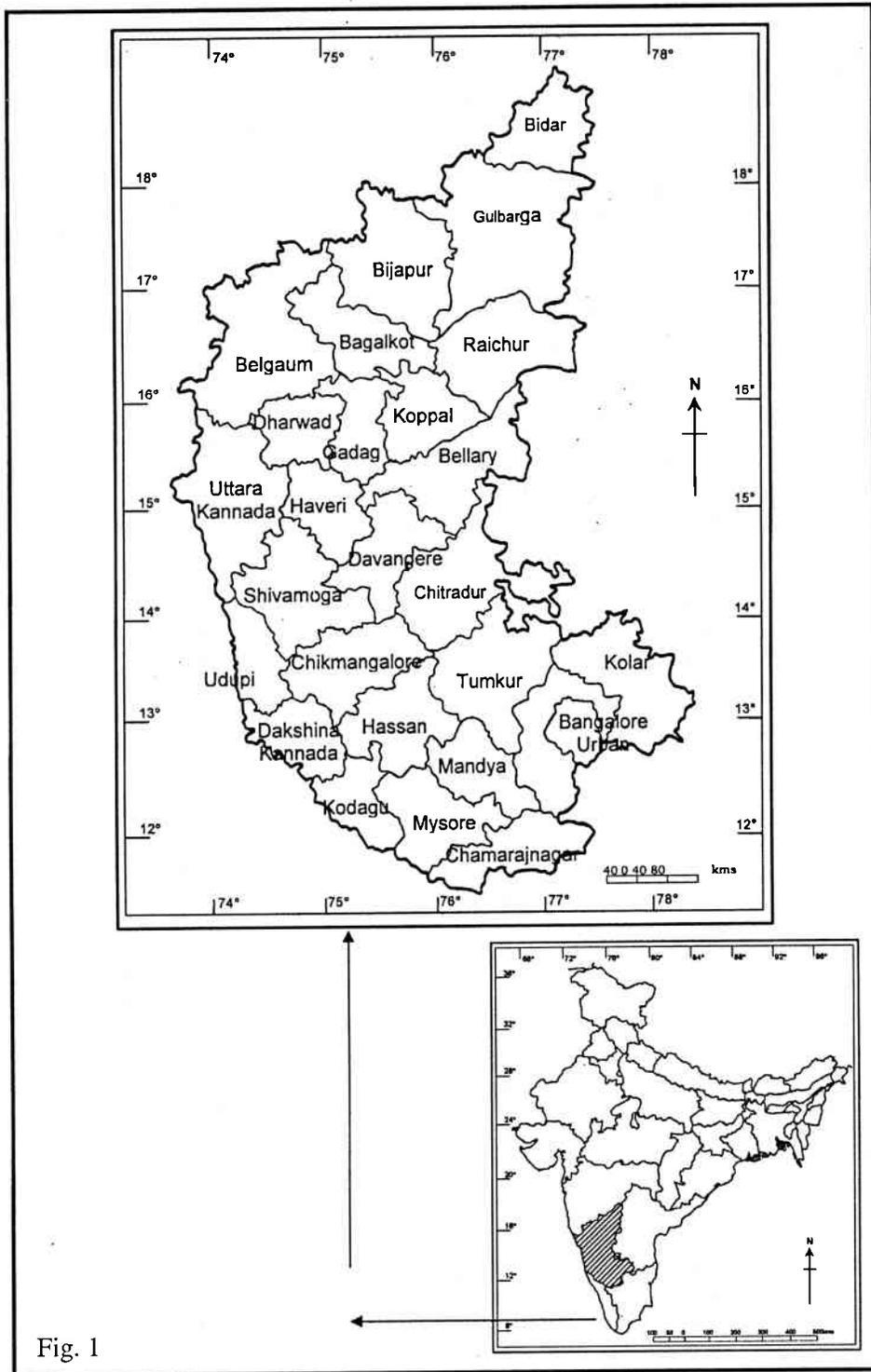
Fig. 1

monsoon zone hence, it's clime described as tropical monsoon climate. It receives moderate rainfall. The annual average rain fall varies from 400mm in the *maidan* region to 2500 mm in *malnad* region.

Objectives

In order to carry out the present study the following specific objectives have been identified.

1. To study the socio-economic conditions of women by considering the variables like Demographic and Social, Economic and Health.

2. To examine the nature of socio-economic disparities among women in particular and social groups in general.

3. To identify the levels of disparities among the women based on composite indices at district level.

4. To find out the various factors behind the emergence and growth of disparities in the study area.

5. To suggest certain measures for lessening the growing disparities.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been formulated in order to achieve the objectives

1. There is a positive correlation between female literacy and sex ratio, infant mortality and total fertility, high infant mortality and low status of female, gender disparity and illiteracy.

2. High fertility rate, sex ratio, large number of crime against women, illiteracy, low work participation rate, and infant mortality rate lead to low development of women's status.

Data base and methodology

The present study is exclusively based on secondary data collected from the Karnataka at glance - 1991and 2001, Census handbooks, National Family Health Survey - 1 and 2, Directorate of Health and Family Welfare Service, Karnataka, Primary Census Abstract 1991 and 2001, Population Census (Provision paper 1) 2001, Commissioner for Public Instruction, Karnataka, Rapid Household Survey Report 2001 ISEC Bengaluru and IIPS Mumbai, Directorate of Employment and training, Karnataka, Crime Record Bureau, Karnataka, Rural Development and *Panchayat Raj* Department Karnataka, Survey on SCs and STs, DES Karnataka 2004,B

In the present study an attempt has been made to evaluate the indicators affecting socio-economic status of women in Karnataka. To derive a composite index from a set variables, a wide variety of multivariate statistical techniques are used. Actually, the choice of the most appropriate method depends upon the type of the problem, the nature of the data and objective of the analysis. Considering these, composite index method has been applied in the present study.

For computing the composite development index at district level of Karnataka, a composite picture has been obtained through the following formula.

$$CI = \frac{\text{Observed Value}}{\text{Mean of the respective column}}$$

Where   CI = Composite Index

The preservation of real variations among the different observations is the primary objective of the method for computing the

Table: 1: Variable Groups, Definition, Mean and Standard Deviation

	Variable Groups	Definition	1991		2001	
			Mean	STD	Mean	STD
			Female	Female	Female	Female
I	**Demographic and Social**					
X1	Sex Ratio	Females per 1000 male	968	39.06	975	37.14
X2	Literacy	% of females to the total female population	43.63	12.96	55.87	11.57
X3	Enrolment of Girls in primary school	As % of enrolment of boys	85.12	8.97	90.99	7.89
X4	Enrolment of Girls in high school	As % of enrolment of boys	71.18	17.69	80.63	23.98
X5	Enrolment of Girls in Pre University level	As % of enrolment of boys	77.92	21.62	74.05	20.83
X6	Gram panchayat	Seats won by women	1764.85	643	1273	556
X7	Taluka panchayat	Seats won by women	67.15	23.05	51	19.29
X8	Zilla panchayat	Seats won by women	16.75	4.84	13	4.50
X9	Mean age at marriage	-	20.16	1.38	18.99	1.63
X10	Molestation and Rape	% per lakh females	9.15	6.18	7.39	3.08
X11	Dowry death	% per lakh females	1.33	1.39	0.67	0.60
X12	Suicides	% per lakh population	3.58	25.65	15.74	7.87
II	**Economic**					
X13	Work participation	% to the total workers	31.15	10.08	32.92	5.77
X14	Cultivators	% to the total workers	28.25	12.47	23.66	11.23
X15	Agriculture labourers	% to the total workers	51.75	17.87	44.60	19.57
X16	Workers in household industries	% to the total workers	5.25	9.22	6.35	9.00
X17	Other workers	% to the total workers	15.33	14.42	25.2	19.87
X18	Agricultural wages	Rs. Per day	13.17	3.98	35.08	8.02
III	**Health condition**					
X19	Fertility level	Birth per women	3.78	0.63	2.40	0.61
X20	Infant mortality	Per 1000 live birth	81	2.36	58	1.99
X21	Life expectancy		63	2.30	65.58	2.19
X22	Safe Delivery	% to the total deliveries	59.86		66.50	14.03

composite index. Keeping this in view, the method of division by mean of the respective columns in the present analysis has been preferred as it can get rid of the bias of the scale without affecting the relative position of the arial units in the series. As far as the determination of weightage is concerned, no special weightage has been assigned to any variable. (In other words, equal weightage has been assigned to all the selected variables to compute the development of the region). Thus after the removal of the biasness of scale, the transformed values of the given variables are added up linearly and the scored values of composite index are classified into different categories. To categorize the state in to high, medium and low developed regions the standard deviation grouping technique is applied based on the combined score of 22 indicators.

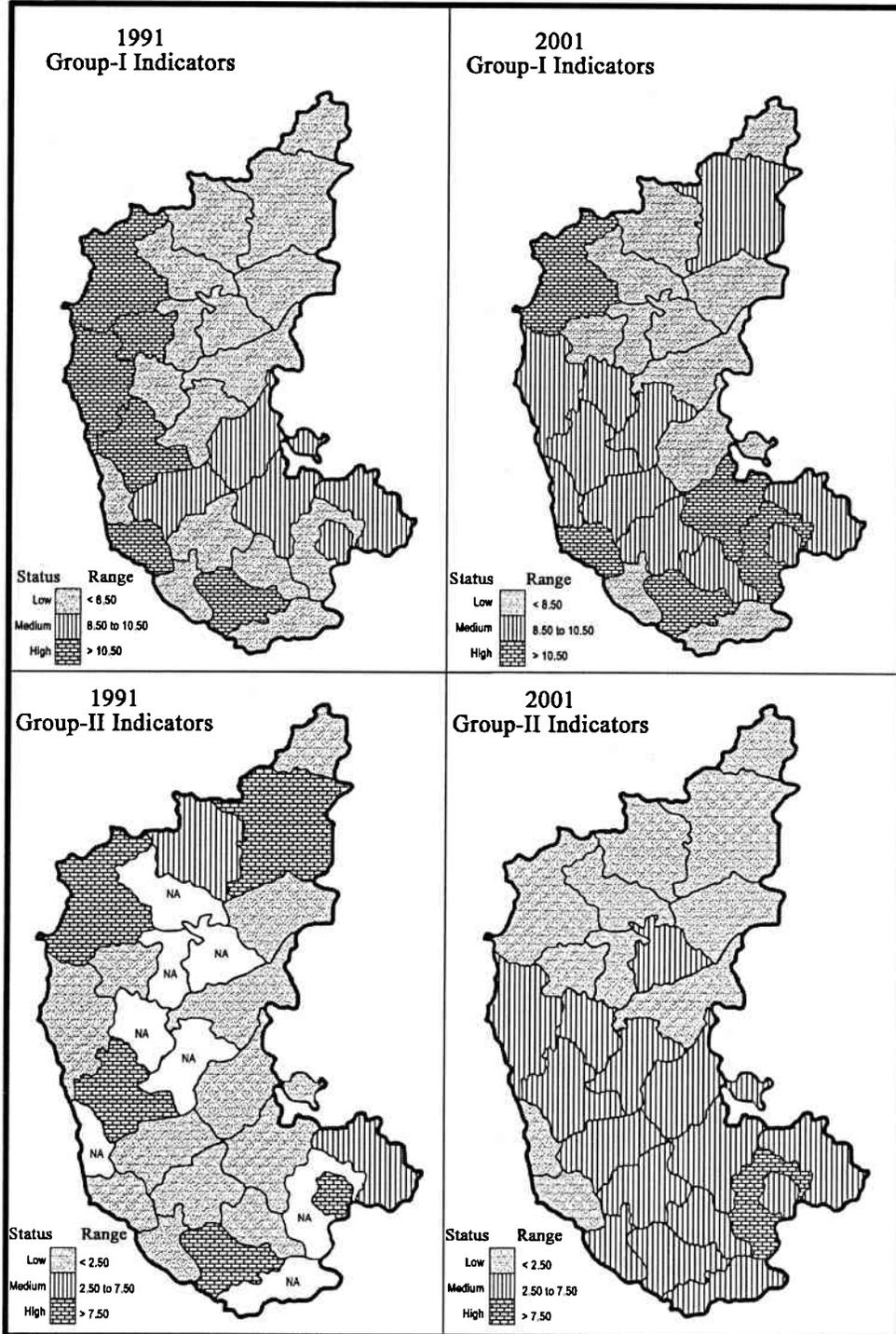# Regional Variation in Demographic and Social Status of Women in Karnataka

Fig. 2

Selection of Variables

There are a number of factors to measure the regional disparities. But based on the availability of data, the following 22 indicators (Table. 1) are taken in to consideration to find out the regional disparities in socio- economic conditions of women in Karnataka. These indicators are broadly divided into three groups such as Demographic and socio, Economic and Health status.

Status of women in Karnataka

An attempt has been made to evaluate and assess the regional disparities in the status of women by considering the socio-demographic, economic and health indicators.

I. Regional Variation in the Demographic and Social Status of Women in Karnataka

Demographic and social variables are important as they give a clear idea about the disparities in any area under study. In the present context this group includes Sex ratio, Female literacy; Mean age at marriage, Enrolment of girls in schools, Crime against women, Empowerment of women and others.

Sex Ratio

In developed countries there are slightly more females than males. In India, this ratio continues to be reverse with a persistent marginal increased trend i.e. from 929 in 1991 to 933 in 2001. This indicates a disturbing disparity in the survival of men and women in the country. The area under study showed 960 women's per every 1000 men in 1991 and 965 in 2001 in Karnataka. The sex ratio among the districts in the study area shows wide variation i.e. from 906 (Capital city – Bengaluru) to 1127 (Coastal district – Udupi). In all most all the districts of the study area the sex ration has improved except north eastern districts namely Bagalkot and Bidar, where the sex ratio decreased. Early age at marriage leads to early pregnancy and high fertility among women. In Karnataka more than one third of the women are married before reaching the legal minimum age at marriage of 18 years for girls as set by the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1978. About 19 per cent of girls in Karnataka are married at mean age between 18-25 years. The average age of marriage in India is one of the lowest in the world and illegal child marriage is still prevalent.

Literacy Rate

Literacy Rate is an important indicator associated with the improved socio-economic development indicators, as well as some demographic indicators. It is also likely to show greater improvement in women's status when their literacy levels rise. For instance, there is a positive correlation (0.28) between female literacy and the sex ratio. This is apparent from the situation prevailing in Coastal districts (literacy 77.21% and sex ratio1130) which have highest sex ratio and literacy rate in the area under study. The literacy rate of women of the area under study (44.34%) has increased by 10 per cent between 1991 and 2001. The highest female literacy rate is to be found in state capital (77.48 %) and Coastal region (literacy 77.21%) and

lowest in the districts of North Karnataka (less than 40 %). Geographically, these districts are contiguous and share the same socio-economic characteristics of under development.

Enrolment of girls in primary school education (Std I-VII)

Enrolment of girls in primary school education (Std I-VII) grew at the rate of 1.4 per cent encompassing growth of one per cent for boys and two per cent of girls per annum from 1991 to 2001 indicating that girls education has received an impetus and girls enrolment grew from 40 per cent of the total enrolment in 1991 to 48 per cent in 2001. South Karnataka districts witnessed (Mandya) the highest enrolment of ST girls and few districts from North Eastern part of Karnataka (Gulbarga) registered lowest enrolment of SC girls. Enrolment of girls was highest in capital city of Karnataka (95.92%) and lowest in the districts of Eastern part of Karnataka (Bellary - 63%). **Enrolment of girls in pre- university college** (Std XI-XII) has negative growth (- 4%) in all most all the districts. During 1991 the enrolment of girls in PUC was 77.92 per cent and it decreased to 74.05 per cent in 2001.For girl's least enrolment, a variety of reasons, ranging from early marriage to using girls for house work and sibling care, lack of parental support caused largely by their low education level and lack of motivation are the strong inhibiting factors. If schools are far from the habitation then parents feel discouraged. Investing in girl's education is not high priority partly because most parents feel it does not benefit the family directly and mainly because women are treated as marginal beings that can be pulled out of school to manage the home and assist in sibling care.

The composite index /score of Demographic and social indicators have been calculated for all the 27 districts with the help of composite development index. The indicators have been grouped into two categories, one shows the indicators with positive values, here higher the value higher the development and another group consists of the indicators with negative values means higher the value lower the development .It is observed that during 1991 the positive values of indicators varied from 1.00 in the districts of North Karnataka to 14.31 in Coastal districts .In 2001 the range of variation was from 7.09 in the district of North – East Karnataka (Koppal) to 12.16 in North – West district (Belgaum) of Karnataka. While in 1991, the negative values of indicators varied from 0.04 in the district of Malnad Region to 34.09 in the district of Maidan Region of the study area, and in 2001, 1.42 in Coastal district to 8.79 in the districts around the state capital city (Bengaluru Rural district). In 1991 high development of demographic and social indicators was identified in state Capital, districts of Coastal Region, Southern part and Central part of Karnataka. In 2001 state Capital, districts of Coastal Region and Southern part of Karnataka (Bengaluru Urban, Dakshin Kannada and Mysore districts) maintained the same performance. But during 2001 some changes have been noticed in development of status of women in Central part of Karnataka from high to moderate development, and the districts surrounding state capital city (Bengaluru Rural) noticed medium to high development (Fig 2). In 1991 most of the districts of North Karnataka showed less development (Range

- < 8.44) however, in 2001 these districts maintained the same status of development except Haveri, Bidar, Bellary and Davangere districts which showed slight improvement and fell under medium development (Range 8.07-9.87) group. Molestation and rape, Dowry death and Suicide indicators considered in group II. These indicators show negative value therefore higher the values lower the development, and lower the value higher the development. In 1991 two districts from south, one form maidan and one from malnad region of Karnataka indicated highest value (Range- > 7.18) due to increase in crime rate against women. On the contrary Coastal Region showed least (Range -< 4.96) crime rate against women. It is interesting to note that during 2001 the crime rate had reduced considerably. Two districts of south Karnataka (Benagaluru Rural and Kodagu) had registered highest (Range - > 4.44) crime cases while districts of Coastal Region and districts from North Western part of Karnataka recorded least (Range < 3.00) crime.

II. Regional Variation in the Economic Status of Women in Karnataka

Work participation rate, sector share of employment and agricultural labourers are the important economic indicators taken into consideration to evaluate the economic status of women in Karnataka.

Work participation rate

Work participation rate provides key insights in to the core issues of women's economic dependence and their ability to control income and expenditure, exercise some degree of personal autonomy and share in decision – making . The work participation rate increased from 42.0 per cent in 1991 to 44.6 per cent in 2001. As a result the work force also increased from18.89 million in 1991 (as increase of 2.64% per annum) to 23.52 million in 2001 (2.45 % per annum).(table 2). The increase in the total work participation rate occurred largely because of the increase in female work participation. Work participation rate for female increased by 8.8 per cent but it varied in different districts. Two districts from Central part of Karnataka (Davangere and Chikkamangalore) showed negative rate of change for women, the remaining districts of South Karnataka show significant increase in female WPR. The rates of change in work participation for women are much more widely dispersed across the districts and region. This probably points to greater volatility in both the demand and supply of female labourers as also their marginal character.

According to 2001 data 16.85 per cent of the total workers (main + marginal) were SCs and 7.25 per cent were STs. A comparison of women work participation by women (both general and among SCs and STs) shows that participation among Sc and ST women at about 41 per cent is higher than women's work participation for all groups(35%). About 55 to 60 per cent of total agricultural laboures are women, both for all groups and SC/STs and among those engaged in household industries; about 60 per cent are women.. Proportion of women as a proportion of the total number of SC/ST workers is about 28 per cent which is significantly higher than women workers as a proportion of the total 'other workers' (22.0). Sc and ST workers in the 'other workers' category is also significantly

higher than the total women workers under this category. As in the rest of the country, male wages are higher than female wages. This is one of the manifestations of gender discrimination that refuses to disappear, arising as it does from an inequitable gender division of labour.

Agricultural wage

Agricultural wage shows the same range – a fact that has significant implications, considering that agriculture laboures are typically among the poorest and have high proportion of Dalit and tribal population. 2001 data reveals that the absolute difference between male and female wages increased from Rs. 4.57 in 1991 to 18.92 in 2001. As a percentage of the female agricultural wage rate, the gap went up from 33.75 per cent to 53.83 per cent. The difference was particularly stark in the districts of North-Eastern part with male agriculture wages being more than double the female wages. Districts with the least difference in male –female wages are found in Central part of the study region. Changes in real wages for women during 1991 and 2001 are the highest in Haveri district (203%).

Composite index of work participation rate, sector share of employment and agriculture wages of rural labourers have been computed by applying composite index formula. Coastal districts and state capital represented high (Range - > 7.17) economic development status in 1991. Whereas less (Range -< 5.96) economic development was observed in all most all the districts of North Karnataka. However, medium (Range –5.96 to 7.17) economic status of women was identified in the district of South Karnataka and coastal districts maintained

the same development trend in 2001 also. whereas, two districts from South Karnataka (Kodagu and Tumkur) gained entry in to high development range (Range-> 6.10).Districts from North-Eastern part namely Bidar and Raichur emerged as less economically (Range < than 5.0) developed districts and some changes were noticed from the North Karnataka districts in development from low to high economic development Fig. 3)

III. Regional Variation in the Health Status of Women in Karnataka

Health care issues came into province with the International Conference on Population and development at Cairo in 1994 and Fourth World conference on women at Beijing in 1995. The concept of women health today has become a major concern among the developing countries because of high prevalence of infant, child and maternal mortality and the deteriorating quality of life. To study this total fertility rate, Infant mortality at birth and safe delivery indicators are considered.

Total fertility rate

Total fertility rate is one of the determinant factors of population growth. A survey conducted by The National Family Health Survey-2 (NFHS-2) during 1996-98 in the country reveals that besides other things, fertility is highly influenced by the effective age of marriage. Birth and fertility rates are highly and positively correlated with the proportion of women married before attaining 18 years of age (Warvedekar and Parchur, 2004). It means both birth and fertility rates can be decreased and there by proportion of early marriage could be

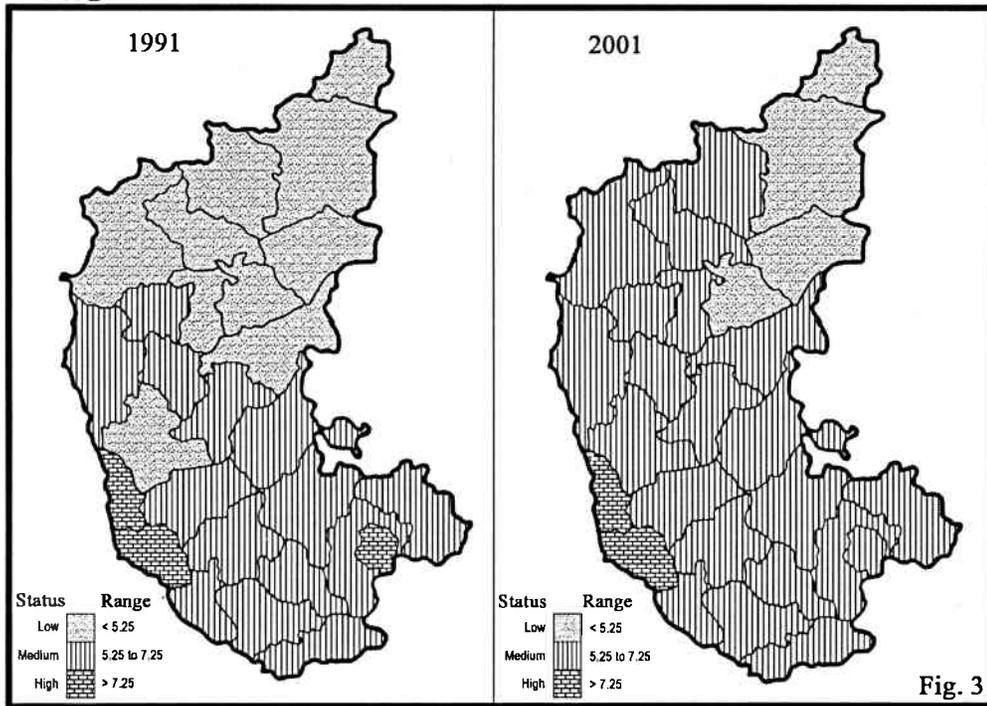# Regional Variation in Economic Status of Women in Karnataka

1991　　　　2001

Status | Range
Low | < 5.25
Medium | 5.25 to 7.25
High | > 7.25

Fig. 3

Regional Variation in Health Status of Women in Karnataka

1991　　　　2001

Status | Range
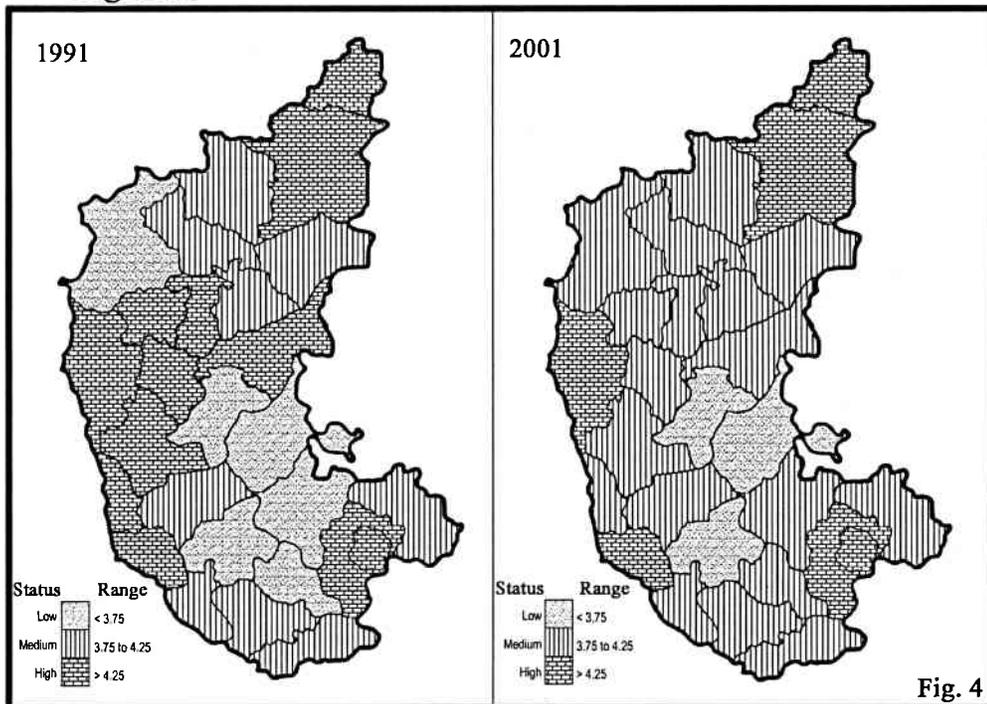Low | < 3.75
Medium | 3.75 to 4.25
High | > 4.25

Fig. 4

Fig. 3-4

reduced. There is a positive correlation (0.34) between total fertility and infant mortality. This is observed in most of the districts of South Karnataka. The fertility rate for women at the age 15-49 was 3.31 births per women. Total fertility in Karnataka was 3.78 births per women in 1991 and in 2001 it declined to 2.40. Across the districts in the study area Bellary recorded highest (4.85) total fertility followed by Gulbarga (4.75), while lowest was in Hassan (2.0). It is pertinent to note that in 2001 all most all the districts showed negative growth of fertility and the highest was found in Gulbarga i.e.3.5 birth per women and least was 1.5 in Udupi district. The present level of **infant mortality rate** in Karnataka is 58 per thousand live births (SRS-2003) against 81 in 1991. During 2001 two districts from Coastal Region, one from malnad, one from North- Western part and state capital recorded lowest IMR. The highest IMR registered in the districts of North Karnataka. There is a correlation between high IMR and the low socio – economic status of female, gender disparity and illiteracy. Data from NFHS –II shows that 51 per cent of birth in Karnataka took place in health conditions (34 % in India), 28 per cent in the women's own house (50 % in India) and 21 per cent in their parent's homes. More births took place in government hospitals (28 %) than in private health facilities (22 %). 59 per cent of births in Karnataka were attended by health professionals (42 %in India), 15 per cent of births were attended by a traditional birth (35 %in India) and 26 per cent by friends, relatives, neighbours and others. Composite index / score of health indicators for the status of women have been calculated. During 1991 state capital,

Coastal districts, and the districts from the central part of Karnataka had witnessed high (Range-.> 4.30) development in the field of women health. Less development (Range -< 4.09) was recorded in Belgaum, and Bijapur districts of North-Karnataka, two districts from central part and one district from South Karnataka. Whereas, medium development was found (Range -4.09 to 4.30) in two districts from Eastern part and two districts of South Karnataka. During 2001 high development (Range- > 4.03) was noticed in state capital, five districts from North Karnataka and one each from south and coastal region. Medium development (Range - 3.80 to 4.03) was noticed in 14 districts scattered all over the area under study. (Fig 4)

Over All Development of Socio-Economic Status of Women

To evaluate and assess the over all development of socio-economic status of women, a separate composite index for each group has been calculated with the help of composite development index formula. For example composite index of demographic and social indicators, composite index of economic indicators and composite index of health indicators. Further, all the concerned indicators have been clubbed together to find the composite index for the over all development of the status of women. The standard deviation technique has been applied to divide the study area in high, medium and low development districts based on the combined score of the three major indicators (Table. 2)

Table 2: Overall development of Socio-Economic status of Women in Karnataka-1991 -2001

District	Indicators 1991				Indicators 2001				Change 91 to 01
	Social	Economic	Health	Overall	Social	Economic	Health	Overall	
	1	2	3	4=(1+2+3)	5	6	7	8=(5+6+7)	9=(8-4)
Bagalkot	3.47	4.79	4.14	12.4	7.23	5.67	4.07	16.97	4.57
Bengaluru R	7.53	5.92	4.11	17.56	10.26	5.84	3.98	20.08	2.52
Bengaluru .U	9.6	7.98	4.32	21.9	8.85	6.35	3.98	19.18	-2.72
Belgaum	12.89	5.17	3.53	21.59	12.16	5.49	3.99	21.64	0.05
Bellary	6.95	5.13	4.28	16.36	8.13	5.29	4.04	17.46	1.1
Bidar	5.26	4.79	4.35	14.4	8.11	4.93	4.33	17.37	2.97
Bijapur	1	4.82	3.94	9.22	7.83	5.34	4.12	17.29	8.07
Chamrajnagar	4.26	5.46	3.91	13.63	7.83	5.56	3.84	17.23	3.6
Chikmaglur	9.72	5.4	4.03	19.15	9.37	5.9	4.01	19.28	0.13
Chitradurga	8.87	5.34	3.45	17.66	8.43	5.55	3.7	17.68	0.02
D.Kannada	14.31	14.27	4.38	32.96	10.39	12.12	3.91	26.42	-6.54
Davangere	7	5.25	3.47	15.72	9	5.53	3.74	18.27	2.55
Dharwad	13.19	5.25	4.42	22.86	7.44	5.49	4.16	17.09	-5.77
Gadag	4.68	5.01	4.38	14.07	7.62	5.52	4.17	17.13	3.06
Gulbarga	8.27	4.81	4.32	17.4	9.73	5.06	4.3	19.09	1.69
Hassan	8.26	5.52	3.64	17.42	9.31	5.83	3.51	18.65	1.23
Haveri	4.82	5.26	4.41	14.49	8.98	5.51	4.16	18.65	4.16
Kodagu	7.99	6.65	4.09	18.73	8.33	6.45	4.07	18.85	0.12
Kolar	9.08	5.65	3.75	18.48	9.79	6.03	3.94	19.76	1.28
Koppal	3.81	5.17	4.25	13.23	7.09	5.12	4.24	16.45	3.22
Mandya	7.55	5.5	3.68	16.73	9.6	5.8	3.76	19.16	2.43
Mysore	11.5	5.74	3.96	21.2	10.06	5.76	3.9	19.72	-1.48
Raichur	7.91	4.71	3.95	16.57	7.45	4.87	4.1	16.42	-0.15
Shimoga	11.85	4.81	4.38	20.97	9.17	5.6	3.91	18.68	-2.29
Tumkur	10.12	6.59	3.74	20.45	10.4	6.36	3.8	20.56	0.11
Udupi	8.41	10.18	4.71	23.3	9.73	8.92	3.84	22.49	-0.81
U. Kannada	10.64	5.76	4.82	21.22	9.81	6.04	4.71	20.02	-1.2
Mean	8.44	5.96	4.09	18.13	8.97	6	4.01	18.98	
SD	2.84	1.21	2.02	4.48	1.86	1.41	0.23	1.84	

I. High development in socio-economic status of women:

During the study period i.e from 1991to 2001, study region as a whole had witnessed a moderate development in the status of women. In 1991 there were seven districts, three from Coastal region, two from North Western part, one from South and state capital showed high development (Range- > 21.11). In 2001 the same districts had maintained the pace of development. Whereas moderately developed (1991) districts were identified around the state capital (Bengaluru Rural), one district from North –Eastern part (Gulbarga) and four districts from South Karnataka indicated high (Range- > 19.02) development. Over all development of the districts in study region may be attributed to traditionally maintain good human development, high literacy rate, lesser gender bias, establishment of IT/BT centers and suitable physical environment
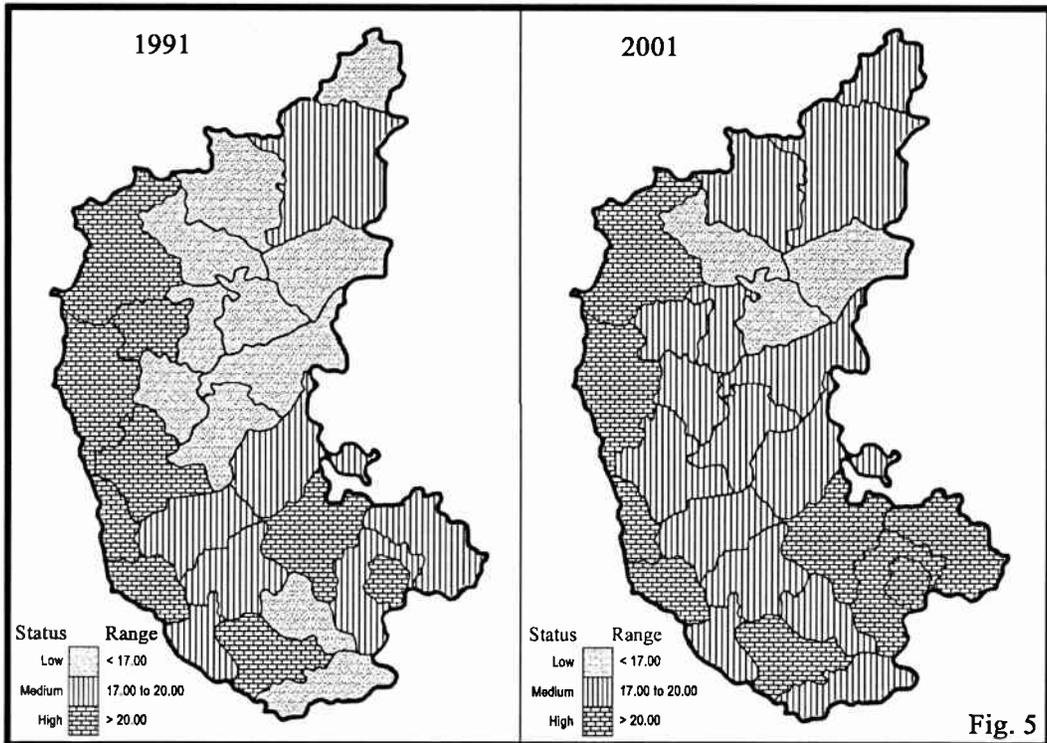
Fig. 5

for human, industrial and infrastructure development etc. (Fig. 5.)

II. Medium development in socio-economic status of women

In 1991 medium development (Range 17.03 to 21.11) was identified in eight districts of Karnataka. These districts are scattered all over the study region. In 2001, districts from central part of study region showed stagnant growth and remained in medium development group (Range-17.18 to 19.02). However, the districts which earlier (1991) belonged to lower development group (Range - < 17.03) showed better development and gained medium development status.

III. Low development in socio-economic status of women

In 1991 low (Range -< 17.03) development was observed in twelve districts, most of them located in North Karnataka and three districts from South Karnataka (Chamrajanagar, Chikmaglur, Mandya) and one district from central part of the study area showed low development. In 2001 low development (Range- <17.18) was recorded in districts of North Karnataka namely Bagalkot, Koppal, Raichur,Dharwad, and Gadag. Except Dharwad district, all the remaining districts showed no change in low status gained during 1991. One of the reason for low development of Dharwad district may be bifurcation of Dharwad district in to three

separate districts (During 1996-97). It has been observed that during the study period most of the districts of north Karnataka remained in lower development group. These districts have disadvantages both in terms of natural resources, topography etc., and in terms sector development. These districts form dry region of Karnataka with very low rainfall, poor composition of soil and so on, and they are subjected to frequent droughts and famine conditions.

Major Findings

Social Attributes

o Literacy
  - There exists a positive correlation (0.28) between female literacy and sex ratio. This is apparent from the situation prevailing in the districts of Dakshin Kannada (Literacy-77.21% and sex ratio -1022), and Udupi (Literacy-75.19% and sex ratio -1130) districts which indicated the highest literacy rate and sex ratio.
  - The literacy rate in Karnataka has increased by 10 per cent between 1991 and 2001. but still showed low female literacy rate as in India is a visible manifestation of gender bias.
  - Developed districts like Bengaluru Urban (77.48 %), Dakshin Kannada (77.321%) and Udupi (75.19 %) have highest rate of literacy. While least developed districts namely Raichur (35.95 %), Gulbarga (37.90) and Koppal (39.61) exhibit lowest rate of female literacy.
  - The literacy rate of SCs (26% and 41.72 %) and STs (23.6 and 36.7 %) has been constantly lower than that

of general population (44..34 and 56.87 %) in both the years as they belong to poorest, most vulnerable and neglected section of society.

o Age at Marriage
  - More than one third of the women in Karnataka married before reaching the legal minimum age at marriage of 18 years for girls as set by the child marriage Ratraint Act of 1978.

o Enrolment of Girl Students
  - The enrolment of girls in primary school (Std I- VII) grew from 40 % of the total enrolment in 1991 to 48 % in 2001.
  - Bijapur (-26 %), Kolar (-39 %), Tumkur (-10 %), and Uttar Kannada (- 3.5) districts witnessed negative growth in enrolment in high school owing to poverty and early marriage.
  - Enrolment of girls in pre- university college (Std XI-XII) has negative growth (-4 %) in all most all districts of the study area.
  - Molestation and rape cases dowry death and suicide cases have increased from 280 cases in 1991 and 293 cases in 2001, (every one lakh women there were 7 rapes cases registered during the study periods.

o Work Participation
  - Work participation rate among social groups (SC and ST) is higher (41 %) than the work participation of the general women (35%)

- It is observed that there is a lot of variation in agricultural wages between male and female which went up from 33.75 per cent to 53.83 per cent
- Women occupy one third of the decision – making position (empowerment) in all three tiers i.e. Gram panchayat, taluk panchayat and zilla panchayat

Demographic Attributes

o Sex Ratio
  - The area under study experienced slight increase in sex ratio during the study period i.e. 960 women per every 1000 men in 1991 and 965 in 2001. Though socio-economically advanced districts namely Hassan, Dakshin Kannada and Udupi have recorded higher sex ratio.

o Fertility Rate
  - Fertility rate per women in Karnataka has decreased from 3.78 (1991) to 2.0 (2001)
  - The fertility rate in the study area decreased from 3.78 births per women in 1991 to 2.40 in 2001 and all most all the districts show decrease in fertility rate.
  - There is a positive correlation (0.34) total fertility and infant mortality. This is observed in most of the districts of south Karnataka.

o Infant Mortality
  - Infant Mortality rate has decreased form 81 to 58 per 1000 live births.
  - In Karnataka the infant mortality declined from 81 per 1000 live birth in 1991 to 58 in 2001

o Life expectancy
  - Life expectancy has increased for both male and female i. e. from 59.9 & 61.8 in 1991 and 61.2 & 63.2 in 2001 respectively.
  - The life expectancy in the study area improved and female life expectancy was higher (61.8 in 1991 and 63.2 in 2001) than the male (59.9 in 1991 and 61.9 in 2001)

Suggestions

1. Allotment of more government resources for the overall development of women.
2. More awareness regarding the existing government programmes.
3. Provide more health facilities and educate the women about side effects and problems related to early marriage
4. More schools with competent teachers and good infrastructure facilities and provide information on education facilities and positive attributes of education.
5. Reduce the gender bias by providing equal opportunity in important sectors.
6. Employment / Job oriented courses to be conducted separately for women only.

There is lot to be done still to improve the status of women.

References

Battacharya, B.B and S. Sakthivel (2004): " *Regional Growth and Disparity in India. A comparison of pre and post reform decades*, Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi.

Borgohain, P and Sharma, H.N (1998): " Pattern of Socio- Economic Disparity in Gowhati City. *The Indian Geographical Journal* – pp 47-56

Census of India (1991 and 2001) :

Registrar General of India. Fourth World Conference (1995): "Country Report Govt. of India. Dept of Women on women and Child" Beijing, Ministry of Health Resource Development.

Government of Karnataka (2005): *Karnataka at a Glance*, Dept. of Economic and statistics , Dept. of Crime Record Bureau, Human Development Report

Hogan,D.P.Berhanu andA. Hailormarium (1991): Household Organization, Women's Autonomy and Contraceptive behaviour in south Ethiopia'' *Status in Family Planning.* 30 (4). 301-314.

Krishna Chand Ramotra (1997): "Socio-Economic Status of Women in India and Maharashtrs''. *The Indian Geographical Journal. Pp39-46*

National Family Health Survey (1998-99): (NFSH-II) Karnataka International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai. India and ORC Macro-Calverton, Maryland , USA

Shidramshetti, S.C (2003): "Health status of Women inKarnataka: Problems and Future needs" The Journal of Family Welfare

Warvadekar, Janardan and Nikhilesh Parchure (2004): Deferential and Determinants of Age Marriage in Madhya Pradesh. Unpublished Project Report Population Centre. Sagar

WHO (1989): Preventing Maternal Deaths, Geneva. World Health Organization

WWW.Yahoo!geocities - Disparities in Socio-Economic status of women

WWW.google search. com. - Disparities in Socio-Economic status

Dr. L.T. Nayak
Associate Professor

Dr. D.S. Narayanakar
Lecturer
Karnatak Science College
Dharwad- Karnataka
lokeshnayak_t@yahoo.in