

The Problems of Regional Imbalance in Hyderabad-Karnataka- An Analysis.

Manik Raj.S

Assistant Professor of Political Science

Govt First Grade College Kamalapur, Dist Kalaburgi 585313

Abstract:

India is a Federal nation. Federalism is a form of government in which powers are divided between national and regional governments. It is contrary to the unitary system in which all the powers are vested in the national government. Indian federal system is unique in the sense that, it has been variously described as 'quasi-federal', 'extremely federal', 'bargaining federalism', 'co operative federalism', 'federation with a strong centralising tendency' etc.. Thus sources of conflict in Indian federal polities such as diversity based on ethnicity, religion, language, regional demands, territory, culture so on has forced to describe Indian federation as "a new kind of federation to meet its peculiar needs". It is neither too centralised nor strictly federal as both union and states have powers affecting each other. The Supreme Court once called it 'amphibian'. The paper attempts to understand the problems of Regional disparity/imbalance in particular reference to Hyd-Karnataka region from various angles. The failure on the part of union as well as successive state governments through continuous negligence has widened the developmental imbalance in the state. Though corrective measures in the form of inserting Art 371 J that provides special status to HK region is a well come move, it is also important to find out how far the provisions of the Article 371J has been effectively implemented.

Key Words: Democracy, regionalism, regional disparity, Hyderabad-karnataka, Art 371j.

I. Introduction:

Indian democracy has many challenges in today's world & one such major challenge is Regional Disparity. Regional Disparities has become an extremely sensitive issue in recent times with serious social & political ramifications. Such chronic persistence of underdevelopment over a major part of any state is a reality & poses a challenge to democracy. This imbalance needs significant attention, otherwise it can push democracy into more & more complex situation where there will be an imperative need to replace or manipulate the existing model of democracy, thus going beyond the dreams & projections put forth by the champions of democracy.

II. Conceptualisation:

Regional Disparity:

Regional Disparity means different things to different people. There is no one accepted criteria to determine or define regional disparity. However in a democratic set up like India, regional disparity can be defined as “The co-existence of relatively developed & economically depressed states & even regions within each state”. This difference may be due to the uneven growth in a country, state, district or any other place as the case may be. Thus any areas having such uneven growth are said to be facing the problems of disparities, which may eventually lead to its backwardness.

Regional imbalances –based on regions historically at disadvantage - North Karnataka (includes Kalyana Karnataka / Hyderabad Karnataka and former Mumbai Karnataka); based on geographies like Karavali, Malnad and Bayalu Seeme.

III. Profile of Hyderabad-Karnataka (now Kalyana-Karnataka)

Hyderabad- Karnataka is the name given to the area which was the part of erstwhile Hyderabad province, when the new state of Mysore (presently Karnataka) was formed in 1956. Kannada speaking areas of Hyderabad province were added to new state. These areas later came to be known as Hyderabad- Karnataka region. At present Hyderabad- Karnataka region includes the districts of Ballari, Bidar, Kalaburgi, Raichur, Koppal, & Yadgiri, with a total population of **1,12,86,343**, covering the total area of 44108 sq. kms which accounts for 23% of the total geographical area of the Karnataka state

1. HK region account for 23% of state geographical area.
2. Uncultivated area of the region is 23% of state uncultivated area.
3. Decadal population growth of the region is 17.73% whereas state growth rate is 15.60%.
4. Literacy rate of the region is 64.45% whereas state literacy is 75.36%.
5. Dropout in the HK region is 5.77, whereas the state dropout rate is 2.96.
6. Child mortality rate of the region is 59, whereas state child mortality rate is 41.
7. Infant mortality rate of HK region is 51, whereas state infant mortality rate is 35.
8. Net District domestic product of HKRDB region is Rs. 72284 per capita whereas the state average is Rs. 116238 per capita.

: Source: Economic survey of Karnataka, Planning, Programming and Statistics Dept 2015-16.

IV. Regional Imbalances in Hyderabad-Karnataka: Some challenges:

Karnataka is one of the above national average states of India, facing inter-regional & intra-regional disparities since its reorganization in 1956. Sharp North-South divide has existed in the State since the reorganization of States in 1956. The new areas that joined the State from Hyderabad State and Bombay State were relatively less developed than the Old Mysore State. This area formed the Northern part of the State. In the absence of focused efforts in the past, the development gap increased over a period of time leading to marginalization and exclusion of the region and its people

from the mainstream development process. Efforts have been made over a period of time to reduce the gap.

Many historical & economic factors are responsible for these disparities along with the influence of regional diversities across the region of the state.

When Karnataka state emerged out of the union of regions, there were varying levels of socio-economic development, as well as diverse political & administrative systems & structures each with its unique style of governance. This meant that there were sharp imbalances between the regions at the very inception of the state, thus running consistently over the decades. However, backwardness was considered synonymous with Hyderabad Karnataka region & in the long run; the regional disparity has broadened depriving the region from development.

The reasons for regional disparity in Hyderabad-Karnataka are many. Natural factors may include topographical reasons like climatic conditions, inadequate rainfall, lack of mineral resources, non existence of perennial rivers, forests, etc. Such uneven distribution is a natural hindrance for the development of the region. In historical factors, the princely state of Hyderabad was under the Nizam rule. Unlike the princely states of Mysore, erstwhile rulers of Hyderabad- Karnataka were interested neither in developing the region economically nor in investing in human capital. This proved as a base consequently leading to regional disparity. Among Socio-Economic Factors, the region has remained neglected even in the new setup as it was woefully neglected historically. Though the area is full of potential, talent & material resources, the basic cause of this disparity is that, states lack an inherent mechanism to ensure that in the long run, the benefits of economic change are distributed equally. This failure on the part of state (govt) may be due to negligence, deliberate policies or lack of attitude. These factors may be both at the national, state or local level.

To quote about this HPCFRRI in 2002 expressed “while Mysore-Karnataka has for historical reasons registered relatively a higher level of development, this is not so in respect of other regions. If we take Hyd-Kar region, it can be asserted that the entire region has not registered any development at all. Only substantial improvements in output, income & infrastructure have taken place between 1956 & 2000. But due to lower base with which they started in 1956, the relative development registered through the annual & five year plans & also Externally Assisted projects implemented in these areas & rates of growth have not been adequate to reach Mysore-Karnataka level”.

This clearly proves the serious allegations of Hyd-Kar people that their demands have been constantly neglected by the state (govt) time & again.

In order to address the issue of regional disparity in Hyd-Kar, a High Power Committee for the Redressal of Regional Imbalances (HPCFRRI) was constituted by the state govt in 2000. The Committee headed by Dr. D.M. Nanjundappa submitted its report in June 2002. The Committee identified 35 indicators encompassing agriculture, industry, social & economic infrastructure & population characteristics to measure & prepare an index of development. The Composite Development Index of each district clearly shows the regional disparity in Karnataka.

The Composite Development Index: Ranking of District in Karnataka.

District	1960-61	1976-77	1998-99
Bangalore	2	1	1
Dakshina Kannada	1	2	2
Shimoga	3	3	3
Mysore	5	5	4
Chitradurga	11	7	6
Hassan	13	14	9
Bellary	14	10	11
Bidar	17	15	19
Gulbarga	19	19	20
Raichur	18	18	16

Source: Report of HPCFRRI, June 2002.

Further the Committee on the basis of 35 socioeconomic indicators, the level of development of 175 taluks in the state were assessed. These indicators were spread over various sectors such as agriculture, industry, economic infrastructure, social infrastructure, and financial and technical infrastructure. Taking the State average of development in these indicators as the benchmark (equal to 1), the Committee estimated the Comprehensive Composite Development Index (CCDI) with appropriate weights and identified 114 taluks as backward taluks. These taluks were further classified into most backward, more backward, and backward based on the value of CCDI. Taluks with CCDI of 0.53 - 0.79 were classified as most backward, those with CCDI of 0.80 - 0.89 as more backward and, taluks with CCDI of 0.90 – 0.99 as backward. The distribution of the taluks in these various groups in the State is given below. Among 59 identified backward taluks in North Karnataka, Hyd-Kar area alone has 21 ‘most backward’, 5 ‘more backward’ & 2 ‘backward’ taluks.

Backward Taluks

Area	Most backward	More backward	Backward	Total
Hyd-Kar	21	5	2	28
Bombay-Karnataka	5	12	14	31
North Karnataka	26	17	16	59
South Karnataka	13	23	19	55

Source: Report of HPCFRRI, June 2002.

The status of Human development in the state further illustrates wide disparities. Comparing HDI value with the relative ranking, none of the districts of Hyd-Kar have made remarkable progress compared to other districts.

The performance of districts in Human Development -2015 (2012 Data)

Districts	HDI Value	Rank
Bangalore Urban	0.958	1
Dakshina Kannada	0.866	2
Udupi	0.861	3
Kodugu	0.817	4
Koppal	0.556	23
Ballari	0.545	24
Gulbarga	0.447	26
Raichur	0.420	27

Source: Economic Survey of Karnataka, March 2022.

From the comparison of various HDI indexes of five top & bottom ranking, it can be inferred that Hyd-Kar region remaining at bottom has no corresponding change and still a long way to catch up with other high performing districts.

In the other sectors like agriculture there is a huge gap between the net area sown & its relative productivity. Since the hot tropical climate of Hyd-Kar & absence of sources of rivers does not support much to irrigation, only 19.58% of area is irrigated against 79.20% net area sown (2001). Only 17.64% of area is under commercial crops. Thus with 70% of the area supporting only dry farming, too much dependence on rain makes it much vulnerable. Thus ultimately leading to poor agricultural productivity.

In industrial sector too, since the beginning this region have received a step motherly attitude from the government. Though the region is endowed with rich mineral resources such as limestone, Gypsum, Quartz, Iron ore, & Manganese, it lacks as far as exploitation of these resources are concerned. The IT led sector which accounts for 40% of India's software export are all concentrated in Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli, and Dharwad etc. The recent mine politics has further deteriorated the situation.

In demographic features the increase in population leading to the density of population. The female literacy is the lowest in the region when compared to the state. Among low ranking districts in overall literacy, are Bidar (70.51%)- 19, Ballari (67.43%)- 25, Kalaburgi (64.85%)- 27th, Raichur (59.56%)- 29, and Yadgiri (51.83%)-30th rank & stands at bottom level.(2011 census)(*population census-2021*).

V. Art 371(J) - a Corrective Measure:

In order to redress the grievances of the people of HK region, the constitution 118th amendment bill, 2012 inserted a new article- art 371j, which came into force on Jan 2, 2013, provides for granting special status to Hyd-Karnataka region. The Hon'ble President may, by order, made with respect to the state of Karnataka, under Art 371J, provide for any special responsibility to the Hon'ble Governor for-

1. Establishment of a separate Development Board for Hyd-Karnataka region with the provision that a report on the working of the board will be placed each year before the state legislative assembly.

2. Equitable allocation of funds for development expenditure over the said region, subject to the requirements of the state as a whole.
3. Equitable opportunities and facilities for the people of HK region in the matters of public employment, education and vocational training, subject to the requirements of the state as a whole.

An order made under this respect, may provide for-

1. Reservation of a proportion of seats in educational and vocational training institutions in the HK region for students who belong to that region by birth or by domicile; and
2. Identification of posts or classes of posts under the state government and in any body or organisation under the control of the state government in the Hyderabad-Karnataka region and reservation of a proportion of such posts for persons who belong to that region by birth or by domicile and for appointment there to, in a manner as may be specified in the order.

The constitutional obligation under Art 371J binds the both state and central governments to put forth all out efforts for development of the Hyd-Karnataka region besides ensuring the same by way of providing reservation in the Education and Public employment sectors.

(*Economic survey of Karnataka, Planning, Programming and Statistics Dept 2015-16.*)

The following were implemented as per the recommendation of the High Power committee:

(*Economic survey of Karnataka, March 2012*)

- 1) A Women's University at Vijayapura
- 2) A High Court Bench at Dharwad and IT park in Hubli. In Dharwad mental hospital has been upgraded. Hubli-Mumbai flight is open to public service
- 3) IT parks, High Court Bench, Central University, Airport, Food Park in Kalaburgi. Textile Park is in the process of being set up in Kalaburgi. Bidar - Kalaburgi railway line, open to public service
- 4) 6 new Government Medical colleges are established at Hassan, Mandya, Shimoga, Raichur, Belagavi, and Bidar
- 5) 38 Burns and dialysis wards are newly opened
- 6) Horticulture University at Bagalkot and Horticulture College at Bidar has been established.
- 7) Revolving fund established to support agricultural pricing.
- 8) Karnataka Veterinary and Fisheries Science University at Bidar is Established.
- 9) Dairy Science College at Gulbarga is Established
- 10) Established Kasturba Gandhi Girls Schools in all the 39 most backward Taluks
- 11) Dialysis wards are set up in 23 district hospitals and 34 taluks
- 12) Sainik School Established in Kodagu District
- 13) 49 Farmer Training Centers are established by the Agriculture Department.

- 14) Establishment of 172 new breeding centers.
- 15) APMC markets capable of operating independently in 162 Taluks.
- 16) 3,71,517 houses were built and 86,677 sites were distributed by the Rajiv Gandhi Rural Housing Corporation.
- 17) There are 53 medical colleges already operating in the state. The department has announced that finding land to set up Government Medical Colleges on a priority basis due to the non-availability of Private or Government Colleges in Haveri, Yadgir, Bagalkot, Chitradurga, Chikmagalur, Chikkaballapura, and Ramanagara districts
- 18) In 2015-16 the department has initiated to set up a government medical college in Chikkaballapura District.
- 19) From Mysore to Chennai Airlines Services are open to the public.
- 20) In 39 Most Backward Taluks Teachers Quarters, Cluster Complex were constructed for Teachers.

VI. The problems in implementation of Art 371J:

There are number of problems witnessed during the implementation of Art 371j. The problems presented below are based on observation and a few based on practical experience of the writer.

1. Obtaining eligibility certificate for availing benefits under art 371 j of the constitution has become a punishment rather than a convenience. Candidates have been complaining about the cumbersome procedure and that the certificate issuing authorities have made a simple process complex by forcing them to produce several documents to prove their eligibility. Moreover there is also no uniformity in issuing eligibility certificate throughout the region. (*The Hindu Jan 2, 2015*).
2. Implementing authority does not have thorough knowledge about the article and related regulations. Also lack of awareness among HK residents, especially students and job aspirants has escalated the problem.
3. Recently a few religious and linguistic minority professional colleges have moved the High Court of Karnataka questioning the govt order on reserving seats for students of HK region according to the special status given to the HK region under Art 371 J.

The petitioners have questioned the 'Karnataka private unaided Educational Institutions (Regulations of Admissions in the Hyd-Karnataka region) order, 2013 and Feb 1, 2014 notification earmarking certain percentage of seats in these institutions for persons hailing from six districts. They argue that the order on the reservation for the HK region could not be enforced on minority institutions in view of Art 30(1) of the constitution; the petitioners contended that the notification ought to have restricted the reservation only to non-minority educational institutions. (*The Hindu May 17, 2014*).

4. There are also allegations that many govt departments and universities continue to issue recruitment and admission notification without provisions for reservation to candidates of HK region under Art 371J of the constitution. The Hyderabad Karnataka Horata Samithi (HKHS), a civil society group allege that, the vacancies in the state secretariat were being filled up by posting staff and officers from other parts of the state, denying equal opportunities to the staff and officers from the HK region.

Out of the total of 3000 staff working in the secretariat, only 240 were from HK region. (*The Hindu, March 25, 2015*).

5. There is also outsiders menace or what may be called as interventions by extra regional forces (non-HK residents) getting HK reservations.
6. Tardy pace of implementation – political elitists/civil society groups etc., are not showing active involvement in implementing various provisions of the article. The HKHS has blamed “lethargy and disinterest” of elected representatives from the region for the poor implementation of Art 371j. They allege that none of the 39 MLA’s and 10 MLC’s from the region had ever seriously raised the issue in the Assembly or the Council in this regard. (*The Hindu Jan 1, 2016*).
7. According to Karnataka Government Employees Association, not only appointments to govt jobs has been stalled, promotions also been halted citing Art 371J. (*Deccan Herald, Jan 2016*).
8. Despite the efforts to develop the HK region on par with the relatively developed regions, vital indicators relating to Human Development, in particular, of the region depicts that the gaps in the indices still persists, which indicates that the barriers to development are still strong enough to retard the development processes.
9. Mere implementation of Art 371j for the development of HK region does not solely justify their cause for regional development. The HK regions do require interventions in social, sectoral, developmental and environmental fronts simultaneously.

Therefore, the summary packages of the development across the region with effective implementation of Art 371j may in the long run or near future bring fruits of development and reduce regional imbalances.

VIII. Conclusion:

The political leaders should share a common vision of Regional Development & must be committed to the goals of rapid social & economic change & democratization of the society. Also reduction of regional disparities should be looked upon as a national objective. The strength of a building depends on the strength of its weakest pillar. In a similar way the strength of the nation’s economy depends on the strength of the backward regions. Thus identifying the barriers to development & formulating policies accordingly would redress the imbalance & promote growth with equity.

While the development of backward regions is a national responsibility, the solution mainly rests with the local leadership. The local leadership- political, bureaucratic, & intellectual must resolve to usher in development based on sharing the gains on democratic basis with the masses. Resources are not the real constraint. It is the way resources are spent. Similarly if the state makes an earnest effort, then the problems of regional disparities could be minimized, so is its challenge to the democracy.

References:

1. Lancy Lobo, Mrutuyanjoya Sahu, Jayesh Shah (2014), *Federalism in India-Towards a Fresh Balance of Power*, (edited) Rawat Publications, New Delhi.
2. Karnataka Gazetteer Department, *A Hand Book of Karnataka*, (2015), Bangalore, India.
3. Guidance from Dr. Krishna R Hombal, Associate Professor, *Dos in Political Science*, Mysore University.
4. Planning, Programme Monitoring & Stastics Department, (2015-16), *Economic Survey of Karnataka*, Govt of Karnataka.
5. Planning Commission of India, *Karnataka Development Report*, (2007), Academic Foundation, New Delhi.
6. Harish Ramaswamy, S.S.Patagundi, S.H Patil, Edited, *Globalisation & Development of Backward Areas*, New Century Publication, New Delhi.
7. Gopal Kadekodi, Ravi Kanbu, Vijendra Rao, *Governance & 'Karnataka model of Development'* (Feb 24, 2007), *Economic & Political Weekly*, pg 649-652.

