

A Study on Inclusive Growth and Women Empowerment in Kerala

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ABSTRACT

India is one of the fastest growing economies of the world. It has an annual growth rate of an average 8% .Growth can be sustained only if all the members of the society should gain the benefit of growth. It should ensure gender equity. Therefore women should be considered as an equal partner in the development process. The present development strategy aims at“ Inclusive growth” where growth emphasises on more equitable distribution, gender equity, capability, achievement level etc. This paper analyses the position of women during the 11th plan period.

1. INTRODUCTION

Economic development is a concern for all the economies of the world. In India we adopt five year plans to achieve the goal of development. Each five year plan gave priority to the development of one or two sectors of the economy. As a result of these plans India go ahead in many aspects. As far as Indian Economy is concerned the development strategy involves several problems. In India development occurs in a different manner. It was believed that transformation of an economy by improving the living standards of the people was possible with increased industrialisation. The economy achieved high growth rate, national income, employment etc. But Indian development strategy resulted in one sided growth. There is always a dualistic nature for development. One of the main characteristic of Indian economy is dualism ie. the existence of two types of economies existed in the same sector. As a result with increasing growth rate the gap between the rich and the poor gets widened. The income and wealth distribution also gets redistributed against the poor. Real economic growth should concentrate on the upliftment of the lower sections of the society. In the context of rethinking of development, we should make sure that development should be pro-poor i.e. Poor people should benefit from growth.

The term inclusive growth is a central concern for all modern economies. There are several definitions for inclusiveness. But no definition can incorporate all the attributes of it. There is no unanimous concept of inclusive growth. Inclusive growth is a development strategy which requires equity as an input and also as an output of development process based on the development experience of several countries.

The performance of India and its different states in respect of female education is more or less satisfactory in comparison with the developed countries. But it is to be noted that there exist interstate disparity in all other indicators including maternal mortality, sex ratio, and violence against women, IMR for females etc. Kerala exhibits a higher status in all these social indicators.

2. OBJECTIVES

To find out the extent to which inclusive growth succeed in achieving its goal of equity especially gender equity

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper analyses the effect of inclusive growth on women empowerment in Kerala. Secondary data is used for the study. Based on the data GDI is calculated using the formula. To find out GDI equally distributed life expectancy index, equally distributed education index and equally distributed income index are calculated.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Inclusive growth enables the poor to actively participate and significantly benefit from growth. It concentrates both on income outcome and non-income outcome. It has different impact not only on distribution but also on ethnic groups, gender and geographical regions. It can be termed as a growth associated with poverty reduction. There are both income and non-income dimensions for inclusive growth. It is a concept which has more concern about equity. If it is conceived in terms of equity, sharing of growth must be evenly distributed. Inclusive growth concentrates not only on people who are below poverty line, but is arguably more general and it wants growth to benefit all the sections of the society including poor, middle income and even rich. The beneficial effects of inclusive should not result in the development of one sections of the society at the expense of others. It aims at the benefit of all, while the poor accrue greater benefits.

Inclusive growth is termed as a disadvantage reducing growth, which switch its focus from outcome to opportunity. It provides wider access to sustainable socio economic opportunities to people, region and countries while protecting the vulnerable.

MEASURING INCLUSIVE GROWTH

McKinnely (2010) proposed an inclusive growth index based on the Asian Development Banks Long Term Strategic Framework 2008-2020, which identifies that inclusive growth entails a) achieving sustainable growth that will create and expand economic opportunities and b) ensuring broader access to these opportunities so that all the members of the society can participate and benefit from growth (McKinely 2010:1). Thus index includes indicators of growth, productive employment, and economic infrastructure, income, poverty and equity, human capabilities and social protection. Gender equity is considered as the one of the main indicator of inclusive growth. It has three dimensions

- Capabilities domain which refer to the basic human abilities measured by education, health and nutrition
- Access to resources and opportunities which includes
- Access to productive assets
- Access to economic and political opportunities
- Security –refers to reduced vulnerability to violence and conflicts.

This paper analyses the impact of inclusive growth in reducing the gender disparity and the extent to which it achieve women empowerment in the state of Kerala.

Amartya Sen's approach to development is based on "capabilities". He argues that "capability to function is what really matter for status as of a poor or non- poor person. As Sen puts it,"Economic growth cannot be sensibly treated as an end in itself. Development has to be more concerned with enhancing the lives we lead and the freedom we enjoy"

In other words, capability is essentially one of freedom. Despite remarkable growth, a vast section of the contemporary society is deprived of basic freedoms. One such un-freedom is gender bias.

Though HDI incorporates some aspects of human development, inequalities in opportunities between men and women are missed out in HDI. Because of gender bias in health care, mortality rates of women are high compared to men. Adverse sex ratio which is one of the important problem observed in all most all the UDC's attributed to" missing women" concept. All these reflect gender related inequality.

With economic as well as social progress, such bias against women should have declined. But unfortunately it shows an increasing trend.

To measure the extent of this disparity or inequality, the UNDP in 1995 took a new initiative to construct an index called Gender Related Development Index. The indicators of GDI for Kerala are explained in the following table.

Indicators	Female	Male
Life Expectancy Index	0.813	0.815
Adult literacy Index	0.920	0.960
Gross enrolment index	0.915	0.914
Education index	0.918	0.945

The table explains that in almost all the indicators the gender disparity is much lower. The life expectancy index is 0.813 for female and 0.815 for males. Adult literacy index is 0.920 and 0.960 respectively. With regard to the Gross enrolment index it is 0.915 and 0.914. Education index of female is 0.918 and 0.945 for male. Equally distributed life expectancy index for Kerala is 0.814 and equally distributed education index is 0.93. GDI for Kerala is 0.729, which is comparable to most of the developed countries of the world. It is proved that gender disparity is not prevailing in Kerala as it shows a highest index in all the indicators of GDI. Though the status of women in the state is very high, their position in the society remains unsatisfactory.

The kind of challenges that women have to face, apart from acute competition with men, even in a state that enjoys high female literacy rate, low maternal and infant mortality and a healthy sex ratio compared to other Indian states has been baffling to many.

According to the latest NSSO data of 2011-12, female work participation rate (FWPR) in rural areas in Kerala was 22.1 compared to that of men at 56.5. The FWPR at all-India level for the

corresponding year was 24.8. In urban areas, however, FWPR in Kerala (19.1) is slightly higher than the all-India average (14.7) even though it is still highly skewed in favour of men (55.2).

The repercussions are visible on the political arena as well. Despite 50 per cent reservation for women in local bodies, they are nowhere climbing the higher echelons of the state government or that of political parties. In the last Congress-led UDF government, there was one woman minister. In the current CPM-led LDF government, there are two among 18 ministers. In the current Lok Sabha, there is a single woman MP from the state. In the state Assembly, the share of women MLAs is a pathetic 5 per cent

4. CONCLUSION

Research is re-appraising the so-called Kerala model of development which indicated the possibilities of higher social development at low levels of per capita income. The fact that economic backwardness was the flip-side of social development constituted the initial critiques. Later, the question of whether Kerala's high levels of female literacy affected fertility and mortality outcomes also came under the scanner.

Though there are high levels of female literacy in Kerala growing gender-based violence, mental illness and the rapid incidence of dowry and related crimes are at its extreme.

While the so-called Kerala model focuses on the high aggregate levels of female literacy in the state, the authors observe that gender disparity is low up to the 10th standard but a considerable difference exists at the college levels.

The very rigid family structure restrict the female mobility in all sectors including education, occupation etc., result in occupational segregation. This actually reflects the weaker position rather than their high status. Their weaker position in the society results in increasing the number of domestic violence, dowry death, mental illness and crimes against women. Higher levels of female literacy haven't played the transformative role assumed by the so-called Kerala model.

5. REFERENCE

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