



Regional Development – a Study in North Karnataka.

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ABSTRACT

In India, regional feelings have created considerable impact on the political system. Regionalism means love for a particular region or area or state in preference to the nation as whole. Regionalism occurs due to continuous neglect of a particular area or region by the ruling authorities, or it may spring as a result of increasing political awareness among the backward area people who lately realize the importance of development and they begin demanding forcefully for the justice. Parochialism and regionalism is a conspicuous phenomenon of India's political life. Feelings of regionalism grow due to the problem of uneven socio economic development.

KEYWORDS : Regionalism, Regional Disparity, North Karnataka, Development, Regional Imbalance.

In a vast and diversified nation like India, natural diversity and historical legacy have caused disparities in the process of development. The issue of Regional Disparities in India have gained social, political, economic, cultural, attitudinal over tones and have implications on various policy decisions of the governments. Due to uneven economic development regional disparities emerge and persist. An attempt is made in this paper to highlight the underdevelopment position and the statusque of injustice caused to North Karnataka. Even after the submission of Dr. D. M. Nanjundappa Committee report much has not changed as far as over all development of North Karnataka is concerned. People had kept lot of expectation for changes.

The disparities arose due to the initial advantages enjoyed by some regions under kings and were compounded under the rule of the British. Thus, the disparities continued even after implementing several plans in different phases Regional imbalances involve non utilization of available resources to the optimum levels. Regional disparity problem is a universal one. Even the developed countries like USA, UK and the under developed nations or the third world countries like Pakistan (East & West), Indonesia (Java & other islands) have faced this problem. Thus glaring differences exist between the levels of development and standards of living. Feelings of sub nationalism, injustice lead to regional imbalances.

In India, regional feelings have created considerable impact on the political system. Regionalism means love for a particular region or area or state in preference to the nation as whole. Regionalism occurs due to continuous neglect of a particular area or region by the ruling authorities, or it may spring as a result of increasing political awareness among the backward area people who lately realize the importance of development and they begin demanding forcefully for the justice. Parochialism and regionalism is a conspicuous phenomenon of India's political life. Feelings of regionalism grow due to the problem of uneven socio economic development. After independence, India lacked a balanced economic growth of all parts and regions. Instead of caring for the overall development the political leadership and the policy measures concentrated their attention towards the development of some regions. Thus one of the most critical problems facing India's economy is the sharp and growing regional imbalance or variations among India's different states and territories in terms of per capita income, poverty, availability of infrastructure and socio economic development.

This being the scenario of India and the world at large, Karnataka state is not an exceptional to this acute problem of Regional Disparity. It is noticed during the recent years that the development process is not at all percolated uniformly throughout the state. There are certain glaring differences in socio-economic, politico-cultural issues between the erstwhile princely state of Mysore and the North Karnataka It is noticed during recent years that the North Karnataka is neglect-

ed by the policy makers since the reorganization of states in the year 1956. The development experiences of North Karnataka is one of the painful process

For the purposes of administration, Karnataka has been divided into two parts namely, southern Karnataka and northern Karnataka. Modern Karnataka has a long and distinguished history. Prior to Unification people of Karnataka had been living under five separate jurisdiction: the Bombay province, the madras province, the chief Commissioner of province of Coorg, and the princely state of Mysore and Hyderabad. Under the States Reorganization Act of 1956, the new state of Mysore was born on 1st November 1956 with Bangalore as its capital.

The linguistic state of Mysore created in 1956 could not satisfy the hopes and aspirations of people of Northern Karnataka. Although the state of Karnataka is considered to be the one whole unit of administration, since the days of reorganization of states in 1956, there are certain inherent problems that have been cropping up, pushing the notion of unified Karnataka to the mark of suspicion. The merger of Bombay Karnataka and Hyderabad Karnataka with the erstwhile princely state of Mysore failed to show the signs of harmonious fusion as these areas were considered as backward and had distinct history which is visibly different from the experiences of southern Karnataka. Right from food habits, culture and religious faith there was anything beyond language that could be identified as strong reason intensifying the needed merger of this north Karnataka with the erstwhile princely state of Mysore. The regional imbalances have grown over the period, leading to unequal levels of development. With this input we shall now move on to understand how the problem in focus, i.e., the problem of Regional Disparity has led to the belief that the North Karnataka is experiencing a step motherly treatment from the state of Karnataka and what has been the role of elites in the region to cure this problem and to overcome the possible disparity that exist in this region.

It is to be noted that of late, feeling of negligence, injustice is cropping up in the minds of the people as they have been experiencing the step motherly treatment by the policy makers since the days of re organization. One may find significant differences in the levels of development attained at various regions within the state. A comparative study of development within the state of Karnataka's will give an idea of backwardness. The indicators of development certainly show significant disparities in the levels of development. It is essential to identify the factors and determinants of regional disparity. It is very interesting to note that this problem is never taken as all peoples problem. Rather it is confined to few people only. Most of the people are of the opinion that this problem must be addressed by the political elites and the government alone. Thus this problem is never attended in total. Elites belonging to various fields have never come

together to tackle this problem. They have failed to stimulate creative thinking in the minds of the people. They are quite busy talking of injustice rather than contributing their might positively to reduce the degree of disparity.

Every political party while in opposition remembers this issue and once it assumes power it simply forgets it and says that the problem of Regional disparity is a universal one and one should not worry too much. In order to pacify, the governments are busy in forming the committees under some eminent expert and seeks report. By the time the expert committee submits its report the tenure of the government will be nearing to expiry, then once again the political party in power give another assurance of looking into the report once it comes to power. This kind of activity keeps rolling. Thus this problem is used as a spring board to come to power. It has become an issue for gaining importance and publicity.

Apathetic attitude of elites, unconcerned attitude of political leadership, lack of keen desire amongst people for development and progress have contributed to the multiplication of regional variations in this area.

Though there is a feeling of injustice, negligence prevails in North Karnataka region, no concrete action is initiated either. At the same time this neglected area sent a number of political leaders like Mr.B.D.Jatti, Mr.Veerendra Patil, Mr.Ramkrishna Hegde, Mr.S.R.Bomma, Mr.K.H.Patil, Mr.N.DharamSingh, Mr. Mallikarjun Kharge, Malikayya Guttedar, Mr. Bhimmanna Khandre, Kamrul Islam, Vajjanath Patil etc are the important politicians of North Karnataka who have been in the forefront of state politics and have had an opportunity to exercise important political positions at the state level. But during their period, they have initiated no significant developmental activities for the development of their own region.

Mr.B.D.Jatti, Mr.Ramkrishna Hegde and Mr.S.R.Bomma are the Chief Ministers who represented the Bombay-Karnataka region while Mr. Veerendra Patil and Mr.N.Dharam Singh represent the Hyderabad-Karnataka region. It is significant to observe that during Veerendra Patil's two tenure as Chief Minister (From 29.05.1968 to 18.03.1971 and from 30.11.1989 to 10.10.1990) some notable developmental activities were undertaken such as roads, development of primary and secondary education, drinking water facilities, irrigation projects, primary health centers, construction of water tanks and connecting bridges were the notable developmental activities for northern region of the state. The top officials who held the key positions in the decision making process of the governments, but still then they were unable to do much to this area as it is a known fact that once our leaders be it in politics or administration or business reach capital places then they forget their own regions. Further an attempt is made in this paper for a comparative study, which shows the quantum of distinctions in the areas of development in the state of Karnataka. One can find the inter district disparities in terms of development variables such as Industries, Education, Health, Transport and Irrigation facilities etc. The continuous lopsided concentration of economic activities has further widened the degree of imbalances. For understanding of the gravity of the problem the following variables are considered. After nearly four decades of unification the people of North Karnataka have sensed that the pace of development is much slower and lower than that in the southern parts. By mid 80's the regional imbalance in development had become a major issue. Discontent in northern parts began to be expressed openly. This further led to the creation of regional development boards in 90's but the creation of these boards was a farce became clear as they could not change the situation much says a senior administrator Dr. S. M. Jamadar while writing on District administration in a book "Karnataka Government and Politics". Need of the hour is to take necessary steps to correct the lopsided development.

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