REGIONAL DISPARITIES OF GENDER IN BELAGAVI DISTRICT: A GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT :
This study analyzes regional disparities in gender-related indicators across various dimensions, including education, employment, health, and social status, with a geographical focus. Using data from government reports, census surveys, and field studies, the research identifies spatial patterns and variations in gender inequality across different taluks of Belagavi. Gender disparity refers to assessing the impact of laws, regulations, and programs on men and women across all fields and levels. The results are mapped using the choropleth method to illustrate taluka-wise regional disparities in gender. To evaluate disparities in Human Resource Development, various indicators have been selected based on different aspects of the study. These indicators vary in both their basic unit and relative importance. To capture their combined effect, a composite index is proposed using Kendall's ranking coefficient method. Ranks are assigned to all selected indicators, summed for each taluk, and divided by the total number to derive a composite index of demographic development and disparities in the Belagavi district for the year 2021.
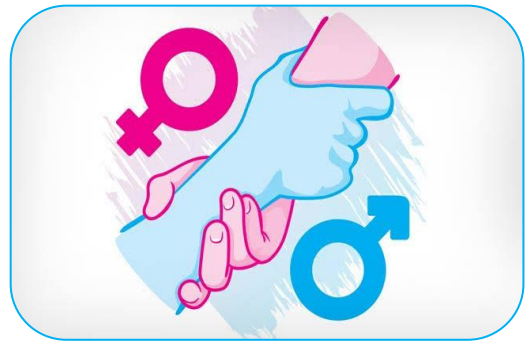
KEYWORDS : Regional, Disparities, Gender.

1.INTRODUCTION:
The World Health Organization defines gender as "the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as the norms, roles, and relationships that exist between them." Gender disparity refers to the process of analyzing the effects of planned actions, including laws, regulations, and programs, on men and women across all fields and levels.

The concept of demographic development encompasses improvements in the demographic and socio-economic aspects of a population. It includes factors such as urbanization, literacy, and occupational diversification. Developmental processes, along with their structural changes—both favorable and unfavorable—are closely linked to population dynamics and characteristics. The size of the population, the intensity and direction of structural changes, and spatio-temporal demographic characteristics play a crucial role in social and economic development. While population growth influences development, the pace and direction of economic change also shape the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the population.

Disparities in demographic development are central to research and planning, particularly in efforts aimed at improving the standard of living. Demographic development is a multi-dimensional phenomenon influenced by various regional factors. This study assesses the demographic development

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of Belagavi district, identifying and classifying taluks based on their overall level of development. A comprehensive analysis provides insights into the district's population development, recognizing that while one taluk may lag in certain aspects, it may excel in literacy, occupational composition, or other demographic factors. The study aims to determine disparities among taluks, identifying those that are developed or underdeveloped. Taluks may exhibit uni-dimensional, bi-dimensional, or multi-dimensional development, while others remain backward. Understanding these disparities is essential to addressing regional imbalances and fostering equitable development in Belagavi district.

2. STUDY AREA:

The study area is located in the northwestern part of Karnataka. Belagavi district lies between **15°23' to 16°58' north latitude** and **75°05' to 75°08' east longitude**, covering a total geographical area of **13,433 sq. km (5186.48 sq. miles)**. The district comprises **14 taluks**, namely **Athani (Kagavada), Bailhongal (Kittur), Belagavi, Chikkodi (Nippani), Gokak (Mudalagi), Hukkeri, Khanapur, Ramdurg, Raibag, and Savadatti**.

Belagavi district is surrounded by **six districts**, three of which belong to Maharashtra. It is bounded to the **west, northwest, and north** by the districts of **Ratnagiri, Kolhapur, and Sangli** of Maharashtra, to the **east** by **Vijayapura (Bijapur)**, and to the **south** by **Dharwad and Uttara Kannada** districts of Karnataka. The district is drained by three major rivers—**Krishna, Ghataprabha, and Malaprabha**—along with their tributaries.

According to the **2021 Census**, the total population of Belagavi district was approximately **5,495,366**, with **2,785,394 males** and **2,709,972 females**. The urban population makes it the **second most populous district in Karnataka**. The **Scheduled Caste (SC) population** in rural areas was **555,339**, while the **Scheduled Tribe (ST) population** was **309,309**. In urban areas, the **SC population** was **183,676**, and the **ST population** was **61,395**.

The population density of the district was **409 persons per sq. km**. The **sex ratio** was **973 females per 1,000 males**, ranking **21st in Karnataka** as per the **2021 Census**. The district had a **literacy rate of 89.82%**, ranking **16th in the state**. The **male literacy rate** was **93.78%**, while the **female literacy rate** stood at **85.84%**.
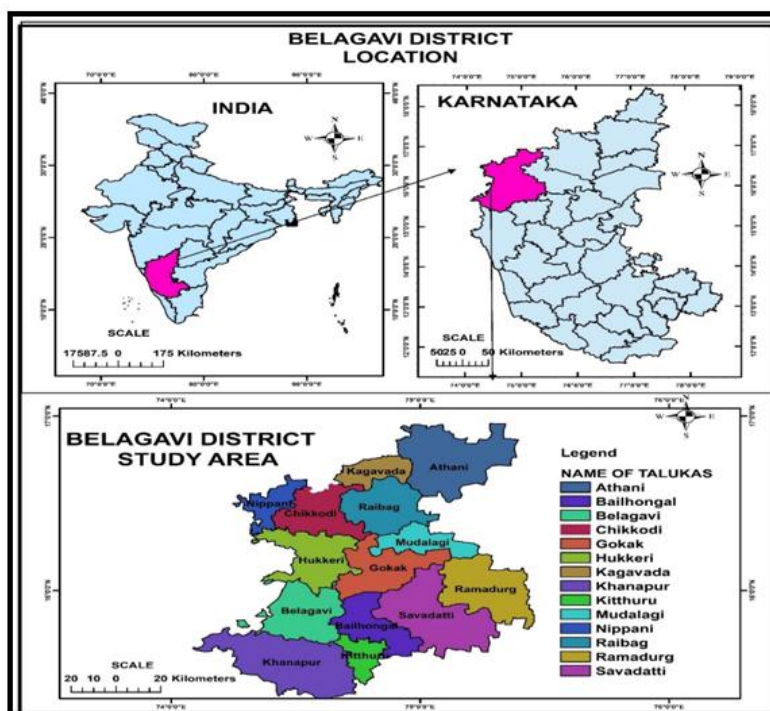

FIG NO.: 1.1

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3. OBJECTIVES:

1. To examine regional disparities in gender distribution.
2. To analyze the spatial variations of gender disparities across different regions.
3. To assess gender disparities in human resource development and their regional differences.

4. METHODOLOGY:

In the present study, an attempt has been made to assess and analyze regional gender disparities in Belagavi district, with talukas considered as the spatial units. The study is based on secondary data collected from various sources. The collected data has been classified, processed, and tabulated. The results have been mapped using the choropleth method to illustrate taluka-wise gender disparities.

To examine disparities in human resource development, various indicators have been selected, each representing different aspects of the study. These indicators vary not only in their basic unit but also in their relative significance. To obtain a comprehensive measure of these disparities, a composite index has been proposed using Kendall's ranking coefficient method. Ranks are assigned to all selected indicators, summed for each taluka, and then divided by the total number of indicators. This process yields a composite index of demographic development and its disparities in Belagavi district for the year 2021.

5. SELECTED INDICATORS:

The indicators of development have been selected after a careful study of their relative importance based on the social, cultural, economic, and health aspects of the study. The following indicators are considered for determining the level of demographic development.

I. Demographic Indicators:

P1 Percentage of Urban population to the total population
P2. Percentage of Rural population to the total population
P3. Number of Urban Centres
P4. The density of the population per sq. Km.
P5. Percentage of total workers to the total population
P6. Percentage of total literacy to the total population
P7. Sex ratio of females per 1000 male population
P8. Dependency ratio (% of Non-workers to the Workers)
P9. Percentage of Annual growth rate of population

II. Socio-Economic Indicators:

P10. Number of Primary Health Centres
P11. Number of Hospitals per 1000 population
P12. Percentage of Beds in hospitals per 1000 population
PI3. Number of Dispensaries
P14. Number of Private Hospitals
P15. Number of Govt. Hospitals
P16. Number of CHCs
P17. Number of Other Hospitals
P18. Number of Sub-Centres
PI9. Number of Medical shops per 1000 population
P20. Percentage of sterilization per 10,000 populations
P21. Percentage of primary workers to the total workers
P22. Percentage of secondary workers to the total workers
P23. Percentage of tertiary workers to the total workers

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III. Infrastructural Indicators

P24. Number of Primary schools per 10000 population

P25. Number of Secondary schools per 10000 population

P26. Number of Junior Colleges per 10000 population

P27. Number of Degree Colleges per 10000 population

P28. Number of other educational institutions per 10000 population.

TABLE NO. 1.1 SPATIAL VARIATION OF GENDER AND ITS REGIONAL DISPARITIES IN BELAGAVI DISTRICT

Sl.no	Name of the Talukas	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16
1	Athani (kagawad)	48.92	51.08	1	299	27.27	67.19	958	1.35	10.86	19	1.1	1.58	14	67	96	1
		9	2	7	7	7	6	9	7	4	2	4	3	7	4	3	5
2	Bailhongal (kitturu)	49.51	50.49	1	387	24.89	68.28	981	1.56	7.9	13	1.1	1.64	10	50	77	3
		4	8	7	6	9	4	3	3	7	7	3	2	8	5	5	1
3	Belagavi	49.2	50.8	13	1102	9.9	76.34	969	1.57	20.69	14	1.3	2.32	16	180	86	1
		8	4	1	2	10	1	7	2	1	6	2	1	4	1	4	5
4	Chikkodi (nippani)	54.18	56.06	3	570	31.38	70.6	966	1.18	13.1	19	1.4	1.46	16	78	105	3
		1	1	3	3	1	2	8	9	2	2	1	4	4	3	1	1
5	Gokak (mudalgi)	49.75	50.25	4	455	26.56	64.85	990	0.59	12.78	20	1.1	1.38	18	107	103	1
		3	9	2	5	8	9	2	10	3	1	4	5	2	2	2	5
6	Hukkeri	49.79	50.21	2	1264	28.29	67.46	991	1.36	8.28	16	1.1	0.9	18	15	75	2
		2	10	5	1	5	5	1	6	6	5	6	10	2	9	6	3
7	Khanapur	49.4	50.6	3	169	28.75	70.4	976	1.39	5.35	9	1.1	1.14	16	8	74	1
		5	7	3	10	4	3	4	4	10	8	7	8	4	10	7	5
8	Raibag	48.92	51.08	2	484	28.11	65.35	958	1.64	8.38	6	0.9	0.98	10	20	54	2
		9	2	5	4	6	8	9	1	5	9	10	9	8	6	9	3
9	Ramadurg	49.36	50.64	1	240	30.47	63.54	975	1.27	5.36	6	0.9	1.35	6	20	50	1
		6	6	7	9	2	10	5	8	9	9	9	6	10	6	10	5
10	Savadatti	49.35	50.65	1	254	30	66.68	974	1.37	7.3	17	1	1.29	25	20	74	1
		7	5	7	8	3	7	6	5	8	4	8	7	1	6	7	5
	TOTAL	49.31	50.69	31	409	24.16	69.13	973	1.39	100	139	1.1	1.56	149	565	794	16

Source: Computed by Author (Figures are in percentage and values are the composite index according to Kendall's Ranking score method)

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P17	P18	P19	P20	P21	P22	P23	P24	P25	P26	P27	P28	Ranking Score of co-efficient Variation	Index Value of Regional and HRD
96	93	0.4	33.39	92.16	3.04	4.78	5.85	1.32	0.44	0.14	0.02		
3	3	4	5	1	10	10	3	3	2	9	3	142	5.07
77	72	0.25	44.15	86.9	6.28	6	3.08	0.96	0.26	0.1	0.01		
5	5	8	2	4	6	9	8	6	7	10	7	159	5.68
92	79	0.83	36.25	37.82	29.4	32.75	6.35	2.29	0.65	0.37	0.17		
4	4	1	4	10	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	92	3.28
105	101	0.58	37.82	74.68	11.64	13.6	5.65	1.32	0.35	0.18	0.09		
1	1	2	3	9	2	2	4	3	5	7	2	87	3.11
103	101	0.42	49.49	80.44	8.43	10.58	5.97	1.48	0.37	0.2	0.02		
2	1	3	1	7	4	5	2	2	4	5	3	111	3.96
75	72	0.36	27.42	78.52	8.26	13.21	3.44	0.94	0.27	0.16	0.02		
6	5	5	8	8	5	3	7	7	6	8	3	153	5.46
74	43	0.2	20.07	86.44	6	12.03	3.64	0.61	0.2	0.8	0		
7	10	10	10	5	7	4	6	9	8	2	10	187	6.68
54	49	0.34	22.29	87.4	4.05	8.54	4.58	1.11	0.41	0.19	0.02		
9	8	6	9	3	9	6	5	5	3	6	3	175	6.25
50	46	0.22	30.93	83.24	9.68	7.06	2.71	0.49	0.14	0.5	0.01		
10	9	9	7	6	3	8	10	10	10	3	7	209	7.46
74	70	0.27	32.73	88.22	4.14	7.62	2.96	0.72	0.2	0.9	0.01		
7	7	7	6	2	6	7	9	8	8	1	7	169	6.03
800	726	0.46	34.69	75.32	11.03	13.64	44.23	11.24	3.29	1.61	0.37		

Table No: 1.2 Gender Disparities in the Level of Human Resource Development in Belagavi District-2021

		2021		
SI.NO	Range of Index value of ranking co-efficient category	Number of Talukas	Name of Talukas	Regional Disparities and Human Resource Development
1	< 5.00	3	Gokak (Mudalagi), Belagavi and Chikkodi (Nippani)	High
2	5.00 to 6.00	3	Bailhongal (Kittur), Hukkeri and Athani (Kagavad)	Medium
3	> 6.00	4	Ramdurg, Khanapur, Raibag and Savadatti	Low

Note: Higher the ranking co-efficient lower with the Demographic development and Regional Disparities vice-versa

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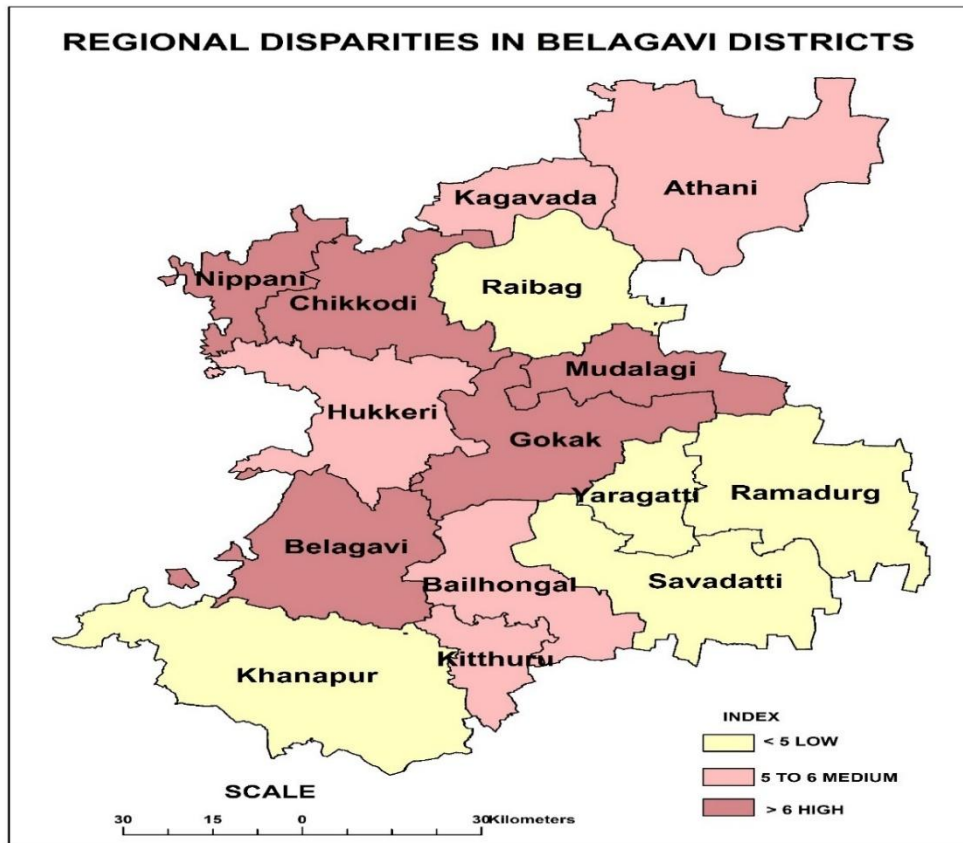Journal for all Subjects : www.lbp.world

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FIG NO: 1.2

1. Spatial Variation of Gender and Its Disparities in Belagavi District

Regional disparities in development have become a major concern, influencing various aspects of spatial variation. Development is a multidimensional process governed by several factors, including planned industrialization, expansion of transport and communication networks, growth in banking facilities, establishment of educational institutions, healthcare facilities, technological advancements, industrial expansion, infrastructure development, and agricultural innovations. These factors collectively contribute to regional development.

2. Level of Human Resource Development

This study aims to analyse regional disparities in human resource development within Belagavi District, considering demographic, socio-economic, and infrastructural factors. To assess these disparities, 28 indicators (Table 1.1) were selected based on data availability for the year 2021. These indicators vary in both their measurement units and relative significance.

To obtain a comprehensive measure of these disparities, a composite index was developed using Kendall's (1936) Rank Score Method. Ranks were assigned to all 28 indicators, summed for each taluka, and then divided by the total number of indicators (28). This resulted in a composite index of human resource development, categorizing the talukas into high, medium, and low development groups. These categories were represented cartographically using the choropleth method.

8. DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT LEVELS IN BELAGAVI DISTRICT
1. Areas of High-Level Demographic Development

Talukas with a high level of demographic development in 2021 include Gokak (Mudalagi), Belagavi, and Chikkodi (Nippani). Belagavi, being the district headquarters, benefits from urbanization,

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educational institutions, and socio-economic infrastructure. Similarly, Chikkodi and Gokak have experienced significant development due to irrigation facilities provided by the Krishna and Ghataprabha river projects, along with other infrastructural advancements.

2. Areas of Medium-Level Demographic Development

Three talukas—Bailhongal (Kittur), Hukkeri, and Athani (Kagavad)—fall under this category in 2021. Their demographic development is attributed to the expansion of agricultural activities and improvements in socio-economic and infrastructural facilities.

3. Areas of Low-Level Demographic Development

As indicated in Table 1.2, four talukas—Ramdurg, Khanapur, Raibag, and Savadatti—exhibited low demographic development in 2021. These talukas are predominantly dependent on agriculture, leading to socio-economic backwardness. Additionally, geographical constraints and inadequate infrastructure have further contributed to their lower development levels. (Refer to Fig. 1.2 for visual representation.)

9.FINDINGS

1. Educational Disparities
• **Urban vs. Rural:** Female literacy rates are higher in urban areas compared to rural regions. Cities like Belagavi have better access to educational facilities and more progressive societal norms, resulting in improved educational outcomes for women.
•**Access to Schools:** In rural areas, long distances to schools and inadequate infrastructure act as significant barriers to female education.

2. Employment Disparities
•**Workforce Participation:** Women in urban areas have higher participation in formal employment sectors, whereas rural women are predominantly engaged in unpaid agricultural labour or informal sector jobs.
•**Economic Opportunities:** Urban centers offer a greater variety of employment opportunities with better wages, further widening the gender gap in economic status.

3.Health Disparities
•**Healthcare Access:** Urban regions have better healthcare facilities, leading to higher rates of institutional deliveries and improved maternal and child health outcomes.
•**Nutritional Statu**s: Malnutrition rates are higher among rural women and children due to limited healthcare access and awareness.

4.Social Status
•**Cultural Norms:** Traditional and patriarchal norms are more deeply rooted in rural areas, restricting women's mobility and decision-making power.
•**Marriage and Family:** Early marriages and larger family sizes are more common in rural areas, negatively impacting women's education and employment prospects.

10. DISCUSSION

The geographical analysis of gender disparities in Belagavi District reveals a significant urban-rural divide. Urban areas benefit from better infrastructure, economic development, and progressive social norms, while rural regions face challenges such as socio-cultural constraints and lack of resources. These disparities are further worsened by unequal local governance and ineffective policy implementation.

11. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Educational Initiatives: Improve access to quality education in rural areas by building more schools, providing transportation facilities, and implementing community awareness programs.

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2. Economic Empowerment: Promote skill development and entrepreneurship programs for rural women while expanding job opportunities in rural areas.

3. Healthcare Improvements: Enhance healthcare accessibility in rural areas, with a particular focus on maternal and child health services.

4. Cultural Sensitization: Launch programs aimed at challenging traditional gender norms and promoting gender equality in both urban and rural settings.

12. CONCLUSION

- This study assesses disparities in human resource development based on various indicators, including social, economic, technological, and infrastructural factors. These factors are directly and indirectly linked to regional demographic development.
- A composite index was developed using Kendall's (1936) Rank Score Method, categorizing the talukas into high, medium, and low development groups.
- Talukas with high demographic development (Gokak, Belagavi, and Chikkodi) benefited from urbanization, irrigation projects, and socio-economic infrastructure.
- Talukas with medium demographic development (Bailhongal, Hukkeri, and Athani) saw improvements due to agricultural expansion and socio-economic infrastructure.
- Talukas with low demographic development (Ramdurg, Khanapur, Raibag, and Savadatti) remained largely agriculture-dependent, facing economic backwardness and geographical challenges.
- Addressing regional gender disparities in Belagavi District requires a multifaceted approach that considers the unique challenges of different areas.
- By implementing targeted interventions and fostering inclusive development, it is possible to bridge the gender gap and promote a more equitable society. This geographical perspective offers valuable insights for policymakers in designing effective strategies to reduce gender disparities.

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