

An executive summary of the final report of work done on the Minor Research Project of Dr Suresh Poojary entitled: “Social Empowerment by NGOs: A Study with Reference to NGOs in Dakshina Kannada District” sanctioned by UGC, vide sanction letter No. MRP (H)-1117/10-11/KAMA002/UGC-SWRO dated 22-Dec-10

NGOs are parallel agencies for the development of less privileged people in the society, participating in the development process along with governments. These NGOs are working towards upliftment of socially backward and deprived sections of the society. NGOs have been playing major role in Dakshina Kannada District with regard to bringing awareness about the citizen rights by taking up welfare measures. The District is a fast growing district industrially and in every field, and it is a District which has given birth to many banks and reputed educational institutions. The present study is an attempt to explore the contribution of NGOs in Dakshina Kannada District in the development process and empowerment of socially backward people. Therefore, the study is on the topic – “Social Empowerment by NGOs: A Study with Reference to NGOs in Dakshina Kannada District”.

The main objective of the study is to analyze the role of NGOs of Dakshina Kannada District in social empowerment. The study also analyzed the profile of members who joined NGOs in Dakshina Kannada District, highlighted the programmes adopted by NGOs for the welfare of the members of organization and analyzed and interpreted the role of NGOs in psychological, economic, social and political empowerment of the members of NGOs .

The members of the NGOs were taken as respondents for collecting data. Two hundred twenty eight members of various NGOs in DK using simple random sampling on convenient basis were taken as sample size for the study. Primary and secondary data were used to analyze the role of NGOs in social empowerment. Primary data was collected from the respondents through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of questions of demographic profile of respondents, welfare schemes offered by

NGOs, and the level of impact of NGOs regarding psychological, social, economical and political empowerment. The collected was analyzed using SPSS package and various statistical tools like averages, chi-square test, tables and charts were used to analyze and interpret the data.

The study revealed that SC/ST membership was insignificant and NGOs have not reached to the services of SC/STs in Dakshina Kannada District. Female membership was significantly higher among minorities and males were significantly higher among backward and other castes. Membership of NGOs consists of younger generation and Level of education among the members of NGOs is low. Membership of NGOs consists of low income group of people, whose annual income is below Rs 1, 50,000. Further when compared among the different communities, all the three parameters including overall socioeconomic status showed significant improvement among minorities and backward caste communities compared to SC/STs and other communities. SC/ST respondents shown significantly less change in psychological wellbeing compared to minorities and backward castes. Overall improvement of socio economic status is highly depends on psychological well being.

Socially and economically weaker sections must be supported through NGOs by bringing improvement in their psychological position. The psychological frame work of communities for empowerment must focus on individual self-esteem and confidence, which enables marginalized groups, particularly SC/STs and women to assert themselves in a much a wider range of social and political domains in their family and community lives.

Date: 22-05-2013

Dr Suresh Poojary