



RESEARCH ARTICLE

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MAHILA SAMAKHYA KARNATAKA FEDERATIONS IN THE POST AUTONOMOUS PERIOD AT PERIYAPATNA AND NANJANGUD TALUKS OF MYSURU DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The article makes a comparative study of the functioning of Mahila Samakhya Karnataka Federations and its outcomes at Periyapatna and Nanjangud Taluks in the post autonomous period and also analyses the constraints faced by them. Sample size consists of 100 respondents selected randomly from two selected Federations. The data collected is analyzed using descriptive analysis. The results indicate that the Federation at Periyapatna is functioning better. Financial support and timely guidance are required by both the Federations to function extensively.

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INTRODUCTION

A programme of the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, named Mahila Samakhya Karnataka (MSKn) came into existence in the year 1989 with the main objective of empowering rural women. By forming Sanghas at villages, women are encouraged to participate in the process of empowering each other. This programme functioned for a period of 25 years at Hunsur, Periyapatna, K.R.Nagar, Nanjangud and H.D.Kote Taluks of Mysuru District. In 2014, MSKn was withdrawn from Mysuru District making Federations autonomous in order to facilitate its functioning independently as the women were adequately trained, made aware of several issues and taught ways to overcome them. The staff of MSKn like Sakhi, Junior Resource Person (JRP) Cluster Resource Person (CRP) who were working in the villages assisting Sangha women were withdrawn from the field. "Empowerment is a process, which helps people to gain control of their lives through raising awareness, taking action and working in order to exercise greater control. Empowerment is the feeling that activates the psychological energy to accomplish one's goals" (Indiresan1999).

In order to empower women and to continue the activities of Mahila Samakhya Karnataka, the Federations are formed at Taluk level. These are functioning towards accomplishing the aims and objectives of Mahila Samakhya Karnataka by organizing various programmes and taking up projects even in the post autonomous period. They are acting as pressure groups in bringing changes in the rural areas and find solution to the problems. MSKn Sanghas registered under Federation, renew their membership by paying fixed amount once in a year. The office bearers of the Federation consist of President, Vice president, Secretary, Treasurer and Executive members who represent 5 to 10 villages each.

Sangha women who actively participate in the programmes are elected as the Executive committee member in the elections held annually. Meetings are organized every month for the Executive Committee members and plans are discussed and called out. The article makes a comparative study of the functioning of Mahila Samakhya Karnataka Federations and outcomes and also analyses the constraints experienced in the post autonomous period by the Federations at Periyapatna and Nanjangud Taluks.

Review of literature

Jyothi (2016): The article focuses on the services rendered to its members by Kapila Mahila Okkuta, a Federation of Mahila Samakhya in Mysore district. Through secondary sources, focus group discussion, interview and participant observation method data is collected. The Sanghas are categorized as weak, medium and strong based on the performances of their activities and assessed accordingly. The article suggests for the increase in the participation and decision making abilities among executive members, upgrading of the services offered by the Federation and also procedure to access loan to be made easier for its members. Mahila Samakhya Karnataka Annual Report (2010-11): The purpose of forming of MSKn Federation and its functions are highlighted in this Annual Report, which is to sustain and support MSKn programmes, to strengthen Sanghas and to work as pressure groups to solve the problems of women. It details about the programmes and trainings organized by the Federation in different districts of Karnataka namely preparation of herbal medicine, Dashamula thaila, selling of pulses at lower prices to the poor and needy and campaigns against child marriage. Mahila Samakhya Karnataka Annual Report (2011-12): The Annual report comprehensively deals with the activities conducted by the MSKn Federations in Karnataka like forming of Sanghas, grooming women to be leaders, women's literacy programmes, strengthening network, campaigns against social evils and the functions of Nari Adalat and Nari Sanjeevini. Mention is made about the Executive Committee meetings held regularly and highlights on the strategies made for strengthening of the Federations. Nancy.W.Yu,(et al) (2013): In their article has focused on the need of women's Federation, MSKn Federation structure, autonomy, functions and its impact. The study is conducted in three states of India namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Jarkhand. Focus group discussion and interview method are adopted to collect primary data from 180 respondents belonging to the Federation. Secondary data is also relied upon. The study found the Gram Panchayats to be joining hands with the Federation to bring positive changes in the society.

1. To make a comparative study of the functioning of Samakhya Karnataka Federations in the post autonomous period particularly from 2014-2019 at Periyapatna and Najangud Taluks
2. To highlight on the outcome of the programmes of the selected Federations during post autonomous period and make a comparative study.
3. To analyze the constraints of the Federations at Periyapatna and Najangud Taluks.

METHODOLOGY

Data is collected through secondary sources like documents of the MSKn Federation, Annual Reports of MSKn, websites and Journals. Primary data is collected by using Interview Schedule, participant observation and focus group discussion. The sample size comprised of a total of 100 women respondents selected from two Federations situated at Periyapatna and Nanjangud Taluks. 50 respondents that is 10 women from 5 Sanghas each who have been members for over 10 years are randomly selected for the study. Data is analyzed using descriptive analysis.

Limitations of the study: Only Periyapatna and Nanjangud Taluk Federations are considered for the study and the Sample size comprise of only 100 respondents who belong to Sanghas of these two Federations. The programmes conducted by these Federations in the post autonomous period are considered for the study.

Analysis and interpretation of data: Table 1 clearly shows that a total of 328 programmes are conducted by the Federation at Periyapatna and only 227 programmes by the Federation at Nanjangud. Out of these most number of programmes (70 & 50) are conducted on availing loans from the banks by the both Federations. Least number of programmes are conducted on Voting rights and contesting elections and also on enrollment campaigns of dropout children to schools.

Table 1. Comparative study of the programmes conducted by the Federations at Periyapatna and Nanjangud Taluks from 2014-2019

Programmes		Kaveri Mahila Mahasangha Periyapatna	Kapila Mahila Mahasangha Nanjangud
		No of programmes	No of programmes
Education	Campaign to enroll dropout children to schools	20	15
	Awareness through Mahiti Kendras regarding Government programmes	32	21
Health	Street plays against child marriage and its impact on health.	50	30
	Jathas and skits to prevent consumption of Alcohol.	30	22
	Awareness to get treatment from Primary Health Centres and Hospitals	27	20
Economic	Awareness programmes on bank transactions and availing of loans	70	55
Development	Vocational training	60	35
Political	Awareness on voting rights and contesting for elections	14	11
Legal	Legal awareness programmes	25	18

Federations have been successful in working against the practice of child marriage, jogini and other problems faced by women. The review of literature reveals that though studies have been conducted on the functioning of the Federations, a comparative study of the selected Federations and the outcome of its programmes have not been made. Hence, the present study is significant.

Objectives

The comparison of the Federations indicates that, the Federation at Periyapatna Taluk has conducted more number of programmes than Federation at Najangud Taluk. By this, assessment can be made that, the members of the Sanghas at Periyapatna are involving more in the activities of the Federation with enthusiasm.

Table 2. Outcome of the Federation programmes

F1 – Represent Federation at Periyapatna Taluk, F2 – Federation at Nanjangud Taluk Total number of respondents randomly selected– Periyapatna Taluk 50, Nanjangud Taluk -50

Programmes	Outcomes	Federations	Level of achievement of outcomes							
			More than 75%		75-51%		50-26%		Less than 25%	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Education	Reduced the number of dropout children from schools	F1	45	90%	05	10%	-	-	-	-
		F2	40	80%	10	20%	-	-	-	-
	Benefits availed from Government programmes	F1	-	-	38	76%	12	24%	-	-
Health	Reduction in the incidence of child marriage	F1	48	96%	02	4%	-	-	-	-
		F2	46	92%	04	8%	-	-	-	-
	Reduction in the incidence of Alcoholism	F1	-	-	35	70%	15	30%	-	-
		F2	-	-	26	52%	24	48%	-	-
	Rural women are accessing treatment from Primary Health Centres & hospitals	F1	-	-	42	84%	08	16%	-	-
		F2	47	94%	03	6%	-	-	-	-
Sangha women availing loan from banks and utilizing for productive purpose increased	F1	44	88%	06	12%	-	-	-	-	
	F2	39	78%	11	22%	-	-	-	-	
Economic Development	Women have become financially independent	F1	-	-	33	66%	17	30%	-	-
		F2	-	-	27	54%	23	46%	-	-
Political	Political participation of Sangha women increased	F1	-	-	43	86%	07	14%	-	-
		F2	-	-	-	-	38	76%	12	24%
Legal	Cases have been successfully solved through Nari Adalat	F1	-	-	44	88%	06	12%	-	-
		F2	-	-	-	-	37	74%	13	26%

Table 3. Constraints of the Federations

Particulars	Kaveri Mahila Mahasangha Periyapatna		Kapila Mahila Mahasangha Nanjangud	
	No.	%	No.	%
Lack of guidance	42	84%	36	72%
Financial constraints	45	90%	48	96%
Irregular participation of the MSKn Sangha members	32	64%	27	54%

Table 2 indicates that, more than 90% of respondents of the Federation at Periyapatna have opined that the incidences of dropout of children from schools and the child marriage have reduced more than 75%. 80% and 92% of the respondents belonging to the Federation at Nanjangud have also opined the same. The benefits of the Government programmes availed by the women and those accessing treatment from PHCs and hospitals are found to be more than 75% at Nanjangud as stated by 86% and 94% of the sample, whereas these are found to be between 75-51% in Periyapatna. 66% and 54% of the respondents belonging to both the Federations stated that they have become financially independent between 75-51% which indicates improvement in their economic conditions. Political participation of Sangha women and also the number of cases solved successfully by Nari Adalat is between 50-26% as opined by 76% and 74% of the women belonging to Nanjangud Federation is comparatively lesser when compared with the Federation at Periyapatna. Hence, it is very clear from the table that the outcome of the programmes of the Federation at Periyapatna is considerably better than the Federation at Nanjangud. Table 3 clearly shows that more than 90% of the respondents have found the financial constraint to be major reason in carrying on the programmes in a large scale and also more effectively. Lack of timely guidance and irregular participation of Sangha women have added to the constraints.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study reveals that a total of 328 programmes on Education, Health, Economic development, Political and Legal awareness have been organized by the Federation at Periyapatna Taluk and 227 by the Federation at Nanjangud

Taluk between 2014-2019. The reason for the Federation of Nanjangud to be falling behind in the number programmes is because of the limited financial resources in the Federation using which, the expenses on the programmes have to be met with. As financial support is not extended by the Government to the Federations in the post autonomous period, they are left to manage by generating resources on their own. Hence, Federation of Nanjangud has been cautious in spending on more number of activities. A total of 125 programmes have been organized by both the Federations on bank transactions and availing loans. The reason for this is to enable women become aware of the services extended by banks and to prevent them from seeking loans from local money lenders at a higher rate of interest. 66% and 54% of the respondents belonging to Periyapatna and Nanjangud Federations respectively have stated themselves to have become financially independent between 75-51% which indicates that, this particular programme has assisted rural women to improve their financial status by saving their income and also utilizing the loans borrowed for productive purposes and reaping its benefits. Reduction in the dropout rate and child marriage to more than 75% in both Taluks indicates that, the children are encouraged and sent to schools by their parents regularly. The reduction in child marriage shows that people have realized the consequences of child marriage and the laws prevalent against it. With the reduction of child marriage, girls are allowed to access education till they reach maritible age. More than 75% of the respondents belonging to Nanjangud Federation are getting treatment from PHCs and Hospitals at the time of sickness where as it is less in Periyapatna. The reason for this can be attributed to the distance and inadequate transport and communication facilities to the interior places at Periyapatna

Taluk. Political participation by Sangha women is stated to be 50-26% by 76% of the respondents of Nanjangud Federation. The reason being lack of motivation and interest towards political activities. The number of cases solved successfully by Nari Adalat is also between 50-26% which is comparatively lesser when compared with the Federation at Periyapatna. This is because, after autonomy minor cases are taken up by Nari Adalat and most of the cases are referred to Santhwana which is setup by the Government for counseling and resolving the issues of women. It can be inferred that, lack of timely guidance is due to the withdrawal of the resource persons from the villages. This has also resulted in irregular participation of women in the activities of the programmes. Financial constraints are due to the withdrawal of financial assistance by the Government to the Federations after autonomy. Difficulty is faced in meeting the travelling expenses of the members to the meetings and programmes. Hence, it is very clear from the results of the data that, the outcome of the programmes of the Federation at Periyapatna is considerably better than the Federation at Nanjangud.

Conclusion

Federations in the selected Taluks have been functioning according to the MSKn objectives for the empowerment of rural women, but the financial constraint is found to be a major obstacle in the post autonomous period.

Hence, extending the prime requirements like timely guidance and financial support by the concerned authorities and the Government will enable the Federations to intensify their activities. Along with this, the participation and involvement of Sangha women is also needed to escalate the programmes of Mahila Samakhya Karnataka.

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