It has become evident that major social forces of a global nature - such as demographic trends, migration patterns and the globalization of the economy - are reshaping social welfare policies and social work practices the world over. There is much to be learned from the careful analysis of experiences in the various countries that are struggling with the emerging challenges to social welfare in the post-modern world. **The Journal of Social Welfare and Management** seek to encourage debate about the global implications of the most pressing social welfare issues of the day. Its interdisciplinary approach will promote examination of these issues from the various branches of the applied social sciences and integrate analyses of policy and practice. Since this journal is multidisciplinary, quality papers from various disciplines such as Economics, Management, Demography, Political science, Geography, Psychology, Literature, History, Anthropology, Sociology, Labor Management, and Communication would be considered.

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Impacts and Implications of Urbanisation in India: Social Perspectives

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Introduction

The world population is becoming predominantly urban. As per the United Nation's revised estimates world's urban population now exceeds 2.9 billion and today, more than 47 per cent of the world's population lives in cities. Besides most of the population of more developed regions already dwelling in urban areas, while in less developed countries the process of urbanization is still acute.

Urbanization refers to the movement of people permanently or temporarily from village to the city. It refers to village manners of city habits. Urbanization is a socio-economic phenomenon. It plays a significant and dynamic role in changing the ways of life of the people. It transforms, civilized as well as modernized the human societies. It serves as a significant agent in patterning and organizing the social processes in space.

The growth of any urban center are of two types - natural growth and migration. The consequences of rapid urbanization are numerous and varied. Apart from the problems of poverty, unemployment, food supply and nutrition, water supply, sewage and solid waste disposal, transport and communication, power supply, pollution control, fiscal problems resulting from financing of public services such as health and education. Further, rapid urban growth has created serious shortages of shelter and thereby led to proliferation of slums and squatter settlements.

Urbanization: Concept and Background

The term urbanisation is mostly used as a demographic indicator or in the demographic sense in whereby there is one increase in the proportion of urban population to total population over a period of time. Urbanisation is the process by which a society becomes urban interms of occupations, land use, population density etc., graduating from primary sector (agriculture, animal husbandry, hunting etc.) to secondary sector economic activitites (manufacturing) to tertiary sector) occupation supporting them (provision of services such as trade, banking, transport etc.,) urbanisation is expressed as the percentage of the total population of a large area such as a country or one of its divisions, living in urban areas.

India's urban population was 285 million as per 2001 census. The urban population lives in 5,161 towns and cities. The Indian urban population equals the combined urban population of USA, UK, and France. In absolute terms the urban population in India exceeds the total population of Brazil, Britain, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. India's urbanization followed by population, explosion, rural urban migration, industrialization has placed great stain on the country's natural resources, infrastructure and environment.

Urbanization in India

Urbanization is the most significant phenomenon of 20th century which has almost affected all aspects of national life in India. Being the second most populous country in the world, after China, India's growing urbanization has a regional as well as world wide impact. India's urban population constitutes a sizeable proportion of world's urban population. This can be well corroborated form the fact that every 12th city dweller of the world and every 7th of the developing countries in India.

Form the data provided in table no.1, it is evident that the process of industrialization, though initiated during the second plan could make little impact on the economy in terms of population shift to urban areas till 1961,

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although the second and third plans emphasized the developed of heavy and basic industries. The employment potential of these industries being limited, their growth did not lead to an absorption of labour from rural to urban areas to such an extent as to have a marked impact on the economy. The breakout of hostilities with China in 1962 and with Pakistan in 1965 and the short recession accompanied by brought by during 1967, acted as obstacles to the progress of industrialization. One can, there fore, observe that the process of industrialization through started during the sixties could not marked. Urbanization could hardly absorb a little more than the natural increase in urban population. As a result, a serious dent in terms of the shift of population from rural to urban areas could not made.

Urban population increased from 26 million in 1901 to 62 million, in 1951 – an increase of only 36 in 50 years. But thereafter, the absolute increase during the next three decades was of the order of 94 millions (1951-81). This indicates that programmes of industrialization did make an impact in terms of population absorption in urban areas, though this impact is very discernible. During the last decade (1981-91) alone, urban population in absolute terms reached the figure of 285 million accounting for 27.8 per cent of total population, 2001.

In the present paper, an attempt is made to highlight the growth of urban population and its impact and implications on the social milieu.

Source: Registrar General India.

State-wise analysis of urbanization

Year	Population in Million			% of Population		Urban Rural Ratio
	Total	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
1901	232.9	207.3	25.6	89.0	11.0	1:8.1
1911	246.0	220.4	25.6	89.6	10.4	1:8.6
1921	244.3	216.6	27.7	88.7	11.3	1:7.8
1931	270.8	237.8	33.0	87.8	12.2	1:7.2
1941	309.0	265.8	43.5	85.9	14.1	1:6.1
1951	361.1	298.7	62.4	82.7	17.3	1:4.7
1961	439.2	360.3	78.9	82.0	18.0	1:4.5
1971	548.2	439.1	109.1	80.1	19.9	1:3.7
1981	685.2	525.7	159.5	76.7	23.3	1:3.3
1991	844.2	627.1	217.2	74.3	25.7	1:2.9
2001	1027.0	742.0	285.0	72.2	27.8	1:2.6

Degree of urbanization varies widely among the States of the country. Goa is the most urbanized State in India with 49.77 per cent urban population followed by Mizoram, Tamil Nadu and Maharastra. All Union Territories are highly urbanized except Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The Degree of urbanization is high in southern, western and north eastern states whereas low urbanization level is found in northern and central states.

Maximum concentration of the country's urban population found in Maharastra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. It is important to mention that Uttar Pradesh urban population is large (34.5 million), next five states namely Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and Union Territory of Delhi together account for 30.7 per cent of urban population. Remaining eighteen States and six Union Territories contain only 18.2 per cent of the urban population of India.

Effects of Urbanization

Changes in the land use pattern

When the city grows in size, it expands both horizontally and vertically. The horizontal expansion engulfed the nearby fringe villages and converts the agricultural lands and the concrete structures do not allow the water to percolate into the soil, so there is decrease of

water level. And the dwellings are so close by that the sanitary tanks so there is decrease of water wells. So there are chances of contamination of drinking water because of leakage of pipes. Another thing is land value is appreciated because of scarcity of land in the growing urban centres. So there is mushroom growth of apartments and in busy centres, the apartments are given permission without checking the way of sewage facilities.

Slums and associated problems

The acute shortage of housing facilities is one of the most serious problem plaguing the Indian cities, whether it is a metropolitan city or a small town. The reason for this is that the availability and development of housing facility has not expanded fast enough to meet growing demand for rapid urbanization process.

The acute shortage of housing facilities compels the poor to live in slums. Slums have developed in almost all the Indian cities. Slums are called by the names of Bustees in Calcutta, Jhuggis in Delhi, Chawl in Mumbai and Cheri in Chennai. The slums or Bustees hav been defined by the government of India's slum area (Improvement and clearance) Act of 1954 as predominantly a residential area, where dwellings by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement and lack of ventilation, light or sanitary facilities or any combination of these factors detrimental to safely, health and morals. It is estimated that 40 per cent of people in Mega-cities like Calcutta, Mumbai and Delhi live in slums. These slums have extremely unhygienic conditions. They have impoverished lavatories made by digging a shallow pit in between three to four huts and with sackcloth "curtain" hanging in front. The children, of course, are used to defecate anywhere around the huts. All such areas have several cesspools and puddles. These are invariable dug in the middle of a state dirty pool. People wash their clothes and utensils under the hand pumps. This causes diseases like blood dysentery, diarrhea, malaria, typhoid, jaundice and conjunctivitis, which stalk them all the year around. Children with bloated bellies or famished skeletons, many suffer from polio and common sight.

Human development is also adversely affected by the environmental degrading. Access to safe drinking water and separation are closely linked with life expectancy and infant morality which are very important indicators of Human Development. So the poor take fertility decisions to compensate for these factors and to avoid risks. Larger population leads to more poverty and worsens the environment creating a vicious circle.

Transport system

There are 300 million cars, trucks and buses all over the world. During peak hours, there will be huge traffic jams in the main junctions. Because of traffic jams more petroleum products are wasted which results in fuel problem. During peak seasons the vehicles are parked and over loaded and there are more chances of occurring accidents. It the State provides good transport system, there will be less number of two or three wheeler on which most people depend.

The combustion of petroleum products, diesel leads to increase of carbon dioxide which helps in increasing of Global Warming, air pollution and noise pollution, besides carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide which release by automobile, is very harmful to those persons exposed to congested high way to a level of about 100 ppm. The noise pollution affects both auditory and non-auditory. The auditory effects are fatigue and deafness. The non-auditory effects are interference in speed, communication, annoyance, loss of working efficiency and psycho-physiological disorders.

The transportation picture in all Indian cities is unhappy while Mumbai is still having the best city transport system and Chennai, Ahmedabad and Pune being reasonably well – served by city buses. Everywhere else if one does not have one's own transport, great hardship would be experienced in moving about in the city. One reason why we are in this mess is that, whilst planning city expansion we have still tender to follow the western concept of commuting time and distance being the determinants of the location of activities this has resulted in compartmentalized zoning of cities, which necessitates extensive travel. At the same time the level of incomes and affordability being low, our citizens are unable to pay an economic fare for the use of a public transport system. Therefore, all city bus services sustain such heavy

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annual losses that they cannot really expand or maintain a fleet adequacy to meet city needs.

Problem of garbage

Urban solid waste consists of building materials, plastic containers, hospital wastes, kitchen waste etc. The building materials and household solid wastes are dumped on the public places. The hospital wastes do not have covers which transporting. The stringent smell contaminates the air. The Urban sewage does not proper let out facility.

As Indian society prospers, it trash mainly hazardous plastics, metals and packing is growing exponentially. In the last decade, garbage was produced at nearly twice the rate of population growth.

Only eight out of 3,119 towns and cities in India have full wastewater collection and treatment facilities. Another 209 have partial treatment facilities, the rest none at all, says World Bank Study. A third of India's population has no access to sanitation services. It becomes much worse in smaller cities and provincial towns.

Sewerage problems

The urban areas in India are plagued with inefficient and insufficient civic amenities. Not a single city in India is fully seweraged. The reason for this is that the unauthorized constructions in and around the city lie outside the purview of the main systems. It has been estimated that only 38 per cent of the urban population have a sewerage system. As sewage, an abysmal lack of planning has led to a situation where most sewer lines date back to colonial times.

Mumbai's crumbling sewer network is a century old, put in place by farsighted British planners when city was no more than a series of fishing villages. Today, it breaks down frequently with waste about eight million more people than it was designed for. The sewer lines lead to drains, which take the sewage – 93 per cent of it untreated – directly into the sea, killing virtually all marine life along Mumbai's coast. Delhi's Yamuna has turned into a giant sewer, chiefly from raw sewage; 40 per cent of Delhi's sewage is untreated.

Water supply

India reached a stage where no city has water supply around the clock. Intermittent supply results in a vacuum being created in empty water lines which often suck in pollutions through leaking joints. Chennai, Hyderabad, Rajkot and Wadhwan get water from municipal sources for less than half an hour every alternative day. Many small towns have no main water supply and depend on such sources as individual wells, household open wells or even the rivers which have some storage water in pools during summer.

The condition of drainage system in equally bad. Within the city, the drainage system hardly exists and the annual flooding of large areas, even in Delhi, is now a regular phenomenon in many urban centres. Mumbai is located in a keel line depression, which also happens to be the main railway artery. With every monsoon showers, it gets flooded choking the communication. The problem is particularly acute in the cities of Indo-Gangetic plain. Most of the cities so efficiently. This is the case with Varanasi and Patna. The situation is worse in the eastern part of Patna, which remains waterlogged throughout the monsoonal period. The terminal case is that of Katihar (Bihar) where, because of the peculiar bowl-like configuration of the city and the non-existence of a drainage system. Large pools of stagnant water can be seen even in the month of May and June. In Srinagar, whole colonies have become sewage to be forced back by hydraulic pressure into the sub-soil, rendering the whole land unfit for human habitation. The drains, which are open, serve as depositors for road sweepings and also human wastes. In rainy season, water over flows and spreads into streets presenting a dingy view, promoting unhygienic conditions and causing outbreak of numerous diseases.

Environmental problems

Environmental pollution is the causing concern and affecting human health today than yester decades. It has been reported by the World Bank that 40,000 persons die in India every year because of air pollution. Recent studies also revealed that a large number of people have been suffering from respiratory

diseases and allergies and cough. It has been doubled since 1990's.Futher, it has been noticed that 23 Indian Cities have crossed the dangerous limits because of auto exhausts and industrial emission. Therefore, it is not of the task of Central Pollution (Control) Board that has to take control but it is the duty of the institutions, individuals to initiate possible care and measures to bounded prevent the pollution uniting works. Hence, it should initiate in the form of a social movement. This, indeed, prevents problems arising out of pollution especially in urban areas.

Conclusion

Urbanization, is one of the causing concerns to the modern man. It is witnessed that population and its impact is found to be more in urban than rural areas. Alarming growth of urbanization, use of vehicles, industrialization, adoption of modern culture and host of factors have been affecting the health of modern man. Hence, causes and consequences urbanization, of late, have become a prime agenda for all the policy - makers, voluntary organizations, Government agencies to find out the ways to minimize and preventive measures to overcome the perils of urbanization. Therefore, it is the high and right time to identify causes of urbanisation and initiate to avoid and manage it at all levels – Government, Non-Government, Institutions and individual households.

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Panchayati Raj and the Political Empowerment of Dalit Women (A Study of Backward Caste Sarpanches in Anantapur Dist.)

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Indian women had been the most deprived section of society segregated, exploited and assigned a secondary status of depravity, inferiority Vis a Vis their male counterparts. Dalit women suffered a double deprivation both as women and as women from disadvantaged section belonging to the lower rungs of social ladder.

In the words of Gandhiji "Women is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities, she has the right to participate in the minute details of the activities of man, and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as he by sheer force of a vicious custom, even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have." (Mahatma Gandhi, 1918).

The word Dalit 'as opined Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Phule means a broken man' – the one who is exploited, segregated attributable to the so called untouchables. The word Dalit also befits women backward cast who predicament is no less better than the tuff the so called untouchables considering the duel deprivation to which they were subjected to has been women in general and women from disadvantaged sections in society. Deprived of access education, economic independence and social isolation they were virtually confine to their houses in a status of subjugation. In that sense of depravity and exploitation women from backward castes can certainly be called Dalit women.

The social depravity of Dalit Women was clearly reflected in terms of socio-economic and political indicators which shown them occupying the subservient position in the Indian Society. Along with the Scheduled castes and

Scheduled Tribes, the women were also included among the disadvantaged groups of people in India. The constitution of India contains equal rights for all the citizens irrespective of social and economic status, but these provisions couldn't become a reality over period of four decades.

The social depravity of Indian women is reflected in terms of sex ratio life literate [census of India 1991), nutrition (Butilily wale 1985,Sen and Sen Gupta 1983]in work force participation wage and earnings (Mukarjee 1996)and work time dispositions (Jain 1996), but also in terms of access to power (Mukarjee 1996) which control and guides development programs if a society's access to political opportunity and participation in political decision making process are important components of capacity building and also autonomy. The entry of women into the decision-making bodies, it was thought would necessitate restructuring of institutions and brings solutions to issues pertaining to women's rights.

India as a welfare state is committed to the welfare and development of its people in general and of vulnerable sections in particular. The government has special concern and commitment for the well being of the socially disadvantaged group's i.e. the scheduled caste (SCs), the scheduled tribes (S.Ts.) the other back ward classes (BCs) and the minorities. The planning in the post-independent era focused on the social amelioration of the weaker sections through educational and economic upliftment of the weaker sections among which women also constituted as belonging to this disadvantaged section. The constitution of India envisaged ensuring equality of all the citizens through provision of protective discrimination and also political participation. The planned efforts to emancipate women educationally economically did not yield the desired results

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over the decades after independence. Beginning with 1980's began the effort of political empowerment as it was perceived to give women the needed fillip to an onward surge towards all round development and to a status of respectability and partnership in decision making.

To make a political empowerment of women a reality, the issues of reservation of 1/3 of the seats for women at the grass-root level organization was taken by women's organizations and social activists. The Government of India palt passed 73rd and 74th amendments, which paved way for women's political participation. It was expected that the Panchayat Raj institution would ensure political empowerment removing the social and economic discrimination against them.

Empowerment means the process by which power is gained, developed, sized, felicitated or given (Webster's Dictionary). Empowerment may be broadly defined as control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology (Battiwala 1995) Empowerment therefore is a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systematic forces which marginalized and the disadvantaged sections in a given context. (Sharma, 1991)

Perceptions of being empowered across time culture and dominate a person's life. In India, a low caste woman currently feels empowered when she is given a fair hearing in a public meeting, which is comprised of men and woman from different social and economic groups.

Empowerment in the human services has emerged from efforts to develop more effective and responsive services of women and other disadvantaged groups. The aim of empowerment is to address the role powerlessness plays in creating and perpetuating personal social problems. It can be distinguished by its focus on developing critical awareness increasing feelings of collective and self efficiency and developing skill for personal, inter-personal or social change.

Empowerment in its simple form means the manifestation of the redistribution of power that challenges patriarchal ideology and the male dominance [Chandra 1997]. It is both a process and the result of the process It seeks to change the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate it pave way for the women to gain access to and control of materials as well as information resources.

The concept of Women's empowerment appears to be the result a number of important critical discussion dialogues and debates generated by the women throughout the world and intellectual resources. Control over ideology, signifies the ability to generate, capacity to propagate, capacity sustain and institutionalize specific sets of beliefs, principles, values, attitudes, action and behaviours – 'virtually' determining how people perceives, think and functioning a given Socio-economic and politically environment. (Apte, 1995)

The term "Backward Classes" describes the totality of groups entitled of preferential treatment on the basis of their backwardness, Viz., the S.C. s and S.T. s as well as BC, but those accorded special treatment because of temporary or situational disadvantage Gender discrimination is a universal phenomenon. Both inside and outside the households women are excluded from position of power. They are denied opportunities to participate in the decision making process. Even when the decisions are to affect their well –being, they are only passive observers. The primary challenge facing women to-day therefore is no increase their participation so they get hold of the situation and become actively involved in the process of decision making (Chandra 1997).

The Government of, A.P. passed executive order in 1963 declaring 139 castes as backward and reserved for them 25 percent of the seats in educational institutions. This order was struck down by the High court of Andhra Pradesh on the ground that it was based solely on caste. The sub-committee adopted the following criteria for determining backwardness 1) Poverty 2) Low level of education 3) Low standard of living 4) Place of habitation 5) Inferiority of occupation and 5) Low status of caste.

Women's political participation in grass roots and community organisations, in non-government and people's organisations, in

feminist's organisations and in worker's movement and in other social and political movements for the transformation of society were witnessed. Women had been at the forefront of the environmental, peace, human rights, consumers and other movements. Women have mobilized in massive numbers to contribute to liberation movements and movements for democracy.

The real empowerment can take place only if women are turned from weaker sex and passive beneficiaries into a valuable human resource of unique strength, and to be integrated in our development efforts. Empowerment of women is strengthening of their innate vitality, which and be done through acquirement of knowledge, power and experience. Power is not power to dominate but power to reduce helplessness and effectiveness. No account of constitutional guarantee of equality will help promote women's in social transformation unless they become empowered persons. Realizing women's subjugation and subordination and affirmative discrimination against women in general has emerged in the need of their empowerment-both political and economic. Here empowerment refers to exercise of powers guaranteed by the constitution to woman in panchayaraj to get rid of different types of socio-economic disabilities.

The legislation in the amendment of the constitution (73rd) for detailing the provisions in respect of Panchayat raj and Municipality is definitely a hall mark fir new and effective system of local self government. The late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had embarked upon empowerment of people to have greater say in their own affairs at the gross root levels UN addition to the nation and state levels. The concept of empowerment is again embossed in the society, which is a complex organism of multi-level and interrelated relationships and interactions.

One decade has gone by after the provision of political participation to women from disadvantage section to take of leadership as Sarpanches at grass-root level democratic institution of panchayat raj. The effort has been a step in the right direction. It has to be assessed to what an extent the real political empowerment of the Dalit women has become

a reality? To what extent the egalitarian society has emerged in the caste ridden rural fabric of India? Need to be brought forth through empirical studies so as to make suitable policy modifications to forth political empowerment and through it the emancipation of the backward section of the society.

Objectives

This paper examines the political empowerment of backward caste women through participation in Panchayatraj and to know the impact that the political empowerment has wrought in the status of backward caste women in grass-root political institutions of Panchayatraj.

Method of Study

Anantapur district is one the four district of backward region of Rayalaseema situated in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Total Panchayats in Anantapur District are 1005. Total women headed Panchayats 301. Other Caste women and SCs and STs Women put together head 217 Panchayats in the district. The universe for the present study was all the 84 Backward Caste Women who head village Panchayats of Anantapur District. Since the universe was small and manageable, all the respondents were covered in this census survey. The present study was carried out on all the 84 backward caste women Sarpanches occupying the Gram Panchayats in the Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh.

Findings and Discussions

The empowerment of women through political participation became a reality through passing of the 73 rd amendment to the constitution paving way for the reservation for women in Panchayatraj to ensure their participation in the decision making process. The active participation of women in the decision making process is to begin with Gram Panchayat level. It was made that 33 percent of reservation for women at all tiers of Panchayat so as to get the elected women to safeguard the interests of the village and in particular of women and children adequate training and authority have to be given to them.

Backward castes women who form sizable portion of the population becoming Sarpanches

signalled the dawn of the era of women's political empowerment propelling women for all round development. The following are the major findings of the study.

1. A majority of women 78.5 per cent of them are in the group age of 20-40 years. It is heartening to know that women in their prime adult age are entering politics, which indicates the enthusiasm and interest they exhibit to come forward to participate in the process of planning for development.

2. It is observable that 63.10 per cent of the respondents are illiterates. It was only 9.52 per cent are with education levels of high school and above.

3. The overall inference is that all the respondents have minimum of land holdings which is an indicator of their economic status in their rural areas. Based on the sample it is observed that owning a land certainly enhances a person's political stature particularly in the rural areas.

4. The income levels of the families of Backward Caste Sarpanches are in category lower middle and lower classes.

5. The basic social institutions viz .family and caste continue to be motivating factors for backward class women's entry into politics.

6. The respondents clearly indicated that 50 percent of the respondents had protecting the families interest as the main consideration forcing their entry, while in the case of 32.14 per cent, rivalry prevalent in the political set up as the reason for their entry into politics.

7. On the whole 76.19 per cent have accepted that they were forced into politics to some extent.

8. The process of emergence of backward class women leaders was found to be following the traditional channels of political emergence such as caste, family's standing in the village and of course the new dimension of reservation for gender which was found to be linked to the traditional channels of caste and family status, intertwined with rivalry and factions prevalent in rural areas.

9. Inspite of several constraints, these women leaders with limited literacy and exposure to political deliberations in the rural areas, have certainly registered moderate success.

10. The reservations no doubt has helped largely the first generation leaders while the majority of them 78.57 per cent who are either second or third generation leaders, which means that the traditional channels of political emergence and dominance are still prevalent. Reservation or no reservations the rural political elites still rule the rural political institutions

11. The average empowerment score of all the backward caste women leaders indicate an average of 43.56 points which is indicative of certain empowerment among these women, which signals of a positive change in the right direction.

12. The empowerment scores reveal that the opinion on empowerment ascends as their age increases.

13. The highest average was obtained by younger generation of women. The lower scores of the higher age groups might be due to their pre-occupation with family burden and their experience of the local political scenarios for a long duration.

14. The highest scores of political attitude is noticed among 21.42 per cent of the respondents who are have primary education. Paradoxically respondents with education levels ranging from upper primary level degree have attitude scores which shows declining attitude scores.

In the light of the findings listed above regarding the socio-economic profile and on the emergence and the performance of backward caste women leaders of Panchayatiraj, it can concluded that the process of emergence of backward caste women leaders is the same as in the case of men. The channels of emergence of rural leadership through caste, family status are widely operational even in the case of emergence of backward caste women leaders. Most of the women are from families with second and third generation of political participation therefore they must have had

adequate political socialization. The empowerment of backward caste women is nothing significant except for women occupying positions of power. The self appraisal of women leaders reveals that the empowerment they experienced is to large extent moderate considering the fact that women are not totally equipped and free from the influence of the traditional institutions which continue to sway the rural political scenario. No doubt the political reservations have opened the doors of local self government for the women to enter positions of power to partake in the decision making process. The political empowerment has given the women a sense of confidence and opportunity for interest articulation which would not have been possible without their entry into local self government. Women in political offices A have certainly broken the ice. A beginning has been made in the emancipation of backward class women through political empowerment. Given the constraints, the strides made by backward caste women through Panchayat Raj is certainly a step in the right direction. It is hoped that empowerment of women in general and backward caste women in particular in the true sense of term, in all its dimensions will be a reality in the coming decades.

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Sl. No.	Age group in years	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	20-30	19	22.62
2	30-40	47	55.95
3	40-50	16	19.05
4	50 and above	2	2.38
5	Total	84	100.00

Table No. 1: Distribution of the respondents by Age

Sl. No.	Levels of Education	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Illiterates	53	63.14
2	Primary	18	21.42
3	Upper Primary	5	5.92
4	High School	6	7.14
5	College	2	2.38
6	Total	84	100.00

Table No. 2: Distribution of the Respondents by their level of Education.

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Sl. No.	Response	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Factions	6	7.14
2	Rivalry	27	32.14
3	Protecting Family Interest	42	50.00
4	Any other specify	9	10.71
5	Total	84	100

Table No. 3
Distribution of the Respondents by Village Considerations that Forced the L.S.G.

Sl. No.	Age group in year	No of Respondents	Empowerment Scores
1	20-30	19 (22.62%)	45
2	30-40	47 (55.95%)	50
3	40-50	16 (19.05%)	50
4	50 and above	2 (2.38%)	55
5	Total	84 (100%)	

Table No. 4: Age and Empowerment Scores

Sl. No.	Levels of Education	No of Respondents	Average Attitude Scores
1	Illiterate	53 (63.10%)	59
2	Primary	18 (21.42%)	46
3	Upper Primary	5 (5.92%)	30
4	Secondary	6 (7.14%)	24
5	Inter	2 (2.38%)	18
6	Total	84 (100%)	

Table No. 4: Age and Empowerment Scores

Strategies for Dynamic Leadership in Institutions of Higher Education

Dr. P. Prema

Prof & Head, Department of Education, Dean, Faculty of Education, Chairperson

School of Education, Alagappa University, Karaikudi

The greatest challenge in higher education is the dilemma of quantity vs quality in all the key dimensions such as teaching, research and extension. Maintaining a balance between market driven forces and community oriented programmes poses another challenge. The more and more the inclusiveness in higher education is stressed, the greater are the complexities. The steep deterioration of standards in higher education in all its dimensions is a major problem that should be immediately addressed to. The graduates coming out of the portals of the University system are becoming more and more unemployable. Even those with professional qualification find it hard to get suitable placements. Barring a few premier institutions, the scenario is common among all the Universities.

The dilemmas of quality vs quantity, creativity vs conformity, equity vs excellence, uniformity vs diversity faced by higher education are to be successfully tackled through a dynamic leadership with a long term vision and continual commitment.

The responsibility of the heads of Universities and other higher institutions is becoming more challenging and demanding. Only a dynamic, constructively critical, creative, resourceful head can lead the institution in the right direction. As very powerful instruments of social and academic change and desirable revolution, the Vice-Chancellors are to adopt certain strategies urgently to keep a check over negative tendencies witnessed in the higher education.

This paper attempts to suggest a few strategies worth trying for successful leadership. But before implementing them, one should be cautions that human behaviour, because of its complexity is only contextual and never textual. There can be no omni-efficient strategy to be tried by an 'omni-competent' leader on account of wide variations among the individuals, differences in contexts and the interaction between individuals and situations resulting in complexities which are difficult to predict. Inspite of all the limitations, based on consistency in human behaviour, certain strategies are suggested for effective stewardship.

In the major dimensions of teaching, research and extension, these creative approaches may be tried out. The entire leadership should be supported by appropriate technology for speedy execution avoiding loss of time.

Teaching

Since the destiny of a nation is shaped inside its classrooms as stated by the Kothari Commission Report, the success of any institution of higher learning depends on the teaching-learning process. To meet the challenges of declining quality in teaching, burn out among teachers and curriculum related issues, there are a few strategies.

1. Regular, systematic assessment of teaching by self, peer teachers and students is to be done as a measure to maintain internal quality control. Frank, unbiased discussions based on objective feedbacks are found to have effect on the teachers. The Vice-Chancellor should take personal interest in this key domain as this internal monitoring decides the quality of every other activities in the campus. Teacher recruitments should be very strictly based on merit only without considering political or monetary compulsions.

2. Systematic, periodic, need-based curricular revisions are to be made. Regular academic auditing is to be done at the Faculty level. Every University should have a Nodal Curriculum Development Centre which will co-

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ordinate, monitor, assess and enrich the curriculum of the courses offered for various disciplines and through various modes.

3. Innovative practices in curricular transaction (teaching) should be identified, encouraged and rewarded. There are hundreds of resourceful teachers at all levels who strive hard to individualize teaching techniques through innovative approaches. Such competent teachers are assets to Universities and colleges and through Professional Enrichment Forum. periodic sharing of innovative teaching experiences should be done. Lack of encouragement to creative and original work leads to frustration among academic community. Therefore every possible step should be taken to promote creativity and commitment.

4. Periodic updating of competencies of the teachers in the content and methodology of teaching the subject should be done. Feedback from the participants of ASC-UGC Orientation / Refresher courses should be obtained both orally and through writing. Frequent short-term in-house workshops and refresher programmes will be helpful in making teachers professionally dynamic.

5. Automation, e-learning, e-governance, technology-supported teaching – learning process, individualized, experiential teaching approaches will go a long way in enhancing learning among the existing students. The entire educative process should be student-friendly to attract a maximum number of students. Adequate publicity should be given about uniqueness and innovative practices of the University through websites.

Research

1. Research revolutionizes policies, programmes and practices in the society in general and in education in particular. Strict quality auditing with special reference to research programme is to be done. A critical assessment of M.Phil., Ph.D. work already done, a trend report of what is presently being done and the future orientation needs to be done. To maintain quality, Pre-registration and Pre-submission presentation by doctoral candidates are to be done.

Every year good pieces of research reports for different disciplines are to be selected and rewarded through transparent techniques.

2. All teachers should have a through knowledge about funding agencies, priority access for research and preparation of proposals for funding agencies. An in-house orientation by the top 'fund tapping' teachers can work wonders.

3. Special Assistance Programme and similar Programmes offered by the UGC and other agencies funding higher institutions should be given wide publicity to the staff; simply circulating the communication will not suffice. Vice-Chancellors should ask every Department to prepare proposals to be sent to funding agencies.

4. Special incentives and awards to staff who generate maximum funds separately for social sciences and sciences through research should be given. This will motivate other faculty members also to emulate the example of brilliant researchers.

5. Signing MoU with leading National and International research institutions and taking up long-term research projects will fetch finance for infrastructure especially equipment. The Vice-Chancellor should not be just satisfied with the quality of research done in their institutions but should take earnest efforts in publicizing the potentials of his staff. This will certainly draw the attention of funding agencies. Leading research organizations are well aware of the fact a project undertaken by University staff will always be cost-effective compared to the ones done by other institutions. This can fetch patents also.

6. Vice-Chancellors should be sensitive and alert enough about priority areas of research in every discipline. This demands wide reading in various subjects to know the trends. It is always the early bird that gets it food first, so the alertness of the heads of Universities will get ample funds from agencies.

7. No stone should be unturned when it comes to obtaining funds for research. There are some knowledgeable faculty members familiar with research funding organizations who

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have established contacts also and it is necessary tap the resources of these expert researchers.

8. Universities can sponsor researches on successful educational leadership witnessed at any level or any section; it may be at a Department level, or at a School level or at a College level. Pooling of strategies for effective leadership will be highly educative if brought out as publication in the form of monographs. Attempts may be made to identify a set of core leadership competencies independent of institutions.

Extension

Extension at the University level has two dimensions – one is organizing regular conferences, workshops, seminars to benefit faculty members of other Universities and Colleges. Extending services of University staff to other institutions of higher learning also is a part of extension activity.

The Vice-Chancellor should plan for the whole year and circulate it to the concerned institutions.

The second dimension of extension is outreach programmes. Nowadays Universities are set up in rural areas also and those studying in urban areas should have at least a glimpse of rural life. To develop an understanding and empathy among students, it is necessary to expose students to village life.

In addition to organizing conferences and symposia at National and International levels, every University should take up outreach programmes by adopting a village or a small town. Adoption does not means extending social welfare activities, only it includes academic help in the form adopting a primary / second-

ary / higher secondary school or an institute / a college and focusing on the quality. Support in the form of infrastructure and expertise will be helpful in strengthening institutions with academic malutution. Technology transfer, minimizing the digital divide and inclusion should be the focus of extension activity of the University. Optimizing resources in a University should be the watchword of every Vice-Chancellor.

Publication

Publication is an inseparable part of all the earlier said three domains of teaching, research and extension and every University should have a Publication Section which must be very active. Publishing newsletters alone is not enough. Good Lectures, research findings and Report of Conference Proceedings should also be published.

Every Vice-Chancellor should be conscious of the fact that they are the powerful agents of change in the academic institution thereby bringing a change in the society. They should realize that education is a powerful instrument of social change and work very hard.

Vice-Chancellors should be experts in delegation, decentralization and discipline maintenance. The work culture and professional ethics can be built up among the colleagues only through being a role model. Nothing can be achieved through coercion. Democratic Approach, Transparency, Perseverance, Patience and Persuasion alone will be rewarding. Regular value auditing is to be done by every teacher.

Vice-Chancellors should learn to ignore streak cases (faculty members) because they consume a lot of valuable time and focus on committed teachers. A strong will power and a shared commitment alone can take up higher institutions to great heights thereby making a nation a superpower.

JAI HIND!

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UNITED NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE 2009

World Partnership Conference on Education for Sustainable Development
"Moving into the Second Half of the UN Decade"
6th April- 15th April, 2009, London, United Kingdom

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