



Karnataka Regional Branch

## **Panel Discussion on Evaluation Reports of Gruhalakshmi and Shakti Schemes of Karnataka**

**Date:** April 7, 2025

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Venue:** Jain (Deemed-to-be University), Jayanagar Campus

### **Report**

On April 7, 2025, a thought-provoking panel discussion on Evaluation Reports of two women-centric welfare schemes Gruhalakshmi and Shakti of Govt of Karnataka was hosted by the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE), School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), and the Indian Institute of Public Administration Karnataka Regional Branch (IIPA-KRB) at the Jayanagar Campus. The session, which took place from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, was attended by a diverse audience, including academics, policymakers, students and members of civil society, focused on the evaluation and impact of the *Gruhalakshmi* and *Shakti* schemes.

This session marked an academic and policy-driven attempt to critically examine the two flagship schemes through the lens of field-level evaluation studies. These schemes aim to tackle long-standing issues of gender inequality, financial disempowerment, and limited mobility faced by women, particularly from underprivileged backgrounds. The panel was moderated by Dr. Priyanca Mathur, Head and Associate Professor, CeRSSE, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University).



**Group Photo: Prof. Sandeep Shastri, Shri T.M Vijay Bhaskar, Dr. Sudeshna Mukherjee, Mr. Thayyil Sethumadhavan and Dr. Priyanca Mathur with the reports on Gruhalakshmi and Shakti Schemes**

The panel featured leading experts in social sciences, economics and public administration who presented their insights.

**Prof. Sandeep Shastri** presented findings from the quantitative survey of over 500 respondents across Bengaluru Urban and Rural districts. He highlighted that 95% of respondents acknowledged benefiting from the Shakti scheme, with 40% using it daily. Over half directed the funds saved toward household expenses or savings, and 57% noted improved employment opportunities. However, he raised concerns over a reported 44% increase in public harassment, emphasizing the urgent need for safer infrastructure to support the scheme.

**Dr. Sudeshna Mukherjee** shared insights from a quantitative and qualitative survey involving 410 Gruhalakshmi beneficiaries. She stressed the emotional and practical impact of the ₹2,000 monthly stipend, which enhanced women's dignity and agency, especially among low-income families and marginalized transgender, devadasi etc communities. She mentioned that more than 35% of beneficiaries were receiving benefits from more than one transfer scheme.

**Mr. T. Sethumadhavan, IAAS (Retd.)** offered a macroeconomic perspective, raising concerns about the fiscal impact of welfare initiatives like Gruhalakshmi, with subsidies taking up a large chunk of the state's budget. He recommended establishing dedicated funds, a unified welfare management system and regular audits to ensure financial prudence and long-term viability.

**Shri T. M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.)** said that IIPA KRB had sponsored the two studies conducted by students of Bangalore University as an attempt to bridge the gap between administrators and academia and give field experience to students. He mentioned that there was a need to estimate the actual percentage of usage of Shakti scheme by women belonging to SCs and STs. He said the issues of better targeting of schemes and making the Gruhalakshmi scheme a conditional transfer could be considered.

**Takeaways & Closing Remarks:** The session concluded with a collective understanding that while the *Gruhalakshmi* and *Shakti* schemes have demonstrated tangible benefits and have broadly achieved their intended objectives, continuous evaluation and fiscal responsibility must drive their future development. The session was followed by an interactive Q/A session moderated by Dr. Mathur. The closing remarks emphasized the need for a collaborative approach involving academics, policymakers, and community leaders to strengthen these welfare schemes for long-term success.