

Educational Disparities across Dalits in Karnataka

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Abstract: *Though the Karnataka state is striving towards achieving universal literacy at a faster pace, but still 35% of the Scheduled Castes population and 38% of the Scheduled Tribes population is still illiterate. The following study analyzed the educational status of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes and briefly commented on the various educational policies and programmes being implemented in the state for the welfare of dalits. It is found that the literacy rates of Dalits are far behind the benchmark goal of 85% by the Planning Commission. Female SCs and STs are quite worse off when compared to male SCs and STs. This is a cause of concern and one of major challenge that the State should address on a priority concern. The Gross Enrolment Ratio in Secondary Education and Higher Education across Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is quite lower than the GER goal of Planning Commission. Achieving better enrolment and passing achievement rates from lower to higher stages of education across dalits are some of the major issues that need to be tackled. Further they should also follow the Four A's framework of the Right to Education at each stage of education for enhancing the capabilities of marginalized groups in order to fulfill the objective of fostering inclusive growth in the state.. It will go long way in sustaining the Dalits improvement in the growth process.*

Key Words: Dalits, Education Development, Inclusive Growth, Right to Education's 4'A' framework.

Introduction

Education serves as an important contributing factor which helps in social and economic development of any community. It has also been looked upon that the benefits of educational programmes have been shared disproportionately by the advantaged and the disadvantaged sections of population. In any state, the progress of educational development will have to be analysed with the objective of achieving inclusive growth so that the disadvantaged sections of the population get their due benefits in order to overcome the constraints imposed on them. Removing barriers to access and addressing the specific needs of these disadvantaged sections and classes are key elements in achieving inclusive growth in education sector. Though the Karnataka state is striving towards achieving universal literacy at a faster pace, but still 35% of the Scheduled Castes population and 38% of the Scheduled Tribes population is still illiterate (Census 2011).

Review of literature

Several researchers have undertaken studies aiming at assessing and addressing the educational disparities of Dalits across states of India. Sabnis and Mahurkar (1985); Reddy and Reddy (1992); Wankhede (2001); Panda and Reddy (2007); Biswal (2011) have analysed the educational inequalities and difficulties faced by Scheduled Caste groups across states of India. They all found that the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste and Schedule Tribes was lower. There is a need to bring a shift in recent educational policies towards decentralized education programmes. They found that relative to other social categories, the participation rate of SCs and STs in secondary and higher secondary education continued to be low and drop-out rate of SCs

and STs in elementary education was higher. Across Karnataka, the educational disparities of Dalits was studied by Nanjundappa (2002), Panchmukhi (2005); Yadav (2005); Azim (2005); Shinde (2012); Lingaraju (2012); Rao and Swamy (2012). All these studies have analysed literacy rates with regard to regions, gender and social groups. They found that female literacy rate was quite lower than the male. Further there was perceptible gap between the State's literacy rate and the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes. They also found that their drop-out rate was higher across primary schools, indicating huge wastage of human resource in the school education.

No doubt that these studies have focused on disparities in educational status and conditions of Dalits in India in general and Karnataka in particular since times immemorial, but in the wake of inclusive growth by the 11th and 12th Plan and in the light of recent surveys, it becomes necessary to provide an comprehensive picture of Dalits who have been disadvantaged in the growth process with regard to their attainments across elementary, secondary and higher education. Therefore the following study aims at analyzing the extent of educational disparities across Dalits in Karnataka. It intends to analyze the educational status of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes with regard to elementary, secondary and higher education. It also aims to comment on the various educational policies and programmes being implemented in the state for the welfare of dalits.

Database and Methodology

The following study has analysed the trends since the last decade i.e., from 2000-01 to 2012-13, depending upon the data availability. It is collected mainly from the secondary data namely Census of India Reports, State Report Cards of District Information System of Education (DISE), Reports of Ministry of Human Resource Development. Apart from that, data is also collected from publications of Directorate of Economics and Statistics namely "Statistical Abstract of Karnataka" & "Karnataka at a Glance" of respective years. The study uses statistical and analytical methods such as Averages, Percentages, Growth Rates, Disparity Indices. Under the Disparity Indices, the study has used Gender Disparity Index (GDI) and Regional Disparity Index (RDI). GDI is arrived by dividing the Female literacy rate with Male literacy rate and RDI is arrived by dividing Rural Literacy rate with the Urban Literacy Rate.

Results and Discussion

Literacy Rate among Dalits

Literacy rate is an important indicator which signifies the educational development of any state or community. Table 1 provides the literacy scenario in Karnataka with regard to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes. The literacy rate among Scheduled Caste population in Karnataka during 2001 was 52.87 per cent. It has improved by 12.46 per cent points during the period 2001-2011. In the year 2011, the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste stood at 65.33 %. Disparity Index is also calculated in order to know the disparity level of Dalits literacy rate to the State's literacy rate. The disparity level of Scheduled Caste in terms of literacy rate stood at 0.79, indicating that still 0.21 level of parity is to be achieved. But gradually over the years, the disparity index has improved, reaching it closer to parity. In 2011, it stood at 0.86. Therefore over the period 2001-2011, there has been improvement of around 0.07 per cent points in disparity index of Scheduled

Caste's literacy rate. The Gender Disparity Index (GDI) has improved by 0.11 per cent points and the Regional Disparity Index (RDI) has seen an improvement by 0.10 per cent points.

Among Scheduled tribe population, the literacy rate improved by 13.81 per cent points during the period 2001-2011 i.e., from 48.27 per cent in 2001 to 62.08 per cent in 2011. The disparity level of Scheduled Tribes in terms of literacy rate stood at 0.72, indicating that still 0.28 level of parity is to be achieved. But gradually over the years, the disparity index has improved. In 2011, it stood at 0.82 slightly lower than the disparity index of Scheduled Caste. Over the period 2001-2011, there has been improvement of around 0.10 per cent points in disparity index of Scheduled Tribe's literacy rate. The Gender Disparity Index (GDI) has improved by 0.13 per cent points, slightly higher than that of Scheduled Caste's GDI, whereas the Regional Disparity Index (RDI) has seen an improvement by 0.09 per cent points. The highlighting feature noticed is that "Though the literacy rate of STs is quite lower than that of SCs, but the improvement in literacy rates of STs is higher when compared to SC across rural, urban, male and female dimensions."

The Eleventh Plan Approach Paper of Planning Commission has suggested a benchmark of 85% literacy rate across states to be achieved by the plan end. It seems that the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe is far behind the goal. Still 19.67 per cent points across Scheduled Castes and 22.92 per cent points across Scheduled Tribes needs to be gained. This is a cause of concern.

Table 1: Growth in Literacy rates of Dalits in Karnataka

Particulars	Years	Total	Rural	Urban	Male	Female	GDI	RDI
Total	2001	67.04	59.30	80.60	76.29	57.45	0.75	0.74
	2011	75.60	68.86	86.21	82.85	68.13	0.82	0.80
	Progress	8.56	9.56	5.61	6.56	10.68	0.07	0.06
SC	2001	52.87	47.25	69.27	63.75	41.72	0.65	0.68
	2011	65.33	60.44	77.43	74.03	56.58	0.76	0.78
	Progress	12.46	13.19	8.15	10.28	14.86	0.11	0.10
ST	2001	48.27	45.26	64.57	59.66	36.57	0.61	0.70
	2011	62.08	58.99	74.82	71.14	52.98	0.74	0.79
	Progress	13.81	13.74	10.26	11.48	16.41	0.13	0.09
Disparity Index of SC*	2001	0.79	0.80	0.86	0.84	0.73		
	2011	0.86	0.88	0.90	0.89	0.83		
	Progress	0.08	0.08	0.04	0.06	0.10		
Disparity Index of ST*	2001	0.72	0.76	0.80	0.78	0.64		
	2011	0.82	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.78		
	Progress	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.08	0.14		

Note: *Disparity Index is calculated by dividing the Dalits literacy rate to the State's literacy rate
Source: Derived from Socio-cultural Tables (C8-Series) of Census of India, 2001 and Primary Census Abstract of Census of India, 2011

Enrolment among Dalits

Universalizing elementary education has been an important goal of the educational planning in India. And now it has made a transition towards fostering inclusive growth in the states across the education sector. Table 2 reveals that during the reference period the enrolment of Scheduled Caste across elementary education has witnessed a declining trend with growth rate turning negative at 0.63 per cent. The enrolment of Scheduled Tribes across elementary education has noticed an increasing trend with an increase of 2.37 per cent. With the significant gains in elementary education, the state has set an agenda for universalizing secondary education to achieve the target of 65% of enrolment across secondary education. Table 2 depicts the enrolment of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes across secondary education in Karnataka. It reveals that during the reference period the enrolment of Scheduled Caste across secondary education has witnessed a increasing trend with growth rate at 5.85 per cent. The enrolment of Scheduled Tribes across elementary education has noticed an increasing trend with growth rate at 8.28 per cent, which is higher than the growth rate of Scheduled Caste. Higher Education is a powerful tool for achieving inclusive growth as higher education helps in increasing access to highly skilled and high paid jobs. Table 2 also depicts the enrolment of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes across higher education in Karnataka. It reveals that the enrolment of Scheduled Caste across higher education has witnessed a drastic increase from 63612 in 2000-01 to that of 205182 in 2011-12 with a growth rate of around 15.01%. The enrolment of Scheduled Tribes across higher education has also registered high growth rate of 17.15%, higher than the Scheduled Castes.

Table 2: Enrolment of Dalits in Karnataka

Years	Elementary Education				Secondary Education				Higher Education			
	SC	% to Total	ST	% to Total	SC	% to Total	ST	% to Total	SC	% to Total	ST	% to Total
2000-01	1866125	19.93	414346	4.43	304171	13.45	87607	3.87	63612	11.52	18514	3.35
2001-02	1870559	20.04	643088	6.89	286523	15.31	89241	4.77	68410	12.74	19272	3.59
2002-03	1505512	15.99	589981	6.27	288161	16.92	99032	5.82	48109	8.84	12874	2.37
2003-04	1188598	13.91	390488	4.57	308365	15.84	105789	5.43	51678	8.08	17664	2.76
2004-05	1705977	19.60	682373	7.84	345440	16.15	121299	5.67	76716	10.86	16443	2.33
2005-06	1704101	19.71	671088	7.76	344704	13.70	169903	6.75	99775	10.48	22122	2.32
2006-07	1696866	19.46	656875	7.53	400394	16.55	138873	5.74	126448	11.91	36329	3.42
2007-08	1651033	19.21	641861	7.47	418872	16.62	148393	5.89	102466	11.73	25361	2.90
2008-09	1501401	17.59	619001	7.25	434561	17.23	177539	7.04	165494	11.64	53218	3.74
2009-10	1609190	19.15	658511	7.83	449899	17.19	182007	6.95	197252	15.65	63122	5.01
2010-11	1415800	16.89	594200	7.09	449200	12.59	185900	5.21	215304	12.01	76993	4.29
2011-12	1622004	19.25	679932	8.07	456042	12.62	184627	5.11	205182	11.54	68280	3.84
2012-13	1630918	19.43	642421	7.65	639597	17.43	241218	6.57	-	-	-	-
TGR*	-0.63		2.37		5.85		8.28		15.01		17.15	

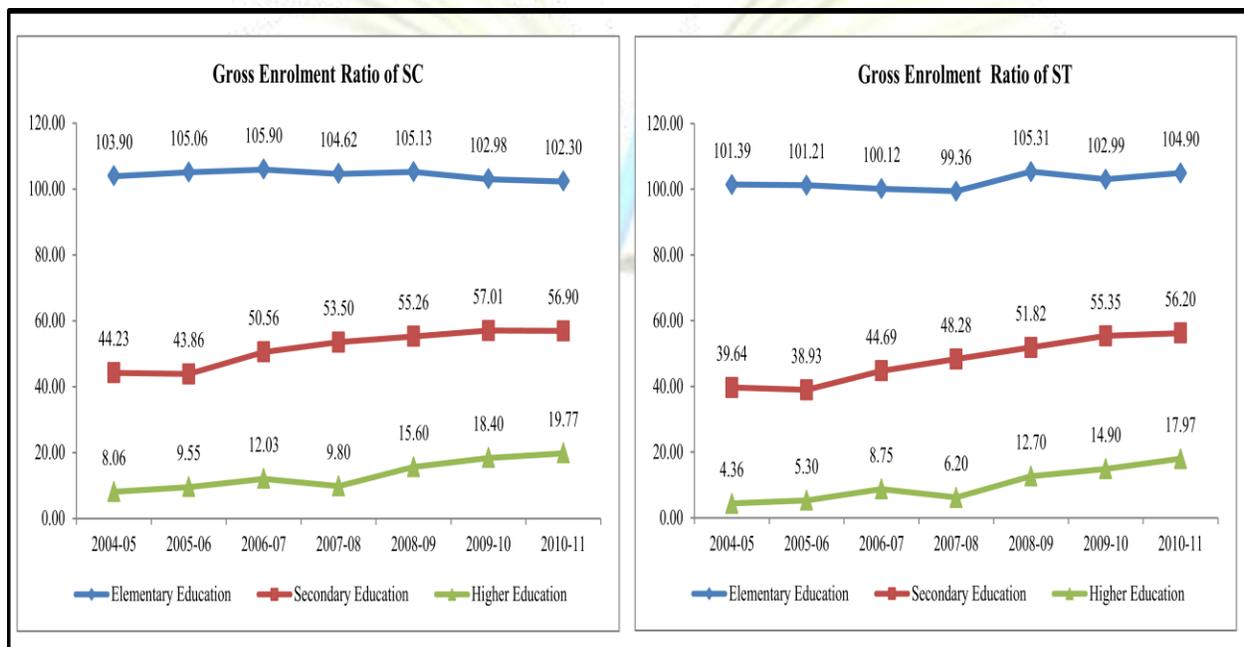
Note: *refers to Trend Growth Rate. It is calculated using LOGEST function in Excel software

Source: Compiled from "State Report Cards" of various years, DISE Publication; Statistical Abstract of Karnataka of various years, DES Publications, Bangalore; Statistics of School Education of various years, Selected Education Statistics and Statistics on Higher and Technical Education, MHRD Publications, New Delhi

Gross Enrolment Ratio of Dalits in Karnataka

Chart 1 below provides the trend of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Dalits across elementary, secondary and higher education in the state. Gross enrolment ratio is the ratio of the number of persons in the respective age group enrolled to that of the total number of persons in that respective age group. The number of over aged and under aged persons enrolled is also taken into account. Across elementary education, the state has reached more than 100% GER. The same is reflected across Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes during the reference period. The 12th Plan Approach Paper of Planning Commission has set an agenda of reaching GER of 75% across secondary education by 2017. A cursory glance over the chart indicates that there is positive increase in the GER of Dalits across secondary education in the state during the period 2004-05 to 2010-11. It has increased by 12.76 per cent points across Scheduled Castes and by 16.56 per cent points across Scheduled Tribes. Currently the GER in Secondary Education across Scheduled Castes stood at 56.90 % and across Scheduled Tribes, it's around 56.20%. Still GER of around 19% is needed to achieve the target of Planning Commission. Similarly with regard to higher education, it has proposed GER of around 30% to be achieved by 2020. It is also found that “No doubt the GER in higher education has recorded an increasing trend across both Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, but still it is lower than the target specified by the Planning Commission.” Across Scheduled Castes, the GER is still 10 per cent points behind and among Scheduled tribes, it is still 12 per cent points behind. This stands out to be one of the challenges before the state in the context of fostering inclusive growth in higher education.

Chart 1: Gross Enrolment Ratio of Dalits in Karnataka

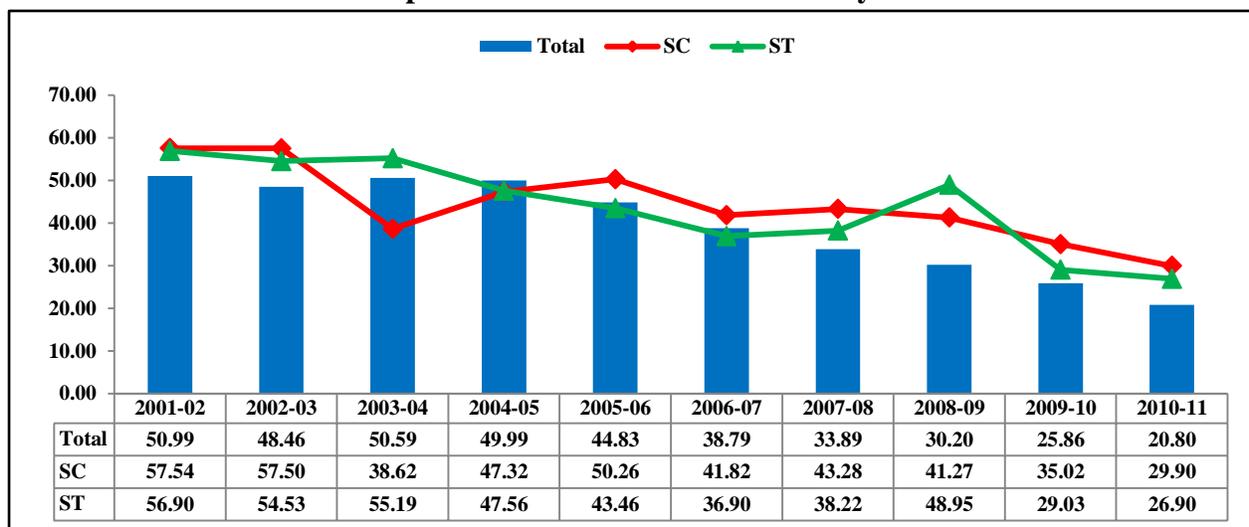


Source: Statistics on School Education and Statistics on Higher and Technical Education of various years, MHRD, New Delhi.

Drop-Out Rate among Dalits

Drop-out Rate is one of the serious concerns while addressing the issue of inclusion in education. There are large variations in drop-out rate across the sections of the population. Children belonging to marginalized groups have higher drop-out rates when compared to the drop-out rate at general population. Chart 2 reveals that the drop-out rates of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes across elementary level are found higher than the general drop-out rates in Karnataka during the reference period. The Drop-out rates across Scheduled Castes in 2000-01 was quite higher (57.5%) and it has seen a considerable decline in 2010-11, but still its quite higher when compared to general drop-out rate of 20.80%. Similarly the drop-out rate across Scheduled Tribes is also found to higher. It is around 26.90%, though reduced by 30 per cent points over the year 2001-02.

Chart 2: Drop-Out rate of Dalits at Elementary level in Karnataka



Source: Compiled from Indiatat website

Passing Achievements among Dalits

Table 3 reveals the passing achievements of Dalits at 10th and 12th Grade in Karnataka. It is found that the passing achievements of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes across 12th Grade are quite lower when compared to 10th Grade in Karnataka. Across 10th grade it seems that the progress among SCs is better than that of STs. Further the progress across these groups is quite higher than the overall increase in the passing percentages across the state. The increase in the passing percentages across 10th grade for SCs stood at 12.6 per cent points as against 12.3 per cent points with regard to ST. On an average during this period, the passing percentages of SCs at 10th grade stood at 71.98 per cent and that of STs stood at 73.42 per cent, quite lower than the passing achievements of the general population (80%). At 12th grade, the passing achievements have considerably declined during the reference period. Across Scheduled Castes, the passing achievements have declined by 10.50 per cent points i.e., from 53.40% in 2004-05 to that of 42.90% in 2010-11. On an average, it stood at 47.61%. However, the passing achievements across Scheduled Tribes at 12th grade have declined by 9.50%. The average passing achievement

remained at 49.09%, quite lower than the State's overall passing achievement of 57.92%. There is need to improve the quality of output of Dalits across 12th Grade because the passing percentages of Dalits have not crossed 50 per cent. Further the enrolment ratios across higher education of Dalits can be enhanced if the passing percentages of dalits across 12th grade are higher. This also seems to be one of the challenges before the state in context of fostering inclusive growth in education.

Table 3: Passing Achievements of Dalits in Karnataka

YEAR	10th Grade			12th Grade		
	Total	SC	ST	Total	SC	ST
2004-05	71.00	58.20	58.10	59.50	53.40	54.60
2005-06	71.02	58.22	58.14	63.45	53.41	54.62
2006-07	83.62	75.48	80.85	62.38	54.73	53.94
2007-08	86.52	79.35	82.52	60.56	49.31	51.93
2008-09	83.91	76.37	78.35	51.94	39.44	41.32
2009-10	90.10	85.50	85.60	51.80	40.10	42.10
2010-11	78.40	70.80	70.40	55.80	42.90	45.10

Source: Statistics on School Education and Results of High School and Higher Secondary Exams of various years, MHRD, New Delhi.

Government Policies and Programmes with regard to Dalits

Constitution of India directs each state to promote the educational interests of the weaker sections of the society, particularly Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes through the Directive Principles. The policy of Special Component Plan (SCP) in Karnataka was initiated during Sixth Five Year Plan in order to uplift Scheduled Caste and to bring their socio-economic development. Now it is called as Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP). The policy of Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) in Karnataka was initiated during Fifth Five Year Plan in order to uplift Scheduled Tribes and to bring their socio-economic development. It acts as a key instrument for achieving the objective of Inclusive Growth in the state. Education is considered as one of the priority sector which helps in bringing out their socio-economic development. The share of SCSP outlay on education to the total SCSP Outlay reveals that the priority given to education of Scheduled Caste is increasing in recent years. The share has increased from 3.97 per cent to 10.60 per cent during the period 2007-08 to 2011-12. Similarly the share of TSP outlay on education to the total TSP Outlay also has seen an increase from 3.82 per cent to 14.91 per cent during the period 2007-08 to 2011-12. (Annual Plan Documents of various years, Government of Karnataka).

Various incentives are being provided by the State Government at primary and upper-primary schools. These include free textbooks, free uniforms, free bicycles, free stationery, hostel facilities for SCs and STs and scholarships at upper-primary students. As per the State Report Cards published by NUEPA, the number of beneficiaries receiving text books in the year 2011-12 was around 55.25 lakh students. 46.38 lakh students were offered free uniforms and around 15.60 lakh students with free stationeries. Department of Social Welfare takes initiative for inclusive educational development with special concern to the neglected and disadvantaged sections of population namely, SCs, STs, OBCs and minorities. It runs pre-matric hostels for all these categories of population. The number of SC pre-matric hostels stood at 1439

in 2012-13, with around 86,000 students getting benefit. Similarly the number of ST pre-matric hostels stood at 162 accomodating 9127 students. Further this department also provides pre-matric scholarships to SCs and STs for enhancing the retention rates. A pre-matric scholarship of Rs.75 for the students studying in Class 1 to 7 and Rs.100 for the students studying in Class 8 to 10 is being disbursed annually to these students. In the year 2011-12, 7.84 lakh SC and 4.38 lakh ST students got pre-matric scholarships to continue their education. Further Department of Social Welfare also runs post matric hostels for Dalits. In the year 2012-13, it runs around 527 SC post matric hostels accomodating 49100 students and 64 ST post matric hostels accomodating 4579 students. It also provides post-matric scholarships to SC and STs to continue their secondary education. During the year 2012-13 nearly 162442 SC students and 183397 ST students availed this scholarship. Incentive scholarship schemes is also provided to meritorious ST candidates who secure top five meritorious positions at the rate of Rs. 10000 per student in each districts. Further various scholarships such as Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship, Indian Council of Social Science Research's Doctoral Fellowships has been implemented in the country across the state for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to pursue their higher education. Therefore it seems that myriad incentive and scholarship schemes are being provided to dalit community, but despite of that it continue to remain backward.

Concluding Remarks

Mahatma Gandhi said that "Illiteracy is our sin and shame and must be liquidated." Therefore Government should look forward to educate the illiterate masses of the nation. It is found that the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe is far behind the benchmark goal of 85% by the Planning Commission. Female SCs and STs are quite worse off when compared to male SCs and STs. This is a cause of concern and one of major challenge that the State should address on a priority concern. Drop-out rates of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes across elementary level are found higher than the general drop-out rates in Karnataka. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme is therefore revamped and unified with the implementation of Right to Education Act. This Act serves as a critical framework for ensuring participation of Dalit children in the process of elementary education. The Gross Enrolment Ratio in Secondary Education and Higher Education across Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is quite lower than the GER goal of Planning Commission. Steps such as setting up of Co-educational schools such as Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNVs) are being taken to increase the Dalits enrolment across secondary education and to arrest their drop-out rates. Several schemes of UGC have also been implemented in the country in order to support the higher education of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It is therefore needed that the Government policies and initiatives should be effectively implemented in a proactive manner with due consideration to marginalized sections of population. Further they should also follow the Four A's framework of the Right to Education developed by the former UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Education by name Katarina Tomasevski at each stage of education for enhancing the capabilities of marginalized groups in order to fulfill the objective of fostering inclusive growth in the state. Achieving better enrolment and passing achievement rates from lower to higher stages of education across dalits are some of the major issues that need to be tackled in an effective manner so as to increase their educational attainment in the state. It will go long way in sustaining the Dalits improvement in the growth process. It will help them to utilize better economic opportunities and enhance their capabilities, there-by leading to socio-economic empowerment.

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