

A STUDY ON TRENDS AND GROWTH OF PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

Elementary education serves as the basis for the capital development of any nation. This paper has examined the growth performance of schools and students at the primary level in Karnataka through the use of secondary data and suitable tools and methods. The study reveals that the quantity of lower primary schools is decreasing notably, higher primary schools are increasing significantly, and overall primary schools are on the rise in Karnataka. The random enrolment of girls, the definite enrolment of boys, and the overall enrolment of students in lower primary schools are all notably rising in Karnataka. The research found that the registration of girls, registration of boys, and total registration of students in higher primary schools are notably rising in Karnataka. The gap identified in early education and the enrollment of girls in early schooling. Thus, the government needs to prioritize the assessment and enhancement of infrastructure facilities at the lower primary level and implement special measures for girls to encourage their enrollment.

INTRODUCTION

Learning is the essential element of human growth. A person's overall growth is not finished without education. Elementary education serves as the basis for capital development. In recent years, there has been significant debate about the closure of many primary schools because of poor education quality and insufficient facilities. In this context, the current paper aims to analyze the expansion of schools and student enrollment in primary schools at both lower and higher primary levels in Karnataka.

Karnataka shows a shifting landscape in primary education, characterized by a contraction in lower primary schools and a concurrent rise in upper/higher primary tiers. Total student enrollment remains high across more than 75,000 schools, though structural shifts and rural-urban disparities shape ongoing educational development

STRUCTURAL TRENDS IN SCHOOLS

- **Lower Primary Decline:** Lower primary schools (classes 1–5) decreased over recent structural cycles (e.g., dropping from 26,308 to 24,316 in comparative mid-decade windows) with a negative compound annual growth rate near -1.49%.
- **Higher Primary Expansion:** Higher/upper primary schools expanded (growing from 34,604 to 38,003) at a compound annual growth rate of roughly 1.93%, reflecting institutional consolidation into combined elementary setups.
- **Regional Disparities:** Distribution varies by administrative division, with southern zones like the Mysuru division historically showing higher primary school availability relative to population density compared to northern sub-regions.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT DYNAMICS

- **Enrolment Scale:** The state manages millions of elementary learners, with primary enrollments hovering above 54 lakh and upper primary around 31 lakh students in standard analytical periods.
- **Government vs. Private Split:** State-funded/government establishments account for the majority of rural institutions, though shifts toward private unaided options persist in urban and semi-urban centers driven by social aspirations.
- **Foundational Realities:** Assessments like the Annual Status of Education Report indicate steady micro-improvements in basic reading and arithmetic competencies post-pandemic, though learning levels and rural enrolment retention remain key focal areas for state policy.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Education is one of the social factors play vital role in achievement of economic development of a nation (Tommaso, 2013), (Mehmet Mercan, 2014). It has been found from the previous literature that providing primary education to all is necessary for better human development process (Jagannathan, 2015). Most of the previous studies have examined the quality of education, determinants of primary education and enrolment in primary education (Janine Huisman, September 2010). Few studies have also studied the growth of primary schools and students (Tudor, 2015). However, very few studies have examined both growth of schools and growth of students. The comparison of lower and higher primary schools and students strengths not exclusively discussed in the context of Karnataka (Vithob B.K, 2009). Hence, there is scope for making the comparative studies of lower and higher primary schools and students. Accordingly, in the present paper an attempt has been made to analyze the growth of schools and students and also attempted to make comparison between lower and primary schools and students.

METHODOLOGY

The secondary time series data have used for the present paper. The major variables considered for the analysis are number of schools and number of students enrolled to lower and higher primary schools. The data collected for period from 20010-11 to 2020-21 for selected variables. The major techniques used for the analysis are average, standard deviation, growth rate and data presented in the processed form. The arguments are made based on the tested proofs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The selected variables are analyzed for understanding their status and to trace their growth trends. The results of the data are computed and presented below;

**Table 1: Trends in Schools in Karnataka
(In Numbers)**

School	Lower Primary	Higher Primary	Total
2010-11	26302	33126	59428
2011-12	25951	33604	59555
2012-13	25950	34086	60036
2013-14	26058	34427	60485
2014-15	26308	34604	60912
2015-16	26118	34795	60913

2016-17	26696	35498	62194
2017-18	25795	36197	61992
2018-19	25278	36951	62229
2019-20	24316	38003	62319
2020-21	24391	38040	62431
Average	25742	35394	61136
STD	771	1699	1152
CAGR	-0.28	0.61	0.24
t-value	-3.077	15.796	11.319
p-value	0.013	0.000	0.000

Source: DISE and SATS various Years. Extracted from Economic Surveys

Trends in schools in Karnataka are presented in the above table. It is found from the table that during 2010-11 the numbers of lower primary schools were 26302 and decreased to 24391 during 2020-21. The average number of schools during the same period is 25742 and the deviation in the average is 771. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of lower primary schools is -0.28 and it is statistically significant at 5 percent level. Therefore, the numbers of lower primary schools have been significantly reduced in Karnataka.

It is also found from the table that during 2010-11 the numbers of higher primary schools were 33126 and increased to 38040 during 2020-21. The average number of schools during the same period is 35394 and the deviation in the average is 1699. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of higher primary schools is 0.61 percent and it is statistically significant at 5 percent level. Therefore, the numbers of higher primary schools have been significantly increased in Karnataka.

It is also found from the table that during 2010-11 the numbers of primary schools were 59428 and increased to 62431 during 2020-21. The average number of schools during the same period is 61136 and the deviation in the average is 1152. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of primary schools is 0.24 percent and it is statistically significant at 1 percent level. Therefore, the numbers of primary schools have been significantly increased in Karnataka.

Accordingly, the numbers of lower primary schools are significantly reducing, higher primary schools are significantly increasing and overall primary schools are increasing in Karnataka.

Table 2: Enrolments in Lower Primary Schools in Karnataka

(In Lakhs)

School	Girls	Boys	Total
2010-11	26.13	28.02	54.15
2011-12	26.07	28.06	54.13
2012-13	25.88	27.9	53.78
2013-14	25.89	27.62	53.51
2014-15	26.01	27.71	53.72
2015-16	26.19	27.87	54.06
2016-17	26.24	28.25	54.49
2017-18	25.98	28.06	54.04
2018-19	26.3	28.52	54.82
2019-20	26.08	28.26	54.34
2020-21	26.2	28.4	54.6
Average	26.088	28.061	54.149

STD	0.139	0.280	0.394
CAGR	0.031	0.084	0.059
t-value	1.497	2.519	2.334
P-value	0.169	0.033	0.044

Source: DISE and SATS various Years. Extracted from Economic Surveys

Enrolments in schools in Karnataka are presented in the above table. It is found from the table that during 2010-11 the enrolment of girls in lower primary schools is 26.13 lakhs and increased to 26.2 percent during 2020-21. The average number of girls in lower primary schools during the same period is 26.088 lakhs and the deviation in the average is 0.139 lakhs. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in enrolment of girls in lower primary schools is 0.031 and it is statistically not significant at 5 percent level. Therefore, enrolment of girls in lower primary schools has been randomly increased in Karnataka.

It is also found from the table that during 2010-11 the enrolment of boys in lower primary schools is 28.02 lakhs and increased to 28.4 lakhs during 2020-21. The average number of boys in lower primary schools during the same period is 28.061 lakhs and the deviation in the average is 0.280 lakhs. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in enrolment of boys in lower primary schools is 0.084 and it is statistically significant at 5 percent level. Therefore, the enrolment of boys in lower primary schools has been significantly increased in Karnataka.

It is also found from the table that during 2010-11 the overall enrolment of students in primary schools is 54.15 lakhs and increased to 54.6 lakhs during 2020-21. The average enrolment of students in primary schools during the same period is 54.149 lakhs and the deviation in the average is 0.394. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in enrolment of students in primary schools is 0.059 and it is statistically significant at 5 percent level. Therefore, the percent of students in primary schools has been significantly increased in Karnataka.

Accordingly, the enrolment of girls randomly, enrolment of boys definitely and overall students enrolment to lower primary school is also definitely increasing in Karnataka.

**Table 3: Enrolments in Higher Primary Schools in Karnataka
(In Lakhs)**

School	Girls	Boys	Total
2010-11	9.73	10.37	20.1
2011-12	10.03	10.72	20.75
2012-13	14.49	15.68	30.17
2013-14	14.3	15.4	29.7
2014-15	14.34	15.37	29.71
2015-16	14.16	15.19	29.35
2016-17	13.94	15.26	29.2
2017-18	14.24	15.35	29.59
2018-19	14.72	15.78	30.5
2019-20	15.19	16.05	31.24
2020-21	15.24	16.12	31.36
Average	13.671	14.663	28.334
STD	1.919	2.060	3.976
CAGR	0.015	1.510	1.527
t-value	3.370	3.153	3.258
P-value	0.008	0.012	0.010

Source: DISE and SATS various Years. Extracted from Economic Surveys

Enrolments in schools in Karnataka are presented in the above table. It is found from the table that during 2010-11 the percent of girls in higher primary schools is 9.73 and increased to 15.24 during 2020-21. The average percent of girls in higher primary schools during the same period is 13.671 and the deviation in the average is 1.919. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of girls in higher primary schools is 0.015 and it is statistically significant at 5 percent level. Therefore, the percent of girls in higher primary schools has been significantly increased in Karnataka.

It is also found from the table that during 2010-11 the percent of boys of higher primary schools is 10.37 and increased to 16.12 during 2020-21. The average percent of boys in higher primary schools during the same period is 14.663 and the deviation in the average is 2.060. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of girls in higher primary schools is 1.510 and it is statistically significant at 5 percent level. Therefore, the percent of boys of higher primary schools has been significantly increased in Karnataka.

It is also found from the table that during 2010-11 the percent of total students of higher primary schools is 20.1 and increased to 31.36 during 2020-21. The average percent of total students in higher primary schools during the same period is 28.334 and the deviation in the average is 3.976. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of total students in higher primary schools is 1.527 and it is statistically significant at 5 percent level. Therefore, the percent of students to higher primary schools has been significantly increased in Karnataka.

Accordingly, the enrolment of girls, enrolment of boys and overall enrolment of students to higher primary school are significantly increasing in Karnataka.

CONCLUSION

The present paper has analyzed the performance of primary schools in Karnataka by using secondary data and appropriate tools and techniques. It is found from the study that the numbers of lower primary schools are significantly reducing, higher primary schools are significantly increasing and overall primary schools are increasing in Karnataka. It is also found that the enrolment of girls randomly, enrolment of boys definitely and overall students enrolment to lower primary school is also definitely increasing in Karnataka. The study identified that the enrolment of girls, enrolment of boys and overall enrolment of students to higher primary school are significantly increasing in Karnataka. The lacuna found in the lower primary school and girls' enrolment in lower primary. Accordingly, government has to give importance to review and improve the infrastructure facilities at lower primary level and also to make special provisions to girl to attract them.

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