



## A study on Karnataka state government initiatives and schemes for promoting primary education

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### Abstract

The Government of Karnataka has initiated certain schemes on its own for the purpose of enhancing access and enrolment situation for the school going children, and to prevent dropout incidents as far as possible. Here in this section, some of such programmes of the state are presented to indicate as to how government has been working relentlessly to make “education for all children” a reality.

**Keywords:** education, children, government, Karnataka

### 1. Introduction

Before 1976, education was the exclusive responsibility of the States. The Constitutional Amendment of 1976, which included education in the concurrent List, has been a far-reaching step. The substantive, financial and administrative implication required a new sharing of responsibility between the Union Government and the States. While the role and responsibility of the States in education remained largely unchanged, the Union Government accepted a larger responsibility of reinforcing the national and integrated character of education, maintaining quality and standard including those of the teaching profession at all levels, and also the study and monitoring of the educational requirements of the country.

In order to achieve UEE (Universalisation of Elementary Education), the Government of India has initiated a number of programmes and projects. The Government adopts an integrated approach in the implementation of the various centrally sponsored schemes, in keeping with the principles of the National Policy on Education. The common objectives are to enhance access through the expansion of quality school education; to promote equity through the inclusion of disadvantaged groups and weaker sections, and to improve the quality of education.

The Government of Karnataka has initiated certain schemes on its own for the purpose of enhancing access and enrolment situation for the school going children, and to prevent dropout incidents as far as possible. Here in this section, some of such programmes of the state are presented to indicate as to how government has been working relentlessly to make “education for all children” a reality.

### 2. Objectives

- a) To Study the recent Karnataka Government Incentives for promoting Primary Education.
- b) To Study the recent Karnataka Government Schemes for promoting Primary Education.

### 3. Methodology and Data Source

The proposed study is based on secondary data pertaining to the state of Karnataka.

The required data have been obtained from following sources: RBI Bulletin, Budgetary Documents, SSA Annual Reports, Human Development Report (UNDP), National Human Development Report (2002), CSO, and Economic Survey.

#### 3.1 State Government recent Incentives for promoting Primary Education

##### i) Free Uniforms, Text books and School Bags

Poverty and economic deprivation are those factors that are responsible for children’s non-participation in school. Those factors demand special governmental interventions to promote better participation of such children. Increased access to the schooling facility has increased number of children from even lower income families. Their retention in schools until compulsory stage depends upon effective programmes like mid day meal scheme, free supply of school uniform, text books, regular health checkup etc.

All the children studying in class I to X from government and aided schools are given text books free of cost. In addition, all the children studying in government schools in classes I to VII and girl students studying in classes VIII to X are provided with free uniforms. This has been extended to all students of I to X std. from 2006-07. During the year 2010-11, the number of children who had received free text books was 57.19 lakh in high schools during the same period. The number of students receiving free School Bags was 11.58 lakh in primary schools during 2010-11 (Education in Karnataka, 2011).

##### ii) Mid-Day Meal Programme

A massive mid day meal programme covering all the children studying in Government and Aided primary schools in classes I to X is implemented in the state from 2007-08, objective to improve attendance, reduce drop out, improve the nutrition levels of children and enhance their learning attainments. A

total of 64.26 lakhs of children in government and aided schools were the beneficiaries of the scheme during 2010-11. This scheme is operated by the state with partial grants received from government of India. In the year 2010-11, the central government contribution was Rs. 11662.70 lakhs while government of Karnataka contributed Rs. 21892.64 lakhs.

### iii) Energy Food and Ahara Yojana

The State Government introduced its own scheme called "Energy Food" program in 1980-81 on the basis of a nutrition formula developed by the CFTRI, Mysore 5.62 lakh children benefited from this program in 1990-91. In 1993-94, the State Government introduced the Ahara Yojana for all the children studying in 1 to 4<sup>th</sup> standards. It was continued till mid August 1995 when it was merged with the GOI sponsored National Programme of Nutritional support to primary education in 1995.

### iv) Nutritional Support Programme

In order to improve the nutritional condition of children and motivate them to attend school, the nutritional support programme was introduced by the state government through this program; the state government started distribution of 3 kg of wheat or rice per child per month (though the fair price shops). The food grains were given to all the children studying in 1 to 5<sup>th</sup> standards in government and aided primary schools; subject to the children maintaining an average 80 per cent attendance per month. The entire cost of the scheme was borne by GOI.

### v) The Akshara Dasoha Programme

The programme of providing hot cooked midday meal was introduced in 7 Northeastern revenue districts of the state during 2002-03. Looking into the merits the scheme was extended to the remaining 20 revenue districts during 2003-04 under "Akshara Dashoha". The scheme was further extended to cover the children of 1 to 5<sup>th</sup> standards in government aided schools with effect from 1 September, 2004 and students of 6 to 7<sup>th</sup> standards of all government and aided schools in the state from 1 April 2005. The total of 43414 government schools and 2830 government aided schools (Total 46244 elementary schools) were covered under this programme. There were 38926 kitchen centers and 96064 cooks in 2005-06. The beneficiaries of the scheme run in several lakhs, i.e., about 56.04 lakh students from 1 to 7<sup>th</sup> standards throughout Karnataka State.

The budget allocation for this programme in 2011-12 was Rs. 258.84 crores. The Central Government provides 100 grams of rice/ wheat and conversion charges of Rs. 1.50 for the child per day, whereas the state Government spends about Rs. 3.16 per student per day. In 2010-11, the state budget allocation was Rs. 253.47 crores. Rs 26 crores were released for construction of kitchen centers at the rate of Rs. 5000/- per centre. About Rs. 72 crores was given by the central government towards equipments and Rs. 33.46 crores towards construction of kitchen centers. The Governmental departments like Revenue, Rural Development, Health and women and child development take active role in implementing the programme. The members of the GP and SDMC monitor the scheme at the school level. The

programme has been complemented with the following objectives:

- To improve enrolment and attendance in elementary schools.
- To improve retention.
- To improve health of the children by increasing nutrition levels.
- To improve learning level of the children.

Hot cooked midday meals are provided for 244 days in a year, 53 NGOs (including Akshaya Patra Foundation) and meets have been participating actively and adding value to the existing government programme. In 2005-06, these NGOs covered 2012 primary schools and Rs. 4.71 lakh children. In 2004-05 and 2005-06 the government covered children of drought hit taluks under the hot cooked midday meal scheme during summer holidays also.

Preliminary findings, indicating a significant improvement in the enrolment, attendance and retention of children in schools as a result of the successful implementation of this massive programme are as under:

- 2 to 10 percent improvement of attendance across the state;
- Children are more attentive inside and outside the classroom;
- Nearly a lakh women have been given part time employment as cooks;
- Coordination between various field department and voluntary organizations; and
- The programme also helps in achieving social and educational equity at the field level.

The government has extended the programme to cover all the children studying in government and aided secondary schools in the state from the academic year 2007-08.

### vi) Akshaya Patra

With the dedicated purpose of liberating poor children from the vicious cycle of hunger and illiteracy, the Akshaya Patra Foundation under the age of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) come into being in the year 2000 and has been providing free, nutrition rich midday meals to thousands of underprivileged children in and around Bengaluru. With a humble beginning of feeding 1500 under served children in Bengaluru, the programme has grown to reach half a million of children in 5 states across India. The programme utilizes the food grains as well as the conversion charge provided by the government. One of the most important social initiatives in India, the Akshaya Patra Midday Meals Programme has documented the benefits such as:

- Protecting children from hunger and improving their nutrition;
- Increasing school enrolment, attendance and school performance;
- Improving socialization among children – the experience of sitting together and sharing a meal irrespective of caste, gender and status is a social leveler: and
- Empowering the girl child in particular.

In Bengaluru, the hot cooked midday meals are supplied to 1.45 lakh children studying in 533 government aided and corporation schools. In collaboration with the BBMP, the programme also offers free meals to 1507 pregnant and

nursing women from the marginalized sections of society. The programme status in the state as in 2010-11 was;

**Table 1:** Beneficiaries of Akshaya Patra Scheme in Karnataka 2010-11

Location	No. of Children	No. of Schools
Bengaluru	1,45,000	533
Hubballi-Dharwad	1,54,510	647
Bellary	32,590	89
Mangaluru	10,500	51
Mysuru	6,100	19
Total	3,48,700	1339

*Source:* ISKCON – Akshaya Patra Foundation, Bangalore, 2011

Besides, the Akshaya Patra Programme has initiated the concept of mechanization of its kitchens which is worthy of emulation by other NGOs as well as the institutional establishments in schools across the state. The mechanized kitchen in Hubballi-Dharwad is based on the principle of gravity. It has potentially increased operational efficiency of the Kitchen. It also complies with ISO 2200 standards which meet the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness. The foundation is continuously making improvements in the infrastructure, bringing about quality control measures and raising funds for the massive programme.

#### vii) Free Bicycles to Students

Having understood the problems of rural girls who come to school by walk all through from hilly regions the Government of Karnataka introduced the scheme of free distribution of bicycles to the girls studying in 8<sup>th</sup> std and who come from B.P.L families. This is to enhance the confidence and courage besides reducing dropout rate among girls. Subsequently, this Scheme has been extended to Boys also.

#### Details about Scheme

- After passing out from 7<sup>th</sup> standard, the scheme is introduced from the academic year 2006-07 for these children who belong to BPL Family (Excluding the children who possess bus passes and Hostel facilities).
- During 2007-08 221300 girls and 213700 boys are benefited from this scheme in 202 educational blocks.
- For this Rs. 90 crores of grants have been released and entire amount is spent by State Government only.
- Out of 2008-09 grants deficiency of Rs. 8.62 crores has been utilized for 2007-08, and out of Rs 159.69 crores 324682 girls and 341540 boys, who are studying in 8<sup>th</sup> standard in Government and Aided schools (Excluding the students who are from corporation limit & having bus pass and hostel facilities). During 2011-12 Rs. 100/- crores grants has been released, out of this Rs. 64.41 crores has been utilized for the year 2008-09, after that Rs.35.50 crores grants available. During this year 266163 girls and 266229 boys are benefitted who are studying in 8<sup>th</sup> standard of Government and Aided schools.

### 3.2 State Government recent schemes for promoting Primary Education:

#### i) Nali-Kali (Joyful Learning)

All the 45476 schools in the State have adopted *Nali-Kali*

method of learning-teaching. At a rate of two teachers per school, more than 90,000 teachers have been trained to engage *Nali-Kali* classes. Heads of all the schools have also been trained. *Nali-Kali* kits that include learning cards have been supplied to all schools. *Nali-Kali* toll-free helpline has been set up in all district offices.

Other programmes which reach the schools are EDUSAT (in Chamarajanagar, Kalaburagi, Bengaluru Rural and Ramanagaram districts), as well as the Radio lessons programmes that are integrated with school syllabus and daily time-table. Classes 1 to 2, 3 to 5 and 6 to 8, receive Chinnara Chukki, Chukki Chinna and Keli-Kali Programmes respectively. 921 Higher Primary Schools are treated as Nodal Schools for organizing activities and providing leadership to neighbouring H.P.S. for the benefit of Education of girls in 71 Educationally Backward Blocks (EBB).

#### ii) Baa Marali Shaalege (Come Back to School Campaign)

In order to celebrate the 2002 Karnataka Rajyotsava Day in meaningful manner, the department of education mounted a massive campaign of getting children, who had dropped out of school for various reasons, back into the school. The main objectives of this campaign were:

- To enroll all the children at the age group of 6-14 and get them to attend school through intensive door-to-door campaigns through the state.
- To bring back to school children of those who have been absent for too long.
- To provide bridge courses and remedial teaching to the returning children so as to make their re-entry as smooth as possible.
- To place the children ready for mainstream schooling in regular classes suitable for them.

By the end of 2002, the campaign had successes in bringing back to school over 220000 children, about 50 per cent of them being girls. The effort and the response on the educationally backward districts of NEK were particularly impressive, contributing nearly 50 per cent of the figures for the entire state. Raichur and Koppal Districts were right at the top of the list, accounting for 28,000 and 23,000 children respectively.

The success of the “Baa Marali Shalege” stimulated the department to undertake other campaigns with similar goals and objectives to bring down the huge number of children staying out of school.

#### iii) Samudaydatta Shale

The government has launched ‘Samudaydatta Shale’ (School approaching the community) programme to bring the schools closer to the community and to create a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the schools.

Under this programme every month, the Hon’ble Education Minister, Education Secretary, the Education Commissioner, all the officers of the department teachers of high school and primary school halt in villages and hold discussions. They also interact with the community and parents in order to create awareness on education matters and issues, so as to improve the quality of education, admit children and provide basic facilities to the schools. This programme was started in November 2000. It is very effective in mobilizing community

and bringing awareness about quality education and demand for equity education.

#### **iv) School Adoption Programme**

It is difficult for the government alone to provide all the basic necessities to the schools, given resource constraints and limitations. Hence, in order to the schools, the "Schools Adoption Program" was launched. This was well received in many quarters. Many companies, corporate entities and individuals have come forward to adopt and improve the facilities in government schools. So far, individuals, NGOs and other undertakings have adopted more than 9226 schools and Rs. 200 crores has been mobilized under this program.

#### **v) Chinnara Angala - A Bridge course to the Mainstream**

The "Chinnara Angala" is an innovative summer bridge course programme aimed at bringing out-of-school children back to schools. A regular school teachers and a Para-teacher are appointed from amongst the village youth to teach the children.

An intensive, condensed form of the curriculum is taught, at the end of regular classes. The duration of the intervention was initially proposed to be 60 days. Later, it was decided that it would continue till all the children were enrolled into formal school.

The programme was first implemented in the state in April/May 2000. Stated on a pilot basis in 10 education blocks, 3100 out-of-school children were enrolled in the course, with as many as 2600 from amongst them being mainstreamed into formal schools.

The children census of 2001 revealed that there were 10.53 lakh out-of-children in the age group of 6-14 years in the state. Hence, the "Chinnara Angala" programme was extended to the entire state in 2001-02 and at the end of it; nearly 82708 children have been main streamed against a target of one lakh children. In October/November of that year, the programme was again held in the seven educationally backward districts of NEK and 22244 children were mainstreamed.

During 2003, over 4800 "Chinnara Angala" centers were opened so as to generate school preparedness among 407,000 out-of-school children. 107000 children, including 50000 children labours, were mainstreamed. Among the NGOs, the Akshara foundation has been very active in running this programme in Bengaluru. All the existing 194 "Chinnara Angala" learning centers reaching out to 4600 children in the city have been coordinated by the foundation with the help of other NGOs like MAYA, Mobility India, APSA, REDS and Rastrothan Parishat (Education Karnataka, 2011)

Akshara, in collaboration with Madyam another NGO, has launched a 100 percent enrolment campaign in 30 slums in Bengaluru city. Along with the field publicity office of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, they conducted awareness programmes on "Chinnara Angala" in another 35 slums in Bengaluru. The drawback in this programme was that in several cases, the mainstreamed children were unable to cope with the work load of the regular school and slowly dropped out. The programme did not make any efforts to track these children. There was not external assessment of this programme to find out its impact.

#### **vi) Vidya Chetan – An alternate School**

"Vidya Chetan", started only in northeastern Karnataka was an alternative school for those children who were not in the schools even after the "Chinnara angala" intervention. The location of a "Vidya Chetana" center was selected keeping in mind the student's convenience. The timings for teaching were flexible to suit the child. Classroom transaction started with books prepared especially for the "Chinnara Angala". Once children mustered this, they were tested and given regular books prescribed by the department according to their level of achievement. They were also provided with notebooks, pencils, and pens, instrument boxes and textbooks. At the end of the year, the child had the option of choosing between joining regular schools or continuing further in the "Vidya Chetan" centre. With the advent of SSA, this programme was discontinued.

#### **vii) Coolieyinda Shalege Programme (From Labour to School)**

Community children at the age group of 6 to 14 are found employed in places such as factories, shops, households, hotels, garages, etc. mainly to supplement income of their parents for their livelihood. The "Collieyind Shalege" programme has been launched to bring these children to the school fold from their work places. In this programme, parents and employers of the children are warned citing the provision of the prevention of child labor Act. Awareness has been created among them regarding importance of education. This has helped to bring the children into the school fold. This programme is being implemented with the co-ordination of the other departments like police, women and Child Development, Social Welfare and Labour Department. This campaign is to liberate such working children from the bondage of labour Handouts and posters have been made with the appeal of Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka to bring these children to the school fold. Advisement, T.V. jingles and street plays are put up suitably to create awareness among the parents and society in co-ordination with NGOs in the state.

#### **viii) Flexi School**

Eight flexi schools have been started in Bengaluru (Urban and City). These schools were started with the working children in view of those who cannot attend the formal school due to their time frame in the workplace. These schools are running from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm, so that the working children can attend classes and learn their lessons at the hours convenient to them. Hence, the name "Flexi Schools". These schools which are not permanent formal schools aim at infusing confidence and strengthening their learning activities and thus helping these children to get knowledge and thus helping these children to bridge with the formal school without any difficulty. Till data, 280 children are admitted to these schools, Several NGOs are also cooperating to these schools, including the Akshara Foundation and also The Center for Working Children, Bengaluru, who have joined in the effort of these schools. Departments such as, the labor, the social welfare and the department of minority in addition to several voluntary organizations are cooperating with the education department of the state Government.

**ix) Mobile Schools**

These schools were started in 2001-02 to give education to slum dwelling children and children of construction workers, especially in the city areas. At present eight mobile schools are working in Bengaluru city. These mobile schools collect children from the slums in and around the city and take them in a bus to a good environment where their teachers will teach them. The inside of the bus is modified into a classroom. Learning levels will be improved and interest will be created in these schools. After achieving the minimum level of learning these children are admitted to formal schools. The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation has donated eight buses for this purpose. The State Government provides free uniform, free textbooks and midday meals to these children. In 2011-12 there were 12 mobile schools. Nearly 500 children are mainstreamed every year through the mobile school. These schools were initiated by the state government of Karnataka.

**x) Beediya Shalege (From the Street to School)**

For the children who are in the street in the age of group of 5-14 and are being out of the portals of school education, the education department in Karnataka prepared some innovative programmes to bring them into the school fold with some selected NGOs Co-ordination. As per the survey of street children conducted by the Bengaluru city Forum for Street and Working Children, there are 12284 street children who were out of schools. To address these children a provision was made in the Annual Work Plan of 2004-05 to imitate activities to bring them to school.

**xi) Baa Bale Shalege (Bringing the Girl Child to School)**

Baa Bale Shalege is yet another special initiative to bridge the gender gap. The main strategies adopted under this campaign are,

- To make women officials of the Education Department motivate themselves to adopt an educational block each and evince special interest in the education of girls in that block.
- To make the women officials adopting a block to meet women teachers in the particular block and motivate them to achieve the aims of this programme voluntarily.
- To make all voluntary organizations such as Stree-Shakti/ Self-Help Groups, Mahila/ Yuvathi Mandals and women representative to evince interest and take responsibility for the task.

**xii) Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC)**

IEDC is considered as an important component in UEE Integrated education, in its simplest form, it is providing education to disabled children along with normal children in normal schools with the assistance of specially trained teachers. In this context, the IEDC helps in identifying such children and integrating them in the regular school system so as to facilitate their learning. During 2011-12 a total number of 98600 special children were identified under SSA.

**Table 2:** Special Children identified in Karnataka (2011-12)

Visually impaired	12968
Hearing and Speech Impaired	20387
Mentally & Retarded	13808
Physically Handicapped	25441
Learning Disability Children	3788
Other	5508
Total	81900

Source: SSA 2011-12.

A financial provision of Rs. 1200/- per child is available under SSA in 2011-12, 129491 children with special needs were identified and 117401 children were enrolled in schools, and 10327 severally disabled children were provided home based education.

As there are special need children the state provides a number of incentives like allowances for books, stationery, uniforms, transport, readers, hostel facilities, escort, equipment 03 etc.

**4. Conclusion**

The above discussion has analysed recent government programmes on primary education. There is no doubt government has made sincere efforts to provide free and compulsory education to all the children of the state through various programmes and policies. In the recent days, programmes on education have yielded good results, which is evident from the improvement in enrolment and reduction in dropout rates significantly.

Despite the fact that, the objectives and formulation of policies are emulated with good intentions to outreach the beneficiaries of target population. Contrarily it seems to have failed to achieve the set target. Probably, this might be done to lack of efficient implementation at the grass root levels, owing to improper diffusion technologies adopted in wake of policies reaching the target population, such as deprived section of society and also the deserved beneficiaries of target population.

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