

# ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN KARNATAKA: STRUCTURE, STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper presents the changes in structures and strategies in the management of elementary education in Karnataka over the period of time for achieving education for all. The challenges in elementary education and recent programmes and innovative actions to meet the challenges have been presented. The paper finds that the state has achieved commendable task of universalizing primary education by providing access to schooling for more than 99 per cent children. It has almost resolved the issues of access to schools and enrolment mainly with the initiatives of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyana Mission which was implemented in the state since 2001-02. The increase in the number of private schools has also significantly contributed for achieving education for all. DISE data indicate that there has been many fold increase in the private schools in recent years. These are mainly English medium schools located in urban and semi-urban areas providing education mainly to middle and rich class of people. The RTE act has been implemented from the year 2012-13. It stipulates that private schools reserve 25 per cent of seats at the entry level for children belonging to 'disadvantaged groups' and 'weaker sections'. Though the state has achieved universal coverage, there are number of challenges that still need to be achieved. Providing quality education is one of a major challenge. There are regional imbalances, gender disparities, educational backwardness among the weaker sections, etc. Recently, in an effort to provide quality education, the state government has taken the help of NGO like Azim Premji Foundation and Akshara Foundation. Such management issues relating to elementary education in the state of Karnataka in India form the core discussion of the paper.*

**Key Words:** *Elementary Education; Administration; Community Participation*

## INTRODUCTION

India's commitment to the spread of knowledge and freedom of thought among its citizens is reflected in its Constitution. The Directive Principles in the Constitution state (Article 45) **"the state shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the announcement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years"**. Other provisions of the Constitution with regard to any citizen having a distinct language, script, special care of economic and educational interests of the unprivileged sections, particularly scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is laid down as an obligation. Though education is currently in the **concurrent list** of the Constitution, the State Governments play a very important role in the development of education especially in the Primary and Secondary Education sectors.

Government of India has set up various committees to address the problems of education and make feasible recommendations. The prominent among them are; Kothari Education Commission 1964-66, New Educational Policy of 1986, Revised New Educational Policy 1992, District Primary Education Programmes 1994, Programme of action 2000 and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 2000. Keeping in view, the Constitutional mandate, Government of Karnataka, has been implementing various programmes for the educational advancement of these communities to ensure access, equity and quality education. The recent move of Right to Education (RTE) has further assured relief to the marginalized sections of the society in availing admissions to the educational institutions especially at the school level.

## **BRIEF PROFILE OF KARNATAKA**

Karnataka is the eighth largest state in terms of area in India, accounting for 5.83% of the total area of the country (32.88 lakh sq. km). As per 2011 Census, the State's population was 611 lakhs (approximately). There are 968 females per thousand population. Karnataka occupies Ninth place with regard to population and the density of population as per 2011 Census was 319 persons per sq. km which was lower than the all-India density of 382. Karnataka State has been divided into four Revenue divisions, 49 sub-divisions, 30 districts, 177 taluks for administrative purposes. Based on the Physiography, the state can be divided into Karavali, the Coastal Plain; Sahyadris, the Western Ghats; Malnad, the Transitional Belt; the Southern Plateau; the Northern Plateau; the Eastern Ghats. Most of the people speak Kannada. Telugu, Tamil, Urdu, Marathi, Tulu, Kodagu, Konkani and Hindi are other languages spoken, especially in border areas and in some regions of the state. Karnataka is the one of the fast-growing economies in the country. This growth is largely based on the knowledge base of the society. The state has been implementing many reforms in the education sector along with the increased public investment. These have resulted in ensuring access, equity, and quality in education, with community involvement. The literacy rank of the state was 9th among 16 major states during 2001 and in 2011. The overall gain in literacy in the state during 2001 to 2011 was 9 per cent. The performance of the state is slightly higher than that of the national average on every literacy rate parameter. The literacy rate during 2001 and in 2011 has increased from 66.64 per cent to 75.60 per cent in the state. There are variations in urban and rural and male and female literacy rate. Urban male literacy rate has crossed 90 per cent. However, rural female literacy rate is yet to cross 60 per cent. The following table shows literacy rate in Karnataka.

**Table1: Literacy Rates in India and Karnataka**

	India	Karnataka		
		Total	Rural	Urban
Persons	74.04	75.6	68.86	86.21
Males	82.14	82.85	77.92	90.54
Females	65.46	68.13	59.6	81.71

*Source: Census 2011*

## STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION SYSTEM

The National System of Education articulated in the National Policy on Education, 1986/92 envisages a common educational structure. The 10+2+3 structure has been accepted in all parts of the country. As in other States of India, 10 years of school education is being imparted in Karnataka also. Up to 2001–02, Lower Primary School comprised of 1 to 4th standard, Higher Primary School comprised of 5 to 7th standard and High School comprised of 8 to 10th standard. The Educational Task Force constituted by the Government of Karnataka under the chairmanship of Dr.Rajaramanna has recommended imparting 8 years of Primary Schooling. As a first step of this recommendation during the year 2001-02, 5th Standard was clubbed to Lower Primary School and in the second step during 2003–04, 8th Standard has been clubbed to Higher Primary Schools. Eighth Standard has been added in Higher Primary Schools where there is no High School facility within the radius of 3 Km. By this the Lower Primary School education is of 5 years' duration, Higher Primary School education is of 3 years' duration and that of High School is 2 years.

- Lower Primary Schools (LPS, class I to V),
- Higher Primary Schools (HPS, class I to VII/VIII) and
- High Schools (VIII to X).

### ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The mission of the Department of Primary and Secondary Education is to equip children of the State with specified knowledge, skills and values to enable them to become good human beings and productive, socially responsible citizens and to achieve excellence in whatever they do. Elementary education is managed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education headed by Minister for Education. Followed by Secretariat, Commissioner for Public Instruction is functioning to implement the policies and programmes of the department of public Instruction. Earlier there was only one commissioner for public Instruction at state level. During 2003-04, two (2) Additional Commissionerates of Public Instructions have been established at Dharwad and Gulbarga in order to **decentralize academic and administrative powers** to North Karnataka Region (backward region). Pre-service and in-service training institutions, Sanskrit education, Hindi, Commerce, Music, Dance, Drawing, and Arabic education also come under the administrative purview of the Department.

The Office of the Commissioner of Public Instruction (CPI) dealing with elementary education manages the government as well as regulates the private institutions. In the case of private aided institutions, this includes granting sanction for teachers' posts in line with the "Grant-in-Aid Code" and payment of teachers' salaries; in the case of unaided institutions, the main role of the government is to ensure that these institutions satisfy the minimum eligibility criteria for granting "recognition", a status that enables these institutions to allow their students to appear for public examinations. The Commissioner for Public Instructions acts as chief co-ordinator for 10 Directors of Public Instructions holding different responsibilities each enjoys the status of a head of the departments. These departments are as follows:

- 1) State Project Director, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Karnataka.
- 1) Director, SSA
- 3) Director of Primary education.
- 4) Director of Secondary Education
- 5) Director of Urdu and other Minority Language Schools
- 6) Director of Public Instruction, K.S.E.E. Board
- 7) Director of State Educational Research and Training and Textbooks.
- 8) Director of Public Instruction, K.S.E.E. Board (other exams)
- 9) Director, Commissioner's Office, Dharwad
- 10) Director, Commissioner's Office, Gulbarga

The Directors in his/her capacity exercise over-all financial administrative and supervisory power in respect of matters he/she is competent to deal with as per rules. He/she is assisted by number of other senior level officer like Joint Director at Divisional level, etc.

The district is the most important unit of educational administration in Karnataka. The Deputy Director of Public Instruction is the over all in charge of the primary as well as the secondary education. Education up to secondary level (1 to 10th class) is also managed by the Panchayath Raj Institutions in Karnataka. In every Zilla Panchayath there is a committee for Health and Education. This committee supervises as well as implements policies and programmes of primary and secondary education at the District level. D.D.P.I is having academic and administrative duties and also, he serves as selection authority for Government primary school teacher and appointing authority for Government High school teachers as per the rules.

At the block level, Block education officer is the administrative as well as academic head and appointing authority to Government primary school teachers selected as per C.R. rules. At the institutional level Head Master of the school plays important role in management and development of school. Seventy-five (75) per cent of the Head Master posts are filled by promotion and remaining 25 per cent are filled by direct recruitment through Karnataka Public Service Commission. SDMCs are working with Head Masters in preparing school development plans and managing the school activities.

The Karnataka State is recomposed in 33 educational districts. The thirty administrative districts of the state are grouped into four Educational Divisions with headquarters at Bangalore, Belgaum, Gulbarga and Mysore. Besides two divisions – Belgaum and Gulbarga divisions are having Additional Commissionerates for effective administration. There are 60,912 Elementary schools in the State, of which 26,308 are LPS, 34,604 are HPS during 2014-15. Schools of the State are run by many types of Managements. The prominent types are:

- Department of Education
- Department of Social Welfare
- Local Self – Government Institutions
- Private Aided
- Private Un-Aided, and
- Others (Jawahar Navodaya, Central, Sainik, NRI, Madarasas, Arabic, etc)

Schools run by the Department of Education, Department of Social Welfare and by the Local Self Government Institutions are classified as Government Schools. Department of Public Instruction monitors these schools for achieving the universalisation of quality education. The following sections depict the efforts of the department in meeting the challenges faced by the education sector.

## **ACCESS AND ENROLMENTS**

The state has policy to start a new primary school within one kilometre in habitations where the population is more than 100 and child population is more than 10. HPS is provided within 3 kilometre radius and High Schools in 5 kilometre radius. Feeder schools or transportation facilities are provided in small and sparsely populated habitations. All the habitations with a population of 100 and above now have access to primary schools within a distance of one kilometre. HPS are being upgraded to include class 8, wherever there are no High Schools within 3 kilometres. A total of 7,817 HPS has been upgraded so far. Thus, there has been significant progress in improving access to schools in the state. Table 2 shows access to LPS and HPS over the years in Karnataka.

**Table 2: Access LPS and HPS over the Years in Karnataka**

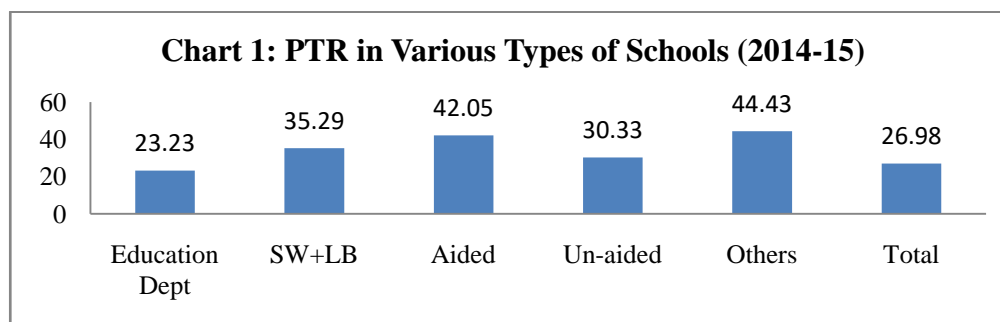
Year	Access to LPS	Access to HPS
2001-02	93.7	89.39
2002-03	94.26	90.48
2003-04	94.58	96.25
2004-05	98.98	99.19
2005-06	99.03	99.61
2006-07	99.13	99.61
2007-08	99.29	99.07
2008-09	100.00	100.00
2009-10	100.00	100.00
2010-11	100.00	100.00
2011-12	100.00	100.00
2012-13	100.00	100.00
2013-14	100.00	100.00
2014-15	100.00	100.00

Source: *Economic Survey, Karnataka 20014-15*

Total enrolments in primary and in upper primary stage are 53.73 lakhs and 29.72 lakhs respectively during the year 2014-15. Due to decline in growth rate of population, the enrolment has declined marginally in primary stage. Most of the (82.13 per cent) SC/ST children are in government schools and their share in total enrolments is 27.7 per cent. In rural areas, 72.70 per cent of children are in government schools. Thus, most of the SC/ST and rural children are in government schools in the state.

## WORKING TEACHERS AND WORK BURDEN

Teachers play very important role in laying a good foundation of learning among children. A good teacher will develop a good student who would be good citizen of the country. The adequate teacher pupil ratio facilitates learning process and makes learning easy for the students. The state government has been trying to provide adequate number of teachers to the schools. Chart 1 shows PTR in various types of schools. It reveals that teacher -Pupil ratio is lower in government schools is. 1: 23.23 compared to aided and unaided schools.



Thus, teacher -Pupil ratio in the state is satisfactory. But data related to total number of sanctioned teachers and working teachers indicate shortage of teachers in the state. According to DISE 2014-15 data only 85.7 per cent of teachers are working out of the total sanctioned posts. This would definitely affect the learning of rural children, especially, SC and ST children. Strong political will and enhancement in the budget allocation will solve the problem of scarcity of teachers.

In the schools, the teachers are also overburdened with the non-teaching activities, such as preparation and distribution of mid-day meals and milk, Polio awareness programme, arrangements of text books, cloths, other materials and cleaning and maintenance of schools. Apart from this, teachers are also involved in population census, preparation electoral list and socio-economic survey. Thus, teachers are involved in many non-teaching activities. **Head Masters feel that peon and clerk posts for all the schools would help to ease the tasks of teachers and promote teaching activities in schools.**

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND INCENTIVES

Planning of elementary education has changed from its earlier position as a Directive Principle under Article 45 of the Constitution to a new position as a Fundamental Right under Article 21A. Government of India, in partnership with the States, has been providing eight basic facilities based on demand and capacity of the state. After the adoption of Article 21A, these provisions have become mandatory, and are treated as child entitlements. Under SSA programme, the state has been providing basic infrastructure facilities as per RTE Act. Table 3 shows progress of provision of infrastructure at schools in Karnataka.

**Table 3: Infrastructure Provision in Elementary Schools in Karnataka (%)**

Years	Boys Toilet	Girls Toilet	Electricity	Play Ground	Ramps	Compound Wall	Drinking Water	Library
2010-11	91.97	74.26	91.89	54.41	72.95	66.61	93.59	91.86
2011-12	97.91	98.81	95.49	54.34	78.27	69.21	99.55	98.66
2012-13	99.72	99.9	99.56	55.74	79.83	73.48	99.92	99.35
2013-14	99.97	99.98	98.71	56.3	80.96	75.48	99.33	99.66
2014-15	99.76	99.94	98.99	56.87	83.37	77.33	99.98	99.73

Source: Education in Karnataka 2014-15, an Analytical Report, SSA, GoK. Dept of Public Instruction

Free textbooks, uniforms, Nali-Kali workbooks, mid-day meals, school bags and bicycles are being provided to children to promote schooling among rural, SC, ST and other weaker sections of population. Table 4 shows incentives provided in schools in the state during last 5 years.

**Table 4: Incentives in Primary & Secondary Schools in Karnataka (No. in lakhs)**

Particulars	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15(A)
Free Text Books to Pupil in Primary (I - VII)	57.19	62.57	42.73	46.32	46.29
Free Uniforms to Pupil in Primary (I - VII)	46	57.03	54.49	53.89	51.95
Free School Bags to Pupil in Primary (I - VII)	11.58	11.12	6.52	3.82	-
Free bicycles to class VIII Boys	2.73	2.72	2.64	2.78	2.75
Free bicycles to class VIII Girls	2.69	2.62	2.65	2.69	2.68
No. of children provided with mid-day meal	66.76	63.02	61.48	61.48	61.4

Source: Economic Survey 2015-16, Karnataka

For providing necessary infrastructure and incentives to students, the EMIS data has been found very useful. The 'Educational Management Information System' (EMIS) unit has been



established in the year 2004-05. It has been publishing educational data every year which have been useful to the government for the said purpose.

## PRIVATE SECTOR IN EDUCATION

A significant feature of Karnataka's education system is the presence of a large private sector especially at the secondary stage and beyond. The private sector consists of those institutions that receive government aid for teachers' salaries and those that do not. Government stopped giving grants-in-aid to institutions established after 1987. However, private unaided schools have increased quite rapidly after 1990. Table 5 shows that 25.94 per cent of elementary schools are managed by private institutions and remaining are managed by government. The proportion of private institutions in LPS, HPS and Secondary schools are 16.57, 33.07 and 64.75 per cent respectively. Thus, private participation is high in secondary and upper primary schools. According to DISE data (2014-15) the proportion of students in private schools is also significant i.e. 21.1 per cent (18.2 % in LPS and 26.3 % in HPS).

Category	Lower Primary Schools		Upper Primary Schools		Elementary Schools		Secondary Schools		Total (Elementary + Secondary)	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Education Department	21816	82.3	22479	64.96	44295	72.72	4614	30.89	48909	64.48
Social welfare + Local body	129	0.49	587	1.7	716	1.18	566	3.79	1282	1.69
Aided	238	0.9	2803	8.1	3041	4.99	3765	25.21	6806	8.97
Un-Aided	4123	15.67	2641	24.97	12764	20.95	5906	39.54	18670	24.61
Others + Central	2	0.01	94	0.27	96	0.16	86	0.58	182	0.24
Total	26308	100.00	34604	100.00	60912	100.00	14937	100.00	75849	100.00

Source: DISE 2014-15

In recent years, private institutions, especially Un-aided institutions have increased more in number compared to government schools. Table 6 shows changes in number of schools over the period. It indicates that aided and unaided schools have increased more in number as compared to government schools.

Type of Schools	LPS				HPS			
	2008-09	2014-15	Increase/Decrease (Nos)	% Change	2008-09	2014-15	Increase/Decrease (Nos)	% Change
Aided	2449	3041	592	24.2	2997	3765	768	25.6
Un-Aided	8870	12764	3894	43.9	4245	5906	1661	39.1
Government Schools	46201	45107	-1094	-2.4	4511	5266	755	16.7
All Schools	57520	60912	3392	5.9	11753	14937	3184	27.1

Most of the private aided and unaided schools are English medium schools. Table 7 shows medium wise number of LPS and HPS in Karnataka. This shows that during the year 2006-07 to 2015-16, English medium schools have increased more in number (119.5 per cent) which is on the rise compared to other medium schools. This shows demand for English medium schools in the state.

Medium	No. of Schools (2006-07)			No. of Schools (2015-16)			Change in No. of Schools			% Change		
	LPS	HPS	Total	LPS	HPS	Total	LPS	HPS	Total	LPS	HPS	Total
Kannada	25411	22532	47943	23295	27969	51264	-2116	5437	3321	-8.3	24.1	6.9
Hindi	50	50	100	36	128	164	-14	78	64	-28.0	156.0	64.0
English	381	2947	3328	546	6760	7306	165	3813	3978	43.3	129.4	119.5
Urdu	2127	1721	3848	2252	2423	4675	125	702	827	5.9	40.8	21.5
Tamil	40	100	140	30	103	133	-10	3	-7	-25.0	3.0	-5.0
Telagu	411	39	450	27	58	85	-384	19	-365	-93.4	48.7	-81.1
Marathi	411	613	1024	317	695	1012	-94	82	-12	-22.9	13.4	-1.2
Total	28831	28002	56833	26503	38136	64639	-2328	10134	7806	-8.1	36.2	13.7

Source: DISE data

Due to craze for English medium, the students are moving from government schools to private schools. This has led to decline in enrolment at government schools not only in urban and semi urban areas but also in rural areas. Some of the government schools have closed due to zero enrolment. There are 555 LPS and 65 HPS schools which are having zero enrolment (DISE Report 2015-16) and these are managed by Education Department. In response to demand for English medium teaching, the government introduced English subject from 1st standard during

the year 2007-08. And it has also introduced 'Adarsha Vidyalaya schools' with English as a medium of instruction. But these are very few in number. **Thus, it seems that the government's response to demand is not adequate and timely.**

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

Community participation in education is felt necessary to ensure universalisation of equitable quality education to all children. Many reports/studies have suggested that a system of decentralised management of education is the only effective strategy for sustained improvement. In Karnataka, the Task Report by Raja Ramanna Committee on quality improvement of Elementary education underlined the importance of management and community participation for ensuring quality education and emphasised community ownerships of the school should be ensured through legislation providing for the establishment of School Development and Monitoring Committees.

Karnataka has been one of the pioneers in adopting School Development and Monitoring Committees. In 2001, Government of Karnataka ordered all the schools to set up SDMCs replacing the earlier Village Education Committees to bring about 'qualitative change' and also to reaffirm the role of community in school education and administration in the state. The SDMC circular specifying the composition, objectives, duties, responsibilities, and procedures were disseminated to all the schools. Accordingly, every school has a School Development and Monitoring Committee equipped with clear cut powers in every school. SDMCs are constituted out of the parents' council of the school. They are accountable to Gram Panchayats. The funds relating to teacher grant, school grant, and school maintenance grant (major repairs) civil works (basic infrastructure like class rooms, provision of drinking water and toilet facilities, compound wall) are sent directly to SDMCs. The SDMC consists of following persons:

- Parental representatives: consists of 13 members who are elected from parents council and one among them elected as the chairman of SDMC.
- Ex- officio Members: Head Master of the concerned school, Anganwadi worker and Health worker are the Ex- officio Members of the committee.
- Nominated Members: One elected represented of Local body, one teacher representative and one student of that school.

Totally there are 19 members in the committee out of which 10 members are women.

Study conducted by 'Centre for Child and Law', Policy Planning Unit; Bangalore finds that about 82 per cent of persons are aware of SDMC formation. It reports that SDMCs played significant role in civil works (48%), positive impact on retention/attendance and enrolment (36.5). Seventeen (17%) percent reported improvement in teacher attendance. Evaluation study of Nali Kali programme conducted by CMDR that the SDMC members are not actively involved in management of the school. They do have self and political motivated interest which cannot lead to better management of the school. Many of these members are not co-operating with the

identification of out of school children in the village. There are many reasons for a child to remain out of school. The major reasons include household work, migration, earning compulsion, socio-cultural reasons, lack of interest, lack of access and others. Here, the community participation is necessary to bring back the children to the school. The following case study shows how the family conflict resulted in child being out of school.

**Case Study: Reasons for School Drop Out**

Name of the Habitation: Kumbalgod State Forest (Bhadrapur)

Revenue Village: Kumbalgod State Forest

Taluk: Ramnagar, District: Ramnagar

The female child belonging to Hakki Pikki community (ST) dropped out at 2<sup>nd</sup> standard. Since last 3 years the child is out of school. The child happens to be the second to the parents. Child's elder brother is studying in 8<sup>th</sup> standard in Kumbalgod School. The child's father and mother had a quarrel over silly reasons and now they are separated. Mother's main occupation is selling plastic materials (like flowers, etc) in different villages. Since the child is younger, mother carries the child with her while going to work. Therefore, the child is not attending the school. Teachers, concerned AEO, BEO and other officers of the education department contacted the family regularly. Since the child is with the mother at work (wondering village to village) they couldn't contact her. At first, the child enrolled because of teacher's initiative, mid-day meals, school within the village and other facilities provided by Social Welfare Department. Drinking habits among men and quarrel with women are common in the village.

**METHODOLOGY OF TEACHING (NALI KALI)**

It is known that there were many problems with rural school. There were large dropouts, low performance and absenteeism. In traditional classrooms, teachers are the sole leaders who lead the students from lesson to lesson and it is a teacher-directed process. There is no provision or mechanism for slow learners or for students who return after long absenteeism to continue their studies, which result into demoralization and dropouts. In most rural primary schools the passive and one-way communication and multi grade situation resulted into children not acquiring the competencies or the abilities to read, write or comprehend.

Methods of classroom transaction underwent severe scrutiny and the need was felt to change the same for the benefit of the student community. In Karnataka, the Nali Kali approach to learning began in 1995 with UNICEF assistance. Based on an interaction with the Rishi Valley School, the teachers in primary schools in Mysore worked on the processes of teaching to transform the rigid system in government schools to an enjoyable, participative system focusing on the 'Joys of Learning'. Under Nali Kali, learning takes place systematically in accordance with age wise competency in an interactive situation. Children are grouped, and they master the competency and move on to another group to learn the next competency. Children learn at their own pace: and moving from one competency to another is not dependent on the whole group's learning. The child is free to move at his/her natural pace of learning. Nali Kali is essentially based on the activity-based learning process. It involves joyful learning which contains processes like songs, games, surveys, storytelling, and use of educational toys. Thus, it arouses interest among

students and pushes them positively to participate in the transactions within the classroom. Subjects like mathematics and science which are considered difficult would be made easier to understand through this innovative method. **Under Nali Kali, joyful, child cantered, activity based, multi grade /multi-level learning is possible while taking individual care of the students.**Nali Kali was introduced in all the government Kannada medium schools of Karnataka at class 1 and II in the year 2009-10.

Based on the study of 541 sample schools, the study conducted by CMDR finds that the Nali Kali has made a positive impact on the learning levels of the students especially students belonging to the socially backward and minority communities. These socially backward communities now seem to be on par with socially advanced communities. The program needs full support and encouragement in the years to come. Recently, class 3 is also included in the Nali-Kali class (along with class 1 and class 2 students). Discussion with the teachers reveals that this system has hindered the teaching process. In this connection a systematic study is felt.

## NEW FACE OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT: PPP IN EDUCATION

The attainment survey conducted by SSA in the state reveals that in spite of all the efforts of the government, the student achievement levels are less than expected. Many studies have documented the fact that the learning skills need improvement in public schools especially with regard to Mathematics and English at the primary level. Akshara Foundation has embarked on a very interesting and challenging project to bring in improvements in learning skills of students in Mathematics and English. It has been trying to bring this change via its very innovative and child friendly teaching methods. The experiment is carried out in select schools of Gadag and Koppal districts of North Karnataka since last 3 years.



The state government is also working with Azim Premji Foundation for promotion of excellence in elementary education. **Thus, the state government has been using private actors in improving the quality of education in the state. But it seems that these efforts are limited to only few schools. Therefore, such efforts should be done on large scale to impart quality education.**

## CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Karnataka has made significant effort in universalizing primary education. It has near resolved the issue of access to schools and enrolment. It is now gearing up to face the challenge of quality of education. Head masters/teachers have to do many non-teaching activities and that consumes lot of time and hence less time for teaching. Therefore, the efforts should be made to allow the teachers only to teach and not to involve in other activities. Efforts have also made to improve the situation by introducing the new method of teaching i.e. Nali Kali method. This type of teaching was only for class 1 and 2. But recently, it has been extended to class 3 also. Many teachers are opposing this system of teaching. Therefore, teaching methods (Nali Kali for class 3) needs to be changed as per the demand of teachers and parents. The English medium schools also need to be started on a large scale. Administration should respond quickly to the demands of students, parents and teachers.

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