

Performance of education, skilling and employment programmes for SC during 2021-22

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The Scheduled Castes (SC) constitutes 9.1 percent of Kerala's population. The Kerala government has been designing and implementing special development projects to empower these people who have been socially marginalised for historical reasons. In comparison to other Indian states, Kerala still follows the five-year planning process and allots the plan fund to the development of Scheduled Castes in proportion to their population as Scheduled Castes Sub Plan.

As a result of the various development processes that occurred in Kerala following independence, it has been possible to make progress in many areas such as education, health, women's empowerment, public distribution, transportation, communication, social security etc and for improving standard of living to the people. Kerala's progress in human resource development has been recognised internationally under the name of the Kerala model of development and Kerala is ranked first in India in the NITI Aayog's 2020-21 Sustainable Development Index (SDI). However, it is a pertinent and self-critical question whether Kerala's SC are progressing at the same rate as Kerala, which has its own social development background that serves as a model for India. The question here is whether a Kerala model development is possible without taking into account the level of development of SC community.

Despite the fact that the central government has abolished the five-year plan system, Kerala continues to follow it. Furthermore, it is the twenty-fifth anniversary of Kerala's successful implementation of decentralised planning since 1997, which serves as a model for the rest of

India. As the final year of the Thirteenth Five Year Plan and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the People's Plan, the period 2021-22 merited special attention from the perspective of marginalised groups' development. Furthermore, this is a time when Kerala is introducing a new paradigm called the knowledge economy to the world as the foundation for Kerala's future economic and social growth. In this period, which is rich in experiments and experiences, no one should be left behind in the process of the fulfilment of Kerala's new development concepts. However, it is important to look into the issue of whether Kerala's development achievements have also benefited the SC community independently. In this background, this article analyses SCs' present position in the crucial areas of employment, skilling and education within the framework of the Economic Review Report 2021-22.

Economic Review 2021 discusses the development issues of Scheduled Castes (SC) in Chapter 8-Initiatives for social inclusion. It is divided into three sections: Gender and development, Addressing socio-economic vulnerabilities and Social security measures. The concerns of SC, ST, OBC, Minorities, and Forward communities are covered in the second section. The total budget allotted for SC development in 2021-22 was Rs. 2708.54 crore, of which Rs. 1487.39 crore (45%) and Rs. 1221.15 crore (55%) were set aside for programmes carried out through the Scheduled Castes Development Department (SCDD) and local self-governments, respectively.

Allocation for education, skill and employment

From its total budget, SCDD has set out Rs. 335 crore (22.5%) for the education sector and Rs. 82.50 crore (5.5%) for skill-building and employment-related initiatives. The management of model residential schools received Rs. 15 crore, the educational support programme received Rs. 245 crore, and additional state aid to post-matric students received Rs. 75 crore under the education sector. A total of Rs. 50 crore was allotted for training, employment, and human resource development in the skill and employment sector, and an additional Rs. 32.5 crore was allotted as the state's 40 per cent share of the Deendayal Antodaya Yojana, which is carried out by local self-governments.

Looking at local self-government's allocation, the scheme-wise total allocation to schemes formulated under Special Component Plan (SCP) during 2021-22 comes to Rs.1487.39 crore. Out of this, Rs.242.40 crore was allocated to the education sector (16.6 %), and Rs. 8.56 crore was allocated to vocational expertisation (0.6 %). To employment schemes Rs.31.96

crore was allocated directly for industry, self-employment enterprises, marketing promotion and small businesses (2.2%). However, the funding allocated to the areas of agriculture, animal husbandry, dairy development, and fisheries, which either directly or indirectly produce jobs, was Rs. 43.54 crore (3 %).

Physical targets achieved by SCDD

Economic Review 2021 only provides information on physical targets up to September 30, 2021, hence Table 1, which shows the physical targets accomplished in the education, skill, and employment sectors throughout 2021-2022, uses data from Plan Space. One of the key areas that SCDD prioritises and where 15 major programmes are in operation is education.

Table 1. Physical targets achieved in education, skill and employment schemes implemented through SCDD during 2021-22		
Sl No.	Schemes	No of beneficiaries
1	Lumpsum grant	362936
2	Stipend	12667
3	Education Aid	260471
4	Pre Metric Scholarship 9th & 10th	13462
5	Initial Expenses to those admitted to	
	Engineering /Medical Courses	523
6	Stethoscope	125
7	Laptops	1110
8	Financial Assistance for studying Abroad	117
9	Financial assistance to Musical instruments	
	& costumes	72
10	Education concessions for students studying	
	outside the state	3043
11	Special incentive to students who got higher	
	victory in annual examinations including	
	SSLC to PG and other professional courses	27501
12	Ayyankali scholarship	27501
13	Vision (Medical & Eng. Entrance coaching)	403
14	Book Bank	1640
15	Medical & Engineering Entrance coaching	
	after plus two	271
16	Skill development programme	599
17	Foreign Employment	673
18	Self-employment subsidy	171
Source: Plan space, 2021-22, Physical achievements, SC department		
Note: Sl.No 1 to 15 - education, 16 - skill and 17 and 18 - Employment schemes		

According to the Economic Review data, 362936 students received the lump sum grant in 2021-2022 compared to 544533 students in 2020-2021.

According to the Primary Household Sample Survey 2018, which was carried out by GIFT, 84.1% of SC students have not studied beyond plus two level. Here, an analysis of the physically attained goals more or less supports the aforementioned finding. The comparison of physical targets attained in schemes such as Ayyankali Scholarship (27501), Pre-Matric Scholarship (13462), Laptops (1110), Medical/Engineering Students (523), and Students Studying Abroad (117) demonstrates the gradual fall of SC students in the higher education sector.

The skilling, up-skilling, and reskilling are essential if community members are to get livelihood measures that will assure a decent living. The number of beneficiaries in the skill and employment sectors is only 599 and 844 respectively. The physical targets achieved in these sectors did not meet the needs of the society, given the 49 percent unemployment rate among SC. Out of the allocated sum of Rs. 50 crores in 2020-21, this sector spent Rs. 38 crore (76 %). In 2020-22, the allocation was the same and the expenditure up to September 2021 was Rs.12.60 crore (25.2%).

Table 2 shows the outlay, expenditure and the number of beneficiaries under self-employment scheme implemented by SCDD during 2021-22.

Table 2. Outlay, expenditure and number of persons benefited under self-employment scheme during 2021-22 (Amount in Lakh)				
Sl.No.	District	2021-22		
		Outlay	Expenditure (as on 30.09.21)	No. of Persons Benefited
1	Thiruvananthapuram	2.96	2.96	4
2	Kollam	0.00	0.00	0
3	Pathanamthitta	1.87	1.87	3
4	Alappuzha	2.30	2.30	6
5	Kottayam	0.00	0.00	0
6	Idukki	0.66	0.66	0
7	Ernakulam	0.00	0.00	1
8	Thrissur	6.37	6.37	9
9	Palakkad	0.97	0.97	2
10	Malappuram	5.26	5.26	6
11	Kozhikode	2.97	2.97	4
12	Wayanad	1.57	1.57	2
13	Kannur	10.34	10.34	12
14	Kasargod	0.90	0.90	1

Source: SC Development Department, 2021, Appendix 8.2.12, ER 2021
*As per Plan Space data the number of beneficiaries is 171.

The district-wise distribution given in Table 2 illustrates two points. The allocation for the self-employment scheme is both inadequate and unevenly distributed. As per the GIFT sample survey 2018, the working age population (15-64) of SC is 73.4 per cent and the deprivation rate is 57.66 per cent (SECC 2011). In this background, the minimal allocation of Rs.36 lakhs as self-employment subsidy cannot make any significant impact in reducing unemployment among SC. In addition, two districts each have just one recipient and three districts have no beneficiaries at all.

Overall performance of local self-governments in SC development

Table 3 displays the allocation and expenditure of funding for SC development through various local self-governments in 2020-21. Block panchayats had the highest expenditure rate of all the local bodies at 75.46 percent. The overall expenditure rate of 70 per cent could be improved. In all types of local self-government, the expenditure rates of the schemes for SC were lower than the rate of general sectors. For instance, the general sector expenditure rate in district panchayats is 74 per cent whereas the SC rate was only 63%.

Type of LSGs	Budget Amount	Fund Available	Expenditure	SCP Expenditure %	General Expenditure %
Grama Panchayats	60999.62	81620.11	58981.9	72.26	75.84
Block Panchayats	20333.2	26619.51	20087.8	75.46	78.41
District Panchayats	20333.2	27991.52	17638.14	63.01	73.57
Municipalities	12509.18	17234.6	10906.13	63.28	71.53
Corporation	7939.8	11203.54	7084.2	63.23	66.25
Total	122115	164669.3	114698.2	69.65	73.69

Source: Economic Review 2021, Appendix 12.1.8

Performance of local self-governments in education, skill and employment for SC

Table 4 lists the allocation and expenditures of the programmes created for SC by local self-governments in the education, skill, and employment sectors. The education sector received the lion's share of the funding among the three sectors (74.2 %). In the education sector, the expenditure was 72 per cent. Though in continuing education/literacy, the expenditure was 64 per cent, the allocation in this sub-sector was very minimal.

Table 4. Allocation and expenditure of education, skill and employment schemes of local self governments during 2021-22 for SC development (in lakhs)

Sl.No	Sector	Allocation	Allocation	Expenditure	Expenditure %
1	Education	24231.13	74.22	17484.07	72.2
2	Continuing education/literacy	8.93	0.03	5.71	63.9
3	Vocational expertisation	856.36	2.62	290.26	33.9
4	Agriculture	1109.27	3.40	582.19	52.5
5	Animal Husbandry	2792.61	8.55	1817.15	65.1
6	Diary Development	367.3	1.13	280.27	76.3
7	Fisheries	85.69	0.26	17.6	20.5
8	Industry, Self employment enterprises, marketing promotion	2673.68	8.19	820.77	30.7
9	Small businesses	522.85	1.60	92.38	17.7
	Total	32647.82	100.00	21390.4	65.5

Source: Sulekha, Expenditure details 2021-22.

Note: Sl.1-2 Education, 3.Skill and 4 to 9 Employment

Programs for skill training programmes fall under the category of micro sector vocational expertization, and the expenditure rate was just 34 per cent. The dairy development sector has succeeded well among the employment creation initiatives, with an expenditure rate of 76.3 per cent, followed by animal husbandry (65 %). With alarming expenditure rates of 53 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively, the agriculture and fisheries sectors clearly demonstrate the need for targeted efforts in these sub-sectors for successful implementation. Self-employment and small enterprises, two subsectors that only deal with employment programmes, were carried out in a pitiful way with spending rates of 31per cent and 18 per cent.

Conclusion

Out of the total earmarked amount of Rs.2,708.54 crore in 2020-21, SCDD expended Rs.1,313.37 crore (88.30 %) and Local Governments expended Rs. 1,125.87 crore (92.20 %). The development picture of SC depicted by Economic Review 2021 reveals that though the SCDD and local governments implement several schemes for their educational attainment, skill development and employment, their less representation in the higher education sector and the high unemployment and deprivation rates highlight the need to implement special initiatives to catch up to other forward communities in terms of development.

Reference

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