



# Inclusive Growth through SCP-TSP Interventions in Karnataka: Special Reference to Higher Education

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## Abstract:

Inclusive growth and poverty reduction are important goals of India's development efforts, particularly for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), who have faced long-term social and economic disadvantages. Higher education plays a key role in helping individuals improve their skills, secure better employment, and achieve upward social mobility. To support these communities, the government introduced the Special Component Plan (SCP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) to ensure that public funds are fairly allocated for their development. Karnataka strengthened these initiatives through the SCP-TSP Act of 2013 and its amendment in 2017. Against this background, the present study examines how SCP-TSP interventions have contributed to inclusive growth in Karnataka, with special focus on higher education. The study is based on secondary data collected from the Census of India (2011) and budget documents of the Government of Karnataka for the period from 2016-17 to 2023-24. To analyse the data, simple statistical tools such as percentage analysis, trend analysis, and compound annual growth rate were used. The findings show that SCs and STs constitute 17.05 per cent and 7.01 per cent respectively of Karnataka's population, indicating the large number of people who depend on targeted welfare programmes. SCP allocation increased from ₹14,408.10 crore in 2016-17 to ₹21,044.14 crore in 2018-19, while TSP allocation rose from ₹5,632.19 crore to ₹8,650.36 crore during the same period. However, funding for higher education declined sharply from ₹257.86 crore in 2016 to ₹47.95 crore in 2020. The compound annual growth rate analysis reveals a negative growth trend in SCP-TSP higher education funding, with combined allocation declining annually by 2.84 per cent during the study period. The study shows that although Karnataka has achieved high utilization efficiency under SCP-TSP, the declining long-term growth in higher education funding has limited its potential impact on inclusive growth and poverty alleviation. Therefore, sustained and stable financial commitment is essential to strengthen educational access and ensure lasting socio-economic empowerment of SC/ST communities.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Growth, Higher Education, SCP-TSP Interventions, Allocation, Expenditure

## Introduction:

Inclusive growth is widely recognized as an essential goal of development in India. It emphasizes that economic progress should benefit all sections of society, especially those who have remained socially and economically disadvantaged for long periods. Among the various instruments of social transformation, education particularly higher education—plays a decisive role in improving life chances, enhancing skills, and enabling individuals to move out of poverty. For Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), access to quality higher education is not merely a means of academic advancement but a powerful pathway to dignity, self-reliance, and social mobility. Historically, SC and ST communities have faced multiple forms of exclusion, including limited access to land, employment, credit, and educational institutions. These disadvantages have restricted their participation in modern economic activities and higher learning. Recognizing these structural inequalities, the Government of India introduced the Special Component Plan (SCP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) as focused policy instruments to ensure that development resources reach marginalized communities in a systematic manner.

In Karnataka, the implementation of SCP–TSP has been strengthened through legal and institutional mechanisms. The enactment of The Karnataka Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan (Planning, Allocation and Utilisation of Financial Resources) Act, 2013 marked a significant step towards ensuring transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in welfare planning. The subsequent amendments in 2017 further improved monitoring and coordination among departments. Through this framework, the state ensures that budgetary allocations for SCs and STs are made in proportion to their population and are utilized for meaningful development outcomes. A major focus of SCP-TSP interventions in Karnataka has been on education and human capital development. The Department of Social Welfare plays a key role in implementing scholarship schemes, hostel facilities, coaching programmes, fee reimbursement, and infrastructure development in higher education institutions. These initiatives aim to reduce financial barriers, improve retention rates, and encourage students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue professional and higher studies. By strengthening educational access, SCP–TSP seeks to create long-term opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship.

According to the Census of India (2011), Karnataka has a population of 5,99,57,336, of which Scheduled Castes account for 17.05 per cent and Scheduled Tribes for 7.01 per cent. Together, they constitute nearly one-fourth of the state's population. This highlights the scale of responsibility faced by the government in ensuring inclusive development. However, the distribution of SC and ST population is not uniform across districts. Some regions have a relatively low concentration, while others have a very high proportion of marginalized communities.

For instance, districts such as Udupi, Dakshina Kannada, Uttara Kannada, and Dharwad record less than 10 per cent SC population, whereas districts like Kolar, Chamarajanagar, Kalaburagi, and Raichur have more than 25 per cent. Similarly, ST population ranges from as low as 1.24 per cent in Mandya to as high as 19.03 per cent in Raichur. These variations reflect different levels of social vulnerability and developmental needs across regions.

Districts with higher SC/ST concentration often face serious challenges in the field of higher education. These include inadequate educational infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers, limited availability of hostels, financial hardship among families, and higher dropout rates. Many students from these communities are first-generation learners who lack academic support at home and face social and psychological barriers within educational institutions. Without adequate institutional assistance, such students find it difficult to compete on equal terms with their more privileged counterparts.

In this context, SCP-TSP interventions play a crucial role in creating a supportive environment for SC/ST students. Through targeted financial assistance, academic support, and institutional development, these schemes seek to level the playing field and promote equal opportunities. However, the effectiveness of these interventions depends not only on budget allocation but also on timely implementation, quality of services, and responsiveness to students' needs. Against this background, the present study examines the role of SCP-TSP interventions in promoting inclusive growth and poverty alleviation in Karnataka with special reference to higher education. It seeks to understand how public investment in education under SCP-TSP has influenced access, participation, retention, and academic outcomes among SC/ST students. By combining demographic analysis with policy evaluation, the study aims to provide meaningful insights into the contribution of higher education to social empowerment and long-term economic development.

## Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the role of Special Component Plan (SCP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) interventions in promoting inclusive growth and poverty alleviation in Karnataka, with particular reference to higher education. The study integrates demographic analysis with financial and sectoral performance evaluation to understand the effectiveness of targeted public expenditure.

The study is based entirely on secondary data collected from Census of India (2011) and Departmental Reports related to SCP-TSP from Social Welfare Department records

## Results and Discussion

The analysis of district-wise population distribution shows that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes together form nearly one-fourth of Karnataka's total population, accounting for 17.05 per cent and 7.01 per cent respectively. This clearly indicates that a large section of the population depends on government-supported welfare and development programmes for social and economic progress. However, these communities are not evenly distributed across districts, and this unevenness creates different levels of development challenges in different regions (Table 1).

**Table 1: District wise percent share of SC-ST population to the total population in Karnataka**

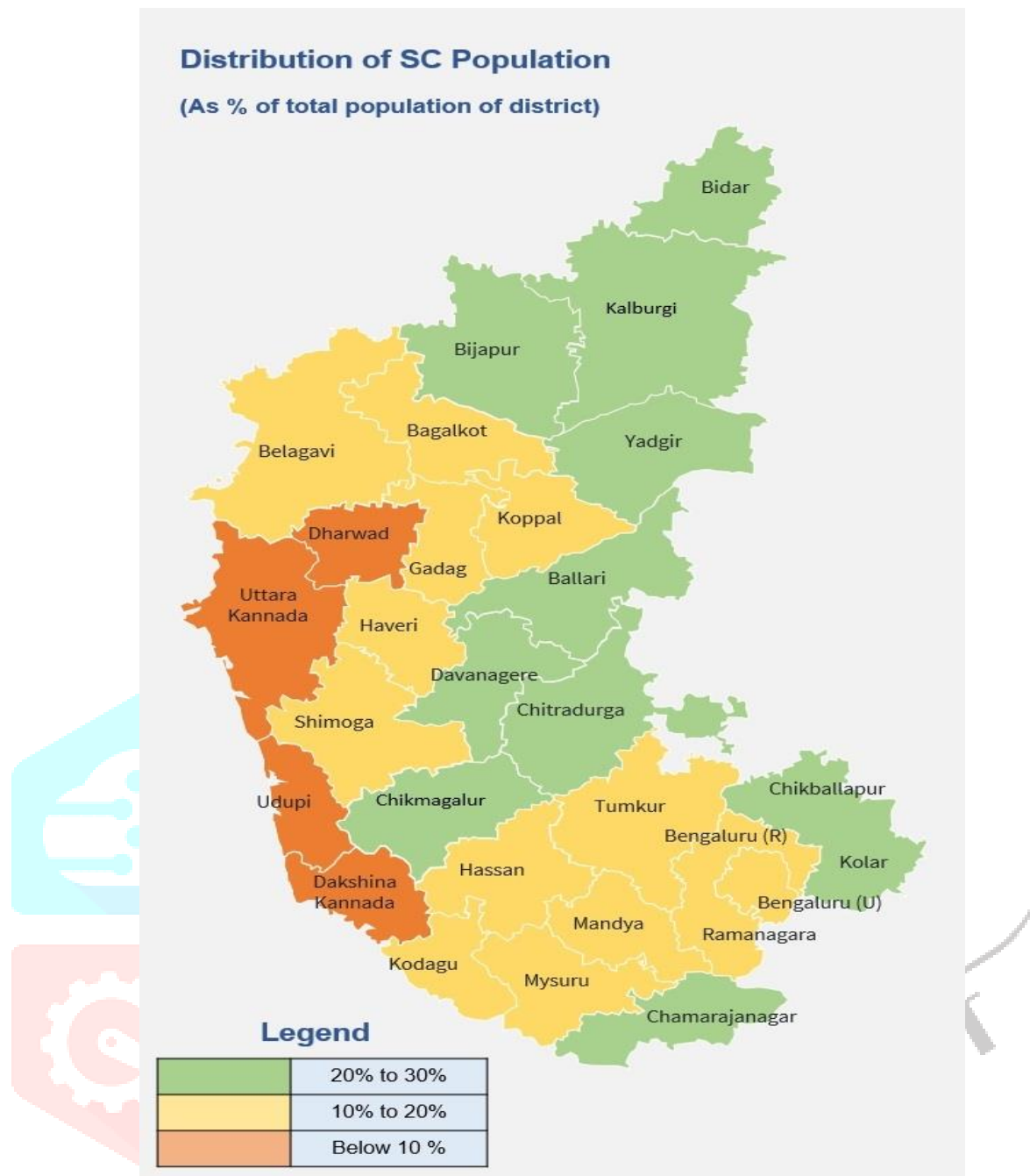
Sl No	Name of the Village	Total Population	SC Population	% share	ST Population	% share
1	Bagalkot	1889752	319149	16.89	97203	5.14
2	Bangalore Rural	990923	213700	21.57	52903	5.34
3	Bangalore	9621551	1198385	12.46	190239	1.98
4	Belgaum	4779661	577418	12.08	297198	6.22
5	Bellary	2452595	517409	21.10	451406	18.41
6	Bidar	1703300	399785	23.47	235822	13.85
7	Vijayapura	2177331	442773	20.34	39314	1.81
8	Chamarajanagar	1020791	259445	25.42	120219	11.78
9	Chikkaballapura	1255104	312565	24.90	156487	12.47
10	Chitradurga	1659456	389117	23.45	302554	18.23
11	Dakshina Kannada	2089649	148178	7.09	82268	3.94
12	Davanagere	1945497	392595	20.18	233112	11.98
13	Dharwad	1847023	177855	9.63	87548	4.74
14	Gadag	1064570	174196	16.36	61654	5.79

15	Hassan	1776421	345031	19.42	32329	1.82
16	Haveri	1597668	219976	13.77	141380	8.85
17	Gulbarga	2566326	648782	25.28	65259	2.54
18	Kodagu	554519	73584	13.27	58054	10.47
19	Kolar	1536401	465867	30.32	78875	5.13
20	Koppal	1389920	258608	18.61	164271	11.82
21	Mandya	1805769	265294	14.69	22402	1.24
22	Mysore	3001127	536643	17.88	334547	11.15
23	Raichur	1928812	400933	20.79	367071	19.03
24	Ramanagara	1082636	203819	18.83	22946	2.12
25	Shimoga	1752753	308158	17.58	65412	3.73
26	Tumkur	2678980	506901	18.92	209559	7.82
27	Udupi	1177361	75429	6.41	52897	4.49
28	Uttara Kannada	1437169	116431	8.10	34239	2.38
29	Yadgiri	1174271	273315	23.28	146849	12.51
	<b>Karnataka</b>	<b>59957336</b>	<b>10221341</b>	<b>17.05</b>	<b>4204017</b>	<b>7.01</b>

Source: Census report, 2011

The Scheduled Caste population varies widely from district to district. While Udupi records only 6.41 per cent SC population, Kolar has the highest share at 30.32 per cent. Districts such as Chamarajanagar, Kalaburagi, Chikkaballapura, Bidar, and Yadgiri also record more than 23 per cent SC population. These districts generally require greater government support in education, employment, and skill development. In contrast, districts with lower SC population usually have relatively better infrastructure and economic opportunities.

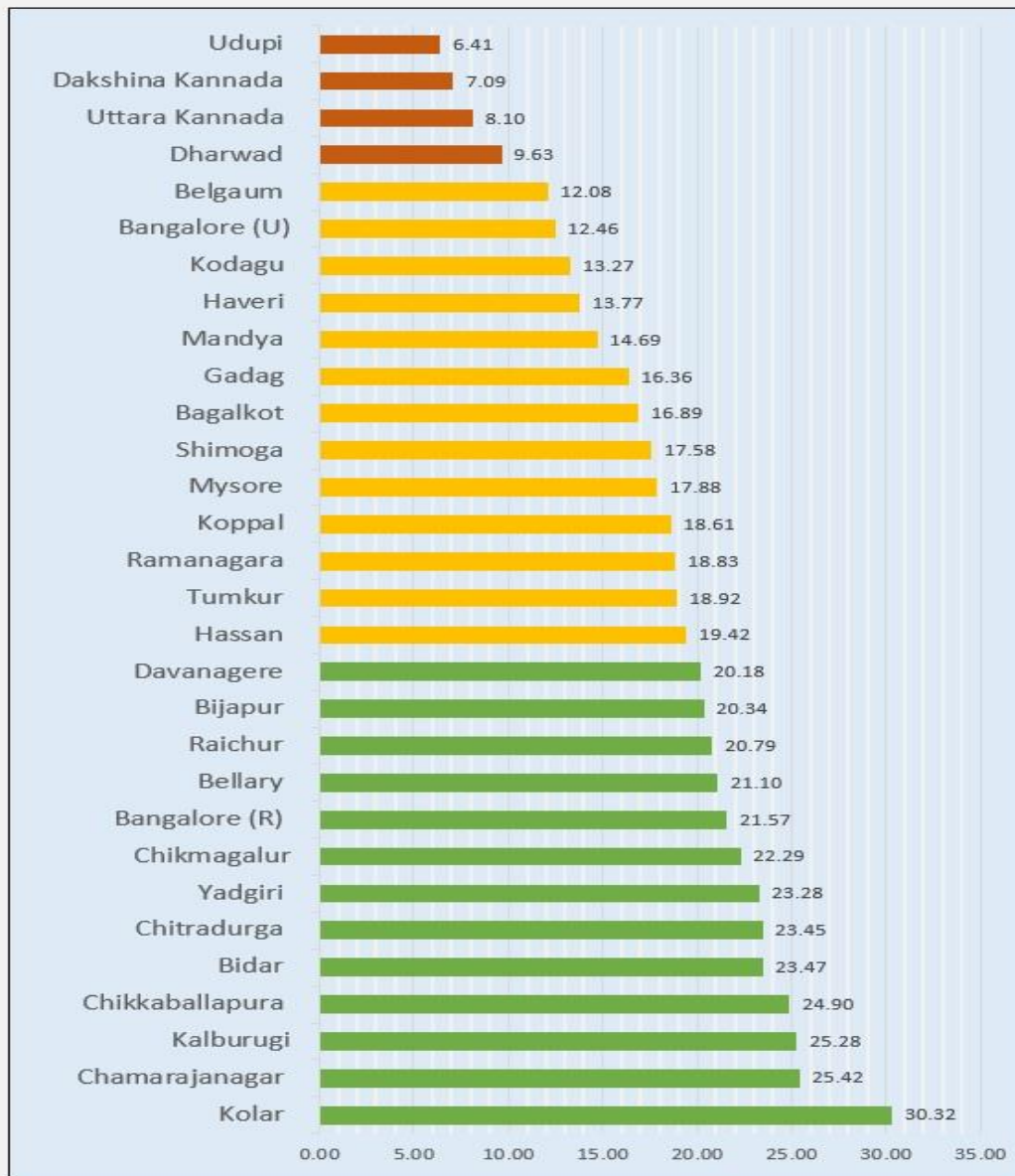
A similar pattern is observed in the distribution of Scheduled Tribe population. Mandya has the lowest ST population at 1.24 per cent, whereas Raichur records the highest at 19.03 per cent. Districts such as Ballari, Chitradurga, Bidar, Yadgiri, and Chamarajanagar also have a high proportion of tribal population. Many of these districts are geographically backward and face problems such as poor connectivity, limited educational institutions, and lack of employment opportunities. These conditions make it difficult for students from ST communities to access higher education and professional training.



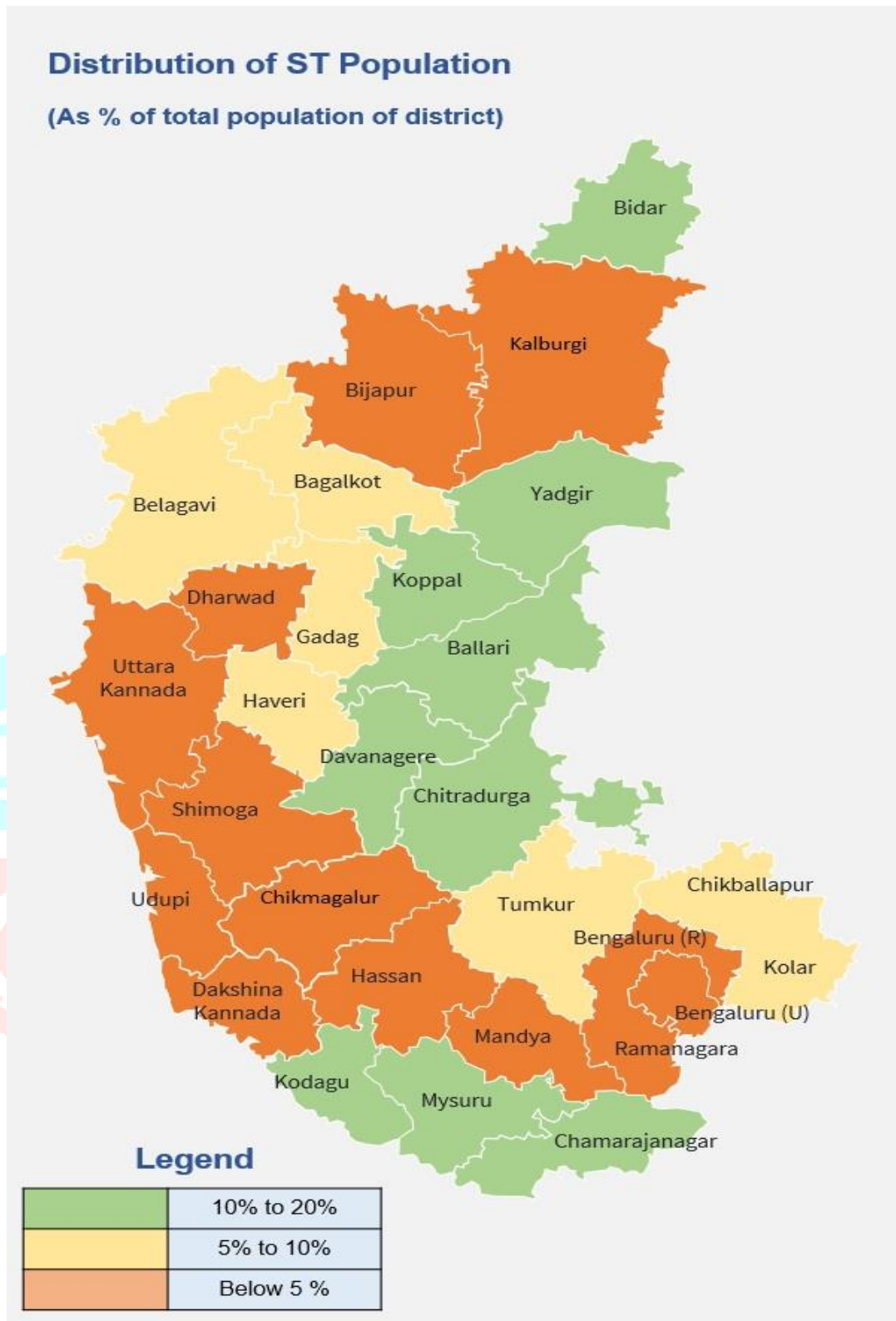
**Fig 1:** District wise share of Scheduled caste population

## Distribution of SC Population

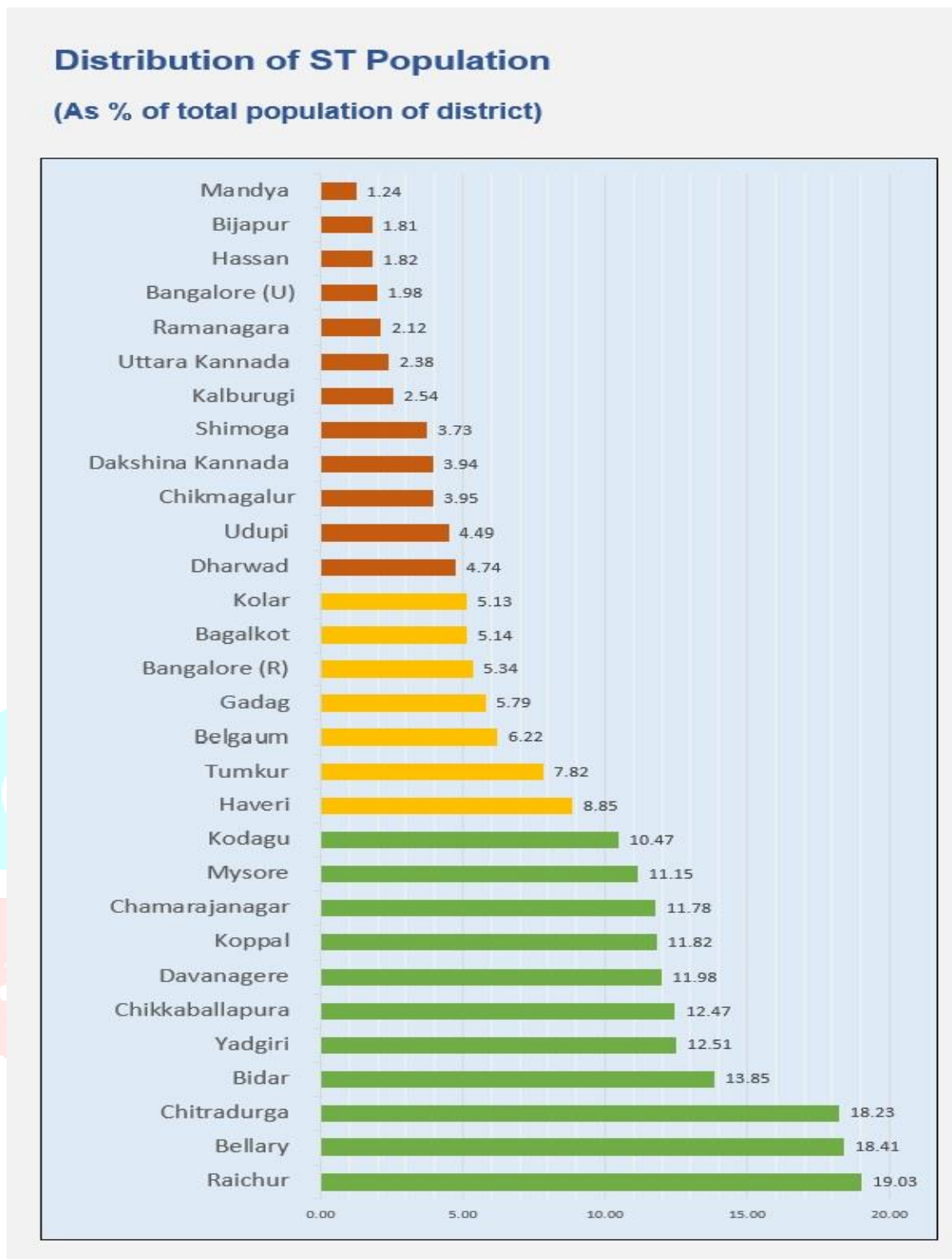
(As % of total population of district)



**Fig 2:** Distribution of Scheduled caste population across the districts



**Fig 3:** District wise share of Scheduled Tribe population



**Fig 4:** Distribution of Scheduled Tribe population across the districts

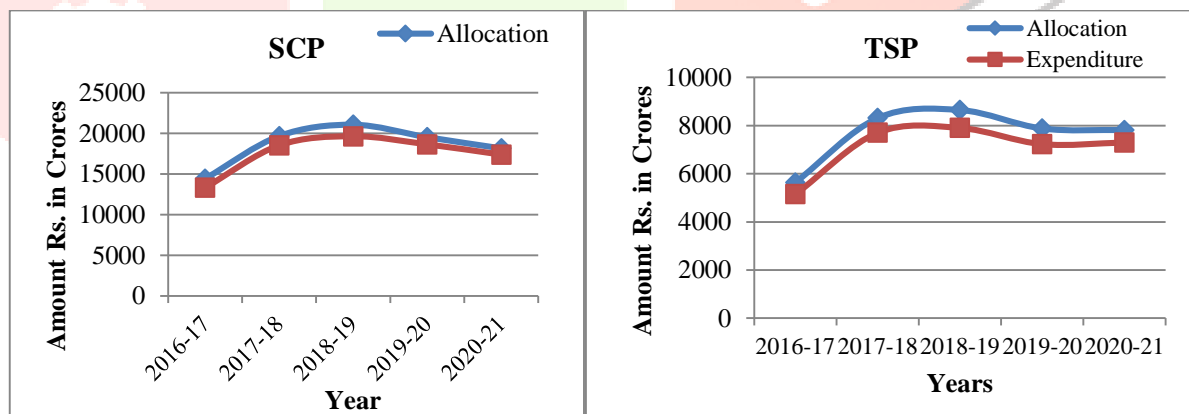
### Budget allocation and expenditure under Special Component Sub Plan (SCP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) in Karnataka

The financial analysis of SCP–TSP implementation during 2016-17 to 2020-21 shows that Karnataka has made considerable efforts to increase budgetary support for marginalized communities. SCP allocation increased from ₹14,408.10 crore in 2016–17 to ₹21,044.14 crore in 2018–19, showing a growth of more than 46 per cent. TSP allocation also increased from ₹5,632.19 crore to ₹8,650.36 crore during the same period. Although there was a slight decline after 2018–19, the overall trend reflects the government’s commitment towards social inclusion. The compound annual growth rate of 4.64 per cent for SCP and 6.20 per cent for TSP further confirms this positive trend (Table 2).

Expenditure under SCP and TSP also increased along with allocation. SCP expenditure rose from ₹13,315.15 crore in 2016–17 to ₹19,619.71 crore in 2018–19, while TSP expenditure increased from ₹5,150.10 crore to ₹7,898.35 crore. The expenditure-allocation ratio remained above 90 per cent in all years, ranging from 0.92 to 0.96 for SCP and 0.91 to 0.93 for TSP. This indicates that most of the allocated funds were actually spent, reflecting better financial management and monitoring mechanisms.

**Table 2: Special component plan and Tribal Sub Plan budget allocation and expenditure in Karnataka from 2016-17 to 2020-21**

Year	Allocation		Expenditure		Expenditure- Allocation Ratio	
	SCP	TSP	SCP	TSP	SCP	TSP
<b>2016-17</b>	14408.10	5632.19	13315.15	5150.10	0.92	0.91
<b>Trend (%)</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
<b>2017-18</b>	19647.58	8314.76	18503.43	7700.21	0.94	0.93
<b>Trend (%)</b>	36.36	47.63	38.97	49.52		
<b>2018-19</b>	21044.14	8650.36	19619.71	7898.35	0.93	0.91
<b>Trend (%)</b>	46.06	53.59	47.35	53.36		
<b>2019-20</b>	19511.85	7879.96	18623.51	7227.59	0.95	0.92
<b>Trend (%)</b>	35.42	39.91	39.87	40.34		
<b>2020-21</b>	18134.34	7816.22	17365.68	7294.98	0.96	0.93
<b>Trend (%)</b>	25.86	38.78	30.42	41.65		
<b>CAGR</b>	<b>4.64</b>	<b>6.20</b>	<b>5.52</b>	<b>6.53</b>		
<b>Average (2017-18 to 2019-20)</b>	<b>20067.86</b>	<b>8281.69</b>	<b>18915.55</b>	<b>7608.72</b>		



**Fig 5: Budget allocation and expenditure under SCP/TSP in Karnataka**

However, when the focus is shifted specifically to higher education, a different picture emerges. The allocation of SCP funds to the higher education department declined sharply from ₹257.86 crore in 2016 to ₹47.95 crore in 2020, representing a fall of nearly 81 per cent (Table 3). Although funding improved in 2021 and 2022, it again declined in 2023 before showing moderate recovery in 2024. This shows that investment in higher education under SCP has been highly unstable. A similar trend is observed under TSP. Allocation declined from ₹98.99 crore in 2016 to ₹14.76 crore in 2020, followed by partial recovery in later years. The combined allocation under SCP–TSP decreased from ₹356.85 crore in 2016 to ₹62.71 crore in 2020. Such sharp reductions severely affect scholarship programmes, hostel facilities, and academic support services for SC/ST students.

Although fund release and expenditure closely followed allocation patterns and utilization rates remained high, with more than 90 per cent of funds spent in most years, stable funding is equally important. In 2022, utilization exceeded 98 per cent under both SCP and TSP, indicating efficient administrative functioning. However, high utilization cannot compensate for inadequate or fluctuating allocation. Without consistent funding, long-term educational planning becomes difficult.

SCP allocation and release registered negative growth rates of -3.34 per cent and -3.01 per cent respectively, while expenditure declined at -1.63 per cent per annum. Similarly, TSP allocation declined by -1.70 per cent, though expenditure showed marginal positive growth of 0.38 per cent. Overall, combined SCP-TSP allocation recorded a negative CAGR of -2.84 per cent, reflecting weakening financial commitment despite improved utilization efficiency.

**Table 3: Allocation-release and expenditure of funds under SCP-TSP to higher education department in Karnataka (Rs in Crores)**

Year	Allocation	Release	Expenditure	%	Allocation	Release	Expenditure	%	Allocation	Release	Expenditure	%
2016	257.86	244.69	238.73	93	98.99	96.29	94.28	95	356.85	340.98	333.01	93.3
2017	146.41	146.41	109.74	75	50.32	50.32	35.1	70	196.73	196.73	144.84	73.6
2018	84.15	84.15	79.07	93.97	30.55	30.55	28.03	91.75	114.7	114.7	107.1	93.38
2019	79.38	79.38	79.22	99.8	28.49	23.53	23.43	82.23	107.87	102.91	102.65	95.16
2020	47.95	47.95	37.78	78.79	14.76	14.76	14.51	98.31	62.71	62.71	52.29	83.38
2021	180.84	180.84	177.62	98.22	41.96	41.96	39.05	93.08	222.8	222.8	216.67	97.25
2022	202.71	202.7	200.47	98.89	78.01	78.01	77.14	98.88	280.72	280.71	277.61	98.89
2023	71.16	71.16	68.1	95.69	32.9	32.9	30.45	92.55	104.07	104.07	98.55	94.7
2024	139.46	139.46	136.98	98.22	59.8	59.8	58.89	98.47	199.26	199.26	195.87	98.29
Average	134.44	132.97	125.30	92.40	48.42	47.57	44.54	91.14	182.86	180.54	169.84	91.99
CAGR (%)	-3.34	-3.01	-1.63	1.74	-1.70	-1.20	0.38	2.11	-2.84	-2.46	-1.04	1.85

Source: SCP-TSP Cell, Karnataka

### Conclusion:

The results indicate that Karnataka has maintained high levels of fund utilization under SCP-TSP, reflecting strong administrative performance. Nevertheless, the persistent fluctuations and negative growth trends in allocation pose a serious challenge to the sustainability of inclusive education initiatives. For SCP-TSP to effectively promote poverty alleviation and social mobility, it is essential to ensure stable and predictable funding, strengthen long-term planning, and prioritize higher education within the welfare framework. Consistent financial commitment, combined with improved institutional support, will be crucial for transforming higher education into a reliable pathway for empowerment among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities.

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