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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# A MICRO LEVEL ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL DEPRIVATION AMONG THE SOCIAL GROUPS OF KASARGOD DISTRICT, KERALA, INDIA WITHIN THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

***Baiju, K. C. and Shibu, S.**

Department of Economics, Central University of Kerala, Tejeswini Hills, Periye (P.O.), Kasaragod, Kerala- Pin:671316

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**ABSTRACT**

The present article is based on an investigation into the educational deprivation among social groups of Kerala. It is a micro level study executed within the human development framework. The study mainly examined the enabling environment for education in the study area. Regional Human Development Enabling Index (RHDEI) and Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) are used to explore the inter-group variations in the incidence of educational deprivation in the study area. The sample size of the study consists of 120 households, which belong to different social groups such as SC, ST, OBC and General. The findings of the study reveal the disparity in educational attainment among different social groups in Kerala, which are placed top in the ladder of human development among other states of India.



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## INTRODUCTION

Inspired by the work of Sen, there is now widespread agreement that deprivation is multidimensional and cannot be adequately captured by unidimensional measures. Sen's argument rests on *capabilities and functionings*. In the process, a new approach was evolved as Human Development Index (HDI) by the United Nations Development Programme in its first Human Development Report in 1990 (UNDP,1990). Since its launch, the Human Development Report has defined human developments as the process of enlarging people's choice. The most critical ones are 'to lead a long and healthy life', 'to be educated', and 'to enjoy a decent standard of living'. Human development can be seen as enlarging people's choices while poverty is the denial of opportunities of and choices, which are most essential to human development. Concerns with identifying people affected by poverty and the desire to measure it have at times obscured the fact that poverty is too complex to be reduced to a single dimension of human life. It has become common for countries to establish an income-based or consumption-based poverty line. Although income focuses on an important dimension of poverty, it gives only a partial picture of the many ways human lives can be blighted. Human poverty is multidimensional in character and diverse rather than uniform in content (UNDP, 2010).

**Corresponding author:* **Baiju, K. C.**
Department of Economics, Central University of Kerala, Tejeswini Hills, Periye (P.O.), Kasaragod- Pin:671316

### Need and Significance of the Study

The nature of the deprivations varies with the social and economic conditions of the community. Issues of poverty in the developing countries involve hunger, illiteracy, epidemics and the lack of health services or access to safe water, which may not be central issues in the more developed countries. Studies of poverty in the more affluent countries concentrate on such variables's social exclusion. These can be forceful deprivations and very hard to eliminate in all countries. There is no real possibility of constructing an index of human poverty that would be equally relevant in the different types of countries (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2009). The nature of poverty in rich countries deserves a specialized index focusing on those deprivations particularly relevant for those countries. The Human Poverty Index (HPI-I) for developing countries concentrate on the deprivation in the three essential elements of human life already reflected in the Human Development Index (HDI), longevity, knowledge, and a decent living standard.The assessment of poverty on the basis of minimum cut-off income used for poor countries fails to show any poverty in general among affluent societies, even when the relatively poor in those societies may lack social participation and may even suffer from hunger and malnutrition. An alternative is to use different poverty lines in different countries. But it is not easy to decide what the appropriate variations would be estimated. The official national poverty lines cannot serve this purpose, since they reflect other

influences especially political, and cannot be used for international comparisons. A more practical possibility is to ~~be~~ focus on material deprivation in hunger and malnutrition, not on the proportion of income that goes to food and nourishment, especially for poor people in the society.

Traditional relative poverty lines provide information about the chosen standard over time as they have been criticised on the grounds that they do not relate to any concept of individual needs. But the popularity remains due to their simplicity (Ravillion, 1996) which may facilitate public discussion about the issues of inequality and poverty in the public domain more easily than more complex measures. The head count ratio is the most common income poverty measure used in several countries for the policy formulation. Sen has been particularly critical of this measure, which he described as being 'obviously a very crude index' and has criticized for being completely insensitive to the distribution of income among the poor (Sen, 1976). Despite the variety of income-based measures, the capability approach is clearly distinct from them all in terms of its recognition of the multidimensionality of well being which focuses on the 'intrinsic ends' rather than 'instrumental means'. According to Sen, well – being and development should be discussed in terms of people's capabilities to function and be whom they want to be. Money, which can help people secure and develop functionings and capabilities, is only instrumental in capability approach. In this backdrop, an attempt to analyze the various dimensions of poverty, which are closely related to human development indicators, among the different social groups of the society and discussion on non-income dimensions on the wellbeing of the people gets significance. In India, the social groups such as the scheduled castes (SCs), the Scheduled Tribes (STs), and the Other Backward Casts (OBCs) are marginalized. These groups have suffered discrimination and thereby exclusion from the mainstream of economic and social sphere in one way or the other. Even though the government introduced several programmes and projects backed by heavy financial support for the uplifting these social groups, their progress in terms of economic and social status is still stagnant. This may be either due to the lack of target specific programmes or error committed with the identification of the real causes of deprivation of basic necessities which are essential for their vertical socio – economic mobility. In this context, an attempt to examine the status of enabling environment for human development and inter-group (SCs, STs, OBC, and General) variation in the incidence of multidimensional poverty in the micro level becomes pertinent.

**Objectives**

- To analyse the multidimensional poverty index of Kerala from the secondary data base
- To find out the deprivation in the dimensions of poverty among different social groups in the study area
- To assess the enabling environment of educational development and educational deprivation among the social groups in the study area.

**Methodology in Brief**

The present study is an investigation into the status of enabling environment for Educational development and the inter-group (SCs, STs, OBC, and General) variations in the incidence of educational deprivation in the study area, ie. Kasaragod District, Kerala. The study uses both qualitative and quantitative methods and follows human development framework of UNDP for the analysis. Both primary and secondary data are used in the study. Analysis of the various dimensions of multidimensional poverty and human development in India, and the enabling environment for human development at Block level in the study area are based on the secondary data which was collected from various Human Development Reports of UNDP, Reports of Planning Commission (GoI), Economic Reviews (GoK), Panchayath Level Statistics, Kasaragod (GoK), and unpublished documents in the office of the Deputy Director (Education) Kasaragod, and the District Medical Office (Kasaragod). The analysis of the inter – group variations in the incidence of multidimensional poverty is based on the primary data collected from 120 sample households belonging to various social groups such as Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Communities (OBC), and General communities residing at Karadukka, Manjeswar, and Parappa Block Pachayaths of the district. Both area sampling and stratified random sampling methods were used for the selection of sample households in the study. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection from the sample households. Regional Human Development Enabling Index (RHDEI) is used to examine the status of enabling environment for human development at Block level in the study area and Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is used to explore the inter-group variations in the incidence of educational deprivation in the study area. The analytical framework of the study is detailed in chapter IV of this thesis.

**Implications of the Study**

The measurement of poverty is a debatable issue among the policy makers and academia. Data base regarding poor households of the country is very important for the formulation of appropriate policies and schemes helping them to escape from the incidence of poverty. Application of unidimensional methodology to measure a multidimensional phenomenon like poverty will not provide exact estimate of poverty. Hope, the findings of this study may provide fruitful for discussion on poverty and related issues in the society. It is expected that the findings related to the human development enabling environment and incidence of multidimensional poverty among the social groups will help the concerned authorities to realize the realities in the society and encourage formulating suitable porogrammes and schemes for helping the people to build up their capabilities to enrich human development and eliminate the incidence of multidimensional poverty. It is also expected that the central argument of the study, implementation of multidimensional methodology for the identification of poor households and meaningful interventions for eliminating the incidence of multidimensional poverty with 'social group specific' programmes and schemes may be considered by the authorities in their developmental agenda.

**Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of India and States**

Based on the 'intensity of deprivation' and 'head count ratio' certain level of categorization of states is possible. That categorization helps to understand the relative position of the states at a glance. Kerala is the only state in India, where head count ratio is below 25 per cent. It signifies that, the proportion of people who are multidimensionally poor is less than 25 per cent of total population. All other states in India, the proportion

of multidimensionally poor people is above 25 per cent. In Jharkhand and Bihar more than 75 per cent of people are multidimensionally poor. These states need intensive programmes to accelerate human development which in turn enable the people to escape from the trap of poverty. The average intensity of deprivation in Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu is more than 40 per cent but less than 45 per cent. It is very high in Bihar (61 %) and Jharkhand (60.2 %). Only nine states in India have the average intensity of deprivation is below 50 per cent. In all other states including 'National average', the average intensity of poverty is more than 50 per cent. In Assam, West Bengal, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar, both 'head count' and 'average intensity of deprivation' are more than 50 per cent. People in Jharkhand and Bihar face severe incidence of multidimenstional poverty. These states require more intensive programmes to accelerate the human development of the people and reduce the incidence of multidimensional poverty. A comprehensive investigation is very much essential to identify the influence of hidden factors in the socio, economic, political, and institutional spectrum of these states.

| States | Deprivationin Education (%) | MPI | Kerala |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kerala | 20.3 | 0.065 | 1 |
| Punjab | 30.0 | 0.120 | 2 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 13.6 | 0.131 | 3 |
| Tamil Nadu | 19.4 | 0.141 | 4 |
| Maharashtra | 20.0 | 0.193 | 5 |
| Haryana | 23.8 | 0.199 | 6 |
| Gujarat | 20.3 | 0.205 | 7 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 25.1 | 0.211 | 8 |
| Karnataka | 24.9 | 0.223 | 9 |
| Assam | 22.0 | 0.303 | 10 |
| West Bengal | 25.4 | 0.317 | 11 |
| Odisha | 20.3 | 0.345 | 12 |
| Rajasthan | 25.0 | 0.351 | 13 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 23.4 | 0.386 | 14 |
| Chhattisgarh | 21.6 | 0.387 | 15 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 22.9 | 0.389 | 16 |
| Jharkhand | 25.3 | 0.463 | 17 |
| Bihar | 29.0 | 0.499 | 18 |
| INDIA | 24.0 | 0.296 | |

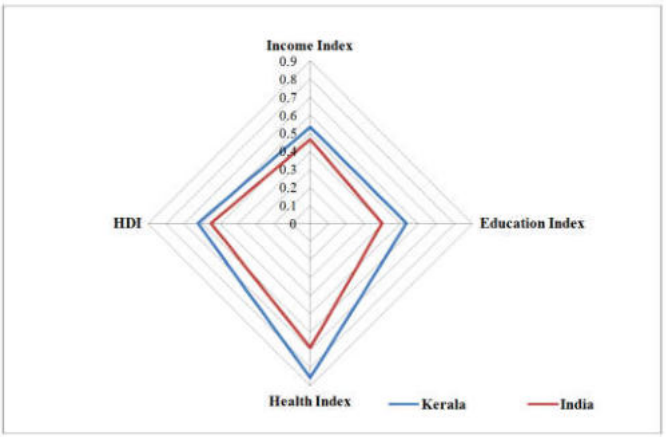
Source: Alkire, Santos (2010)

## Dimensions of Human Development in Kerala and India

The income index of Kerala (0.535) is higher than that of India (0.465). Income indices of all other states in India except Punjab (0.523) and Haryana (0.513) are lower than that of Kerala. Education index (0.534) and health index (0.854) of Kerala is also much higher than that of India. Indices of both education and health of all states of India are much lower than that of Kerala. Education index of Kerala is 33.5 per cent higher than that of India (0.4) and health index of Kerala is 24.1 per cent higher than that of India (0.688). The following figure shows the relative position of Kerala in terms of various dimensions in HDI.

## Dimensions of HDI in Kerala and India

Among the three dimensions of human development, health index is higher in both Kerala and India. But the income index is lower than that of other dimensions. The difference between the health indices of Kerala and India is greater than that of the respective education indices. It is well documented that the drop out ratio is higher in public schools than the private schools. The cost of education in the private schools is not affordable to the poor households and it reflects as low education index, which is the important dimension of human development. At the same time the lower income index of both Kerala and India pose the question of employability of human resources in the country. The reforms and policies related to the education sector should be tuned with the dynamics of labourmarket of the country over the time. Otherwise the unemployment rate especially among the educated will increase in the near future that will pull back the achievements already gained by Kerala and India in both social and economic sectors.




Source: Suryanarayana *et al.* (2011)

## Deprivations in the various Dimensions of Poverty in Kerala

Deprivation in Kerala in all indicators corresponding to the three dimensions of MPI is much lower than that of India. In all indicators in Kerala except 'nutrition status', 'cooking fuel', and 'asset', the deprivation is below 0.1. Deprivation in cooking fuel (0.15) is comparatively higher among other indicators in Kerala which is much higher (0.52) in the national level. Good majority of families in Kerala still depending fire wood and kerosene for cooking. Higher price for Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) and direct delivery of subsidy through banks discourage people especially rural people from using LPG as cooking fuel. Even though government of Kerala promoting to build bio-gas plant in the house through subsidized price, people of Kerala not much motivated to utilize the scope of bio – gas for the domestic use. Major proportion of rural households uses fire wood, which is easily accessible to all the households in Kerala.

## Deprivations in the various Dimensions of MPI

| Dimensions | | Indicators | Kerala | India |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | Education | Schooling | 0.01 | 0.18 |
| | | School Attendance | 0.07 | 0.25 |
| | Percentage Deprivation in Education | | 20.3 | 24.0 |
| II | Health | Mortality | 0.04 | 0.12 |
| | | Nutrition | 0.23 | 0.39 |
| | Percentage Deprivation in Health | | 40.4 | 34.7 |
| III | Living Condition | Electricity | 0.05 | 0.29 |
| | | Sanitation | 0.04 | 0.49 |
| | | Drinking Water | 0.09 | 0.12 |
| | | Floor | 0.03 | 0.40 |
| | | Cooking Fuel | 0.15 | 0.52 |
| | | Assets | 0.11 | 0.38 |
| | Percentage Deprivation in Living Condition | | 39.3 | 41.3 |

Source: Alkire and Santos (2010)

The deprivation in nutrition in Kerala is 0.12 which is 0.39 in the national level. Despite of high level of literacy, especially among female in Kerala, the deprivation in nutrition among them seems to be higher than that of other indicators corresponding to different dimensions of poverty. In the dimension of health, the percentage of deprivation (40.4%) is much higher than that of national level (34.7). It indicates that the intensity of deprivation is very high among the households who are deprived in health. The important highlight of the much acclaimed 'Kerala Model of Development' is the higher level social indicators than that of the economic indicators of the state. So the higher intensity deprivation in health should be treated seriously by the policy makers and the health policy of the state should be treated accordingly.

**Block level status of Education sector Indicators in the Study Area**

Education is one of the important dimensions of human development. Development in the area of education is greatly depends on the availability of educational institutions and the availability of qualified teachers with in the accessible range of the people. Kerala is in the forefront of education sector development in many aspects as compared to other states of India. The official statistics claimed that, during the last decade (2001 -2011) literacy rate in the district has increased from 84.57 per cent to 89.85 per cent. The number of illiterates in the district is about 5.12 per cent of the total illiterates in the state (GoK, 2011). Schooling facilities are available in all Panchayaths in the district. Among 270 primary level schools, 142 schools are under the management of the government while 112 schools are under the private aided management and 15 schools under the private un-aided management. Number of Upper Primary schools in the district is 114 and the number of high schools is 140. These educational institutions are significantly contributing to the educational development of the people in the district. At the same time the accessibility of these educational institutions to the people should be investigated comprehensively.

The enabling environment for human development in the domain of education becomes pertinent in the backdrop of Right to Education Act of India which made the education as the right of children and the responsibility of parents and the State. To estimate the Regional Human Development Enabling Index (RHDEI) with respect to education facilities at the Block level, 'Index for schools to 1000 students', 'Index for total literacy', 'Index for students – teacher ratio', and 'Index for school per kilometers' were treated for the estimation of EDI in the three Block Panchayaths considered for the study. The 'index for school per 1000 students' indicates the relative status of the Block with regard to the number of schools available to the 1000 students compared to the Block Panchayath with highest number of schools . The 'index of total literacy' tells the relative status of the literacy of people compared to the Block Panchayath with highest literacy. The 'index of students – teacher ratio' shows the number of students (in average) under the each teacher in the schools. The 'index for school per kilometer' indicates the accessibility of schools to the students. EDI is the average of all these four indices which tells the relative position of each Block Panchayath compared to the Block with highest EDI. The Education Development Index was estimated to calculate the RHDEI.

**Education Sector Development Indicators of the Study Area**

| Block Panchayaths | Number of Schools / 1000 Students | Total Literacy | Students – Teacher Ratio | Schools per sq. km. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Karadukka | 2 | 84.7 | 24.15 | 0.764 |
| Manjeswar | 4 | 92.5 | 27.67 | 0.223 |
| Parappa | 3 | 87.3 | 25.10 | 0.595 |

Source: (1) Panchayath Level Statistics (Kasaragod), 2011 & (2) Office of the Deputy Director (Education) Kasaragod, 2014

In Manjeswar Block Panchayath four schools are available per 1000 students but 'school – student' ratio is comparatively less in Parappa and Karadukka Blocks. The total literacy in the Manjeswar Block is higher than that of other two Block Panchayaths in the Kasaragod district. The higher Students – teacher ratio in the Manjeswar Blocks signifies the fact that the availability of teachers in this Block is comparatively less than that of the other Blocks. But the availability of schools to the students within the shortest range is very high in the Karadukka Block and very low at Manjeswar Block Panchayath.

**Education Development Indices at Block level**

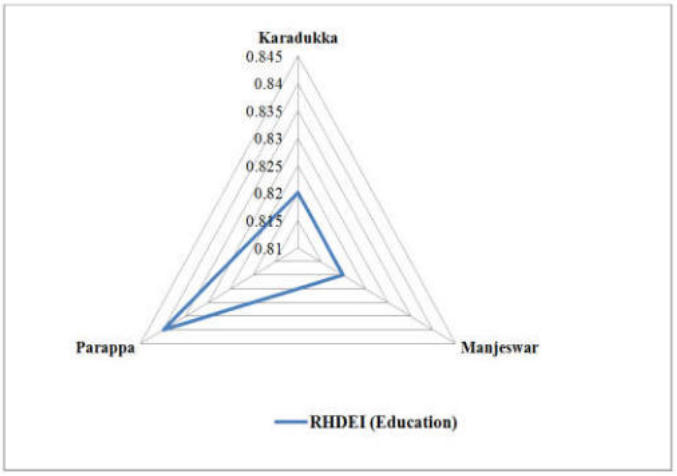
These indices reveal the relative status of these indicators compared to the Block with highest level of achievement thereby the level of Education Development of each Block Panchayaths. It may help to understand the relative status of the corresponding Block Panchayaths and the general reasons behind for its backwardness. The estimates reveal that, Manjeswaram Block Panchayath is relatively higher position with regard to the various indices associated to the education development except the 'index for school per square kilometer' which is very low (0.293) in this Block.The geographical area of the Manjeswar block is comparatively large than that of the other Block Panchayaths in the district. Even though schools are available, the accessibility is not better than that of it to the students of the other Block Panchayaths. It is pushing back the educational development of Manjeswar Block. If the authorities indented to starting new schools in the district, Manjeswar Block has the legitimacy to get first preference. It will enhance the accessibility which will help to improve the education development of the Block. The Karadukkablock

| Block Panchayaths | Index for 'Schools / 1000 Students' | Index for 'Total Literacy' | Index for 'Students – Teacher Ratio' | Index for 'School/sq. km.' | Education Development Index (EDI) | Ranking | Development Category |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Karadukka | 0.50 | 0.913 | 0.873 | 1.000 | 0.821 | 3 | LP |
| Manjeswar | 1.00 | 1.000 | 1.000 | 0.293 | 0.823 | 2 | LP |
| Parappa | 0.75 | 0.946 | 0.907 | 0.779 | 0.845 | 1 | BP |
| Arithmetic Mean (AM) | | | | | 0.841 | | |
| Standard Deviation (SD) | | | | | 0.013 | | |
| AM + SD | | | | | 0.850 | | |

Source: Estimation of the Investigator

which remains at the bottom level, registering lowest index for education development emphasizing the need for improving the availability of schools and hereby enabling the environment for human development with respect to education. The index for schools per 1000 students (0.5) in the Karadukka block is lowest among other Blocks. However the accessibility of schools within the shortest range is very high in this Block. In Parappa Block Panchayath all the indices related to education development seems to be balanced. This Block Panchayath ranked first among the other Block Panchayaths of the study area. The educational Development Index (EDI) of Parappa Block Panchayath is 0.845 where as the EDI of Karadukka and Manjeswar Blocks are 0.821 and 0.823 respectively. Even though the variation can be seen in the Education Development Index (EDI) among the Block Panchayaths, the absolute difference is negligible. It indicates that the human development enabling environment with regard to education is approximately same in these Block Panchayaths. The average (AM) of EDI is 0.841and its standard deviation (SD) is 0.013. The sum total of AM and SD (AM + SD) is 0.85. If the EDI of the Block Panchayath is greater than 0.85 that Block can be categorize as the better performing (BP) Block Panchayath with regard to education development. Only Parappa Block Panchayath belongs to this category. The EDI's of Manjeswar, Karadukka Blocks are 0.823 and 0.821respectively. Since the EDI of these Blocks are below the average EDI (0.85), these Blocks can be categorized as lower performing (LP) Blocks.

**Relative status of Block Panchayaths in Education Development Index**




The assessment of performance at Block Panchayaths level is relative. In this assessment the performance of the Blocks in the dimension of education compared with the Block with comparatively higher performance in the corresponding dimension. The education index value cannot be compared with the blocks which do not came into the area of study as it remains a relative judgment.

**Regional Human Development Enabling Indices (RHDEI) of the Study Area**

Regional Human Development Enabling Index (RHDEI) is a composite index of Education Development Index (EDI), Aggregate Index of Health (AIH), and Aggregate Index of Livelihood (AIL). It shows the human development enabling environment of the study area where education, health, and livelihood of people play an important role. The relative status of education sector, health sector, and livelihood of the people were assessed at the Block level to understand the human development enabling environment of the study area. The Regional Human Development Index (RHDEI) is the mean value of the EDI, AIH, and AIL. It shows the relative status of each Block Panchayath in terms enabling environment for human development.

**Aggregate RHDEI at Block Level**

| Block Panchayath | Education (EDI) | Health (AIH) | Livelihood (AIL) | Composite RHDEI | Ranking | Category |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Karadukka | 0.821 | 0.814 | 0.8485 | 0.827 | 2 | MP |
| Manjeswar | 0.823 | 0.698 | 0.8845 | 0.802 | 3 | LP |
| Parappa | 0.845 | 0.937 | 0.8081 | 0.863 | 1 | BP |
| Arithmetic Mean (AM) | | | | 0.831 | | |
| Standard Deviation (SD) | | | | 0.031 | | |
| AM + SD | | | | 0.862 | | |

Source: Estimation of the investigator

There exists a slight difference in the domain of human development enabling environment which is assed in terms of RHDEI among the three Block Panchayaths. The RHDI of Parappa Block (0.863) is greater than that of Karadukka Block (0.827) and Manjeswar Block (0.808). These three Block Panchayths were categorized on the basis of arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the Regional Human Development Enabling Index. According to this classification Parappa Block Pancgayath categorized as 'Better Performing Block' and Karadukka Block categorized as 'Moderately Performing Block' in Kasaragod District. The performance of Manjeswar Block Panchayath is lower than that of other Block Panchayathsin the district. The Aggregate Index of Health (AIH) of this Block is seems to be lowest among all the indices related to the three dimensions. Even though slight difference exists in the Regional Human Development Enabling Indices (RHDEI) of the three Block Panchayths, the difference is negligible in absolute terms. It indicates that the enabling environment for human development is approximately same in these three Block Panchayaths. But the difference in the dimension specific Regional Human Development Enabling Indices is significant. The dimension specific difference exhausted when these indices clubbed together to assess the Block level RHDEI. Human development is the outcome of the attainment in education, health, and income status of the people. The Regional Human Development Enabling Indices of the Block Panchayths in the study area reveals that, the human development enabling environment of these Block Panchayaths is same. At the same time more interventions is required in the health sector where more inter – block variations in AIH occurred. Human development can be seen as the improvement in the education, health, and standard of living. Capability of an individual depends on these functionings. Effective environment to enabling human development is very critical in the scenario of human development. It is well known that human development is a gradual process. To accelerate human development the enabling environment for human development must be utilized effectively. The Provision of education and health which are very critical factors in the human development process alone do not help to accelerate human development of a region. It requires proper monitoring and follows up by the authorities and should be ensured that these provisions are benefitting to the people in positive manner.

Educational development of student belongs to SC and ST community is not satisfactory. It is observed that SC and ST students face various forms of discrimination in schools. Most of the SC and ST students who enrolled in the public schools in the study area not go to the school regularly. According to of the teachers, the parents of SC and ST students are least bothered about the importance of educating their child thereby denying them the great opportunity for benefitting the educational entitlements and human development. Lack of motivation is also preventing them to reach into the main stream through education. Due to these reasons the drop out ratio is high among the students belongs to these communities. The deferential access of various services contributing to the high incidence of deprivation among the households belongs to SCs and STs Communities. Discrimination in the provision in the provisioning of basic infrastructure with the SC - ST localities also adversely affects their access to basic facilities. Despite the availability of the various legal safeguards for overcoming exclusion and promoting their overall development, the households belongs to SC and ST communities lag far behind other social groups in human development due to their high incidence of multidimensional poverty.

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