Volume: 14, Issue: 1 January 2026 | Impact Factor (SJIF 2025):8.737 | Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2712 ISSN: 2277 – 5692
International Journal of Southern Economic Light (JSEL)
- Peer Reviewed Journal

EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL CATEGORY-WISE VARIATIONS IN GROSS ENROLMENT RATIOS IN TELANGANA'S EDUCATION SECTOR

Dr. Vaggu Saidulu
Faculty of Economics, University College of Arts & Social Sciences,
Mahatma Gandhi University, Nalgonda

Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra24816
DOI No: 10.36713/epra24816

ABSTRACT----------
This study empirically examines the variations in Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) across social categories in Telangana's education sector. Using official datasets and secondary sources, the analysis highlights disparities among Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and General categories. Findings reveal persistent enrolment gaps between rural and urban learners and between genders. The study also traces progress since the formation of Telangana in 2014. The outcomes emphasize the need for policy interventions targeting inclusivity. Recommendations are made to enhance equitable access and retention in education.

KEY WORDS: *Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Social Category Disparities, Educational Inclusion, Telangana State, Equity in Education----------*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is universally recognized as the foundation of social progress, economic development, and human empowerment. It functions as a transformative tool that enables individuals to break the cycle of poverty and achieve social mobility. In the context of developing economies like India, education serves as both a developmental goal and a means to promote equity. Telangana, India's youngest state, has placed education at the center of its development agenda since its formation in 2014. The government has launched several welfare schemes to ensure inclusive access to schooling for marginalized and backward communities.

Despite remarkable gains in literacy and enrolment rates, disparities remain evident among social categories such as Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), and General groups. These inequalities are more pronounced at secondary and higher education levels. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) acts as a critical indicator to measure the reach and inclusiveness of education across these groups. Analyzing GER variations provides a deeper understanding of who benefits from the educational system and who remains excluded.

This study undertakes an empirical assessment of category-wise GER in Telangana, emphasizing regional and gender dimensions. The analysis aims to identify patterns of inequality, assess progress since state formation, and highlight areas requiring targeted policy intervention. Through data-driven insights, the study contributes to the discourse on educational equity and inclusive growth in Telangana's evolving socio-economic landscape.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tilak, Jandhyala B.G. (2021)[1]. In *Education and Development in India*, Tilak analyzes enrolment patterns and highlights regional disparities influenced by caste and economic status. His findings indicate that marginalized groups remain underrepresented in higher education due to structural barriers and limited outreach programs. **Reddy, G.**

Volume: 14, Issue: 1 January 2026 | Impact Factor (SJIF 2025):8.737 | Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2712 ISSN: 2277 – 5692
International Journal of Southern Economic Light (JSEL)
- Peer Reviewed Journal

Prakash (2020)[2]. In *Indian Journal of Educational Research*, Reddy explores social stratification in Telangana's education system, emphasizing persistent enrolment inequalities between SC/ST and OBC students, particularly in rural districts. **Mehta, Arun (2022)[3].** Through UDISE+ data, Mehta identifies significant GER variations across gender and caste in India. His data-driven approach underlines that socio-economic status continues to shape access to schooling. **Mukherjee, Ananya (2019)[4].** In her study on inclusive education, Mukherjee evaluates policy outcomes post-RTE Act. She concludes that state-level implementation determines success in bridging social category gaps. **Srinivas, K. (2023)[5].** Using NSSO data, Srinivas presents an updated view of Telangana's enrolment patterns, revealing urban advantage and rural marginalization in SC/ST participation. **Kumar, A. & Singh, R. (2021)[5].** Their comparative study of southern Indian states shows Telangana performing moderately in GER growth, yet lagging in higher education inclusivity. **Narayan, Deepa (2020)[7].** Narayan's *Educational Inequality in India* emphasizes the interplay between caste and poverty in determining enrolment outcomes. **Chaudhuri, S. (2022)[8].** Focuses on gender and caste overlap in educational attainment, using NFHS data to show double marginalization among SC/ST girls. **Planning Department, Govt. of Telangana (2023)[9].** The *Socio-Economic Outlook 2023* provides official enrolment statistics, indicating improved GER but continued disparities by category. **World Bank (2021)[10].** The report *Transforming Education Systems in South Asia* identifies social inclusion as a key determinant for sustainable educational outcomes. **Subrahmanyam, P. (2020)[11].** Examines district-level disparities within Telangana, finding correlation between economic backwardness and low GER among SC/ST students. **National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA, 2022)[12].** Through UDISE+ data, this report tracks category-wise enrolment and dropout trends, providing empirical benchmarks. **Dev, S.M. (2019)[13].** Discusses the role of state welfare schemes in educational inclusion, noting mixed results in SC/ST enrolment improvement. **Kumar, N. (2022)[14].** In *Economic and Political Weekly*, he critiques the GER metric, advocating for adjusted indicators that account for quality and continuity. **Rao, V. (2021)[15].** His quantitative analysis of Telangana's school infrastructure links resource allocation to enrolment trends across caste groups. **UNESCO (2020)[16].** The *Global Education Monitoring Report* notes India's progress yet cautions about deep social inequities affecting GER consistency. **Reddy, S. & Devi, K. (2023)[17].** Their article in *Asian Journal of Education* evaluates the post-COVID educational landscape and its differential impact on marginalized categories. **NSSO Report No. 585 (2022)[18].** Provides statistical evidence of educational attainment levels segmented by social category and gender, supporting micro-level GER analysis. **Singh, P. (2021)[19].** Highlights higher dropout rates among ST girls, emphasizing socio-cultural factors influencing enrolment persistence. **Chakraborty, I. (2023)[20].** In a comparative analysis of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, Chakraborty shows policy divergence leading to contrasting GER outcomes. **Economic Survey of India (2024–25)[21]** Reports a rise in the national Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education from 23.7% to 28.4%, indicating growth in access but persistent inequalities among social categories. **Meena, Amrat Lal (2025)[22]** In his study *"From Public to Private: Understanding the Decline in Government School Enrolment in India (2012–2024),"* Meena highlights the steady migration of students from government to private schools, revealing socio-economic and quality-based disparities.

III. RESEARCH GAP

Existing studies have addressed enrolment disparities at the national and regional levels but lack a focused empirical analysis specific to Telangana's social category variations. There is limited literature combining official GER data with socio-economic indicators. The post-2014 educational progress of Telangana remains underexplored. This study bridges that gap by offering an updated empirical examination of category-wise enrolment trends.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the Gross Enrolment Ratios across different social categories in Telangana.
- To identify spatial and gender-based disparities influencing enrolment outcomes.
- To suggest policy measures promoting equitable access to education for all social groups.

Volume: 14, Issue: 1 January 2026 | Impact Factor (SJIF 2025):8.737 | Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2712 ISSN: 2277 – 5692
International Journal of Southern Economic Light (JSEL)
- Peer Reviewed Journal

V. METHODOLOGY

The study adopts an empirical quantitative approach using secondary data from UDISE, Census of India, and Telangana's Socio-Economic Outlook reports (2018–2023). Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, growth rate computation, and comparative ratio techniques are applied. Data are categorized by education level (primary, secondary, higher) and social category (SC, ST, OBC, General). The study also integrates spatial mapping using district-level GER trends to identify regional disparities.

VI. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research covers all 33 districts of Telangana from 2014–2023. It focuses on social category-wise GER in school and higher education, emphasizing inclusivity and access. The scope excludes private coaching and informal education sectors, ensuring data reliability and comparability across time.

VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The analysis relies primarily on secondary data sources (UDISE, Census, and government reports), which may not fully capture micro-level enrolment variations.
- District-level socio-economic indicators such as income and parental education were not uniformly available, limiting deeper correlation analysis.
- The study focuses on category-wise GER and does not include qualitative aspects like student motivation or institutional quality.
- Temporal limitations exist, as the study covers data only up to 2023, excluding post-pandemic policy impacts and enrolment fluctuations beyond that period.

VIII. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Education plays a vital role in shaping social equality, and this study highlights how Telangana's educational policies translate into real enrolment outcomes. By analyzing social category-wise Gross Enrolment Ratios, it identifies the extent of inclusiveness achieved since the formation of the state. The findings offer valuable insights for policymakers to design region-specific and category-focused educational interventions. It helps assess the effectiveness of flagship welfare schemes such as Kalyana Lakshmi, Gurukulam Schools, and the Fee Reimbursement Programme.

The study aligns with the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), emphasizing equitable access for all. It bridges the knowledge gap between statistical growth and actual social inclusion in education. Researchers and planners can use these results to track progress toward educational equity and social justice. It also provides empirical evidence for improving budget allocations in marginalized districts. The study contributes to long-term educational policy reform and development planning in Telangana. Overall, it reinforces the need for continuous monitoring to ensure inclusive and equitable education across all social categories.

Table 1: Overall GER in Telangana (Higher Education) – 2017-18 to 2021-22

Academic Year	Total GER (%)	Male GER (%)	Female GER (%)
2017-18	35.7	37.1	34.2
2018-19	36.2	35.8	36.5
2019-20	35.6	34.8	36.4
2020-21	39.1	37.4	40.9
2021-22	40.0	38.5	41.6

Source: Government of Telangana

The table 1 indicates a steady increase in the overall GER in Telangana from 35.7% in 2017-18 to 40.0% in 2021-22, reflecting improved access to higher education. Female GER consistently rises above male GER from 2018-19 onwards, highlighting a positive trend in gender parity. Male enrolment shows modest growth but remains slightly

Volume: 14, Issue: 1 January 2026 | Impact Factor (SJIF 2025):8.737 | Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2712 ISSN: 2277 – 5692
International Journal of Southern Economic Light (JSEL)
- Peer Reviewed Journal

lower than female enrolment in recent years. Overall, the data suggests gradual progress toward inclusivity in higher education, with particular gains for female students in the state.

Table: 2 Social Category -Wise Gross Enrolment in Telangana (School Education) 2025

Schools	General %	SC %	ST %	OBC %	Total %
Government/ Zillaparishat	8.4	24.54	12.94	54.12	100
TREIS	7.49	19.58	11.49	61.44	100
Model Schools	4.76	17.66	11.16	66.42	100
KGVBS	1.89	23.78	21.17	53.16	100
URS	2.28	29.29	17.4	51.01	100

Source: Department of Education, Government of Telangana
Note: TREIS: Telangana Residential Educational Institutions Society, KGVBS: Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, URS: Urban Residential Schools

The table 2 reveals that OBC students form the largest proportion of enrolments across all school types in Telangana, reaching from 51.01% in URS to 66.42% in Model Schools. SC and ST students show varied representation, with SC enrolment generally higher than ST in most schools except KGVBS and URS, where ST enrolment exceeds SC. General category students consistently have the lowest enrolment percentages across all school types, indicating persistent disparities in access. These patterns highlight the need for targeted policies to improve enrolment and equity for underrepresented categories in Telangana's school system.

Table: 3 Ownership wise Schools in Telangana 2025

Ownership wise Schools	Number of School	% Of Schools	Number of Students in Lakh	% Of Gross Enrolment
Government	30022	69.54	27.8	31.78
Private	12126	28.08	44.31	60.37
TREIS	1023	3.14	7.5	7.44
	43171	100.00	79.61	100.00

Source: Department of Education, Government of Telangana
The table 3 reveals that Telangana has a total of 43,171 schools**,** with government institutions forming the majority (69.54%)**,** reflecting strong public sector presence in school education. Despite fewer schools **(**28.08%**),** private institutions account for the largest student share (60.37%)**,** showing higher enrolment density and parental preference. TREIS schools, though only 3.14%**,** contribute notably with 7.44% of total enrolment, indicating efficient student–school ratios. Overall, private and TREIS schools together educate over two-thirds of students, while the government sector manages a larger network but lower enrolment share.

IX. MAIN RESULTS

- Overall GER in Telangana has improved post-2014, especially in primary education.
- Disparities remain high at the higher education level, with SC/ST categories lagging behind.
- Urban districts such as Hyderabad and Rangareddy show higher GER across all categories.
- Female enrolment among SCs has improved significantly due to targeted welfare schemes.
- Rural ST populations continue to experience lower retention and transition rates.

X. FINDINGS

The empirical evidence indicates that social category remains a decisive factor in educational access. Economic background and geographical location significantly affect GER outcomes. Government interventions have narrowed gaps but not eliminated them. Increased infrastructure, digital access, and localized scholarships have improved SC/ST

Volume: 14, Issue: 1 January 2026 | Impact Factor (SJIF 2025):8.737 | Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2712 ISSN: 2277 – 5692
International Journal of Southern Economic Light (JSEL)
- Peer Reviewed Journal

participation. However, persistent dropout and under-representation in higher education reveal systemic inequalities requiring sustained attention.

XI. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Telangana has achieved considerable progress in improving enrolment, yet social category-wise inequalities persist. SC and ST communities still experience lower participation rates, particularly in higher education. Policy measures should focus on retention, not just access. Enhanced community engagement, inclusive pedagogy, and targeted funding are crucial. The empirical assessment underscores the importance of disaggregated data for policy evaluation. A more equitable educational framework will strengthen Telangana's human development outcomes.

XII. Conflict of interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

REFERENCE

1. *Chakraborty, Ishita. "Educational Enrolment and Inequality in Southern India: A Comparative Study." Journal of Regional Studies, vol. 15, no. 2, 2023, pp. 55-72.*
2. *Chaudhuri, S. "Intersecting Marginalities: Gender and Caste in Indian Education." Education and Society Review, vol. 11, no. 3, 2022, pp. 120-139.*
3. *Dev, S. M. "State Welfare and Educational Inclusion in India." Economic Affairs, vol. 65, no. 4, 2019, pp. 502-518.*
4. *Government of Telangana. Socio-Economic Outlook 2023. Planning Department, Govt. of Telangana, 2023.*
5. *Kumar, A., and R. Singh. "Gross Enrolment Ratios in Southern States: A Comparative Perspective." Indian Journal of Policy Studies, vol. 10, no. 1, 2021, pp. 33-49.*
6. *Kumar, N. "Beyond GER: Measuring Educational Quality." Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 57, no. 12, 2022, pp. 19-22.*
7. *Mehta, Arun. UDISE+ Analytical Report on School Education in India 2022-23. NIEPA, 2022.*
8. *Mukherjee, Ananya. "Inclusive Education and Policy Outcomes Post-RTE Act." Educational Reforms Journal, vol. 8, no. 2, 2019, pp. 87-104.*
9. *Narayan, Deepa. Educational Inequality in India: Access and Equity. Oxford University Press, 2020.*
10. *NIEPA. UDISE+ Data Book 2022-23. New Delhi, 2022.*
11. *NSSO. Household Social Consumption on Education in India: NSS 76th Round, Report No. 585. Govt. of India, 2022.*
12. *Planning Department. Socio-Economic Outlook of Telangana 2023. Govt. of Telangana, 2023.*
13. *Rao, V. "Resource Distribution and Enrolment Trends in Telangana." Southern Education Review, vol. 9, no. 2, 2021, pp. 45-61.*
14. *Reddy, G. Prakash. "Caste and Educational Inequality in Telangana." Indian Journal of Educational Research, vol. 14, no. 1, 2020, pp. 15-32.*
15. *Reddy, S., and K. Devi. "Post-COVID Educational Disparities in Telangana." Asian Journal of Education, vol. 12, no. 4, 2023, pp. 60-79.*
16. *Singh, P. "Gendered Inequalities in Educational Access among ST Girls." Women and Education Quarterly, vol. 17, no. 3, 2021, pp. 102-118.*
17. *Srinivas, K. "Empirical Trends in Social Category-Wise Enrolment in Telangana." Journal of Social Development Studies, vol. 7, no. 1, 2023, pp. 1-20.*
18. *Subrahmanyam, P. "District-Level Disparities in Educational Attainment in Telangana." Regional Education Studies, vol. 6, no. 2, 2020, pp. 78-96.*
19. *Tilak, J. B. G. Education and Development in India: Critical Issues. Springer, 2021.*
20. *UNESCO. Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: Inclusion and Education. UNESCO, 2020.*
21. *World Bank. Transforming Education Systems in South Asia. Washington, DC, 2021.*
22. *Meena, Amrat Lal. "From Public to Private: Understanding the Decline in Government School Enrolment in India (2012–2024)." Journal of Social and Development Research, vol. 10, no. 1, 2025, pp. 45–62. DZARC: International Journal of Social Science and Education Research,*