

Determinants of Pass Percentage of Students in Aided Private Degree Colleges: Evidence for Karnataka

M R Narayana*

This paper provides empirical evidence and policy implications for determinants of pass percentage of students (or students' performance) in aided private degree colleges in Karnataka State (India) from 1991-92 to 1997-98. The 113 sample aided colleges are grouped under different management and determinants are estimated using cross-section, pooled regression and panel data models. The estimation results show both similarities and differences in the nature and magnitude of the determinants and pooling of data between management and estimation models. For instance, regardless of the nature of estimation and the management of colleges, the impact of grants-in-aid (through student-teacher ratio) on the pass percentage of students is found to be statistically insignificant. Apart from the college-specific effects, whether a college offers the aided courses or aided and unaided courses makes a remarkable difference in the students' performance. These results indicate, among others, the need for a (i) reconsideration of the current and future GIA policy in the State and (ii) greater role for college management in determining and improving the students' performance in the aided colleges.

I Introduction

A private degree college is called an aided college if it receives the Grants-in-Aid (GIA) from the State government¹. At present, in Karnataka State (India) the GIA is given only in the form of maintenance or teaching grant or centpercent reimbursement of salary for teaching and non-teaching staff in the aided courses (i.e., courses leading to the award of B.A., B.Sc. and B.Com degrees)². Since teachers are the vital inputs for the performance of students in the examination, and such performance of students is an important indicator of academic performance of aided colleges, the GIA is a key policy variable for explanation and prediction of pass percentage of students in the aided colleges.

* Professor of Economics and Head, Quantitative Analysis Unit, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Nagarahavi P.O. Bangalore 560 072.

Grateful thanks are due to: the Department of Education (Government of Karnataka, Bangalore) for sponsoring the research contained in this paper under the Institute's Project No.IXQALU10; the participants of a seminar at the ISEC for useful comments and suggestions; and Mr Jaya Krishna for technical assistance. However, the views expressed in the paper are those of the author.

¹ For details of GIA code for collegiate education in Karnataka State, see, for instance, Murthy, 1993, pp.217-244.

² In addition, GIA is provided for legal courses leading to the award of L.L.B. degree (i.e., three years course). At present, the number of aided law colleges is only eight in the State. The aided law courses are excluded from the scope of this paper.