



livelihoods

today and tomorrow

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‘How To’

Help Students in Government Schools

According to India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), 22.7 crore students are enrolled in 1.4 million schools (Including 1.08 million government schools and 0.32 million private schools) in the country (As on May 2017). IBEF was established by Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Government of India. Every year 18 million children are enrolled in to school education. Additional two million schools are required to provide education to children in our country. Lack of infrastructure, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the government schools leads poor performance in education. Gradually students' enrollment has been decreasing in government schools and increasing in private schools. According to a survey, students enrollment in government schools fell by 13 million and at the same time enrollement in private schools increased by 17 million during 2010-11 and 2015-16. Quality education became a serious issue in government schools and students from poor families paying of price for poor quality education. Largely poorest of the poor and downtrodden families' children are enrolling in government schools. Given this context number of Civil Society Organizations (CSO), Gram Panchayath (GP) and individuals are coming forward to help students in government schools to access quality education at different scales in various forms. In this context, we try to address the issue of has how to help government schools.



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Education is a most important factor, which nurtures the personality of an individuals and impacts on individuals entire life, guides their life journey and influences their future generation. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) recognized education as a right to every individual. Constitution of India rightly recognizes the importance of education to everyone in the country. There are 33 educational Boards in the country, including Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE). Government of India (GoI) had launched flagship program Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), 2000 to provide quality education to all children up to 14 years old, with special focus on downtrodden groups' children and girls. Around 1.14 lakh crores where spent on SSA to provide free quality education to students between 2009 – 2014. However, quality of education, became a vital issue and government educational institutions' performance gradually declined over the decades. As a results there has been study increase in children drop-outs, decreased enrollement in government and increased enrollement in private schools. Thus, education became a commodity and quality education centered around its dependency on the capacity of purchasing power of parents. The commodification/commercialisation of education resulted in victimisation of children belonging to poor and marginalised groups, due to poor performance of government schools.

Improving schools and helping students, is an important and foremost tasks in country. Eighty percent of poor and marginalized children are studying in government schools. Lack of performance in government schools, is impacting poor students education and these students are becoming victims. There are number of factors effecting performance in government schools they are as follows...

- ◇ Lack of student centric education.
- ◇ Scarcity and poor Infrastructural facilities.
- ◇ Poor students teachers ratio.
- ◇ Lack of innovative teaching method.

- ◇ Administrative burden on teachers.
- ◇ No special guidance/classes on poor performing students.
- ◇ Lack of regular monitoring and evaluation on teachers and headmaster.
- ◇ Lack of parents’ involvement in school management.
- ◇ Conventional teaching practices.
- ◇ Parents’ illiteracy.
- ◇ Lack of separate classes with special focus on backward students.
- ◇ Lack of assistance to the students related to the doubts.
- ◇ Concept clarity.
- ◇ Insufficient funds’ allotment by the government.
- ◇ Lack of computerization and digital classroom room systems in the schools.



To enhance quality education in government schools number of committed individuals, CSOs have been working by using different strategies. The various strategies are, working with schools directly, running alternative schools, working with children’s parents, assessing students’ performance, imparting training to teachers, providing materials. One can help students in many ways and different forms, by way of providing infrastructural facilities, conducting special classes to the students. Most of the NGOs and individuals are directly involving in providing various services and facilities to schools as follows...

- Providing additional quality teachers.
- Providing class books, bags, lab material, play kits, general books etc.
- Establishing libraries and providing quality material in the form of academic books and general books.
- Conducting special classes for two to three hours before and after school hours.
- Imparting training to the teachers to upgrade them with various teaching methods and in-depth knowledge on the subject.
- Providing drinking water facility, toilet facility and play ground for the students.
- Conducting motivational classes to enhance students focus on education.
- Providing lights, fans in classrooms.
- Providing additional support to 10th standard students in the early morning and night two or three months prior to their public exams.
- Creating awareness among parents about their child education and giving participatory approach to the process.
- Promoting students by giving prizes once in year to the students for their academic excellence.
- Giving prizes once in a year to students for their performance in story telling, book reading and writing book summaries.
- Conducting weekly tests for the students on academic subjects and general knowledge.
- Conducting quiz, drawing and debate competition, essay writing on periodical basis.
- Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW).

“Curriculum does not mean only academic subjects traditionally taught in the school, but it includes totality of experiences that a pupil receives through the manifold activities that go in the school, the classroom, library, laboratory, workshop, playground and in the numerous contacts between the teachers and pupils. In this sense whole life of school becomes curriculum, which can touch the life of student at all points and help him in the development of a balanced personality (Pritam, 2004).

Source: Secondary Education Commission (1952-53)”

- Developing 3R (reading, writing and arithmetic) skills in students.
- Providing computers and other digital equipments to schools.
- Providing academic material in digitalised form.
- Providing educational material on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), facility like sanitary napkins to decrease the dropout ratio of girls.
- Providing computer faculty.
- Providing uniform and shoes in order to maintain the hygiene practices.
- Providing sports equipments.
- Constructing compound walls to maintain security, peaceful atmosphere and discipline in the school boundaries.
- Creating awareness and encouraging parents to monitor their child education at home.

Professor Sandeep Desai –Shloka Missionaries

A 52 year old professor and a familiar face on Mumbai's local trains . He is a marine engineer , MBA by training and a professor at Mumbai's renowned SP Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mr. Desai wrote to over 250 big companies for help but was refused by everyone. He goes around begging on the crowded local trains to raise funds for running English medium schools for underprivileged children in rural parts of Maharashtra and Rajasthan. He has been doing this since 2010 after realizing the lack of educational facilities in the villages and have now established 5 schools which educate about 480 students upto the 4th standard.

Mr. Desai opines that - 'I'm educated, a professor but still often referred to as a beggar by profession. But I have no complaints...if being a beggar allows me to do what I do, I accept being called a beggar until my last breath.'“ I'm educated, a professor but still often referred to as a beggar by profession. But I have no complaints...if being a beggar allows me to do what I do, I accept being called a beggar until my last breath.”

His belief behind establishing Shloka Missionaries is : “Vidyadaan, shresthadaan”

(giving knowledge as alms is a noble cause), [link: <http://www.ndtv.com/mumbai-news/why-this-professor-begs-on-mumbai-trains-507604>]

Hole in the War

Educational researcher Sugata Mitra is the winner of the 2013 TED Prize. His wish: Build a School in the Cloud, where children can explore and learn from one another.

In 1999, Sugata Mitra and his colleagues dug a hole in a wall bordering an urban slum in New Delhi, installed an Internet-connected PC and left it there, with a hidden camera filming the area. What they saw: kids from the slum playing with the computer and, in the process, learning how to use it -- then teaching each other. These famed “Hole in the Wall” experiments demonstrated that, in the absence of supervision and formal teaching, children can teach themselves and each other -- if they're motivated by curiosity. Mitra, now a professor of educational technology at Newcastle University, called it "minimally invasive education."

Mitra thinks self-organized learning will shape the future of education.

Help me build a School in the Cloud where children can explore and learn on their own -- and teach one another -- using resources from the worldwide cloud. [link: https://www.ted.com/speakers/sugata_mitra]

Kalkeri Sangeet Vidyalaya (Centre for Education innovations)

Kalkeri Sangeet Vidyalaya is a residential school launched in 2002, in the city Dharwad, Karnataka. It seeks to empower and support children from socially marginalized and economically disadvantaged backgrounds through an innovative and holistic education curriculum that incorporates academic studies, musical studies, and personal development, health and welfare services. The school currently serves over 200 students, providing education, accommodation, healthcare, and food, all free of cost to students from marginalized backgrounds. The curriculum has a solid foundation of traditional academic studies. These are complemented by extracurricular activities that include reading classes, conversational English classes, art classes, computer classes, and sports, among others. In addition to standard academic and extracurricular classes, KSV's model also incorporates rigorous musical training. Its music program is inspired by the Indian tradition of the Gurukul, where students live with a reputed musician to develop knowledge and skills in traditional musical arts and ultimately contribute to India's culture and heritage. At KSV, students are taught vocals, harmonium, sitar, tabla, violin, bansuri (flute), and Bharatnatyam dance. The ultimate goal of the school is to build students' skill sets to secure successful livelihoods for themselves and their families later on in life. [link: <http://www.educationinnovations.org/program/kalkeri-sangeet-vidyalaya>]

WHAT DO SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS DO DIFFERENTLY?

Learning Guarantee Program (LGP), a joint initiative of the state government and Azim Premji Foundation, was a study conducted in 7 most educationally backward districts of North East Karnataka during 2002-2005. In the first year of the program, 896 schools voluntarily enrolled in the program and their performance was evaluated described below.

Schools were evaluated on quantitative measures such as school infrastructure, school management, socio-economic background of enrolled children and community factors such as functioning of the SDMC and presence of active NGOs in the village. The qualitative measures included attitude and commitment of teachers, quality of teaching and class room practices.

Findings from the Learning Guarantee Program (LGP), a joint initiative of the Karnataka government and Azim Premji Foundation provides some answers to the above question. Qualitative research suggests that successful schools made an effort to provide additional inputs to children

- 1. Took special classes for weak students and gave additional homework*
- 2. Conducted special tests and practiced model question papers*
- 3. Held meetings with parents to improve learning efficiency*
- 4. Motivated the children better*

Winning schools also display higher levels of discipline, commitment and teacher involvement. Their teachers seem to have traveled that extra mile to get the award. Also social background of the students seems to have a positive correlation with the success of the schools on the Learning Guarantee parameters.

[Source: A report on What Makes a School Successful? by Azim Premji Foundation]

Providing infrastructure material, extra teachers and other required supports may not suffice, headmasters and teachers commitment play vital role in enhancing students' performance in education. Headmaster is the key person who can bring remarkable change in students' performance by facilitating teachers' regular attendance and active participation in teaching. Lot efforts needed to enhance teachers' active participation in teaching. Interventions have to design to enhance involvement of parents in school management for good education for their children. Initiatives needed to promote local panchayat bodies focus on school management.

Governments can play big way across the country and facilitate changes in crore of students. Enhancing students' performance required many initiatives from government such as recruiting sufficient teachers, providing infrastructure facilities including sufficient benches, desks, tables, lab material, classrooms, library, play ground, toilets, drinking water etc., providing books and related material in-time, regular monitoring of teachers and headmaster work, evaluating students performance on periodical basis, appointing clerks for non-teaching works,

NGOs Working on Quality Education

Aragamee: <https://aragamee.org/>

Akshara Foundation: <http://akshara.org.in/>

Akanksha: <http://www.akanksha.org/>

American India Foundation: <http://aif.org/>

Asha For Education: <http://ashanet.org/>

AzimPremji Foundation: <http://www.azimpremijfoundation.org/>

BharatiVidyapeeth: <http://ieer.bharativedyapeeth.edu/default.aspx>

Bharatiyam: <http://www.bharatiyam.org/>

Centre For Education Innovations: <http://www.educationinnovations.org/country/india>

Ekalavya Foundation: <http://ekalavya.net/>

HomiBhabha Centre for Science Education: <http://www.hbcse.tifr.res.in/>

Kaivalya Education Foundation (<http://www.kefindia.org/>)

Krishnamurthy Foundation: <http://www.j-krishnamurti.org/kfiPage.html>

Magic Bus: <http://www.magicbus.org/>

MV Foundation: <http://mvfindia.in/> (Presently website is under repair)

Padala Charitable Trust Scholarship: <http://scholfin.com/padala-charitable-trust-scholarship-for-btech-students/>

Pragathi: <http://www.globalpragathi.com/india/>

Pratham: <http://www.pratham.org/>

Smile Foundation: <http://www.smilefoundationindia.org/>

SevaNidhi: <http://www.sevanidhi.org/>

Vandemataram Foundation: <http://vandemataram.foundation/>

Vidya: <http://vidya-india.org/>

Vikramshila: <http://www.vikramshila.org/>

Vignan Ashram: <http://vigyanashram.com/>

Urmul: <http://www.urmul.org/>

Room to Read

The organization believe that the World Change starts with educated children . Room to read seeks to transform the lives of millions of children in developing countries by focusing on literacy and gender equality in education. Working in collaboration with local communities, partner organizations and governments, we develop literacy skills and a habit of reading among primary school children, and support girls to complete secondary school with the relevant life skills to succeed in school and beyond.

[link: <https://www.roomtoread.org/>]

facilitating teachers and parents committees for good education, conducting regular refresh training programs to teachers to enhance their knowledge and teaching methods etc.,

eVidyaloka- A Digital Initiative

Started by Satish Viswanathan and Venkat Sriraman, eVidyaloka is a not-for-profit organization that aims to improve the quality of education in remote regions of India through digital classrooms. The primary purpose that the organization strives to drive is creating a knowledgeable and empowered rural India through quality education.

eVidyaloka has already reached out to over 650 students so far through digital classrooms across 13 schools in Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu, with help of around 100 volunteers across 33 cities in 11 countries, and delivered over 2500 online classes that translates to more than 50,000 child learning hours. It is a practical solution to the problem. The idea was to enhance the learning outcome of the students by bringing learning modules and technology together.

The digital classroom has a 32" LCD screen with a high-power camera and a conferencemic. The classes are taken by teaching volunteers based across the globe through Skype. The eVidyaloka team arranges for the class timings and centres depending upon the batch size and availability of the teaching volunteers. The teachers include housewives, working professionals, and even senior volunteers who have retired from various careers including the defense forces. The focus is Government schools and Local NGOs and partners located in these villages play a very critical role in the delivery model. In addition to identifying the schools and active engagement with the local regulatory authorities, the local partners actively take care of the classroom setup and sustained children attendance. [Link: www.evidyaloka.org]

Towards a Progressive Reading !

Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI), a pedagogy which has been used by several countries such as Nicaragua, Costa Rica, South Africa and Thailand. Inspired by the legendary learner, Eklavyais a group of people committed to working towards social change through education, and striving to create alternatives in education. They are actively involved, for almost two decades now in designing innovative curricula, teaching methodologies and educational material for science, social science and primary education. Eklavyawas the first, and continues to be among the few NGOs that have been allowed access to work in government schools for quality improvement.

The 15-minute programme is broadcast from All India Radio's Pune station three days a week. It has been devised by the Centre for Learning Resources (CLR), Pune, a non-profit educational centre established in 1984. It works to improve the quality of elementary education for disadvantaged urban and rural children, providing consultancy in developing curriculum, designing education projects and conducting research - mostly at the teacher and trainer of teacher levels. The CLR radio programme was created to teach English in a manner that is child -friendly and require minimal knowledge on the part of the teacher. It allows listeners to hear English being spoken correctly, and -most importantly - it also allows them to speak it in the course of the lesson. The distance teacher does the bulk of the teaching, directs activities such as exercises and songs, and answers questions that are raised within the lesson. There are time slots during the broadcast for children to respond to questions, or dialogue with each other. The class teacher facilitates this process and adds to it after the lesson is over. Thus, it turns the traditionally one-way technology of radio, into a two-way one.

Radio was the chosen medium because it is low -cost, can work on batteries when frequent power shutdowns occur, and it has a wide reach.

[Source : Improving Government Schools What has been tried and what works. Link: www.arvindguptatoys.com & www.clrindia.org]

There are many examples in providing quality education to students in government schools across the country. Individuals and NGOs are playing remarkable role in facilitating good education to students. Some of their case studies given above and below:

Education most important and it facilitates changes in all dimensions of persons life and their destination towards progress and prosperity including their children's life. It plays vital in developing of their personality. It became basic needs of human beings along with quality health. Helping students in government schools to the poor and downtrodden groups' children is great and sustainable task. Its' impact sustain their entire life towards evolving and designing better life. It ensures equity and social justice by facilitating opportunities to every person in the country. It also need to society and nation for comprehensive development.

Awareness Understanding Reflection and then Action (AURA) – the learning place, Varodra

AURA was established on 2nd October 2007. It works extensively on emotional intelligence of Children . It's mission is to provide chances for children to own , shape and enjoy the learning journeys. Caters to the needs of the disabled and underprivileged children .

AURA was born out of a need to 'joyfully serve' the 'child' in each one of us that is constantly longing to learn, evolve and be free. We build communities of conscious learners that focus on inner transformation. Our tools are service and generosity. And the vessel that holds this is love and kindness.

We work with children, mothers, youth, teachers and older people.

We believe that to cure any kind of unhappiness in the world we have to first learn to be happy as individuals and then transfer that happiness into the collective. And, so at AURA all our work springs from complete joy. We operate from the paradigm of 'What is possible?' and build on individual strengths to enable learners transform fears into possibilities, boredom into excitement, loneliness into connections, failures into an opportunity to learn. Every motivated learner takes back this learning into his community of influence and designs his own unique project to carry this work forward.

We invest a lot of time, thought and expertise in designing every program using contemporary theories of learning and development, wisdom from great thinkers and wisdom of the group. [Link: <http://www.auraplace.com/>]

Presently number of individuals, alumnus, NGOs and governments are working to provide quality education to students in government schools, more hands needs to participate in providing quality education. The economic, social and cultural constrains of the children cannot block them to access quality education. More individuals, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs), religious institutions, political parties and other organizations have to come forward in providing quality education in innovative ways to children in government schools. ❖