

Including the Excluded through Education:

A Case study of Chhattisgarh

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1. Introduction

In the last 18 years of Chhattisgarh's birth as a new state, it has achieved huge success on several development indicators. Be it infrastructural or social growth, the state has performed well in the last one and half decades. The Bastar region of the state is hit by the menace of Naxalism, one of the biggest interior armed conflicts faced by any country. The past one and a half decade has been very transformational for the region, and it has seen it all- the violence as well the newly developed mega education cities in different districts of the region.

Reports suggest that the impact of the innovative educational initiatives of the government have been very significant when it comes to combating Naxalism. These initiatives have both short term as well as long term impact. In the past few years, several tangible impacts of the educational initiatives have been talked about through different media reports. Minimal efforts have been done to understand the impact through an empirical research study. In this background PPRC (Public Policy Research Centre) commissioned this study with the aim of studying the role of the in bringing marginalized section of society into mainstream and also to study the impact of the innovative educational interventions by the government. The study brought forth certain pointed insights and attempts to clearly explain how these educational initiatives have been instrumental in restraining the Naxalism movement.

2. Background

India knows the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh for reasons of its being at the forefront of an armed struggle between state security forces and groups of armed Left Wing Extremists, commonly referred to as Naxalites. This violence has claimed many lives of civilians, security forces, and political leaders, and posed very serious challenges as to how normal state and development activities are to be carried out.

What once used to be a single district of Bastar today comprises of 7 districts. Over 60 per cent of the area is under forest cover (consisting of mainly of rich teak-wood), and the region boasts of very rich mineral reserves of iron ore, tin, kimberlite, and silica among others. It is predominantly a tribal inhabited region (nearly 75% of the total population) with the major tribal groups being Muriya, Mariah, Halba, Gond, Bhatra, Dhurva and Dorla. The governance of this region is done under the special provisions of the Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, applicable to nine states with large tribal population, and the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act (PESA).

Each tribal community has its own distinct identity and language—the main dialects are Gondi, Halbi, Bhatri and Dorli. They also have their own believes, social customs, and institutions including the Panchayat system and community heads like *Baiga*, *Guniya*, *Siraha* and *Badde*. These leaders still draw prominence and respect among the community. They have a rich cultural life replete with folk songs, dances, and dramas, with *Murga Ladai* being a very popular source of entertainment. Worshipping nature and the spirit of their forefathers are essential part of their rituals, and their festivals are targeted either to seek permission from the Mother Nature or to please their deities and forefathers. Each tribe's totem is based on the names of animals, birds and trees furthering their deep association with nature. Their lives are simple, led in the affinity of nature, and little evidence of consumerism.

Quantitative indicators of development confirm the region's poor achievements on human development indicators, as compared to other districts of Chhattisgarh, and abysmal as compared to all-India averages. This is especially evident in terms of the low educational attainment in the region; a low literacy rate of about 40% is about half the state average of 71%, and an All India average of 75 per cent.

These low achievements are in a large measure the result of remoteness of the region from visible institutions and milestones of development. This remoteness is also self-perpetuating, posing insurmountable structural challenges in terms of furthering development.

The present Bastar area has historically remained isolated from other parts of the country and hence remained underdeveloped. Till the formation of the state of Chhattisgarh in the year 2000, residents of the old united Bastar district travelled more than 900 km to reach the then state capital Bhopal, in Madhya Pradesh. Distance from other institutions, such as the high court bench in Jabalpur, educationally developed cities like Indore, Gwalior, Bhopal, Jabalpur, as also cities which were employment centres for skilled or unskilled labour—was all too far for the natives of this region. Added to the distance, the quality of the roads was sub-standard and inter-connectivity between villages and from villages to nearest facility centres of health, education and market was non-existent. Under these conditions, many development blocks, especially in un-divided Bastar (45 blocks then), would not report even one visit by public officials, including heads of developmental department in their entire tenure. There is a weak penetration of modern communication technology, specially telephones, mobile and internet. But there is a deeper sense in which this region remains isolated and remote from mainland India, this is accounted for by lack of language skills other than their own dialects, inability to communicate with the outside the world, and very low literacy rates reinforcing the remoteness. This also leads us to understand why India's most deprived and poorest are unable to demand for their rights, in this case their right to education.¹

3. Significance of Study

In the last few years, the government has increased its focus on the education initiatives especially in Naxal-affected districts. Following the example of Dantewada, the government has established Education city in almost all such districts through which about one lakh students are benefitting. The two-way strategy to combat Naxalism seems to be successful (evident from the on ground scenario as well as the government data). The carrot and stick policy adopted by the government to control the menace of Naxalism has started showing the results. Education has played a very significant role in this process. So at PPRC (Public Policy Research Centre), it was conceived that the role of the in bringing marginalized section of society into mainstream be assessed and studied by doing the primary field research along with scanning the available data.

¹https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/DANTEWADA_case.pdf

4. Objectives

- To study the role of the in bringing marginalized section of society into mainstream.
- To study the impact of the innovative educational interventions by the government in combating Naxalism.

5. Methodology

The research is mainly based on the empirical and qualitative data. This study aims to access the impact caused by Educational initiatives in the weakening of Naxal movement in Chhattisgarh. The impacts are manifold- both tangible and non-tangible. For this purpose, case study method was taken as an important tool.

This report is a part of the PPRC's comprehensive study on the "Multi Sectoral Perspective of Chhattisgarh's growth story".

The sources used for this study included both primary and secondary sources. The research team visited Rajnandgaon, Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada and Narayanpur. The research team went to the interior parts of these areas and conducted a field based survey too. This included visits to gram sabhas, schools, colleges, porta cabins, education cities, district headquarters, media organizations; and interviews of Civil Governance officials, Police officers, Naxal leaders, surrendered Naxals and local tribals.

6. Research Details

Starting from Rajnandgaon, The research team conducted the research in two phases travelling to 34 villages located in Rajnandgaon, Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada and Narayanpur districts of Chhattisgarh. In the first phase, the research team covered 14 villages of Rajnandgaon district travelling about 700 KMs and interviewing around 350 people including the police officials, educators, students and civil governance officials. The trip started by interviewing the District Magistrate and concluded at a High school in Madanwada, the place where Naxalites killed then SP Sh. Vinod Chaubey and 24 policemen in an ambush on 12th July, 2009.

In the second phase, The research team visited 20 villages located in Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada and Narayanpur districts of Chhattisgarh travelling around 1,674 km and interviewing 189 people including the police and CRPF officials, Naxal leaders and other officers. The study started from the Sukma District headquarters and concluded at Orcha Block HQ in Narayanpur.

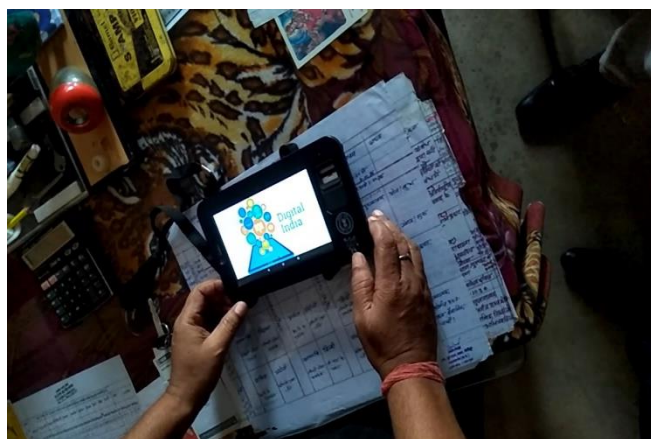


7. Observations

7.1 Technology

7.1.1. Use of Bio Metric Attendance for teachers and students:

The Chhattisgarh Online School Monitoring System (COSMOS) comprises of Android based tablet to record and monitor school data in real time. The tablet is equipped with a finger print reader to take biometric attendance of teachers and other staff at the school. Unlike a traditional biometric system, COSMOS is an integrated system which encompasses other services requisite for efficient working of teachers and admin staff. It is emerging as a comprehensive solution for the education department to efficiently monitor and control school level information in real time. The data is stored online at the central server and can be accessed from any remote location. It has helped check the presence of teaching staff & other staff at school accurately and in transparent manner without depending on legacy system of registers and paper reports.



Picture 1: A teacher showing the working of COSMOS

The initiative started from Rajpur block in Balrampur district in 2014 whereby all requisite hardware and training to teachers regarding the standard operating procedures for usage and maintenance of the system were provided. The system had inbuilt functionalities to establish communication channels for non-teaching and administrative works. It allowed teachers to communicate with district authorities for their administrative and personnel issues such as application and sanction of leaves, etc. Gradually, teachers started adopting this system and took ownership as it was for their own benefit. As a result, more and more teachers started recording their attendance and their physical presence at school also increased. Seeing the success of the initiative, from 1st May 2015 it was further expanded to all remaining blocks of the district.

Later, in 2017 through a government order, the Chhattisgarh Government implemented the scheme across all the 27 districts of the state. Over 51,000 units of the tablet also called as 'Shalakosh' were distributed in schools across Chhattisgarh.

Principal of the Govt. Higher Secondary School, Jangla of the Bijapur district says that since the school is in LWE affected area, teachers earlier used to come late and leave early. Now everyone comes on time because they know that they have to do the check in at time as the data is directly uploaded at real time basis to the server.

A govt. official who prefers to be anonymous said that Shalakosh is beneficial for the teachers too. Earlier due to human errors or any personal enmity with the monitoring team, teacher's salary used to get reduced. Now since the data is directly uploaded and can't be edited, all those reductions in the salary have stopped.

Out of 35 schools visited, COSMOS tablets were working in 33 of them, i.e. 94 % of the schools have benefitted from the scheme.

The project has greatly reduced paper-work and administrative hurdles in the day-to-day functioning of the schools, as tasks like teacher's leave application, online reporting of information related to delivery of various schemes all can be done sitting at the school premise. Some of the major modules and benefits are detailed below: -

- Attendance Module
- Real time dashboards in mobile app
- Online Leave Management System
- Salary Module
- Student Registration
- Student Attendance module
- Child Tracking System
- Inspection Module
- Increasing efficiency of MDM and Inventory management
- COSMOS as digital Service book
- Aadhar enabled services

COSMOS has reduced time and efforts often wasted by teachers in non-academic administrative work, tracking academic progress of each child – thus improving efficiency of teachers giving ample time for teaching learning processes with students. The system has also helped in monitoring daily activity of each school in the district the utilization of fund granted, thereby minimizing misuse.²

Savings from this project

The initiative is expected to save a lot of government money by stopping pilferages & leakages in the system and improving efficiency of people and processes. The COSMOS implementation

²<http://www.chips.gov.in/cosmos>

at state level will greatly impact several schemes implemented at school and has potential to save money from distribution of uniforms, books, scholarships, Mid-Day Meal and teacher salary.

Challenge

The most important challenge was the adoption of this new technology by the teachers and non-teaching staff of the institutions. But the field study suggests that the teachers and the teaching staff have responded positively after the initial reluctance. Current challenge is the lack of connectivity in the schools located in interiors especially in LWE affected districts.

7.1.2 Growing Infrastructure for E-Learning: Case study of Rajnandgaon's Dr Baldev Prasad Mishra Government Higher Secondary School.

Rajnandgaon comes under the LWE affected districts of Chhattisgarh. The state government has pushed the agenda of using technology for bringing more personalized learning to the students studying in the government schools. *CHIPS* the nodal agency of the government did a tie up with *FUNTOOT* which is software for personalized learning in math and science basically. The evidence from the pilot project being run in Rajnandgaon, Dantewada and Bastar districts of Chhattisgarh suggests that technology specially personalized learning can be a driving force to realize right to education in letter and spirit.

The role of *Human Teacher* indeed is very necessary in the learning process. From teaching in a safe environment to providing emotional support to the students, the role of a human teacher is very vast, especially in the LWE affected



Picture 2: Students of the school practicing on FUNTOOT software

Chhattisgarh where maximum of the students is first generation learner. Teachers, generally who belong to the local area, also can talk to the parents about the performance of the students and the problems in local languages and, they have the ability to instill certain basic values such as patriotism, honesty, cleanliness etc. in the students.

Technological software

Technology has many advantages over human beings in the field of education. It is not possible for a *Human Teacher* to personalize the teaching instructions on a large scale for each child based on what is there current position and their strengths and weaknesses. Personalization can only be done using technology. Considering this Chhattisgarh state collaborated with high-quality research-based software which provided the required technological support.

In Dr. Baldev Prasad Mishra HS School, Rajnandgaon, there is a dedicated computer lab with all the equipped software where every child comes once in a week and practices the classroom learning. Every student has its own unique ID on the programme and the software is set in a way

that it personalizes the learning resources and other inputs provided for the students. The learning style as well as the language of instruction is also personalized. The materials are designed in a way that children find it attractive. The software uses popular cartoon figures thus the kids find it very exciting.

Principal of the school Sh. Kailash Sharma said, this software has helped them in grouping assessing and the re-grouping the children based on the real time performance data of the Children. Unlike the *Human Teacher* the software is available to the children at any time depending on the class schedule and the infrastructural facilities of the school.

The Vice Principal of the school, which is also the first high school in Chhattisgarh to be completely backed up with solar energy, stated that they have been able to identify the children who are falling behind and require specific attention by providing remedial classes or enrichment activities to the student.

The school consists of students who generally come from Jhuggi clusters and hence there was some amount of discrimination earlier by the Human Teachers. After this software-based teaching was introduced, this has stopped the discrimination stated the computer teacher of the school. HE said, “Computer doesn’t discriminate based on the parameters such as socio-economic status which we human beings use to discriminate with others.

Each child is unique

The responsibility of the government in the education sector is immense. Due to socio-economic barriers, children from low income group don’t get the platform they deserve. Hence it is the responsibility of the government to bring them in the mainstream education system. As educators, it is our responsibility to consider those who may not have the resources to be able to receive a world-class education – physical and emotional barriers can cause a highly intelligent and motivated child to miss out on what she might otherwise achieve. To reach every child in the Indian learning context, when it comes to languages and mathematics, there is a place for both human teachers for the socio-emotional aspects of education, and technology for personalized learning optimization. Research-based, vernacular, personalized and adaptive technology can generate huge amounts of data to make learning ‘child centric’ – not via results from a one-off examination, but through daily, highly dynamic iterations based on the real learning of each and every child

The use of technology is adaptable to the time, place and medium of instruction – it can reach the level of the child no matter their age, physical condition or caste. Technology has the advantage of being a great leveling field for children who are intelligent on multiple dimensions, but struggle on ones typically measured.

Challenge:

Due to Infrastructural lacking, the students only get to practice on the software once in a week

which is not very adequate. There is a scope for improvement in this. Another challenge is the connectivity issue. There is server error in the computers many a times, which should be solved if complete benefit is to be taken out of it.

7.2 Innovation

Prayas Residential School: A Platform for the dreams of Naxal hit children to fly

Prayas- an advance residential school for the upliftment of students of Naxal affected areas of the state was started in 2010 at Gudhiyari Raipur. The LWE affected districts faces a lot of violence and loss of the infrastructural facilities. In this scenario the state government established a residential school in Raipur with all facilities.

Rationale:

The status of education in LWE affected districts of Chhattisgarh was abysmal. Due to violence of caused by LWE, a huge infrastructural loss was caused to the schools situated in those areas. Due to rise in violence, villagers were living in camps and providing education for their kids was becoming a huge challenge. The development deficit in the LWE affected districts is mostly attributed to the lack of infrastructure, less connectivity and further because of the violence caused by the Naxals. Owing to the difficult conditions, lack of teachers and coaching facility in districts of tribal populated divisions such as Bastar and Sarguja, there were hardly any selections from the place in such competitive examinations. Naxal violence in Bastar region has also been a big obstacle in the way of their career building. In this backdrop, Chhattisgarh Government came up with an alternative of setting a residential school in Raipur which will give school level education to the children as well as provide them special coaching for the Country's top competitive exams like IIT-JEE and Medical entrance exams. Since then, many Prayas centres have been opened and thousands of students today are studying in those centres. Over the last four years, application for the Prayas Entrance Test has almost become four times of what is was earlier. For this study, we have taken Prayas Residential School, Suddu, Raipur as the case study.



Picture 3: Prayas Saddu, Raipur

Objectives:

Main objectives of starting an institute like Prayas was to provide the students of Naxal affected districts opportunity to be a part of the formal education sector. Not only schooling but the whole idea was to provide them coaching for the competitive exams like IIT JEE and Medical to bring them into the mainstream society. Apart from this, the idea is to provide them a scientific temper and develop basic tendencies such as knowledge of proper healthcare, food & Nutrition, and a scientific attitude towards innovation and entrepreneurship. Few other objectives include setting

ambitious goals with confidence and to achieve the same with hard work & dedication and to always hold onto their moral values of simplicity and honesty, which are the significant part of Chhattisgarh's culture.

Implementation:

Prayas Residential School was established by state government at Gudiyari area of capital city Raipur in year 2010 under Mukhyamantri Bal Bhavishya Suraksha Yojana. The students were admitted through an admission test. Teachers were hired from top coaching institutes of the country like career point; Vidya Mandir classes etc. to facilitate the preparation for the competitive exams. Gradually a greater number of centres were established and today it is established in more than 5 centres. Every year tie up is done with a coaching institute for resource persons who provide teachers for the preparation of the competitive exams, through the transparent process of the expression of interest and bidding.

The research team visited the Prayas located in the Education City Suddu, Raipur. The Centre currently has 1100 students selected through the entrance test. Equipped with all the facilities, the centre has a dedicated counseling centre for the students studying there. Since maximum of the students come from Naxal affected area, it is important to counsel them properly to bring them into mainstream society. The infrastructure has been developed scientifically keeping in mind the aspirations of the students residing there.

The most important part of the initiative is human resources in the form of teachers and non-teaching support staff. The quality has been maintained till now because of the transparent process of selecting the teachers through a bidding process which allows the coaching institutes to apply in response of the expression of interest released by the ministry.

The non-teaching staff is also appointed on the contract basis and the renewal depends totally on the performance.

While taking the round of the centre to check the infrastructural facility, we could see a world class library, computer lab with high speed of 40 MBPS which is used for practicing mock tests since the entrance exams are totally computer based now. The residential facilities are well maintained, and every resource is provided by the centre itself. For the preparation of meals modern machines are used which helps in reducing the time and human effort.

Modern teaching facilities like classes equipped with smart class and digital learning aids like videos and presentation have been provided along with the entertainment facilities such as television with connection to satellite channels connections.

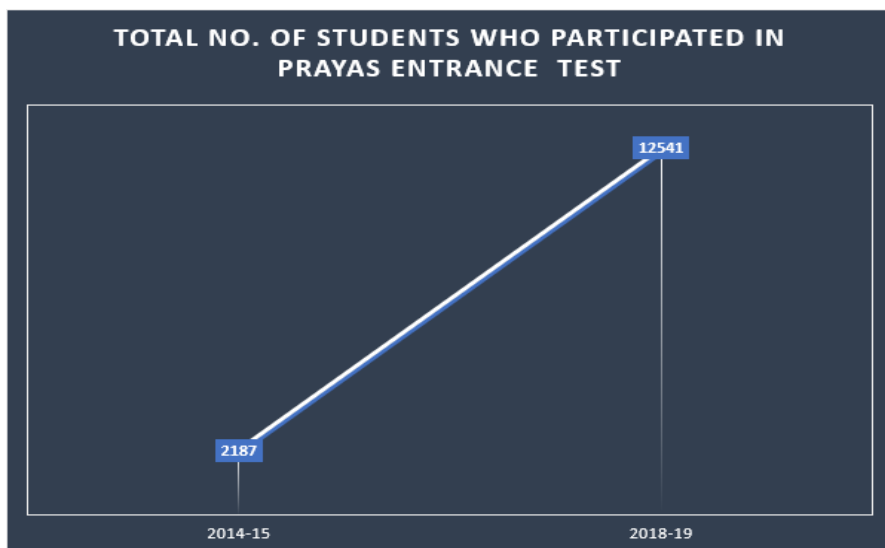
For Health needs, the in-house system has been developed for minor issues. In case of any major problem, students are taken to the nearby hospital for which transport facility is 24/7 available at the Centre.

For physical and mental wellness, extracurricular activities are given focus. Yoga, Sports, and Debate competitions are regularly organized at the Centre.

Impact:

The comparison of the data from 2014-15 to 2018-19 on number of students who applied for the entrance test of Prayas Residential School gives a brilliant idea of the impact of the initiative of the Prayas. About 2187 students gave the entrance exam in 2014 while in 2018 the number grew to 12541 i.e. almost six times in the last four years. This is a very interesting insight because all these students

come from Naxal affected districts of the state.



Graph 1: The above graph represents the six time increase in the number of participants for Prayas Entrance Examination

Because only those students who have got 60 % marks in the previous class, can sit for the entrance test of Prayas, this six time increase in the number of students appearing for Prayas Entrance Exam also signifies that the school education in the Naxal affected districts are improving, thus this increase in the numbers. Secondly, year after year various students are getting selected into the IITs, NITs, Medical Colleges, and other career options. From 2012 to

2016, total 74 students have got selected in NIT, 27 in IIT, 450 in engineering and 8 students of Prayas School have got selected in MBBS. This year from Prayas Suddu Raipur, about 16 students have taken admission in the prestigious IIT. Many are going into NITs and other prestigious institutions. Hem Kumar belonging from Primitive Tribal group is going to IIT Kanpur this year. He said initiatives like Prayas is making it possible for the students belonging to our tribe to study in institutions like IITs. Dev Kishan, whose father was killed by Naxals, says that it is only because of Prayas School that



Picture 4: Few Students of Prayas School with their teachers. These students were selected in IITs.

I am going to study in IIIT Raipur. He also said that seeing him, many youngsters today have started

preparing for Prayas and the approach towards Education is changing now positively. This has created a very positive change in the lives of maximum people of the Naxal affected districts. Thirdly, Prayas Schools score 100% results in 12th board exam. All the centres of Prayas have

scored 100% result in class 12th. This is also an incredible achievement considering the situation that the student comes from. Children from remote areas of Bastar and Balrampur have proved that resource constraints cannot bind their talent and potential, and they are very much capable of giving tough competition to students of other state across the country.

Conclusion:

Prayas was launched as a mission to get the marginalized Naxal affected children admitted into the top engineering and medical institutions of the country and the state. From 2012 to 2016, total 74 students have got selected in NIT, 27 in IIT, 450 in engineering and 8 students of Prayas School have got selected in MBBS. This statistic is itself the proof of the success of Prayas. Now it is operating from multiple centres and the idea is to replicate the model to every other district of the state. Though replicating it in the districts where there is no provision for district mineral fund is challenging. The challenge of sustainability and uniformity also persists in the model of Prayas. From the existing Prayas in five different districts of Chhattisgarh only Raipur centre is giving incredible results.

7.3 Targeted Approach: Education City of Sukma

Spread over 100 acres of land in the main town of Sukma, the Education City benefits around 25000 children of Sukma today. Taking inspiration from the similar initiative in Dantewada, the district administration of Sukma initiated the plan of establishing a similar structure in Sukma which is till now the heartland of Naxal movement. Several institutes are providing an all-round development to the children. The local needs of the students were taken into consideration when the plan was being developed. From kinder garden to Livelihood College, the education city is providing opportunity to everyone who has been left till now. The research team went to different institutes and interviewed different stakeholders.

7.3.1 Gyanoday:

In the interiors of the district, the Naxalites often captures the school buildings for shelter or they destroy the school infrastructure. Children fearing from the violence are left out from the formal education system. Recently, the administration identified 123 such schools in the districts which have closed in the recent past because of the Naxal violence. The district administration in collaboration with a non-government organization started the scheme 'Gyanoday' which is also known as back to school. Under this program special course module has been designed for the children who were forced to leave the school. They are provided 3 month special residential training and post that



Picture 5: Gyanoday. Courtesy- Indiafellow.org

the students join the formal education. With in-house sports academy, the centre was designed to provide an inclusive atmosphere to the students.

About 600 Naxal violence affected children have benefitted from the scheme till now and have joined the mainstream schooling system now. The initiative has been instrumental increasing the enrollment ratio of the district which was till recently below the national average. The administration is planning to open a cultural academy for the students so as to provide them a more inclusive learning atmosphere in the centre. Through this programme, 65 out of 123 schools have been opened under the 'Back to School' initiative taken by the administration. The out of school children are the biggest potential for recruitment by the Naxal cadre. The back to school program, i.e. Gyanoday has reduced that risk magnificently and thus helping in reducing the fresh recruitment which is at its all-time low in district Sukma as per the police officials.

Aarohan:

Being run in collaboration with Vidya Mandir classes New Delhi, the centre gives coaching of IIT-JEE and NEET to Naxal affected children of Sukma. Students of the local area don't understand the concept of IITs and Medical colleges. The district administration gives an orientation session to the students studying in tenth or eleventh standard. After the orientation session, students are divided in different batch i.e. those who want to pursue math's oriented career and those who wants to pursue biology-oriented career. During the two year long coaching, the students are prepared for the IIT-JEE exam and the NEET exam. The centre through the district administration takes care of all the expenses of the students starting from their admission to their counseling when they are selected to the institution. In the last four years, the result of the students has been phenomenal, and the institute has given 100% result in the Chhattisgarh state 12th board exam.



Picture 6: : Students of Aarohan Sukma during thier lecture

Looking at the result of the present year as many as 4 students out of 38 from the biology batch has secured above 80% mark in the 12th board exam, an achievement which the children couldn't even dream of while living in the constant fear of Naxals. 50 out of 66 total

students in the 2018 batch secured the first division marks. While 3 students qualified in the JEE Mains, 7 students from the biology batch qualified in the NEET exam. The number of interested

students in the past few years has been increasing, said Sh. Brijendra, the science teacher at the centre. The students who didn't know how to hold the pen properly are being taught in the science lab which the centre has recently opened.

7.3.2 Vivekananda Yuva Shakti Kendra (VYSK):

After developing the formal education system in the district, the administration went ahead in providing one of the most needed services to the children today. Every child is unique and so are their choices. But due to lack of exposure, the children are not sure about the choices they take in their career. For example, Sh. Brijendra said the students didn't know much about the difference between Maths oriented and biology oriented career. Thus the risk of making the wrong choice is always high. The choice can only be right if it's informed.

With this vision, the district administration planned the VYSK through which professionals counselors are being roped in from cities to provide career counseling to the thousands of local students. Special camps have been organized in different Porta Cabins to spread about the importance of career counseling.

Another vision of the centre is to provide Personality Development. The local students are not well versed with the popular culture of the outside students and they generally face huge difficulty when they compete with the outside world. To solve this difficulty, it was important to develop their personality and to provide them proper industrial exposure so that when they go on to compete with the outside world in their progressive career, it becomes easy for the students.

7.3.3 Teaching the teachers: Programme for Training and Capacity Building of the teachers:

One of the major challenges that the education sector in Chhattisgarh faces right is the lack of training among its teachers. Especially in the Bastar region and other districts which are LWE affected, since the teachers from other part of the state hesitate to go in those areas and locals are not so trained in English and Maths. This has resulted in compromised learning for the students. The district administration of the Sukma came up with a noble initiative of starting a capacity building and training programme for the teachers employed in the district. About 165 teachers out of about 900 total teachers have been selected in the first phase of the programme which is three months residential programme for the capacity building and training.

Experts have been called from outside the state to teach them with the help of the latest technology. One of teachers Ms. Jyoti she has come from Andhra Pradesh and is living currently in Sukma only. She said, "When I started teaching them, they were very shy and embarrassed to learn at this point of life. It took me about a week to make them feel comfortable and make them understand the need of such training for the teachers. English is often treated as an alien language in this area but when I explained them the need of English in today's world, they understood and are responding in a very positive way."

The programme coordinator, Mr. Rajnish stated that now that the teachers have understood the mission behind the programme, they are taking keen interest in it. New technology is used to provide them the training so that they can teach the students using latest technology. Mr. Rajnish

said, he has observed a lot of changes in the attitude of the teachers towards the learning process since they have started taking the training course. The teachers are also explained the way to approach the parents to convince them to send their children to the schools. The idea is to send these teachers in the interiors and persuade the parents to send their children which will increase the education level.

A local teacher who is currently going the training programme told me that when the administration approached them for this training programme, they were very hesitant to join the free course. But after joining the course it is helping me a lot in gaining the new age technology. It will seriously help me in the teaching process when I go back to schools after my training program; I think the biggest beneficiary of this programme is the children of this district who will be able to get good education from the trained teachers.”

The administration plans to cover all the teachers in a phase wise manner. The study shows that there is huge change in the attitude of the teachers attending the training when compared with their previous.

7.3.4 ‘Vidyalaya Darpan’

The school management at an individual level lacks the vision of making an institute a model institute. Decentralization of policy making is one of the core principles of a democratic country like India. Due to lack of exposure, the locals don’t know their rights and duties. They don’t have any voice which supports their small demands. The reason why Naxalism is still able to recruit people is because of the lack of knowledge about governance and the system.

The administration created the design of a model school using the available waste materials thus establishing the principles of ‘Kabad se Jugad’. The design of the model school clearly gave the message of the importance of ‘Child Friendly’ school.

In all the three blocks of Sukma district, 1132 teachers have benefitted by organizing 36 workshops. The admin is planning to engage all the teachers of the districts and convince them to develop their schools to be more children friendly.



Picture 7: Vidyalaya Darpan, Education City Sukma



Picture 8: Vidyalaya Darpan, Sukma

7.3.5 Science Centre and Science Park

In the tribal populated and Naxalite dominated Sukma, a Science centre and a Science Park, located in the same campus but based on different themes, are formed with the aim of increasing the interest of students in pursuing science as a subject in schools and to inculcate its concepts in general lives.



Picture 10: Science Centre and Science Park, Education City, Sukma

To increase the experimental nature of students and understanding the basic principles of science through practical exposure and subject specific lab is the reason behind the construction of this mega Science Centre and Park.

Spread over one acre, it has various kinds of equipment, play and sports material based on science concepts like solar energy, time taken to produce an echo, transfer of energy, and biological

concepts like human body, surgery, DNA etc. Based on science principles, 35 play equipments are present in the campus. Students have their first-hand experience on models based on science theories. The help and guidance to the visiting students is provided by the expert trainers. Special ‘Vigyan Vahini’ bus ensures transportation facility for children of classes 6 to 8.

Being accredited as Chhattisgarh’s first science theme park in Chhattisgarh, it has become very

famous among the citizens specially the children. More than 23,000 children have visited the centre till now. Sh. Sheikh Salim, the coordinator stated that a huge positive change has been observed among the students who have visited the centre. Children have started observing things in a very scientific manner and the confidence level among them have also increased.

Two Students of Kanya Parishad Vidyalaya, Sukma said, ‘it is more exciting and interesting to understand the topics through practical and labs than just reading from the text books.



Picture 9: Students having the first-hand experience of different scientific principles

7.3.6 Aakar

Disability is just an extra ability- with this idea in mind and with the aim of providing barrier free quality education to the children belonging from what we call today specially abled category.

Established in the Education city of Sukma, the key objective is to provide equal opportunities for the students having special needs. It was started in 2017 and approximately around 350 students study currently in the residential centre. Special learning modules in Braille have been made for the students keeping in minds their needs. The infrastructure is also developed in a way to provide all round support and assistance to the children. For example, the kitchen has different sized chairs and table to aid the students of different groups. The centre has accessible toilets, sign boards, proper ramp infrastructure, audio visual signs and required number of wheel chairs.

The overall infrastructure was designed keeping in mind the minute details of the special needs of the children with disability, read special ability. Aakar does not only focus on providing therapy and special education, but aim to facilitate education. The key objective is to equalize opportunities for children with special needs, and to set a standard in equitable education and facilitate their schooling with appropriate study aids and materials.

“Generally, in a tribal populated and Naxal dominated area, the implementation of normal social welfare schemes is itself a huge task. In an environment of violence, the people belonging to the marginalized category are often ignored by the administration. But this is not true when it comes to Chhattisgarh’s Sukma. Following the example of Dantewada’s Saksham, the administration while planning the Education city, made sure that there is centre which will provide equal opportunity to the needs of the specially abled children, and thus the idea of Aakar was born, said avinash, the coordinator of Aakar.

Professionals were roped in from cities to provide the necessary facilities and to make training as well as teaching modules for the children considering their special needs. Students get speech and language therapy which helps them sharpen their communication skills. Computer training is also provided to the students to make them aware about the latest technology and innovations around the world. The hardware and the software have been designed specifically keeping in minds the special needs of the students.

A library with books in Braille technology has also been provided. The library has mostly biographies of great and successful persons from all walks of life. The idea is to tell them about the inspirational journey of the great personalities.

“All these facilities have less tangible and more intangible benefits when we see in the perspective of combating Naxalism. These infrastructure developments have helped the civil administration to develop a level of trust with the local villagers. The civil governance is now reaching to the interiors. For Aakar, the survey is now done throughout the districts and by the support of the locals. In fact many initiatives are led by the locals after they have seen the results. After all who doesn’t want a secured and wonderful future for their children”, said the district education officer.



7.4 Chhattisgarh's experiment of Livelihood College and the legal right to skill education

An alternative Education:

The huge problem of unemployment today is not only because of the lack of opportunities but also because of the lack of required skill in the workforce. In a region where even basic education is not available to the population, talking about skill education was a very farfetched idea concerning all the eligibility requirements in the prevalent system. Bastar region, predominantly tribal dominated and Naxal affected has very less literacy rate and people are generally dependent on the forest goods for their survival. Local talent didn't get any opportunity from the administration for their livelihood.

With this in background, the district administration came up with the concept of Livelihood College that was set up in the district to train the local young individuals in different forms of skill set. Local Employability was taken into consideration while drafting the plan. The basic reason for failure of various skill development programmes has been the lack of employment opportunities. The administration worked on this and the course modules were designed according to the local employment requirements.

The livelihood college has no entry qualifications for enrollment. Both educated and dropout's youth in the age group of 15 to 35 can attend the college and get trained in different courses.

For example, local requirements are from the field of servicing, repair and maintenance of mobile phones, A.C, hand pumps, carpentry, plumbing, hospitality, sales & marketing, etc. The courses have been designed to fulfill the needs of the local people as per their needs to maintain the high employability rate. Young girls are also pursuing medical and nursing courses from the livelihood college and getting employment in local health centres.

Regular practical training is provided to the students to give them an industrial exposure along with the theoretical knowledge. Assessments at fixed interval of time are taken to check the learning capacity of the students. Students who generally reside in the rent-free accommodation are certified by the Chhattisgarh State Development Authority after proper assessment.

Focus on self-employment

The locals of Chhattisgarh generally don't favor migrating to other cities to seek employment or to avail any other opportunity. Locals usually prefer living with their family members. With this background in mind, the administration conducted a survey to identify the requirements which can be filled by providing skill training to the local youth in that field.

“In Sukma we found out that there is huge requirement of skilled person for the maintenance and repair works of AC. Considering this, this course was made a part of the course modules of the

district livelihood college”, said the district coordinator. The job creation process of the government has its own limitations. Hence the administration focused on the entrepreneurship and self-employment. Government support is provided for the creation of new business opportunities. Shakti Garments Limited is one such fine example of the local entrepreneurship and job creation. Today at least 300 local youth of Dantewada district is employed in Shakti, said the district NRLM coordinator.

Sustainable livelihood

The training and education received through the livelihood colleges is providing them the necessary skills for the improvement in their livelihood the skill set helps them in earning a living that too permanently. The administration has provided for further training after gaining certain level of professional experience. Training is provided in different local trades for proper and attractive marketing which helps in increase the volume of sale further increasing their income.

Professional trainers and Institutes

District administration has collaborated with certain professional institutes and trainers to provide world class professional training to the local villagers. Importance of branding and creativity is shown to the villagers as well as giving them the important insights about the marketing needed. Local experts and guests are also called for working with the institutes. While collaborating the variety is taken into consideration.



Picture 11: NMDC DAV Polytechnic, Dantewada

The district administration supports the training providers and Project Implementation Agencies (PIAs) with resources and infrastructure. We partner with different training providers for a variety of trades and all our candidates are certified as per government norms. We also work with local experts and guest trainers.

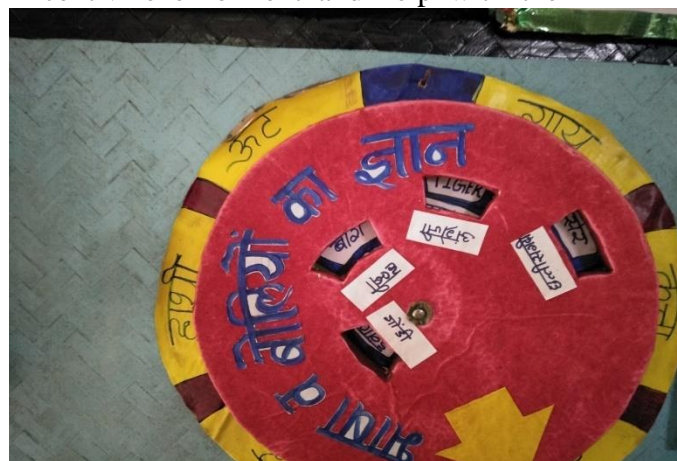
Chhattisgarh is the first state of India to provide its youth the legal right to skill development. Livelihood Colleges, ITIs and polytechnic colleges have been opened in all 27 districts of the state, where youngsters are provided skill development training in trades of their choice. More than 2.35 lakhs youngsters have been trained under our skill development initiatives and more than 4lakhs youngsters will be trained in over next three years. In this way, we are making relentless efforts in the direction of developing skilled manpower.

7.5 Home away from Home- The concept of Porta Cabins³

The interiors of Chhattisgarh affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE), areas such as Bastar, Dantewada, Narayanpur, Sukma, and Bijapur, are dotted with cabins made of pre-fabricated bamboo and plywood. These durable fireproof and waterproof structures, in fact, are state-run residential schools which enable the government to extend education facilities in these regions and help bring youngsters into the fold of mainstream society. The schools are commonly referred to as Porta Cabins and here students are given free meals along with education, boarding facilities, uniforms and books.

The LWE-hit areas in Chhattisgarh are typically not well-connected, both in terms of road networks as well as communication technology. Moreover, schools are soft targets for extremists, and have either been destroyed or rendered defunct. According to government statistics from 2011, the number of out-of-school children in the age group of 6-14 years in Dantewada district alone was 50.3 percent and 20-30 percent schools were reported to be defunct.

To address this gap, the State Government decided to experiment with the innovative Porta Cabins initiative in 2011. Because these structures are relatively easy to build, they can be set up in a matter of few days. Also, because the schools would provide food and educational amenities free of cost, the authorities hoped that they would incentivize enrolment and help with the retention of students in some of the remotest regions of the state. The residential education programme aims to inculcate a scientific temperament in children and prepare them for employment opportunities and qualitative changes through the provision of basic amenities of healthcare, food and proper accommodation. A key objective of the programme is to promote vocational skills and build capacities for self-employment among students, through an environment that encourages innovation



Picture 12: From one of the porta cabins- the innovative way to teach in different languages

and entrepreneurship. Driving awareness about these Porta Cabins are local volunteers who are adept in Gondi and Halbi. They visit the villages and educate the parents about the merits of the Porta Cabins and help to bring the children to school. The day-to-day operations of the Porta Cabins are managed by a teacher-in-charge and teaching staff that also doubles up as class instructors and wardens for the student residents.

³ The major part of this article has been taken from Chhattisgarh.yourstory.com

Within five months of being launched in 2011, 12 Porta Cabin schools each with a capacity to seat 500 students were built in Dantewada alone. From the initial months, Porta Cabins delivered on all fronts. They made education accessible again in areas where schools were once destroyed by Naxal violence. They helped bring students from tribal families back to school because they no longer had to walk miles to access the nearest one. Schools were set up in remote places without healthcare facilities, erratic electricity supply, unstarred roads and some places accessible only by foot.



Picture 13: Kanya Avasiye Vidyalaya Porta Cabin Sukma

In other words, Porta Cabins brought children from inaccessible and remote areas into the formal schooling system. Within a year after the initiative was launched, the number of out-of-school children in the 6-14 years age group reduced from 21,816 to 5,780 and the number of Porta Cabins rose to 43 in Dantewada alone. The initial success saw the initiative undergo a progressive transformation. Initially, the Porta Cabins were used for conducting Residential Bridge Courses, and soon they were incorporated under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Also, in a bid to reduce congestion, the Porta Cabins now house 250 children as opposed to 500 children earlier. A number of NGOs working in the education sector, like Patham and Bachpan Bachao, have been roped in to assist and further improve the delivery of the programme. In addition, to enhance the pedagogy, a number of Porta Cabins are equipped with modern teaching aids and entertainment facilities, such as television with satellite channel connections, and smart classes equipped with digital learning aids for videos and presentations. Some Porta Cabins even have computer labs, library rooms and science labs.



Picture 14: A porta cabin of Bijapur

These successes, however, did not come easily. Because Porta Cabins had to be set up in LWE-affected regions and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) protected areas, private contractors were wary. So the district administration made efforts to ensure that construction sites were given protection and their access through check points was facilitated. The other challenge was the reluctance of parents to send their children to a residential school programme, which was overcome with the help of awareness drives led by the volunteers. The next key problem was that even if the children were admitted to the Porta Cabins, they often got homesick and ran away. But sensitizing the children helped them adapt to the culture of the residential programme.

More than half a decade later, Porta Cabins are a household name in the interiors of Bastar and Dantewada. The enrolment numbers have increased while the school dropout rate has drastically reduced. But the real testimony of the success of the programme comes in the form of acceptance by the locals, LWE and armed forces alike. Which means that the temporary school structures are now being transitioned into permanent structures?

According to a 2017 government circular to the Education Secretary by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, 49 Porta Cabin schools located in the LWE district of Sukma, Narayanpur, Dantewada and Bijapur were approved for up gradation to permanent structures.

Excerpts from the Interview of Dr. Sukhram Dorpa of Community Health Centre, Orcha Narayanpur

The first doctor from Particular Vulnerable Tribal Group of Narayanpur, Dr. Sukhram Dorpa is an inspiration today for the thousands of young students studying in the Naxal hit districts of Bastar region. He says, the active support of the administration has been very vital in getting the degree and then serving his own people in Narayanpur.

Q. Dr. Dorpa, what made you take the decision of coming back to Narayanpur after getting your MBBS degree in Raipur when you could have chosen any other city?

A. I come from the Orcha block of the district. Even today, the Naxal presence is very high, though it is indeed decreasing. To be honest, proper medical services are not available in the interior region. Reason being that the Naxalites doesn't let the infrastructure to develop. Also, the locals have certain trust issues because of the propaganda of the extremists. Doctors and other government officials often tend to avoid postings in Naxal hit areas. In this backdrop, when I graduated, I decided to work in the region where medical services are required the most. With proper administration support, I got the posting in community health centre, Orcha.

Q. How has been your journey since you got posted here?

A. I can say it has been incredible. Since I belong to the local community, people have trusted my knowledge and have started taking faith on the medicines and other healthcare services provided by the government. The government has immensely supported all my initiatives of

engaging with the tribals with the aim have providing them the access to the proper health services. I have started teaching the local students. The basic problem here is the lack of exposure. The kids are not aware of the different career choices they have and the government schemes to support that. Education being the biggest exposure, I am trying to educate them with the help of the administration, so that they are able to think about anything and everything in their lives.

Q. Considering these problems how was your journey to the medical college since childhood?

A. I studied in the primary school of my village. I had to run away from house because of the restraints on my education by the society and my family. After taking admission in Jawahar Navoday Vidyalaya Dantewada, I developed interest in medical services after a counseling session. Bad medical condition in the region, also motivated me further to study for MBBS in the higher studies. With the support of the government, I was admitted in a coaching institute which helped me in the preparation for the MBBS entrance exam. After getting selected, the then Governor of Chhattisgarh paid my fees for the first year and I got scholarship for the remaining years. The government actively supported me throughout all these years.

Q. Do you feel there is a difference in terms of governance and the necessary services provided by the government in the last 10 years?

A. Indeed. Especially in the last few years, a lot has changed. Because of the huge intervention by the government in the education sector, the children today are having the best facilities through Porta Cabins, New schools and colleges. The development of the education cities in the Bastar region is a strong foundation which will ensure that the merit of the tribal students is getting proper resources. The livelihood colleges are also doing the wonders. With the increasing penetration of the armed forces, the influence of Naxalites is decreasing. *CMHO said, the penetration of Health services in the Orcha block has increased a lot since Dr. Dorpa was posted there.*

Q. What do you think is the future of Abujhmad?

A. The future of this region is bright. As I said, education is the biggest exposure that anyone can get. With almost one lakh young students studying in different education cities and porta cabins of the region, I see that there will not be any scope of the violence. Abujhmad is soon going to be the new hub of education in Chhattisgarh.

8. Conclusion

1. Technological advancement, local innovation, proper planning, coordination among officers and public participation has brought a revolution in the education of the most Naxal hit districts of Chhattisgarh. Technology is being used to enhance the learning experience. By integrating technology into education, educators aim to engender pedagogical change and address fundamental issues that affect learners with special needs. Technology can therefore be seen as both a tool and a catalyst for change.
2. Assistive technology can be defined as an item, piece of equipment or product system that can be used to maintain, increase or improve functional capabilities for any person with a special need. The model of Aakar in Sukma and Saksham in Dantewada explains the incorporation of educational technology to provide benefits to students with disabilities who may be in a better position to interact with the lesson through technology. Moreover, technology can place teachers in a better position to customize learning for students with special needs.
3. The innovative scheme of livelihood colleges, porta cabins have significantly increased the education as well as employment facilities. The short term effect of education which is visible right now is the exposure which is benefitting the youth in getting better employment opportunities. The affect of which can be seen in the decreased number of fresh recruitments in the Naxal cadre.
4. Pen is mightier than the Sword. With this concept, the first education city was started in Dantewada. Today almost all districts of the Bastar region have the education city. It is in itself a revolutionary change in the region which is still the heartland of Naxalism. About one lakh students are benefitting from these cities and are getting education.
5. The Future is bright. The long term effect of education is very significant to note here. The locals who are generally not educated, gets easily brainwashed by the Naxals. In the longer run, the current generation which is in schools and colleges right now are specially given the exposure so that they never take the path of violence. Special counseling sessions are organized by the administration to ensure that the democratic principles and the concept of non-violence is enshrined in the heart and mind of the students.
6. Targeted approach has been very successful. Examples like Prayas Foundation, Choo Lo Aasman, Gyanoday, Vivekananda Shakti Kendra etc. have done wonders for the category of people for which these were created. Prayas Foundation for Naxal hit kids and tribals have resulted in making sure the admission of the meritorious students to the several esteemed institutions of the country.
7. The biggest challenge that these initiatives face is in bringing behavioural change in the locals. But the coordinated efforts have ensured people's participation. Local participation has helped in building, monitoring and maintaining the educational infrastructural developments. The local

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE			
CLASS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
VI	41	31	72
VII	63	33	96
VIII	33	28	61
IX	19	28	47
X	12	17	29
TOTAL	218	137	355
ABSENT	05	09	14
PRESNT	210	128	338

Picture 15: The main notice board of Astha School, Dantewada, Visited on 1st August, 2018

residents have started taking the sense of ownership of the schools and porta cabins which are generally located in schools. The villagers are now able to fight for their right to education which in turn is giving them the exposure to make the decision of what is right and wrong.

8. Proper mapping of Human Resources have helped the administration in planning the future course of actions. From providing proper facilities in kinder garden to ensuring employment opportunities after completion of their education, the administration has done it all. This has helped in reducing the number of youth who join the Naxal cadre just for some money in the lack of any source of income.
9. One of the important aspects has been the approach of finding localized solutions to the problems of the region. Instead of importing solutions from other areas, the administration in proper communication with the stakeholders designed localized solutions, so that the tribals (locals) understand the issue and take full benefits of the schemes designed for them.
10. Continuous follow up and monitoring has also been important part of the impact that educational initiatives have been able to generate in combating Naxalism. The successful schemes have ensured that proper coordination with all the stakeholders is a constant process. Building a permanent system was given preference over finding transient solutions. The research suggested that the regular campaigns, monitoring and mentoring of villages resulted in creating an ecosystem which is sustainable.

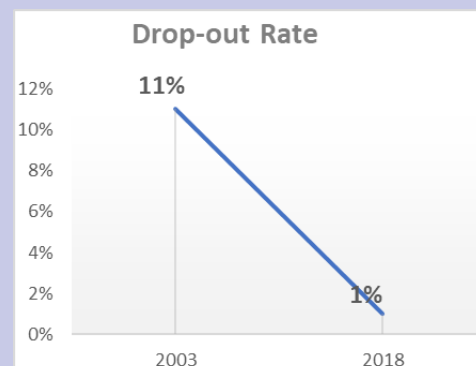
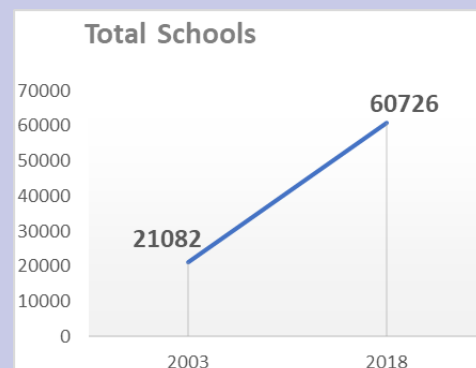
Comparative Analysis of The State Government's Performance In Education Under Congress Rule (2003) And BJP Rule (2018)

1. *Literacy Rate:* Compared to 63.68 % literacy rate of the state under congress ruled government in 2003, the literacy rate of the state in 2018 under BJP ruled government has increased to 71%.

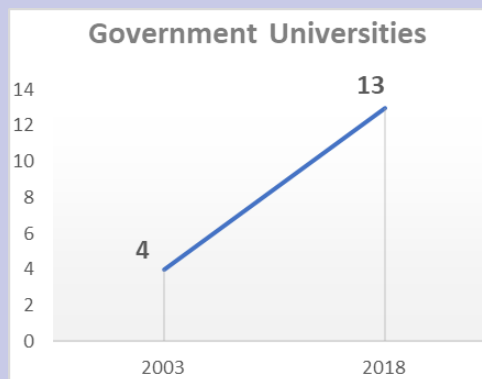
2. *Total number of schools:* Compared to 21,082 schools in 2003, the state has 60,726 total numbers of schools in 2018.

3. *Dropout Rate:* The dropout rate was as high as 11% in 2003 under the congress government which has improved significantly and is only 1% in 2018.

4. *Government Universities:* The state had 4 government universities in 2003 which has increased and is 13 in number today.

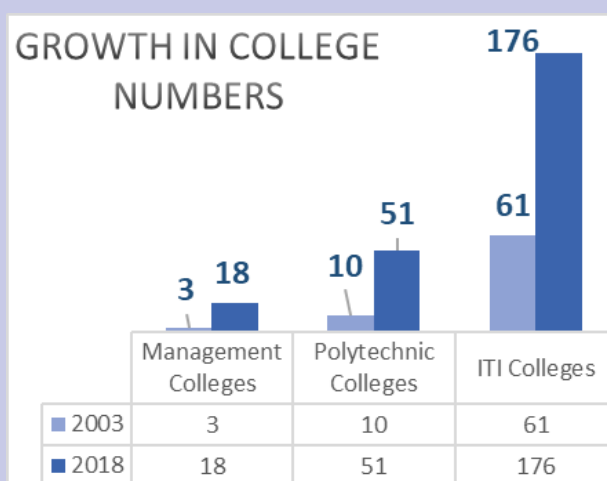
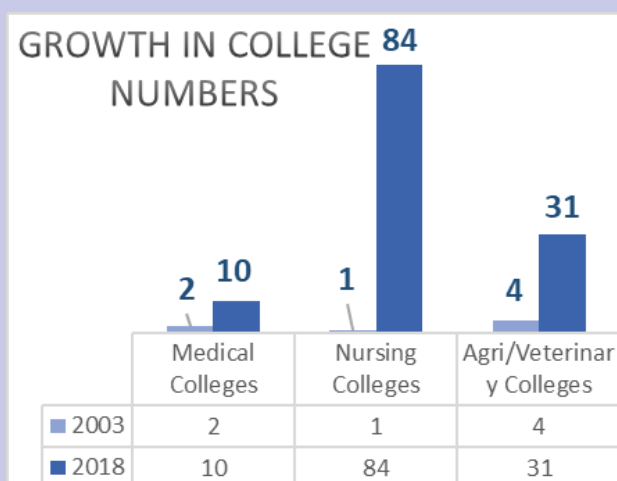


5. *Medical colleges:* From 2 medical colleges in 2003, the state has 10 medical colleges in 2018. The number of seats of MBBS has increased from 100 to 1100. Number of nursing colleges has increased from 1 in 2003 to 84 in 2018. Veterinary colleges in the state have increased from 4 in 2003 to 31 in 2018.



6. *Management Colleges:* The number of management colleges in the state has increased six times from 3 in 2003 to 18 in 2018.

7. *Engineering, Polytechnic and I.T.I. Colleges:* The number of engineering colleges rose from 14 in 2003 to 50 in 2018; Polytechnic colleges from 10 to 51 and I.T.I colleges from 61 to 176.



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