



Three Pillars of Progress: Telangana's Vision for Educational Empowerment

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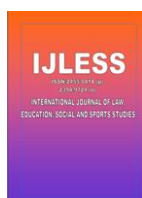
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ABSTRACT

Since education is the cornerstone of socioeconomic growth, closing the fundamental learning gaps is crucial for overall advancement. The government of Telangana has implemented three revolutionary projects to improve public education through the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Mana Ooru Mana Badi, Shift to English-Medium Instruction, and the Tholimettu Program. With an emphasis on community-driven infrastructure development, 'Mana Ooru Mana Badi' in rural and 'Mana Basti Mana Badi' in urban areas aims to improve necessities including classrooms, drinking water supplies, and online learning resources. It guarantees long-term viability by encouraging community ownership via school management committees and alumni involvement. To facilitate regional language integration and give students the tools they need for global communication, the shift to "English-medium instruction" introduces bilingual textbooks and a gradual adoption of English as the medium of instruction for grades I through VIII. The goal of the Tholimettu Program is to guarantee that all students attain fundamental reading, writing, and math abilities by Grade 3 by addressing foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) inadequacies. With a focus on 52,000 instructors and over 11 lakh students, its implementation is around structured lesson plans, activity-based learning, and teacher training.

Increased student enrollment, retention, and academic achievement are the outcomes of these programs' combined efforts to strengthen infrastructure, promote global competencies, and close learning gaps. Nonetheless, issues including a lack of resources, the burden of teachers, and ongoing community involvement continue to exist. By analyzing the implementation, results, and difficulties of these initiatives, this research provides insights into how Telangana is leading the way in high-quality, egalitarian education. These initiatives serve as a complete model for educational empowerment, establishing standards for other states and fostering the development of a knowledgeable, self-assured, and globally prepared generation.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Since education lays the groundwork for social and personal development, it is essential to a society's socioeconomic progress. Basic reading and arithmetic skills are the cornerstones of a strong educational system because they enable pupils to succeed in a rapidly changing environment. The Telangana government has implemented ground-breaking measures to modernize its public education system and address pressing issues via the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

In the academic year 2022–2023, Telangana initiated three significant programs to encourage substantial improvements in government schools.

Mana Ooru Mana Badi is a community-driven effort that seeks to improve educational facilities and cultivate a sense of communal pride.

English Medium Education: A policy change aimed at using bilingual education to inform pupils about global opportunities.

The goal of the **Tholimettu** Program is to assist elementary and upper-primary students in acquiring fundamental reading and numeracy skills.

The study illustrates Telangana's comprehensive approach to improving public education by providing equal weight to all three of these programs. It also lays the groundwork for critical conversations on educational practice and policy.

2. OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the process of implementing the Mana Ooru Mana Badi program in Telangana's government schools.
2. To study the process of adopting English-medium instruction in Telangana's government schools.
3. To study the process of implementing the Tholimettu Program in Telangana's government schools.

3. ANALYSIS PART FOR THE OBJECTIVES

3.1."Mana Ooru Mana Badi"

An examination of Telangana's "Mana Ooru Mana Badi" program for school infrastructure development

The Telangana state government announced the "Mana Ooru Mana Badi" project, a comprehensive program aimed at improving the facilities of all government and local body schools. By addressing significant infrastructure deficiencies in schools, it seeks to create a favourable learning environment that will increase student enrollment, attendance, retention, and, eventually, academic results.

Program Highlights:

All-Inclusive Infrastructure Development

The initiative covers a wide variety of educational infrastructure upgrades, such as building more classrooms, fixing up existing buildings, supplying the furniture, restrooms, and drinking water facilities that are required, and introducing digital classrooms.

Better educational outcomes are anticipated as a result of these enhancements, which should make the classroom more stimulating and encouraging for pupils.

Implementation in Phases:

Phase I will target 9,123 schools in Telangana, with an emphasis on schools with the largest enrollment. The initiative would be implemented in phases over three years, starting in 2021–2022.

In order to ensure that schools at all educational levels benefit from the infrastructural upgrades, the initiative includes elementary, upper primary, and high schools.

Authorized Elements for Infrastructure Improvements: Twelve essential elements are included in the program to

improve school facilities:

The following 12 components are approved under this program:

- a) Toilets with running water facility b) Electrification c) Drinking Water Supply
d) Furniture for Students & Staff e) Painting of the entire school f) Major & Minor Repairs g) Green chalkboards h) Compound Walls i) Kitchen Sheds j) New Classrooms in place of dilapidated rooms k) Dining Halls in High Schools

Obtaining funds and mobilizing resources:

The program's Phase I budget is anticipated to be ₹3,497.62 crores, and it will be funded by a number of state and federal programs, including MGNREGA, NABARD, and Samagra Shiksha. The Finance Department oversees the distribution of monies, guaranteeing responsibility and openness in its use.

Using School Management Committees (SMCs) to carry out:

With School Management Committees (SMCs) in charge of carrying out the work at the school level, the program places a strong emphasis on community involvement. Joint signatures for grant disbursements and regular progress reports guarantee transparency.

Observation and Responsibility:

A Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) will supervise the program's advancement, and social audits will be carried out to guarantee responsibility and openness in its execution. District Collectors will be crucial in administering administrative fines and keeping an eye on the program's development at the district level.

Engagement of the Community and Alumni:

Through its opportunities for fund-raising through donors and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) initiatives, the program promotes active engagement from alumni and the local community. Each institution will establish an alumni association to support ongoing infrastructure construction and upkeep.

Impact and Consequences: By resolving long-standing infrastructural shortcomings, the "Mana Ooru Mana Badi" initiative is a crucial step in revolutionizing Telangana's educational system. If this initiative is implemented successfully, it will not only enhance the physical learning environment but also improve educational outcomes, producing a generation of kids with improved academic and life skills. The program also fosters a sense of common duty and ownership by incorporating community and alumni support, guaranteeing sustainability beyond the first stages.

CURRENT SITUATION

In all government schools in Telangana, the state government established "Amma Adarsha Patashala Committees" made up of members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs). The headmaster of the school will serve as the member-convenor, and the committee will be chaired by the president of the village organization or area-level federation. These committees are in charge of maintaining basic facilities, sewing student clothes, supervising the provision of midday meals, and enhancing school infrastructure. Additionally, they will maintain school grounds, including installing solar power systems to save electricity costs,

monitoring cleanliness, making repairs, and guaranteeing water and electrical facilities. The program uses SHGs' grassroots participation to enhance school administration and the quality of education.



3.2. Note on Telangana Government Schools' Shift to English-Medium Instruction

A major push to switch Telugu-medium education to English-medium instruction in government schools has been started by the Telangana administration. The goal of this change is to improve students' proficiency in the English language and get them ready for a world that is becoming more interconnected. All of the state's government schools are expected to adopt the Cabinet subcommittee's resolution to establish English-medium instruction for grades I through VIII beginning in the 2022–2023 academic year. Bilingual textbooks have been made available to first- through eighth-grade pupils in government schools to facilitate this shift. These textbooks With English on one side and the corresponding regional language (Telugu, Hindi, or Urdu) on the other, these textbooks make the material approachable while assisting students in acclimating to an education that is taught in English. When learning English, students from non-English-speaking backgrounds can better grasp the material thanks to the presence of bilingual materials.

For textbooks up to Class VII, multilingual content creation is the responsibility of the State Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT). After the government gives its approval, the textbooks will be printed and given to the pupils. The department is thinking of offering two distinct textbooks for non-language topics, one for Summative Assessment-I and another for Summative Assessment-II, to prevent pupils from being overburdened with big school bags as a result of bilingual textbooks' greater page count.

To ensure that students from all backgrounds—particularly those in rural and economically poor areas—do not fall behind in the increasingly globalized world, this program is essential. By offering bilingual textbooks and progressively implementing English-medium instruction, Telangana hopes to provide a welcoming learning atmosphere where students can succeed academically, communicate clearly, and get ready for new challenges.

3.3. Note on the Analysis of the Telangana Tholimettu and NAS Survey

The Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) objective of Telangana was complemented by the August 15, 2022, introduction of the Tholimettu (First Step) initiative. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, aims to enhance primary and upper-primary pupils' foundational reading and arithmetic abilities. Through the development of core literacy skills (such as reading comprehension) and numeracy (such as basic arithmetic), the program seeks to close the learning gaps in Telangana's education system.

The results of the National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2021, however, raise serious issues. Among the 37 states and Union Territories, Telangana had mediocre performance, ranking 36th in languages, 35th in arithmetic, and 36th in environmental studies for pupils in the third and fifth grades. For example, third-graders scored 78% in languages, 75% in arithmetic, and 75% in environmental studies, whereas

fifth-graders scored 76% in language, 89% in math, and 85% in environmental studies. Both scores were below or at basic levels.

With an alarming 30% loss in average achievement across disciplines, the academic performance decline from NAS 2017 to 2021 is concerning. Telangana's poor ranking emphasizes how urgently educational changes are needed to raise student achievement.

With pupils missing fundamental language and arithmetic abilities, this condition might cause a major educational crisis, increase dropout rates, and impede future learning. Improving the quality of education in the state requires addressing these issues with targeted programs like Tholimettu.

Tholimettu Program Overview

Telangana primary school pupils' deficiencies in basic reading and numeracy abilities are intended to be addressed by the **Tholimettu** (First Step) program, which was introduced in the 2022–2023 school year. Enhancing fundamental reading, writing, and math abilities for pupils in Class 1 through Class 5 is the initiative's main goal, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic's interruptions.

Over 11 lakh kids are the program's aim, and 52,000 instructors will be trained. It incorporates organized teaching techniques that prioritize strengthening foundational knowledge before moving on to grade-specific material. Beginning on August 15, 2022, the program was overseen by district and state officials to guarantee successful execution. The Tholimettu program is anticipated to greatly enhance instruction and learning in the classroom, supporting the more general objectives of FLN.

Tholimettu and FLN Program's Implementation

Framework of Tholimettu

Introduced in 2022–2023, the Tholimettu (First Step) program addresses learning loss from the COVID-19 epidemic by bridging foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) gaps for pupils in Grades 1–5. Monthly, weekly, and daily plans that are in line with Discourse-Oriented Pedagogy are included in its 28-week annual cycle (140 days) in order to accomplish certain learning objectives. Teachers receive training on how to design and implement locally relevant Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) to build inclusive and dynamic learning environments.

FLN Objectives

All children should have basic reading, writing, and numeracy abilities by Grade 3 or, at the latest, Grade 5 by 2026–2027. • Grade 1: Reads 20 words per minute, writes numbers up to 99, and does simple math.

In grade two, students can read 25 words per minute, write numbers up to 999, and solve subtraction problems. • Grades 3-5: Able to write numerals up to 9999, read more than 50 words per minute with understanding, and solve multiplication and division problems.

Highlights of Implementation1. Structured Plans: Lesson, weekly, and annual plans place a strong emphasis on evaluations and activity-based learning.2. Classroom Dynamics: For a more comprehensive understanding, sessions are divided into 45-minute practice and teaching periods.3. Progress Monitoring: Consists of baseline assessments, customized tactics, and frequent parent-teacher correspondence.

The roles and responsibilities of teachers in the implementation of FLN

Fundamental Duties:1. Adherence to Period Plans and Textbooks: To guarantee organized and thorough material delivery, teachers should adhere to period plans and prescribed textbooks.2. TLM preparation: Create and implement Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) that are suited to a range of

learning requirements to improve student engagement.3. Performance Monitoring: Using the Students Tinkering App, track and document student success regularly to make data-driven modifications to your teaching methods.

Cooperation and Career Advancement: To promote collaborative learning among educators, actively participate in monthly meetings of the school complex and share TLMs, best practices, and creative approaches. • Make use of SCERT example lesson plans for daily, unit, and yearly instruction, adapting them to the needs of the classroom. • Take part in discussions and demonstration courses to hone instructional strategies and enhance results.

These methods seek to equip students with fundamental reading and numeracy skills while fostering an inclusive, stimulating, and productive learning environment.

4. OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY:

4.1. Program Mana Ooru Mana Badi:

- Improved Infrastructure: Considerable upgrades to infrastructure, such as classrooms, power, sanitation, and digital classrooms, produced a favourable learning atmosphere.
- Enhanced Community Involvement: Through active involvement, alumni, local communities, and School Management Committees (SMCs) promoted a feeling of responsibility and ownership.
- Effect on Learning Outcomes: Increased student enrollment, attendance, retention, and academic achievement were all impacted by better infrastructure.

4.2. Switch to instruction in English: • Better Language Proficiency: Bilingual textbooks helped pupils adjust by improving their English language proficiency and preparedness for the global community. • Inclusion in Learning: Students from non-English backgrounds were able to adjust to the curriculum without feeling overburdened because of specially designed content. • Future Preparedness: Students developed the analytical and communication abilities necessary to successfully navigate a globalized environment.

4.3. Tholimettu Program:

- Enhanced FLN Skills: Targeted interventions helped close learning gaps and greatly enhanced students' basic reading and numeracy in Grades 1–5.
- Teacher Empowerment: Well-structured lesson plans and thorough training allowed instructors to produce higher results. Regular monitoring, baseline tests, and customized solutions resulted in quantifiable gains in reading, writing, and math proficiency.

Impact overall: Telangana's multifaceted strategy has shown promise in reviving public education via the creation of infrastructure, creative policy, and the development of fundamental skills. By addressing current educational shortcomings and preparing pupils for future problems, these efforts together guarantee holistic educational empowerment.

5. CONCLUSION

The Mana Ooru Mana Badi, Shift to English-Medium Instruction, and Tholimettu projects, which reflect Telangana's educational reforms, demonstrate a progressive approach to enhancing public education. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020's overarching goals are in line with these programs' focus on infrastructure, global language competency, and basic reading and numeracy.

The Mana Ooru Mana Badi initiative has made government schools welcoming and interesting places while promoting a feeling of community ownership. The transition to English-medium instruction preserves regional linguistic identities while giving pupils the language skills they need to succeed in a globalized environment. With its planned and focused interventions, the Tholimettu program has successfully filled in fundamental learning gaps and given young students the necessary tools.

Despite the impressive advancements made by these programs, issues including maintaining community involvement, reducing teacher workload, and dealing with resource limitations still plague them. Telangana is establishing a standard for other states by expanding on the achievements of these programs and filling in the gaps, demonstrating how careful planning and inclusive execution can revolutionize public education.

These initiatives aim to create a generation of capable, self-assured, and internationally educated students while also paving the road for socioeconomic empowerment and raising educational standards.

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