



TRADITIONAL
RAMASABHA MEETING



25TH YEAR OF PEOPLE'S PLAN CAMPAIGN IN KERALA

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND EDUCATION



KERALA INSTITUTE OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION (KILA)

Mulamgunnathkavu P.O. Thrissur, Kerala, INDIA

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25th Year of People's Plan Campaign in Kerala Local Governments and Education

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M B Rajesh

Minister for Local Self Governments,
Rural Development and Excise
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25 YEARS OF PEOPLE'S PLANNING A SUCCESS STORY OF DECENTRALISATION OF POWER IN INDIA

The People's Plan Campaign is a unique initiative that has transformed the landscape of developmental politics in Kerala. This great experiment encapsulated the democratic achievements, Kerala made over the decades. It included the land reforms initiated by the first Communist government led by EMS Namputiripad, the government which was the product of larger movement for land in the pre-independent era and also included the innumerable struggles for land- rights and surplus land in the post – land reform period by the tenants across the state.

In 1996, the state launched the People's Plan Campaign, which was designed and implemented as a successful methodology for transferring fund, functions and functionary that constitutional amendments in 1992 envisaged as the necessary condition to make the devolution of power possible. The campaign and the related process empowered the local level leadership and people at large to plan and implement their own development projects, ensuring inclusive development. Potential of our decentralized government system which was nurtured by the People's Planning process got its effective manifestation during the time of 2018 flood and Covid. Along with the Kudumbashree movement, decentralisation of power through the people's planning has achieved remarkable success in

enhancing the quality of life of people of Kerala and expanding the vistas for economic wellbeing and social development.

Today, in yet another transformative moment of Nava Keralam, new responsibilities are placed confidently on the shoulders of local governments in Kerala. Government expects local governments to become the leaders of economic development by fostering the growth and employment on par with that of developed nations, as it has been in the case of human development. In the journey of creating a Nava Keralam, we also pin hope on our local self-government institutions to make Kerala waste free by clearing the waste produced in our own neighbourhoods through the sustainable systems.

The series of 25 books published by KILA is a valuable contribution to the knowledge base on decentralization, documenting the experiences of the People's Plan Campaign and capturing the essence of decentralization and the role of local governments in development. I am confident that these books will serve as a valuable resource for other states and countries that are striving to achieve sustainable development through decentralization.

I congratulate the team at KILA and the local governments of Kerala for their outstanding work and am proud of the achievements of decentralization in Kerala. I am confident that the state will continue to scale new heights in the years to come.



PREFACE

Education is a fundamental right that can shape the future of individuals, communities, and nations. Decentralization has proved to be a powerful tool in enhancing the quality of education and reaching the unreached, especially in remote and marginalized areas. Decentralized education initiatives have increased access and equity in education through decision-making by the people. This book showcases interventions in decentralized education through real-life examples, offering valuable insights and lessons for those interested in promoting such approaches to education. The stories featured in this book demonstrate the power of collaboration, innovation, and local solutions in transforming education and providing all with access to quality education.

This book highlights how the local governments and communities have come together to create lasting positive change. These stories of perseverance, innovation, and collaboration are not only a source of knowledge, but also as a source of inspiration for those who believe in the transformative power of education. This preface serves as a testament to the impact that decentralized education initiatives can have, and a call to action for all stakeholders to come together and create a brighter future.

Dr. Joy Elamon

Director General

KILA

ABBREVIATIONS

ASAP	Additional Skill Acquisition Program
BRC / CRC	Block Resource Centre / Cluster Resource Centre
CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
CARSEL	Centre for Advanced Research in Socio-Emotional Learning
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CWSN	Children with Special Needs
DDE	Deputy Director of Education
DEO / AEO	District Education Officer / Assistant Education Officer
DIET	District Institute for Education and Training
HS / HSS	High Schools / Higher Secondary Schools
IEDC	Integrated Education for the Disabled Children
IOF	Initial Observation Framework
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
IRTC	Integrated Rural Technology Centre
ISRO	Indian Space Research Organization
IT / ICT	Information Technology / Information & Communication Technology
K-DISC	Kerala Development Innovation & Strategic Council
KILA	Kerala Institute of Local Administration
KITE	Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education
KSSP	Kerala Shastra Sahithya Parishad
LCD	Liquid Crystal Display
LP / UP	Lower Primary / Upper Primary
LSS / USS	Lower Secondary Scholarship / Upper Secondary Scholarship
MEC	Municipal Education Committee
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
NEET	National Eligibility cum Entrance Test
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
QIP	Quality Improvement Program
REAP	Rapid English Acquisition Program
RMSA	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
ROTS	Receive Only Terminal System
SC / ST	Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribe
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SEL	Socio-Emotional Learning
SSA / SSK	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan / Sarva Shiksha Kerala
SSLC	Secondary School Leaving Certificate
VEC / PEC	Village Education Committee / Panchayat Education Committee
WHO	World Health Organization

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INTRODUCTION TO DECENTRALIZED EDUCATION

We are celebrating the Silver Jubilee Year of the People's Plan Campaign at a pivotal social moment. To begin with, all of our public schools have become centers of excellence as a result of the Public Education Rejuvenation Mission and the public education sector has become a common platform for community attention and intervention. Second, while the Covid pandemic has wreaked havoc on all aspects of our life, there have been widespread initiatives to solve the various crises it has spawned and turn them into opportunities.

In this situation, Kerala's society began to think about the knowledge community and how to enhance the local economy. Simultaneously, efforts are being made in the sphere of education to address the different crises caused by the pandemic. All of these debates point to the need for decentralized planning and implementation. The main focus at the national level is on school enrolment and continuing education. According to the National Education Policy 2020, 3.22 crore school-aged children are out of school. Kerala, on the other hand, has been able to enroll nearly all children of this age in schools and ensure that their education continues until they reach Class XII. As a result, our primary concern should be to ensure educational quality and equity. This change requires large-scale local expertise, thus it's important to assess our decentralization initiatives.

Changes in the world are often not mirrored in public areas,

particularly in schools, according to common perception. There was also a public outcry that such criticisms were not given the attention they deserved. This has had a substantial impact on children's enrolment in public schools, resulting in a decrease in the number of students enrolled in public schools. As a result, public schools were forced to close due to a lack of sufficient student enrolment. Governments have been forced to withdraw from the service industry as a result of globalization policies. When governments became more supportive of such approaches, public schools became undesirable and inefficient. The education of ordinary people's children has become a major issue. In the time-period 2011 to 16, the government decided to close public schools in our state.

The Public Education Rejuvenation Campaign was founded in 2017 with the belief that education is a child's right and that it is the government's responsibility to ensure inclusive education for all children considering social justice, equality, and equal opportunity. With the passage of the Public Education Rejuvenation Mission, the government, which took office in 2016, intended to halt the trend. They stated that public schools should not be abolished, but rather enhanced and transformed into centers of excellence that promote secularism and humanity, a cause that would require widespread popular support. Public schools began to thrive after the government took the lead in all of this.

The inquiry of how the environment for revitalisation of public schools emerged as part of the Public Education Rejuvenation Mission naturally stems from the experience gained over the past 25 years in the concept of local government as well as decentralized planning, its methodology and implementation developed over the years through People's Plan Campaign.

Kerala's aversion to centralized control has long been a part of the state's culture. All organized efforts against upper-class tyranny as part of power centralization, struggles against land centralization, land rights, and exploitation, were all efforts towards decentralization. From the beginning of the twentieth century, the communal and social reform initiatives of well-known and illustrious leaders such as Vaikundaswamy, Sree Narayana Guru, Chattambi Swamy, Mannath Padmanabhan, Ayyankali, V.T.Bhattathiripad, Sahodharan Ayyappan, Fr.Chavara Kuriakose Elias, and Muhammad Abdurrahman Sahib were against the exploitation and the centralized of power practised by the British and the royal houses. All power was concentrated in the hands of the British rulers and local kingdoms. The liberation movements advocated for decentralization. Grama Swaraj was proposed by Gandhiji. During the liberation movements, national parties emphasized the



significance of the panchayat system, which was presented to society as a political solution. Unfortunately, Post-Independence India did not accept these views into consideration.

Prior to the law reform, a committee was constituted in the 1950s under the chairmanship of Balwant Rai Mehta to explore local governing institutions in independent India. The committee recommended that grama panchayats, block panchayats, and district panchayats should be constituted and given more powers and resources, but this did not occur. Later the same year, another committee led by Ashok Mehta was formed to explore and present a recommendation on decentralization. Mr.E.M.S.Namboothiripad, a committee member, recommended in his dissent note included in the report that local governments should be given greater powers to satisfy the basic needs of the common and backward classes.

Decentralization has proven to be beneficial in the field of education. We have many models of program that have taken advantage of the needs and capabilities of each region and actively intervened in the advancement of education, dating back to the Renaissance period. As a result, the diversity and variability of social relationships are abundant in our area of experience.

The Malabar District Board, led by Shri. P.T.Bhaskara Panikkar was founded in 1954 and served till 1958 to assure the conscious continuation of this experience. The Malabar District Board's contribution to the educational growth of Malabar, which had trailed behind in the education sector, cannot be overstated. Attempts were made to actively interfere in the sphere of education, either directly as a continuation of this activity or subsequently within some of the limits of the district councils of 1990. To combat learning backwardness in schools, *Aksharappulari* program and panchayat school complex projects were implemented. The inclusion of education in the areas of activity designated by 73–74 constitutional amendments for local bodies streamlined the interventions.

KERALA'S EXPERIENCES TO PEOPLE'S PLAN CAMPAIGN

When we look at the history of Kerala's education sector, we can see that it was accomplished not through centralized schemes, but entirely through decentralized efforts. Education decentralization has long been a goal of Kerala society. By the 1950s, education had become a political matter that no democratically elected government could ignore (Jeffery, 1992). District boards existed in the Madras province even before independence. They possessed certain abilities. The Malabar

District was a division of the Madras Province. The district board was made up of elected officials. It had limited authority and resources, but the district boards proved that rural people, who were under British control did not even have access to basic education, healthcare, or transportation, could do a lot with the minimal authorities at the local level. The work of the Malabar District Board in the sphere of education is the best example of this. Prior to the foundation of the State of Kerala, the Malabar District Board, chaired by P.T. Bhaskara Panikkar, was founded to capitalise on the potential for decentralization in the establishment of primary schools in Malabar. Despite not having the same authorities or resources as now, the Malabar District Board interfered in education with enthusiasm and built the foundation for elementary education in Malabar.

All programs became centralized with the formation of United Kerala. After the formation of the State of Kerala and the 1956 elections Shri. Joseph Mundasseri became the first Minister of Education in the government led by E.M.S.Namboodiripad ministry. On 7th July 1957, he introduced the Education Bill, which empowers local governments to enhance education and ensure that all children should complete the schooling phase with the involvement of local residents. Section 17 of the Education Act, which was later passed, describes how the District Education Authority was formed and Section 18 of the act envisions the District Education Authority's functions, including extensive authority at the lower levels to form educational committees at the local level. The requirements for elections, working, and activities of the local educational authority are specified in Chapters 17, 18, and 19 of the Kerala Education Rules, which went into effect in 1959. But, in reality, none of this has occurred.

Long before decentralization and people's planning, isolated popular alternatives in the sphere of education in Kerala had been established at the local level. Many of these experiments were carried out with the help of the Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP), a popular science and literature organization. Efforts were made to make the teaching method student-friendly, work-oriented, eco-friendly, and life-affirming through Eureka Vinjanolsavam, Aksharavedi, science camps, eco-camps, and so on, which contributed to improving the quality of education with popular participation in various parts of Kerala during the 1980s and early 1990s (Tharakan & Sunanthakumar 2004). In the early 1990s, new educational projects were launched. Kasargod saw the first significant intervention. A meeting was held on how to educate illiterate children, headed by the Literacy Committee, District Council, DIET, and the Department of Education. This sparked the



notion of introducing a new pedagogy instead of the existing ones. A guidebook was developed for the instructors, and all the teachers in the third and fourth standards in the district were trained. As an outcome, the results of the learning process conducted by teachers in schools were accurately monitored by DIET. The learning process took place after school hours as part of this new curriculum. Locals also contributed by providing snacks to the children. This action in the Kasargod district was noticed at the state level, and the project was taken over by other DIETs. (Ajit Kumar, Aswathi, Rebecca Ashok, Bibin Thampi 2020)

NATIONAL-LEVEL INITIATIVES ON DECENTRALIZATION

A number of decentralization initiatives have also emerged at the national level, such as the Decentralized Administration in education on the CABE Committee Report (Veerappa Moily Committee 1993). On February 2, 1993, the Central Ministry of Human Resource Development formed a committee chaired by the then Chief Minister of Karnataka, Shri Veerappa Moily, to submit a report on decentralized governance in education in accordance with the Program of Action 1992 of the National Education Policy 1986. Shri. E.T Mohammad Basheer, the then-Kerala Education Minister, was also a member of the committee. The committee made several basic ideas for educational decentralization. The Veerappa Moily Committee's report is also notable in that it was prepared in 1992 during the 73rd and 74th amendments of the constitution.

The National Education Policy of 1986 called for the establishment of District Education Boards. It stated that 'District Education Boards will be established for implementation up to and including the Higher Secondary level. State governments should examine all possibilities in the area and multi-level educational development systems involving central, state, district, and local agencies should be involved in its planning, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation.

The 1992 Program of Action called for the establishment of district education boards, which would be responsible for supervising all educational activities in the area, including formal schools, non-formal education, and elderly education. The Board was also supposed to be in charge of all administrative, financial, and human resource matters, as well as all planning activities at the primary, upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels. The suggestions of the Program of Action for District Boards include details on the statutory authority that would be in charge of such matters.



In light of the 73rd and 74th Panchayat Raj/Municipal Amendments to the Constitution, as well as the 1992 Program of Action, the Veerappa Moily Committee proposed a number of essential ideas. In the case of a panchayat with only one village, the activities would be led by the panchayat Education Standing Committee. If a panchayat included more than one village, the activities would be led by the panchayat's Village Education Committee. These committees should be in charge of adult education, childcare education, non-formal education and primary levels of education.

These committees activities would include community awareness campaigns about the importance of education and sending children to school; regular school enrolment drives; awareness program for parents of dropout students; taking necessary steps to prevent pre-school dropouts; and facilitating primary school education. These committees would also be in charge of developing implementation strategies and overseeing the physical development of the schools. They would also be in charge of gathering resources for all of these activities. The responsibility for providing universal primary education and literacy would belong to local committees. PECs and VECs would be in charge of coordinating with other departments and agencies.

Rather than stating their responsibilities, the committee proposed that decentralized committees be granted the authority to carry out all of these functions. Similarly, the Veerappa Moily Committee report includes specific ideas on the powers and responsibilities of the District Educational Committee, as well as the Education Development Committee at the local level, which is monitored by the grama panchayats and municipalities.

DECENTRALIZATION EFFORTS IN KERALA

The Kerala government prioritized decentralization in the latter half of the 1980s. Seven programs were introduced as part of this, and powers and resources were transferred to implement certain issues. Under the joint leadership of the district administration and the Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad, the Literacy Movement (Saksharatha yangyam) was implemented in Ernakulam district in 1989. The Total Literacy Program was extended to the entire state as a result of this experience in 1990. Local self-government institutions have been critical in implementing exemplary literacy efforts. The general performance of the local governments in recruiting volunteers and identifying and coordinating locations for literacy program has been outstanding.



DISTRICT COUNCILS

The government decided to strengthen decentralization by establishing a District Council in 1987. District Council elections were held, and the District Councils were established in 1991. Despite their short existence, the District Councils organized a number of program. The most important of these were participatory education program aimed at increasing educational quality. The first attempt in this manner was the Sivapuram Education Complex in Kannur district. Based on previous experiences, it was determined that educational complexes should be planned at the panchayat level as a local self-governing unit in order to create and utilize local leadership. The twin Panchayat School Complexes built on this model are the Kalliasseri Panchayat School Complex in Kannur District and the Madikkai Panchayat School Complex in Kasargod District. The reform efforts conducted in Kalliasseri evaluation activities were remarkable. In this segment, an evaluation methodology has been established to examine practical skills in addition to field knowledge.

These experiences have demonstrated that evaluation methods should be developed through teacher seminars at panchayat-level. The Madikkai Panchayat School Complex explored how local' skills should be used in the sphere of education. These experiences demonstrated that artists, skilled workers, parents, and instructors could all collaborate to create the best educational content. This has also shown how to mobilize resources on a local level for decentralized initiatives. Similar investigations were conducted in other panchayats as well. The Dharmadom Panchayat School Complex stated that public monitoring was useful for evaluating school activities and identifying and resolving problems. Following that, most districts carried out activities under the direction of local governments with emphasize on various sectors. Padiyoor & Perinjanam in Thrissur, Mezhuveli in Pathanamthitta, Nellikuzhi in Ernakulam, Payyoli, Parayancherry, and Thamarassery in Kozhikode are a few instances. District councils have been able to build a number of working models in the education sector in a relatively short amount of time. As part of the panchayat complex activities, teacher training, teacher meetings, learning workshops, coordination of officials and popular systems, and learning support activities were implemented.

CONTINUITY OF LITERACY CAMPAIGN

Interventions to improve the quality of school instruction began in many regions as

early as the 1980s, but as a result of the literacy campaign, transformation initiatives expanded to more areas in the first half of the 1990s. Local investigations were carried out to identify the active participation of children and identified activities such as the Aksharavedi campaign organized by the Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad in Vellanad in 1981; all of these experiences have persuaded the necessity to improve the quality of school education. The favourable position produced as a result of the literacy campaign was used for this purpose. Following the Akshara Kerala project in 1991-92, Aksharappulari, led by Kasargod District Council, District Literacy Committee, and DIET, 'Ammathan Manikuttan' in Malappuram District in 1992-93, and other educational activities in various districts, opened up the possibility for people's participatory intervention.

INQUIRY & PEOPLE'S PLAN CAMPAIGN

District Councils and various organisations have been able to further organise and develop the diverse inquiries that have taken place in the field of education since the inception of the People's Plan campaign. Large-scale research was also conducted on the subject of preschool education, which is the primary duty of the gram panchayat and municipality. Kayyur Cheemeni Grama Panchayat implemented comprehensive interventions in pre-primary schools. This initiative involved the entire society, including volunteers, mothers, teachers, and educators. A significant revolution occurred in the academic arena, which was able to design a preschool curriculum and educate people working in the field accordingly. These initiatives were funded by the grama panchayat.

During the same period, Vidhura grama panchayat introduced the pre-primary comprehensive education program (Samagra Vidhyabhyasa Paripadi), Thanalur grama panchayat launched pre-primary education, and Mararikulam South grama panchayat launched Balakairali Nursery Schools. Chembilode and Pallippuram grama panchayats focused on Anganwadis, Bharanikavu and Annamanada grama panchayats on pre-primary education and Anganwadi action plans, Kolepadam and Kulanada grama panchayats, Koothuparamba and Attingal municipalities on pre-school education projects. Over the same period, several other local governments made similar steps. The panchayat education calendar of Pannyannur, balasabha of Vidhura, awareness program for parents at Padiyoor and Chennirkara, and assembly notes of Anthoor are some of the projects that took place during the first phase of the people's plan campaign. These educational programs received a lot of help from educated volunteers.



In addition, during the early stages of the People's Plan campaign, wide ranges of educational program were held. The key goals were to improve education quality, promote participation, and assure innovative implementation. Diverse activities were organized and carried out as part of this under the supervision of the panchayats. Teacher training, infrastructure development, workshops for developing educational materials, cohabitation camps and comprehensive assessments through neighbourhood monitoring, diverse program for honouring special days, career guidance, vocational training, and early education system improvement have all provided valuable insights into the matter. Over the years, the People's Plan campaign has expanded these initiatives. Many local self-government institutions have set an example by formulating and implementing innovative initiatives.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OF THODANNUR BLOCK

Despite the fact that education was not a mandatory function of a block panchayat, Thodannur Block Panchayat was able to make a substantial contribution to the field of education with the public's support. In 1996-97, an educational program was initiated by the Thodannur Block Panchayat Committee as a part of the people's plan campaign, which aimed to cover education up to the secondary level. Along with fostering friendships among teachers, managers, officials, parents, and people's representatives, this has resulted in widespread public participation at all levels of the project. To ensure people's participation, many committees were constituted. The Block Resource Committee and its sub-committees have worked to coordinate academic activities in addition to the Block Education Committee, Panchayat Education Committees, Cluster Education Committees, and School Committees.

Before the beginning of the academic year, an extensive plan was developed. Teachers were appropriately equipped. This was most likely the first time in Kerala that teachers were trained as part of a project during holidays. The annual plan included even the most precise elements of the entire educational activities to be carried out in a year. The Thodannur Block has followed the strategy of analyzing project progress monthly and then going forward. Thematic training program and workshops were held for teachers in order to establish new experiments in the field of evaluation and learning materials. Large-scale use of audio-visual equipments and informal methods were included in the learning sessions. Fellowship camps and creative camps were held to assist with this.

All of this resulted in the unification of block and grama panchayats, and therefore the integration of multiple activities. Another element of this popular schooling method was that all actions were meticulously tracked. Formal and democratic monitoring systems were created for this purpose. The democratic monitoring team led by the grama panchayat members; departmental monitoring led by the AEOs, DEOs, and DDEs; and block-level monitoring led by block-level officials and headmasters were the monitoring systems developed for the success of the project.

Monthly teachers meetings, children's literary societies, manuscript magazines, wall magazine, children's festivals, national day commemoration, special program were organized to make classrooms more attractive, special program to improve the SSLC pass percentage, art exhibitions, and developing teacher's manuals are among other things were held provided novel experiences.

PANNIYANOOR GRAMA PANCHAYAT

The Panniyanoor Grama Panchayat has created an activity calendar for the entire academic year. The panchayat also organized and carried out teacher training, meetings and workshops to develop learning materials, public involvement in National Days, parent education, and language learning program.

VIDHURA GRAMA PANCHAYAT

In addition to increasing English language learning and organising math festivals, theatre training, and library development, the panchayat also organized children's groups and neighbourhood children's forums to promote democratic consciousness in teenagers. To coordinate and supervise educational initiatives, the Panchayat Education Network was established. They used the services of unemployed people who had completed their teacher training since the panchayat needed teachers to maintain the schools functioning smoothly. The initiative received initial academic assistance from the education and research unit of Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad.

VEMBAYAM GRAMA PANCHAYAT

The panchayat tried out new approaches to improve children's English language learning. Teachers and parents collaborated to identify and rectify difficulties in English learning. The panchayat also sought assistance from the educational research unit.



AMARAMBALAM GRAMA PANCHAYAT

Teacher training, the formation of children’s literature groups, reading groups, film festivals, a moving magazine, learning festival for children in the guest-host format, special schemes for Class X students in need of academic assistance, Vaithaari, a drive for folk song collection and book publishing, the commemoration of special days, a parent education program, the establishment of study centers in SC/ST colonies, school hygiene program, and the improvement of school libraries were all conducted as part of the panchayat’s educational initiatives.

PADIYOOR GRAMA PANCHAYAT

A unique plan was put in place to ensure parental involvement in educational activities. Workshops for parents were also held at the panchayat level. At the workshops, the general goals of education and parental involvement were discussed. Local knowledge was used to create learning materials. In addition, the panchayat committee oversaw school-level study courses, neighbourhood groups, pamphlet development, teacher seminars, and evaluation workshops under Padiyoor grama panchayat. District panchayats have been actively engaged in the field of education since the inception of the people’s plan campaign. Kannur District Panchayat’s Gurukulam, Kozhikode District Panchayat’s Vijayotsavam, Malappuram District Panchayat’s Vijayabheri, Palakkad District Panchayat’s Harisree, Thrissur and Thiruvananthapuram District Panchayat’s Vidhya Jyothi and several other district panchayats also have significant contribution towards this cause. A detailed evaluation of the performance of some of the districts would be appropriate.

PALAKKAD DISTRICT PANCHAYAT – HARISREE

In the sphere of education, schools in Palakkad had faced numerous problems and challenges. The district has benefited greatly from the holistic approach to school education implemented by the district panchayat. It has resulted in significant development. As part of this, educational meetings with teacher participation, Vijayasree, a project aimed at SSLC and HSS public examinations, a web portal called Harisree, additional classes for those in need of study support, REAP Project for 7th and 8th standard students to improve their English learning, arts and sports advancement program, mobile laboratories, and other initiatives were implemented. Palakkad district panchayat has also been able to apply a novel project monitoring mechanism.

MALAPPURAM DISTRICT PANCHAYAT - VIJAYABHERI

The Vijayabheri of Malappuram district panchayat project has resulted in a significant improvement in education. Malappuram district reported a poor pass rate of 33% in the SSLC examination in March 2001. In an effort to improve education in high schools, Vijayabheri committees were established in each school and special training was provided to headmasters and PTA members. Vijayabheri's calendar fosters collaboration between grama panchayats and block panchayats, enabling them to identify schools in need of special attention, provide essential support materials, specialized training programs such as Unnarv for parent awareness were organized as part of this effort. These efforts have resulted in a significant increase in student success, with the percentage of students who passed the SSLC rising to 99.37% in 2021. Furthermore, program for the holistic development of children have been developed.

ISSUES AROUSED DURING THE PEOPLES PLAN CAMPAIGN

The Kerala Legislative Assembly specified the powers of local governments in the sphere of education with the Constitutional Amendment to the Panchayat Raj and Municipal Acts in 1994. Accordingly, the government L.P. and U.P. schools were transferred to the grama panchayat, the high schools and higher secondary schools were transferred to the district panchayat, and all schools within municipal/corporation limits were transferred to the respective local authorities. Aside from schooling, local governments are in charge of pre-primary education, adult education, and literacy program. The district panchayats also manage library societies.

Local government authorities have been carrying out various efforts to improve the schools in their jurisdiction since the people's plan period from 1997. The decentralization effort resulted in a significant increase in physical infrastructure development. Some district panchayats have also made consistent interventions in academic affairs. It has been able to solve educational quality issues in the individual districts in this manner. When local self-governments began to intervene in the sphere of education, gave rise to many issues are as follows. Despite the fact that the institutions were transferred to the Local Self-Government Institutions, they encountered numerous constraints in exercising the existing powers.

1. Local governments lack the mechanisms and powers to intervene effectively in transferred institutions.



2. Kerala must set aside a substantial sum of money for the centrally sponsored scheme Samagra Shiksha Kerala, which limits its own educational efforts.
3. There are numerous barriers to intervening in aided schools which accounts for 60% of all schools in Kerala.
4. The intervention of local self-governing institutions in education is often limited by society's attitude towards education. The widespread perception is that education is for the objective of seeking jobs abroad. The social desire for a worldwide syllabus, or at the very least an all-India centralized syllabus, forces a type of content concentration. Society is frequently concerned about the notion that decentralization would contradict this.
5. Grama panchayats are in charge of LP and UP Schools. However, the LP and UP sections of a high school are under the purview of the district panchayat, and as a result, the grama panchayat is unable to make plans that will include the complete LP and UP students under its purview.
6. There are currently distinct heads of institutions for high school and higher secondary sections in schools. In schools with a Vocational Higher Secondary section, there are three principals. This results in a slew of difficult issues. Coordination factors have been identified. The government is responsible for finding a solution. Only then will the district panchayat/municipality/corporation will be able to strengthen its ability to intervene effectively in these institutions.
7. The district panchayat has limited authority over district-level systems such as DIET and BRC, which are tasked with ensuring quality education.
8. Accurate monitoring is essential to ensure that students receive textbooks, study materials, and scholarships on time. At the same time, the midday meal program is required to be implemented perfectly. The insufficiency of mechanisms for monitoring all of this poses a challenge.
9. To improve preschool facilities for all minors within the limits of a local body and to coordinate the academic and administrative activities of Anganwadis (Kindergartens), and pre-primary facilities attached to schools, the physical and academic environments of all of these must be transformed from an unappealing and neglected state to a modern one. Local governments must have a pre-school strategy and action plan in place to facilitate this. A constraint is the lack of a state-level public policy to accomplish this.



10. According to census data, there are still 16 lakh illiterates in Kerala attempting to complete fourth-class equivalency. This is not a condition that can be justified. Only through the initiative of local governments can effective remedial action be implemented.
11. Local governments can also help to change parents preconceived notions about education. Parental education program must be implemented on a regular basis. Schools, including parents, should also play an essential part in the vocational development of the community. The institutions have systemic hurdles in organising all of this.
12. In addition to these efforts, the responsibilities mentioned in the sections on the possibilities proposed by the Right to Education Act necessitate the coordination and implementation of appropriate mechanisms, particularly for the effective fulfilment of meritorious or educational matters. The current system of implementing officers is inadequate. One of the reasons for the lack of coordination in promoting quality education is the lack of a panchayat level-education officer.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The number of local governments that developed and implemented excellent creative ideas within their jurisdiction is significant. Such organisations have demonstrated that blaming limitations costs time and that restriction can be transformed into possibilities. Decentralization in school education must be effectively implemented to materialize the all-encompassing quality of education attained by providing justice for all students in school. Local governments must assume this critical task. Local governments should be able to give the necessary support to schools in order to develop possible educational action plans taking into account each regions and socio-cultural background of the community and environment. Education committees of the local government institutions should be strengthened accordingly.

Schools are the most critical public institutions under the control of local government having numerous possibilities due to:

1. They continue to serve a large number of institutions in the jurisdiction of local governments.



2. Around 75%, making them an important player in the sphere of public education.
3. Given their local presence, schools are likely to be the first entities to intervene in addressing public education issues.
4. Kerala society places a high value on education, and the general public takes a keen interest in the matter.
5. Now that the first-generation issues in school education have been resolved, it's time for the society to focus on the second-generation issues, which are primarily concerned with the quality of education being offered to the students.

ENORMOUS OPPORTUNITIES BY THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT

Local governments play a critical role in upholding the Right to Education Act. This is clarified by G.O. (P) No. 192/2014/G.Edn. Department issued on September 20, 2014 (Appendix 1). As per the order of education department, local governments have the following tasks:

1. Ensure the availability of schools within prescribed land limitations.
2. Ensure non-discrimination in enrolment.
3. Ensure the maintenance of school records.
4. Provide adequate equipments and infrastructure facilities.
5. Ensure the availability of qualified teachers.
6. Ensure the availability of textbooks and learning materials in a timely manner. In the event of failure to meet these obligations, it is essential to inform the educational authorities of the situation.
7. Provide specialized education support for children who require it.
8. Ensure the attendance of all school-going age children,
9. Provide training to teachers.
10. Ensure the admission of immigrant students.
11. Ensure monitoring school level activities.
12. Preparation of the academic calendar, and

13. Ensure the formation of school management committees.

This order has provided local governments with a lot of alternatives. Ensuring all of these in every school requires a significant deal of responsibility. Furthermore, it is a constitutional requirement. Following this order, a precise guideline was developed by KILA intervention in the field of education. Providing the quality education provided by the Right to Education Act to all children under local government is a significant task for local governments. This problem is aggravated by the fact that approximately 60% of aided schools fall outside the authority of local government.

PUBLIC EDUCATION REJUVENATION CAMPAIGN – THE POSSIBILITIES

The ideals advanced by the public education rejuvenation mission have evolved into state-sponsored educational projects and activities. Government schools have evolved into a place where the public's creative participation is encouraged. The enrolment of children in public schools has increased with renewed optimism, confidence, and enthusiasm. Everyone engaged with public schools is experiencing significant changes in their attitudes and activities. It has injected new zeal and optimism in teachers, non-teaching personnel, parents, the administrative system, people's representatives, and the panchayat system. The tremendous awakening has revived excitement and exuberance. The positive impact of society's increased support for education is evident in the results of the 10th and 12th classes. The number of students receiving higher grades has increased, reflecting a heightened level of engagement and motivation among students. Additionally, the number of students participating in the LSS and USS exams has been steadily increasing every year, indicating a growing appreciation for the value of education. These results provide clear evidence of society's increased enthusiasm and support for education, and their impact on student outcomes. The qualitative analysis of the findings underscores the significance of this support in shaping students' academic success.

The increasing number of children who attends public schools each year can be used to gauge the country's and natives' interests. More than 9.3 lakh pupils enrolled in public schools in the five academic years from 2017-18 to 2021-22 than in prior years. At the beginning of the academic year, public schools rarely emerged in the picture. However, the print media in Kerala now highlights creative activities



taking place in public schools. It has become a source of pride to send children to public schools and to work for public schools. Each local government institutions, at various levels, are playing an important role in this process.

Local governments must work in concert to safeguard the long-term viability of the concept and application produced through the Public Education Rejuvenation Mission. In this context, the Public Education Rejuvenation Mission is as follows.

1. Quality education is a child's right.
2. Academic excellence is synonymous with school excellence.
3. Modernization and technical growth contribute to the preservation of democracy and humanity.
4. Special care for all children requires learning assistance.
5. It is essential to democratise and popularise the importance of education.
6. Identifying each student's abilities and providing experiences allow them to grow to their full potential.
7. Learning should be a process. It is critical to take use of all group learning opportunities, but there should also be opportunities for each child to develop their particular strengths.
8. It is vital to use all available resources when providing quality education.
9. Technology should be used judiciously and appropriately in accordance with requirements of curriculum delivery in order, to avoid impeding children's abstract thoughts and imaginations.
10. To accomplish all of this, school facilities should be improved. The physical facilities include not only classrooms but also children's restrooms, playgrounds, school and compound walls, trash disposal facilities, seating beneath the trees, a dining hall, kitchen, and other amenities.
11. Bringing the motto "Green School Hygiene School" into action. Create biodiversity gardens on all university campuses. Problems with waste management are frequently caused by attitudes and habits. As a result, school campuses should be converted into laboratories in order to build the aptitude for scientific waste management in the area as well as to identify and utilise various waste management alternatives.
12. Establish campuses entirely in drug-free zones.

Schools are the essential institutions of the state. Developing the education system in a decentralized manner is the only way to create a system that serves all children in society. Each institution faces unique situations and challenges that children must overcome. Children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds must receive the support they require and be integrated into the mainstream. To achieve this, each school should create an academic master plan. While creating such an academic master plan, people's representatives, parents, and localities should be engaged. Each school should develop an academic master plan as well as action plans to execute the plan. Padanolsavam (Education Festival) has already demonstrated that all of these can help to improve academic performance of the schools. The academic activities of each school, as well as the knowledge and skills acquired by students, were presented to the community as evidence through padanolsavam. These testimonies instilled tremendous public confidence and trust.

In the context of the Public Education Rejuvenation Mission, we are already at a point where decentralized school activities are being re-established in the eyes of the general public. The popularity of the People's Plan campaign and Literacy Mission initiatives is the foundation for the rebirth of the public education system. Local governments have a lot of power to intervene in order to ensure high-quality education.

POTENTIAL FOR INTERVENTION

1. Ensuring that all school-age children in the local government jurisdiction attend schools. Its importance grows in the context of the Covid 19 epidemic. According to the Right to Education Act, it is the responsibility of local governments to keep education data. The register should include complete information on the whereabouts of all school-age children who come under the jurisdiction of the local government, as well as whether or not they are continuing their education.
2. To properly execute the education curriculum, the government should be able to guarantee the number of working days specified in the annual academic calendar. This is a fundamental right of every child. However, there may be instances where scheduled study days are not possible for various reasons. In such cases, it is the responsibility of local governments to ensure that children are properly compensated for missed study days due to unavoidable circumstances, such as holidays being declared.



3. Promoting the holistic development of children is a key aspect of providing quality education in public schools. Local governments actively participate in the plan formulation process of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan. However, due to the centralized structure of the plan, local governments may face limitations to participate in the implementation process. Therefore, it is crucial to find ways to work around such limitations.
4. Local governments play a crucial role in ensuring that the objectives of the curriculum are effectively met at every level. This promotes the establishment of a realistic format. It is important to note that a school's quality should not be solely determined by the marks or grades received in examinations. Rather, quality education should be defined as providing students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence to lead self-sufficient lives in today's society and in the future.
5. Assessing the quality of education should take into account the holistic development of children, which encompasses their physical, mental, emotional, and social needs. Only then can initiatives to strengthen the mid-day meal program, develop facilities for sports and self-improvement, encourage collective inquiry, nurture extracurricular talents, offer vocational training, and promote parental and community participation come to the forefront. Local governments are better positioned to coordinate with local experts and stakeholders to effectively implement such initiatives to promote the holistic development of children.
6. Food plays a crucial role in the physical development of children. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to ensure that children receive the necessary nourishment for their physical growth through their midday meal. In addition, breakfast is also a crucial meal as it can significantly impact a child's day, providing them with the energy they need to study and play.
7. In Kerala, frequent episodes of torrential rains, floods, and severe droughts are becoming increasingly common. This highlights the urgency of addressing global warming and climate change, which have now become an integral part of our daily lives. We need to adopt a proactive approach to tackle these issues, with the mantra "Annarakannanum Thannalayath" (Every little helps). The Biodiversity Garden project is a hands-on initiative that aims to instill this understanding among children. This project carries multiple meanings, as it not only teaches children about the importance of preserving biodiversity but also promotes



sustainable living practices and encourages community involvement in tackling environmental issues. In education, knowledge is considered complete when students can apply what they learn in the classroom to real-life situations. The classroom atmosphere should not be dull and monotonous, but rather alive and dynamic. Thus, the biodiversity garden serves as a learning environment that is both visually appealing and mentally stimulating for children, allowing them to connect their academic learning to practical experiences. As a result, a biodiversity garden can become a crucial factor in determining the quality of a school's educational program.

8. Every child is unique and possesses their own set of abilities in which they excel. The Talent Lab initiative aims to recognize these individual talents and provide children with the best opportunities to succeed. This can only be achieved by combining the skills they acquire in school and society, and creating a supportive environment that fosters their interests and strengths. Local governments can play a crucial role in leading this initiative.
9. Another issue that we face is the fitness of children. It is now common practise to send children to school too early, depriving them of their natural independence. It is not advisable to timetable and plan children based on what adults believe is best for them. The pressure from parents and society places enormous psychological strain on the child, leading to an increase in the incidence of psychiatric illnesses among them. Local governments must convince the public that outdoor activities such as games and sports are necessary for the appropriate physical, mental, emotional, and social development of children.
10. A waste-free school campus should be our goal. For this objective, practical waste management laboratories should be established on school premises, providing various waste management options. Local governments can play a significant role in implementing this initiative.
11. It is also essential to detoxify the school campus. a drug-free school campus, it is crucial to have the collective efforts of everyone associated with the institution. Local governments can play a significant role in assessing the actual situation in each location and documenting the progress towards achieving a drug-free campus.
12. The transformation of classrooms into high-tech educational experiences presents an opportunity to implement effective civic and community education programs. This is a new possibility that requires collaboration between the



education department and local governments.

13. Lot of creative researches and experimentations were conducted to deliver better education. Under the initiative Manchadi, the government-led Kerala Development & Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC) is currently conducting an investigation into developing a simple and effective method of teaching mathematics. It is also feasible to contribute to quality education by providing facilities for such activities on a local level. It is also critical to share lessons learned from initiatives such as Mazhavillu, which experimented in the fields of science and social sciences, as well as the exchange of innovative ideas led by various local governments and the transformation of appropriate projects into action plans tailored to the potential of each region.
14. Exploration of joint projects and integrated initiatives can uncover a range of possibilities for improving school infrastructure and facilities. Ideas such as the construction of swimming pools, installation of synthetic sports tracks, solar energy projects, adoption of modern kitchen systems and canteens, adherence to green regulations, monitoring systems to ensure quality of sanitation facilities, and provision of essential furniture systems such as desks and benches, and better library systems should all be considered. The aforementioned ideas are just a few possibilities, and it is essential to explore and consider all potential improvements to our schools. Discussions and proposals must take place to determine the best procedures for effective implementation of these initiatives. By doing so, we can transform our schools into visible, experiential paradises, providing future generations with the education and resources they deserve.
15. It is imperative that the members of Local Self Government Institutions to understand their obligations and variety of functions that have been delegated to them under the Right to Education Act.
16. Strengthening of local self-government committees and delegate the responsibility for monitoring school operations to Local Self Government Education Committees is another potential area.
17. In order to bolster the local economy and foster the growth of the knowledge community, it is crucial to further decentralize current systems, such as the School Level Master Plan and the Academic Master Plan. Another avenue to explore is promoting coordination among local government levels.
18. It is important to enable panchayats to implement programs aimed at benefiting all primary school children, including those affiliated with high schools, as the



current situation where such schools are outside the jurisdiction of the grama panchayat poses a challenge that needs to be resolved.

19. Transforming schools into testing grounds for the establishment of decentralized democratic governance can only be achieved by fostering a culture of democratic participation and engagement among students, which can be instilled through class discussions and school parliaments. Local governments can play a vital role in providing limitless opportunities for children to develop their leadership skills.

It is a stage on which we must perform to the best of our abilities, drawing on our experience and powers. Local governments must take the lead in assuring quality of public schools. Quality is intended to elevate the whole child to the curriculum's goals at each stage. It must identify children's different skills and create learning opportunities that foster and develop them. Equally crucial is the preparation of the learning environment to effectively give such a learning experience. All of this requires a shift in the school's present perception.

When dealing with quality difficulties, we should take a thorough strategy. All children's emotional, physical, and social growth should be the purpose of education. Schools should not become centers for the mechanical teaching of market-oriented work skills, but rather platforms for the development of all children's knowledge, talents, and abilities. Simultaneously, democratic and secular ideals must be fostered. Cooperation, collaborative learning, scientific awareness, and a scientific approach are all essential. Students must learn empathy and be prepared to speak out against inequity and injustice. Local governments must be capable of leading such a shift. We have demonstrated that municipal governments at various levels can operate in this direction. Lessons learned from district council projects such as Aksharappulari and panchayat school complex in 1990s, as well as quality improvement program undertaken by local governments as part of the people's plan campaign, will boost confidence and improve clarity on the educational activities that must be undertaken.

While pursuing quality education based on equality, the educational difficulties experienced by our state's scheduled tribes must be treated seriously. Language is a crucial concern in the early stages of their schooling. Many indigenous children may find Malayalam to be an alien language. The informal approaches to teach Malayalam in schools would cause significant learning difficulties for students further results in drop out. To achieve equity and justice in regions with diverse



cultures and languages, it is crucial to consider the language and culture of the local communities in schools. Similarly, for scheduled castes and fisher folk students who require academic aid and learning enhancement program. Such issues can only be addressed through decentralized plans. In such cases, we must be able to assess all children's domestic backgrounds in order to link their educational concerns to their livelihood issues and find a solution for them.

While envisioning an education that includes all children in society, we must address the issues that physically challenged children experience. School campuses and classrooms should be accessible to those with disabilities. We can create a more accessible learning environment by modifying many of the preconceived notions about our campuses, school buildings, and styles of instruction. A deeper knowledge of their rehabilitation is also required. Panchayati Raj institutions should incorporate such creative thinking and follow-up action plans into their planning and implementation framework.

We have replaced the old educational system, which solely considered the educational needs of the few children on the front bench, and a significant portion of the population benefited as a result. Kerala society has witnessed the scholastic improvement of children from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The importance of the new curriculum in this regard cannot be overstated. However, there are still children in our schools who are unable to overcome their educational disadvantages including the issues related to mother tongue. These are still concerns that people confront today. A new learning process must be created if required. Efforts to integrate students who require academic assistance into the mainstream should become more effective. Various inquiries and actual action plans should be developed under the leadership of local governments.

Participation in education must be promoted if the next generation is to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to uphold progressive principles and be active participants in societal development activities. Government funds alone may not be sufficient to restructure schools and learning environments in the desired manner. It necessitates a high level of social resource mobilisation and effective and transparent utilisation. In this regard, the decentralized governance system can take the lead. Only by taking on this difficult effort can a secular learning environment and a public education system that considers the abilities and interests of all children be maintained and improved. Local governments can undertake the necessary measures for further devolution of authority to meet their duties of their



own.

As local governments develop plans to attain equality and quality in all aspects of education, it is useful to familiarize oneself with some of the activities that have been currently happening over the last 25 years as part of the people's plan campaign. The coming chapters describe some of the actions that occurred during the preliminary stages of people's plan. Many of them may no longer exist. Rather than inquiring about current status of the project, what actions have been carried out and what has been accomplished thus far will be assessed. The following section presents empirical evidence to support such an investigation. Those were not templates; they are experiences that occurred in our state under the leadership of people's representatives in local government institutions and other various stakeholders. While there may be superior interventions, the ones mentioned here are valuable and can serve as a guide for future education initiatives if methodically documented and recognized as a function of local government.

BALA-KAIRALI OF MARARIKULAM

*“Your children are not your children; they come through you
but not from you*

*And though they are with you yet they belong not to you;
you may give them your love but not your thoughts*

*For they have their own thoughts; you may house their bodies
but not their souls*

You may strive to be like them; but seek not to make them like you”

- A Poem “Children” by Khalil Gibran

RETROSPECTION

One day, a teacher drew a mango on the board and instructed the students to draw ten mangoes. One of the students drew ten mangoes, which astounded the teacher. He inquired, “Are these mangoes?” to which the student replied that they were salted mangoes. The child had drawn correctly, but the teacher was at fault for not recognizing the correctness of child’s drawing. Children are aware of the various types of mangoes, including those that hang from tree branches, ripe mangoes, mangoes in vendor stalls, salted mangoes, and more. Some teachers may not fully appreciate or recognize their children’s creativity. Their vivid imaginations and diverse perspectives that



often lead them to think outside of the box. Under the people's plan campaign of Mararikulam South Grama Panchayat, Bala-kairali Nursery School follows learning and teaching process that sparks children's innate creativity.

NATIVE WISDOM

Alappuzha, a city in Kerala, India, is renowned as the Venice of the East. As in Venice, the word refers to the network of canals that crisscross the city. Alappuzha is well-known for its snake boats and the Nehru Trophy boat racing. It is a place marked in proud revolutionary history dating back to the Punnapara Vayalaar protest. Ambalapuzha is one of Alappuzha's six taluks, while Mararikulam South Grama Panchayat is a seaside panchayat in the district's north-western corner.

A considerable proportion of the population in the area works in coastal activities like fishing, coir, and agriculture. Until 1994, there was no structure in place to provide proper education to pre-school children in this panchayat, which is densely populated by poor working-class households. The affluent send their children to metropolitan unaided English medium schools for education. The only source of assistance in this remote area, where there were no Anganwadis, was the occasional "Ashan-Kalari". Prior to entering the first grade, there was no system of education for common people's children. In this social context, the Bala-Kairali Nursery School was founded.

Higher education is just as vital as preschool and pre-primary education. The Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad and the Library Association stepped forth with active proposals. The notion of a mother tongue preschool education was developed and submitted as the Bala-Kairali project. However, the project's initial phase was rejected due to a number of technical issues. However, the project was officially inaugurated on 25th May 1999, as a result of the Gramasabha's resolute stance.

FRESH LIGHT

English medium schools becoming increasingly popular; it was difficult for many parents to comprehend the idea of a Malayalam language preschool. The transition from thoughts to sentences, from sentences to words, and from words to letters, according to the neo-educational paradigm, this new approach to education involves reversing the traditional learning concepts. Parents were also anxious that the child should not begin writing letters until he or she was four years old. Following the establishment of the Bala-kairali pre-school, other anganwadis were also started in



the grama panchayat resulted in a dilemma.

INCEPTION

The project started with the explanation sessions conducted in multiple wards, followed by the formation of ward-level committees consisting of 9 members in all 11 wards, with each committee headed by the respective ward member. Furthermore, a total of 45 public meetings were organized during the launch of Bala-Kairali, resulting in the identification of a suitable location for the school to commence its operations. The pre-schools were established in cultural institutions, including libraries, in every ward. The project was inaugurated on May 25, 1999, by Shri.Kadammanitta Ramakrishnan, MLA, who praised the initiative of the grama panchayat in establishing these pre-schools in Malayalam medium when English medium schools were gaining popularity throughout the nation.

GENESIS

The project progressed to conducting a state-level workshop to design its own curriculum. This workshop was facilitated by faculties of DIET, elected representatives and prominent figures in the fields of education and psychology such as T.P. Kaladharan, I.V. Das, Dr.C.Ramakrishnan, and Dr.Jayaprakash. With their expertise, a traditional and scientifically-sound curriculum was developed for the project.

YIELD

Bala-Kairali, which began operations in 1999, is celebrating 21 years of success with a team of 22 teachers; Bala-Kairali caters to the educational needs of over 300 students across 11 schools. Bala-Kairali continues to work in the field of pre-primary education, obtaining the recognition and trust of the community in order to achieve its goal of holistic child development.

The involvement of parents associated with Bala-kairali has brought gradual changes in the institutions. As a result of their efforts, Preethikulangara and Kalavoor schools are receiving recognition at the state level. Bala-kairali students have also excelled in their academic pursuits after completing their pre-primary education. A committee investigating the educational backwardness of the grama panchayat identified 146 underprivileged students, none of whom were from Bala-



Kairali. It's noteworthy that Bala-Kairali students have performed well in the LSS and USS tests.

Bala-Kairali's operations have gained international attention, with ministers, educators, and people's representatives from Germany, France, the United Kingdom, China, Denmark, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and Bangladesh visited the school to learn about this successful model. The project serves as a shining example of providing top-notch pre-primary education to children in a region.

ACHIEVEMENT OF EQUALITY: RAMAPURAM

“I don’t have dis-ability; I have a different-ability”

Robert M. Hensel, Guinness World Record holder

The fundamental goal of a healthy and democratic society is to provide individuals with the means to lead a life of dignity, self-respect, and confidence. It is crucial to eliminate discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, or economic status. Any form of discrimination that targets physical or mental abilities goes against the very principles of democracy. In line with the principle of “Equal Opportunity for All,” the Buds Rehabilitation Centre (BRC) of Ramapuram Grama Panchayat is an exemplary initiative towards achieving this goal.

Ramapuram, a village in Kerala, has a rich and illustrious history. The renowned Vanchipattu has immortalized this location in Malayalam literature. Ramapurathu Warriar, the author of Kuchelavritam Vanchipattu, hails from this village and is remembered with great respect. Lalithambika Antharjanam, who made significant



contribution to Malayalam literature, also belongs to Ramapuram. Another luminary from this village is Ezhacheri Ramachandran, who won the prestigious Vayalaar Award. This location has been home to many gifted individuals who have excelled in diverse fields and brought honour to their village. The megalithic burial sites known as Muniyara, which can be found near Palliyampuram and Kurunjikavu and date back to the Buddhist civilization, reflect the historical significance of Ramapuram believed to have been occupied as early as 3000 BC. Ramapuram Grama Panchayat, located in the north eastern section of the Kottayam district, encompasses 54.54 square kilometres and shares its borders with the districts of Idukki and Ernakulam. According to the 2011 census, this panchayat with 18 wards had a total population of 29,395 people, with 14,826 women and 14,569 males.

The educational program of the Ramapuram grama panchayat aims to promote equal opportunities for all differently-abled children and committed to enable the holistic development of these children, fostering awareness of biodiversity and ecological conservation activities, connecting children from all backgrounds to public schools, and promoting the upliftment of women in the Panchayat. The grama panchayat has developed comprehensive plan that cater to the unique needs of each category of children and women.

1. THE BUDS REHABILITATION CENTRE

In line with the slogan of embedded education, all children with physical and mental disabilities were granted access to conventional educational institutions up until the twelfth grade. However, after completing their education, differently-abled children over the age of 18 faced a challenge in terms of finding suitable opportunities to thrive in life. The Ramapuram Panchayat recognized the need to open learning / training center for these children. The main objective of the center was to identify the dormant potential of these individuals and provide them with appropriate training to facilitate their personal and professional development. The Panchayat established a specialized program called BUDS, which is tailored to the unique needs of differently-abled students.

One of the main challenges faced in establishing the learning and training center for differently-abled adults was finding a building with suitable facilities and infrastructure. The Department of Public Education allocated a school building near Chakkampuzha School, which expedited the process. A unique plan was developed to ensure the building visually appealing with all the necessary physical



amenities.

2. WOMEN'S TRAINING CENTRE AND WOMEN'S CAFÉ

With the establishment of reservations to women in the three-tier panchayats, there has been a noticeable increase in the role of women in society. However, women still face challenges in achieving equality in various areas. In response, the Ramapuram Grama Panchayat established the Women Training Centre and Women's Cafe, which focus on skill development and creating job opportunities for women. The panchayat was faced with the task of constructing the training centre and providing ancillary amenities for the women's cafe. The objective was to locate a suitable structure in the town or near the panchayat office that could cater to these needs.

The old panchayat hall has been refurbished, and transformed into a training center and women's cafe. This solution not only provided essential facilities to visitors to the panchayat office but also represented a significant step forward in women's empowerment.

3. BIODIVERSITY PARK

The Biodiversity Park is a Grama Panchayat project that aims to raise awareness among children and the community about the importance of nature to all living things and to remind them that participating in environmental conservation activities, demonstrates civic sense and values. The program's goal is to raise knowledge of the past while also promoting the preservation of historical monuments and archaeological sites. For this goal, a butterfly park has been established. The government's ability to maintain current flora and fauna while also creating a better model in the neighbourhood of the picturesque Kizhithiri Government LP School is a wonderful feat.

4. TALENT LAB, MATHEMATICAL & SCIENCE PARK

Science and mathematics subjects are often viewed as uninteresting and challenging, which can make it difficult for students. Therefore, the grama panchayat initiated a project focused on creating a fun and easy learning experience for science and math subjects. The project involved determining the sequence, format, and frequency of activities to be included. One of the primary challenges was finding trainers with

extensive knowledge and expertise in these subjects. The project was implemented with the support of Malappuram Tech, an institution that provided excellent teachers and subject experts. The project was carried out under the supervision of the PTA and was implemented at the Amanakara Government LP School.

COST OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Sl.No.	Project	Amount (In lakhs)	Source
1	Buds Rehabilitation Centre (BRC)	12,50,000 5,00,000 <hr/> 17,50,000	Kudumbasree Mission Own fund.
2	Women's Training and Women's Cafe	3,00,000 2,25,000 50,000 <hr/> 5,75,000	Own Fund Plan Fund Own Fund
3	Talent Lab / Science park	4,00,000	Own fund
4	Biodiversity Park	4,10,000	Kerala State Biodiversity Board

SILVER SPARKLES OF VELIYAMATTAM

Veliyamattam grama panchayat is situated in the Ilamdesam block of Idukki district in Kerala. Six of the 15 wards are completely occupied by indigenous communities, while the other two are just partially occupied. The Scheduled Tribe Department has identified sixteen tribal communities and more than seven Scheduled Caste settlements throughout the panchayat. The bulk of indigenous children receive their education from government schools. The population of 28 percent of the total population (21440 nos.) are from Scheduled Tribes and 7 percent belongs to the SC community. Of the total students of 3161 (14.7 percent of the total population), 2231 of them belong to the age group of 11 to 18 years and 930 belong to the age 6 to 10 years. In the grama panchayat, there are five government and four aided schools.

The villages in the panchayat have a hilly topography, and the majority of the pupils are the children of farmers and laborers. It's unfortunate to hear that the children in the villages of the panchayat are facing safety concerns while going to and from school. Desolate one-lane roads, remote dwellings, alcoholism, threats from local gambling teams, violence against girls, and family breakdowns have all wreaked havoc on children's learning and living environments. Suraksha mapping (security mapping) was an inquiry into the problem in order to identify remedies. The effort to "make our village a child safety village" served as a wake-up call for the entire

community. As a result, responsibility for the education of children in the village was declared and implemented by the Vidhya Gramasabha.

The project of Ilamdesham Block in Idukki District, ‘Velicham – Comprehensive educational development with community support’ is giving the sector a stimulus. The schools in Veliyamattam have unique learning challenges and environments, especially majority of students from scheduled tribe communities. Therefore, the grama panchayat aspires to take the lead in education by creating and executing exceptional educational initiatives.

SPARKLES OF NIGHT SCHOOL

Many schools have used the percentage of students passing the tenth grade as a hallmark of excellence. In pursuit of high pass rates, these institutions implement intensive training programs during examination season, causing students to experience overwhelming stress and worry. Similar to this situation, until the panchayat introduced the night school program, Furthermore there was a prevalent belief that students from tribal communities were responsible for the decline in school success rates. To address the issue, a new social responsibility initiative was launched, which included the establishment of a night school program. Through this program, it was discovered that the root causes of learning impairments in children were diverse. The real reasons for poor academic performance and failure in the tenth grade were found to be the lack of a suitable home study environment, unfamiliarity with the language of instruction in schools, insufficient support for learning among lower grades, and inadequate mechanisms to improve pass rates.

With the goal of providing a favourable learning environment for children, night schools were established in courtyards, community halls, and community structures opened from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. During power shortages, the community stepped up to help by providing electricity and snacks to the students. They assisted one another by conversing and sharing teachings in their native tongues. They designed their educational atmosphere. The project was a success right from the beginning. The Class X examination was passed by all of the students. In addition to passing tests, the night school was able to instil in students a sense of duty and social consciousness.

SAFETY MAPPING - FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

The eighth-grade social studies curriculum includes a chapter on developing



mapping skills of children, which covers the practical application of safety mapping to ensure the safety of students in school. The idea for this project was sparked by teachers' visits to a tribal settlement called 'Thadiyanaar,' where they witnessed the perilous routes students had to take from their homes to school. Along these routes, students faced various hazards such as desolate roads, distant residences, and groups of alcoholics and anti-socials, which posed a significant risk to their safety, especially for female students. Therefore, the concept of security mapping has emerged as an as a viable approach to address these safety concerns.

MAPPING METHODOLOGY

The social science teacher initiates the mapping process in the classroom, guiding students to map the route from school to their homes. This includes mapping pathways, roadsides, bridges, rivers, waterfalls, areas known for alcohol and gambling, dangerous electric poles, and steep curving roads. The data collected is then consolidated and classified into various sections.

A meeting led by the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is held with department heads from the panchayat to submit the security mapping report. The report is then used to monitor actions taken through a follow-up program. Various departments take action in affected areas to address safety concerns. This entire process turns the eighth-standard lesson into a meaningful learning experience for the entire society.

ARUTHENNU ORUMAYODE ('NO WITH UNITY' CAMPAIGN)

The community-led initiative for child safety, called the 'Aruthennu orumayode' safety campaign, is a testament to the community's efforts. The campaign was launched in response to findings from the security mapping project. The campaign involved several participants, including the District Legal Service Society, Janamaithri Police, Excise Department, Department of Social Justice, Kudumbasree, parents, and social workers, among others.

As part of the action plan, a one-day training for Kudumbasree workers, parents, and social workers, counselling sessions on legal and social security, health and family at ward-level. Local family reunions led by the ward level committee and raising children's issues for social consideration. These efforts yielded positive results, with zero police cases being reported in the following years.



TO ACCOMPANY VIDHYA GRAMA SABHA

The school management was greatly annoyed by the fact that many students from villages who left for school did not arrive, creating a perilous situation as no one knew where the students had gone or why they had not reached school. This also made it challenging for parents to keep track of their child's attendance, as the child would already be back home by the time the parents returned in the evening. Fortunately, this problem was resolved with the help of Vidhya Gramasabha. Students learning challenges were discussed in Oorukoottams and plans were developed to monitor children going to school under the guidance of Kudumbasree. The establishment of such groups ensured that all children attended school, and society was able to adopt a paradigm of being a child's guardian.

MENTOR MAPPING

A psychological approach to coping with learning difficulties in children involves exploring the various causes, which could be due to an inability to adapt to the current learning style or IQ issues. This approach seeks to identify children's emotions and aptitudes and provide them with the necessary support to aid in their learning process. One such scientific intervention is mentor-mapping, which is designed to provide guidance and mentorship to children who require extra assistance in their academic journey.

A panchayat-level executive council was formed, consisting of representatives from the panchayat, psychologists, educators, and PTA representatives. The initiative covered 1,000 children from five government schools in the panchayat, and a variety of WHO-approved standardized scales based on brain-based learning theories were employed to identify a range of children's learning difficulties and interests.

The Gesell Drawing Test, Seguin Form Board Test, and Draw a Man Test were utilized to assess the students' intelligence quotient. Children's achievement in these tests was used to give them special attention and consideration. Standardized tests such as the Big Five Inventory Test, Multiple Intelligence Test, Parent-Child Relationship Scale, Study Habits and Attitude Test, Risk-Taking Scale Test, and Career Preference Analysis were employed to identify children's social and emotional developmental areas, cognitive developmental learning habits and behaviours. These tests were crucial in accomplishing the goal of mentor mapping. According to the findings of these tests, 69 out of the 392 pupils in the panchayat



from 1st to 7th standards need special assistance. Although only a small number of children required assistance, the project's success was due to the assistance of local officials and academic professionals in closing the gap between these children and their peers.

REFLECTIONS OF EXCELLENCE

The success of mentor mapping has created an opening for additional action. Accurate information regarding children in need of resource teachers and psychologists, as well as students in need of counselling and specialist care, may be acquired. Mentor mapping illustrates the necessity for follow-up efforts to maintain connections between children and their parents as they grow and change. The Departments of Social Justice and Health were pursuing various research and initiatives including the formation of public forums and recognizing child's learning methodology as basic right. These insightful ideas of Veliyamattam grama panchayat serve as valuable guide for achieving holistic educational growth with social support.

SURVIVAL IS VITAL FOR MULAMTHURUTHY

Flood deaths and drowning deaths in pools remind us that our children must be trained the crucial life skill; Swimming. Many public schools in Kerala are taking proactive measures by constructing swimming pools and providing swimming education to students. Some schools are also utilizing nearby water bodies for this purpose. The Mahatma Gandhi Semi Olympic Swimming Pool, located in Karikode UP School within the Mulamthuruthy grama panchayat, is a unique and exceptional opportunity for students to excel in this field.

Mulamthuruthy grama panchayat is located in the Kanayannur taluk of Ernakulam district in the state of Kerala. The majority of the population in this panchayat comprises farmers and scheduled tribes. In the past, governing council spent over 70 crores of rupees towards various development initiatives throughout the panchayat.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

Natural disasters and drowning accidents can happen anywhere, be it in urban or rural areas. The idea of developing swimming facilities in Mulamthuruthy panchayat came from the realization that it is essential to teach children how to swim at an early age to improve their chances of survival. This initiative aims to provide children in the panchayat with access to swimming pools and water bodies to learn this critical life skill.



The project specifies to build a Semi-Olympic swimming pool at Karikode government UP School, the panchayat's premier upper primary school. The panchayat has set aside Rs.1.5 crore to build a new swimming pool. In the 2019-20 annual plan, Rs. 80 lakh has been set out for its development, with Rs. 38 lakh put aside for ancillary facilities (including Rs. 20 lakh as per the 2020-21 plan outlay).

The pool is 25 metres long, 12.5 metres broad, and 1.5 metres deep on average. There are six two-metre-wide tracks. The pool is intended for use by both children and adults for training and competition.

MODERNIZATION OF THE POOL

Following simple cement concreting at the bottom, reinforced concrete was used to produce the entire surface. Following waterproof tiles were placed and a deck area was constructed. The Semi-Olympic Swimming Pool is a complete swimming pool system that includes an expansive roof, perimeter wall, pocket entrances, an entrance door, a pool filtering system, electric lights, steel handrails, waterproof seats, changing rooms, and shower areas, as well as paintings and other décor accessories on the walls. (An artistic depiction of the architecture)

The Mulamthuruthy Grama Panchayat has set up Rs.1 crore 55 lakh for the project in its 2019-20 and 2020-21 annual plans. Furthermore, the services of MGNREGS and other voluntary laborers have been enlisted in the construction of the swimming pool.

In conclusion, let our children learn about life and survival by taking classes in smart rooms, playing in modern playgrounds, swimming, and soaking up the sun and rain. Let school authorities and local governments collaborate to modernise our educational facilities and help them keep up with the times. Mulamthuruthy Panchayat's message to other local governments is that any dream project may be realized provided through popular support and inspired leadership.

KUNNUKARA MODEL

INTRODUCTION

Kunnukara, in the Ernakulam district, is a place of antique shrines and galleries. The village was previously a prominent brick manufacturing centre. Despite its proximity to the city of Ernakulam, the region has seen little academic progress.

The Kunnukara Grama Panchayat's Unnarv Project is moving forward with the goal of upgrading the infrastructure of public schools, providing nutritious meals for children, and facilitating computer education for pre-primary to senior citizens. It also tries to increase community interest in public schools and mobilise community support.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Due to a scarcity of high-quality educational institutions in the public sector, locals avoided sending their children to public schools. Coordination with education activists, the general public and social volunteers in the area was a major challenge through the Unnarv initiative. Aside from that, the decaying status of public educational institutions, anganwadis without their own buildings, lack of infrastructure, and overall apathy toward public education were created significant challenges. This was the significant emphasize of second stage.



UNNARV: A SYNOPSIS

The panchayat developed an infrastructure development plan by incorporating the project within the annual plan. This was followed by an examination into locating project resources. Grants from the Departments of Social Welfare and Education, project allocations from district block panchayats, and public volunteer services were the primary sources of assistance. Anganwadis were able to find their own place in all wards with the assistance of the general people. The construction of Anganwadi buildings has also begun. The Monitoring Committees examined the project's implementation at each level and moved quickly to correct any flaws. Kunnukara Panchayat has implemented an education policy that makes computer education available to everyone, from anganwadi students to senior residents.

In order to improve public education, financial support was offered for the establishment of smart classrooms, the establishment of contemporary amenities, and the purchase of vehicles in various panchayat schools. During the Covid-19 epidemic, televisions, laptops, computers, and mobile phones were provided free of cost for educational purposes. Scholarships and study materials were given to people who did well in the exams.

The Kunnukara Panchayat library converted into an e-Literacy Research Centre, providing computer training to individuals with impairments. Pakal-veedu (Day care centers) and a Buds School were also established for children with special needs. The implementation of customized vocational training for the differently abled has also been remarkable. In recognition of these efforts, Kunnukara Panchayat was designated as a Disabled Friendly Panchayat in 2020.

Over the past five years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children enrolled in public schools, with a growth rate of 400%. This has enabled the panchayat to raise a generation of socially conscious individuals through numerous social activities. Overall, Kunnukara Grama Panchayat is setting an example for the rest of the country with its remarkable efforts towards promoting inclusivity and education.

MEPPADI - BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

Meppadi Grama Panchayat has established and implemented a number of schemes that have been well received by the community. Among these schemes, the educational programs stand out as being particularly significant. Meppadi - Beyond Expectations is a depiction of comprehensive set of educational programs designed to promote the overall development of children in the area. The bulk of Meppadi's residents are plantation laborers and small farmers. As a result, youngsters from these low-income families attended the panchayat's public schools. In this situation, the panchayat resolved to devise several program to assist these kids in overcoming social and economic obstacles and achieving their educational aspirations. This required meticulous planning as well as practical experience. A variety of activities were required to be linked, ranging from building a pro-school environment to precisely measuring a kid's level of learning and preparing the students for further education. From this perspective, the panchayat's innovative ideas are worthy of imitation.

CLASSROOM AS A LEARNING TOOL

The collaborative learning method is now widely acknowledged throughout the world. Most industrialized countries use this study approach, which was devised by world-renowned psychologist Vygodski. This form of instruction methods is appropriate



beginning in the pre-primary classes. The learning environment that supports this learning style is an important aspect of its success. Our schools, unfortunately, lack suitable classrooms and other facilities for this purpose. White and green boards, interactive whiteboards, laptops, projectors, cordless and collar mics, drawing system, furniture, and other accessories are all required in the classroom for collaborative learning.

The challenge is that the project's success can only be secured by providing such amenities throughout the panchayat's schools. However, there is enough evidence at every school in the panchayat of how the problems were overcome with the governing body's will. The panchayat has allocated Rs.35 lakh for the conversion of eight classrooms in four-LP schools to hi-tech classrooms. Classrooms with international standards, such as coloured chairs, paintings, learning aids for self-assessment, portfolio exhibition, and unique facilities, as well as equipment ranging from shelving to ceiling fans, were created as part of this project. The advantages of carrying out the undertaking were astounding. In comparison to the previous year, these schools enrolled almost 250 new pupils. As a result, new class divisions were required.

CLAP INITIATIVE

It was the children's dream to be able to manage the English language confidently, was also a dream of teachers. However, just about ten teachers were availed training in English program. CLAP was created and implemented in this setting as a project with the goal of improving students' English language skills. The English language skills of children progressing from the fourth and seventh classes to the next classes needed to be strengthened. Many children were unable to communicate in English. Parents expressed concern that their children were falling behind in reading, writing, and comprehension. The authenticity of the complaint was confirmed by the teachers' evaluation work and therefore CLAP, a revolutionary English instruction program, was developed.

IMPLEMENTATION

After the collection information on teachers trained in the Hello English program, it was observed that about ten persons were associated with it. To address this constraint, the panchayat implemented communicative English training program for all English teachers of LP and UP schools. Regular training increased teachers'



self-confidence and prepared them for further study. Furthermore, training in the form of communicative workshops was provided for young peoples who interested in assisting children from the school wards of the panchayat. The English Drama Camp, which was held as part of this, provided students with a fresh experience. Children began to act with ease in English short plays.

OUTCOMES

Teachers and students gained confidence in speaking English. 103 teachers were trained and 367 youngsters engaged in community training program; and a variety of presentations were conducted as part of the Drama Camp.

MADHURA MITTAYI

Madhura Mittayi is a school-based teaching and learning program for students from one to four standards. Activities are organized by connecting learning activities in the textbook depending on specified learning outcomes.

DIGITAL CARDS

Unlike normal reading cards, digital reading cards and worksheets were developed for children could to make use of the digital version through QR code system. These were created to provide students with worksheet related tasks while scanning the QR code. This piqued the child's curiosity in a variety of assignments and parents were able to assist their children with their tasks. The worksheet in the first and second classes addressed numerical ability and English language skills. Attractive visuals were created in worksheets to enhance child's psychological features in mind. Other classrooms organized the cards into collections of stories, poetry, songs, and experiences. Drawing cards, reading cards, model cards for teachers, and free writing cards were made available. The picture card helped for conceptualization. The reading card is designed for leisure reading. A student can be guided into action by the teacher's model cards. It also includes a working guide that can be utilised for both the teacher and the parents to complete the tasks.

Last year, our world was confronting the Covid-19 pandemic, and the folks at Erumakkolli U.P School in the panchayat were looking for ways to expand the program to neighboring panchayats. Because the Madhura Mittayi initiative could not be deployed in all schools, the system was designed to reach out to students

through the internet. The importance of digital worksheets was demonstrated the fact that the child was able to do activities in the presence of the parents during these pandemic times.

A total of 1608 children from 12 schools in the Meppadi Grama Panchayat were given cards that were printed and distributed. Workshops were conducted for teachers on how to use the cards, and work assistants were also present to offer guidance. Post-study and effectiveness reports were subsequently published. On this technological age, utilizing technology to enhance the learning process is synonymous to keeping up with the times. The cards developed as a component of Madhura Mittayi serve as evidence of this trend.

MALAYALA-THILAKKAM INITIATIVE

A panchayat developed a local action plan to address the obstacles faced by students, and the entire state adopted the project as a model. Meppadi Grama Panchayat spearheaded the Malayala-Thilakkam initiative, which aided numerous children in reclaiming their Malayalam language proficiency.

Surveys were conducted at schools, particularly high schools in the panchayat to detect Malayalam illiterate children. Activity planning was carried out for the 924 students ranging from 4th to 10th classes. Work-related resources such as workbooks, manuals, and training modules were prepared. 45 selected teachers provided training for each school and class. The findings were accurately assessed and solutions were developed accordingly.

Many students who previously believed that “we are worthless” realized that “we are capable of moving forward.” Literacy was taught to 924 children, and they were given opportunities for individual writing and self-expression. The project succeeded in inspiring many children to participate in follow-up activities on their own.

POSSIBILITIES OF ARTS EDUCATION

During the academic year 2016-17, the panchayat made arts education available in all schools. The training program includes dance, music, and drawing benefited 248 children. Additionally, students in the 3rd and 4th standards in the panchayat’s LP section were given the opportunity to pursue instrumental music. Over the course



of three years, a total of 572 children received training in Keyboard, Thabala, Violin, and Guitar.

SPECIALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of students receiving LSS and USS scholarships in panchayat schools. This was made possible by providing teachers with assistance from Resource Teachers from nearby districts. The teachers received training, which they in turns passed on to their students taking the LSS and USS scholarship tests. This organized approach has helped to improve the scholarship test scores of students.

CHILD PANCHAYAT – SHALABHAKKOOTTAM

Shalabhakkootam is a forum of 44 children that was founded in the panchayat. Two children under the age of 15 from each ward in the panchayat were chosen to represent the forum. The children were introduced to a democratic governance structure and a camp was held for them. During the camp, a children’s panchayat was established, which provides a platform for children to express their opinions, ideas, and concerns.

EFFORTLESS COMMUTE TO SCHOOL

The panchayat implemented the Gothra Sarathy project to reduce commuting difficulties faced by ST students in the panchayat to school. The project was funded by the panchayat and in 2019-20, it helped 82 children. As a part of the project, 88 bicycles were also distributed to SC students who travel within a distance of one kilometre to school. The panchayat has allocated a sum of Rs 5 lakh from its fund for this purpose.

BREAKFAST – AROGYA RAKSHA INITIATIVE

The entire breakfast program was launched to ensure that all children attending elementary schools in the panchayat have access to breakfast. The Annapurna Trust assisted in the project’s implementation. A budget of Rs.12 lakh per year has been set out for this purpose. For last two years, the organization has been able to provide a nutritious food to over 1,800 students.



“GOLDEN BELLS” FOR MENTALLY-CHALLENGED CHILDREN

In November 2019, a Buds School called Golden Bells was established in the panchayat to provide care, treatment, education, and job training for mentally handicapped children. The panchayat recognized that such children in their locality faced difficulties, and therefore, decided to launch the school in collaboration with Kudumbasree. The school aims to address the liabilities and obstacles faced by mentally handicapped children in society and provide them with the necessary support and training to improve their quality of life.

The Golden Bells Buds School established in the panchayat is designed for children under the age of 18 with disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy, or dementia. Over 25 lakh rupees have been spent on the school so far, and it currently has 19 students. The school provides professional care, therapy, and education to children with disabilities, which has allowed their parents to work since the burden of child care has been shared. Additionally, the school offers opportunities for children to study and develop their artistic skills, which has had a positive impact on their overall growth and development.

EMPOWERING EDUCATION THROUGH STUDY MATERIALS

ST students faced difficulties in attending school due to their home situations, which were not conducive to their education. To address this issue, the panchayat allocated Rs. 5 lakh for the distribution of school bags, study materials, shoes, and umbrellas to these students. This program had a positive impact on the education of ST students and resulted in fewer school dropouts. Between 2016 and 2020, the program benefited to 1,828 students.

With the creation and implementation of various constructive educational programs, the graph of elementary education in Meppadi grama panchayat grew rapidly. Over a period of five years, an additional 3,856 children have attended public schools in the panchayat. The number of students eligible for LSS and USS scholarships has also increased significantly. The panchayat's efforts in promoting art and culture have brought out the talent in many children. In addition, the physical environment and transit amenities for children have been improved, making the panchayat more disabled-friendly. Both the health and education sectors have had a positive impact on the growth and development of children in the panchayat.

NOOLPUZHA SCALING HIGH

The phrase “Noolpuzha Scaling High” summarizes the success of an innovative education project ‘Kanmani’, which is part of the five-year plan ‘Janakeeyam’ of Noolpuzha Grama Panchayat in Wayanad district which exemplifies decentralized learning within the realm of education.

Wayanad district is home to the Noolpuzha Grama Panchayat. It is a historically significant grama panchayat bounded by the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, and it is inhabited by the Paniya, Kurumar, Kattunaickan, and Uraly tribes which accounted for around 40% of the entire population.

The majority of the students come from low-income families. The panchayat devised an action plan for these students, and 23 of them went on to compete at an all-India level. The whole community waits with bated breath for them to come out with flying colours and the panchayat is looking forward to the proud event.

Their lives are tuned to the rhythm of local music and culture, and they are entirely clueless about how life is lived elsewhere. Some are farmers; some are traders, while others make a living through handicrafts and caste-based jobs. The grama panchayat’s Five-Year Plan is founded on the widespread belief that bringing such people into the mainstream society and becoming the driving force of growth where society is oblivious of the pulse of social change is



the only way to complete local development. The Comprehensive Development Plan, or Janakeeyam, was created to provide openness, participation, and social justice as cornerstones of decentralization. These projects are being implemented through a scientific approach with the aim of improving on the ideas that emerged from experts and others in the development seminar and grama sabha. They focus on in-depth analysis to zero in a practical methodology to implement them for the greatest societal benefit.

KANMANI INITIATIVE

'Janakeeyam' has proposed numerous initiatives in the fields of health, education, and finance. 'Kanmani' an innovative education scheme, is one among them. The project identified 53 school children who were deemed eligible recipients. The project's guidelines were designed with the understanding that the comprehensive development of the panchayat could only be achieved if these 53 children, who were primarily from marginalized groups such as tribals and socio-economically disadvantaged communities with limited access to education and healthcare, were provided with a high-quality education.

METHODOLOGY

To implement the project, learning materials were developed using the Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) approach to education. Facilitators were selected and trained at a ratio of one facilitator for every 14 children. A screening test was used to identify eligible children, prioritizing those who came from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, taking into consideration factors such as their social status, family background, health, and emotional well-being. House visits were conducted for each selected student to gain a better understanding of their individual needs and circumstances. This approach enabled the project team to monitor the child's progress and address any difficulties on a daily basis, as well as gather up-to-date information about the child's health and emotional well-being, as well as their family background. These visits also provided opportunities to identify potential solutions for these challenges. Furthermore, weekly parent-teacher meetings were held to evaluate progress of the activities. It is worth noting that this program has also attracted private participation indicating its popularity.

REFLECTIONS ON SUCCESS



The most significant accomplishment of this project was that, for the first time in Noolpuzha history, 22 children from the Paniya and Kattunaickan tribes were able to take the Sainik School Entrance Examination. Another positive effect was that it was feasible to instill in parents a revitalised sense of responsibility for their child's development by giving them the option to express themselves differently than in the past. It is also worth emphasizing that, like every parent in a progressive society, every parent began to dream about their ward's future and took efforts to achieve it. With the completion of the Kanmani project, it was assured that, in addition to scholastic improvement, children's health and social spheres would also improve. As part of this, each child had a health check-up performed by an expert doctor, and interventions were made to diagnose and treat anaemia, malnutrition, and other diseases. A health card in the shape of a growth chart, which is used internationally to track a child's health issues, was created and regular monitoring was performed. These activities boosted both the children's and the parent's confidence.

Another highlight was the child's improved communication skills. It is a remarkable accomplishment that students can now convey their ideas rationally, analyse and critique ideas and concepts logically, and express themselves effectively (both orally and in writing). Children's logical thinking, reasoning ability, and divergent thinking abilities all improved. Their outstanding performance in general and competitive examinations demonstrates their improvement.

Children in this category were concerned about teamwork. It is hardly an exaggeration to state that as they advanced through the Kanmani project, they overcame their inferiority complex regarding their social background and constraints and became highly self-confident. It is worth noting that many students have been able to express their thoughts, leaving their own imprint on society and establishing their leadership.

Dropout was a common problem among this group of children in the past. There were numerous causes, such as unwillingness to study, fear, lack of interest, and a sense of inferiority, which contributed to the dropout rate. However, the methodical implementation of learning activities enabled the children to be brought to school and prepared for learning.

GUIDANCE IN THE WAY

In essence, the Kanmani project is a concept that required finance and technology in addition to human labor. The implementation of Meppadi Munnottu required



a careful and thoughtful approach, incorporating psychological and scientific methods to overcome cultural resistance. This was a challenging task, but the commitment to success was unwavering. To ensure the success of the project, funding was secured directly from the plan fund, a testament to the importance placed on this initiative. The assistance provided by the then sub-collector of Wayanad Sri.N.S.K.Umesh IAS, as well as academic assistance from the CARSEL (Centre for Advanced Research in Socio-Emotional Learning) Foundation, were critical in inspiring these children to ensure the project's success.

Kazhakootam Military School alumni were continuously interacting with and inspiring the children. The Noolpuzha Health Centre staff, who prepared a health card for each child and made a healthy intervention, as well as the tribal promoters, who eagerly came forward to bring the children to school and facilitate communication with the parents, were all beacons of this activity - the inexhaustible beacons that guide history.

GO TO SCHOOL OR NOT TO SCHOOL

School is a community of companions for some, but for others; it is a reluctant destination, at least for a while. Dropout and absenteeism were common issues at primary schools in Noolpuzha grama panchayat. Noolpuzha utilized Socio-Emotional Learning to address children's educational backwardness and increase their academic skills.

With a total student population of 1,340, Noolpuzha panchayat has 15 schools, including three government higher secondary schools, one residential higher secondary school, four government LP schools, two aided LP schools, and five multi grade learning centers (single teacher schools). A significant portion of these students belong to the Scheduled Tribes, who often fail to reap the benefits of existing educational programs. This is due to social and local characteristics, such as the remote location of their residences. These challenges have a profound impact on their educational outcomes, leading to issues such as frequent absenteeism, disinterest in learning activities, and high dropout rates among older students, resulting in complete withdrawal from education. The one-of-a-kind function of Socio-Emotional Learning is the practical execution of an idea that evolved from debates about how to address this issue. The panchayat established such a system after realising that, despite providing basic amenities such as transportation, food, clothing, and other necessities, they were unable to enhance these children's



attendance or academic performance. The objective of the project includes:

- Ensure more than 90% attendance for all children
- Assist children in reaching their maximum potential in their respective class
- Create classrooms that are sociable, emotionally warm, and energetic
- Assist all learners, regardless of age, in developing social and emotional skills.
- Supports from district schools, parents, and the general public.
- Details about the project's activities, which begin in April and end on March each year.
- Screening test- a professionally designed questionnaire is used to assess each child's learning ability.
- Capacity Test- assessing capacities through frequent assessments with fixed tools at regular intervals.
- Remedial actions - Individually considered remedial steps based on evaluation
- Various teacher trainings - To introduce socio-emotional learning methodologies
- A two-day workshop with promoters concentrating on methodology and practicality as people in regular contact with learners and parents.
- Follow-up trainings - a one-day training for elected representatives/officials to help them understand the project and their involvement in it. A half-day special training for parents to raise awareness about the initiative, as well as a 20-day residential training in phases for the three facilitators, all of whom are post-graduates in Psychology/Sociology or Social Work.

The coordination process of the project was carried out by adopting a combination of scientific and psychological approach in methodology and practice. The process involved the development of the Initial Observation Framework (IOF) with the help of specialists, and the creation of a socio-emotional profile for each student based on the IOF. The services of psychologists and counselling experts were utilized. Action research, capacity testing and location mapping are also carried out as part of the project. Effectiveness is ensured by documentation and monitoring at each stage throughout the project process.

The Noolpuzha Panchayat undertook a prestigious project, which was actively overseen by the Panchayat Management Committee. The Education Standing Committee evaluated the project's activities in detail and provided appropriate



guidelines. Meanwhile, the Noolpuzha Panchayat Education Committee was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the schools and ensuring that all children were beneficiaries of the project, that all beneficiaries derived benefits from the system, and that the activities were executed in a timely manner. The project includes a total amount of rupees 10 lakhs utilized under the following heads for the initiative.

Sl.no.	Particulars	Amount (In Rs.)
1	Academic capacity assessment, designing, printing & execution	1,25,000/-
2	Meetings	50,000/-
3	Training	2,00,000/-
4	Honorarium to facilitators (9 nos.)	4,50,000/-
5	Expert Services for counselling	75,000/-
6	Data Analysis & Documentation	1,00,000/-
	Total Amount	10,00,000/-

THE STAMP OF REALITY

*“Paarinonnaayoottum Samskaram Vilayicha
Veerabharatham Veendum Uyirkollanamenkil
Poovidum Karal Thattil Nee karupidichalum
Poornanaam Manushyane Varkunna Vidhyabhyasam”*

- P.Kunjiraman Nair

(The above verse is a poem written by P.Kunjiraman Nair, a renowned Malayalam poet reminds us that “Education is the key to reviving India’s rich cultural heritage, embracing traditions and practices that bring strength, pride, and a sense of identity to create a perfect human being.”)

Kerala’s unique education system is secular democratic education. In Kerala today, a rather unusual development model has arisen. We want a long-term education system, and “The stamp of reality” (Nerinte Mudranam) for Munderi Grama Panchayat in Kannur District was designed with a thorough educational reconstruction process in mind.

PROJECT PREVIEW

The sole government school in Munderi Grama Panchayat, Kannur district, is Munderi Government Higher Secondary School. The



Mudra initiative intends to transform the school into a cluster centre and 14 primary schools in the panchayat into international standard centers of excellence by providing exceptional academic and physical facilities. The SCERT supported program aims to elevate the academic quality of cluster centers and other elementary schools to international levels. A plan of action was developed in collaboration with experts from SCERT and the Mudra Education Committee.

The project's deployment began on 1st January 2017. On 19th May 2017, the Chief Minister of Kerala inaugurated the project in the presence of a large gathering of over 5,000 people, including parents and education workers who were members of the education committees of all 20 Munderi Panchayat wards. Currently, the construction work is in full swing. The project is expected to be completed in five years and upon its completion, it will result in a 100 crore rupees development project in the education sector of the grama panchayat. The construction and maintenance of IISER-style laboratories, 42 classrooms, including the world's best digital technology, digital library, football turf, sports facility centre, volleyball academy, auditorium, planetarium, science centre, museum, environment lab, kitchen with modern facilities, garden, 100 kw solar unit, campus with beautiful landscapes and academic activities led by SCERT were taken up by the Mudra Committee on behalf of the Department of Education. The committee which is elected for a term of five years is responsible for identifying and disbursing funds for the implementation of the project in accordance with the government-approved standards and is subjected to a systematic audit every year.

QUALITY INTERVENTIONS

Despite having excellent teachers, we have yet to integrate excellent students into the mainstream. We can achieve excellence with proper planning. The Mudra initiative is a public effort to improve public education through multifaceted interventions.

THE PROGRESS

- In 1981, the panchayat established a high school on five acres of land in Kanjirode. Under the direction of the Education committee, revenue land was purchased and provided.
- In 2003, a Higher Secondary School was established with three batches.



- The initial plan of action was developed in the name of “Puthiya Chakravaalam”
- The drafting and presentation of the Mudra Education Development Plan was completed on March 3, 2017.
- The school blueprint was created with the assistance of architect R.Shankar.
- Voluntary donations were raised as a development fund, covering all households in the panchayat. Seventy five lakhs worth of work sanctioned by Shri.Kadannapally Ramachandran, MLA.

The foundation stone of a three-classroom building was laid upon availing of Rs 50 lakh sanctioned by Shri.K.K.Ragesh.M.P as the first tranche of funds and various financial assistance (CSR) received by his intervention used for the development activities of the school. The highlight of the contribution is the public fund mobilised an amount of Rs.40 lakhs for the development of schools. Munderi Grama panchayat also prepared a master plan for school development for the coming years. The key features of the Mudra initiative are support from the people’s representatives and the utilization of CSR funds in the development of a school. The various CSR sources of the fund are as follows:

Sl.no.	Supporting Agency	Facility Provided	Amount (Rs.)
1.	Coal India Limited	Library Room	79 Lakhs
2.	Container Corporation	12 Smart Classroom	25 Lakhs
3.	Power Grid Corporation	3 New Classroom including 4 Smart Classroom & Renovation	1.2 Crore
4.	Rural Electrification Corporation	Auditorium with seating capacity of 700 persons	2.7 Crore
5.	Indian Oil Corporation	3 Classroom & renovation	60 Lakhs
6.	Power Finance Corporation	Laboratory & Mini Conference Hall	38 Lakhs
7.	Cochin Shipyard	3 Higher Secondary classrooms	58 Lakhs
8.	Canara Bank	Furniture	4 Lakhs
9.	NTPC	Kitchen / Dining Block	2.5 Crore
Total			9 Crore

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The development survey and a special grama sabha convened at Pannianoor Grama Panchayat were instrumental in identifying various educational challenges faced by the community. Some of the issues highlighted included declining academic standards, delays in textbook availability, inadequate infrastructure, inactive Parent-Teacher Associations, deficiencies in the mid-day meal program, lack of post-training for teachers, insufficient co-curricular activities, and a need for training in accordance with the new curriculum. The Public Education Rejuvenation Mission, in existence for the last four years, is a clear and robust response to such problems that were uncovered two decades ago.

Across the state, public schools are undergoing significant transformations. Development based on the notion that “excellent education is a child’s right” has contributed to changes in academic standards with high-tech classrooms and international-standard schools. It is an undeniable truth that, as a direct result of multifaceted interventions, over five lakh pupils have returned to public schools in four years.

SAMAGRA VIDHYABHYASA PADHATHI (COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM)

A new age in education has begun in recent years, specifically



through the Samagra Vidhyabhyasa program, which has been in place since 1997. As part of the project, a new approach to calendar activities in education has been implemented throughout the last five years. Each school has conducted a day celebration (as part of the scheduled activities) extensively with the initiative of the PTA. Calendar activities have been linked to learning activities, and each school has created learning activity products. Each year, the schools stepped forward to take over the events in turn.

COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH

Another noteworthy activity was the Communicative English project for teachers. Which began during the holidays; teachers met during the holidays prior to the start of the academic year to be trained. This was a great start. Teachers from all schools participated in the program in turn.

LSS -USS TRAINING

Night classes were provided in each school for students participating scholarship exams in the month of January and February. The PTA supplied refreshments for the children. The academic section of the Panchayat Education Committee created the training module. Worksheets have also been created for this purpose. As a result, the number of scholarship beneficiaries has increased in various schools led the panchayat to remarkable heights in the last three years.

LIBRARY EMPOWERMENT

Classroom libraries were impressively established in all of the panchayat's schools from classes one to four. The PTA and alumni assisted with the collection of books. A total of Rs 2 lakh worth books was gathered. The panchayat awarded prizes to schools for their outstanding performance in the book collection.

CHESS VILLAGE INITIATIVE

Students interested in chess were selected as part of the project and provided a chess training program. 80 children took part in the training session, which was organized in partnership with the Kannur District Chess Association. The training was held throughout the holidays, with the presence of the parents. As a result, it has become one of the panchayat's best model activities.



- Improved educational quality; children began to excel in public examinations.
- Increased participation in scholarship examinations and the number of students achieving scholarships.
- Backwardness in school education solved led to the number of pupils attending unaided schools is rapidly decreased and only one unaided school in grama panchayat has closed.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

There is one government LP school and 17 aided schools in the panchayat. The Government School received excellent construction. The physical infrastructure of all aided schools was enhanced, and some institutions were renovated.

HI-TECH SCHOOLS

All of the panchayat schools have been upgraded to high-tech facilities. In addition to government funding, PTA and alumni engagement has helped to enhance the physical condition of the schools. All of the activities have excellent public participation.

- Improved infrastructure through safe and secure structures
- Improved learning environment through Visual-audio-IT equipment is available in all classes.
- The lack of interest of school managers was rectified.
- An increase in the number of students enrolled in school
- PTAs are self-sufficient.
- Teachers and parents form close relationships with the panchayat administration.

MONITORING

Teachers' meetings were held twice a year to keep track of what was going on. The activities were reviewed in the month of May for planning purposes, and meetings were held in March to develop new plans. In addition, a monthly meeting was held to examine every school's activities.

The activities were well planned and as a result, the skills of both teachers and students have improved. The organization is also making an effort to continually



improve the learning experience by developing new materials each month, such as magazines, videos, and interviews. The combination of well-planned activities and new resources has led to an enhanced learning experience.

LIMITATIONS

Out of the eighteen schools in grama panchayat, seventeen are aided. The government's support for these institutions is limited. The managers of these schools are not motivated to improve their institutions.

The above are the highlights of Panniyanoor Grama Panchayat's educational program in Kannur District over the past five years. The panchayat has successfully organized activities and achieved great results in the experience of people's planning. What we can see is a community's success. Apart from project operations, the panchayat has also effectively carried out activities as part of the public education rejuvenation mission. Ganitha Vijayam's "Success Mathematics" is one of her finest achievements. Perhaps the Panniyanoor Grama Panchayat was the first in the state to declare the Ganitha Vijayam

ATTAPPADY - HEADING FORTH

Tribal communities have always had their language and culture. They maintain their distinctiveness through their food, occupation, traditions, and way of life. Most of the time, this results in their marginalization from normal society. However, tribal communities must obtain all of the possibilities enjoyed by other groups in the society. Munnottu is one such project established and conducted by KILA with the help of Attappady Block Panchayat, with the goal of encouraging tribal empowerment in the area. Attappady is bordered by the districts of Coimbatore, Nilgiri, and Malappuram. The Irular, Mudugar, and Kurumba tribes live in the area, and agriculture is their main source of income. For them, education means learning from their forefathers about their ancient farming skills. Though significant progress has been made in bringing them into the modern school system, there is still much need for improvement.

THE PULSE

The initiative “Munnottu” was developed by KILA and the Attappady Block Panchayat with the primary goal of increasing the educational levels of children from various tribal communities. Personality development of children, Positive intervention in their socio-economic issues, Environmental awareness, Skill enhancement, Health care and social awareness were the sub-agenda of this project.



MUNNOTTU - THE RETROSPECT

Some of the basic problems that children from these communities faced included social and educational backwardness, lack of nutrition, health issues, lack of basic facilities and their unavailability, lack of support from society, lack of interest in pursuing higher education and being unaware of the need for it, lack of confidence, and so on.

THE MUNNOTTU PROJECT

Munnottu initially focused on the goals of increasing children's confidence by providing more possibilities and creating more opportunities by delivering skill development trainings. As a first step, interactions with students were organized at schools with the help of teachers. Along with this, discussions with parents were held to address student's security, transport, food, and health requirements and informed about the importance of the project. KILA organized a 21-day training program for the designated facilitators of the project.

Another initiative of the Munnottu project was the organisation of remedial study courses for the students in the SSLC cohort of Agali Government Higher Secondary School at KILA Agali Campus. KILA also held vacation camps for national service scheme volunteers for the last two-years. This program aided the development of team spirit, a social service mindset, and social awareness. Even when the Covid-19 outbreak disrupted school systems, KILA and the Attappady Block Panchayat joined to set up online education in hamlets. The primary goal of this project was to ensure the completion of all syllabus portions as Munnottu - an alternate school.

Due to the ongoing pandemic situation, the Munnottu project has been temporarily suspended. However, KILA is taking this opportunity to develop improved training modules for camps that will aid in the enhancement of skills and talents, ultimately contributing to the overall development of students in the area.

CHAPTER
12

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE ALPHABETS

'Education is that which remains, if one has forgotten everything he learned in school.'

- Albert Einstein, *Ideas and Opinions*, p.63

Palakkad, Kerala's rice bowl, is also known as the land of Palmyra Palms. Kerala's largest district covering 4,480 square kilometres and shares a border with Tamil Nadu. There are 157 villages divided into six taluks. There are 109 local government organizations in the district, including 88 grama panchayats, 13 block panchayats, 7 municipalities, and one district panchayat. The public education sector in the area has a century-long history and has grown progressively.

The significant progress in the district's public education sector have achieved through democratic values. Even the areas of Attappady, Chittoor, and Kollengode, which had previously lagged far behind have made educational strides. When the commercialization of public education became a threat, the Palakkad District Panchayat devised and implemented the "Harisree Samagra Vidhyabhyasa Padhathi (Harisree Comprehensive Education Program)" to defend and strengthen through public intervention. Workshops were conducted in the schools to identify the various issues and



strengths. The following key issues have emerged such as limited infrastructure such as old buildings, furniture shortage, and lack of basic facilities like drinking water and sanitation; shortage of qualified teachers and inadequate labs, libraries, etc.; outdated curriculum and lack of computerized teaching methods; inadequate monitoring systems; the perception that English medium/unaided schools are superior; and a low pass rate on the SSLC exam.

The Harisree Project identifies and implements numerous solutions to tackle issues, such as improving the infrastructure of public schools. Immediate filling of teaching vacancies, public education is empowered by keeping the neighbourhood together, Recognizing and utilising local resources (financially and academically), Coordination with numerous educational organisations (SCERT, DIET, SSK, Department of Education, Local Self Government Institutions, etc.), and effective social audit systems. The Harisree project arose from the recognition that socialisation and democratisation of the public education system are the only solutions for societal growth.

HARISREE PROJECT

Harisree is an amalgamation of public education protection activities with complete integration of public participation, curriculum, teaching, community, and infrastructure. The scheme is implemented by the district panchayat in partnership with the Department of Education and DIET. The project began in 1997 was successful in strengthening the base of district's public education and increasing success rates in Matriculate (SSLC) and Intermediate (HS) exams. Harisree project was developed in partnership with the District Panchayat, the Education Department, block panchayats, grama panchayats, teacher organisations, volunteers, and PTAs.

Harisree is an all-encompassing educational curriculum. Various components include Vijayasree, a project to improve academic standards in SSLC and HSS exams, Haritha Vidhya for environmental awareness, karate training, arts festivals for teachers, film festivals, fellowship camps, subject clinics, awards for best schools, local learning centers, and so on. This project incorporates several programs including essay writing on local history 'Naadinte Naalvazhi', a rapid English acquisition program 'REAP', local heritage museums, the Harisree web portal, and sports training programs.



VIJAYASREE (IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SSLC AND HSS)

At the start of the Harisree Education Scheme, the district's SSLC success rate was significantly lower than the state average. In 2009-10, Palakkad lagged well behind the rest of the state in terms of SSLC success. The district also lags considerably behind in attaining A grade, which is seen as a key indicator of students educational achievement. There were 11 schools with less than 75% success rate, and one of them had less than 50% success rate. Vijayasree emerged in this context. The scheme was launched in higher secondary schools in 2010.

Workshops were held under the direction of DIET to produce learning tools. Online unit tests were administered, and the results were coded at the school and district levels. This process involved identifying schools that were falling behind and necessary support measures were made available to them. In these situations, district panchayat-appointed counsellors took the lead. The endeavour gave a sense of purpose and confidence to students.

Evening classes were organized for the backward students from a period of January to the end of the academic year (up to main exam). Local study groups were formed under the direction of the PTA and established local resource groups. Snacks for youngsters in the target group were provided with special support. The increasing trend in pass percentage is evident in the Palakkad district from 45.1 percent in 2005-06 to 98.6 percent in 2019-20 is an example for the outcome of this initiative.

APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION

The district panchayat and the Public Education Department collaborated on the project, which received academic support from DIET. Local governments lead the role; a dynamic approach was adopted to facilitate the implementation of district-level planning program that considered the uniqueness and needs of each region. The SSA and DIET took the initiative to provide instructional materials and empower teachers. To streamline implementation, monitoring committees are in place at four levels such as district, sub-district, grama panchayat / municipality level and school level.

ACTION PLAN

Each month, an accurate timetable was created for the events. Committees of

varying levels met and organized these activities. The activities were thoroughly examined and revised as appropriate.

KAITHANGU (HANDFUL SUPPORT)

Kaithangu is a Harisree project initiative introduced in 2010-11. The major goal of this study is to find a way to assist students with learning impairments. Priority in the first year was devoted on addressing the pupils with backwardness in their mother tongue and mathematics in the fifth and eighth classes. The activities used to develop writing, reading and comprehension skills through creative language experiences.

JALASREE

The floods that devastated Kerala in 2018 wreaked havoc on the physical and academic domains of schooling. Everyone must learn to recognise their surroundings and organise their life accordingly. “Jalasree” was founded to broaden people’s understanding of disaster management and enhance their ability to implement it in real life. “Jalasree” also hopes to preserve and nourish humanity and the ‘we’ sense that evolved in post-flood Kerala, as well as to engage the next generation in the battle to rebuild a new Kerala.

LOCAL LEARNING CENTERS

The establishment of regional learning centers with a maximum capacity of 40 pupils in all local governments aimed to enhance education through imaginative activities. The themes of investigation covered a range of topics such as local schools, roads, bridges, hills, fields, water resources, employment, and wildlife. To make learning fun and interactive, sessions such as games, singing, swimming lessons, interviews, debates, and home visits were incorporated into the program. The program began on Gandhi Jayanthi and concluded on Republic day of the next year, offering a unique and enriching learning experience for pupils.

RHYTHM AND LANGUAGE

The project’s goal is to provide new approaches for language learning. The program was planned for both teachers and students. The activities include program vision workshops, video / CD production, try-out camps and workshops at grama panchayat level with participation of 50 students from UP & HS.



HARISREE MODEL SCHOOL

The project has been conducted in each schools selected from the 13 sub-districts and develop them into high-quality educational institutions. The Public Education department provides administrative support, while the DIET provides academic support.

REAP (RAPID ENGLISH ACQUISITION PROGRAM)

The success of this English language learning program, which is based on modern language learning theory, was made possible through the dedication of the teachers who volunteered additional time and the support provided by the District Panchayat, who organized training workshops and learning materials. The recognition of the Rapid English Acquisition Program (REAP) through the state-level syllabus revision in 2008 was a matter of pride.

LOCAL CHRONICLES (LOCAL HISTORICAL RESEARCH)

All the schools in the district joined with the grama panchayat to conduct research and document their local history. Historical exhibitions and seminars were held as part of this initiative. The findings were compiled and published in the book “Naadinte Naalvazhi” at the district level.

CHILDREN’S WRITING CAMPS

Writing camps to promote reading and creative writing for children. It is a source of pride that the Harisree writing workshop inspired the writing group program executed by Kala Sahithya Vedi (Arts & Literary forum) called “Vidyarangam” an initiative launched at the state level in partnership with SSA.

SPORTS ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM

Swimming classes for children, Distribution of Sports equipment and Sports training camps were conducted as part of the Harisree initiative. As part of the initiative, Mannarkad & Kalladi Higher Secondary School, Mundur and Parli High School have trained national-level athletes.

TO THE SKY & TO THE HUMANS (MAANATHEKKU)



MANUSHYANILEKKU)

The event commemorates the 500th anniversary of Galileo's astronomical findings as well as Darwin's 200th birthday. As part of this, other events such as science festivals, Science experiment tours, Galileo Little Scientist program, School telescopes, Receive Only Terminal (ROT) system for watching EDUSAT program in all high schools, High school kit with 150 science resource CDs and Smart classrooms for all government schools.

DISTRICT PEDAGOGY PARK

A district-level learning center has been established on the grounds of the DIET Lab School, to facilitate self-learning and research among teachers. This center is dedicated to developing and implementing activities aimed at strengthening the professional abilities of teachers.

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In collaboration with IEDC resource teachers, the district developed a special program for children with special needs (CWSN), which included skill enhancement through production training at various locations. Additionally, exhibitions were organized to promote the products created by these children.

ART ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM

The Art Advancement Program, implemented in selected schools across the district, is designed to revive Kerala's artistic heritage and aid in the preservation of traditional art forms. The program includes instruction in extinct traditional arts and instrumental music, such as Chavittukali, Kudachozhi, Chendamelam, and Mappilah songs. Additionally, 5 lakh rupees have been allocated to Vellinezhi Government Higher Secondary School for the preservation of Kathakali tools, including head gears and decorations. The program also involves the expansion of classroom theater under the guidance of DIET.

HARISREE WEB PORTAL - www.harisreepalakkad.org

There are several good models for improving educational quality has been developed



in schools. This web portal is established for documenting these extremely valuable events sharing with others, and allowing teachers and students to effectively use information technology. This web gateway is being used throughout the state. The web platform also makes it easier to coordinate government orders, qualitative actions, and directions from the DDE/DEO/AEO, DIET, SSA, and action plans. It enables teachers and students to share learning resources and improve academic support.

The development and expansion of web-based tools, such as GeoGebra, an IT-based resource for mathematics learning, aimed to improve education through technology. Education-related orders and circulars were made available in the web portal. SSA, DIET, and District Sub-District Education offices merged to form a strong and efficient communication network. It provides an opportunity for schools to share their performance and achievements. The web portal can be used to coordinate and administer the various operations of the Vijayasree project. Harisree web portal is one of the top websites in the state for teachers and students nowadays.

KARATE TRAINING FOR SELF DEFENCE

Karate Training is being offered in a number of schools as part of the empowerment program for girls in Higher Secondary Schools.

Harisree Pathrika, (Newsletter)

The aim of the newsletter is to expand innovative activities in schools and product exchange as part of learning activities. It imparts modern educational concepts to teachers and facilitates contact between the district panchayat. Harishree Pathrika, published in 2008, 2009, and 2010, is a great reading material that includes works by well-known authors and children.

HARISREE PATHRIKA (NEWSLETTER)

The aim of the newsletter was to promote innovative activities in schools and exchange of resources as part of learning activities. It imparts modern educational concepts to teachers and facilitates coordination / interaction between the district panchayat. Harishree Pathrika published in 2008, 2009, and 2010 was a great reading material that includes works by well-known authors and children.

HARISREE SEMINAR



A teacher-parent education program was established at the school and panchayat levels to increase involvement and awareness in innovative learning approaches. The program aimed to educate the public on the important role of parents in education and included the preparation and distribution of study materials, teacher education, and education meetings. The goal was to raise parental awareness and support students learning success.

DIGITAL LIBRARY

The majority of the learning materials accessible at school can be used for teaching / learning activities by both teachers and students. However, they were not being used effectively. Harishree envisioned a digital library as a solution to provide library access in the classroom for all subjects. The goal was to create a digital library through the collection of existing books, CDs and e-materials in the form of a server reading card. The books were scientifically indexed to develop, share and store knowledge, and the internet and intranet were utilized for educational activities. A monitoring mechanism was also established to assist these activities.

PEOPLES KNOWLEDGE CENTRE (JANA PADANA KENDRAM)

The Jana Padana Kendram is a public space where teachers, children and the public can gather to study and improve their scientific and rational thinking and participate in society's development activities.

The core of the Harishree initiative aimed to improve the academic performance of the entire public school system in the district, along with efforts to provide the necessary physical conditions. The consortium of people's committees focused on people's educational and cultural upliftment is the backbone of Harishree project. These committees have been instrumental in ensuring that the Harishree project is successful in its efforts to uplift people's education and culture.

VIJAYASMERAM OF MALAPPURAM

Decentralized power is essential for local governments to develop and implement programs and initiatives aimed at advancing education at the local level. While education is a manifestation of the best in its broadest sense and promotes the overall growth of learners, its efficacy is often measured by confirming the knowledge learned qualitatively and quantitatively. Therefore, the pass percentage in SSLC and Plus Two exams in a state is also an important measure of the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The Malappuram District Panchayat created the Vijayabheri project with this feature in mind.

VISION 2001

Vijayabheri, which was launched on 1st June 2001, in Malappuram district with the purpose of integrating educational improvement, first focused on raising the SSLC and Plus Two pass percentage, but today the focus is on enhancing the quality of basic education.

Two decades ago, SSLC pass percentage of Malappuram district was only 30% (only half of the state average). Today, approximately 98% of students pass their exams, which is higher than the state average. This is certainly the output of the influence on Vijayabheri project.

The Malappuram District Panchayat oversaw the project, which was backed by the block panchayat, grama panchayats and municipalities. All education agencies in the district participated in the project,

which was overseen by the DDE of Malappuram District.

POPULARITY IN EXECUTION

The initial step of the Vijayabheri project involved establishing Vijayabheri Committees in every school within the district. School coordinators were also recruited and trained at both the district and panchayat levels. Progress was monitored through regular meetings with institution heads, presidents, and coordinators. In addition to the school coordinators, panchayat-level coordinators were appointed to provide local leadership. Primary-level review meetings were held at the panchayat/municipality level to evaluate progress and identify areas that required improvement.

NOTABLE INTERVENTIONS

It is worth noting that as part of the Vijayabheri project, training was provided to institution heads and PTA (Parent Teacher Association) leaders, with a particular focus on backward schools. In addition, teachers were trained for remedial coaching, which enabled them to organize and provide remedial teaching for special needed children in the morning and evening batches. Teachers were selected from various schools and trained in counselling, after which they organized counselling and motivation classes for students. A team of well-trained teachers collaborated to develop handbooks, which were instrumental in ensuring the success of the project.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The Vijayabheri activity calendar was tailored to meet the specific needs of each school, with a focus on local requirements. Regular examinations were emphasized, along with targeted study exercises. The success of Vijayabheri can be attributed to the rigorous evaluation process that followed each examination, during which results and progress were assessed, and corrective measures were developed and implemented. Special study camps were held during vacations, and an awareness creation program called Unnarv was conducted for parents, both of which contributed significantly to the success of the project.

THE PRIMARY FOCUS



While the initial goal of the Vijayabheri project was to improve the pass percentage in public examinations, the emphasis was placed on prioritizing initiatives for primary school students. The project began with baseline assessments that were used to identify basic cognitive impairments in students in fourth and seventh classes. Specialized training was then provided to teachers on the development of remedial teaching strategies and instructional aids to address these impairments. At the same time, the project also focused on identifying talented students and providing specialized training for the LSS (Lower Secondary School) and USS (Upper Secondary School) examinations.

The Upper-class Student Development Initiative was designed to promote the overall growth and development of students by providing access to mental health seminars, vocational training, and career counselling programs. The success of the project was due in large part to the collaboration between various educational agencies such as DIET (District Institute of Education and Training), SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), RMSA (Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan), and the operational support of Vijayabheri.

SOURCES OF FUNDING

During the first year of the project, the district panchayat allocated less than Rs 2 lakh for the Vijayabheri project. However, as the project made progress in subsequent years, the funding was increased to Rs 20 lakh. While a small portion of this fund was allocated for schools and students, the primary focus was on generating funds locally and executing programs. The district panchayat's funding was primarily used for workshops and training programs.

INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Vijayabheri's emphasis on community responsibility and the role of local governments in education led to the majority of schools in the district becoming centers of excellence. Grassroots people's associations played a crucial role in developing creative models and pooling resources, while three-tier panchayats and educational institutions offered administrative and academic support. This extensive and rapid shift in the education system was gradually reflected in the SSLC and Plus Two tests, as well as in the excellent performance in the LSS and USS exams. The SSLC pass percentage of Malappuram in 2014 was 95.48 percent, which was higher than the state average of 95.45 percent. The pass percentage in



the tenth standard was only 33% in 2001, but it gradually improved to 98 percent in 2008 and 97.76 percent in 2018. The number of students achieving A+ grade in all subjects also increased from 693 in 2011 to 1286 in 2013. The success story of schools in Malappuram serves as a model for the entire state, demonstrating that it is possible to achieve remarkable results even with ambitious goals.

CHAPTER
14

COMMUNITY OF COMPREHENSIVE ADVANCEMENT

“It’s what you do in the present that will redeem the past and thereby change the future.”

- Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist*

Gandhiji stated that education is about equipping oneself to confront crises rather than learning to read and write. The Koyilandy Municipality’s education program is evocative of Gandhi’s remarks. The Koyilandy Municipality has been in function for a quarter-century. In 1995, the panchayat was raised to the status of municipality. This coastal town near the Arabian Sea is an important town and the taluk headquarters for the Kozhikode district.

Koyilandy is thought to have acquired its name from Kovilkandi. According to William Logan, this Koyilandy is the same site mentioned as Pandarani by the Portuguese and Fantina by Ibn Batuta. The town’s mudflats made it a popular anchoring spot for cargo ships. The population of Koyilandy is primarily composed of people who make living from fishing and traditional weaving. The coastal area of Koyilandy Municipality is the common man’s hometown, with the exception of a few landowners and financially wealthy households.

The education sector in Koyilandy likewise endured a period of

deterioration during the last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century due to the purposeful marketing of the education industry. The proliferation of English medium schools was the brainchild of business-minded educators. Koyilandy had a variety of educational establishments tucked away along the national highway. There were also big educational institutions, such as large retail malls, that had a regal look and material conditions. Learning in government schools was overlooked since it was thought to be of lower importance. From pre-primary through secondary school, parents were rushing to enrol their children in English-medium institutions. The consequences of this unfortunate situation were devastating, leading to the undervaluing of government schools with qualified teachers, making them a third choice. Aided schools also faced similar issues.

The Koyilandy Municipality made conceptual breakthroughs in project implementation and planning in this area. The Municipal Council, which took office on November 12, 2015, provided a solid foundation for the development of education sector. The committee comprises service-minded individuals with educational knowledge and abilities. Independent action was launched as a result of their vision.

In this context, the State of Kerala announced the commencement of the 'Public Education Rejuvenation Campaign.' Koyilandy is a municipality that has voluntarily taken over the state government's education plan. Koyilandy Municipality eagerly chose to resurrect the schools lost splendour and reactivate them with increased zeal. The increase in the number of students in the educational institutions of Koyilandy Municipality and the extraordinary excellence displayed by the municipality schools and students in the extra-curricular fields at the state and national levels are direct testimony to this project.

INCEPTION

As a first step, it was determined to take actions to avoid dropouts, re-enrol dropouts in government schools, demonstrate the strength and quality of schools, improve their physical infrastructure, provide ample learning resources possible, empower teachers, and establish effective coordination with parents.

ACTIVITIES

Parents and locals were given counselling and orientation regarding the program. The PTA's involvement in the school's day-to-day operations was ensured. PTA



representatives and principals were ensured to attend Education Committee sessions. Enlisting the PTA's strong support to avoid strikes and set school campus strike-free.

The importance of education as a shared responsibility between teachers, parents, and social workers has been emphasized through various awareness programs. The joint efforts of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), police officers, and student police cadets have resulted in the transformation of schools into drug-free environments. To improve the quality of education, new educational programs have been implemented and the infrastructure of schools has been upgraded. Monitoring committees have been established to ensure proper implementation of these programs and identify areas of improvement. Additionally, efforts have been made to make government schools centers of excellence, not just in terms of academics but also in fostering student interests and talents.

In order to constantly improve the quality of education, projects were regularly modified based on scientific research, data collection, and status monitoring. To enhance English language instruction, action plans were developed and put into effect, resulting in the installation of modern learning facilities in schools, including the availability of English instruction starting from the first grade. To cater to students' language preferences, class divisions were designed to allow for the choice of either English or Malayalam as the medium of instruction. To further improve the skills of instructors, subject-specific self-improvement training was introduced, along with the implementation of a smart teacher system and smart classrooms.

To promote physical and mental well-being, various sports activities including swimming and cycling have been introduced, as well as sports training. The structure of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) has been strengthened to better support educational initiatives. To encourage reading, a class library was established and reading programs were implemented. National and international holidays were transformed into teaching days to maximize learning opportunities. To broaden students' experiences and interests, extracurricular activities outside of school hours were encouraged, including excursions, study tours, and meditation classes.

As a result of these efforts, the loss of teaching vacancies due to low enrolment in municipal schools came to an end. Many unaided schools were closed down, and their influence declined significantly. Admissions to government schools reached an all-time high. Students from government schools began to perform exceptionally well in competitive exams such as NEET exams in top level. There were no longer



any instances of student dropouts or changes in school enrolment. The relationship between teachers and students became friendlier, and PTA meetings became more productive, making schools the center of the community.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

The Koyilandy Municipal School Committee had a turbulent time of operation from 2015 to 2020. Koyilandy is proud of its accomplishments, particularly in the education sector. The Board of Education has been pleased to convey, at least in part, the important message that a “Good Country produces Good Schools, and a Good School produces a Good Country”.

LET'S BEGIN RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING

Education is the process of extracting human resources in the same way that natural resources are extracted from the earth's crust. This is the gist of the British educational scholar Sir Kenneth Robinson's perspective on education. Even if there are obstacles, the need of the hour is not education reform, but educational transformation. This transformation will occur not through the standardisation of education, but through its personalization. Each student should be given the opportunity to discover his or her skills and mission of life. With 43 wards, Kanjhangad Municipality is the oldest and largest municipality in Kasargod district. Among the 24 schools operating under the municipality, 16 are government schools.

EMERGED VISION

With the evaluation of education in Kerala becomes a game of calculating the pass percent of the annual examination would mean losing sight of the core values that define the Kerala model of education. In line with the public education rejuvenation mission, the Chief Minister has declared that our goal is to make a holistic transformation in the school education rather than to improve the exam results. The results of the secondary and higher secondary exams continue to dominate Keralites debates about educational quality. Many districts do not give enough attention to the primary section when developing and executing various educational plans.

The primary education revamping campaign came up with the project of reframing primary education focusing LP level in the academic year 2016-17 in response to the concerns of the primary teachers and parents of Kanjhangad Municipality.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Unappealing classrooms, inaccessible computer learning, outdated equipment, lack of laboratory areas, and insufficient reading materials were all obstacles to a better learning experience. Despite having the best curriculum, textbooks, and nutrition, the learning environment remained subpar. Primary schools were severely impacted. Furthermore, Parents started contemplating the idea of enrolling their children in private schools.

PREVIEW OF ACTION PLAN

There are a total of 18 lower primary schools included in the project. The project started in the year 2016-17 realizing that the conditions were not conducive to revamping the infrastructure of all the schools simultaneously. The idea behind the project was to facilitate incremental development, making it more feasible for all schools to participate by rebuilding one classroom per year. The project included plans for improved facilities such as classrooms, libraries, child-friendly furnishings, and up-to-date IT equipment. Private schools were not eligible to take part in the initiative, but the five schools received laptops as part of the project.

The funds for the project were obtained through a combination of the municipality's plan outlay and a maintenance grant. The Education committee regularly held discussions and evaluated the project's progress. The steering group overseeing the project consisted of the secretary of the municipal education committee, an implementing official, and two principals. The project was developed through frequent working group meetings and was ultimately completed at a development seminar. The initiative's goal was to establish IT-based education infrastructure within four years.

The action plan for the upcoming four academic years involved creating a smart classroom in each of the schools, through Onnam Class Onnam Tharam (First Standard First Class), Mikavarnna Randaam Class (Outstanding Second Standard) and Mizhivekhum Moonnam Class (Exemplary Third Standard). However, the initiative was suspended in 2018-19 when the government introduced a project to transform public schools into smart schools.



FIRST STANDARD FIRST PLACE TO EXEMPLARY THIRD STANDARD

The ‘Onnam class onnam Tharam’ initiative was launched in 2016-17, starting with the first grade of 18 schools. In that year, smart classes were established in 18 first-grade divisions across 13 government schools. The classrooms underwent a comprehensive renovation process, including tiling the floors, decorating the walls, hanging picture frames, and installing child-friendly furniture. The classrooms were also equipped with baby desks, letter boards, interactive screens, LCD projectors, and laptops, and each class was given the name ‘Onnam Class Onnam Tharam’.

Continuing from the first grade, the second grade classrooms in the same schools underwent improvement during 2017-18. The development motto for that year was ‘Mikavarnna Randaam Class’. As part of the renovation, the interactive boards in these classrooms were replaced with whiteboards.

The third-grade classrooms underwent renovation in the 2018-19 as part of the ‘Mizhivekhum Moonnam Class’ program. KITE’s efforts to make primary schools smarter coincided with the completion of preparations to refurbish fourth-grade classrooms, resulting in the suspension of the municipality project. As part of the renovation process, the classrooms were tiled. In addition to donating library books and laboratory equipment, a follow-up initiative was launched to reduce the burden of weight carried by 4,500 children’s school backpacks. The initiative involved the purchase of steel plates and glasses for schools.

SUPPORT SYSTEM

In addition to the monitoring and steering committee intervention by the MEC, the SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) and IT Mission provided training to teachers on managing interactive boards and IT-based teaching.

GOAL ACHIEVED

The successful execution of the project has injected new vitality into the municipality’s LP (Lower Primary) schools. As the schools became more appealing, enrolment in public schools increased significantly. Moreover, the quality of education has improved compared to previous years. The community’s loyalty to and concern for public schools also underwent a significant transformation. Ongoing training has provided teachers with confidence and modernized their teaching approaches

One of the benefits of the project was that teachers could submit their self-created learning materials on a digital platform. However, one constraint identified during project implementation was a lack of financial support, which resulted in delays in achieving targets when the available funds were distributed among multiple programs. Due to legal restrictions on funding for aided schools, some of them were excluded from the scheme. The initiative encompassed 13 government LP and UP schools, as well as 5 aided LP schools listed in the following table.

LIST OF BENEFICIARY SCHOOLS

Sl. no.	Government Schools	Sl. no.	Aided Schools
1	GLPS, Hosdurg, Theruvath	14	P.P.T.S.A.L.P.S, Kanjhangad, Kadappuram
2	GLPS, Punjavi	15	M.C.B.M.A.L.P.S. Balla, Kadappuram
3	GLPS, Kottachery	16	A.L.P.S. Balla, Kadappuram
4	GFLPS, Hosdurg, Kadappuram	17	K.I.A.L.P.S. Kanjhangad
5	GLPS, Pattanakkad	18	U.B.M.C.A.L.P.S, Hosdurg
6	GFLPS, Kanjhangad		
7	ACKNS GUPS, Melangot		
8	GUPS, Hosdurg, Kadappuram		
9	GUPS, Arayi, Kanjhangad South		
10	GUPS, Pudukai		
11	GHSS, Uppilikai		
12	GVHSS, Kanjhangad		
13	GHSS, Balla-East		

VELLOOR LIGHT FOR PAYYANUR



The Velloor Government LP School is one of the top government schools in Payyannur Municipality, with modern facilities, and it is quickly rising as a notable institution in the public education sector. Padinjaarekkara Naalpathu Eeradi Kalari was founded in 1903 as a Board Elementary School on the outskirts of Velloor. Later, the school relocated to a sacred grove (Kavu) thickly forested with trees. As a result, the school was renamed kavile school by earlier generations and is still known by that name now.

In 1960, the school was converted to a UP school, and in 1980, it was raised into a high school. The dropping number of children in public schools for different reasons, as well as the proliferation of unaided English medium schools, resulted in a decrease in the number of pupils in the school. To address this, English medium pre-primary classes were introduced in 2012, followed by English medium first standard classes based on the Kerala state curriculum in 2014. This was the initial step in the school's development. Payyanur Municipality has prioritised the development of the school's infrastructure from the commencement of the People's Plan Campaign. As a result, the number of children rose to 162 in 2004-05 before falling again in 2009-10. With the assistance of the PTA, special lessons were held in Malayalam medium classes in 2010-11. The municipality designated the school as a model LP school and expedited its expansion by prioritising the provision of facilities for academic and non-academic activities, as well as the development of other infrastructure amenities. Vibrant murals in school classrooms, colourful paintings even on the compound walls, a well-furnished modern mini auditorium, spacious stage, and outdoor seating that provide space for children to relax during breaks, a mini park, and other infrastructure all contributed to a positive impression on those who entered the school. In 2009-10, the school had 132 students in four divisions, and by 2019-20, it had grown to 18 divisions with 501 students. Enrolment at the school climbed from 38 in 2010-11 to 120 in 2019-20.





ACTIVITIES BY PAYYANUR MUNICIPALITY

Payyanur Municipality declared the school as a model LP School and the following development activities were carried out. The construction of new buildings was undertaken to provide state-of-the-art facilities for all students. The classrooms were equipped with smart technology, ensuring that students had access to the latest resources. To create a comfortable and conducive learning environment, each class was furnished with child-friendly seating and necessary furniture. Computers were also made available in every class to support the students digital education.

In addition to the classrooms, the school also provided a kitchen, dining hall, stage, mini auditorium, and modern toilet facilities. To ensure the health and well-being of the students, a water purifier was installed for drinking water. A mini park was also provided for students to enjoy their leisure time. The school also supported eligible students in appearing for the LSS examination and securing scholarships. In the academic year 2018-2019, 28 students qualified for the scholarship and several students won second place in the state. This demonstrated the school's commitment to providing students with the resources and support they need to succeed.

PTA works as an excellent supporting group in the development activities of the school. PTA funds were provided for the purchase of a school bus to avoid transportation issues.





OTHER FEATURES

- IT-based education in all classes
- Class libraries for each class and a school library called “Jyothirgamaya”.
- A school radio for the dissemination of information.
- Extensive Annual Day celebrations every year for the encouragement of students in arts & music.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Every year, at least 25 - 30 students participate in inter-school arts festivals and win many prizes. The municipality has been giving special consideration since the school was declared as a model school and providing better physical and academic facilities in associated with Public Education Rejuvenation Mission.



CLASS PTA OF PERINJANAM

Perinjanam is a grama panchayat in the Thrissur district with extensive experience in directing social interventions to promote and improve public education quality. The Perinjanam Education Complex was established and implemented by the governing council of Perinjanam grama panchayat in 1994. Shri.C.M.Velayudhan, then President of the Perinjanam Panchayat, presented a working paper on Perinjanam Educational Complex experiences during the International Congress on Kerala Studies held in 1995 at Kerala Varma College in Thrissur. The Akshara Kairali initiative examined issues of learning difficulties and classroom limitations, with the aim of addressing them. As part of this effort, a discussion took place that led to the publication of a leaflet called “Poovvankurunnila” and a guidebook outlining the study activities. The Sasthra Sahithya Parishad, Perinjanam unit, spearheaded the initiative, and all events were conducted with the active participation of the local community. As a result, these experiences proved to be highly valuable to the educational project activities under the people’s plan campaign. In reality, there was no obligation, force, or pressure from the schools for these activities, as they originated from external sources. Nonetheless, over time, we observed a remarkable shift in which schools became enthusiastic about undertaking such endeavours. This document outlines such a change that occurred in Perinjanam grama panchayat.

Perinjanam Government Primary School is the only government

school among the nine public schools located in Perinjanam Grama Panchayat. This institution was established during a period when Renaissance ideas were gaining momentum in Kerala, with its creation credited to the remarkable personality Shri. Shankunni Gurukkal in 1903. Shankunni Guru latter passed the school over to his close friend Shri T K Kunjaaman Master in 1907. The Malabar District Board subsequently took over the school, which was then designated as a government school following the formation of United Kerala. The educational activities in Perinjanam have always been centered on the school. In the 1980s, the school faced the prospect of losing its accreditation due to inadequate infrastructure, but it was able to overcome this issue with the aid of public participation. This approach helped to maintain public support and cooperation with the school at all times. Consequently, the institution underwent a significant transformation both physically and intellectually during the academic years of 2017-18 and 2018-19.

MIRACLE HAPPENS IN A CLASS: INVOLVEMENT OF THE PTA

During the academic year 2017-18, a significant initiative was sparked by a discussion that arose in the PTA meeting of VI-B class regarding the need to improve the learning environment in the classroom. As the discussion progressed, the class PTA unanimously supported and proposed the idea of transforming the class into a smart class. Despite the classroom having only half wall and small cracks and holes on the floor, it was transformed into a state-of-the-art learning environment with the support of the PTA. At the time, there were only a few novels available for reading at Reading Corner, and there were no ICT resources. The class lacked its own learning tools, and the students' assignment works were often displayed in an unappealing manner.

Following the class PTA's decision, all parents in the class contributed their fair share, ranging from Rs.500 to Rs.10,000 towards the improvement of the classroom. The middle wall was raised and painted in an aesthetically pleasing manner to make the classroom more soundproof. The electricity system was upgraded to provide better amenities, and the floors were tiled. Special arrangements were made to display the creative work of students, and separate stands were provided for shoes and umbrellas. Additionally, a list of books related to the sixth-grade syllabus, as well as additional reading and reference material, was compiled and presented, resulting in the creation of a full class library. In addition to the contributions made by the parents, a local businessman provided an LCD television, and the Rotary Club had already supplied three classrooms with new child-friendly benches and desks.



Beautiful tables and chairs were purchased for the teachers. A comprehensive list of all the materials needed for everyday instruction, from chalk to A4 sheet paper, was ensured and made available in the classroom. Within a week, the class 6B had undergone a complete transformation.

This action sparked similar initiatives in other classes, and as a result, class PTAs in each class began to compete with each other to make their classrooms smarter. Retired teachers, alumni, government officials, and local residents all donated money and equipments. All the parents collaborated and each class teacher also contributed money to the fund. When the class PTAs worked together, they raised almost Rs 10 lakh. The Perinjanam Government UP School PTA sought financial assistance from the Perinjanam Service Co-operative Bank, which contributed one lakh rupees towards developing a high-tech classroom for the first standard with advanced features such as a digital interactive touch board. As a result of these initiatives, 11 classes became smarter by the end of the first term. The IT @ School program chose Perinjanam Government UP School as one of the schools to launch their innovative concept. To keep up with the new, high-tech environment in the classrooms, the PTA took on the challenge of improving the teachers' competencies by organizing special IT training during the holidays for selected teachers.

FROM PRIMARY TO PRE-PRIMARY

The pre-primary sector of the school had a total enrolment of 147 students across four classes, and following this, the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) assumed responsibility for infrastructural development. As part of this initiative, a one-day seminar on child education was conducted during the mid-summer vacation for parents of pre-primary pupils and teachers, led by the renowned educational activist, Sri. K.T. Radhakrishnan. The classrooms were subsequently adorned with vibrant depictions of nature, such as forests, seas, villages, and cities, creating an immersive learning environment for the young students. With a generous grant of Rs.1 lakh from Mr. Innocent MP, the pre-primary class was equipped with a digital interactive touch board. This move was especially noteworthy, as the Department of Education had recognized the school's pre-primary division as one of the district's premier model pre-primaries. In light of this recognition, the activities within the pre-primary classes were significantly expanded. Each classroom was thoughtfully designed with distinct corners, including story, reading, music, science, arithmetic, dolls, crafts, and picture corners. Many workshops were also conducted by creative



parents, who generously provided the learning materials and play equipments for each corner.

REFERENCE LIBRARY WITH COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) put forth a proposal for a three-tiered reading facility comprised of the class library, the Amma Reading Centre, and the central school library. wherein the class library would provide books specifically tailored for curriculum reference. The introduction of smart classes paved the way for the expansion of reading corners in each class, which evolved into class libraries that were custom-tailored to the curriculum. With the enthusiastic support of parents and the local community, shelves were installed and books were meticulously organized in each class library.

The Amma Reading Centre, situated in the school's front yard under the shelter of a majestic mahogany tree, stocked a wide array of newspapers and journals, providing parents with access to valuable reading material. Meanwhile, the central school library offered an even wider selection of books and publications, catering to the needs of all students and teachers. Although the school had a central library stocked with a decent collection of literature, it lacked appeal. Recognizing the need for a practical and organized approach to library management, the Mothers' Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) stepped in. With the help of teachers during the holidays, they catalogued the books and meticulously tracked the inventory. The PTA was able to amass a sum of Rs. 1 lakh through donations from retired teachers and school alumni, which was used to purchase new bookshelves and renovate the library. The revamped school library, boasting an impressive collection of over five thousand books with an excellent and cosy reading environment was inaugurated on October 2, 2018.

NEW BUILDINGS

The generous contributions of Advocate V.S. Sunil Kumar, former MLA of Kaipamangalam constituency and Minister of Agriculture, who allocated Rs. 2 crore towards the development of infrastructure amenities, and the Education Department's contribution of Rs. 1 crore as part of the Public Education Rejuvenation Mission, for the construction of a new three-storey building including large auditorium and numerous classrooms was completed.



SAFE DRINKING WATER

The total student strength of the school amounted to 660, and the process of providing boiled drinking water to each one of them was incredibly time-consuming. Consequently, the children had to bear the burden of carrying drinking water from home, adding to the weight of their already heavy school bags. In order to address this issue, the school PTA decided to take action. They invested Rs. 60,000 towards the installation of a water purification system, which guaranteed a constant supply of fresh and clean drinking water for all the students.

ARTS TRAINING

In their continuing efforts to promote holistic development among students, the PTA of the school introduced the concept of a Talent Lab. As part of this initiative, the PTA provided instrumental music training facilities to the students. To facilitate this, the school purchased a range of instruments such as the violin, guitar, tabla, piano, and flute, and recruited a parent from the school as a trainer. Apart from instrumental music, the PTA also set up painting and visual arts facilities to encourage creativity and artistic expression among the students.

SCIENCE CLUB

The school, in collaboration with the Science Club installed a rain gauge to scientifically measure rainfall and a thermometer to record the daily ambient temperature. The Jananidhi Project supported the installation of a rainwater harvesting system, while the Agriculture Department supported the installation of a biogas plant. The school also integrated a solar electrical energy unit into the grama panchayat's Parignyanam Energy (Knowledgeable energy) project, which generated and transferred solar energy from the Perinjanam Co-operative Bank to the Electricity Board. The school also received support from the Department of Environmental Economics at Kerala Agriculture University for the installation of another solar unit. In addition to installing a rain gauge and thermometer, the school set up model solar plants, wind plants, and other green initiatives. These initiatives not only benefit the environment but also serve as a practical learning experience for students.

GRAMA PANCHAYAT'S OWN SCHOOL

The Perinjanam Grama Panchayat has been a constant supporter and caretaker of



the school, initiating various projects to aid in its growth and development. One such initiative is the Breakfast Scheme for the Perinjanam Government UP School, which was executed by the grama panchayat. The school has also been an integral part of the panchayat level Vinjanolsavam (Knowledge Fair) organized by Sasthra Sahithya Parishad for many years. Moreover, the recently established Perinjanam project, aimed at attracting students to public schools, is yet another example of the panchayat's efforts to strengthen public education.

EMPATHY FOR FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS

The PTA of the school took a proactive role in promoting empathy and kindness among the students. By involving them in charitable activities such as contributing to the State Government's flood relief fund, providing home appliances for flood-affected families, setting up a library at home for a classmate who could not get to school on a daily basis, and providing financial assistance to parents in need, moreover, their efforts to provide lambs to children with special needs are truly inspiring.

SOCIAL AUDIT

The school's PTA conducts monthly academic evaluations and coordinates with the various committees regularly. The school invites teams of educators and social workers to review the school's overall activities periodically. Initiatives such as Malayalam Week are evaluated publicly by the school, Malayalam Week is held every year on 1st November in all classes to promote the Malayalam language through various competitions.

ACCOLADES

The Perinjanam Govt. School PTA was recognized as the top PTA in Valappad sub-district and the second best in Thrissur District last year. They were chosen to represent the district in the Shraddha Project, which is a special educational program for economically disadvantaged children, organized by the Department of Education at the state level. The school's Standard 4B won the best class library award in the Kaipamangalam Constituency last year, presented by MLA Sri.E.T.Tyson Master. The Minister of Education, Prof.C.Raveendranath, inaugurated the district-level educational festival (Padanolsavam) at the school. The PTA's efforts to address transportation concerns resulted in the Kaipamangalam



constituency MLA providing a bus to the school. The school's activities are highly regarded, and a team of students, teachers, and parents from other educational institutions visit the school for first-hand experience.

The PTA is actively involved in every nook and cranny of the school, with mothers taking turns to cook and distribute food daily and more helpers being called on for significant events. The collaboration between parents and teachers is commendable, particularly during fairs and festivals. The positive relationships and friendships among PTA members, teachers, parents, and the public have been a significant factor in the school's success.

KNOWLEDGE OCEAN OF THRISSUR

With the powers vested in the district panchayats by the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution, they are responsible for strengthening the district's secondary school system. The district panchayats of Kerala, viz., Palakkad, Kannur, Malappuram and Thiruvananthapuram have made significant interventions in strengthening their district's secondary school system. Thrissur District Panchayat had a long tradition of conducting various experiments in the field of education.

They focus mainly on nurturing science education and developing scientific awareness among students. The district panchayat has educated students on the local history, conducted teacher development program and projects to nurture students' literary and artistic talents, and established educational and physical facilities for girls, program to nurture digitised learning, and interventions to support students from marginalised communities and other educationally backward students. The details of these programs are detailed below:

1. VIGYAN SAGAR

The Vigyan Sagar project was implemented by the Thrissur District Panchayat at a cost of Rs 20 crore. The Science and Technology Museum and Planetarium were constructed in Ramavarmapuram, Thrissur on a 9.074-acre land contributed by the Government. The



3.5 crore rupees contributed by Shri Therambil Ramakrishnan, MLA, was a major support for the project. The building was constructed by Nirmithi Kendra, an agency under the Government of Kerala. The project was prepared by a team of experts from Thrissur Engineering College. To support the program, a mobile observatory was included in the annual plan of district panchayat for 2010 -11. Serious efforts were made to find and utilise other resources to ensure that the project was completed on time.

Vigyan Sagar is one of the largest science parks in Asia. The Science Museums and the Planetarium in the campus provide deep knowledge in various streams of astronomical science to the children. It also has a modern library, conference room, Maths theatre, FM station, mini conference hall, mini theatre, cultural gallery, press gallery, botanical garden and medicinal plant garden. The ISRO pavilion, which provides a historical sketch of India's space exploration, is another major attraction for visitors. Pavilion admission is opened to 100 individuals per day, including teachers and students. The school also organises summer camps for students, which take the children into a world of scientific inquiry.

2. HISTORICAL EXPLORATION JOURNEYS

There have been a number of activities by historians to document the history of the state and the history of the various regions within the state. But attempts to find local histories are not seen in the mainstream. History is taught in schools as



a subject but it is not related to the local context. Through this project, the district panchayat intends to nurture students' historical inquiry by providing opportunities for the exploration of local histories. The aim of the program is to prepare the institutional histories of the schools through joint efforts of the students, teachers, and the village community, to provide guidance to the teachers for innovative teaching, and to facilitate the process of preparing village histories by students.

Another feature of the program is to engage teachers in the methodology of advanced data collection through interviews, document analysis, field visits, report preparation, and presentation of district-level report. The program was implemented by the district panchayat in collaboration with the State Education Department and the State Gazetteer Department. More than 50 teachers were trained in local history and local histories of about 400 schools were prepared and published by the district panchayat.

3. ASTRONOMY OLYMPIAD

The Education Working Group of district panchayat launched the program in 2012 to enrich astronomical knowledge to students. The program aimed to impart knowledge about the scientific aspects of astronomy and differentiate them from the beliefs associated with astrology. It was intended to inculcate a scientific approach in students through astronomy and to improve the quality of science teaching in schools by training teachers.

The content of the program includes

- Sessions on the dynamics of space and astronomy
- Presents about galaxies, planets and stars
- Introduces monitoring methods and tools.
- Includes practical sessions on sky watching

As part of the program, 30 teachers and 120 students participated in residential camps held in 12 sub-districts, a three-day astronomical Olympiad was organized at the district level. Specially trained teachers were appointed as resource persons in these areas.

4. KALIYARANGU (2000-2005)

Theatre has a high potential to develop a students confidence level, and it provides

an opportunity to develop personal qualities. Once a children's theatre is established in schools, it could be used as a medium of learning and as a tool for developing children's associations. With these objectives, the district panchayat had planned the Kaliyarangu program to develop children's theatres in selected schools across the district. The project aimed to:

- Conduct theatre camps to train teachers, students, and parents to use theatre as a medium of learning.
- Develop models to enhance student skills using theatre as a medium.

The district panchayat sought the support of Kerala Sangeetha Nadaka Academy (Kerala Academy of Music and Theatre) and the expert theatre performers and groups in the district to realize the concept of Kaliyarangu. An expert resource team developed for the program implementation.

5. VINJANOLSAVAM

Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP), a scientific movement of the common people, has been organizing science festivals across Kerala for the last four decades. With the support of Shastra Sahithya Parishad, Thrissur District Panchayat took up Vinjanolsavam as their program and implemented throughout the district. It should be noted that this program has been going on for more than a decade.

They conduct science festivals at various levels, such as:

1. School- Grama panchayat level
2. Block level
3. Student Science Congress at the district level (Bala Sasthra Congress)

Question papers and activities for these levels are prepared by a team of teachers working as the resource team for the program. All training sessions are conducted under the leadership of this resource team. District-level and sub-district level training classes are conducted for teachers and activists. Selected students from schools are allowed to participate in the panchayat level Vinjanolsavam. The district-level festivals also follow the same pattern.

Science festivals are organized in all the schools from the LP level to secondary-level across the district. Organising committees have been formed under the leadership of local self government institution. The panchayat level knowledge festival is being organized as a one-day event and the block level program as two-day residential



camp. A children's congress is also being regularly held at the district level as a three-day residential camp. The district panchayat, Sasthra Sahithya Parishad and the Department of Education have been organising the Knowledge Festival from school level to district level as a joint initiative.

6. CHILDREN'S SCIENCE CONGRESS

The Children's Science Congress was organized as part of the three-day residential camp at Vinjanolsavam at the district level. Every year, Children's science congress is being organized with different themes. As part of the program, teachers and students are given training and orientation in advance and the students are asked to do small research projects. Every year the program has been able to involve more than 100 students in the scientific research process and trained about 50 teachers. The themes selected for the Children's Science Congress are considered in the curriculum and learning outcomes of the current education system.

7. TEACHER SCIENCE CONGRESS

The district panchayat aims to promote scientific inquiry among teachers by organizing the Teacher's Science Congress. The Congress encourages teachers to propose ideas for small research projects and trains them on research methodology. It also offers a platform for presenting short research projects.

8. SPECIAL TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

The district panchayat decided to provide specialized training on the latest developments in the subjects of selected teachers from high schools and higher secondary schools. This is an innovative program conducted by the district panchayat to promote the knowledge of the teachers and to achieve higher proficiency in their respective subjects.

To this end, various resource institutions have been identified as resource centers for the training of teachers. Departments of selected colleges like St. Thomas College, Vimala College, Kerala Varma College and English Institute were responsible for developing and providing training modules. The district panchayat is providing financial support to these institutions to aid in their efforts. By coordinating the resources of various institutions, the district panchayat has organized collaborative programs leading to an increase in participation of experts and institutions in their activities.



9. ADOLESCENT HYGIENE PROGRAM (2000-2005)

Schools have a significant impact on shaping a person's behaviour, as a student's education goes beyond the classroom. In addition to academic learning, schools also teach discipline, values, and hygiene. Therefore, maintaining school hygiene is crucial, especially in addressing the hygiene needs of girls, which are often overlooked. This paved the way for the evolution of the District Panchayat's Adolescent Hygiene Program, the objectives are as follows.

- To improve school hygiene conditions and promote hygiene practices among students.
- To provide student-friendly toilets in various schools throughout the district.

ACTIVITIES UNDER THE PROGRAM

- Awareness sessions on personal hygiene were given to all students in high school classes.
- Toilets were constructed in the ratio of students at all government schools.
- Student-friendly toilets were built in all schools.
- Awareness campaigns in the form of kala jaatha were conducted among the students to make them aware of health and hygiene.

Financial assistance from the Total Sanitation Campaign of the Central Government was utilized for the work and it was implemented through the institutional system of the district panchayat. It is also notable as a model for combining different resources for a common purpose.

10. SPECIAL CARE FOR GIRL STUDENTS

The Thrissur District Panchayat has installed napkin vending machines and incinerators in all the schools across the district to ensure menstrual hygiene among female students. This was part of a more comprehensive program to make Thrissur, a child-friendly district. 258 napkin vending machines and incinerators have been installed in government and aided schools in the district. In addition, the district panchayat has set up a napkin production unit as part of this initiative. This is the first initiative of a district panchayat at this level within the state, aimed to:

- Ensure menstrual hygiene in adolescent students



- Establish girl-friendly hygiene facilities in schools
- Provide livelihood to women through napkin manufacturing units.

The scheme was implemented in association with state and central schemes for the development of women. Schools with 500 and more girls were selected under the scheme and two machines were provided to the schools. The kit provided to each school includes an incinerator, a napkin vending machine and five boxes of napkins. Each box contains 500 packets of napkins. Kudumbasree workers from 36 units received training in making napkins and three napkin manufacturing units were set up in the district.

11. ILAMCHUNDUKAL

This is a project aimed at nurturing the literary talents of students. More attention was paid to promote the story/poetry writing skills of students. Poems contained in the textbooks were converted into music albums. Music for these poems was composed with the support of the prominent musician and music director Vidhyadharan Master. Music teachers and students supported the project and the CDs of the album were distributed in all schools in the district.

12. ASSISTANCE FOR LEARNING BACKWARDNESS

The Government of Kerala initiated the Quality Improvement Program (QIP) with the aim to uplift the educational standards of students in 104 schools across the state that achieved poor pass percentage in the SSLC examination. Out of these 104 schools, 26 were from the Thrissur district. An intensive remedial education program was organized in these schools with the support of the PTA and the local community. The district panchayat facilitates additional training for the students before and after school hours and offers financial assistance for providing snacks to these students.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- This program helped to transform many backward schools into well-performing schools.
- It has helped to raise the standard of education in schools with large numbers of students from marginalized groups such as SCs and fishermen communities.



13. DIGITALISATION OF SCHOOLS

The concept was developed at a time when government schools in Kerala did not have digital infrastructure such as LCD projectors and school laptops to support digital learning processes. The initiative was taken up by the district panchayat to upgrade the learning process and introduce students and teachers from government schools to the latest digital learning facilities.

BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM

As part of the program, LCD projectors and laptops were donated to more than 100 government high schools and higher secondary schools across the district. A group of teachers from all schools were trained to use them as an aid to better teaching. It is worth mentioning that such an initiative was taken up over a decade before the Government of Kerala started thinking of digitalising the classroom through a public education rejuvenation mission.

14. ASSISTANCE TO SC STUDENTS

Technology-supported education processes around the world are changing day by day, and the world of digital education is also growing. Therefore, the accessibility of marginalized students to the technical field is quite relevant. The district panchayat is providing an opportunity for SC students to access the benefits of the digital world by distributing 3,000 laptops to selected SC students from the district.

The projects like Vigyan Sagar have contributed to Thrissur District Panchayat to receive the “Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Shakthikaran Puraskar” of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj during 2018-19. The district panchayat has been able to increase the SSLC pass percentage from 18 percent in 2004-05 to 100 percent through remedial coaching in a decade. Thrissur District Panchayat prepared a document ‘Road Map: 2020-2030’ for initiating various programs for the development of the education sector in the district with the help of IRTC.

VIDYALEKSHMI OF KUMARAKOM

The Panchayati Raj system, which was adopted during the 9th Five Year Plan, empowered Kumarakom Grama Panchayat to launch the Vidyalakshmi initiative, which aimed to improve academic excellence in the public education sector. According to the status report included in the Development Report provided by the panchayat prior to the Ninth Plan, students in each level performed below par. In 1997-98, a performance-based analytical test was performed to precisely capture this and analyse the findings. An educational program was developed and executed through the Vidyalakshmi project.

It was discovered that the amount of time each student spends in his or her class is insufficient for them to achieve the anticipated level in each standard. As a result, a program was developed to ensure that children spent two to three hours each day on learning activities, from the ten hours spent with family and community. The abilities to be learned by the learner at each level were enumerated and finalized with the assistance of educational specialists. DIET and SCERT provided help and expert guidance in the development of the study/teaching methodologies. Educational experts participated in more than 10 workshops. Based on these discussions, it was determined that a student-centric approach was insufficient and that the environment in which the student lives needed to be evaluated and changed as well. It was also recognised that one of the key issues affecting children's education was their parent's educational



and social backwardness. It was analyzed that the majority of parents were unable to intervene effectively in their children's schooling. The project aims to make education one of the top priorities of the society.

The Panchayat Development Committee established a panchayat-level education committee. To help the education committee, ward-level and neighbourhood-level education committees were formed. Students from each neighbourhood group were registered, and facilitators were appointed for groups of four students each from the local students forum. These facilitators were not only tasked with attending to the academic needs of the pupils in their group, but also with maintaining daily contact with the schools as parent representatives. Teachers were required in the classes to have a thorough awareness of the child, including his name and social background, and to communicate this information with the facilitators. This creates a difference in each student in the school who has a precise face. In two-month intervals, training program with well-designed modules were organized for the facilitators. The trainings were planned with the goal of comprehensive student development in mind. Parents gained confidence as a result of students participating in group learning activities in the mornings and nights. Furthermore, it should be noted that the children thoroughly enjoyed these activities. Each facilitator had a healthy competitive attitude that every child in his or her care should be better; it is worth noting that when the majority of teachers reacted, the learning environment in the school radically improved but some teachers objected and turned away from it.

The Vidyalekshmi project in Kumarakom aimed to bring out the best in every child by organizing various programs such as theatre and writing camps, competitions, festivals linked with learning, science and math fests, art festivals and exposure visits. The project also provided a platform for children to submit their academic and non-academic questions and clear their doubts during monthly clinics by professionals for different school sections (LP, UP & HS) on a Saturday of every month.

Regular physical activity is recognized as an essential part of education. Musical exercises designed to ensure physical health; similar to those taught in Chinese schools, were practised in every neighbourhood. Students of all ages, from kindergarten to college, would gather in a suitable location in their neighborhood before 6 a.m. and participate in the activity under the guidance of trained facilitators. Classical music used in the fitness schedule was composed by the late Kumarakom Rajappan was highly popular among the students. Every morning in Kumarakom, students eagerly awaited the musical exercise and parents gathered to watch their



children practice it.

During this time, special training was provided to facilitators, and it is worth noting that an allocation of rupees three lakhs was made to the education funds for academic activities, in addition to the beneficiary contribution of approximately rupees one lakh. The facilitators received a remuneration of Rs.1000 paid in three instalments during the festive seasons with Rs.300 given during Onam and Christmas, and Rs.400 during Vishu. When the majority of grama panchayats were not actively involved in the academic interventions, the Vidyalekshmi project was able to improve the academic quality and make successful interventions with low resources.

The success of the initiative was largely due to the joint effort of panchayat governing council, education standing committee, PLDP Coordinators and Kerala Shastra Sahithya Parishad activists and other various individuals. However, the project was not sustained due to various reasons such as restrictions on the flow of funds which were used as untied funds as well as new guidelines and strong opposition from some of the teachers who were supposed to benefit from the initiative. Additionally, the voices of regular parents, who constituted another category of the common people, were drowned out by the promoters of elite education. No other project gained as much public support during this time span, according to assessments.

BE POSITIVE - KANNUR

'Be Positive' is a project established and implemented in schools by the Kannur district panchayat in partnership with different government departments with the goal of increasing student's academic standards, as well as their physical and mental health, and skill development. The project seeks to achieve 100% success in all schools by enabling all students to achieve atleast B grades in all courses and full A+ marks for at least 20% of students in each school. Special coaching classes, parent awareness program, student counselling program, Mukulam, a one-of-a-kind project, model examinations, virtual classrooms, unit examinations, and other initiatives were adopted as part of this scheme. Skills development program for students in the eighth and ninth classes from 23 selected schools in the district were organized in partnership with ASAP. Sports and practice such as yoga were incorporated in chosen schools to ensure children's health and physical well-being. Biodiversity parks were also created in a few schools. The objectives of the project are:

1. To ensure the comprehensive academic and non-academic development of Kannur district high school and upper secondary students.
2. To provide educational help to SSLC/Plus Two students in order to improve their learning standards (with additional coaching in subjects that emphasize everyday learning).
3. To improve student's self-confidence and proficiency in



English and Malayalam, as well as their literacy and proficiency in English and Malayalam.

4. To increase the SSLC pass rate. Following measures are ensured: (a.) ensure all students receive grades of C+ or above (b.) aiming at least 20% of students to receive A+ grades in all subjects.
5. To improve children's physical and psychological development, particularly the health and physical development of students in the eighth and ninth grades and counselling for 10th grade students.
6. Create and maintain biodiversity parks to instill environmental consciousness in youngsters, lure them to eco-friendly lives, and maximize environmental learning.
7. Launch smart software activities to help children learn occupational skills.
8. To raise the standard of education in high school and upper secondary schools. The program strives to improve educational standards through daily study in high school and higher secondary sections, as well as specialized program with an emphasized on exam preparation (SSLC & +2).

1. MUKULAM (QUALITY PROGRAM)

Mukulam program includes quality improvement of students in English language and Mathematics. The first program aimed at enhancing the English speaking and writing skills of 8th and 9th-grade students' in collaboration with DIET and SSK allowing them to use the language confidently. Workshops and theatre camps, spanning two days were organized for English teachers and camps have also been arranged for children with English learning disabilities. The second program aimed to strengthen basic mathematics skills and build confidence in students of 8th and 9th classes from November 2016 to February 2017. Workshop conducted for mathematics teachers including the training of RPs and mathematical fellowship camp for children with learning disabilities.

2. IMPROVING THE TENTH CLASS PASS PERCENTAGE.

The school had implemented several programs aimed at improving students' overall learning and development. These included cohabitation camps for both excellent and backward students, with a second phase consisting of day camps in schools. Additionally, parental awareness initiatives and house visits were conducted



for SSLC and Plus Two students. Exam assessments were also conducted, with workshops held for preparing SSLC model exams. The school was closely monitored by district and sub-district monitoring teams, and headmasters held review meetings three times a year. Counselling sessions were held twice a year, and materials for E-Mukulam were provided. The schools also documented the best classroom activities via video, and subject clinics were conducted to address any learning difficulties with the help of experts from various subjects.

3. SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR HSS AND HS STUDENTS

Kalari training (Martial Arts) was imparted to build physical and psychological robustness and self-confidence to the students of selected high schools. 30-day yoga and martial arts training was organized for students of 8th and 9th standards.

4. PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS OF 11TH AND 12TH STANDARDS

The project focuses on imparting training and promoting skills after analysing the talents of the students in collaboration with ASAP. Soft skills development program were conducted to encourage the entrepreneurial activities.

5. BIODIVERSITY PARK IN SELECTED SCHOOLS

The aim of this initiative was to cultivate ecological awareness in children, attract them towards eco-friendly lifestyles, and maintain biodiversity parks that facilitate environmental learning.





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