

MODEL SCHOOLS IN TELANGANA - AN EVALUATIVE STUDY

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Introduction:

Under the aegis of State Project Director, the Rajiv Vidya Mission, Andhra Pradesh has envisaged the idea of 'Model Schools' in the State in the year 2013-14. The main goal is to develop these Model Schools as schools of excellence, where, through quality education children are equipped with requisite knowledge and skills that enable them meet the challenges of the 21st century and grow into responsible global citizens. These MRGs Mandal Resource group basically are resourceful teachers and good classroom practitioners who make their own schools as Model Schools. These model schools are seen as the centre of Innovations which adopt progressive pedagogical practices for Quality Education. Three MRGs were identified from each mandal and were entrusted with the task of making their schools 'Model Schools.' The prime intention of introducing Model Schools is to rebuild the confidence and trust among the Community, Parents and students towards Government schools and to project them as Learning Centers that strive for the well being of children and to meet the aspirations of the people.

Objectives of the Model Schools:

1. Model school aims at holistic and integral development of children in academic, physical, emotional, social, moral and aesthetic spheres.
2. To promote and strengthen inclusive environment and Inclusive practices in the Schools.
3. To set new trends in bringing paradigm shift in classroom processes and in school Governance.
4. To stand as Centers of Excellence and Innovation
5. To reflect the implementation of Quality Initiatives
6. To establish strong community- school linkages.

Background of the Study:

As a part of strengthening of Model Schools and to support the MRGs, one of the strategies chosen is to make an initial study on the performance of MRGs and Model Schools in the state and there by assess their strengths and weaknesses. This study intends to identify the areas which need inputs in terms of Human Resources, material resources, financial resources, support system available for MRGs and other issues for the development of the Model Schools. An observation schedule is prepared, executed in all 61 schools and data was collected. The data thus collected was analyzed and an attempt is made to make it a systematic study on the status of Model schools bearing a title “Model Schools in Telangana-An Evaluative study”

Objectives of the Study:

1. To find the status of functioning of Schools.
2. To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Schools.
3. To explore the ways and means to improve the functioning of the Schools.

Sample:

Visited 61 Model schools from ‘8’ Telangana Districts. The district wise coverage of schools is as follows:

1. Adilabad - 3
 2. Khammam - 4
 3. Mahboobnagar – 18
 4. Medak - 14
 5. Nalgonda - 6
 6. Nizambad - 7
 7. Ranga Reddy - 2
 8. Warangal - 7
- Total - 61

Research Tools Used:

During the visits, a monitoring schedule comprising of the following (9) areas is administered in each model school:

1. Academic Performance of the children
2. Attendance of the children
3. Infrastructural facilities
4. Innovative Activities adopted in the school
5. Children Talent Search Activities
6. Utilization of Teaching Learning Materials
7. Classroom practices
8. Steps taken to improve the achievement levels of the children.

Findings of the Study:

a. Children's Performance:

None of the schools are in A+ grade. Out of 61 schools only 10 schools (16.4%) are in A grade. As Model schools are marching towards quality of education and are expected to be the schools of excellence, there is a need to improve the tally of the schools securing "A" grade schools. Out of 61 schools only 13 (21%) schools are in B+ grade. With some additional effort, these schools can be elevated to A, A+ grade. They should adopt suitable teaching learning strategies and put in efforts in this direction.

b. Attendance:

At primary level the highest attendance percentage is observed in Nizamabad (81%) and the lowest in Warangal. In other Districts the percentage varies from 71% to 74.5%. There is a need to improve the percentage of children's attendance in the region in general and in particular, Warangal district needs utmost attention. At upper primary level 93% of highest attendance is observed in Adilabad and Nizamabad districts. Again, even at UP level the lowest attendance is found in Warangal District.

c. Infrastructure facilities:

The infrastructural facilities considered for the study are potable water, toilet facilities, compound wall, school garden, sports materials, school cleanliness, school learning environment and Quality of mid day meals. The overall status of infrastructural facilities of Model Schools are satisfactory, all the schools have 3/4th of facilities mentioned in the observation schedule. As per the ranking given for the facilities available in the schools surveyed, Khammam district stood first, followed by Nizambad, Medak, Ranga Reddy, Warangal and Mahboobnagar. Adilabad district stood last.

d. School Activities and Innovative activities:

Model Schools are expected to conduct certain school activities and innovative activities for all round development of the child. These expected activities are children's diary, children's school cabinets, wall magazines, honesty box and Post box, Child portfolios, Anecdotal records, Weather Report, Compost pit, School zone as eco zone, observation of National and International days, Literary activities, Exhibitions and Melas.

e. Utilization of available Material:

The overall utilization of available materials in schools is found to be 74 % which is a good sign that indicates the utilization of Materials in the Schools is good. Among 8 Districts, Khammam district stood first with a score of 22.5 (Max Score 27), followed by Nizamabad with a score of 21.9. Mahaboobnagar district stood last with a score of 18.9. Using various educations related materials in Schools will improve the pupils in all aspects. So Mahaboobnagar, Ranga reddy, Medak, and Warangal, districts should concentrate on providing and utilization of existing education related materials in Model Schools.

f. Professional improvement and Children Achievement levels:

This is assessed in organizing activities like- diagnosis of children's strengths and weaknesses, practicing CCE, Innovative activities, attending school complex meetings, participation in exhibitions and Melas. The extent of participation in these activities in the Model schools is 76%. Khammam District stood in 1st place with 17.6 score (Max Score 21), followed by Nizamabad and Rangareddy with 16.7 and 16.5 scores respectively. Medak is in 4th place,

Mahaboobnagar in 5th place, Nalgonda in 6th place, Warangal occupied 7th place and Adilabad District is in last place with 14.7 score

Suggestions and Recommendations:

a. Children's performance:

1. Out of 61 Schools none of the schools were in A+ grade. Efforts are required to lend academic support to A grade children to help them ascend to A+ grade. For this, teachers have to follow differential teaching strategies keeping the strengths and weaknesses of the children in view.
2. All the schools should have a clear knowledge of different areas of difficulty of different children so that they can work on them and improve the performance of the children.
3. Individualized teaching learning strategies which enables every child to learn at their own pace is to be adopted to make every child learn and participate.
4. The real classroom transaction time should be taken care of.
5. School Headmaster may be instructed to provide onsite professional support by closely observing the classroom practices and reviewing the performance of children from time to time. This will also create a sense of belongingness in the High school which is now lacking.
6. In addition to direct monitoring, coordinate and collaborate with the School Headmaster to provide the required support to the Model School.

b. Attendance:

1. School HM should review the attendance of children and should make necessary arrangements for home visits of truant children by HM, Teachers, to mobilize the pupils.
2. If seasonal absenteeism is observed, bring it to the notice of the SH, he may take up the issue in respective with the village representatives.
3. Extending Online Monitoring System, child tracking system to the district and sub district levels.

c. Infrastructure facilities:

1. The overall status of infrastructural facilities of Model Schools provided in the studied districts is at satisfactory level, all the schools have $\frac{3}{4}$ of facilities. Warngal, Mahaboobnagar

and Adilabad districts should concentrate on improving the infrastructure facilities in the schools. The availability of infrastructural facilities at the satisfactory level is the pre-requisite requirement to improve the learning level of the children.

2. Wherever the infrastructural facilities are not available, district administrations may take up such works in the Model Schools on priority basis. However, quality of education cannot be neglected or compromised for lack of infrastructural facilities. Putting the existing infrastructure to maximum utilization should be ensured.
3. Most of the facilities provided in the school are gradually becoming non functional due to lack of maintenance. They should also coordinate with head masters and see that the available facilities are properly maintained.

d. Innovative activities & School Activities:

1. The extent of overall implementation of Innovative and school activities is found to be 75 %. As these schools are labelled as Model Schools, they should become the labs for carrying innovations to improve the Quality Education. Therefore efforts should be made that all the models schools shall implement the innovative and school activities regularly to bring all round development of the children. Medak, Nalgonda and Adilabad districts should concentrate on implementation of all these activities, which are at low ebb. The classrooms should be bustling with various teaching learning activities.
2. The effects of innovations made at school level and at class level shall be widely discussed in School complex meetings and subject forums and in other review meetings.
3. All the activities mentioned in the textbooks should be done in the Model Schools. In addition, as per the need, additional activities based on local conditions/ resources are to be planned.

e. Professional preparation of Teachers:

1. With regard to professional preparation of the teachers in the model schools, the activities such as preparation of lesson plan, teacher's diary in the classroom should be to the maximum.
2. Conducive and resourceful learning environment should be available at Model School Level.

3. Resource material like dictionaries, subject magazines, journals, books on pedagogical practices should be used extensively. They should keep growing and help the children grow!
4. It is a good sign that the professional preparation in Model schools is visible in the schools, but still the efforts have to be made in Warangal, Adilabad and Medak districts without exception that all the Model Schools have to make serious efforts in lesson plan preparation or maintaining of teachers.
5. The programmes on capacity building of teachers should focus on professional preparation of the teachers, which is vital for providing quality inputs in the model schools.

f. Child centred Approaches in Schools:

1. The quality of learning depends on the extent of participation of children in the classroom activities. The more the classroom transaction is child centric, the more is their participation. Therefore, encouraging child centric approaches shall be a key measure to improve quality of learning in Model Schools.
2. All the Model schools should become the trend setters in building inclusive environment in the class and in the school. The capacity building and the HMs in handling the diverse needs of the children shall be given priority to make Model Schools as a Schools with difference, Schools as Centers of Excellence

g. Others:

1. Opportunities should be given to the teachers to show case the innovations, success stories of their interventions with other teachers in School complex meetings and through subject forums.
2. The Melas like Teaching learning materials, Subject melas, Reading festivals, Science festival and other such activities shall be organized at different levels.
3. Additional facilities such as providing curriculum supportive materials in print form and electronic form, school and class libraries, provision of subject kits, additional teacher support, Specialized and advanced professional training could be designed and conducted to enhance the professional skills and as academic leaders.
4. In turn these academic leaders play a catalytic role in bringing changes in their own schools and neighborhood schools.

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