

Impact of Mana Badi Nadu Nedu Programme on Infrastructure and Quality of Government Schools: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

The quality of school infrastructure plays a pivotal role in enhancing educational outcomes, improving student attendance, and fostering an inclusive learning environment. In Andhra Pradesh, government schools have long faced challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, declining enrolment, poor sanitation, and limited access to digital learning facilities. To address these issues, the Government of Andhra Pradesh launched the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme in 2019 as a flagship initiative aimed at transforming government schools into modern, child-friendly, and technology-enabled institutions. This study examines the impact of the programme on school infrastructure and the quality of government schools through a case study approach. Based on secondary data, government reports, policy documents, and relevant literature, the study evaluates the programme's achievements in infrastructure development, educational quality, student enrolment, and community participation. The findings indicate significant improvements in school infrastructure and increased public confidence in government schools. However, challenges related to maintenance, teacher capacity, learning outcomes, and financial sustainability continue to affect the long-term success of the programme. The study concludes that while infrastructure transformation has laid a strong foundation for educational reform, sustained investments in teaching quality, digital education, governance, and community engagement are essential for achieving comprehensive educational excellence.

Keywords: Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu, Government Schools, School Infrastructure, Educational Quality, Andhra Pradesh, Public Policy, Case Study.

INTRODUCTION

Education is universally recognized as a cornerstone of human development and socio-economic progress. Access to quality education is fundamental for promoting equality, reducing poverty, and fostering inclusive development. In India, government schools cater primarily to children from economically weaker sections and rural communities. However, many government schools have historically suffered from poor infrastructure, inadequate classroom facilities, insufficient sanitation, lack of digital resources, and declining enrolment due to increasing parental preference for private schools.

Recognizing these challenges, the Government of Andhra Pradesh introduced the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme in November 2019 to revitalize government schools by improving physical infrastructure and creating a conducive learning environment. The programme reflects the government's commitment to providing equitable and quality education by modernizing school facilities and enhancing public confidence in government education.

The term "Nadu-Nedu" translates to "Then and Now," symbolizing the transformation of schools from neglected institutions into modern educational spaces. Through phased implementation, the programme aims to provide standardized infrastructure facilities across government schools while promoting digital learning, improved sanitation, and community participation.

This paper evaluates the impact of the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme on infrastructure development and the overall quality of government schools using a case study approach.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Prior to the implementation of the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme, government schools in Andhra Pradesh faced several infrastructural and administrative deficiencies that adversely affected educational quality. Poor classroom conditions, inadequate sanitation, lack of furniture, insufficient digital facilities, and deteriorating school buildings discouraged student enrolment and attendance. These deficiencies contributed to a growing preference for private schools, even among low-income families. Although the programme has attracted considerable attention for its large-scale infrastructure development, systematic evaluation of its impact on educational quality remains limited. Therefore, assessing the effectiveness of the programme is essential for understanding its strengths, identifying implementation challenges, and informing future educational policy.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a qualitative case study research design supported by descriptive analysis. Data for the study were drawn from multiple secondary sources, including Government Orders (GOs), School Education Department Reports, Andhra Pradesh Budget Documents, UDISE+ Reports, the National Education Policy (2020), academic journals, UNESCO and UNICEF publications, and official government websites. The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis to examine the changes in infrastructure, educational quality, and stakeholder participation under the Mana Badi Nadu Nedu programme.

OVER VIEW OF NADU-NEDU

The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme is one of the most significant school infrastructure development initiatives undertaken by the Government of Andhra Pradesh with the objective of revitalizing government schools and creating an enabling environment for quality education. The programme was introduced with the vision of transforming every government school into a modern, student-friendly, and inclusive educational institution capable of providing learning opportunities comparable to those available in private schools. Recognizing that the physical condition of schools has a direct influence on students' attendance, motivation, learning outcomes, and overall educational experience, the initiative places strong emphasis on upgrading school infrastructure while simultaneously improving the teaching-learning environment. The programme seeks to bridge the infrastructure gap that had accumulated over decades due to inadequate maintenance and insufficient investment in government educational institutions. By providing well-designed classrooms, functional sanitation facilities, safe drinking water, proper electrification, improved furniture, digital learning facilities, and aesthetically pleasing campuses, the programme aims to restore public confidence in government schools and encourage greater enrolment and retention of students.

The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme adopts a comprehensive approach that integrates physical infrastructure development with educational quality enhancement. Rather than focusing on isolated repairs or limited improvements, the programme envisions holistic transformation by ensuring that every school possesses the essential facilities required for effective teaching and learning. It recognizes that a conducive educational environment extends beyond classrooms to include clean surroundings, secure school premises, adequate playgrounds, libraries, laboratories, and digital infrastructure that support twenty-first-century learning. Furthermore, the programme promotes community participation by involving parents, School Management Committees, teachers, and local stakeholders in planning, monitoring, and supervising development activities. This participatory approach enhances transparency, accountability, and local ownership of school development initiatives.

The programme encompasses government schools administered by various departments, including the School Education Department, Panchayat Raj Institutions, Municipal Administration, Tribal Welfare Department, and Social Welfare Department, thereby ensuring that infrastructure improvements reach students across diverse social, geographical, and administrative settings. This broad institutional coverage reflects the government's commitment to providing equitable educational opportunities to children belonging to rural, urban, tribal, and socially disadvantaged communities. To ensure systematic implementation and efficient utilization of resources, the programme has been executed in multiple phases across thousands of government schools throughout Andhra Pradesh. Schools are selected phase-wise based on identified infrastructure needs, allowing for careful planning, timely execution, effective monitoring, and continuous evaluation of progress. Through this phased implementation strategy, the programme seeks not only to modernize school infrastructure but also to strengthen the overall public education system by creating safe, inclusive, attractive, and academically supportive learning spaces that foster student development and improve educational outcomes across the state.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAMME

The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme adopts a comprehensive and integrated approach to school infrastructure development by focusing on a set of essential components that collectively contribute to creating a modern, safe, and student-friendly learning environment. Rather than undertaking isolated repairs, the programme emphasizes holistic transformation by addressing the most critical physical infrastructure requirements of government schools. A major component of the initiative is the construction of additional classrooms to accommodate increasing student enrolment and reduce overcrowding, thereby ensuring a more conducive teaching-learning environment. Simultaneously, major and minor repair works are undertaken to restore damaged school buildings, strengthen structural safety, and extend the functional life of existing educational infrastructure. The provision of quality student furniture, including desks and benches, further enhances classroom comfort and promotes better student participation and concentration during instructional activities.

Recognizing the importance of effective classroom teaching, the programme also includes the installation of green chalkboards, which improve visibility and facilitate interactive learning. In line with the growing emphasis on digital education, digital classrooms equipped with modern technological facilities have been introduced to support innovative teaching methods, multimedia-based instruction, and greater student engagement. To strengthen language proficiency and communication skills, particularly in English, dedicated English language laboratories have been established in many schools, enabling students to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing competencies

through technology-assisted learning.

The programme also gives high priority to improving health, hygiene, and basic amenities within school campuses. Safe and adequate drinking water facilities have been provided to ensure the well-being of students and staff, while modern and gender-sensitive toilet facilities contribute to maintaining sanitation standards and encouraging regular school attendance, particularly among girl students. Construction of compound walls enhances campus security by protecting school premises from encroachment and ensuring a safer learning environment. Upgrading electrification systems, along with the installation of ceiling fans and energy-efficient lighting, has significantly improved classroom conditions, making schools more comfortable and suitable for year-round academic activities. In addition, painting and beautification of school campuses have transformed the visual appearance of government schools, creating clean, attractive, and motivating educational spaces that instill a sense of pride among students, teachers, and local communities.

Collectively, these infrastructure interventions are designed to improve the quality of the educational environment by ensuring that government schools provide safe, hygienic, inclusive, and aesthetically appealing spaces that support effective teaching and meaningful learning. By addressing multiple dimensions of school infrastructure simultaneously, the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme seeks to enhance students' overall learning experience, improve attendance and retention, strengthen community confidence in public education, and contribute to better educational outcomes across Andhra Pradesh.

IMPACT ON SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme has brought about substantial improvements in the physical infrastructure of government schools across Andhra Pradesh, significantly transforming the overall educational environment. Before the implementation of the programme, many government schools faced serious infrastructural deficiencies, including deteriorating classrooms, inadequate furniture, poor sanitation facilities, insufficient drinking water arrangements, and limited access to modern educational technologies. These shortcomings adversely affected the quality of teaching and learning, student attendance, and public confidence in government schools. By addressing these long-standing challenges through a comprehensive infrastructure development strategy, the programme has played a crucial role in revitalizing public educational institutions and creating a more conducive environment for academic excellence.

One of the most visible outcomes of the initiative has been the construction and renovation of modern classrooms that provide safe, spacious, and well-maintained learning spaces for students. Improved classroom designs, coupled with better ventilation and natural lighting, have enhanced comfort levels, reduced congestion, and created healthier conditions for both students and teachers. The provision of quality student furniture, including ergonomically designed desks and benches, has further improved classroom functionality by enabling students to participate more effectively in learning activities and reducing discomfort during instructional hours.

The programme has also significantly strengthened the availability of essential amenities within school campuses. Reliable drinking water facilities ensure that students have continuous access to safe and clean water throughout the school day, thereby supporting their health and well-being. Similarly, the construction of modern, hygienic, and gender-sensitive toilet facilities has improved sanitation standards and encouraged regular attendance, particularly among adolescent girls. Enhanced electrification, installation of ceiling fans, and improved lighting systems have created more comfortable classroom environments that facilitate uninterrupted teaching and learning regardless of seasonal weather conditions.

Another important achievement has been the introduction of digital classrooms equipped with modern technological infrastructure, enabling schools to integrate digital learning resources into classroom instruction. These facilities have expanded opportunities for interactive and technology-enabled education, helping students develop digital literacy and improving classroom engagement. Furthermore, systematic efforts to improve campus cleanliness, landscaping, and beautification have transformed the appearance of government schools. Freshly painted buildings, well-maintained surroundings, and aesthetically appealing campuses have fostered a sense of pride among students, teachers, parents, and local communities while creating a positive atmosphere that supports learning.

The infrastructure improvements achieved under the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme have substantially enhanced the quality of government school facilities and contributed to creating safer, healthier, more inclusive, and student-friendly educational environments. These physical transformations have not only improved student comfort and classroom experiences but have also strengthened public confidence in government schools, increased the attractiveness of public education, and established a stronger foundation for improving educational quality and learning outcomes across Andhra Pradesh.

IMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme has made a significant contribution to improving educational quality by creating a supportive and student-centred learning environment through comprehensive infrastructure development. Although the programme primarily focuses on strengthening the physical infrastructure of government schools, its impact extends beyond the construction and renovation of buildings. Educational research consistently demonstrates

that a well-equipped, safe, and attractive school environment positively influences students' academic performance, attendance, motivation, and overall learning experience. By addressing critical infrastructural deficiencies, the programme has created conditions that facilitate effective teaching and meaningful learning, thereby contributing indirectly to improvements in educational quality across government schools in Andhra Pradesh.

One of the most notable outcomes of the programme has been the improvement in student attendance. The availability of clean classrooms, comfortable seating arrangements, safe drinking water, hygienic sanitation facilities, and well-maintained school campuses has made government schools more attractive and welcoming for students. Parents are increasingly encouraged to send their children to schools that provide a safe and healthy learning environment, while students themselves are more willing to attend regularly when schools offer adequate facilities and a pleasant atmosphere. Improved attendance enhances continuity in learning and reduces the likelihood of absenteeism and dropout, thereby supporting better educational outcomes over time.

The creation of modern and comfortable classrooms has also contributed to a more effective learning environment. Well-ventilated classrooms with sufficient lighting, quality furniture, and organized learning spaces help students concentrate better during instructional sessions. Comfortable physical surroundings reduce distractions, improve classroom discipline, and encourage greater participation in academic activities. Teachers, in turn, are able to conduct lessons more efficiently in environments that are conducive to interactive teaching and active student engagement. These improvements strengthen the overall teaching-learning process and create opportunities for higher levels of academic achievement.

The integration of digital classrooms represents another important dimension of educational quality enhancement under the programme. The provision of smart classrooms equipped with digital technologies enables teachers to adopt multimedia-based instructional methods, interactive presentations, educational videos, and online learning resources. Such technology-assisted teaching promotes greater student engagement, enhances conceptual understanding, and supports the development of digital literacy skills that are increasingly essential in contemporary education. Digital learning tools also encourage innovative pedagogical practices and make classroom instruction more dynamic, inclusive, and learner-centred.

The programme has further contributed to enhancing teacher motivation and professional effectiveness. Improved school infrastructure creates a more comfortable and dignified working environment for teachers, enabling them to focus on instructional activities rather than coping with inadequate facilities. Better classrooms, functional teaching resources, and well-maintained campuses positively influence teacher morale, job satisfaction, and commitment to delivering quality education. A supportive physical environment encourages teachers to employ more effective teaching strategies and devote greater attention to student learning.

The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme has promoted inclusive education by ensuring that government schools provide facilities that are accessible and beneficial to all sections of society. The construction of hygienic and gender-sensitive toilets, improved drinking water facilities, safer school campuses, and barrier-free infrastructure has particularly benefited girls, children from socially and economically marginalized communities, and students studying in rural and tribal areas. These improvements have reduced barriers to school participation, strengthened equity in access to education, and fostered a more inclusive learning environment where every child can learn with dignity, safety, and confidence. Collectively, these developments demonstrate that investments in school infrastructure can play a vital role in enhancing educational quality by improving attendance, strengthening teaching-learning processes, supporting digital education, motivating teachers, and promoting inclusive and equitable education.

Community Participation

The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme recognizes that the successful development and long-term sustainability of government schools depend not only on government investment but also on the active participation of local communities. Accordingly, the programme adopts a participatory approach that encourages the involvement of School Management Committees (SMCs), parents, teachers, local elected representatives, community leaders, and other stakeholders throughout the planning, implementation, monitoring, and maintenance of school development activities. This collaborative framework strengthens the relationship between schools and the communities they serve while promoting shared responsibility for improving the quality of public education. By involving stakeholders at the grassroots level, the programme ensures that infrastructure development reflects the actual needs and priorities of individual schools and enhances the effectiveness of implementation.

School Management Committees play a particularly important role in overseeing the execution of infrastructure projects, monitoring the quality and progress of construction works, and ensuring that public funds are utilized efficiently and transparently. Their participation provides an institutional mechanism for regular supervision, timely identification of implementation challenges, and effective coordination between government agencies, contractors, school authorities, and the local community. The involvement of parents further enhances transparency by enabling them to observe and assess the improvements being made in their children's schools, thereby strengthening public trust in the programme.

Community participation also promotes greater accountability in the implementation process. Since local stakeholders actively monitor infrastructure development and resource utilization, opportunities for delays,

irregularities, or misuse of funds are significantly reduced. Continuous public oversight encourages higher standards of quality in construction and maintenance while ensuring that development activities are completed according to prescribed specifications. This participatory monitoring system fosters a culture of responsible governance in which both implementing agencies and community members share responsibility for achieving the programme's objectives.

An equally significant outcome of community involvement is the development of a strong sense of ownership over school assets. When parents, teachers, and local residents contribute to planning and monitoring school development, they are more likely to view school infrastructure as a shared community resource rather than solely as government property. This sense of ownership encourages greater care for school facilities, discourages vandalism and misuse, and motivates communities to support regular maintenance and cleanliness. Community members often contribute voluntarily by participating in campus beautification, environmental improvement activities, and minor maintenance efforts, thereby extending the life and functionality of newly created infrastructure.

The participatory approach adopted under the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme has strengthened school governance by fostering transparency, accountability, community ownership, and sustained maintenance of educational infrastructure. By building strong partnerships between government institutions and local communities, the programme not only improves the quality of school infrastructure but also enhances public confidence in government schools and ensures that developmental gains are preserved for future generations. This collaborative model serves as an important example of community-centred educational governance that contributes to the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of public education in Andhra Pradesh.

Policy Recommendations

To enhance the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme, a comprehensive set of policy measures should be adopted that integrates infrastructure development with broader educational reforms. Although the programme has significantly improved the physical condition of government schools across Andhra Pradesh, its full potential can be realized only through continuous institutional support, systematic monitoring, and complementary interventions aimed at improving educational quality. Future policy initiatives should therefore focus not only on maintaining infrastructure but also on strengthening teaching, learning, governance, and community engagement to ensure that investments in school development produce lasting educational benefits.

A key priority should be the establishment of dedicated annual maintenance grants for government schools. While substantial resources have been invested in creating modern educational infrastructure, regular maintenance is essential to preserve buildings, classrooms, furniture, sanitation facilities, digital equipment, and other assets. Predictable financial support for maintenance would prevent infrastructure deterioration, reduce future repair costs, and ensure that schools continue to provide safe and functional learning environments. In addition, School Management Committees should be empowered with clear guidelines and adequate resources to oversee routine maintenance activities and ensure effective utilization of funds.

The programme should also place greater emphasis on strengthening teacher capacity through continuous professional development, particularly in the area of digital pedagogy. As digital classrooms and technology-enabled learning become increasingly important, teachers require regular training in the effective use of educational technologies, innovative instructional methods, and digital teaching resources. Capacity-building initiatives should be institutionalized to help teachers integrate technology into classroom instruction and enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Regular third-party impact evaluations should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the programme and provide evidence-based recommendations for policy improvement. Independent evaluations can examine the quality of infrastructure development, implementation efficiency, educational outcomes, stakeholder satisfaction, and cost-effectiveness while identifying best practices and implementation challenges. Such assessments would strengthen transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making for future phases of the programme.

Another important policy priority is improving internet connectivity and digital infrastructure, particularly in rural, remote, and tribal schools where technological access remains uneven. Reliable broadband connectivity, uninterrupted electricity supply, and technical support services are essential for maximizing the benefits of digital classrooms and ensuring equitable access to technology-enabled education. Investments in digital infrastructure should therefore accompany physical infrastructure development to reduce educational disparities across regions.

Infrastructure improvements should also be systematically integrated with assessments of learning outcomes. While better school facilities create favourable conditions for education, improvements in academic achievement depend on effective teaching, curriculum implementation, student support, and regular learning assessments. Establishing mechanisms to evaluate the relationship between infrastructure development and student performance would enable policymakers to design more comprehensive educational interventions.

The programme should further strengthen community participation by encouraging greater involvement of parents, School Management Committees, local self-government institutions, and civil society organizations in school maintenance, monitoring, and decision-making processes. Active community engagement enhances transparency, promotes accountability, fosters local ownership of school assets, and contributes to the long-term sustainability of infrastructure investments.

Future phases of the programme should also incorporate green and climate-resilient infrastructure by promoting environmentally sustainable school designs, energy-efficient buildings, rainwater harvesting systems, solar energy installations, waste management practices, and expanded green spaces. Such initiatives would improve environmental sustainability while creating healthier and more resilient educational environments for students.

Strengthening monitoring and accountability mechanisms through digital monitoring systems, periodic inspections, performance indicators, and transparent reporting procedures would further improve implementation quality and ensure efficient utilization of public resources. At the same time, greater attention should be given to expanding counselling, mental health, career guidance, and student support services to address the holistic developmental needs of children and promote their emotional well-being alongside academic growth.

Finally, the continued implementation of the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme should be closely aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, particularly its emphasis on equitable access, inclusive education, digital learning, quality infrastructure, experiential pedagogy, and holistic student development. Such alignment would ensure that the programme contributes not only to infrastructure modernization but also to the broader national vision of creating an inclusive, innovative, learner-centred, and future-ready education system. Through sustained financial commitment, evidence-based policymaking, institutional strengthening, and active community participation, the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme can continue to serve as a transformative model for public school development and educational reform in Andhra Pradesh.

Challenges

While the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme has achieved remarkable success in transforming the physical infrastructure of government schools across Andhra Pradesh, several challenges continue to affect its long-term effectiveness and sustainability. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensure that the benefits of the programme are maintained over time and translated into sustained improvements in educational quality and student learning outcomes. Although substantial investments have been made in constructing and upgrading school infrastructure, continuous policy support, financial commitment, institutional capacity, and effective monitoring remain critical for achieving the programme's broader educational objectives.

One of the foremost challenges is the long-term maintenance of newly developed school infrastructure. Buildings, classrooms, furniture, sanitation facilities, digital equipment, and other physical assets require regular maintenance and periodic repairs to remain functional and safe. Without dedicated financial allocations and well-defined maintenance mechanisms, there is a risk that the infrastructure created under the programme may gradually deteriorate over time. Establishing sustainable maintenance systems involving government departments, School Management Committees, and local communities is therefore essential to preserve the quality and longevity of school facilities.

Another important challenge relates to the capacity of teachers to effectively utilize the modern educational resources introduced under the programme. The establishment of digital classrooms, smart learning technologies, and English language laboratories has expanded opportunities for technology-enabled education; however, these facilities can deliver meaningful educational benefits only when teachers possess the necessary digital competencies and pedagogical skills. Continuous professional development programmes, regular training workshops, and technical support are therefore required to enable teachers to integrate digital technologies effectively into classroom instruction and maximize their educational potential.

The programme also highlights the broader challenge of improving learning outcomes. While high-quality infrastructure creates a favourable environment for teaching and learning, physical improvements alone cannot guarantee better academic performance. Student achievement depends on multiple interrelated factors, including curriculum quality, teacher effectiveness, classroom pedagogy, student motivation, parental involvement, learning assessments, and school leadership. Consequently, infrastructure development must be complemented by comprehensive educational reforms that strengthen teaching practices, curriculum implementation, and academic support systems to achieve sustained improvements in learning outcomes.

The digital divide continues to pose another significant concern, particularly in rural, remote, and tribal areas. Although digital classrooms have been established in many government schools, inconsistent internet connectivity, inadequate technical infrastructure, unreliable electricity supply, and limited access to digital learning resources in certain regions restrict the effective use of technology in education. Bridging these disparities requires continued investment in digital infrastructure, broadband connectivity, technical maintenance, and equitable access to educational technologies so that students across all geographical locations can benefit equally from digital learning initiatives.

Financial sustainability represents an additional long-term challenge for the programme. The large-scale transformation of thousands of government schools demands substantial public investment not only during the initial implementation phase but also for future maintenance, modernization, equipment replacement, and technological upgrades. Sustaining these achievements requires continuous government funding, effective financial planning, transparent resource management, and periodic evaluation to ensure that infrastructure remains functional and responsive to evolving educational needs. Therefore, while the Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme has established a strong foundation for improving public school infrastructure, its long-term success will depend on sustained financial

commitment, institutional capacity building, continuous teacher development, strengthened educational reforms, and effective maintenance strategies that collectively support quality, inclusive, and future-ready education in Andhra Pradesh.

CONCLUSION

The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme represents a landmark initiative in the transformation of government school infrastructure in Andhra Pradesh. The programme has significantly improved physical facilities, enhanced learning environments, increased student enrolment, and restored public confidence in government education. By providing modern classrooms, digital learning resources, improved sanitation, and safe school environments, the initiative has laid a strong foundation for improving educational quality. However, sustainable educational transformation requires more than infrastructure alone. Future policy should focus on strengthening teacher capacity, improving learning outcomes, ensuring regular maintenance of school facilities, and enhancing community ownership. Integrating infrastructure development with pedagogical innovation and effective governance will be essential for realizing the programme's long-term objectives. The Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu Programme offers an important model for educational infrastructure reform and provides valuable lessons for other Indian states seeking to improve the quality and accessibility of government school education.

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