

# Learning Improvement Initiative in Upper Primary and High Schools Department of School Education, Telangana

## Background

The department is taking up concerted steps to address the learning gap which has resulted due to earlier backlogs and Covid-19 pandemic.

The department has designed a massive Learning Improvement Program Viz. Tholi Mettu (Initial step) which is being implemented in all the primary schools during the academic year 2022-23 to improve the basic competencies of reading, writing and arithmetic (FLN) in classes 1 to 5.

The Department proposes to take up a Learning Improvement Program (LIP) at Upper Primary and High School stage (classes 6th to 9th) in all the 33 districts in the state.

In order to assess the current/existing situation in terms of children performance and quality of classroom teaching a rapid survey has been conducted across the state from 9th to 16th March, 2023. A total of 400 high schools have been surveyed in 33 districts and performance test was conducted to 16000 children from classes 6th to 9th in the subjects of Telugu, Hindi, English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Interviews of 400 Headmasters and 400 teachers across the state was conducted to assess the issues in the learning process and related issues and their opinions to improve the situation.

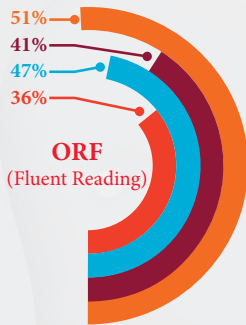
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with the students in all the schools to understand their opinions on teaching learning process and difficulties across various aspects.

**The survey findings are represented below:**

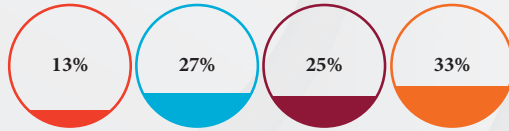
### **I. Student performance levels:**

A. Student's performance in basic competencies of reading, reading comprehension and writing in Telugu, Hindi and English were analysed.

## TELUGU



### Reading Comprehension

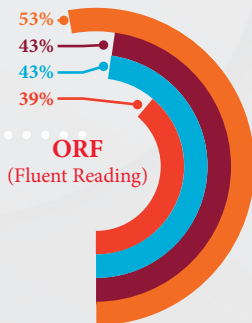


### Self Writing

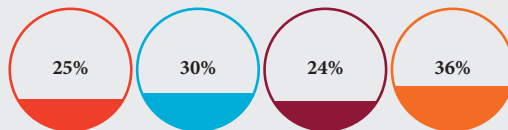


- About 60% students of classes 6th and 7th cannot read Telugu text, 80% cannot comprehend what they read, 74% cannot write on a given item on their own.
- About 54% students of classes 8th and 9th cannot read Telugu text, 72% cannot comprehend what they read, 60% cannot write on a given item on their own.

## HINDI



### Reading Comprehension

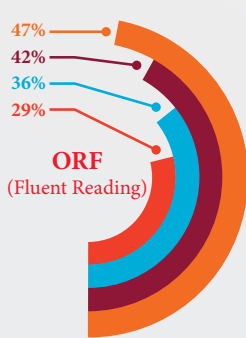


### Self Writing

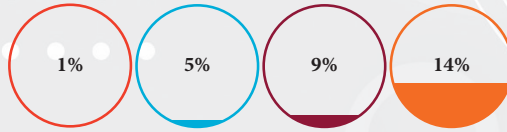


- About 59% students of classes 6th and 7th cannot read Hindi text, 67% cannot comprehend what they read, 50% cannot write on a given item on their own.
- About 53% students of classes 8th and 9th cannot read Hindi text, 66% cannot comprehend what they read, 41% cannot write on a given item on their own.

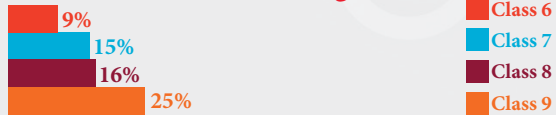
## ENGLISH



### Reading Comprehension

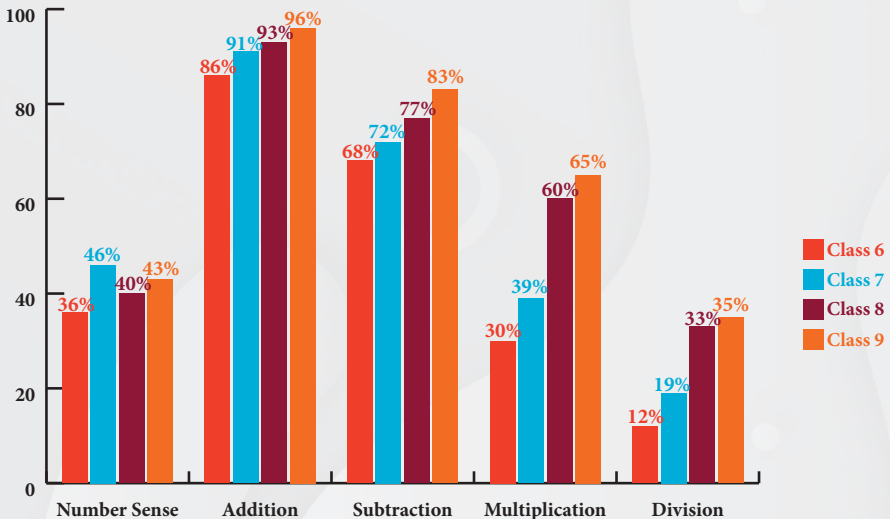


### Self Writing



- About 64% students of classes 6th and 7th cannot read English text, 95% cannot comprehend what they read, 80% cannot write on a given item on their own.
- About 56% students of classes 8th and 9th cannot read English text, 85% cannot comprehend what they read, 75% cannot write on a given item on their own.

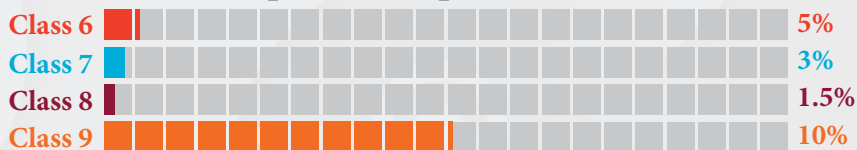
## MATHEMATICS



- Number sense:** 36% of children has number sense in class 6th, 46% in class 7th, 40% in class 8th, 43% in class 9th.
- Addition:** 86% of children can do Addition in class 6th, 91% in class 7th, 93% in class 8th, 96% in class 9th.

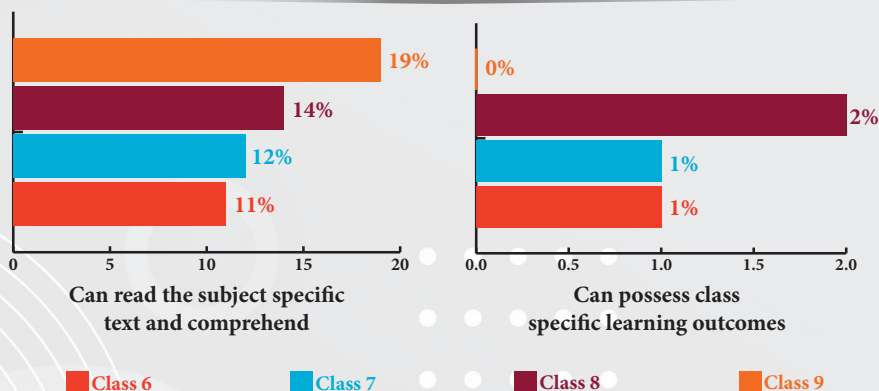
- **Subtraction:** 68% of children can do Subtraction in class 6th, 72% in class 7th, 77% in class 8th, 83% in class 9th.
- **Multiplication:** 30% of children can do Multiplication in class 6th, 39% in class 7th, 60% in class 8th, 65% in class 9th.
- **Division:** 12% of children can do Division in class 6th, 19% in class 7th, 33% in class 8th, 35% in class 9th.
- While students were able to do addition and subtraction they found it difficult to do multiplication and division.

### Class specific competencies- Mathematics



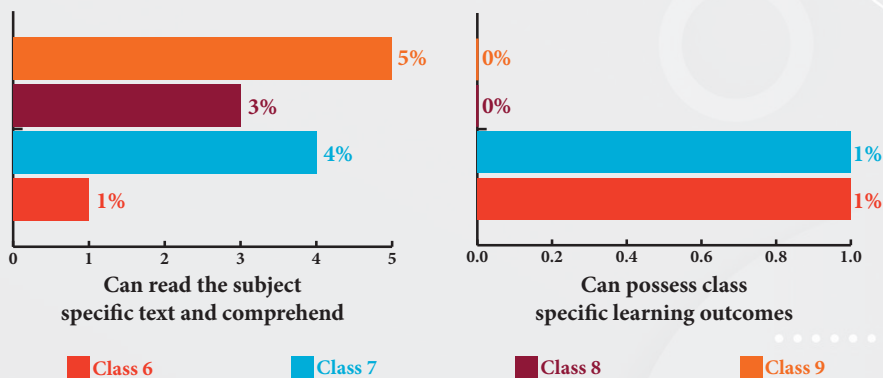
- **Class specific competencies:** In addition to basic competencies, the assessment was conducted in class specific competencies for the classes 6th to 9th. The problems were given covering the topics such as profit & loss, areas, exponent & powers, linear equations, rational numbers, mean, unitary method measurements, algebraic expressions, application of perimeter, etc. The performance of the students in the class specific competencies are 5% in class 6th, 3% in class 7th, 1.5% in class 8th and 10% can perform in class 9th. This shows poor performance levels of students in class specific Mathematical problems.

### SCIENCE



- 80% cannot read and comprehend in class 6th, 75% in class 7th, 70% in class 8th, 68% in class 9th.
- Class specific competencies: 90% do not possess class specific competencies in class 6th, 80% in class 7th, 75% in class 8th, 70% in class 9th.

## SOCIAL STUDIES



- 85% cannot read and comprehend in class 6th, 80% in class 7th, 73% in class 8th, 70% in class 9th.
- Class specific competencies: 80% do not possess class specific competencies in class 6th, 78% in class 7th, 75% in class 8th, 68% in class 9th.

## II. Quality of teaching and teacher preparation - Classroom observations

- In 95% of cases teachers don't have lesson plans and not used Teaching Learning material (TLM) during classroom teaching. There is no preparation on the part of the teacher to teach effectively. They just depend on the textbooks to read and explain in a passive way. Absence of active methods of teaching.
- In about 90% of cases the teachers teach the subject through reading the lesson and explaining the meaning, the most passive method of teaching. It is almost one way teaching and there is no interactive teaching learning process and space for children to ask questions and express.
- In about 98% of cases there is no support from the teacher to the children struggling to learn during classroom teaching learning process.
- There is no strategy to address multilevel classrooms such as group works, peer to peer support, individual support by the teacher, etc.

- In almost 100% of cases the children are writing homework's and assignments through copying from guides, study material and text books and no practice of reading the lesson, comprehend and write the answers on their own. A meaningless exercise and waste of time and effort, where most of the time children are being engaged.
- Teachers appointed recently have no awareness on new textbooks, steps for teaching, assessment procedures.
- No where the teachers are following the pedagogical steps suggested by SCERT and trained them accordingly along with teacher handbooks.
- In about 90% of the cases the children have not been acquired the expected learning outcomes based on the teaching for the particular period observed by the observers.

## SUGGESTIONS

- Teachers suggested for conduct of moral classes to address behavioural issues duly using the books on ethics published by the department in order to develop character and positive attitudes among the children.
- Teachers suggested for orientations and trainings on the quality classroom processes with a focus on learning outcomes and other processes such as children engagement, interactive teaching learning process and proper assessment procedures. They also suggested for online courses for their continuous professional development.

### III. Interaction with headmasters on the present situation and strategies to improve

- All the headmasters have informed that the department should take up rationalization of teachers immediately since in some schools there are more teachers than required and in some vacancies.
- There is no action plan from the school to improve the FLN and class specific learning outcomes except syllabus completion.
- The focus is on syllabus completion and preparing class 10 children for the examinations.
- There are lot of behavioural problems among children due to Corona. The children are spending most of their time with mobiles using different social media to share and exchange with their friends, playing video games, etc.
- Most of the headmasters informed that about 50-75% of children in the school can perform basic skills of reading and writing but actually the position is very low than what headmasters perceived.



- Parents do not attend parent teacher meeting and there is no way to have a dialogue with them to improve children learning with parents' support.
- Most of the posts of headmasters are on full additional charge. They being school assistants impacts their regular teaching of their subject.
- No headmaster is teaching a regular subject and conducting assessment atleast one subject for one class as per the government orders. They are away from teaching and academics.
- HM being the first level supervisor at school level, he / she is academically inactive and focusing on administrative matters. NO observation of classroom teaching and aspects of teacher preparation such as lesson plans, TLM, children performance. There is no action plan to improve the situation except completing the syllabus in a one-sided way.

## OPINIONS

- All the headmasters opined that a comprehensive program is required on long term basis to improve the teaching and achieve expected learning outcomes by all the children.
- All the headmasters opined that absence of school inspection, academic supervision and teacher support mechanism is the reason for falling of the educational standards in quality teaching and children learning performance. They suggested that strong monitoring with subject experts and a comprehensive school inspection is required to improve the quality. The school inspections / monitoring informs the strengths and weaknesses in classroom teaching, children performance and facilitate to fix the responsibility among the teachers, Headmasters and others.
- It is required to identify good teachers and good schools and complement them accordingly.

## IV. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with students

- The absenteeism is due to not able to understand teaching and unable to learn and perform in the classroom and hence other reasons for not attending school are supporting parents in their work, family issues, problem with dress and hygiene, fear of non-completion of assignment, homework and exams.
- When they are absent to the school they spend time with friends, mobile phones.
- Children informed that about 10-15% of children alone in the class can read, write and do arithmetic and they only interact with the teacher and answer the questions.

- Library books are not in access and not being issued to them.
- Most of their time is being spent in writing the homeworks and assignments and these are being copied from the textbooks and guides. More time is being spent on writing rather than on reading.
- Children expressed certain issues i.e., some teachers are not teaching properly and do not come on time to the classrooms, Mid-day meal is not good, teachers use mobile phones, smelling washrooms, etc.
- The available digital equipment and labs are not being used properly.
- Most of the students informed that they are forgetting easily what they have learned in the classrooms, teachers should not get angry and insult when they raise doubts.

## V. Way forward - Program to Improve the Learning:

- The question is how to address learning crisis and what changes are required in classroom teaching learning process, children support mechanisms and academic monitoring of schools.
- In this context a well-designed long term Learning Improvement Program is required basically focusing on improving the quality of classroom teaching learning process. The learning crisis is due to teaching crisis. A well-planned LIP is required to support headmasters, teachers and students.
- The LIP is for classes 6th to 9th in all the Upper primary and high schools across 33 districts. The program will be designed and implemented in partnership with Department of school education, Centre for Innovations in Public systems (CIPS) - Administrative staff College of India (ASCI) and Save the Children.
- The program should be a continuous one focusing on all the three learning challenges i.e., (i) Foundational skills of literacy and numeracy, (ii) prerequisite competencies and (iii) class specific learning outcomes.
- Learning gaps will be reduced through teaching of regular syllabus with a focus on language across curriculum with specific pedagogical strategies and steps.
- Parents engagement – Transparency in children performance and informing the parents and seeking their support for improving their learning. Motivating parents to support children for their regular attendance and learning.
- Promoting collaborative learning - encouraging group works where children learn from each other. Heterogeneous groups need to be constituted with children of average, above average and below average.
- Accountability and performance indicators across individual and systems will be identified and developed to monitor student / teacher performance.

\*\*\*\*\*