

# PROGRAMME EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING ACCELERATION PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABILITY

## ANDHRA PRADESH

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### Summary Report

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#### I. ABOUT CLAPS

Children's Learning Acceleration Programme for Sustainability (CLAPS) was a quality enhancement initiative undertaken by the State of Andhra Pradesh. The programme was simultaneously launched in December 2006 across all government schools in the State and targeted at students of primary schools. The programme was implemented for almost three years and in April 2009 it was subsumed into a new programme called Learning Enhancement Programme (LEP) covering students up to the elementary stage under SSA. The main goal of CLAPS was to improve the Learning levels of children in all curricular areas. The specific objectives of CLAPS were to:

- Enhance the core competencies of all the curricular areas
- Improve the classroom transaction by adopting CBTL
- Improve the reading habits of children
- Strengthen home school links

#### II. EVALUATION DESIGN AND DATA SOURCES

The evaluation study addressed the following evaluation questions:

1. Has CLAPS been implemented as intended? If not, why not?
2. To what extent have the following programme components facilitated or impeded the improvement of learning levels of children?
  - Teacher Training
  - Awareness about CLAPS
  - Competency Based Teaching Learning (CBTL)

- Innovative Activities
  - Process Grading and Performance Grading
  - Monitoring mechanisms
  - Home- School Link
3. Has CLAPS achieved its objectives?
  4. What unintended outcomes might be attributable to CLAPS? Are these positive or negative?

The evaluation study was on a non experimental hybrid design using mixed methods. *A pre-post design with independent sample cohorts* was used to assess the impact of the programme, as no control group was available for comparison. Time series data with varied temporal intervals were also used to get more evidence about changes in competence and achievement levels over time before and after CLAPS was introduced.

Stratified multi-stage random sampling was used for the evaluation. The sample of the study included a wide range of respondents who were involved at various levels of programme implementation. A total of 375 schools were randomly selected from three regions covering 8 districts out of 23 districts and 40 out of 417 mandals in the State. Children studying in Class III and V were selected for the study. Qualitative data were collected from 46 schools (at least one school from each of the selected mandal) through interviews (children, parents and teachers), classroom observations of core subjects (Telugu, Mathematics and EVS) and classroom library period. A variety of instruments were developed to collect relevant information. Focus group discussions were also organized to collect data from community members. All the instruments and achievement tests were piloted before their finalization.

### III. MAJOR FINDINGS

- **Programme implementation**
  - (i) All the major components of CLAPS, namely teacher training, awareness generation, innovative activities, CBTL, home-school-link and monitoring, were implemented as intended in the programme with marginal variations across districts.
  - (ii) Teacher training was implemented as intended. Teachers were involved in the planning stages and almost all the teachers received the material on time and they appreciated the training modules for the presentation, relevance and adequacy of content.
  - (iii) Awareness scores of teachers were slightly above the average score in the state with significant variations across districts. There were no urban and rural variations with respect to the awareness of teachers.
  - (iv) The monitoring and review component of the programme was not implemented as intended.
- **Impact of different programme components on learning levels of children**
  - (i) Teacher training, innovative activities and awareness of CLAPS were found to be key predictors for learning achievement of children at the state level, but there were some variations at the district level and for curricular areas.
  - (ii) Components of school grading, CBTL and home-school-links did not contribute significantly in enhancing learning achievement or competency attainment of children at the state level or within most districts.
  - (iii) Process grading of schools had no impact on performance grading in improving the school grades and vice versa. Neither process nor performance grading was found to be effective in improving child attainment of competencies or achievement.
- **Achievement of CLAPS objectives**
  - (i) Comparisons of scores of independent cohorts showed that competency attainment did not improve after introduction of CLAPS. Mean achievement scores increased after introduction of CLAPS for children in class V, but not for children in class III. In general, time series data for both competency attainment and achievement showed that there was improvement in the first six months of CLAPS, followed by a decrease in the next year, and only a slight improvement in the final year.
  - (ii) There was an improvement in reading habits of children due to the availability of classroom libraries and provision

of library periods in the time table providing exclusive time for reading. Organization of educational melas, parent-teacher meetings and regular visits of teachers to children's homes improved home school linkages.

- **Unintended Outcomes**

- (i) Team spirit and teacher punctuality and regularity improved.
- (ii) Increased self confidence and self esteem amongst the students.
- (iii) Feeling of inadequacy and lack of motivation amongst schools in 'C' and 'D' categories.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Policy Planners

- Development of district-specific strategies should be considered for any learning enhancement programmes undertaken in Andhra Pradesh.
- Strengthen existing monitoring and feedback mechanisms at the mandal and district levels:
  - o Ensure adequate positioning of mandal resource persons to provide academic inputs and feedback to teachers about their classroom practices.
  - o Feedback to teachers should include more on-site academic support rather than being purely supervisory, and feedback should be regular and timely.
  - o Ensure schools receive regular feedback regarding how children and teachers are performing.
- Incorporate effective and useful components of CLAPS such as innovative activities, and the strategies of teacher training in future quality initiatives for elementary education. Do not include strategies such as competency based teaching learning and school grading.
- Limit the amount of non-academic/record keeping work done by teachers.
- Incorporate programme evaluation as an inbuilt and integral component in the state's plans pertaining to the quality initiatives in elementary education.
- Ensure that authentic baseline studies are conducted at the start of innovative projects and regular monitoring data are maintained to ensure the robust evaluation of the projects.

### B. For Implementers

- Teachers should classify children into several different groups based on their learning levels (rather than only 'A' versus 'B' group children). However, ensure:
  - o That teachers are given training about how to effectively engage these groups of children in remedial periods both for all curricular areas (rather than only Telugu and Mathematics).
  - o That self learning material is developed and available for children in order to meaningfully engage them in learning when teachers are involved with other groups.
  - o That teachers provide timely formative feedback to children of all groups on a regular basis in order to improve their learning achievement.
- Develop training material and ensure sufficient training is provided to master trainers and mandal resource persons keeping in view their role in providing academic support to teachers.
- Delineate clear cut roles and responsibilities for mandal resource persons, MEOs and DIET faculty members to enable them to contribute effectively to the Learning Enhancement Programme.
- Evolve strategies to record implementation fidelity of various components.

