

## GRAM PANCHAYAT LEVEL MATH CONTEST FOR ELEMENTARY GRADERS

### Introduction

The basic objectives of the *Ganitha Kalika Andolana* are:

1. To remove the Mathematics phobia from the minds of the children.
2. To make Mathematics Child friendly through play, do, and learn methodology.
3. To provide a strong foundation to Mathematics through experiential learning.
4. To make Mathematics meaningful and applicable to daily life.
5. Involving all the stakeholders including the community to make it an integrated effort.

### Strategy of the Programme

The programme has three basic dimensions:

1. Hands on training through provision of a Mathematics kit in every school.
2. Capacity building of teachers and resource persons of the state government.
3. Involvement of the community at every stage to generate awareness and own the programme and, as an extension, the education of their children. It is a component of this community engagement that is the object of this study.

### The Salient features of the GP contest

The GP Contest is an innovative programme – a first-of-its-kind in the country involving participation and sharing of responsibility by all the stakeholders –the child- teacher- parents- community- educated youths - *Gram Panchayat* (GP) members, the GP President– in the process of enhancing the quality of teaching learning process in mathematics – leading to a better understanding and improved performance of the students in mathematics.

GP Contest was designed and conducted with help of the educated youth (educated volunteers) from the villages where the children contested from. The Math test was conducted for children of 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grades. The test papers were designed on the basis of competencies that children had acquired in the previous academic year (2015-16) i.e 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grades. The evaluation of the test papers were done by the educated youth

on the same day of the contest and there is transparency in the system as evaluation is done by the youth volunteers on the examination spot itself.

**The objectives of the GP contest were:**

1. To generate the awareness among the parents. The assumption was if the parents become aware of the status of numeracy levels of his/her child then, there is a possibility of questing the school system about the delivery of service.
2. To get the contest self-financed. The assumption was the effective level of participation can be ensured and measured through the contribution of resources in the form of donations - in kind and cash to conduct the Contest. This was a significant indicator to measure the collective concern at the GP level towards creating buzz on quality education.
3. To measure the performance of the students in outside school situation and to inculcate the spirit of completion among children.
4. To have an integrated, transparent and inclusive Method of completion. The approach adopted in the overall *andolana* was integrated and intensive involving appropriate strategies at different level.

**Process of competition event followed so far:**

- A meeting of all the stakeholders is conducted at the *Gram Panchayat* level and the venue as well as the schedule of examinations is prepared with a gap of four days between the *Gram Panchayats*. The examination is scheduled during summer season.
- All the schools of the selected *Gram Panchayat* were visited by the Akshara co-coordinators and the programme was discussed in detail with the SDMC members/president, school head master and teachers and parents. They were requested to encourage their school children to take part in the competition.
- The local human resources i.e., the educated youths (BA, BSc, D.Ed, B. Ed qualified youth) were identified for assisting to conduct the competition. These educated youths ( called as Education Volunteers) were given a quick orientation (details about the Math program, objectives & process of GP contest ,and their responsibilities and are requested to co-operate for

conducting the competition. About 10-15 volunteers were selected from each *Gram Panchayat*.

- A Test was conducted in a school or *samudaya bhavana* (community building) or in a temple.
- The packet containing the question papers was opened up in front of the *Gram Panchayat* president and other members.
- The supervision was done by the youth and strict monitoring is enforced to ensure that no malpractice happens during the conduct of the examination.
- Examination was conducted for 20 marks with the help of objective type question paper pattern. The time given was 45 minutes - 5 minutes for filling up the basic information and 40 minutes are given for solving 20 questions.
- After the examination the volunteers together assess the answer papers with the help of the answer keys provided to them by Akshara Foundation. The class wise marks sheet is then prepared.
- In each of standards 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> their ranks are given for the first three highest scores.
- The volunteers were also given certificates of appreciation for their co-operation in conducting the examination. The parents and the village people and the donors were invited for the prize distribution. Thus the whole process of conducting the competition was well planned with transparency in the procedures and conduct of competitions.
- The participation of the community and the different Stakeholders in the implementation of the GP contest was critical indicator for assessing the success of the *Ganitha Kalika Andolana*. The community participation was measured in with the help of the following indicators
  - Participation of *Gram Panchayat* members including the Chairperson
  - Participation of SDMC Members.
  - Participation of parents
  - Participation of Donors
  - Engagement of Volunteers/youths
  - Participation of the people in the prize distribution function

**Measurements thought so far:**

- The community participation was measured in with the help of indicators like participation of *Gram Panchayat* members ; participation of Members of the School Development & Monitoring Committee (SDMC); participation of parents, community donors, volunteers/youth and participation of the people in the prize distribution function.
- The presence of large number of parents indicates that the Programme has high chances of sustainability in future. Activating Gam Panchayat staff to focus on the quality education delivered by Public School System.
- The total expenditure on conducting the competitions was met by the donors from the local communities. The total expenditure was made up of expenditure on prizes; food to the participants; other expenditure like costs for banners, tents / *shamiana*, photography, transport, etc.
- The post event actions taken by the parental groups, GP members, SDMC members and institutions towards improving the quality of education.
- Media coverage- Local news papers.