Annual Report 2024–2025: Rural Education Initiative in Rajasthan

Date: January 15, 2025

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1. Introduction

This annual report provides a comprehensive overview of the Rural Education Initiative in Rajasthan for the fiscal year 2024–2025. It examines the efforts made by the government, the impact of various educational programs, and the significant contributions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in enhancing educational access and quality in rural areas of Rajasthan. The report also delves into key statistical indicators, highlighting both achievements and persistent challenges, and identifies opportunities for future development in the rural education sector.

2. Government Initiatives and Policies

The Government of Rajasthan has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing rural education through a series of strategic initiatives and substantial budgetary allocations. For the fiscal year 2025, the state budget has prioritized youth-centric policies, focusing on upskilling and fostering an environment conducive to entrepreneurship [1]. This commitment is reflected in the significant investment in the education sector, with Rajasthan allocating 19.5% of its total expenditure to education in the 2024-25 budget, a figure notably higher than the national average for states [2].

Enrollment in government schools across Rajasthan has reached an impressive 67.39 lakh students, with secondary education (Class 1-12) accounting for 54.64 lakh students [3]. To further enhance educational outcomes and reach, the state has embraced digital transformation. Key digital initiatives include the launch of the Digital Praveshotsav App by the Chief Minister, an AI-based mobile application designed to assess and improve reading proficiency among children, and a Student Attendance App [4]. Furthermore, the 2024-25 academic session saw the implementation of common question papers for semi-annual and

annual examinations across 84 subjects, benefiting over 41 lakh students, thereby standardizing assessment and promoting equitable learning outcomes [5].

3. Key Programs

Several key programs have been instrumental in driving the rural education agenda in Rajasthan. Among these, the **Shiksha Sambal** program stands out as a flagship initiative. A collaborative effort between Hindustan Zinc and the Vidya Bhawan Society, this program is specifically designed to strengthen conceptual knowledge among rural students and improve their learning levels [6]. The program's reach was further extended through initiatives like the Diwali camps in 2024, which successfully engaged over 4,000 students [7].

Another significant initiative aimed at promoting girls' education is the **Kali Bai Bheel Medhavi Chhatra Scooty Yojana**, which provides scholarships and incentives to meritorious girl students, thereby encouraging their continued enrollment and academic pursuit [8]. Additionally, the **Samagra Shiksha** scheme has played a crucial role in the development of educational infrastructure, leading to upgrades and the establishment of new senior secondary schools in rural areas, thus expanding access to quality education [9].

4. NGO Contributions

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a vital role in complementing government efforts and reaching the most marginalized communities in rural Rajasthan. **Educate Girls**, a prominent non-profit organization, has made significant strides in mobilizing over 400,000 out-of-school girls for enrollment into primary schools, particularly focusing on Rajasthan's educationally backward districts [10]. Their work underscores the importance of community engagement in bridging the gender gap in education.

The **Foundation for Education and Development (FED)** has also contributed significantly by supporting Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) surveys and fostering community-based education initiatives [11]. Furthermore, organizations like **Bal Raksha Bharat** (Save the Children India) have implemented various projects such as "The Right Start" and "Eco Gram," which aim to empower communities and promote climate-resilient villages, often integrating educational components within their broader development goals [12]. These collaborations between government and NGOs are crucial for a holistic approach to rural education.

5. Statistical Overview (2024-2025)

The 2024-2025 period reveals a mixed but generally positive trend in rural education statistics for Rajasthan. The state's overall literacy rate is estimated at 75.8% in 2024 [13], with rural literacy specifically recorded at 72.5%. A closer look at rural literacy rates indicates a notable gender disparity, with male literacy at 83.6% and female literacy at 60.3% [14].

While there has been improvement, the secondary-level dropout rate in rural Rajasthan remains a concern, estimated at approximately 13.3% [15]. This figure, though higher than the national average, reflects ongoing efforts to retain students in the education system. Digital outreach has been substantial, with over 41 lakh students participating in common digital examination and assessment frameworks during the 2024-25 academic session [5].

6. Challenges and Opportunities

Despite significant progress, rural education in Rajasthan continues to face several challenges. The persistent **digital divide** remains a critical area of focus, as equitable access to technology and digital literacy is essential for inclusive education [16]. There is also a continuous **need for vocational training and upskilling** programs tailored to the specific demands of rural economies, which can enhance employability and economic empowerment among rural youth [17].

Furthermore, efforts to **reduce dropout rates**, particularly among girls, and to bridge the existing **gender gap in education** are ongoing priorities. Opportunities lie in leveraging public-private partnerships, expanding digital learning infrastructure, and developing innovative pedagogical approaches that cater to the unique needs of rural students. Continued investment in teacher training, curriculum development, and community engagement will be crucial for sustaining and accelerating progress in rural education across Rajasthan.

7. References

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