

YOUTH IN COMMAND: JAGRIK LED SHIKSHAGRAHA

A youth leadership movement for education transformation



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Foreword

In the vast and diverse landscape of India, education remains a cornerstone of self and social transformation. Yet, despite significant strides, the reality of education at the grassroots often reveals stark disparities. Issues such as skewed student-teacher ratios, gender and social inequalities, and inadequate career guidance lead to disconnect with teachers and peers, lack of understanding and low self-esteem. These feelings drive many young people to disengage or drop out of school.

In a country with the largest youth population in the world, what is the role that young people can play in addressing these challenges?

Within this context, this book showcases inspiring stories of young people who are evolving as exemplary leaders to transform the learning experience of education.

An improvement can often seem to be long, difficult, and overwhelming. But if we break it into micro, short-term steps, it can lead to macro and lasting changes. The micro-improvement (MI) approach makes the achievement of a goal easy and achievable for stakeholders in the education system. It helps break down ideas into clear, actionable steps and tailors them to fit the specific context. By showing quick evidence of success, it builds confidence that change is possible.

The MI approach uses 'learning by doing'. It keeps leaders engaged in learning and motivates them to apply new knowledge in real-life situations. This approach also gives youth the power to take control of their environment and make meaningful changes. This connection between youth and the MI approach is crucial; when young people see their efforts result in tangible improvements, it reinforces their role as key agents of change.

Through games and activities, dialogues with the parents and community members, and mentorship from youth facilitators, these young leaders have created deep impact in their communities.

This coffee table book is a product of a partnership between vartaLeap and ShikshaLokam, organisations deeply committed to mainstreaming youth-centric development and enhancing the quality of education across the country. Through our collaboration, we aim to highlight stories of these Jagriks, self-aware, active citizens who are being the change even as they are making change - and inspiring others to do the same.

These stories are a treasure trove of many micro-improvement steps that carry depth and mindful intention toward transformation. These micro-improvement steps by the Jagriks are something that we can learn from and adapt in our communities.

We celebrate the incredible potential within our youth and the boundless possibilities that arise when we invest in their leadership. Together, let us support these and many more young visionaries in their changemaking journey, scaling, with depth and impact, promising a future with Every youth of a Jagrik, Every Space Nurturing Jagriks.

Kanika Sinha
Convener, ComMutiny - The Youth Collective
Anchor - The vartaLeap Coalition

Khushboo Awasthi,
Co-founder & COO, ShikshaLokam

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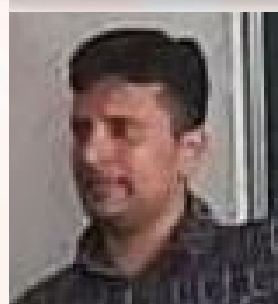
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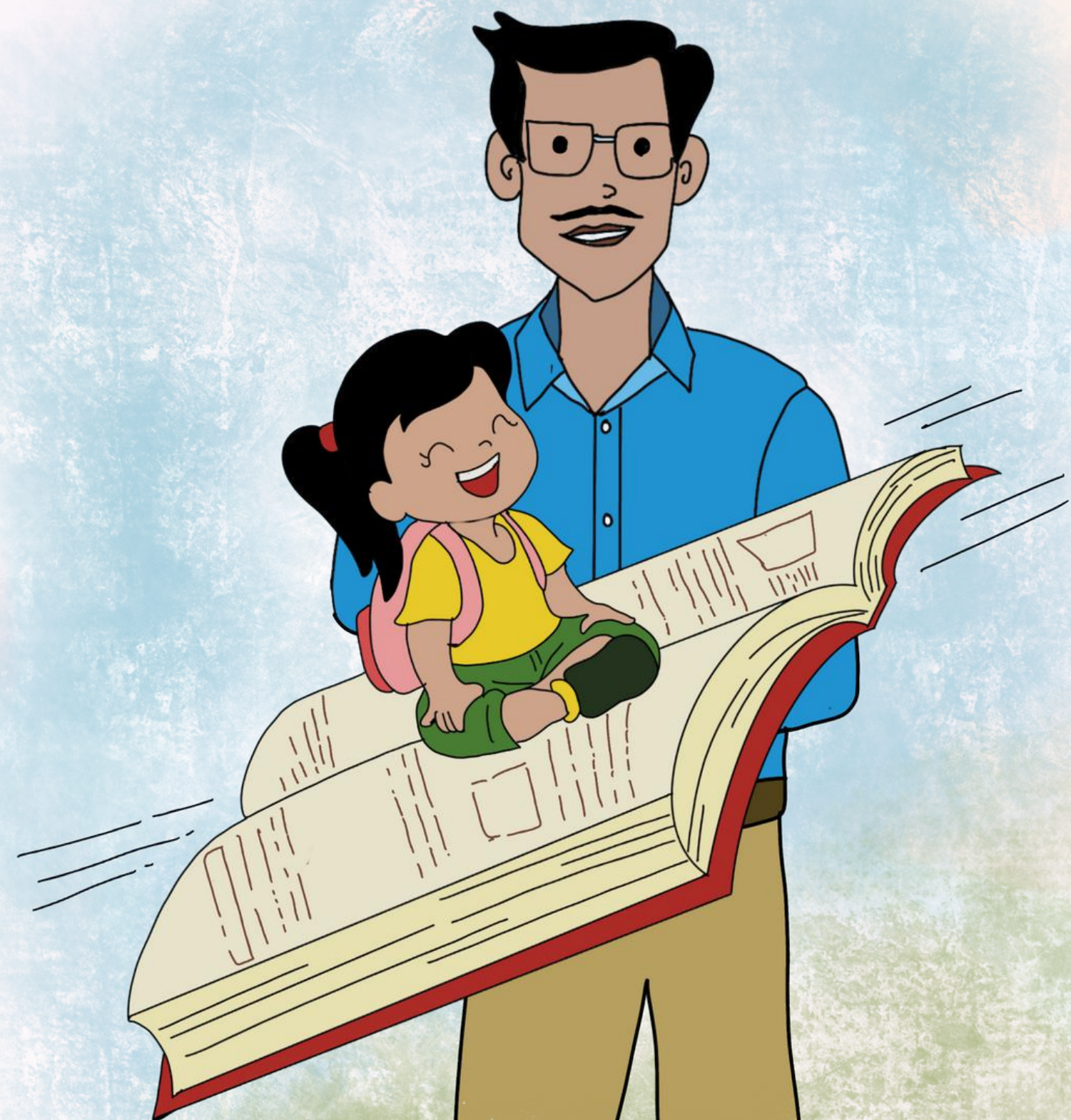


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Making Classrooms Fun and Inclusive



Satish

NSS Coordinator
NSS



The Journey

"Mr. Satish and the NSS volunteers have shown us the power of dedication and community spirit. Their relentless efforts have transformed our villages, giving our daughters the chance to dream big and achieve their goals. We are grateful for their unwavering commitment to our children's future."

Mr. Satish, the dynamic NSS Coordinator in Puducherry, has inspired a group of dedicated National Service Scheme volunteers to champion the cause of educating girls in their community. Under the "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" scheme, they have initiated numerous activities aimed at raising awareness and promoting the importance of girls' education. Driven by a vision of a more equitable society, Mr. Satish and his team have made significant strides in various villages, ensuring that every girl child has the opportunity to learn and thrive. Their exceptional dedication and impactful work have even earned Mr. Satish the prestigious President's Award.

Challenge

In many villages across Puducherry, deep-seated cultural biases and a lack of resources have historically hindered the education of girl children. These communities often prioritize boys' education, leaving girls with limited opportunities to learn and grow. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these challenges, as fear and uncertainty kept children, especially girls, away from schools. This situation demanded immediate intervention to break down these barriers and encourage families to prioritize education for all their children.

Micro Steps

- Organised rallies and door-to-door visits to raise awareness about the importance of educating girls.
- Conducted signature campaigns for the "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" initiative and garnered community support.
- Celebrated National Girl Child Day with events honoring female teachers and mothers.

- Addressed pandemic challenges with home visits, and distributing educational essentials to students.
- Promoted physical fitness through sports activities in village schools.
- Held community meetings and worked with local authorities to support girls' education.
- Provided tutoring, mentorship, and created a support network for girls to encourage academic progress and mutual support.



Mega Impact

The dedicated efforts of Mr. Satish and the NSS volunteers have led to a significant transformation in the communities they serve. Their campaigns and initiatives have not only raised awareness about the importance of educating girls but also fostered a more inclusive and supportive environment for all children. The inclusive approach and community engagement have strengthened the bonds between students, parents, and educators, creating a more conducive learning environment. As a result, more girls are now attending school, participating actively in their education, and realizing their potential. The recognition of Mr. Satish with the President's Award stands as a testament to the remarkable impact of their work.





The First Step Towards Gender Equity



Shakila

*Educator & Nurse
Swatantra Talim & Krishna Nursing and
Paramedical Institute*



The Journey

"In a village where children would hardly study till grade V, Shakila is an inspiration. She has inspired many children to go to school and pursue higher education."

-Rahul Agarwal, Co-Founder, Swatantra Talim

Shakila Bano, an educator and qualified nurse from Lucknow, faced a significant challenge early in her life. Hailing from Ramdwari, a village near Mahmoodabad, she faced resistance from her family who felt her education was sufficient and believed it was time for her to marry. However, Shakila went ahead with her studies and became more than just a support to her family.

Determined to pursue her dream, Shakila sought guidance from her mentors at Swatantra Talim. Through numerous conversations, around financial implications and her safety while studying away from home, she eventually won her family's support.

Her journey didn't stop there. Once she completed her studies and returned to her village, Shakila recognised another pressing issue: Ramdwari had no doctors, nurses, or healthcare facilities. Motivated by her experiences and the lack of medical professionals in her community, she resolved to address this gap by becoming the first medical professional from her village, setting an example for others.

Challenge

In addition to her role as a nurse, Shakila faced significant challenges in her community as an educator. Many girls in Ramdwari were discouraged from continuing their education beyond primary school. The lack of awareness about the importance of education for girls further hindered their academic progress.

Furthermore, Shakila noticed that girls often faced issues related to menstrual hygiene, which impacted their school attendance and overall well-being. Addressing these health and educational barriers became a critical part of her mission.

Micro Steps

- Held sessions on menstrual hygiene and overall health as part of her teaching.
- Distributed cloth pads to girls and used these opportunities to discuss hygiene practices.
- Conducted regular check-ins with students to understand their needs and challenges.
- Used storytelling and art to make lessons engaging and relatable.
- Encouraged group work and peer support by regularly shuffling groups.
- Shared her own experiences to inspire students to pursue their educational goals and overcome challenges.

Mega Impact

Shakila's approach transformed the traditional student-teacher dynamic, creating a safe and inclusive space in the classroom. Her emphasis on menstrual hygiene education significantly improved the well-being and school attendance of girls in her community.



Her efforts have empowered many students, fostering a culture of education and health awareness. Shakila's journey has also deepened her understanding of societal roles and responsibilities, and she continues to bridge the learning gap for adolescent girls, ensuring they have the support and resources needed to succeed.

Defying Tradition to Champion Education



Sharmila

*Educator
International Center For Research On Women (ICRW)*

The Journey

At the age of 18, Sharmila stood at a crossroads. Having lost her father at a young age, her mother's daily wage earnings were supporting her education. When her mother passed away during COVID-19, Sharmila had to make a tough decision. Her dream of getting an education seemed distant.

Due to the financial hardships that had fallen upon the family, her brother suggested that she quit her education and get married. But this didn't sit right with her.

She had been engaging with ICRW for years. As part of the UMANG program, she had participated in sessions on gender, aspirations, leadership, and communication skills that drove her to prioritise her education. She decided to deny the marriage proposal and started taking tuitions to fund her education. She also reached out to the village-level committee for support.

Challenge

The societal pressure to prioritise marriage over education for girls was immense and many families in her village held traditional views that girls should not pursue education beyond primary school.

Sharmila noticed the consistent challenge of girls dropping out of school. Parents seem to be ignorant about their girl child's education and often felt girls are better at home helping with the chores.

Sharmila herself had to overcome these deeply ingrained societal norms within her own family, which gave her a unique perspective on the importance of education. Her personal experience with these challenges made her determined to ensure that other girls in her community did not face the same obstacles.



Micro Steps

- Conducted door-to-door visits to understand how many adolescents had dropped out of school.
- Engaged with parents, offering practical suggestions on how to re-enroll their children in school.
- Organised community meetings to rally approximately 20 young girls and women to focus on education rather than marriage.
- Held interactive sessions to discuss challenges and sensitise people.
- Worked with local authorities and the village-level committee to gain support for her initiatives.
- Provided tutoring and mentorship to girls to help them catch up academically and stay motivated.
- Created a support network among the girls, encouraging them to share their experiences and support each other's educational journeys.

Mega Impact

Sharmila and her team were able to re-admit several adolescent girls into schools and skill education programs. Her courage to confront and understand gender-based issues and to inspire others to do the same is truly remarkable. She started by developing her own worldview and values, which laid the foundation for her leadership. Over time, she emerged as a prominent leader in her community, using her experiences and insights to shape the lives of others.

Her journey demonstrates how crucial it is to have the right support systems in place, to approach challenges with compassion, and to provide timely encouragement. These elements together can make a significant difference in addressing and overcoming gender-based challenges.



Championing Education with Equality



Anand Gandwane

*Youth Leader
Shado Sanstha Timarni*



The Journey

"Teaching children through play is something I have seen for the first time. Now, children will surely stay connected to the school."

— Shekendra Rajput, Village Secretary of Bagwad, on Anand's innovative methods.

Anand Gandwane comes from Bagwad village, where his parents work as labourers. He completed his early education at the local government school and pursued a B.Sc. from a government college in Timarni. Anand's passion for teaching children was sparked during his involvement in the Community Youth Forum (CYF) programme by SHEDO Sanstha, where he learned about his strengths, weaknesses, and constitutional values.

During the CYF programme, Anand conducted sessions on children's rights, which boosted his confidence to work with children. He noticed that while children from one community attended school, others engaged in begging. Determined to change this, he faced significant challenges, including caste-based discrimination. Despite this, Anand remained resolute in his mission to connect all children with education.

Challenge

The main challenge Anand faced was caste-based discrimination in his village. Underprivileged children and those who begged, were ill-treated by the community members. (He himself had faced this -discrimination and was called derogatory caste-based terms).

Additionally, children were uninterested in school due to the teachers' negative attitudes and monotonous teaching methods. Anand aimed to change these perspectives and engage both the underprivileged children and the local community children in education.



Micro Steps

- Developed a comprehensive understanding of the Right to Education (RTE)
- Engaged with teachers to discuss how RTE could improve the school environment and bring underprivileged students to schools
- Visited homes to emphasise the importance of education
- Formed a support group with parents and community members to gain their trust and support and inspired them to change their attitude and behaviour towards underprivileged children.
- Incorporated play and activities into teaching, inspiring teachers to adopt similar methods to increase student engagement.
- Gained insights and patience by learning from colleagues working with children and schools in other villages.



Mega Impact

Anand's efforts convinced parents of children earning living through begging on the streets to prioritise education, leading to increased school attendance.

Eighteen children began attending school regularly, inspiring others to join. Teachers' attitudes towards students improved, fostering a stronger connection between teachers and students. Anand's dedication and innovative ideas earned him a place in the Gandhi Fellowship in Odisha, where he continues to champion education and equality.



Hopping Towards The Enhanced Students' Outcomes



Surmila

*Youth Leader
People for Change*

The Journey

Surmila Kisku, a 25-year-old Santhal girl, overcame financial difficulties that initially kept her at home by pursuing a Master's degree. Inspired by her brother's teaching, she discovered her passion for education. As a Community Fellow with People for Change, Surmila is now transforming the learning environment at Primary School, Bada Govindpur, with her innovative and engaging methods.

Surmila's journey with People for Change began when they sought dynamic individuals for their programme that capacitates community members to work with children and their parents to enhance the education experience in schools. Her enthusiasm and background made her a perfect fit. Surmila's approach blends creativity with teaching, bringing a fresh perspective to the classroom and making learning an exciting experience for students.

Challenge

At Bada Govindpur's Primary School, the imbalanced student-teacher ratio meant that each student did not receive the attention they needed. This issue resulted in low literacy and numeracy levels and led to early dropouts due to disengaging lessons.

Moreover, the traditional teaching methods failed to capture the students' interest, and there was a lack of interactive and stimulating activities. This was reflected in the low students' outcomes. Surmila needed to address these problems to make education more engaging and effective.

Micro Steps

- Initiated conversations with parents to understand children's home situations and learning needs.
- Used her dance skills to make lessons enjoyable and interactive, increasing student participation.
- Employed local resources creatively, such as the floor and stones, to make learning more tangible.

- Regularly observed students and provided timely feedback and encouragement to boost confidence.
- Offered additional support and personalised attention to students struggling academically.
- Facilitated discussions on nutrition, allowing students to choose healthier food options.
- Gave students choices between instant noodles and healthier food to encourage decision-making and responsibility.
- Participated in recruiting and training new fellows to strengthen the teaching team.
- Conducted lessons in local languages to ensure better understanding and relatability.

Mega Impact

Surmila's creative approach has led to significant improvements at the school. Attendance rates have increased as students began to see learning as a fun and engaging activity. Her innovative methods have enhanced literacy and numeracy levels, and students now actively participate in class with greater enthusiasm. Confidence among students has grown, and they are more excited about their educational journey. Surmila's efforts have fostered a positive learning environment, making school a place where students are eager to learn and grow.

"It's amazing to see how much my child enjoys going to school now. Surmila's enthusiasm and unique teaching methods have made a huge difference. My child comes home excited to share what they've learned."

-a parent



Nurturing Minds and Nature For A Healthier Future



Nikhil

*Youth Mentor,
Youth Resource Center, Mantra4Change*

The Journey

“Nikhil's leadership and commitment to sports and environmental initiatives have brought substantial positive changes to our community,”

-Shruti Gautam, Social Science Teacher,
Government High School, Hennagara.

Nikhil joined the Youth Resource Centre (YRC) in January 2020. He actively participated in many YRC classes, gaining skills and knowledge to lead various initiatives. Reflecting on his experience, Nikhil shares, *“Balancing studies and sports was challenging, but the support from YRC helped me realise the importance of giving back to the community.”*

Nikhil's passion for sports began at a young age, but he often faced obstacles due to the lack of proper infrastructure and support in his village. Determined to overcome these challenges, he pursued his interest and became a national-level throwball athlete. His journey was not easy, but his perseverance paid off, and he earned the respect and admiration of his peers.

When he joined YRC, he found a platform to channel his energy and enthusiasm into community service. He quickly became involved in various activities, demonstrating his leadership skills and commitment to making a difference. His role as a youth mentor allowed him to inspire and guide other young people in his village, fostering a sense of unity and purpose.

Challenge

Nikhil faced multiple challenges in his community. He noticed a lack of structured physical activities for students, which limited their holistic development. Additionally, there was minimal awareness and engagement in environmental conservation efforts. These issues were further compounded by limited resources and support from the local community.

Nikhil's challenge was to find innovative ways to address these needs, fostering a culture of active participation in sports and environmental initiatives. He needed to inspire and mobilize his peers and community members to work together towards common goals.

Micro Steps

Sports Initiative:

- Collaborated with the Gram Panchayat to organise a sports competition.
- Conducted evening sports training sessions for high school students.
- Guided his team to win the taluk-level throwball competition.
- Ensured consistent practice and motivation for students.

Environmental Initiative:

- Proposed a plantation drive to celebrate World Environment Day.
- Approached the local government for support and received 30 saplings from the Gram Panchayat.
- Communicated with the Forestry Department to secure an additional 2000 plants.
- Organised the "Hasiru Habba" (Plantation Drive) with 30 YRC youths and 6 Gram Panchayat members.
- Inspired other village youths to raise environmental awareness and plan future plantation camps.

Mega Impact

Nikhil's leadership and dedication have led to significant positive changes in his community. The sports initiative provided physical training to 160 students over three years, with the school team participating in district-level competitions. The environmental initiative resulted in the planting of 2000 saplings, creating a greener and more sustainable community.

His efforts have not only transformed the local environment but also inspired other young people to take on leadership roles and contribute to their community's development. Nikhil's story is a testament to the power of youth leadership in driving social transformation.

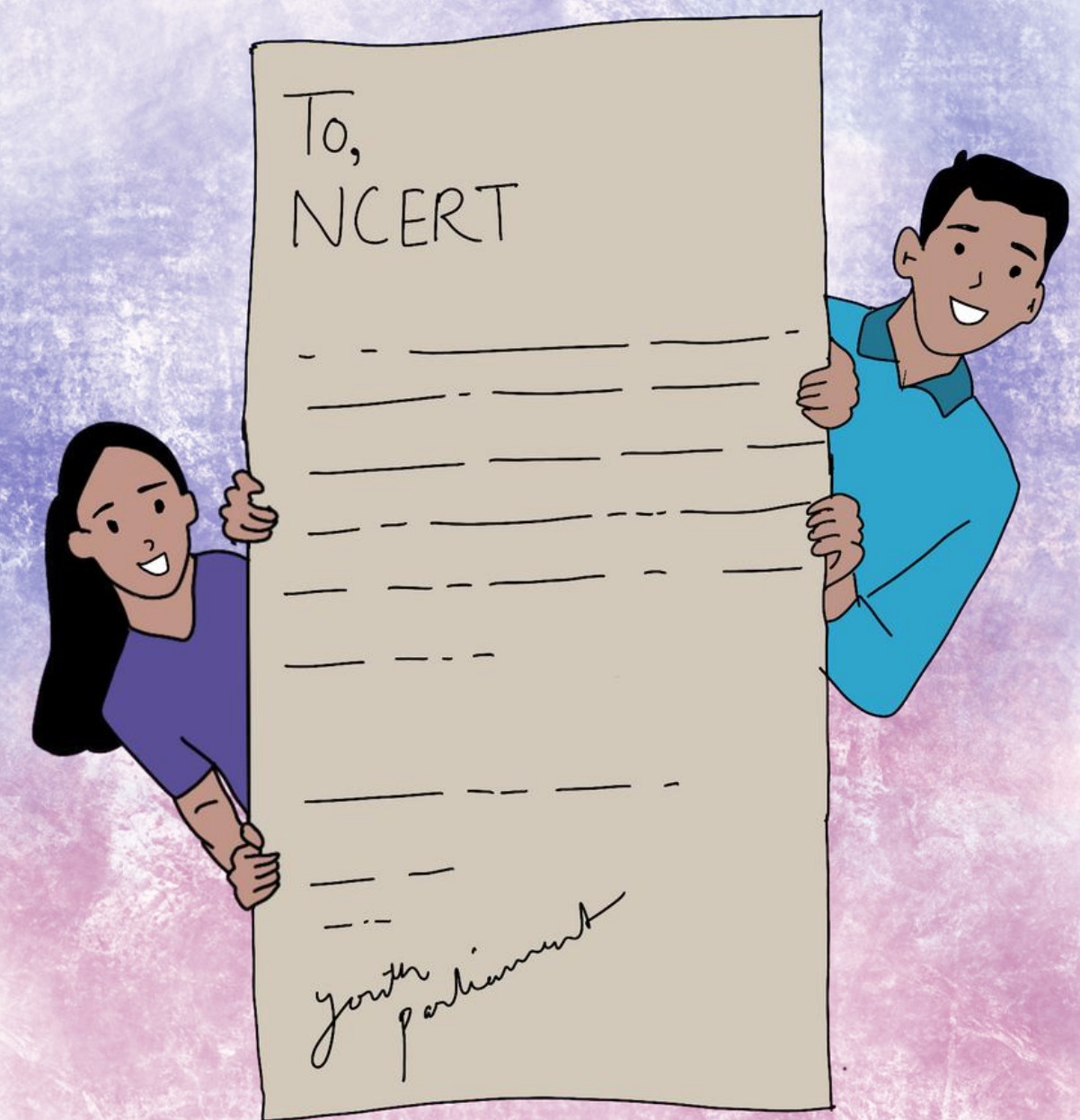


Empowering Change: The Story of the Student Parliament



Student Parliament

Agrini



The Journey

In the tribal village of Kurai in the Seoni district of Madhya Pradesh, Agrini Public School is a beacon of democratic education. Operated by the Agrini organisation, the school is being transformed into a democratic community school, with one of the key processes being the “Student Parliament.” This student-led parliament mirrors the general election process of the country, allowing elected student members to play a vital role in the school's operations.

At Agrini Public School, a collaborative environment is fostered by teachers, parents, and community members. This inclusive atmosphere encourages students to view the school as their own space, prompting them to question and exercise their democratic rights. Teachers actively engage with students, treating their concerns seriously and recognising them as crucial stakeholders in the school's ecosystem.

Challenge

In the NCERT social science textbook for Class 8, "Our Pasts III," Chapter 2, the language used to describe Birsa Munda seemed less respectful compared to other historical figures. While it says, “Aurangzeb was the last powerful Mughal emperor,” it refers to Birsa Munda as, “A tribal named Birsa was seen roaming around.” The Student Parliament took issue with this language.

What started as a classroom discussion soon escalated to the Student Parliament, where both tribal and non-tribal members raised their objections.

Micro Steps

- Held three to four meetings to discuss the issue.
- Both tribal and non-tribal members expressed their objections and decided to write a letter to NCERT.
- With the help of their teacher, they learned about the process of addressing such issues.

- Drafted a letter, signed it, and made a photocopy of the textbook page.
- Learned how to send an online letter, including using Gmail and finding the correct email addresses.
- Sent the letter to NCERT, the Education Minister, PMO, and other relevant departments, requesting a revision of the language used in the textbook.



Mega Impact

Two weeks later, NCERT responded, acknowledging the students' concerns and assuring them that the issue would be addressed in the next publication of the textbook. This process instilled confidence in both students and teachers that appropriate actions taken by citizens can lead to positive changes. The joy of this success was beyond words for the students.

The students from that session's Student Parliament are now pursuing higher education. Diksha, who was the Prime Minister of the school at that time, is currently studying for a B.Sc. and provides free martial arts training to children in her village. Other students are studying at Azim Premji University. It is hoped that these students will play a significant role in strengthening democracy in India as better individuals and citizens in the future.

Making Classrooms Fun and Inclusive



Neha

*Youth Leader
Pratigya*

The Journey

"Neha always believed that teachers hold immense power to shape young minds. But for her, the rigid, traditional approach felt outdated. She envisioned a classroom where fostering a healthy and cooperative bond among children was just as important as academics."

Neha, a dedicated youth facilitator at Pratigya, is committed to transforming education for marginalised children. Having experienced the limitations of traditional teaching methods during her own school days, she aspires to create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment. She understands the profound impact teachers have on their students, often becoming mentors who shape minds and foster a love for learning. However, she has also seen the negative effects of bias and lack of support for struggling students, which discourages children from attending school and hinders their potential.

Challenge

Upon stepping into her role as a youth facilitator, Neha confronted a harsh reality: the education system was failing its most vulnerable students. Children from diverse backgrounds—some from low-income families, others as first-generation learners—arrived with varying needs. Many received only one meager meal a day. Yet, despite their different circumstances, they were treated as a homogenous group. Classroom seating arrangements were poorly managed, with "good" students placed at the front and receiving all the attention, while average and struggling students were left unseen and unheard at the back. This biased

approach fostered a culture of neglect, where much of the student body's potential remained untapped. This systemic inequity demanded immediate intervention and a shift towards a more inclusive education system that empowers all children, regardless of their background.



Micro Steps

- Introduced mixed-ability groups to break down classroom hierarchies and encourage peer support and learning
- Conducted interactive sing-along sessions called "Baal Geet" to involve every student.
- Ensured every child had a chance to participate in the sing-along, promoting inclusion.
- Regularly checked in with students to ensure they felt seen and valued.
- Created a classroom environment that encouraged exploration and fear-free learning.
- Promoted active participation by making lessons engaging and interactive.
- Built strong relationships between students and teachers to foster a supportive environment.
- Monitored student progress and adapted teaching methods to meet diverse needs.
- Held meetings with teachers to discuss and address biases in the classroom.



Mega Impact

Neha's approach transformed the classroom environment. By creating a space where children felt free to explore and learn without fear, she strengthened the bonds between students and teachers. Students felt valued and seen, which made them excited to come to school.

The inclusive environment fostered by Neha's methods significantly improved student engagement and enjoyment in learning.



Empowering Education Through Parental Support



Ebrahim

Youth Facilitator
Antarang Foundation

The Journey

In MCGM School, opinions on parental involvement in education varied widely. Some students felt that parents should have no say in their academic journeys, while others believed that parental support was essential. It wasn't until Ibrahim, the school career counsellor, started facilitating a series of parent sessions that perspectives began to shift.

Ibrahim noticed a disconnect between students and their parents regarding educational paths. Determined to bridge this gap, he proposed organising sessions to educate parents about the importance of their involvement in their children's education.

Challenge

Initially, the parent sessions were met with scepticism. Parents and students questioned whether they were worth their time. However, Ibrahim's passionate discussions about the impact of parental support on academic success began to change minds. As word spread, more parents started attending, and their understanding of their crucial role in their children's education deepened.

Micro Steps

- Conducted surveys to gauge initial attitudes of parents and students towards parental involvement.
- Organised interactive workshops with role-playing, group discussions, and exercises on setting academic goals and providing support.
- Invited parents and students who had benefited from parental involvement to share their success stories during the sessions.
- Developed and distributed resource kits containing tips, strategies, and tools for parents to support their children's education effectively.
- Scheduled regular follow-up meetings to discuss progress, address challenges, and provide additional support.

- Involved students in planning and executing the parent sessions, allowing them to present their perspectives and collaborate in organising the sessions.
- Implemented a feedback mechanism where parents and students could share their thoughts and suggest improvements.
- Recognised milestones and achievements of students and parents who actively participated with certificates, shout-outs, and small rewards.



Mega Impact

As the school year progressed, the impact of the parent sessions became evident. Attendance and grades improved among students whose parents were actively involved. The once-divided opinions about parental support shifted towards a unanimous agreement on its importance.

By the end of the school year, the parent sessions had become a crucial part of the school's approach. Students who had been sceptical now understood the power of parental support in shaping their academic success. As they prepared for their next educational journey, they did so with the unwavering support of their parents by their side.

"Participating in these sessions has not only improved my child's academic performance but also strengthened our family's support for their education. I now see the difference our involvement makes."

-A Parent



Cutting Through Rocks With Persistence



Khushbu

*Program Coordinator,
Had-Anhad*

The Journey

“Khushbu’s dedication to enabling, empowering and substantially impacting the students is evident in her commitment and efforts. She has found effective ways to engage with the students in the classroom,”

-Shruti Gautam, Social Science Teacher,
Sangam Nagar Government School, Indore.

Khushbu is a youth facilitator working towards implementing experiential learning framework with the students and teachers in government schools in Indore.

Reflecting on her own experience as a student in Indore, she shares, *“Studies would always terrify me. Being unable to excel and perform like other students made me feel inferior.”*

The assessment of a student’s intelligence merely based on their grades within the academic frames, was a limitation that Khushbu struggled with as a student. In spite of her efforts, labelled as a *‘slow learner’* impacted her self-image and prevented her from pursuing her passion for dance and art.

During college, she started volunteering with Had Anhad. As she started engaging in youth and adolescent programs in schools, she closely observed how the facilitators were interacting with the students in the classroom. The importance of experiential and qualitative education in shaping the students holistically struck her.

Challenge

In government schools, many times students from marginalised backgrounds often experience an unsupportive environment where they are exposed to aggression from teachers and parents. The lack of a nurturing environment hinders their ability to learn, grow, and succeed like child should. Moreover, she observed students facing challenges to express themselves or share their problems with elders around them.

“To address this, I decided to make the classroom space more flexible,” Khushbu.

Micro Steps

- Introduced energisers and quick ice-breaking activities at the starting of day that gets students open up in class and participate
- Ensured every student gets attention with regular check-ins after every 20 minutes
- Distributed all students into smaller, shuffling groups and assigned engaging knowledge-building activities
- Introduced flexible lesson plans that varied on subject and student basis
- Adjusted her teaching style to be more friendly and approachable, which significantly improved student responsiveness and engagement.

Mega Impact

Instead of the conventional student-teacher relationship that builds a power dynamic in the classroom, these steps enabled Khushbu to share the power with the students



and together create a safe space in the classroom, where they started engaging deeply and meaningfully. The journey of self-discovery, even as she contributed to the education of school students, enabled Khushbu to become more sensitized to the world around her. She has developed a deeper understanding of the society and the role she aspires to play within it. Continuing on her journey of creating enabling educational experiences, she is currently working on bridging the learning loss of adolescent girls in her community.

Meet The Contributors

Organisations that made this book come alive..

*Neha, Youth Facilitator
Antarang Foundation*



Agrini was started with the thought of creating a sustainable impact through education and awareness using new techniques in November 2009. It received incubation support from ComMutiny - The Youth Collective. Agrini Public School worked in Seoni District of Madhya Pradesh with the theory of change that if rural students have access to relevant high-quality education in their villages then they will collectively create an aware and sensitive rural community. This sensitised community will then be equipped to take responsibility for development in their village, ultimately leading to sustainable rural development.



ComMutiny stands for the first 'mutiny' within a young person, symbolic of the fact that social and systemic transformation cannot happen without personal transformation. Founded in 2008, ComMutiny - The Youth Collective is a community of practice of youth work organizations across the country engaged in Aggregating, Accelerating and Amplifying empowering youth spaces co-led with self-aware, active citizens i.e. Jagriks.



Had-Anhad

Had-Anhad started in 2013 and was registered as a public charitable trust in 2016 to work primarily towards capacity building, leadership and education of children & young people from the underprivileged sections. Till now, Had Anhad has worked with more than 17000 youth & adolescents from diverse schools, communities & colleges through campaigns, leadership workshops/journeys, exposure camps, and sessions. Volunteers who engage deeply with Had-Anhad have taken leadership roles by initiating campaigns and action projects on multiple social issues like exclusion, caste & gender-based discrimination, education, constitutional awareness, etc. Had-Anhad also works with institutions engaged with marginalized communities such as government schools, childcare institutions and community-based learning centres to impart education and training.



International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) is a global research institute with offices located in Washington, D.C.; New Delhi, India; Nairobi, Kenya; and Kampala, Uganda. Our research evidence identifies women's contributions as well as the obstacles that prevent them from being economically strong and able to fully participate in society. ICRW translates these insights into a path of action that honors women's human rights, ensures gender equality, and creates the conditions in which all women can thrive.

ICRW comprises social scientists, economists, public health specialists, and demographers, all of whom are gender experts. It is an institution of thought leaders driven by a passion to alleviate poverty and rectify injustice in the world.



People for Change is proactively functioning in the East and West Singhbhum districts of Jamshedpur, Jharkhand. Their work is extensively focused on school-going children and underprivileged children from underserved communities. The primary activity of the organization is education and youth development. It seeks to encourage children and youth to undertake self-to-society journeys by enabling them with critical life skills to establish personal and social transformation for a sustainable collected future.



Founded in the year 2013, Mantra stepped into the ecosystem with a vision to transform Public Education in India. The idea and belief in development of education leadership that inspired the team to initiate our work in Karnataka with 3 schools in 2014, has now become a game changer in 5 States with 284000+ education leaders who are transforming the reality of 266000+ schools in India.



Pratigya, established in June 2007, is an independent youth initiative committed to the cause of quality education for underprivileged children and mobilizing youth to be change agents. It believes that change is only possible through “Education”. It has several grassroots interventions and community-based programs, both in urban and rural areas of Jharkhand. It has also run state-wide campaigns for Child Trafficking Free India and the National Campaign to End Child Marriage in Jharkhand. Engagements with youth include programmes for sensitization, civic-constitutional education, and leadership development thereby enabling them to become agents of change in society.



Social Health and Education Development Organization (SHEDO) is a non-governmental organisation established in 2014 under the Society Registration Act 1973. The organization was established in the Timarni block of Harda district, Madhya Pradesh. Its value proposition is based on the organisation’s core belief that children and youth must be adequately empowered. In addition, they must possess enough self-esteem to independently face the world and its challenges. The organisation has, over a period five years, strategically built its key resources in the form of a group of energetic and enthusiastic young men and women, having their key strengths and competencies in different domains of the development sector. In the last decade, SHEDO has worked with 5500 women, 1500 artists, 7000 children, and 500 youth.



ShikshaLokam is an NGO founded under the aegis of Shibulal Family Philanthropic Initiatives. As an education leadership catalyst, the organisation co-creates continuous learning and improvement programs and solutions for education leaders, along with government functionaries and civil society organisations. We co-create the programs and solutions to restore the agency of education leaders (teachers, school leaders, community members, administrators, education officers, etc. ensuring an enriching learning environment for children) in the K-12 public education ecosystem, so that leaders’ ability to continuously improve is enhanced, they are able to solve the school improvement challenges on their own, and all our children get access to quality education as a fundamental right.



Swatantra Talim believes that children are born curious and the society should try to enhance this potential rather than binding them in designed structures. Let them explore and develop their own structures as it is a proven fact that we always remember what we learn through our own experiences. Swatantra Talim was born to walk with children who don't get the freedom to pursue their dreams and get the ‘talim’ they want. The organisation’s aim is to co-create spaces - both mental and physical where children can learn through their own experiences and make their own decisions.



In 2019, recognizing the need for mainstreaming youth-centric development across all sectors, Commutiny incubated The vartaLeap Coalition. It is a cross-sectoral grouping of youth-engaging organizations from the development sector, corporate, educational institutions, etc. The purpose of the coalition is to design, pilot and scale youth-centric innovations and enable appropriate narrative shifts. With over 150 youth-centric organisations in the ComMutiny-vartaLeap ecosystem, our collective goal is to co-create a world with... ‘Every Youth a Jagrik, Every Space Nurturing Jagriks’



Co-created by

“commutiny”
the youth collective



ShikshaLokam
Catalysing Education Leadership



shikshagraha



ArtaLeap
Beyond the demographic dividend