

Multi-Utility learning stations in rural libraries and Schools

Background:

The National Education Policy 2020 envisages an inclusive and structural change in the educational system. It focuses on 'Equitable and Inclusive Education' which reverberates the idea that no child should be left behind in terms of educational opportunity because of their background and sociocultural identities. NEP 2020 suggests state governments to identify SEDG children (Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) can be broadly categorized based on children with disabilities, gender identities (particularly female and transgender individuals), socio-cultural identities (such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, and minorities), geographical identities (such as students from villages, small towns, children from migrant families, children living in conflicts areas etc.

Inclusive education is a process which needs continuous support to children with disabilities who may have short term or long term special educational needs. This needs working in partnership with existing panchayaths as disability is a state subject and also a subject for the PRIs. Rights of persons with disabilities Act 2016 identifies 21 types of disabilities.

Multi Utility JOYFUL LEARNING stations FOR ALL CHILDREN in rural /remote schools

A Joyful learning station offers unique opportunity for all children including children with special needs to explore knowledge related to the Science /Arts / Music/ Indigenous Arts /Sports /Games /Food /Heritage and a vast other area of knowledge. Needless to say, such a knowledge hub must be Child centred, Inclusive, barrier free and joyful. A learning centre is typically a designated area within the classroom that provides students with exciting and interesting experiences to practice, enrich, reteach, and enhance their learning.

These types of centres are filled with manipulatives, art material, online games/videos/audio books, and other instructional tools. Students visit the centres to complete an assignment or consolidate learning that has taken place during the week in the respective classrooms, learn through different activities. In well-designed learning centres, students participate in activities that help them see curriculum subjects in real-time, hands-on ways. Working both independently and in small groups, students are provided with time and space to complete a project or learn about a subject in a more in-depth fashion. Multi utility learning stations works in close partnership with parents and local community. Learning stations in schools or for a cluster of school is an effort to promote active learning during all stages of the educational process, a technique that utilizes learning stations. There are many such joyful learning centres in other countries (<https://www.scholastic.com/>)

A learning station is a self-contained multi-purpose section of the classroom in which students engage in independent and self- directed learning activities. Such a joyful learning station can be established in a rural library that is essential to provide age-appropriate materials books/learning aids/online learning outcome based games and access to dynamic programs, fostering skills essential to excel in core and open curricular areas leading to holistic child development.

In Karnataka multi utility learning centres are being set up in Gram Panchayat (GP) libraries. A learning station needs the following devices/learning aids:-

- 1.Computer/s with 8GB ram
- 2.Alexa device
- 3.Samsung tablet
- 4.Elementary equitable inclusive education kit.

To run the mulit utility learning centres, the librarian will be motivated to take up the training. In case the librarian is unable to take up the training , then a member of the SHG working in the area will be trained and deployed in the centre by the GPs. 15 days training and capacity building is provided using online training portals such as google classrooms/DEEKSHA /SWAYAM.

It can be inferred that the establishment of these Multi Facility Learning Centres is a successful strategy for development of children through education in a joyful manner.

