



GONOTSAV 2.0

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Manuscript details:

Available online on <http://www.ijlsci.in>

ISSN: 2320-964X (Online)

ISSN: 2320-7817 (Print)

Cite this article as:

Dabhi Ranjit Shamjibhai (2025) GONOTSAV 2.0, *Int. J. of. Life Sciences*, Special Issue, A21, 9-12.

Article published in Special Issue of "International Conference on Futuristic Approach for Viksit Bharat (ICFAVB-2047) Organized by Government College, Dholpur (Raj.) Dated 23 and 24 Dec. 2024.



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ABSTRACT

The Gunotsav 2.0 program is a comprehensive quality assessment initiative launched by the Government of Gujarat to evaluate and enhance primary education. This paper examines the program's structure, which operates through a unique two-phase evaluation process. The first phase involves self-evaluation by schools, assessing students' scholastic competencies in reading, writing, and numeracy, alongside co-scholastic activities and infrastructure. The second phase deploys senior state bureaucrats to conduct external evaluations of a representative sample of schools, fostering accountability and direct engagement with the community. The study highlights Gunotsav 2.0's objectives of bridging learning outcome gaps, creating an outcome-oriented performance culture, and building awareness among all stakeholders. While the program has shown significant success in improving school facilities and maintaining high enrollment rates, the author notes a critical divergence between the government's intended purpose—to guide curriculum and teaching methods—and how teachers perceive the evaluation. The program stands as a significant state-level accountability framework aimed at driving qualitative improvements in Gujarat's primary education system.

Keywords : Gunotsav 2.0, Primary Education, Quality Assessment, Learning Outcomes, Educational Accountability, Gujarat Education

INTRODUCTION

The Gujarat State Government has implemented the Gunotsav 2.0 program to assess the reading, writing and arithmetic skills acquired by primary school children studying in the government system in the state of Gujarat (Drèze & Sen, 2013). The Gunotsav 2.0 program is being organized to help classroom teachers in basic education. The Gunotsav 2.0 program is not an evaluation of primary school teachers but is intended to give direction to the curriculum and teaching-learning methods taught to students by the state government (Annual Status of

Education Report [ASER], 2023). Therefore, the Gunotsav 2.0 program is being organized to fulfill this objective. But teachers evaluate the Gunotsav 2.0 program in a completely different way. For the achievement of such a universal objective, it is necessary to address the beliefs prevailing in the minds of the state government and teachers. If the state government is organizing the program for the purpose for which it is organized. If teachers can achieve those objectives, then only the Gunotsav 2.0 program can yield very good results. Gujarat is the only state in the entire country where a qualitative evaluation of schools and teachers has been done to bring about qualitative changes in primary education (Government of Gujarat, 2023). Not only this, by providing set criteria for the state's primary schools to become ideal, this Gunotsav 2.0 program provides a valuable opportunity for about two lakh teachers to make their best efforts for the development of about sixty lakh primary school children of tomorrow. This three-tier evaluation evaluates academic evaluation, education-related, assessment of skills and maintenance of physical facilities. Based on this evaluation, gradation is given to schools and teachers. Not only this, best efforts are made to bring about qualitative changes in primary education by encouraging schools with lower grades to get higher grades.

Primary education is the foundation on which the development of every citizen and the nation as a whole built on. In recent past, India's improved education system is often cited as one of the main contributors to the economic development of India. At the same time, the quality of elementary education in India has also been a major concern. Student of primary school at least have basic knowledge of reading, writing and simple mathematics equations which may be helpful in performing their daily activities.

While in Gujarat there has been notable focus and efforts on enrollment, and have brought a fair share of success for the primary education, concern for learning outcomes and quality provided in primary education has been addressed by various enhancement programmes for learning improvement. It is for strengthening the quality outcomes, the government of Gujarat launched a programme called Gunotsav, or 'Celebrating Quality'. Therefore Gunotsav is defined as an accountability

framework for quality of primary education which includes learning outcomes of children as well as co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community participation.

This programme was started by the state Education department during November 2009, with an aim to evaluate primary education scenario and grade school teachers accordingly. State Government has seen primary education as a grass-root sector and initiated with revolutionary experiments. The government of Gujarat has initiated a series of steps to improve the level of learning in its schools across the state and wishes to take these efforts forward, so as to achieve visible and measurable positive change. Government's efforts have succeeded in increasing school enrollments and bringing down school drop-out ratio, two major concerns in education field. The aim is to ensure that Gujarat should be among the top three states of the country in terms of student learning outcomes over the next 5 years.

A unique example of being a state initiative-Gunotsav is carried out with the participation of all state departments to strengthen 'quality' components of the Dept of Education. Different state departments took up additional responsibilities for this period.

Importance

The efforts of the Government of Gujarat, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Ministers, and high officials at the state and district levels in the Gunotsav 2.0 program have resulted in significant improvement in the educational and physical facilities in the schools of the state. The results of this program are very good, with the school admission rate being around 99%.

Objectives

- To bring awareness among teachers, students, administrators, communities & stakeholders for quality education.
- To ensure the enhancement of reading, writing and numerical skills for all children studying in primary schools (Std 2 to 5).
- To ensure the enhancement of subject knowledge for all children studying in upper primary sections (Std 6 to 8).

- To assess quality based classroom teaching learning processes followed in schools.
- To address gaps in achieving learning outcomes and to acknowledge achievement.
- To track the children based on learning outcome levels and identify focus areas for remedial action.
- To build an environment of accountability - for an outcome oriented performance at all levels across scholastic, co-scholastic outcomes and stakeholder participation.

Phase One

In the First phase self evaluation is done for 34210 primary schools which include all Government primary schools, Ashram schools and Granted schools. Before the first phase, schedules were shared at district, block, cluster and school level, for the self evaluation to be done in every school. During the earlier three Gunotsavs, each school was given a school self evaluation booklet. It has instructions and guidelines for conducting the academic test for children and for the assessment of school infrastructure. All children of Std III to VII/VIII took the test for subjects like Math, Gujarati, English, Social Studies and Environmental Science. After the academic tests, teachers checked and graded each child for their respective classes and standards. Forms were filled and the data were submitted to the CRCC. Data gathered by all schools were uploaded on the Gunotsav web portal, within 15 days at the cluster level.

In April 2013 Gunotsav, each school was given a school Selfevaluation booklet with instructions for conducting the academic test for children and for the assessment of co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community mobilization. Assessment was carried out in the presence of School management committee (SMC). The School assessment format is designed for 55 indicators for 11 categories can be assessed on OMR based rating scale. Over 53 lakh children of standard II to VIII have been given unique DISE ID number as part of new system of Child Tracking for Learning Outcomes. For the purpose, children of Standard II to V were assessed for their performance in basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy; whereas children of standard VI to VIII took the OMR based test for all scholastic subjects including Gujarati, Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Mathematics, Social Sciences and Science and Technology. For standard 2 to 5

individual child wise results were prepared utilizing OMR sheets and uploaded centrally. For standard 6 to 8 child wise OMR based answer sheet each with unique DISE ID number were collected and the database was created during scanning by applying OMR / ICR / OCR technology and by applying various validations. Utilizing this database, generated various reports and graphs for remedial measures. Similarly, reports / graphs for co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community mobilization were generated. This child wise database was placed online for utilization by schools.

Phase Two

Evaluation for the second phase follows the self evaluation. To create a spirit of a high priority to this cause and to make those in the field of education feel the value of this activity, the complete strength of government machinery is deployed with a first hand briefing by the Chief Minister to the participating officers in the state capital. Simultaneous satellite based conferences are held at district levels for district officers to share the process. The second phase of Gunotsav involves 3200 senior bureaucrats of the State evaluate government primary schools covering 25% schools from all the blocks of the state. Officers and their teams visit one school each day and cover three schools in this exercise, each year. The team comprises of a senior state government official, accompanied by one or two members from his/her own department/office and a local liaison officer. Great emphasis is laid on uniform numbers of schools to be assessed in all clusters/blocks/districts of the state.

The Officer and team spend an entire day in the selected school (from morning assembly to the evening presentation by students and meeting with parents) The team has to reach before school time, participate in the assembly, participate in the school review and non academic and academic assessments-participate in the mid day meal and also review the school's basic facilities on matters of safety and utilization of resources.

After school hours, the officer and team interact with parents and take view and suggestions for educational activities in the village/school. At the end of the day, in school, Officers attend the cultural programme. This encourages the scope of participation among parents and makes them aware of their role in the school activities.

The class assessment by Officers in the selected schools is conducted for Reading, Math and English. For the 'Reading assessment'-in each standard, and in each division, 20 children or 20 % (whichever is much) are assessed. All the students of the class are assessed for Writing and Numeric Skills. There are specially prepared booklets for reading, writing and math. Officers and accompanying team members divide themselves in visiting classes in the school.

For reading-officers, themselves assess the child's reading and grade them on their competency for reading. Teachers in front of the officers, which the offices randomly check as well, check the written and math evaluation.

Apart from assessing the competencies in each subject, officers assessed parameters of co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community participation.

CONCLUSION

Gunotsav 2.0 stands as a pioneering and comprehensive framework for quality enhancement in Gujarat's primary education. By integrating self-evaluation with large-scale external assessment, it creates a robust system of accountability and data-driven intervention. The program's unique approach of involving the entire state administration underscores a deep commitment to educational improvement. For Gunotsav 2.0 to yield optimal results, it is essential that its intended purpose as a developmental and diagnostic tool is fully internalized by all stakeholders, particularly teachers. When perceived as a collaborative effort to "celebrate quality," it holds the profound potential to transform the educational landscape of the state.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest in relation to this research.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

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