

TRIGGERING SUCCESS: **INNOVATIVE INTERVENTIONS TO** **PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS IN INDIA**



Triggering Success: Innovative Interventions to Promote Educational Access in India

Compiled by Jacqueline Bhabha and Anisha Gopi

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Preface

Thanks to the generosity and support of the Tata Trusts, the Harvard South Asia Institute, in collaboration with the Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, had the opportunity of convening some of India's most impressive and creative civil society organizations working in the field of girls' education. The convening took the form of a short but intensive workshop outside Mumbai at the end of January 2016. During the course of this meeting, formal presentations on aspects of law, policy and practice concerning education in contemporary India in general and girls' education in particular combined with opportunities for group discussion, networking and case presentation. The result was a rich exchange of views, a learning opportunity for participants, and a decision to highlight for more general dissemination and benefit some of the most original and innovative gender education-related interventions. While some contributions focus on aligning intervention outcomes with development investments to advance a clearly articulated reform agenda, others probe elusive questions about the social factors that impinge on girls' educational success. This publication's modest goal, and hope is that the following pages will provide interesting and instructive reading for a range of audiences. This effort is, part of a broader set of projects distributed nationwide and across public and private sectors aimed at radically improving access to quality education at all stages of the pedagogical process for all India's children and adolescents, an aspiration still a long way in the making.

We welcome feedback from readers and hope to develop further work with our dedicated researcher and practitioner colleagues over the coming months and years.

Jacqueline Bhabha
Professor of the Practice of Human Rights
Harvard University.

Introduction

Education is central to the future development of India's citizenry as active and empowered contributors in building a vibrant and democratic country with social justice and non-discrimination at its core.

Over the past decades, dramatic strides have been witnessed in terms of exponential increase in access to primary education of very large sections of previously excluded populations. However, enduring challenges remain. One relates to ensuring access for the most marginalized and stigmatized groups, including low caste girls, tribal children, children with disabilities and children living in conflict-affected areas. Another challenge relates to improving the quality of learning and the outcomes of the educational system, to ensure access to skill development necessary for productive and well-remunerated employment. Finally, the imperative of reversing pervasive gender-based discrimination continues to generate challenging goals for educational interventions across India.

It is in this context, over an eighteen-month period, that the Harvard South Asia Institute (SAI) explored issues, challenges and solutions connected with the educational empowerment of women in India. The project consisted of field research, capacity strengthening, knowledge dissemination and engagement by Harvard faculty with select organizations across different states. The project reached out to over 45 organizations and worked closely with six of them. Contributions to this volume are primarily based on the work done by four of these organizations. They outline a range of approaches, research studies and policy innovations. Together they paint a rich picture of the toolkit available for future scaling by the central and state governments in India.

The reflections by Alison Bukhari and Safeena Husain from Educate Girls, and Dr. Shantha Sinha, Orla Kelly and Professor Jacqueline Bhabha discussing the Champions Project focus on strategies for incentivizing and scaling success. They explore a range of questions, from the impact of volunteer assistance on increasing the adult to child ratio in schools to multi-factoral drivers of female educational success in challenging contexts. The reflections generate the context for detailed case studies that follow.

The case studies by M V Foundation, White Lotus Trust, Ibtada and Centre for Unfolding Learning Potentials (CULP) focus on innovative strategies introduced

to maximize educational potential, while at the same time exploring the individual narratives that illustrate the broad array of challenges and obstacles that students continue to face. The case studies capture a diverse set of initiatives, from the introduction of targeted means of transport to ensure safety, reliability and affordability in access to education, to the development of alternative forms of educational opportunity that drive significant norm and behavior change in vulnerable communities.

Throughout the different narratives, several themes recur. They include the deep commitment of most parents, particularly mothers, to their children's educational success despite the difficulties they encounter in supporting this practically or financially. They also include the powerful impact of consistent community-based engagement by non-governmental actors as an essential element in building the trust and confidence needed to change traditional gender and child rearing norms. Together these essays and case studies generate useful material for future educational interventions, not only at the primary school level but also at the secondary and tertiary levels, areas that are increasingly vital if entrenched social and economic inequalities are to be challenged.

We wish to acknowledge the efforts of our team that made this publication possible. The guidance from Professor Tarun Khanna, Director, and Meena Hewett, Executive Director, Harvard SAI was valuable. We are very grateful to Professor Jacqueline Bhabha, Faculty Chair of the women's track of the project, for compiling this publication and providing very valuable inputs and insights throughout the course of the project. She was ably assisted by Anisha Gopi who coordinated the field efforts with all grantees, knowledge partners and subject experts. The creative team led by Usha Gawde and Aashika Cunha spared no effort in presenting the content with fine aesthetics. Clare, our copy editor, has done a brilliant job despite tight deadlines. Kundan, Nora, Meghan and Diana from the Harvard SAI Team helped us at every stage of this project. We are obliged to R. Venkataramanan, Executive Trustee, Tata Trusts, and his team for the grant and their consistent cooperation.

We hope that researchers, practitioners, civil society leaders, gender activists, educationists and policy makers will draw some valuable insights from this compilation.

- Dr. Shashank Shah

**Project Director, *Livelihood Creation in India*
Harvard University South Asia Institute**



Teacher - Learner interaction

Center For Unfolding Learning Potentials (CULP)

**Contextualization of Primary Education in Small
Remote Schools of Rajasthan**



SECTION - 1 Introduction

The Center for Unfolding Learning Potentials (CULP) was founded in 1998 by a group of professionals to take up innovative experiments, organized field studies and teachers' trainings for independent schools. Once the strength of the group was consolidated, it was registered as a non-profit, non-government organization under Rajasthan's Society Registration Act 1958 in the year 2001. Thereafter formal project proposals were submitted to organizations.

CULP's vision is 'towards a learning and democratic society' and its mission is 'to make learning unfold and develop in an environment of mutuality and discovery'. The broad objectives of the organization are:



Girls bridge course graduates joined mainstream schools

- To conduct action research and undertake initiatives on current social issues related to human development, environment and population;
- To organize and strengthen people and the structure and form of institutions as the need arises;
- To ensure appropriate strategies and management processes for information through assessment of educational and social realities;
- To develop and disseminate diverse educational material;
- To conduct innovative experiments in the areas of education and social development;
- To empower deprived sections of society, especially women, for their development;
- To build up a learning environment according to the learners' needs, both institutional and individual.

In 2002, based on the strength of its members, CULP was invited by the Government of Rajasthan and UNICEF and assigned the task to design and implement an innovative project called 'Pehchan'⁷⁶ for education of out-of-school girls in rural Jaipur district. Looking at the strength of the Pehchan project and its learning material, the Jaipur District Administration instructed the government schools to take help from CULP functionaries for qualitative improvement in their schools.⁷⁷ Subsequently, the state government also decided to expand the project model for educating out-of-school children in 22 blocks of seven tribal districts in Rajasthan, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNICEF for funding support under the Rajasthan Education Initiative, and invited CULP to collaborate on the project with the government and UNICEF.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ A Hindi word that means 'identity', used to establish self-identity of girls in rural society where a discriminatory environment prevails for girls or women.

⁷⁷ District Collector Jaipur. (2003). Office Order no. Vikas / 2002/1054-1073 dated 4.04.2003.

⁷⁸ Rajasthan Council of Elementary Education. (2008). Office Order no. RCEE/ Jai / REI / 08 / 28864-70 dtd 13.06.2008.

When the process of conceptualization of the Pehchan project was initiated in 2001, the situation in rural and tribal Rajasthan regarding the status of girls was poor, both educationally and socially. The status is shown in Exhibit – 1.1.

Exhibit – 1.1

Status of girl children in rural and tribal Rajasthan

Problems/gaps identified by CULP team addressed:

- Gender discrimination in education
- Child marriage (Average age of marriage of girls: 13 years & boys: 17 years in tribal areas)
- Child labor
- Poor functioning of rural government schools, causing low learning levels of students and high dropout of children

Nature of the problem: Out-of-school adolescent girls

Scale of the issue: (i) 38-48% over-aged out-of-school girls (9-14 years) in rural Jaipur (2002),⁷⁹ Tonk (2005)⁸⁰ and Banswara (2008).⁸¹

(ii) The District Administration identified about 30,000 adolescent out-of-school girls (2000-01) in rural Jaipur, and Household (HH) survey (CULP 2002) data projected the above figure to be more than 1 lakh out-of-school girls in rural Jaipur.

iii) Government survey (Child Tracking Survey 2010): about 12 lakhs children (6-14 years) out of school, comprising about 59.4% girls.⁸² 32.2% of the total workforce are children in the 7-14-years age group, 62% are

⁷⁹ CULP. (2002). Household Survey Report, Chakras Block in Jaipur District (Rajasthan).

⁸⁰ CULP. (2002). Household Survey Report, Niwai Block in Tonk District (Rajasthan).

⁸¹ CULP. (2008). Household Survey Report, Ghatol and Peepalkhoont Blocks in Banswara District (Rajasthan).

⁸² CULP. (2013). State Education Report Rajasthan – Primary Middle and Secondary Education: A Working Paper.

girls,⁸³ and 28% of children are engaged in labor. 35% of HHs have at least one child working in tribal areas,⁸⁴ 13% migrate for work (for 3-12 months).⁸⁵ Female literacy in rural Banswara is 24%, which is the lowest in the state (Census 2011).

(iv) Significant decline in basic learning skills of students in primary grades, causing declining trend in enrolment and retention of children in government schools (ASER 2012 & Shiksha Samblan 2013).

(v) *Dungarpur* and *Banswara* are the lowest-placed districts in the Human Development Index (HDI) (2007) with a value of 0.409 and 0.425, compared to an overall HDI of 0.710 for the entire state of Rajasthan. Worst malnutrition was recorded in Banswara. (HunGama Report 2011).



The pertinent information about CULP is as follows:

CULP's major goals are to:

- Bring positive change in society, particularly towards the education of girl children.
- Strengthen the school system for ensuring quality education to all children, especially children of excluded communities.

⁸³ Burra, N. Child Labour in Rural Areas with Special Focus on Migration, Agriculture, Mining and Brick Kilns, p. 20.

⁸⁴ Rajasthan Baseline Report, pp. 14 and 26. Dakshini Rajasthan Majdoor Union. Child Labour in Cottonseed Production – A Case Study of Cottonseed Farms in North Gujarat, p. 43.

⁸⁵ Save the Children (2011). Report on Consultative Process for Addressing Issues of Child Migration and Child Labour in Cotton Agriculture.

CULP's vision is to:

- (i) Demonstrate effective learning strategies in Multi-Level Multi-Grade (ML-MG) situations
- (ii) Mainstream out-of-school girls in age-appropriate grades
- (iii) Qualitative improvement in government schools
- (iv) Empower children's collectives / adolescent girls' forums for inculcating self-esteem, self-confidence and life skills
- (v) Strengthen the government system and community-based organizations

Larger opportunity for scaling the organization's solutions:

- The model has proven its relevance in numerous geographical and cultural/social settings without making any significant change.
- The model is already being used by government / SSA and NGOs / Civil Society Organizations for education of out-of-school children in Rajasthan and also in other states (e.g. Uttar Pradesh and Odisha).

External factors (e.g. government schemes), which can take solutions to a wider audience:

- Since the program is being implemented in collaboration with the SSA/state government, public resources are available for that purpose.
- The Right to Education Act 2009⁸⁶ ensures 'free & compulsory education' (Classes 1-8) to all children (6-14 years) and the government is committed to comply to achieve this target.

The CULP model can be seen as a viable intervention for educating all children, irrespective of their location and context.

Innovativeness of the project:

The Pehchan project has evolved and matured as an innovative project in terms of addressing the education of girls, its features and the best approach to learning.

⁸⁶ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009. <http://mhnd.gov.in/rte>

How are needs being addressed?

- Reaching out to unserved and underserved population in remote geographical locations to address the learning needs of girls from deprived communities.

Unique features of the program:

- Rights-based framework
- Participatory approach in assessing the situation, planning, review and monitoring of the program
- Collaborative nature
- Organizing *Pehchanshalas*⁸⁷ for imparting age-appropriate learning competencies (including life skills), as a precondition for successful mainstreaming of out-of-school children
- Use of multiple intelligences for developing professional skills of teachers
- Locally relevant teaching and learning material

Multi-level learning approach of CULP:

- Children normally work in three groups, each at a different level of learning.
- Learning process divided into three parts:

- (1) Teacher-directed learning activity
- (2) Group learning activity
- (3) Individual practice activity

For the latter two, worksheets are used. Relevant Teacher Learning Material (TLM) facilitates accelerated learning.

The implementation of the first project was acknowledged as innovative and effective.⁸⁸ It even became a subject of research for educating out-of-school girls. Prior to the Pehchan project, for about one year, the CULP group members used their professional competence by organizing teacher trainings and survey

studies sponsored by various schools and organizations, as indicated by pictures 1, 2 and 3 of Exhibit 1.2

Exhibit – 1.2
Box 1: Brochures of CULP and assorted activities before and after CULP was institutionalized.



Thereafter, the Pehchan project was extended to other districts (Tonk, Jhalawar and Banswara) and supported by other organizations, such as UNICEF, Save the Children, Axis Bank Foundation, The Hans Foundation, Dasra, Resource Alliance and EdelGive Foundation in collaboration with government and other NGOs.

It has been reported that CULP ensures access to quality education to out-of-school children, especially girls, and improves the teaching and learning processes in mainstream schools.⁸⁹

The experience of CULP during its various phases has shown that the Pehchan-shala model is replicable and scalable because of the learning material it has developed. Reports by Dasra⁹⁰ and The Resource Alliance⁹¹ validate this conclusion.

⁸⁷ Bridge Course Center(s) for imparting age appropriate learning skills to out-of-school adolescent girls for their mainstreaming.

⁸⁸ Centre for Educational Innovation (2015). <http://www.educationinnovations.org/program/pehchan-project>

⁸⁹ Krishna, G. (2015). In the Rajasthan Desert, Education for Girl Children Blooms. Business Standard.

⁹⁰ Dasra. (2014). Empowering Adolescent Girls in India.

⁹¹ The Resource Alliance. (2015). Celebrating Success ... Rewarding Excellence, p. 13.

Exhibit – 1.3

The project from its pilot phase to expansion phase

- Pilot project initiated in 12 habitations in one block of Jaipur benefitted about 350 out-of-school adolescent girls in 2002.
- Scaled up to 3,500 habitations in 15 blocks of three districts covering about 1 lakh out-of-school children (75% girls) in a period of one and a half decades.
- About 80% of girls successfully joined mainstream schools at upper primary and secondary level at the age-appropriate grade.
- Pehchan project as successful model, still being continued and able to attract funding sources.
- Replicated by other partner NGOs in 19 districts (e.g. Jhalawar, Dholpur, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Alwar) with the technical support of CULP.
- Treated as an integral part of the school system by the government due to the collaborative mode which synergized efforts for ensuring quality education to adolescent girls.
- Learning package being used in link schools for improving pedagogic process and creating a child-friendly environment.
- Course curriculum integrates life skills and adolescent health issues.
- Both NGOs and government are using the package under different programs for similar groups.

A serious attempt was made by CULP to contextualize primary education through the Pehchan project of bridge course schools for dropout and non-starter girls (viewed as over-aged and never-enrolled) of small habitations of rural Jaipur district which made an impact at the national and international levels as mentioned in a UNICEF-sponsored study report⁹² and action-research studies on feministic pedagogy by a senior member of the academic team of the organization. These got disseminated through e-group discussion⁹³ as well as a discussion paper for the Harvard Extension School (Education)⁹⁴ that emerged

out of a concept note entitled 'Do women and men learn differently?' Also, incorporation of some of the practices of the intervention in some consequent projects in rural and tribal small schools in Rajasthan has been reported.

Furthermore, the National Council for Educational Research and Training supported the research⁹⁵ of CULP on intervention activities relating to transition from home to school language.

On the basis of the observational visits and invited inputs by various organizations such as the Rajasthan State Education Department officials, the intervention was highlighted. Some salient features of CULP's intervention were included in the *Bal Mitra Vidyalaya Shikshak Margdarshika* (Child-Friendly Schools: Teachers' Guidebook) to be used by the DIET (District Institute of Education and Training) Dungarpur.⁹⁶



Teacher's Diaries

CULP is working on multi-level, non-graded and rights-based curricular frameworks by assessing the current situation (e.g. learning level of children, awareness of the community and capacity of stakeholders) and sharing it with

⁹² Sullivan, A. et al. (2005). Educating 'Out-of-School Girls': An Assessment of the Pehchan Project in Rajasthan, UNICEF New Delhi.

⁹³ Kishore, L. (2008). Do Men and Women Learn Differently? <http://www.mernews.com/article/do-men-and-women-learn-differently/140198.shtml>

⁹⁴ Taylor, T. (2009). Do Men and Women Learn Differently? <http://sites.harvard.edu/ich/icb.do?keyword=k40630&pageid=ich.page251753>

⁹⁵ CULP. (2004). Developing and Trialling Language Material for Transition from Local Dialect to Standard Hindi for Rural Rajasthan Children Entering Grade one.

⁹⁶ District Institute of Education and Training. (2014). Child-Friendly Schools: Teachers' Guidebook.

stakeholders. This is the beginning point to initiate discussion and discourse, followed by intervention through engagement with duty-bearers including their capacity building, development of study materials, teaching and learning materials, packages for classroom support to out-of-school children to improve learning, pedagogic intervention with teachers (activity-based accelerated learning, development and usage of innovative TLM) and formation of a collective resource group for shared learning (e.g. teachers' resource group on pedagogic sharing). CULP works with marginalized girls' populations where access and quality is a major concern for them by engaging intensively with the government system and the community.

Some newspapers have also been following the success stories of the Pehchan project,^{97,98} and advocacy for the protection of the girl child.⁹⁹

CULP's model focuses on leveraging government infrastructure and funds and garnering community support to make its intervention sustainable.

CULP, as an NGO, is a well-recognized organization in education and its work won recognition by receiving two prestigious awards:

(i) The **Dasra Girl Power Award 2014 for empowering adolescent girls** in the **Education**¹⁰⁰ category. The award is an initiative of **Dasra** in collaboration with **USAID** and the **Kiawah Trust**. The award recognizes innovative and high-impact work for adolescent girls but also draws attention to issues affecting adolescent girls.

(ii) **India NGO Award 2014–15 in Small Organization category**.¹⁰¹ The award is an initiative of *The Resource Alliance* and sponsored by the *Rockefeller Foundation* and the *EdelGive Foundation*. The award recognizes and celebrates excellence in the non-profit sector and promotes good standards and practices in resource mobilization, accountability and transparency, and overall credibility of the non-profit sector for long-term sustainability.



Girls' Festival

Pehchan Project

The Pehchan project has been the flagship project of CULP.^{102,103} The specific objectives of the program are to:

- (i) Create a positive environment among the rural community towards girl child education.
- (ii) Ensure access to quality elementary education to out-of-school adolescent girls for achieving age-appropriate learning levels for their successful mainstreaming.
- (iii) Inculcate life skills and impart adequate knowledge of health and personal hygiene to adolescent girls so that they can understand their bodies, democratic and development processes, and can develop their identity, self-esteem and self-confidence in order to make conscious decisions about their lives.
- (iv) Improve pedagogic processes in government elementary schools in order to create an enabling environment for girls.

⁹⁷ Times of India. (2009). Pehchanshala: A boost for women education, p. 4.

⁹⁸ Dasgupta, K. (2014). Back to School. <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/back-to-school/story-YR4INDc3Q6CRLRTbH2ReKM.html>

⁹⁹ Hindustan Times. (2010). Need for Strict Application of Act for Saving Girl Child, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ Dasra Girl Power. (2014). Award Announcement - Education Category - Dasra Philanthropy Week 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBBmupqEMNE>

¹⁰¹ India NGO Awards 2014–15 Winners Felicited in Delhi. http://southasia.oneworld.net/news/india-ngo-awards-2014-2015-winners-felicited-in-delhi#V_CjNNR97VQ

¹⁰² Khattar, S. (2009). School Education in Rural India. Retrieved from: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/School-education-in-rural-India/articleshow/4172974.cms>

¹⁰³ Pehchanshala: A Boost for Women Education by CULP. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ds4YXdcGinE>

Project Beneficiaries

The following steps were involved in selection of direct beneficiaries (mainly out-of-school adolescent girls):

- (i) Interactive meetings with concerned officials of education departments at block and district levels, community leaders and teachers at block and district levels for selection of blocks, gram panchayats, villages and habitations where the maximum number of out-of-school children (OoSC) were found as per government records/child-tracking data.
- (ii) Block-wise and gram panchayat-wise lists of habitations/revenue villages were prepared for conducting household surveys/rapid assessment for identification of OoSC.
- (iii) Lists of OoSC were collected from government schools.
- (iv) A household survey was conducted in selected habitations for identification /updating of the list of the target beneficiary children (OoSC) procured from the government schools.
- (v) Habitation-wise lists of OoSC were prepared after consolidation and analysis of information of the survey/assessment. We then shared the surveyed data or lists in community meetings and with school teachers for verification/endorsement of the survey data.
- (vi) The final lists of the target beneficiaries were prepared with the verification of the school head teacher. We submitted lists to the SSA/ government with the proposal to start the bridge course centers in those habitations where a minimum of 15 children were available in the target group.
- (vii) After getting final approval from the district authority, the Pehchanshalas (bridging course centers) were started to impart quality education in addition to providing life skills to the target beneficiaries.



Interactive classroom

Exhibit – 1.4

Pictures of beneficiaries of the Pehchan project



The project was implemented with the following strategies:

- (1) Utilization of existing resources of government school systems.
- (2) Establishment of inter-linkages with the Education-for-All project to initiate a model of bridging courses with emphasis on multi-level cooperative learning.
- (3) Ensuring the participation of the community so that it can play a vital and pro-active role in the project.
- (4) Sensitizing the community and government school system to address the larger social and gender equity issues in society.
- (5) Forming adolescent girls' forums after the completion of bridging courses for continued activity in the village for social change.

The project has four main components to facilitate annual and quarterly action plans. These are:

- i) Community cooperation and micro-planning at the village level;
- ii) Two/three-year bridging courses;
- iii) Pedagogic improvement in government schools;
- iv) Adolescent girls' forums.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Voice of Beneficiary. CULP. (2015). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXFSGopbaGM>

The major activities organized were as follows:

- Household surveys/situation analysis to identify the target children and rapport building with the parents and community through interactive meetings and enrolment drives;¹⁰⁵
- Developed a 40-day training module for bridging course teachers;
- Reorganized the curriculum of elementary education by integrating life skills and adolescent health issues to make it relevant to local environment and adolescent girls;
- Bridging course centers (5 hours per day at village level) for a period of 24 to 30 months;
- Two-day monthly workshops with the bridging course teachers (four camps);
- Organized pre-tests, mid-session tests and post-tests for assessing the learning achievement levels of bridging course students and impact studies;
- Organized three to five-day reflective workshops with government school teachers to strengthen their professional skills;
- Formed and strengthened community/parents' groups for seeking their support in planning and running the bridging course activities at the school level and regular participation in formal meetings of gram sabhas and gram panchayat meetings to share the activities of the project;
- Exposure visits for adolescent girls;¹⁰⁶
- Games and sports, children's and girls' festivals.¹⁰⁷



Girls with community leaders supported for higher education

¹⁰⁵ Campaign for Enrolment in School. CULP (2015). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdhVen_rmfQ

¹⁰⁶ The Times of India. (2006). A Learning Experience.

¹⁰⁷ Children's Festival. CULP. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdhVen_rmfQ

Exhibit – 1.5

Pictures of some prominent activities with girls



- Formed and strengthened adolescent girls' collectives (*Kishori Manch*s) at village level to impart life skills (inculcate self-confidence, self-esteem, identity in the community/society, understanding the traditions and customs related to women/girls prevailing in the local community and also understanding development and democratic processes/practices and achieving skills in decision-making).
- Organized adolescent girls' meet / *Kishori Melas* / *Utsav* (festivals).
- Systematic documentation of the activities organized and shared with the partners and other stakeholders.

I. Curriculum (for grade levels 1 to 5, relevant for over-aged, non-starter, out-of-school girls)

The curricular approach of a multi-grade, multi-level learning strategy has been conceptualized at CULP through the following measures:

- Prepared a curriculum document by reorganizing state curriculum into learning units, making it relevant to the local context and age-appropriate;

- Three to five-week-long integrated concepts as learning units;
- About 25 to 30 total learning units from grade 1 to 5 for each subject;
- Freedom for self-pacing.

Developed systematic learning material:

- Teacher-made big-books (*Anubhav Pothis*) with visuals;
- *Dhara Pothi* for grade levels 3 to 5 with abridged subject matter appropriate for older children;
- *Setu Pothi* (a guidebook for teachers for grade levels 1 and 2);
- Worksheets for different subjects;
- *Jeevan Koshal* (a teachers' guide booklet) for imparting life skills to adolescent girls.

II. Bridging Courses: Teaching Learning Material (package) for Each Center

Teaching and Learning Material (TLM) was required which met the learning levels of students for the multi-level learning situation described above. Materials to facilitate the learning process were developed and provided to both teachers and students in the centers.

All Pehchanshalas have the following TLM package in the required quantity, which facilitates group learning:

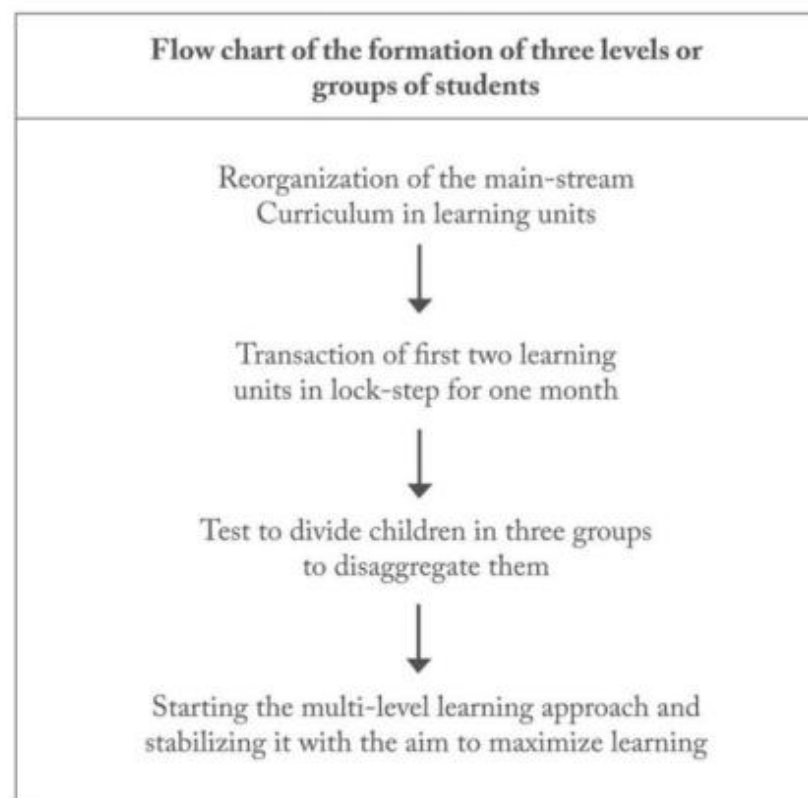
1. A curriculum document;
2. *Setu Pothis* for mathematics and language (Hindi): A guidebook for teachers for grade levels 1 and 2;
3. *Dhara Pothis* for Hindi and math: Guidebooks for grade levels 3 and 4 developed by academic supporters;
4. *Chhan-Been*: Environmental Studies (EVS) activity booklets for grade levels 3, 4 and 5 developed by academic supporters;
5. *Anubhav Pothis*: Eight-page big books (one for each learning episode) developed by teachers for beginners;
6. Material for transition from home language to school language;
7. Group-learning worksheets (50-60) developed by teachers under the guidance of academic supporters;
8. Self-learning worksheets (about 100);
9. Flash cards (100-150);
10. Game boards;
11. Concept learning charts (10-20);

12. Other charts (10-20) including web charts and flow charts;
13. Resource material on adolescent health, HIV/AIDS, life skills, etc.

The above material was continuously developed and revised based on new experiences, and teachers and project support staff were oriented in the process of innovative learning material development.

Multi-Level Learning Approach: CULP follows the multi-level learning approach in which children work in three groups, each at a different level of learning. In order to handle three groups of students with five to nine students in each group, the learning process has been divided into the following three parts: (1) Teacher-directed learning activity; (2) Group learning activity; and (3) Individual practice activity. For the latter two, worksheets are used.

Exhibit – 1.6



Since the learning experiences needed to be related to over-age, dropout and non-starter girls, special learning materials were developed as summarized in the following exhibit.

Exhibit – 1.7

The development and use of supplementary material relevant to bridging courses and some pictures	
Stages	Features
1. For standards 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition from home language to school language • Use of big books for Hindi, math and English • Use of worksheets for group work and individual practice
2. For standards 3 and 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of abridged version of Hindi material • Combined learning units for EVS and use of a workbook • Complete course of mathematics and English with worksheets for group and individual work • Mainstreaming of girls in the 9-11-year age group
3. For standard 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete textbook lessons with the use of teacher-presented material in the form of charts and use of blackboard • Use of worksheets for group and individual work • Preparation for test for entrance to formal school/mainstreaming/certification for girls in the 11-14-year age group

Furthermore, the span of two years was split into periods of six months or semesters. In the first semester, an effort is made to prepare children to become proficient in literacy (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and numeracy (numbers and basic arithmetic operations) skills with comprehension. After this, the abridged material (booklets) of grades 2 and 3 are taken up with children in the next two semesters and the process of accelerated learning of grades 3 and 4 is used. In the last semester, the textbooks of grade 5 are taken up. While using the textbooks, each lesson is generally split into two or three segments with group learning and individual practice sheets for each part.

Use of Multiple Intelligences (MIs) Theory of Learning and Capacity Building of Teachers and Project Staff

CULP has adopted the MI approach (verbal, visual/drawing, kinesthetic, mathematical-logical, musical, interpersonal and intra-personal) to promote learning in a multi-level situation and accordingly the teaching material has been developed. The instructional skills of teachers were developed based on MIs theory. Three basic teacher skills for each intelligence have been identified for which the training was imparted to teachers and support project staff in the form of demonstrations, reflection and practice. The relevant teaching and learning material was developed which facilitates accelerated learning of children in multi-level learning situations.

Community Ownership¹⁰⁸

The success of the project depends on community participation. This issue was strongly tackled by the CULP team from the inception of the project. The field team members organized interactive meetings with peoples' representatives (*Sarpanchs, Ward Panchs*, Women's groups, parents of educationally deprived children/especially out-of-school adolescent girls) and other community members, head teachers and teachers on relevant issues like gender, social discrimination, quality in education and local resource mapping and mobilization. The meetings with the members of village communities and Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) were planned in a phased manner, as follows:

Exhibit – 1.8

Pictures of the community-based activities for community ownership towards small schools



¹⁰⁸ Addressing Gender Issue in Education, Girls' Festival by CULP, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aV4zMN2OR0>

Phase I: Rapport building with members and sharing the project objectives and planned interventions/activities.

Phase II: Participation in formal meetings of the *Gram Sabhas/Panchayats* and sharing data and the situation analysis of girls' education in the project village.

Phase III: Proposals are invited from *Gram Sabha*/village community for those villages where the number of out-of-school girls was more than 20.

Phase IV: Preparation for starting bridging course centers (called *Pebchanshala*) at village level with three preconditions which the village community must fulfill:

- Ensuring that 90% of out-of-school girls are enrolled with the bridge course center, of which 80% will attend the course center regularly (80% attendance) for two to three years to complete it successfully by achieving age-appropriate learning competencies, essentially required to join age-appropriate grade in mainstream school for further education;
- Providing adequate and appropriate space/building/rooms for running the bridging course center for two to two and a half years;
- Providing free accommodation (one room) to female teacher/ education volunteer in the village.

If the village community made a full commitment for completing the above conditions, the CULP team took the decision to start the program in that village.

The concern of the parents towards the education of their children was considered a driving factor. The education-based initiative brings positive social impact in the local community which motivates people to send their children to school, keeping child marriage and child labor checked. Social concerns related to child rights were discussed through regular discourse in community meetings and collective solutions were worked out through their participation. In the course, curriculum content related to life skills and adolescent health was integrated, which capacitated the adolescents to understand their development. For this purpose, Adolescent Girls' Forums were formed and strengthened at village level, which created an enabling, non-discriminatory learning environment even after graduation. The bridging course aimed to establish self-esteem and identity of the girls. In the forum meetings, the adolescent girl members discussed social and gender issues (such as traditions and customs related to girls and women in society, democratic decision-making mechanisms in society and the role of girls/ women in this process).

Exhibit – 1.9 Pictures of adolescent forums and their features



Community Volunteer Teachers

For ensuring the quality of the learning process for the target children, CULP considered the quality and the commitment of bridging course teachers. Therefore, criteria for selection of teachers in the local area were established, providing continuous back-up academic support. The criteria for the selection and capacity building of bridging course teachers were as follows:



Training of Pebchan Shala Teachers of Niwai (Raj) on pre writing skills

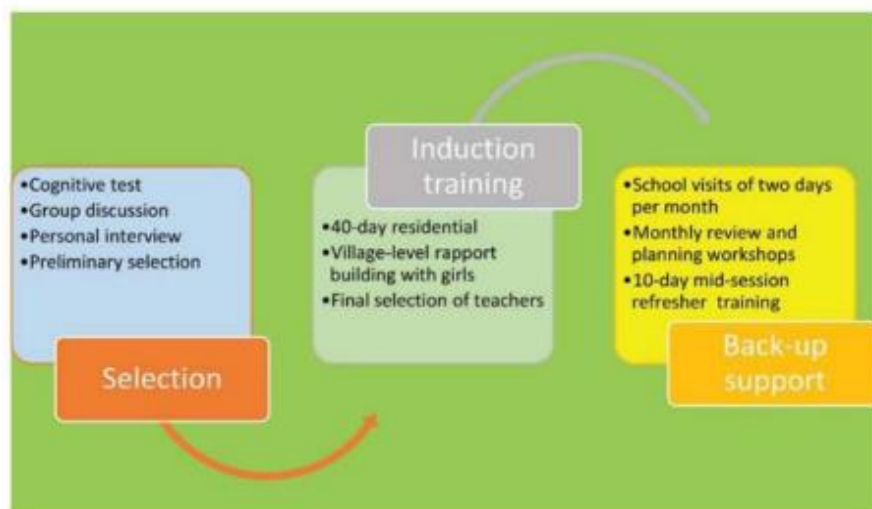
1. Young woman who is willing to stay in the village;
2. Educational qualification with minimum grade 12 pass;
3. Four-stage selection procedure with the use of relevant selection tools;

4. 40-day induction training in teaching and learning processes and development of TLM for the bridging course;
5. Teacher required to work for eight hours per day for effective functioning of the bridging course center – 5.5 hours for actual teaching; 1-1.5 hour for preparation, one hour for report writing and one hour for community contact;
6. Monthly two-day review and planning workshops for teachers;
7. On-site academic support to teachers (at least one visit per week by an academic support person);
8. An annual refresher course.

The teachers' selection and development process under CULP has been summarized in the following exhibit.

Exhibit - 1.10

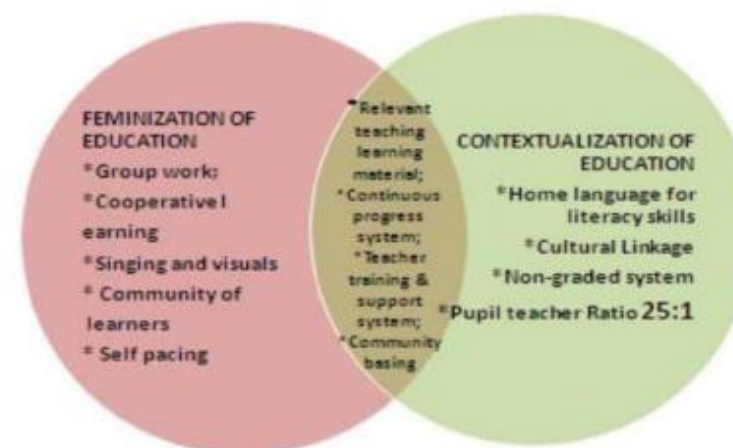
Flow chart of teachers' selection, induction training and support system



On the basis of the foregoing, CULP's philosophy has been summarized in the following exhibit.

Exhibit - 1.11

Venn diagram summarizing CULP's philosophy of small rural schools



CULP believes that the relevance of elementary education in small rural schools can be maximized through feminization and contextualization of education. The organization looks at the quality of education in the form of relevance of school organization, classroom processes and contextualization.

SECTION – 2

Study Methodology

Descriptive case study methodology was used to describe various interventions, individuals, processes and products in the real-life context as they occurred or evolved. The study team, designer of the intervention, field functionaries and teachers who worked during the project period constituted the research team. For the present research, the case study method was viewed as a 'flexible qualitative method ... it reports about a person, group, institution, practice or situation that has been studied over time in a real-life context and found to be effective or successful'.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Kishore, L. (2016). Understanding Case Study Research Methods. Retrieved from: <http://www.slideapp.net/understanding-case-study-research-method>

Also, the draft tools and the methodology describing the study design and study plan were shared with experts and their suggestions were incorporated to strengthen them.

The principal investigator oriented the research team for construct validity of the instruments, and reliability was ensured through similarity in note taking, abstraction and interpretation through monthly participatory reviews. As suggested, the sample was chosen at random from the best cases identified in each category.

Also, case studies consisted of multiple source data such as (a) documents and archival records, (b) focus groups, (c) interviews of individuals, (d) physical artifacts and products, (e) processes/inventory, and (f) participants' direct observations for each case unit. This was helpful in cross-validation of data.

A focus group was organized for developing this research tool for collecting and collating quantitative data /information. After the collection of data / information / observations, analysis occurred. A monthly review meeting was organized for discussion and exploration.

The research instruments, mainly in the form of schedules, were as follows:

- Content analysis schedule for desk study of the documents;
- Focus group schedule;
- Interview schedule with closed and open-ended questions;
- Individual reminiscences and articulation schedule;
- Artifacts, materials or products analysis format;
- Processes/practices/intervention analysis schedule.

During orientation, besides sharing the entries in the tools, a consensus of investigators was built about the case studies in the present research. For this, a sketch note¹¹⁰ on the case studies was prepared along with the process of doing such research. The sketch note on the case studies is given in the following exhibit.

¹¹⁰ Kishore, L. Case Study Sketch Note and Process. Retrieved from: <http://www.slideshare.net/lalitkishore31/case-study-a-sketch-note-and-process>

Exhibit - 2.4

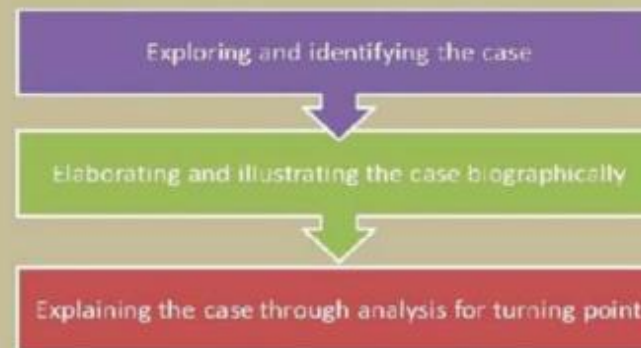
Case study: A sketch note and process

~Lalit Kishore

Sketch note



Process:



The operational terms for the study were identified and in-house perceptions were noted to define them as seen by the project holders.

Transition: In the research study, 'transition' will be regarded as movement from home language (local dialect) to school language; progress from one level of learning to another level of learning with mastery, and mainstreaming of out-of-school children from bridging course to formal mainstream school.

Multi-level continuous progress strategy pertains to instructional transactions in a small school where children of different learning levels get the opportunity to learn at their own pace and teachers monitor the learning levels of each of the students and accordingly organize teaching and learning activities in three groups (instead of grades) based on the learning levels of students.

Multiple intelligences pedagogy pertains to student-centric instructional processes which respect diversity and promote inclusion by the use of music, visuals, verbal reasoning (mathematical/logical), interpersonal (group work) and intra-personal (individual practice work) exercises.

Feminist pedagogy in the project was seen as a combination of an emotive learning environment, emphasis on group learning and making use of non-competitive or cooperative learning strategies.

SECTION – 3

Case Studies

Case 1: ‘Setu Pothi’ or ‘Abridged Courseware’

Various documents available at CULP were accessed and were listed in Schedule-1 of the tools. In all, 15 main documents were identified, namely, (i) Pehchanshala profile files; (ii) monthly and quarterly reports of the project; (iii) news clippings; (iv) meeting minutes registers; (v) planning registers; (vi) teachers’ diaries and field notes; (vii) photo albums; (viii) girls’ profile files; (ix) girls attendance registers; (x) staff movement registers; (xi) visitors’ registers; (xii) *Setu Pothi* or abridged courseware; (xiii) observation registers; (xiv) review reports; (xv) mini-books.

Three investigators, using the principle of triangulation, identified the best three documents out of all the documents to discuss and build consensus on which one would be the subject of the case study. It was agreed to describe the process and features of *Setu Pothi*. The identification of the case from 15 documents has been shown in Exhibit – 3.1.

Exhibit – 3.1

Box 2: Various documents, the best three and the case




Various *Setu Pothi* were scanned by the investigator to capture their features. It was revealed that the non-starter and dropout rural girls in the age group 9 to 14 in single teacher schools had to complete five grades in two years. After the girls acquired the basic numeracy and literacy skills in the first six months, for grades 3 and 4, the textbooks of Hindi, English and environmental studies were abridged to one-third since there were some aspects which over-age girls found childish. For grade 5 and mathematics from grades 1 to 5, worksheets or workbooks were introduced. The abridged courseware was typed and soft-bound photo copies were used for classroom purposes.

When examined for the basic features of *Setu Pothi*, it was found that they had courses for which the subject matter other than mathematics was condensed to one-third by removing the material which was not suitable for teenage girls and designing some lessons with cross-curricular linkage so as to link language skills and context-based cognitive skills. The outstanding features of *Setu Pothi* in various subjects from grades 3 to 5 have been summarized in the following exhibit.

Exhibit – 3.2

Pictures of *Setu Pothi* and their features through content analysis



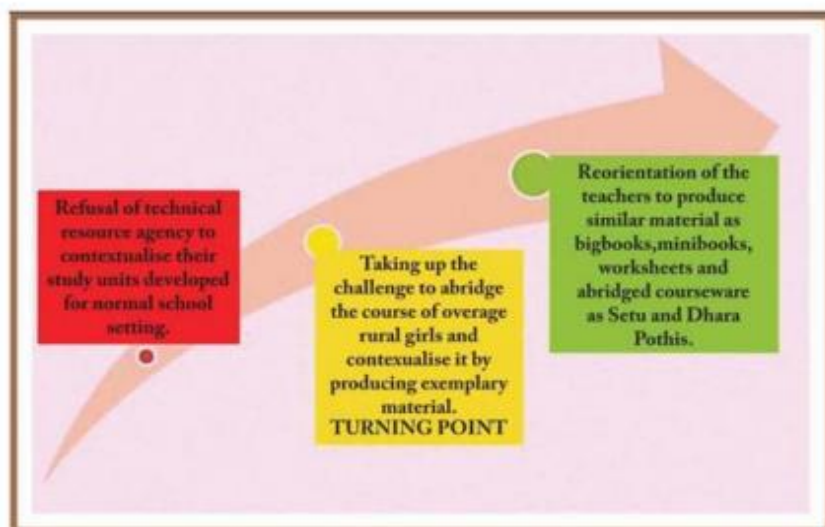
- Up to 32 pages of learning material
- Half A-4 size, soft-bound, could be locally duplicated through photo copying
- Subject matter reduced/ condensed to one-third
- Same lesson used for different cognitive skills
- Worksheets included for group work in the class
- Handy for revision before common examination

An interview which was video-recorded¹¹¹ with the then chairperson of CULP who had designed the curriculum for multi-level learning, the teacher training module and the *Setu Potbis*, reveals the biographical details of the development of courseware in which over-aged girls had to complete five grades in two years.

Initially, a technical resource agency provided training to the teachers of CULP. In a meeting with an academician, the issue of abridging the curriculum was brought up and the technical agency refused to do so. CULP took up the challenge and consequently, abridged learning material based on the government school textbooks was produced to be implemented with the three-stage learning system with the freedom of self-pacing. Consequently, the exemplar material was produced in the form of big-books, mini-books and *Setu Potbis*. This was followed by training of CULP teachers and production of similar materials by teachers for grades 3, 4 and 5.

The following exhibit depicts the turning point in the development of bridge school courseware.

Exhibit - 3.3
The turning point in the development of *Setu Potbis*



The new curriculum design and matched instruction material boosted the confidence of both teachers and learners, leading to better learning outcomes and mainstreaming most girls in grade 5 or 6 after two-year bridging courses. In the interview with the bridging courseware designer, it was held that the courseware was abridged curricular material for over-age learners with high social learning. By accelerating the pace of learning, the courseware would cover the requisite competencies in various subjects in a shorter period of time.

The rationale of *Setu Potbis* was explained in terms of their advantages, such as the fact that the courseware helped both teachers and learners to integrate it with three-stage learning. Appropriate learning material was also included in the form of worksheets and supplementary material to finish and consolidate the requisite levels of learning in time.

The 'how' was explained as a process of exemplary material preparation; training of teachers on this material and developing similar material during teachers' workshops. It was gathered that once the *Setu Potbis* were ready and transacted, for grade 5, the courseware helped to revise and consolidate learning for taking the common examination for certification and mainstreaming. The elements of group learning and self-learning helped some of the bridge school girls to opt for an open education system to continue their studies up to higher education.

Case 2: Applied Research on the Transition from Home Language to School Language¹¹²

CULP views research as a tool to improve ongoing activities and build quality in various projects. Therefore, it subscribes to ideas of responsive research, action research and formative evaluation research. CULP and its members conducted several research studies for government and UN agencies, INGOs and other corporate groups which support social development activities. Most of the action-research projects are of one to six-month duration and were meant to improve processes and practices. The studies which were supported by external agencies have been listed below:

¹¹¹ Interview on bridge courseware development. Pechamshahis of CULP-NGO, Jaipur (2016). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IX1zzVbA0o>

¹¹² International Mother Language Day: How Can Teaching through Local Dialect in Early Grades Succeed in India? <http://www.merionews.com/article/international-mother-language-day-how-can-teaching-through-local-dialect-in-early-grades-succeed-in-india/15913877.shtml>

- An educational needs assessment study of schools of Govindpura and Neemrana villages in Sikar district, Rajasthan (2001);
- A study of multi-grade teaching in India (2003);¹¹³
- Mid-term evaluation of the education project of ASSEFA Rajasthan (2003);
- Situation analysis of elementary education and NGO-mapping in Rajasthan (2004);
- Rapid assessment of elementary education in rural Chaksu block in Rajasthan (2004);
- Developing and trialing material for transition from home language to school language (2004);
- Mid-term evaluations of a girls' education program of four partner NGOs of Plan International in Rajasthan (Urmul Setu and Urmul Seemant), Karnataka (Samuha) and Odisha (PREM) (2004);
- A co-partner-led evaluation of the pilot phase of the education program in western Rajasthan being implemented by Urmul Trust (2005);
- An assessment study of education centers of two partner NGOs (GVNML and GSS) of Save the Children in Tonk district (2005);
- Impact assessment of the Taleem project for educating girls of deprived minority groups in Alwar district (2005);
- Joint evaluation of the education program of seven partner NGOs of Plan International in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Maharashtra and Karnataka (2006);
- In-depth study of classroom processes in elementary schools of Rajasthan (2007-08);¹¹⁴
- Impact assessment of Prabhat project for education of out-of-school girls in Jhalawar district (2007);
- The case of the Lok Jumbish project in Rajasthan: An ex-post facto secondary analysis and qualitative study (2010);¹¹⁵
- Situation analysis study of child rights in Banswara district (2014).

During a scan of available research study reports, the three outstanding educational research studies were found to be relevant for this study. These are as follows:

- Developing and trialing material for transition from home language to school language (2004);
- In-depth study of classroom processes in elementary schools of Rajasthan (2007-08);
- The case of the Lok Jumbish project in Rajasthan: An ex-post facto secondary analysis and qualitative study (2010).¹¹⁶

The investigators chose 'Developing and Trialing Material for Transition from Home Language to School Language' as the study worthy of case illustration since it is a unique study recognized by the National Council for Education, Research and Training (NCERT) under the projects sanctioned by the Educational Research Innovation Committee (ERIC).

The following exhibit shows the pictures of the study reports, the identified best three research reports and the report as a case illustration.

Exhibit - 3.4 Pictures of the available and identified reports as case illustration



The research areas of multilingualism, transition from Home Language (HL) to School Language (SL), and cultural linkage of curriculum are almost untouched in the Indian context. Therefore, this research can be considered a landmark work in the area of language instruction in rural primary schools. The research proposal was submitted to the National Council for Educational Research and Training after having encountered the problem of high dropout rates of girls due to the gap between their home language and school language.

¹¹³ Kishore, L., Multi-grade Teaching in India. <http://opac.tiss.edu/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=272164>

¹¹⁴ In-depth Study of Classroom Processes in Elementary Schools of Rajasthan. (2008).

<http://parbamedinipur.gov.in/SSA/Research/20Studies/Research%20Studies%20Under%20SSA.pdf>

¹¹⁵ List of : Educational Research Innovation Committee Projects Completed over the Last Six Years. http://www.ncert.nic.in/departments/nio/deo/activities/pdf/ERIC_proj.pdf

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

The desk study of the research report revealed that the objectives of Research & Development (R & D) in the area of language instruction were:

- (1) To develop and test a pre-standard language program for first graders in rural Rajasthan;
- (2) To make Home Language to School Language transition a part of the in-service training program of the Pehchan project;
- (3) To collect 10 to 20 children's folk songs for transition from Home Language to School Language, institutionalizing the same.

Fieldwork was done to identify children's folk rhymes/songs in the *Dhundhari* dialect of rural Jaipur which were converted into short pedagogical poems to build vocabulary through a padding strategy. Mini-books were produced for transaction in the classroom with a procedure developed which used flash cards. After developing 'sight' vocabulary of 20 or so words, the transition was made to literacy skills in the school language (Hindi).¹¹⁷

Exhibit - 3.5

Pictures of research instructional material



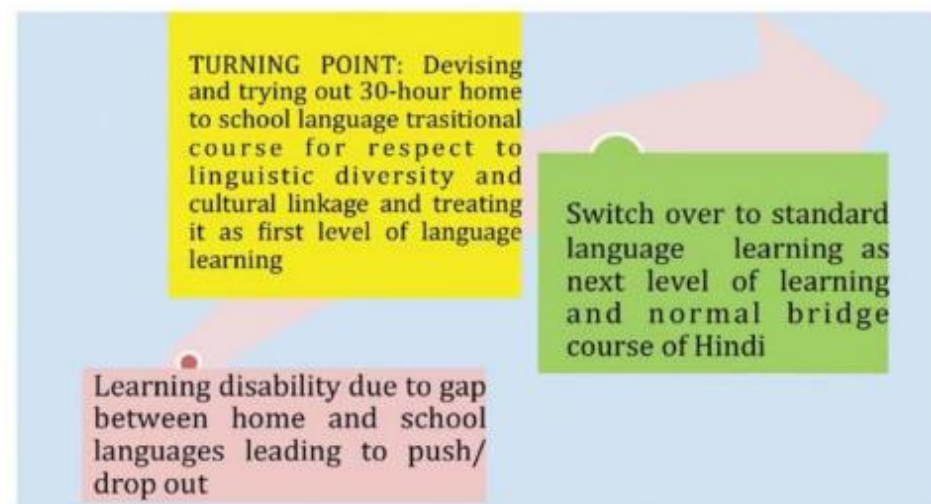
- Mini-books of adapted folk songs for student use
- Padding strategy for transition of spoken words
- Flash cards for sight vocabulary and for mental images
- Learning of alphabets of Hindi with four-line clap rhyme and worksheets

The material, developed through the fieldwork and its successful evidence-based testing was incorporated in the training of teachers through refresher courses first and, later, was made a part of induction training as a strategy to teach language as a part of the first level of learning.

¹¹⁷ Interview on research on transition from home language to school in Pehchanshala.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEDCD83Xgk>

Exhibit - 3.6

The turning point for linking home language to school language



The dialect or home language is seen as the language variation spoken by a regional group, suggesting the group's collective identity.¹¹⁸ Delpit¹¹⁹ has advocated the idea of bringing home language into the classroom. Thus, CULP has brought theory into action by imparting literacy skills to rural girls through their home language.



Multi-level learning in 3 groups (CULP)

¹¹⁸ Ogbu, J.U. (1999). Beyond Language, American Educational Research Journal, 36, 147.

¹¹⁹ Delpit, L. (1995). Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in Classroom, New York: The New York Press.

Case 3: Three-group Three-stage Learning Process

Among various processes mobilized by CULP during the implementation of the Pehchan project were the teacher selection and development process; the community mobilization process; the review and planning process; and the curriculum planning process in the form of levels of learning. The process of three-group and three-stage learning (TGTS) was chosen as the case to be described and explained.

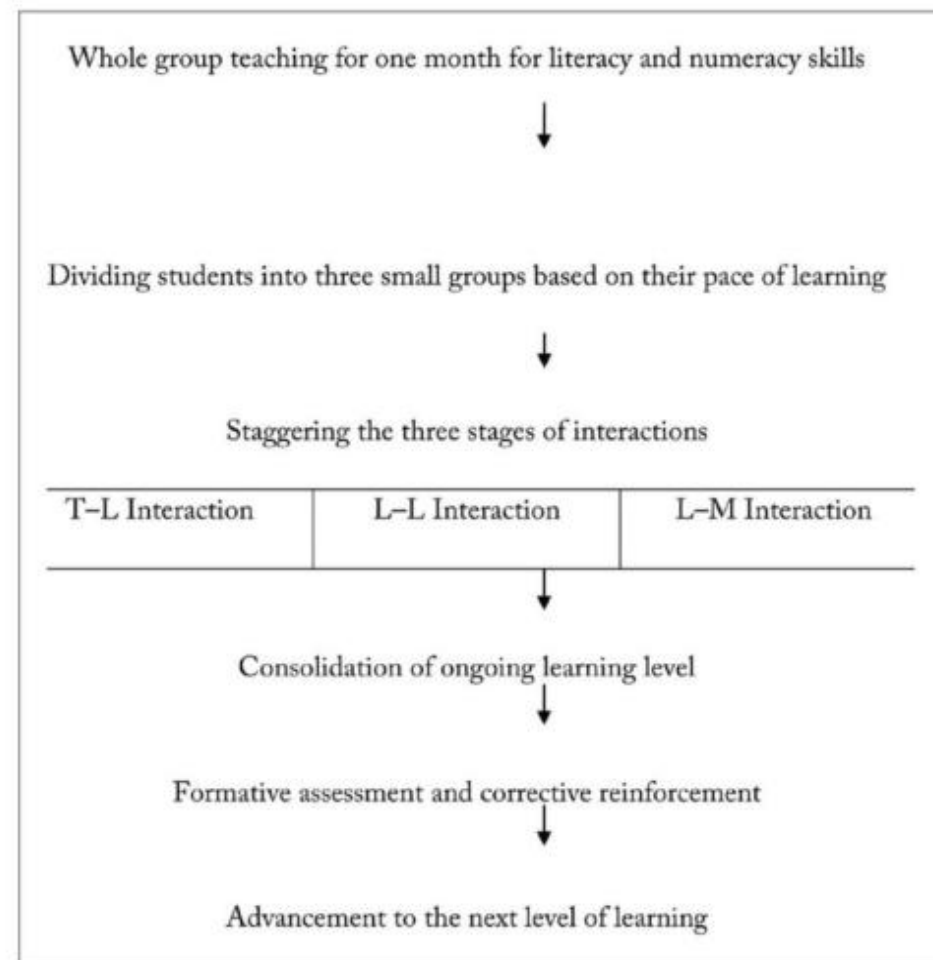
The TGTS process consists of dividing students into three groups working at different levels due to their individual pace of learning. Initially, they are described as slow, medium and fast learners. Further, daily learning episodes for each of the groups pass through three stages of learning called: (i) teacher-directed learning or teacher-learner (T-L) interaction; (ii) group learning/learner-learner (L-L) interaction; and (iii) individualized learning or learner-material (L-M) interaction.

The TGTS process systematized the space, time and material management aspects of single-teacher, small school organization. A concept paper on the TGTS process,^{120, 121} has been developed and the process was stabilized in Pehchanshalas through teacher training programs, monthly review and planning workshops, and a back-up support system for teachers.

The process has been studied and mentioned in research reports by Kishore and Kulhari¹²² and used for two types of worksheets developed by CULP to systematize the process.

The steps of the TGTS process, gathered from an interview of the curriculum designer, revealed the process as depicted in Exhibit – 3.7.

Exhibit - 3.7
The steps in the TGTS process



The observations from the documents, along with interviews with the education program coordinator and curriculum designer, led to the course being organized in an abridged format. This was a turning point to impart success in learning by girls as shown in the following exhibit.

¹²⁰ Kishore, L. (2016). Small School Success Strategy: Graphic and Sketch Note.

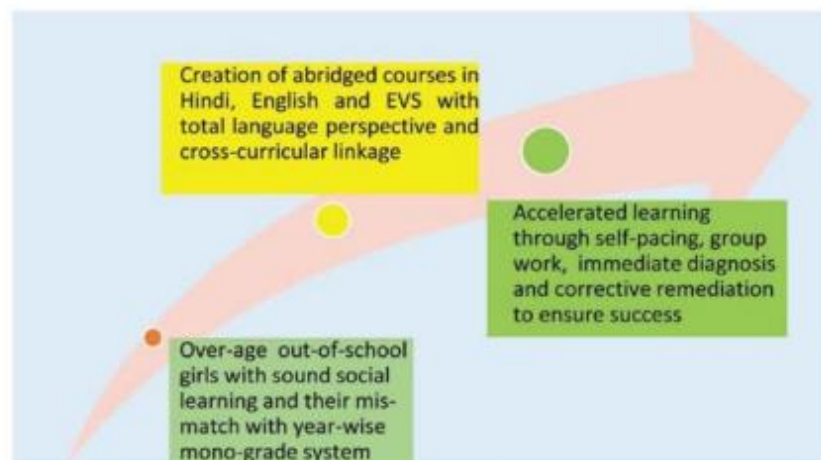
<http://www.alidshare.net/lalitkishore31/small-school-success-strategy-graphic-and-sketch-note>

¹²¹ Kishore, K. (2016). Multi-grade multi-level: Some Reflections. <http://www.alidshare.net/lalitkishore31/multigrade-multilevel-teaching-some-reflections>

¹²² Kulhari, P. (2011). A Comparative Study of Multi-grade Teaching on Achievement Levels Hindi and Mathematics of Grade 2 in Government and NGO Schools, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Jaipur: University of Rajasthan.

Exhibit - 3.8

The turning point for creation of a bridge course in text for over-age girls



Multi-grade Multi-level Teaching: Some Reflections

The learning material review and interview of the curriculum designer further revealed that the two main types of learning materials used in the TGTS strategy have been the 'group worksheets' and the 'individual practice worksheets'. The features of the worksheets, which evolved through discussion with the volunteer teachers, have been shown in the following exhibit.

Exhibit - 3.9

Two types of worksheets as the learning material

Worksheet type	Features
Group worksheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading exercises • Ticking, matching and circling exercises • Word search puzzles
Individual worksheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary writing • Filling the blanks exercises • Examples, comparisons, graphics • Drawing and rewriting

The group work and reading exercises de-emphasized competition and enhanced cooperative learning, leading to the feminization of classroom processes and making the curriculum transaction female-friendly. This has been validated by Kishore.¹¹⁵

Case 4: Individual Beneficiary Adolescent Girl Who Showed Transformation

To identify the individuals who benefitted from the Multi-Level and Multi-Grade bridging courses and experienced transformation in their lives, a girls' conclave cum alumni meet was held, marked by self-narration of changes in their lives in an open forum as well as interviews of the cases identified.

The girls who came for the conclave (total of 35), in their narrations, attributed the change in their lives to the self-esteem-building environment, systematic completion of the bridging course in which group learning took place and individual practice. They also found the exemplary behavior of their teachers and mutually respectful relations the prominent change agents in their lives, both as individuals and students motivated for further studies.

Some of the typical expressions of the girls were as follows:

- Both girls and their parents were less interested in education, keeping girls engaged in domestic chores, cattle grazing or sibling care and preparing them for marriage at an early age.
- A girl, Dhapu, shared that she had never attended school and had never been interested in receiving an education, while her younger brother was studying in class 7. She got married at an early age.
- Three other girls (Sugana, Vijanti and Badam) dropped out in grade 3 or 4, and were found engaged in activities to support their families. They did not find a child-friendly environment or joyful learning activities in school.
- Eight girls, after completion of secondary education, joined higher education.
- Two girls obtained government jobs - Vijanti Meena (Trilokinathpura) is a teacher and master trainer in Maabari education center run by the Tribal Area Development (TAD) department of the state government for tribal

¹¹⁵ Kishore, L. (2016). Should Education Be Feminized to Build Quality into It? <http://www.merinews.com/article/should-education-be-feminized-to-build-quality-into-it/15912516.shtml>

habitations, and Anita Meena (Thikriyan Meenan) is serving in the post office.

- Five girls, after completion of school education, got married and were looking after their homes and taking care of their children.
- The remaining 16 girls are studying at secondary level. Six girls are engaged in self-study to appear in the board examination for secondary education as private students. They are expecting coaching support in three core subjects, namely English, science and mathematics for class 10.
- CULP teachers and field staff members contacted their parents and persuaded the girls to join Pehchanshala.
- They joined Pehchanshala and found a joyful learning environment since there were interesting activities (games, songs/rhymes, dance). Diverse materials were used which inculcated interest among them.
- They also expressed that they were very shy and were hardly able to speak a single word/sentence about themselves, but now they have developed confidence and can speak well. They have developed their identity and self-esteem.
- CULP team members also extended academic support for the board examination of class 8 and subsequently for class 10 and 12. Dhapu was married even before joining Pehchanshala and five other girls got married after completion of class 12. Both parents and in-laws also became enthusiastic and encouraged the girls to pursue higher education.

Some individual girls who came forward to narrate their case stories were: *Sugana, Dhapu, Vijjanti, Manisha, Badam, Suman, Nirma, Mangali, Karwa, Lekha, Pinky, and Mithilesh, Lali (ST, Trilokinathpura); Anita Meena (Thikariyan Meenan, graduates); Saroj Prajapat (Sanwalia Dhani), Roshani Meena (Dahlala), Lali Meena, Jyoti Meena (ST), Lali Khateek, Gudi Khateek, Sona, Lali, Mamata, Suman, Geeta, Sunita, Sarita, Puja, Sunita, Asha (all from ST, Hingonia), Prem, Lada, Kaushila (ST, Badrinathpura).*

The girls were of the opinion that the way the bridging courses were organized, and the way the classroom was converted into a web of relationships, helped them to gain confidence and provided success in learning. The condition of rural girls prior to the bridging course is depicted in the following exhibit:

Exhibit - 3.10

The condition of out-of-school girls prior to the bridge course



Vaijanti Meena who was a dropout and married (born: January 10, 1993; attended bridging course: November 2004, Trilokinathpura, Chaksu, Jaipur district).

She belongs to a 'Below Poverty Line' (BPL) family and a 'Scheduled Tribe' (ST) community. She dropped out in grade 3 and stayed home for three years. By persuading her parents, she joined Pehchashala and gradually became very regular.

She completed the bridging course and attained a learning level equivalent to grade 8 in a period of two years. After completion of her school education with first division grades, she moved to her in-laws' home but continued her higher education since her parents and in-laws supported her.

She obtained a Bachelor's degree and is pursuing a B.Ed. (Bachelor's degree in Education). She is working as a teacher in Maa-Bari education centers run by the Tribal Area Development Department (government) and she has also been selected as best teacher and trained as a master trainer to instruct other teachers of Maa-Bari centers in Jaipur and Dausa districts.

Her study was supported by her in-laws and her 'Gona' (move to the marital home) was delayed until after the completion of her school education. Both her parents and in-laws feel proud of her. She dreams of joining the Rajasthan state service.

Exhibit - 3.11

1) Self-narrated case stories; (2) Exemplary cases; and (3) Cases for illustration



Case 5: The Case Illustration of 'Board Games' as a Product

CULP resource persons, support functionaries and teachers produced a variety of supplementary teaching materials such as: (i) pocket charts; (ii) poem charts; (iii) board games;¹²⁴ (iv) word strips; (v) flash cards; (vi) stick puppets;¹²⁵ (vii) masks; (viii) window charts; (ix) word booklets; (x) sentence strips and sentence booklets; (xi) mathematic operation strips; (xii) word puzzles; (xiii) jigsaw puzzles; (xiv) finger puppets;¹²⁶ and (xv) origami-puppets.

The three most exemplary supplementary teaching aids were reported to be: (1) board games;¹²⁷ (2) window charts; and (3) stick puppets.

¹²⁴ A concept note on the use of board games in early primary classes. <http://www.slideshare.net/lalitkishore31/a-concept-note-on-use-of-boardgames-in-early-primary-classes>

¹²⁵ Ice cream stick puppet ideas as craft for kids and teaching them content. <http://www.slideshare.net/lalitkishore31/icecream-stick-puppet-ideas-as-craft-for-kids-and-teaching-them-content>

¹²⁶ Eight animal faces for finger puppets, stick puppets and masks for primary classes. <http://www.slideshare.net/lalitkishore31/eight-animal-faces-for-finger-puppets-stick-puppets-and-masks-for-primary-classes>

¹²⁷ Interview regarding supplementary learning materials for Pehchanshalas. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fa_18yd4m8o

The main advantages of these aids were the heightened interest of children, improved manipulative skills, cognitive development and use of performing arts (see Exhibit – 3.12).

Exhibit - 3.12

Pictures of learning aids, three exemplary aids and best case illustration



The most popular supplementary teaching aid in literacy skills was found to be the board games. The use of these was extended to mathematics learning. The features of the board games are depicted in the following exhibit.

Exhibit - 3.13

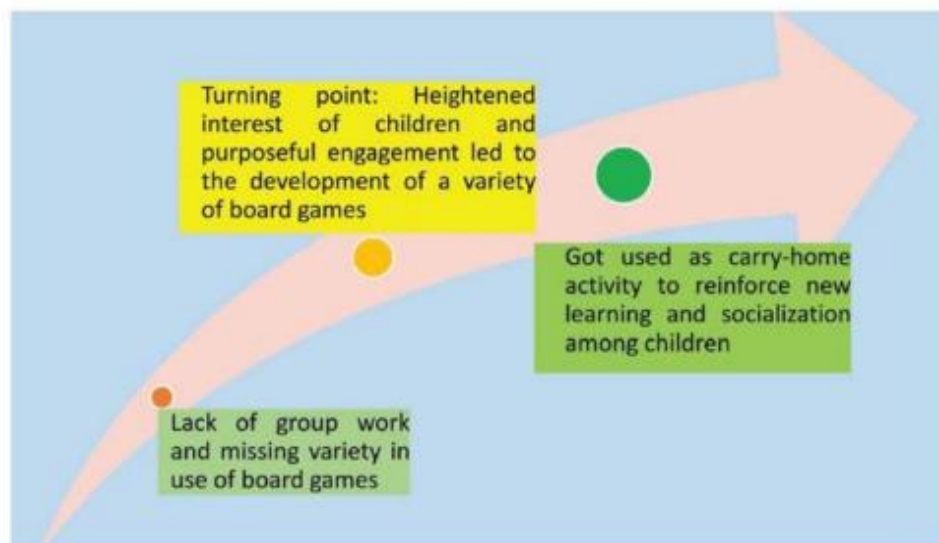
Picture of a board game and its features



- Facilitates group work
- Helps in reinforcement of new words and concept labels in a non-competitive way
- Engagement of children with light cognitive load
- Linkage with worksheet
- Interest building with hands-on kinesthetic intelligence

Board games were seen as a meaningful device for group activities, engaging four children at a time. This led to the creation of many board games to be played with dice, counters and cards. Also, it was reported that board games also helped in aiding the socialization of girls.

Exhibit - 3.14
The turning point of group work for purposefully engaging children in the learning process



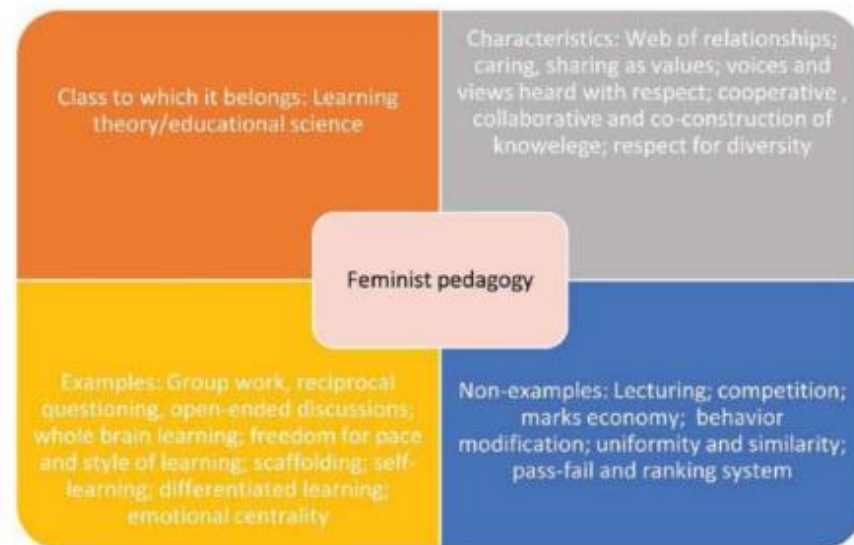
Feministic Pedagogy

The draft was shared with a representative of the Harvard University South Asia Institute¹²⁸ and the suggestions regarding incorporation of CULP's views on feministic pedagogy were discussed and crystallized in the form of a short note,¹²⁹ reproduced in the following exhibit.

¹²⁸ Anisha Gopi visited CULP office in Jaipur on 14 October 2016 and shared her comments and suggestions on the draft report.

¹²⁹ Kishore, L. (2016). A Short Note on Feministic Pedagogy. <http://www.slideshare.net/lalitkishore31/crystallizing-feminist-pedagogy-model-at-culp-queries-on-research-and-focus-group-outcome>

Exhibit - 3.15
The Feminist Pedagogy Evolved at CULP



A distinct learning theory, feminist pedagogy theorizes about teaching, learning organizations, institutions and knowledge as democratic concepts. Viewing traditional measures of education as the responsibility of the teachers, feminist pedagogy places the responsibility of learning on the students. It also proposes that the best learning environment should be one wherein students' opinions and ideas regularly contribute to the learning process.

Feminist pedagogy is distinct in its encouragement of individual conclusions, combined with a mutual respect for other students, or perhaps just an understanding that reality has many perspectives.

CULP subscribes to six fundamental principles of feminist pedagogy. First is the relationship between the teacher and students. Second is empowerment, and third is constructing a learning community. The fourth is the privilege of voice. The fifth is respect for diverse personal experiences among all students. Lastly, feminist pedagogy challenges typical traditional instructional methods.

In feministic pedagogical settings, mutual respect, critical and positive thinking, and empathy create better relationships and safer, more open learning environments. Distinctions among learners are no longer set, allowing everyone equal learning opportunities matched to their contexts.

Impact Analysis:

The year-wise cumulative figures in the following exhibit shows the target beneficiaries of different categories impacted under the program:

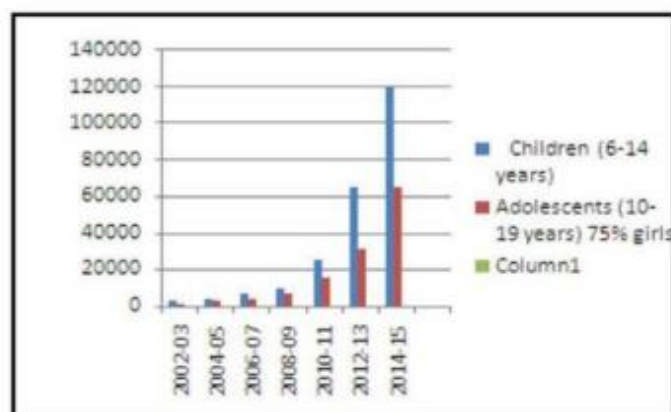
Exhibit - 3.16

The trend of cumulative coverage of girl beneficiaries in the project

Year	Children (6 to 14 years)	Adolescents (10 to 19 years)	Percentage of adolescent girls (10 to 19 years)
2002-03	3,000	1,200	80
2004-05	4,000	2,500	75
2006-07	6,500	4,200	70
2008-09	10,000	6,800	70
2010-11	25,000	16,000	75
2012-13	65,000	30,665	75
2014-15	120,000	65,000	70

The data of exhibit – 3.16 when represented graphically show the trend of coverage of girls over the years visually, which has been depicted in Exhibit 3.17.

Exhibit - 3.17



In addition to the above figures relating to the beneficiaries of the project, several students and volunteers of technical and research institutions also received exposure/internship training for one month to three months in the program.

Case studies conducted by external experts,^{130,131} and volunteers (overseas interns/students),^{132,133} reflected the following impacts on the lives of adolescent girls who were deprived of basic education:

Impacted group	Impacts
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instances of delayed marriage • Continuation of studies at upper primary level by about 70% of admitted girls • Better understanding of concepts in science and math • Better articulation • Health awareness
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heightened awareness of relevant and quality education • Mothers feeling concerned about their daughters' education • Enhanced stake in school through collective effort • Positive attitude towards investment in girls' education: better marriage prospects
Government partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saw the positive effect of community-based schools • Recognizing the baseline data of children provided by NGOs • Providing free textbooks to complementary programs of NGOs • Certification of bridging course of girls
Other programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other NGOs adapting the TLM • New UNICEF programs and SSA include the strategy

¹³⁰ Sullivan, A. et al. (2005). Educating 'Out-of-School Girls': An Assessment of the Pehchan Project in Rajasthan, p. 6-15.

¹³¹ Mathur, K. (2006). Review of Pehchan Project in Rural Jaipur District for UNICEF.

¹³² Punia, R. (2009). Pehchan Project: Making a Difference in the Life of Rural Girls.

¹³³ Patel, C. (2010). Pehchan: Giving Girls an Opportunity at Life.

A case study of the Pehchan project and review study supported by UNICEF-INDIA concludes that 'For many girl students, participating in Pehchan led to increase in self-discipline, respectful behavior, freedom to question and discuss, and sharing of learning outcomes. In addition, Pehchanshala students experienced improvements in personal hygiene, hygienic handling of food and water, and knowledge of feminine health and motherhood. Positive impacts were also observed on inter-caste relations within the classroom'.¹³⁴ Further, the research team strongly recommended continuation of Adolescent Girls' Forums or *Balika Manches* along with co-educational environments within Pehchanshalas. Another aspect that has been highlighted by the study is the fact that the participation of girls in Pehchan programs delayed the age of 'Gona' (the third stage of marriage when girls move to their husband's home). Surprisingly, education of non-school going girls even increased their value in the marriage market as perceived by the parents of Pehchanshala girls.

The impact of CULP's pedagogy was studied through content analysis of teachers' diaries, which were selected as representatives of reasonably written diaries chosen through random sampling. A schedule was also prepared and a five-step process¹³⁵ was adopted. The steps have been summarized as follows:

1. Read through the transcripts individually and make the list of the relevant information in phrasal form;
2. Categorize the relevant information pieces in a given format (a sample given below) and validate them with two other content analysts for vetting category labels;
3. Identify the categories that can be linked to the research topic;
4. When the above is completed for all the transcripts, collect all of the identified categories and themes and get them vetted or validated by two other content analysts. Alternatively, organize a mini focus group for review, finalization or short listing of categories;
5. Prepare another sheet for the frequency of each of the short-listed categories.

¹³⁴ Mathur, K. (2006). Review Study of Pehchan Project in Jaipur District. (Rajasthan).

¹³⁵ Kishore, L. (2016) Content Analysis of Field Functionaries' Diaries or Notes Depicting Personal Experiences: A Five-step Process. <http://www.slideshare.net/lalitkishore31/content-analysis-of-field-functionaries-diaries-or-notes-depicting-personal-experiences-a-five-step-process>

The diaries were read for content analysis to identify the categories of comments, reflections and feelings of teachers. An interview of one of the investigators who had been associated with CULP since project inception was also conducted. The frequency of occurrences of reactions in three categories were computed and converted into percentages by a research team member. These have been summarized in the following exhibit:

Exhibit - 3.18
Teachers' diaries and table summarizing the categories from teachers' diaries and percentage of occurrence

Category	Frequency in %		Chi-squared value
	Observed	Expected	
Positive	80	33	61.15**
Neutral	18	33	
Negative	2	33	

**Significant at 0.01 level with degree of freedom (DF) as 2 ($p \leq 0.01$ with $DF=2$)



The pedagogical intervention of CULP with 40-day residential training, back-up support, periodic review workshops and refresher courses impacted teachers significantly in a positive manner.

Some Reflections from Community Members, Parents, Local Government Members and Officials

During the research study, the comments of community members, parents, PRI representatives and government officials were also recorded. Some of the comments have been listed below.

'The efforts of Pehchanshala teachers for inculcating learning and leadership skills in out-of-school adolescent girls deserve appreciation.'

– **Mustak Khan, block Chairperson, Chaksu**

'We are thankful to CULP for providing opportunities to dropout and non-starter adolescent girls to study again and supporting them to join mainstream schools for continuation of their education in Khejri village.'

– **Badri Lal Meena, Sarpanch, Thikrayan Meenan, Chaksu block**

'Adolescent girls achieved expected, age-appropriate learning levels and developed personality and leadership skills in Pehchanshala. After joining mainstream schools at primary and secondary level, they perform better than other regular students. For this, we are grateful to CULP.'

– **Narsingh Lal Meena, HM, Govt. Sec. School Jhampada Kalan (Chaksu)**

Voices of community leaders: as reported in visitors' register (translated from local dialect/Hindi in English)

'I observed the learning process and material in Pehchanshala of Chimapura where 19 girls were found busy in group work. These girls never attended formal schooling before. I express my gratitude for CULP and the Axis Bank Foundation for giving an opportunity to the deprived girls within our community to study. This will transform the lifestyle of the deprived girls for better development.'

– **Hanuman Prasad, Ward Member, Chimapura (Member of PSMC)**

'The learning levels of girls are assessed periodically and displayed in a competency-based chart sheet which is available for all visitors. This gives the overall performance of girls at a glance. The ways of learning are quite effective

and facilitate accelerated learning by girls. All concerned stakeholders and associated partners must extend their support for continuation of Pehchanshala in the village for the overall development of rural girls.'

– **Shyoji Ram Jat, Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat Dahlod (Niwai block).**

On the basis of the case illustrations of various aspects of the Pehchan project, it can be stated that the success of primary education depends on numerous factors. These include sound pedagogical processes supported by contextualized learning material; non-graded school organization permitting the freedom of self-pacing; intensive teacher training and robust support systems and the strengthening of social processes through group learning opportunities. In addition, treating the small school system as a community of learners can have a significant positive effect.



CULP receiving Dasra Girl Power Award 2014

CONTRIBUTORS TO CASE STUDIES:

Centre for Unfolding Learning Potentials (CULP)

Dr. Lalit Kishore completed his master's in physics in 1968 and taught physics for 15 years. He then made a shift towards pedagogy by pursuing a doctorate in education at the Punjab University, Chandigarh. He had his advanced training in school technology in the UK; quality of education from the International Institute of Educational Planning in France; and evaluation from Queen's University in Canada. He has published over 300 papers on education and written six books. He has completed three research studies for ERIC of the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and one for UNESCO. For his contribution to education, he has received 11 national awards and 13 Commonwealth awards. He has been founder chairperson of CULP, and has worked on various educational projects as well as for NGOs including CULP. Currently, Dr. Kishore is working as a research consultant with Disha which is an institution for differently abled students. He also writes for the e-media as a citizen journalist and has presented papers on various national and international conferences held in India, South Africa, the UK, and Malaysia.

Dr. O.P. Kulhari studied for his Ph.D. at the University of Rajasthan. He then studied botany for six years, and subsequently shifted from higher education to work in the social development sector. He became a part of Sandhan, a professional group in education to provide technical support to the government's innovative education projects (mainly Shiksha Karmi and Lok Jumbish) for universalization of elementary education in Rajasthan. Dr. Kulhari has published several articles and research papers in various national and international journals. He has also conducted/coordinated more than 35 research studies (action research, baseline, evaluation, and impact studies) for various organizations including government, UN agencies, and INGOs.

MV Foundation

Sita Mamidipudi teaches at the School of Gender Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Hyderabad, India. She is also involved in research and advocacy on public healthcare response to gender-based violence, laws and policies on women's livelihood rights, and adolescent girls' education.

Ibtada

Rajesh Singhi set up Ibtada in 1997 to work for the betterment of deprived sections in Mewat and its adjoining areas. Ibtada focuses on working with women and girl children in about 350 villages in six blocks of Alwar. Some of its major programs include SHGs and federations (women's savings and credit program), and livelihoods – improving the livelihoods of SHG members in areas of agriculture, dairy animal and goat rearing among others. He has published a paper titled "Unlocking a Potential: Findings from a Baseline Survey of Mewat". He holds a master's in public administration and a postgraduate diploma in rural management. He can be contacted on +919982205400 or ibtada.alwar@gmail.com.

White Lotus

Glenn Fawcett has been living between India and Cambodia as executive director of White Lotus Trust and Lotus Outreach International field operations for more than 15 years. He has built program portfolios, both of his own design and through collaboration with capable partner organizations, which mainly focus on creating opportunities for and toward protection and post-abuse care for women and girls. He is currently studying toward an MSc in poverty reduction in policy and practice at the University of London.

Suraj Kumar is the program manager at White Lotus Charitable Trust and is currently working on a project to improve government schools in Haryana for which he is maintaining the monthly and annual financial reports of income and expenditure among other things. His work at White Lotus includes preparation and execution of monthly, quarterly and annual work plans, as well as capacity-building for School Management Committees (SMC), villagers, schoolteachers and headmasters to evolve the strategy to improve government schools to implement the RTE Act of 2009 in letter and spirit. He was appointed as state representative for the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) for Haryana from January 2011 till March 2013, and was responsible for developing cooperation and coordination between the state government and NCPCR.

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