

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PPEF'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



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Executive Summary



The Impact Assessment conducted for Pratham Pune Education Foundation's (PPEF) educational programs, supported by Bharat Forge Limited (BFL), aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs and determine the most successful approaches. Education is one of the key intervention areas covered through BFL's CSR-supported projects. Over 2 decades, BFL has supported PPEF's educational programs which have evolved over two decades with the simple objective of 'giving back to the society'.

The Impact Assessment covered a period of five years, from 2018-19 to 2022-23, and included a sampling universe of over 84,000 students. The assessment was conducted in March and April 2023 and aimed to determine the effectiveness of the programs and inform program design decisions. A systematic stratified random sampling method was used to ensure a representative sample of students. The assessment utilized a research methodology that encompassed both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, including educational assessments, interviews with students and parents, focus group discussions, and individual interviews. Impact Assessment findings are based on 718 students covered educational assessment, 573 students &/ parents interviews, 31 Focus Group Discussions, 63 Individual Interviews, and several field observations.



Overall, the impact assessment of PPEF's educational programs conducted by BFL and PPEF provided valuable insights into the program's performance, highlighted areas of success, and identified areas for further improvement.

The primary focus of PPEF's programs is to assist needy students in developing basic educational skills that will enable them to cope with higher-grade subjects. The assessment revealed that approximately 95% of parents of students included in the assessment had education up to the 12th grade, with 43% having primary education and 8% being illiterate. This indicates that the program is effectively reaching the intended beneficiaries within the project area.

Programs should target students from families who cannot afford private school fees, ensuring enrollment of needy students in government/corporation schools. Strategies and methodologies should be in place to identify students with learning disabilities and focus on their needs during program implementation.

While teachers and field staff from PPEF had established good connections with the communities, the involvement of parents in daily activities was identified as an opportunity for improvement. Enhancing parent participation, both in terms of quantity and quality, could potentially enhance engagement and the overall effectiveness of the programs.

PPEF's programs, based on PEF's strategies, have an implementation gap. Excessive programs dilute their importance and hinder reaching the target population. Students and parents struggle to remember all activities. Focus on core elements and student-teacher engagement is vital. Streamlining programs and simplifying activities can improve impact, understanding, and recall. Quality engagement between students and teachers fosters lasting impressions and effective learning.

Further study is required to address gaps in implementing Pratham Education Foundation's (PEF's) original strategies, focusing on operational aspects, quality assurance, and monitoring. Consider merging programs instead of adding new ones. Promote select programs for better stakeholder visibility. Supervisory visits should assess awareness among enrolled students and parents/guardians regarding program participation.

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Field cadre lacks structured follow-up methods to ensure students transition to Read India Plus program through educational attainment. Efforts are needed to facilitate the enrollment of Catch Up/Read India Program students into Read India Plus. Training teachers to enhance their capacities for program delivery is crucial.

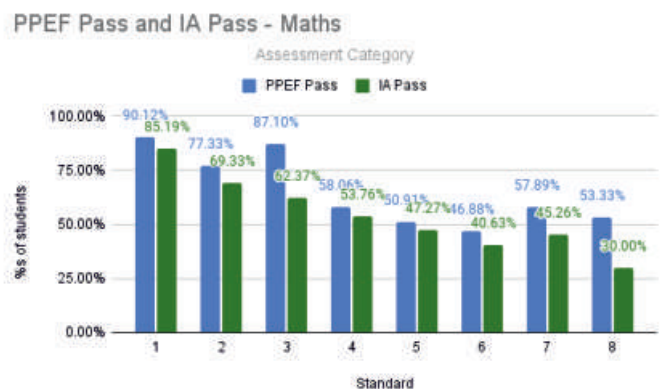
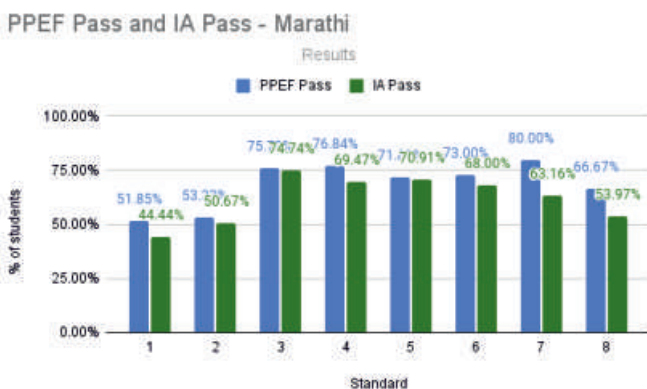
Teachers closely monitor students' educational performance through ASER Test results. They form student groups based on attainment but lack specific record keeping. Teachers are aware of attending students' performance but may lack awareness of absent or dropped-out students.

Teachers administer ASER Tests three times per batch - at the beginning, mid-term, and end of the class. Results are documented and sent to the Field Office for analysis. Tests are conducted verbally, lacking written records. Structured verbal and written tests, rigorous supervision, and proper documentation are needed for quality assurance. Separate tests and referral services should be available for students with learning disabilities. Standard-wise curriculum can supplement foundational programs.

The appointment of an Education Expert can bridge the gaps between Pratham Educational Foundation strategies and their envisioned implementation. The expert can provide proper training on educational approach, methods, and implementation of PPEF strategies. Strategies should address irregular/dropped-out students and track their performance.

Graph 1: PPEF syllabus & Impact Assessment Criteria and Standard wise percentages of students who cleared Marathi Language assessment

Graph 2: PPEF & Impact Assessment Criteria and Standard wise percentages of students who cleared Maths Subject assessment

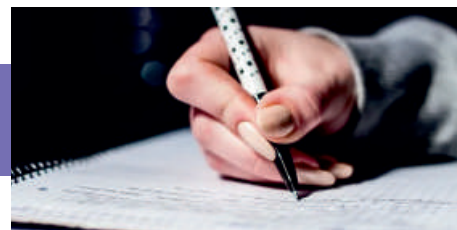


The organization's efforts to strengthen the foundation of the Marathi language have shown success. Many children lack basic language skills and struggle with grammar and vocabulary. Adding these elements to the curriculum will enhance students' ability to solve related questions. Encouraging independent thinking and expression through writing is vital. Emphasizing independent thinking and imagination will further develop language skills in children.

In the analysis of performance by grade, only a few students excel in mathematics, except for 1st grade. Performance declines as grade levels increase. Students' preparation in mathematics is concerning, struggling even with basic arithmetic operations. Verbal problem-solving skills are notably low. Many students face challenges solving math examples from their regular curriculum. Beyond grade five, arithmetic becomes less significant, and introducing algebra, geometry, measurement, and statistics topics becomes necessary for problem-solving in higher grades.



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Educational Assessment

PPEF's Teachers' working relationships with the community aid in identifying potential students and tracking their participation in various programs/activities. Enrollment can be done through written consent from parents/guardians. Discontinuation and absenteeism can be addressed through written communication with parents/guardians. Overlapping enrollments with Pratham and other programs require collaboration and coordination with stakeholders to manage effectively.

In many cases, teachers provide classroom space. If space is limited, community consultation allows for the use of common properties. Challenges include seating, ventilation, and lighting. The number of students per teacher per batch should be determined by available space. Alternate day classes for different grade groups can help manage batches. Each teacher should have a proper session and batch-wise timetable available for reference.

As continuous programs, stakeholders have developed necessary capacities for regular activities. Teachers and volunteers can enhance their skills in conducting sessions through activities. Proper training is needed to improve teachers' academic understanding. Assessment methods should be designed during onboarding and periodically to evaluate teachers' knowledge and teaching skills.

Programs operate with minimal resource requirements as mandated. Worksheets are not provided to every student. Each teacher should have a storage unit to safely store educational materials and documents/registers. Evaluation studies should include resources provided under digital programs in the future.

The unstructured reporting system has led to inconsistent reporting among staff and field cadre. Consolidated figures lack supporting documents. Mandatory documents for verification, such as enrollment, attendance, student profiles, assessment results, and educational performance, are unavailable. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) documents should be developed to ensure clarity and uniformity among stakeholders. Proper documentation of processes like inquiry, enrollment, and dropout is necessary for supervision, monitoring, and evaluations. Required documents and data should be available at CRLs, BRLs, and with field cadre.

The absence of structured database management systems results in a lack of organized year and program-wise databases. The available database does not provide clarity on individual student progress, leading to inconsistent data. Updating the status of each student becomes challenging without continuous data. Online baseline surveys can be conducted, and student attendance should be documented and closely monitored. Variables requiring regular updates should be identified and maintained in the central database. PPEF can introduce a digital recording platform for conducting ASER Tests and recording results.

The team has a supportive working system and can collectively complete tasks within the given timeframe. Internal supervision methods should be developed to prevent clashes of interest among teachers and ensure student overlap is avoided unless programs are distinct. Structured supervision activities will provide unbiased observations based on various parameters. Building field cadre's capacities in supportive supervision will improve field reporting accuracy. Capturing, documenting, and consolidating error-free data is crucial for making informed decisions. Supportive supervision plays a vital role in achieving accurate data.

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In summary, the findings of the Impact Assessment indicate the need for a comprehensive program revamp, focusing on streamlining result-based program management and implementing an effective monitoring and evaluation framework.

The absence of an M&E framework has led to a lack of clarity and structured monitoring at various levels. Essential indicators are not being tracked consistently by staff and field cadre. Implementing an M&E framework is crucial to improve intervention quality and achieve objectives. Various indicators should be identified and tracked across different levels. The M&E framework will provide monitoring tools for capturing indicators and informing timely decisions. Future evaluation studies should incorporate financial components and consider the role of Pratham parent bodies. Stratification, such as private and government school attendance, may impact students' educational performance.

The current feedback mechanisms rely mostly on verbal communication, lacking structure. This results in unstructured supervision and monitoring, potentially missing important aspects. Formal feedback mechanisms should be established, integrated into structured supervision and M&E activities. Feedback should be consistently documented and used as a basis for decision-making and reporting.

There is good team coordination among field staff and cadre, but a common understanding of job roles and activities is needed. Internal coordination among field cadres has gaps, with limited awareness of each other's availability. Teachers' selection criteria should include educational qualifications, subject knowledge, and teaching abilities. Additional forms of appreciation should be considered for field cadre. Targets and feedback mechanisms should be developed to strengthen the work environment. Clear roles and responsibilities should be defined and shared for better understanding. Improved internal coordination and collaboration will enhance field performance. Incentivization can be explored to maintain motivation and engagement. Minimum educational qualifications can be established.

Poor visibility and branding make it difficult to identify students, teachers, and volunteers engaged with PPEF's programs, reducing their sense of belonging. Efforts to improve recognition and visibility should be implemented. Installing signboards and providing branding collateral can help reach the masses and create a sense of engagement. Prominently displaying logos on materials will enhance identity and participation. Better visibility will connect stakeholders and improve community engagement.

Clarity is needed among stakeholders regarding exit strategies for students and program implementation. Each PPEF program should have an exit strategy to track student performance and ensure academic progress. Continuous engagement and improved quality of participation should be emphasized. The program allocates resources annually to work on basic academic skills for newly enrolled students. For program implementation, alternatives such as empowering teachers to run classes based on PPEF's strategies can be explored. Financial support can be gradually reduced through honorariums and nominal fees. The library program can be operated by teachers on a fee basis. Collaboration with other development agencies can prevent overlapping interventions.

In summary, the findings of the Impact Assessment indicate the need for a comprehensive program revamp, focusing on streamlining result-based program management and implementing an effective monitoring and evaluation framework.