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#### **Abstract**

This school is unique in terms of its diverse student population belonging to all socio-economic groups, however, majority are from economically low income groups or lower middle class and children of families living below poverty line. The diversity is also in terms of multilingual groups of students who speak Urdu, Gojri, Pahari, Balti, Punjabi and Dogri. There are students from the community of Bakerwaals (nomads). Student absenteeism was the biggest challenge- main reason being its location amidst socio-political disturbance. The school head and team conducted regular parent teacher meetings to update regarding student progress, attendance and academics. The school worked towards community mobilization and involvement for peace, feedback, absenteeism and helping students keep away from stone pelting during 2016 unrest. They assigned counsellors to each student who saw to the fact that the student attended the school. The school conducted capacity building programmes for teachers for ICT integrated teaching-learning methodology. The school has initiated multi-lingual magazine (English, Urdu, Kashmiri and Hindi).

#### SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Government boy's Higher Secondary School Soura Srinagar provides Education to Classes 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> and the streams taught are commerce, Science and Humanities. The school has a diverse socioeconomic profile. Being a Government school, students from varied backgrounds attend the school, majority of which are economically low income groups or lower middle class and students of the families living below poverty line. Also, there are some students from privileged backgrounds and well to do families or middle class or upper middle class. It would not be wrong that many of our students are especially able children. There are good number of children from educationally as well as economically backward classes and areas. Some students are with single parent (mother is the caretaker due to the current situation/turmoil) and some are orphans. Students with different cultural background



#### SOCIO - ECONOMIC BACKGROUND - CHALLENGES

Situated in the heart of Old City of Srinagar, it holds a very distinct position in terms culture and locality. There are some premier institutions like Sheri Kashmir institute of medical sciences, University of Kashmir, National institute of Technology, Baba atomic research centre surrounding the school. The children of the employees of these institutions who are not only from far flung villages/ areas of Jammu and Kashmir but also from the country also seek admission in classes 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. The official language is URDU, medium of teaching is English and native language is Kashmiri but there are also children whose mother tongue is Gojri, Pahari, Balti, Punjabi, Dogri etc depending upon their birth place. This school also have children of Bakerwaals (Nomads). This school has the highest diversification in terms of its language and culture and unique in its diversity due to its location and geographical position as mentioned above. Moreover to work in a conflict zone in itself is a very big challenge.



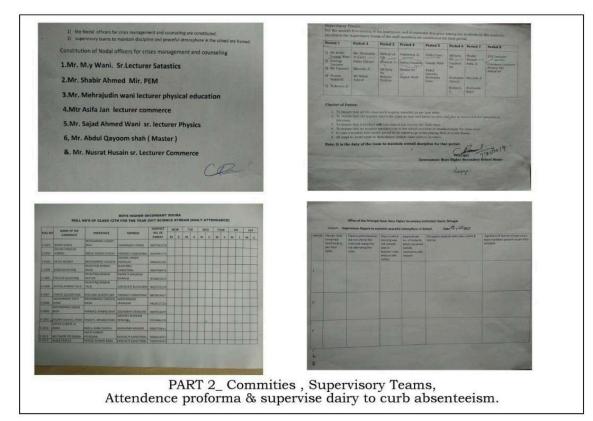
#### **CHALLENGES:**

- Being a Government school, absenteeism was a big challenge. Kids from poor families attend
  to work and rich families attend to private tuition and in both cases they tend to miss the
  school. Also as we get lesser number of instructional days (91 days in 2016 and 120 days in
  2017) and so on.
- Infrastructure was a challenge; The school is surrounded by most of the private reputed schools
  with extraordinary infrastructure. The infrastructure of our school in comparison to these
  private schools was very ordinary or poor, in availability of well maintained and well equipped
  labs, libraries, inadequate equipments, Inadequate enabling resources, with no electrification

and improper Toilets, unsafe drinking water etc. This was effecting the enrolment, teaching learning and was developing negative perception in public about our school



- · Developing sports ground
- Absenteeism: it has been the biggest challenge owing to multiple reasons. So it was very
  important to address this challenge. Adding to many reasons, regular disturbances in Srinagar
  add to this factor. Associated with this, Parent –Teacher Coordination was completely missing.
  There was no focus on that part.



As a measure to address this challenge, various initiatives were taken such as:

- 1. Regular Parent meetings to update regarding student progress, attendance & academics.
- 2. Assign counsellors to each student who will see to the fact that the student is attending the school.
- 3. Counselling sessions with Students during 2016
- 4. In case of many students, teachers visited their houses and convinced their parents to ensure their attendance.
- 5. Community Mobilization and involvement for peace, feedback, absenteeism and helping students keep away from Stone Pelting during 2016 Unrest.

As part of absenteeism the students of class 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> used to escape from the school just after attending two or three classes this was great matter of concern not only for school or parents but also for the civil administration because

- 1. such students used to get involved /indulged in unpleased activities
- 2. The overall teaching-learning process was effected
- 3. Teachers were losing interest because only few students were left in the class room.
- 4. Examinations result was affected.

#### EFFORTS INITIATED OR THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION

- 1. Proper supervision/ monitoring of classes by teams of teachers headed by Senior Teachers
- 2. The team of about five staff members for each period was given the responsibility of ensuring smooth class work, feedback and monitoring of teachers, all students remain inside the class rooms as they may not mix with the students having vacant period. Monitoring of attendance.
- 3. The students used to escape from classes under the pretext of vacant period. To identify such student's faculty wise and class wise colour coded identity cards were issued to the students, which a student was supposed to wear around his neck.
- 4. Identification of such students who were either disruptive or used to bunk the classes was made through proper attendance system on daily bases and period bases by the supervisory teams;
- 5. The supervisory team used to submit the report just after end of the class/period immediately on a specially designed format,
- After identification the parents of such students were called on phone through landline wherein the parent was informed about the activity of his ward and was requested to attend the office of the principal on the next day.
- 7. Both student and parent were given counseling and assurance was sought from both especially the student that such thing will not happen in future.
- 8. Most of the students were doing this without the knowledge of their parents. However after knowing this mechanism, most of the students themselves avoided this practice and within one month this menace got eradicated.

### Address to the challenge of infrastructure:

A comprehensive strategy was devised

- 1. A team of dedicated teachers both and female was framed to develop and improve infrastructure
- 2. Three sources of finance was identified
- 1, local funds; as school was charging about Rs 700(admission fee one time for a year) from each student. This included school development fund, science fund, games fund. Library fund, mutual benefit fund etc INR 20 to 50.
- 4. Through community and teachers,
- 5. Students on voluntary basis.
- 6. Through effective team work, planning, collaboration with community and management

# **Infrastructure Development**

- Upgraded Physical and Educational Infrastructure.
- Modern Library for students with access to all relevant books, Journals, magazines and newspapers on Science, literature, etc.
- Upgraded Science Laboratories –at par national level Development of Herbal/ Botanical garden
- Face lifting of school buildings to make them more attractive.
- Establishment of a very comfortable and good Staff room.
- Development of Play field for Students and complete infrastructure
- Toilets especially for Students. INR 3.5 lakh contributed by teachers of the school and community for Modern Toilet Building Program with Hand wash facilities,

Development of Safe Drinking water facility having RO-UV.



### Community meet to discuss school issues

**Hi-tech ICT** Established (information and Communication Technology) -24 Hr Power and Wi-Fi facility. **A capacity building** and **training programs** were organised to train our staff on the use of ICT **100% electrification** was carried out for entire school premises.

In brief the National level infrastructure was developed and was at par and in some cases better than the surrounding Private Schools.

#### **Creating More Opportunities for our students**

- Now, the magazine is printed every year and is led by Students guided by teachers' editor body.
- Promotes reading and writing among students. Many of our students do aspire to become writers; we just provided a small platform.
- Multi-lingual Magazine (English, Urdu, Kashmiri & Hindi).
- Formation of Sports Teams
- Student Video Interactions with renowned personalities such as Indian Ambassador Egypt and Hon'ble Governor of J&K through ICT Lab.
- Special Separate Labs for Class up to 10th
- Capacity building for 100+ Teachers of adjacent schools on the use of ICT.

### **Visible Results of Transformation**

- 1. The development of national level infrastructure helped to provide quality education.
- 2. The negative perception about the school got removed in the minds of public.
- 3. There was an Increase in enrolment from 774 in 2015 to 1018 in 2017.
- 4. There was an Improvement in board results. 94% in commerce 97% in science and overall result as 87% in 2016-2017while as in 2015-2016 the overall result was 76%. The school achieved more than 94 distinctions in 2016-17 academic years and every third student in class 12<sup>th</sup> was a distinction holder.
- 5. **Selections** of Our students in Professional **Courses** MBBS, B.Tech, Law at GMCs, IITs, NITs etc
- 6. Able to involve community in the development of my school.
- 7. Successful in curbing absenteeism.
- 8. The learning became more joyful due to availability of good laboratories, library and sports facilities.

The change and progress my school made under my leadership was acknowledged at National level.

#### **Further Areas for Change/Transformation**

- 1. Implementation of ICT (Information and Communication Technology ) for :
- 2. Planning and design of yearly Courses
- 3. Make each course available online
- 4. Track and monitor the progress of syllabus completion online through a web dashboard.
- 5. Mobile application for teacher and students to track courses.
- 6. Cross utilization of teachers from various schools through online classes (Live Classes)

#### School Leader and Transformation

As a school leader after transformation of the school I see myself also a leader with some different views and skills which I had at the time I was assigned the job of school leadership and before June 2016 when I attended one month certificate course on School leadership at NIEPA (NUEPA) in June 2016.as school leader I find in myself the ability

- a. Of developing a common and shared vision and to promote a culture of collaboration, support and trust.
- b. To empower others to lead and distribute leadership responsibilities throughout the school.
- c. to involve different stakeholders in the process of decision making,
- d. To develop and maintain good relationship among different personnel of school community.
- e. giving emphasis on the professional development of myself as school leader as well as teachers
- f. To involve parents and community in the process of improvement.
- g. To take holistic view of the school and planning for the long term within a framework of clearly articulated values and objectives. Also the ability to integrate different aspects of school to ensure the best possible educational outcomes.

I believe in shared vision, team building, setting priorities, collaboration, need for monitoring, feedback and reflection by all concerned in the process of improvement and focus on the learning of students is central to school improvement.

Today I am highly motivated and satisfied with my job.