

IMPACT ASSESSMENT
2023



VARDHMAN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



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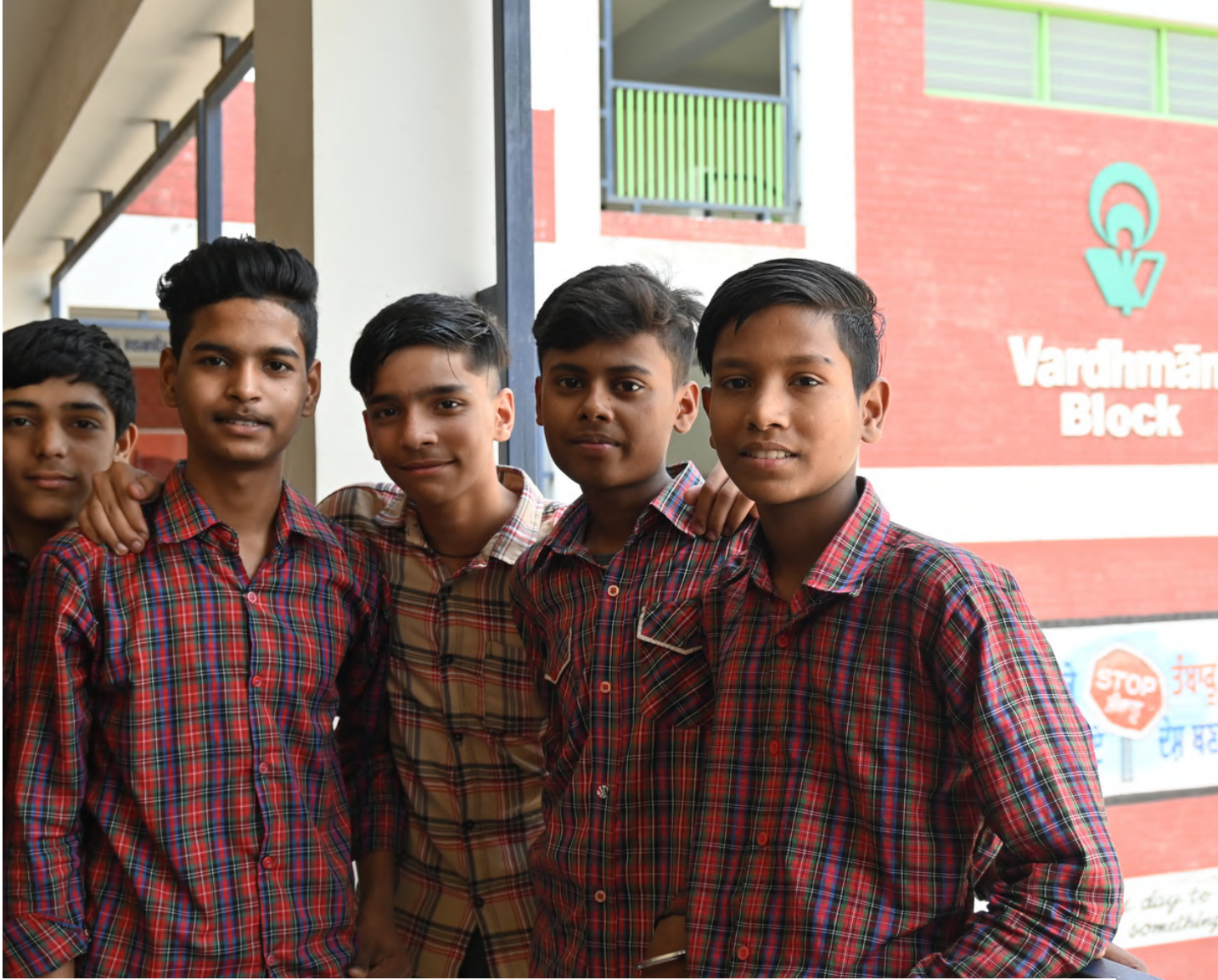
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

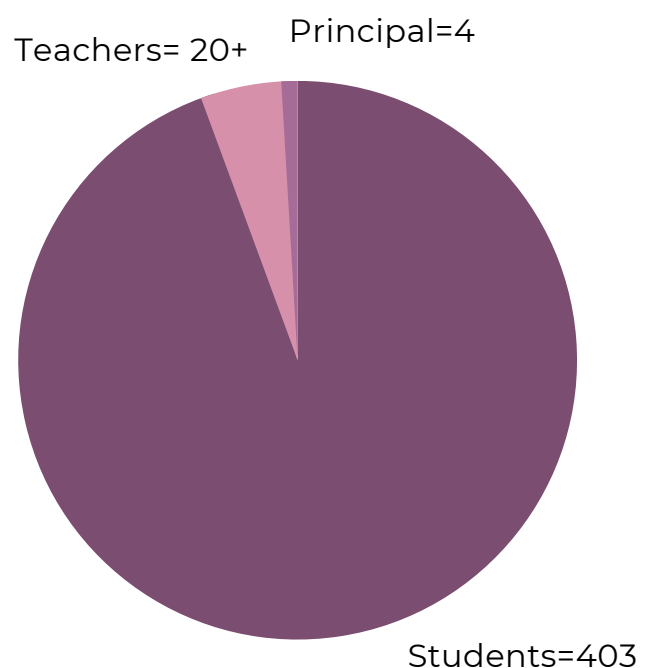
Quality infrastructure in schools is crucial for creating an environment conducive to effective learning and overall development of students. Adequate classroom space, safe and clean drinking water facilities, and modern internet and communication facilities are some of the critical infrastructure requirements that are necessary for schools to impart quality education. However, the poor infrastructure of government schools has been a cause for concern. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) for 2020 highlights the poor status of government schools in various states across the country, including Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh. The poor quality of infrastructure in government schools in Punjab and Madhya Pradesh has a direct correlation with low learning outcomes. Hence, the ASER report recommends building adequate and functional infrastructure in schools for effective learning outcomes.

Keeping this in mind, Vardhman's CSR initiated Vardhman School Development Program (VSDP) to address the issue of infrastructural challenges by rebuilding seven government schools six in Ludhiana, Punjab and one in Obedullaganj, Madhya Pradesh- (A) Government Primary School Giaspura, Ludhiana (B) Government Primary School Giaspura, Ludhiana (C) Government High School, Lohara, Ludhiana (D) Government Senior Secondary School, Kasabad, Ludhiana (E) Government Senior Secondary School, Sekhewal, Ludhiana (F) Government Senior Secondary School, Ladhowal, Ludhiana (G) Government Excellence Higher Secondary School, Obedullaganj, Mandideep, M.P.

By improving the educational infrastructure, VSDP contributed to SDG 4 - Quality Education. The program achieved SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation, by providing access to safe drinking water facilities in schools. Moreover, VSDP contributed to SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth, by providing training and capacity-building opportunities to teachers and staff in government schools. This improved the quality of education, which in turn led to a skilled and competent workforce, promoting economic growth.

In order to assess the pertinence, effectiveness, and efficiency of the intervention carried out by the Vardhman group, a study was conducted in the states of Punjab and Madhya Pradesh. The impact assessment was conducted with a sample size of 430+, and the following Figure presents a detailed breakdown of the collected sample for the assessment.

The study findings unveiled that the VSDP initiative yielded the establishment of diverse educational amenities including classrooms, laboratories, and segregated lavatories for both female and male students, as well as staff members. Furthermore, essential assets such as classroom furniture, furniture for teachers' staff rooms, computers, projectors and green boards were also provided as part of the initiative.



KEY FINDINGS

Although the increase in enrollment rate is a significant macro-level indicator of the impact of the project, the assessment was able to delve deeper into the changes in the school culture. According to both students and teachers, there has been a notable improvement in teacher-student engagement which has resulted in improved student performance.



Students believed that their classrooms are well-lit and ventilated.



Students reported having separate Toilets for girls and boys in their school



Students reported having access to safe drinking facilities in their school.



Students reported having an access to Internet and communication Technologies like Computer and Projectors.



of the students reported that all constructed amenities positively impacted their school experience.

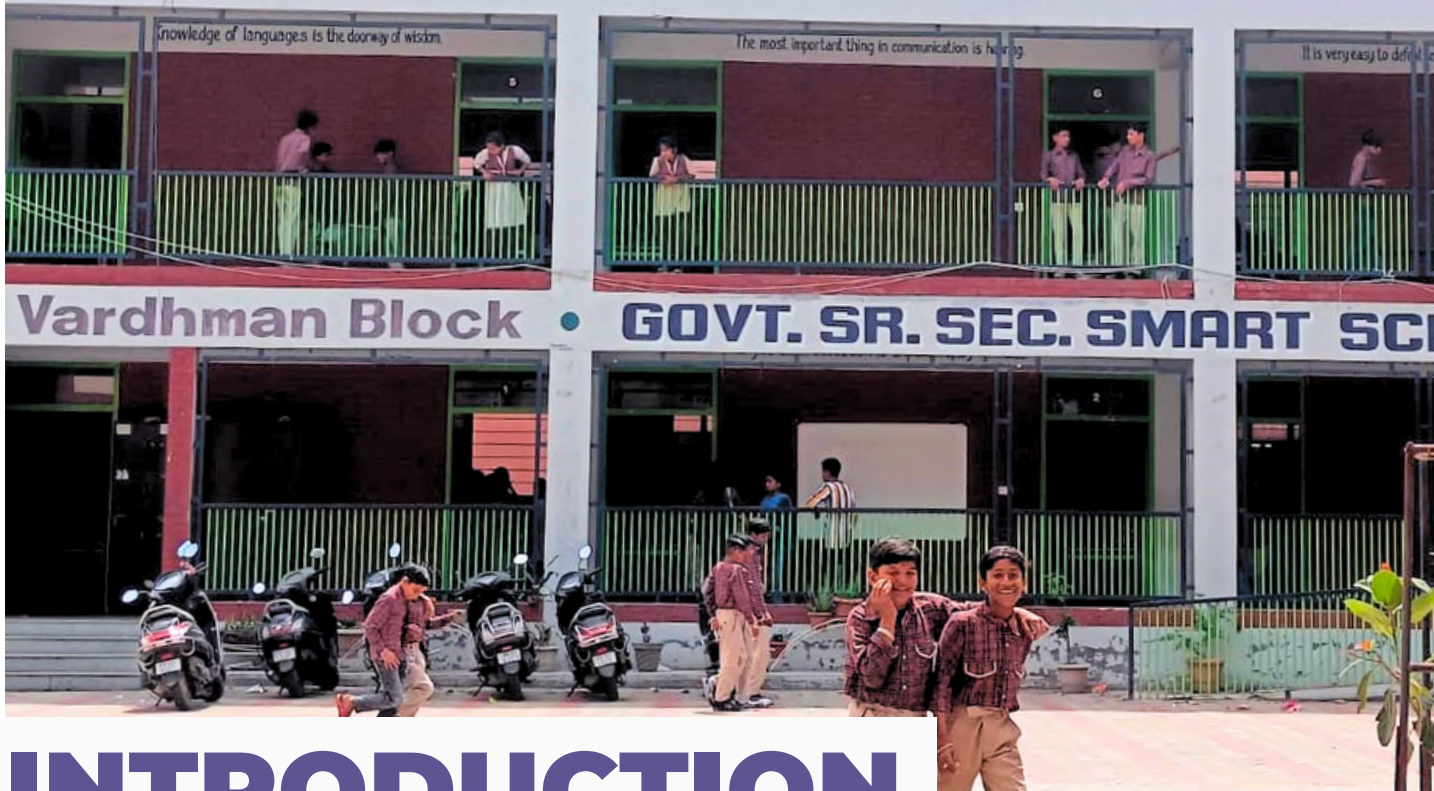


Students believed that new facilities positively impacted academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings and analyses, the following recommendations are put forth:

- It is imperative to fill the vacancies for both teaching and non-teaching staff in all schools, given the rising enrollment, to cater to the increasing demand for teachers.
- An annual awareness camp for Project Nandini can aid in raising awareness about menstrual health and hygiene among girls.
- VSDP should conduct regular audits of school facilities for upkeep, maintenance, and sustainability.
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools should be provided to students, and measures should be taken to ensure their efficient utilization.
- Measures should be taken to ensure the provision of safe drinking water for all students.



INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental right in India, holding significant importance for the nation's overall development. It not only imparts knowledge and skills essential for personal and professional growth but also contributes to poverty reduction, improved health outcomes, and the advancement of gender equality. Primary education serves as the foundation for higher education, and in India, it is now recognized as a fundamental right for all citizens. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), launched in 2001, aims to provide free education to children between the ages of 6 and 14. The establishment of new schools in underserved areas and targeted incentives for socially and economically disadvantaged communities are key strategies employed by the SSA to ensure that all children can fully benefit from the transformative power of education.

However, the successful implementation of this provision and the achievement of SSA's goals rely heavily on the availability of proper educational facilities (Boruah, 2017). The development of educational infrastructure plays a crucial role in realizing the objectives of education. Therefore, when implementing educational initiatives, it is essential to focus not only on achieving desired learning outcomes but also on ensuring a conducive learning environment and considering the holistic student learning process. By addressing the infrastructure needs and providing adequate resources, India can further enhance the effectiveness and impact of its education system, leading to better educational outcomes and opportunities for all.

Nugroho (2019) also emphasizes that student learning activeness is a fundamental aspect of education that needs to be developed and suggests that the quality of school infrastructure plays a crucial role in influencing student learning and enabling its optimization. It should be noted here that the significance of education extends beyond the classroom, as it is also instrumental in reducing poverty in India. According to the World Bank, each additional year of schooling can increase individuals' earning potential by up to 10%. Moreover, education plays a vital role in improving health outcomes, as educated individuals possess a better understanding of health and hygiene practices. Despite notable progress in India's literacy rate, which reached 77.7% in 2019 according to the Ministry of Education, a substantial gap remains between urban and rural literacy rates, with urban areas at 87.7% and rural areas at 73.5%.

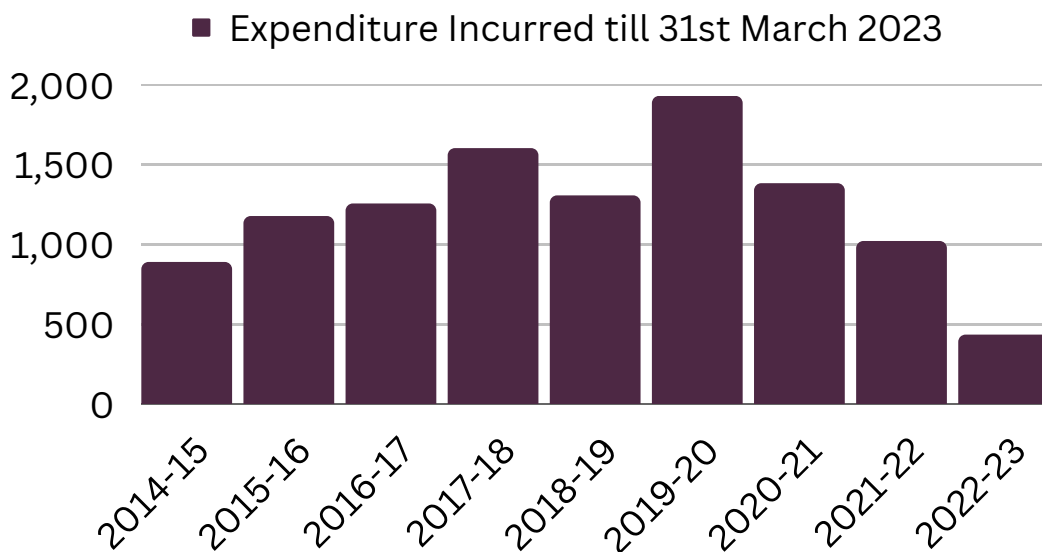
Despite the progress made, India still faces significant challenges in ensuring that every citizen has access to quality education. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2020, over 60% of students in rural areas in Grade 5 cannot read at the Grade 2 level, and 59% of them cannot perform basic arithmetic operations. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the existing education disparities, with school closures and the shift to online learning resulting in significant disruptions to education for millions of children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Indian education system has made significant progress in recent years to ensure that educational opportunities are available to all segments of society. However, with the increasing population and demand for more and better educational facilities, there is much more needed to be done. The government needs to improve and equip schools with sufficient infrastructure facilities to affect the whole teaching-learning process. To sum up, education is a critical factor in the comprehensive growth of India, and it requires collaborative efforts from the government, civil society, and other stakeholders to tackle the obstacles and guarantee that each child in India has equal access to quality education. With this in consideration, the Vardhman Group launched the Vardhman School Development Program in the year 2016. The Vardhman Group is a well-known Indian textile conglomerate with a significant presence in the textile industry. The group has also been actively involved in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives for several years.



VARDHMAN CSR

Vardhman Group is a leading Indian Textile conglomerate that operates in the manufacture of yarn, fabrics, threads, fibres, garments and special steel. The company was founded in 1973 and has since become a well-known name in the Indian business community. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an important part of Vardhman Group's business philosophy. The company believes that it has a responsibility to give back to society and support the communities where it operates. The Vardhman CSR program focuses on improving the lives of people in its surrounding areas by supporting initiatives in education, healthcare, environmental sustainability and community development.



FOCUS AREA OF VARDHMAN CSR ACTIVITIES



Education



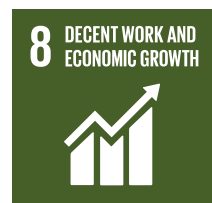
Health Care



Rural Development

Within their educational programs, the CSR activities have been focusing on building school infrastructure and providing necessary assets and material support to affect a positive change in the learning development of the government school. In addition, Vardhman has also implemented several healthcare initiatives to provide access to quality healthcare facilities to people in remote areas. The company has organized health camps and established health centres in villages to provide basic healthcare services to people in need. Vardhman is also committed to environmental sustainability and has implemented various initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint. The company has invested in renewable energy sources, such as solar power, and has implemented various measures to reduce water and energy consumption.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) ALIGNED WITH CSR ACTIVITES



Vardhman, as a responsible corporate entity, recognizes the significance of aligning its activities with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations. It actively contributes to SDG 4: Quality Education through educational programs, infrastructure development, and capacity-building. Vardhman aligns with SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, focusing on fair employment practices and sustainable economic development. It also emphasizes SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, promoting sustainable manufacturing and waste management. By engaging with the SDGs, Vardhman strives to make a positive impact on society, the economy, and the environment.



VARDHMAN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Access to quality education is a basic necessity for the development of a strong, civilized, and progressive nation. VARDHMAN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (VSDP) makes all possible efforts to lay a foundation for indiscriminate access to quality education for children by building the capacity and infrastructural facility of the schools. The program has helped bridge the gap between urban and rural education by providing equal opportunities for growth and development to all. Vardhman's CSR initiated the Vardhman School Development Program (VSDP) to address the issue of infrastructural challenges by rebuilding the following seven government schools in Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.

1. GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL GIASPURA, LUDHIANA
2. GOVERNMENT HIGH SCHOOL GIASPURA, LUDHIANA
3. GOVERNMENT HIGH SCHOOL LOHARA, LUDHIANA
4. GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL KASABAD, LUDHIANA
5. GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL SEKHEWAL, LUDHIANA
6. GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL LADHOWAL, LUDHIANA
7. GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL, OBEDULLAGANJ, MANDIDEEP, M.P.

The program has helped bridge the gap between urban and rural education by providing equal opportunities for growth and development to all. With VSDP, Vardhman Group has demonstrated its commitment to social responsibility and showed education is key to building a better future for our society. The efforts have created a brighter and more equitable future for children. The few objectives of VSDP are enlisted below:

- 1.** To make Quality Education accessible to the underprivileged section of society, especially for the children of migrant workers by providing required and essential facilities in government schools including classrooms, benches, safe drinking water, hygienic toilets etc.
- 2.** To upgrade the infrastructure and educational facilities available in government schools so that students are not denied admission owing to lack of facilities.
- 3.** To provide a clean, safe, hygienic, comfortable and effective learning environment to students so that they can focus on their academic and holistic growth, along with minimizing the drop-out rates
- 4.** To cultivate a sense of belongingness among teachers, students and the community through behavior-changing activities and capacity building initiatives.

VSDP has been primarily implemented in the government schools situated in the vicinity of the manufacturing locations of the states of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The beneficiaries of the program are the school teachers, students and the community in general. The entire process of the program is as below;

- 1.** **Beneficiary Identification:** Collecting information from District Education Office, Baseline Survey, Need Assessment. Post analysis of data, discussions and approvals the school is selected and finalized.

- 2.** Infrastructure Development: As per the analysis and need identification the necessary infrastructure is developed and donations are made.
- 3.** Monitoring and Quality Control: School Management, Internal Audit Team and Gram Panchayat certify the quality of work done.
- 4.** Infrastructure Handover: The asset created is legally handed over to the school and community.



VARDHMAN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (VSDP) is committed to providing access to quality education, recognizing its importance in nation-building. Through the program, various donations have been made to schools to support this cause. Such as :

Year (of handover)	Location	Project	Beneficiary
2018	Government Primary School, Giaspura, Ludhiana	Construction of 12 Classrooms, 2 Staffroom including furniture & separate toilets block for Girls & Boys, Drinking water facilities.	4000+
2020	Government High School, Giaspura, Ludhiana	Construction of 12 Classrooms including furniture & separate toilets block for Girls & Boys, Drinking water facilities.	1900+
2020	Government High School, Lohara, Ludhiana.	Construction of 15 Classrooms including furniture & separate toilets block for Girls & Boys, Drinking water facilities.	2000+
2020	Government Senior Secondary School, Kasabad, Ludhiana	Construction of 12 Classrooms including furniture & separate toilets block for Girls & Boys, Drinking water facilities.	2000+
2021	Government Senior Secondary School, Sekhewal, Ludhiana	Construction of 10 Classrooms including furniture & separate toilets block for Girls & Boys, Drinking water facilities and 15 Desktops.	2000+
2021	Government Senior Secondary School, Ladhawal, Ludhiana	Construction of 10 Classrooms including furniture	800+
2021	Vardhman Block at Govt. Excellence Higher Secondary School, Obedullaganj, Mandideep, M.P	Construction of 13 Classrooms including furniture & Science Lab, a separate toilets block for Girls & Boys, and Drinking water facilities	900+
2022	Vardhman Sport Complex	Construction of Indoor Badminton Hall, Gym, Changing Room with Lockers, Separate Toilets for Men and Women, and Administrative office.	4600+



IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

The Impact Assessment study pertaining to the structure encompassed the following constituent elements:



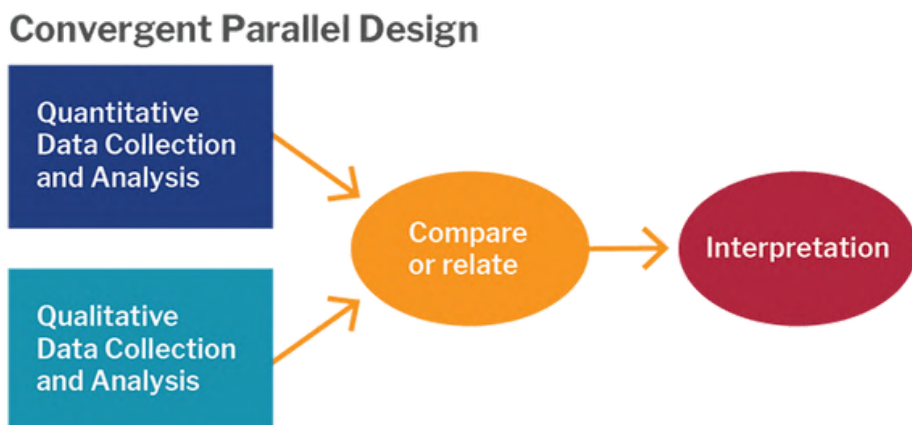
OBJECTIVES

- 01 Evaluate the infrastructure and facilities developed by the Vardhman Group under Vardhman School Development Program (VSDP) in selected schools.
- 02 Assess the impact of the facilities on the quality of education and the overall experience of the students.
- 03 Measure the impact of the facilities on student enrollment, retention, and academic performance.
- 04 Assess the impact of the facilities on the overall experience of the students.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The mixed-method approach combined field data collection and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the VSDP's impact. Field data captured the perspectives of those involved, while qualitative data added depth through interviews and Focus Group Discussions, enabling insight into implementation and stakeholder experiences

The research design employed a convergent parallel design to draw overall conclusions. This involved independent analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, followed by a joint interpretation to draw conclusions (Creswell & Pablo-Clark, 2011). A process of triangulation was used to verify the data and enhance credibility (Carvalho & White, 1997). This approach enabled the synthesis of the Quantitative and Qualitative data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the VSDP and its impact on the stakeholders ensuring the reliability of the conclusions drawn. The study conducted used the following method of data collection:



SAMPLING

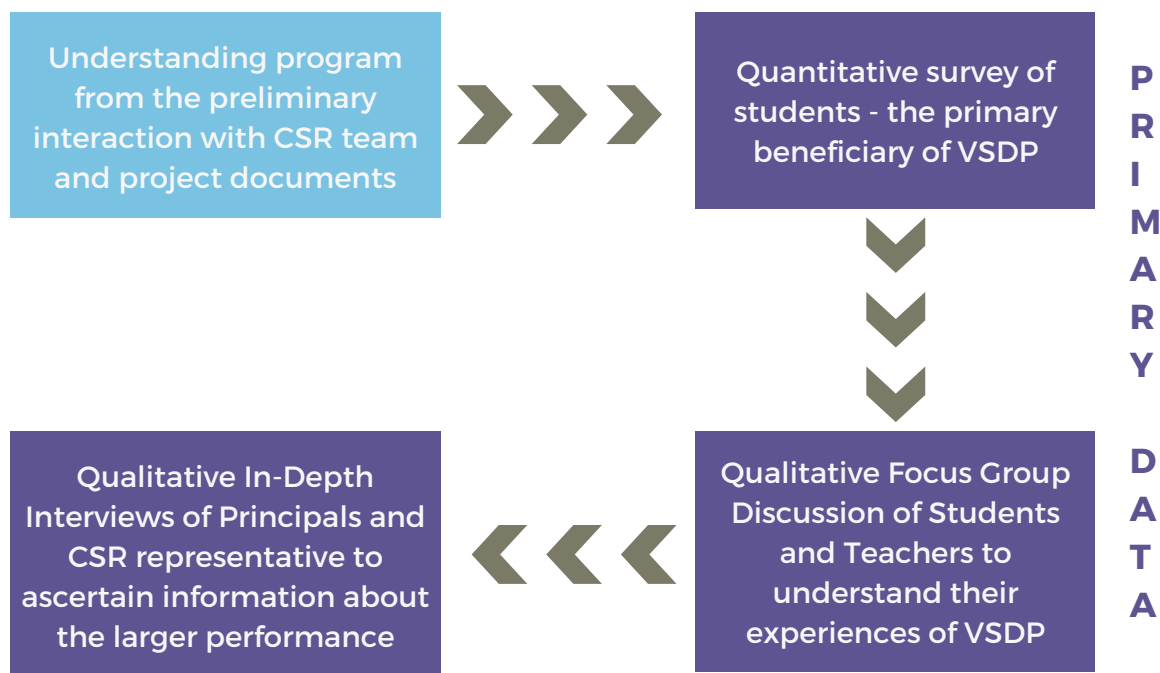
Quantitative data were only collected from students considering them to be the primary beneficiary of the VSDP. The purposive and stratified Random Sampling technique was employed to ensure the students with optimum experience of the VSDP are included in the assessment of the project. Students who have experienced both the facilities school Pre-VSDP and Post-VSDP. The students of grades 8th to 12th were the major participants in the assessment. The sample size for the quantitative data was scientifically calculated using Cochran Formula. The sample size maintained a 95% of confidence level and covered 5% of the margin of error. A total of 403 students were surveyed for quantitative data collection.

FIELD INTERACTION

	Ladhowal	Giaspura	Sekhewal	Lohara	Obedulla ganj
Quantitative Survey (Students)	90	90	94	90	39
Focus Group Discussion (Students)	1	1	1	1	1
Focus Group Discussion (Teachers)	1	1	1	1	-
In-Depth Interview (Principals)	1	1	1	-	1

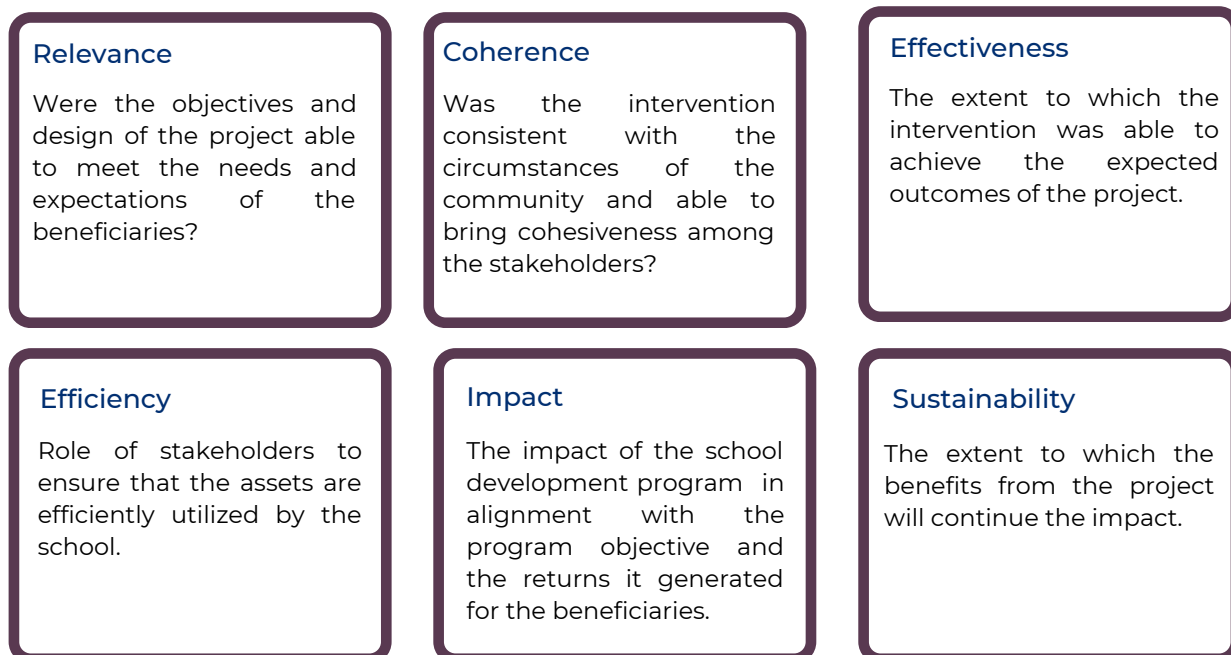
Qualitative data was collected from students, teachers, and principals. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) were used as data collection techniques. Purposive sampling was used to select participants for FGDs, while individual principals/in charge of the schools were approached for IDIs. 20+ teachers and 4 principals were consulted for qualitative data collection.

SECONDARY DATA



ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) has defined six evaluation criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability – and two principles for their use. These criteria provide a normative framework used to determine the merit or worth of an intervention (policy, strategy, program, project or activity). They serve as the basis upon which evaluative judgments are made.



The aforementioned criteria and the mapped indicators in the context of the project have been used as a structural framework to develop the evaluation tools for this impact assessment study.

DATA ANALYSIS

The study utilized a mixed-method approach to analyze the impact of the program on the beneficiaries. Data were quantified and assigned values to assess the program's impact and the beneficiaries' experiences. Qualitative data was collected through field notes and transcriptions, which were analyzed for common themes and unique insights. The data was then organized using OECD DAC pointers to establish the program's impact. The findings were presented in a categorized format, decoding the raw data to derive key insights.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The Impact Assessment Study on the Vardhman School Development Program (VSDP) provides valuable insights, but it is important to recognize its limitations. Firstly, the study relied on self-reported data, which can be influenced by recall bias or social desirability bias. This may have affected the accuracy and objectivity of the findings. Secondly, the study's timeframe may have limited the assessment of long-term effects beyond the study period. Changes or impacts that occur after the study is not captured. Lastly, like any research study, resource constraints, time limitations, and logistical challenges may have influenced the study's scope and depth. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the study's results.

OVERALL DATA DESCRIPTION

STAKEHOLDER	COUNT
Students	403
Teachers	20+
Principals	4
Total	424+

Distribution of Surveyed Students by Age

AGE	COUNT
11	2
12	6
13	18
14	58
15	120
16	107
17	74
18	14
19	4
Total	403

Distribution of Surveyed Students by Class

AGE	COUNT
VII	6
VIII	29
IX	20
X	242
XI	3
XII	103
Total	403

Distribution of Surveyed Students by Sex

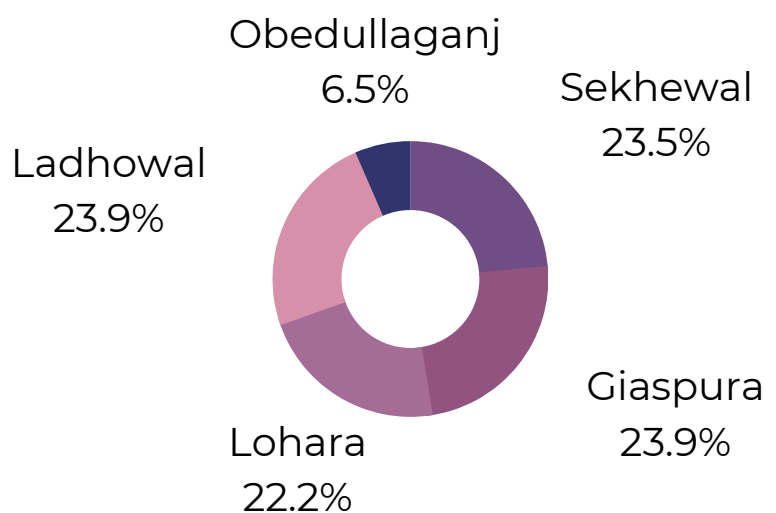
SEX	COUNT
Female	230
Male	173
Total	403



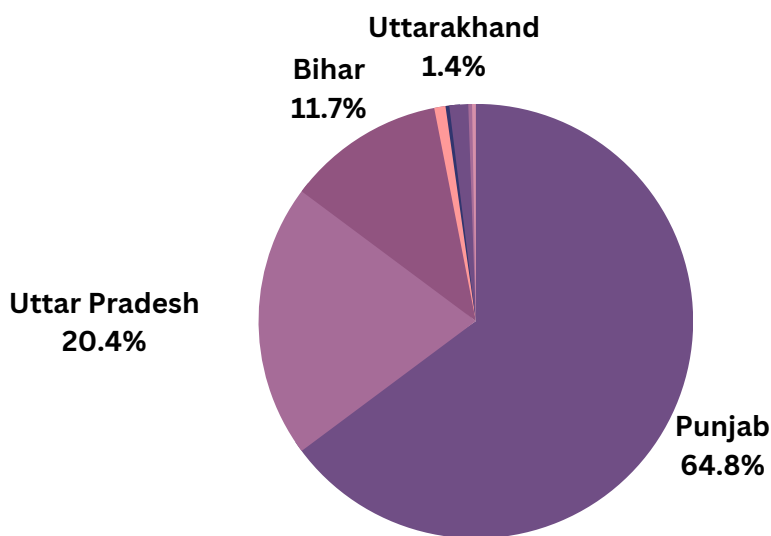
IMPACT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Participants' Demography

Among the total sample size of 403 students, aged between 11 to 19 years, 57% were identified as female. The distribution of female students across the sample size was relatively even in all schools, with the exception of Obedullaganj.



The majority of the students belonged to the age group of 14 to 17 years. A significant portion of them hailed from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, with close to 86% reporting that their fathers were employed in the informal sector. Likewise, the majority of the students in the survey (86%) reported that their mothers were involved in performing unpaid domestic care work at home.



The majority of the surveyed students (approx. 65%) identified themselves as either native to Punjab or having resided for an extended period of time. In contrast, 20.4% and 11.7% of the respondents hailed from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, respectively. In Madhya Pradesh, 100% of students identified their native state as Madhya Pradesh.

Considering the diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of the surveyed students, it can be inferred that the VSDP has successfully reached out to the most vulnerable sections of society as well as to the migrant population from different parts of the country. The program's outreach to the migrant population is particularly noteworthy, as it demonstrates the program's ability to engage and support students from diverse geographical origins.

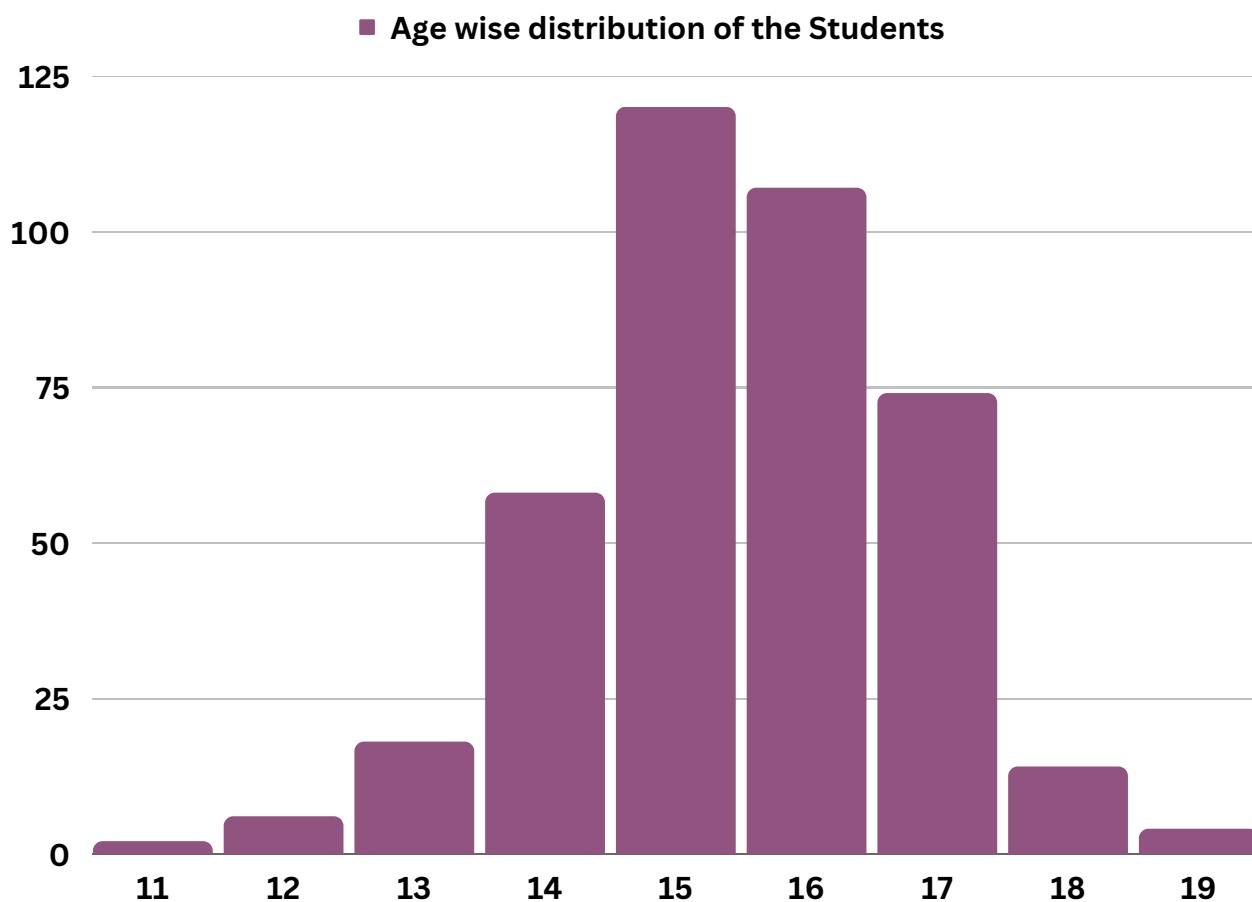
“ VSDP is dedicated to providing essential infrastructural facilities for students to secure a brighter future. Their primary focus is on providing quality education to students and ensuring that they have access to the necessary resources to thrive in their academic pursuits.

-Teachers,
Lohara School ”

The study comprised a sample of 403 students from four schools located in Ludhiana, namely, Govt Senior Secondary Smart School Sekhewal, Govt High School Giaspura, Govt Senior Secondary School Lohara, and Govt Senior Secondary Smart School, Ladhowal. Apart from this, one school in Madhya Pradesh also comprised a sample in this study, namely, Govt. Excellence Higher Secondary School Obedullaganj. Of these, 60 % were enrolled in grade 10, while the remaining students were distributed in classes seventh, eighth, ninth, eleventh and twelfth.

The majority of surveyed students have been beneficiaries of the program since their junior years and continue to enjoy the benefits of the program to date. The VSDP's success in reaching such a diverse range of students indicates its inclusive approach to education, which aims to provide equal opportunities to all students, regardless of their socio-economic or cultural background.

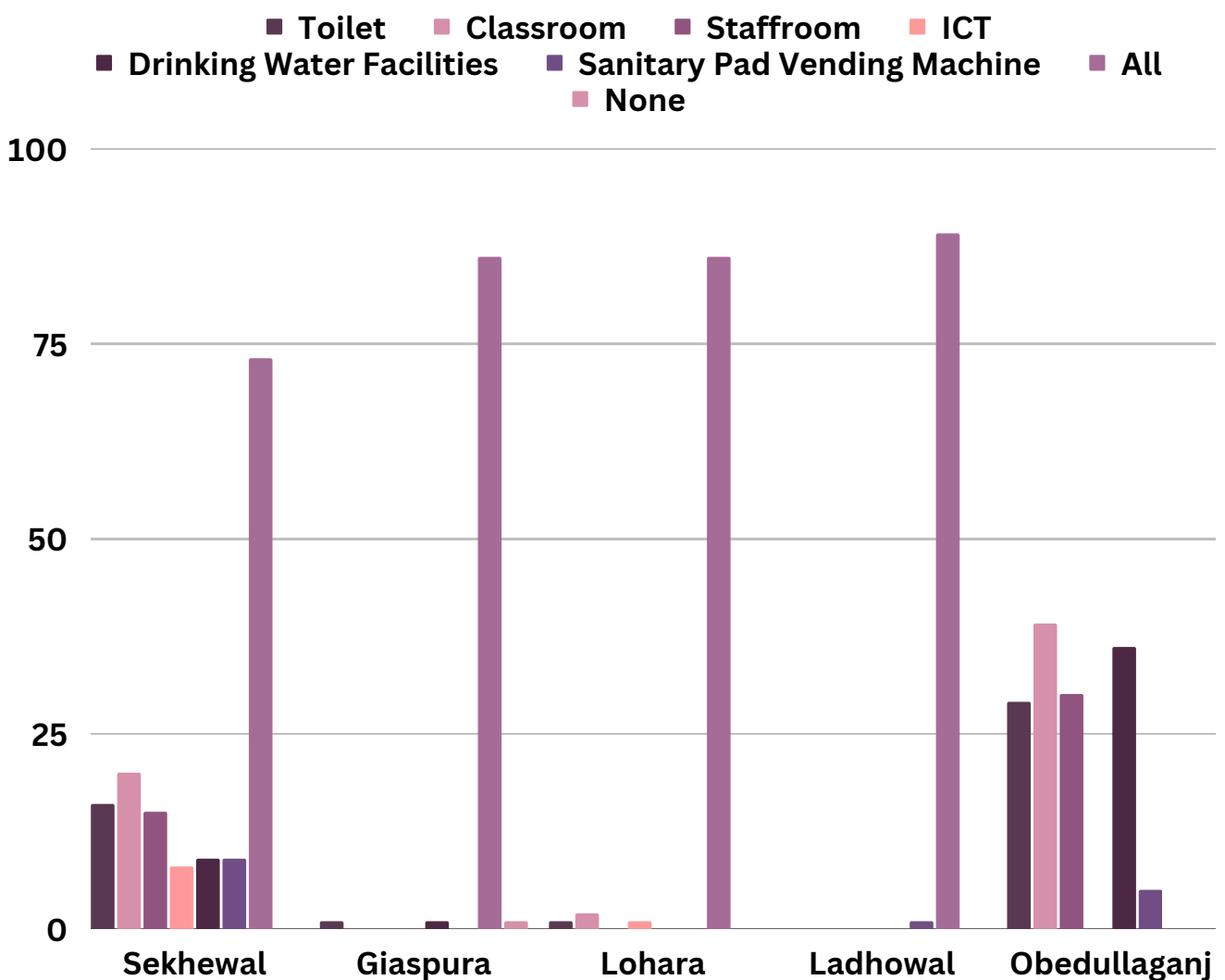
In a country like India, where access to quality education is frequently impeded by challenges such as poverty, gender inequality, caste divisions, and regional disparities, the VSDP's commitment to providing equal opportunities to all students becomes even more significant. By bridging these gaps, the program serves as a catalyst for transforming lives and dismantling barriers, empowering students to overcome socio-economic and cultural limitations.



Facilities created by VSDP

Access to quality infrastructure and essential services, such as water, sanitation, and electricity, are vital elements for the success of any development program, including VSDP. The program recognizes the significance of these facilities, and their availability is considered a fundamental factor in ensuring program success. To assess their effectiveness, students were inquired about their access to facilities provided under VSDP.

The participants shared their experience of the overall facility created by the program and narrated how each of it contributed to their academic experience and development. The bar graph shows the number of students confirming the kind of facilities created by VSDP.



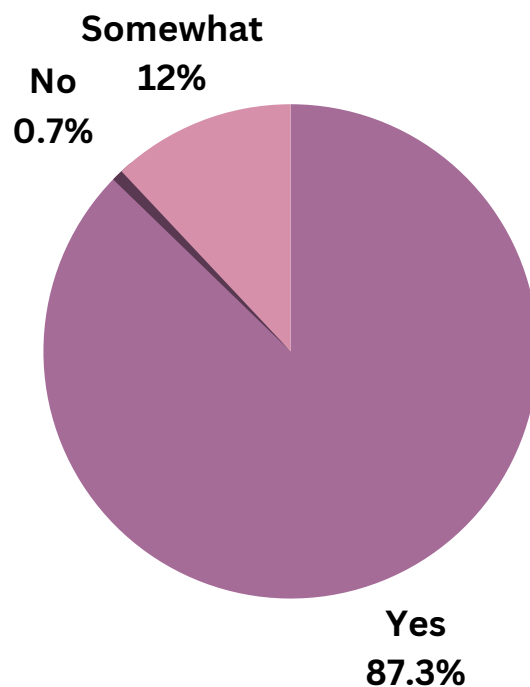
A notable proportion of the student body, specifically 82%, has opined that the VSDP has effectively built classrooms, installed sanitary pad vending machines, provided adequate toilet facilities and ensured access to the potable water supply. Additionally, the program has equipped them with cutting-edge information and communication technology (ICT) tools, thereby facilitating academic excellence and growth.

The program's success in meeting the needs of the students is evident through the high proportion of positive feedback. A conducive learning environment is fundamental to promoting academic growth and success, and the VSDP's efforts in this regard have been commendable.

According to the survey results, a significant majority of 87.3 % of the student participants strongly agreed that the implementation of new infrastructure through the Vardhman Sustainable Development Program (VSDP) has successfully addressed the challenges and obstacles they previously faced. This overwhelming agreement reflects the positive impact of the program's contributions.

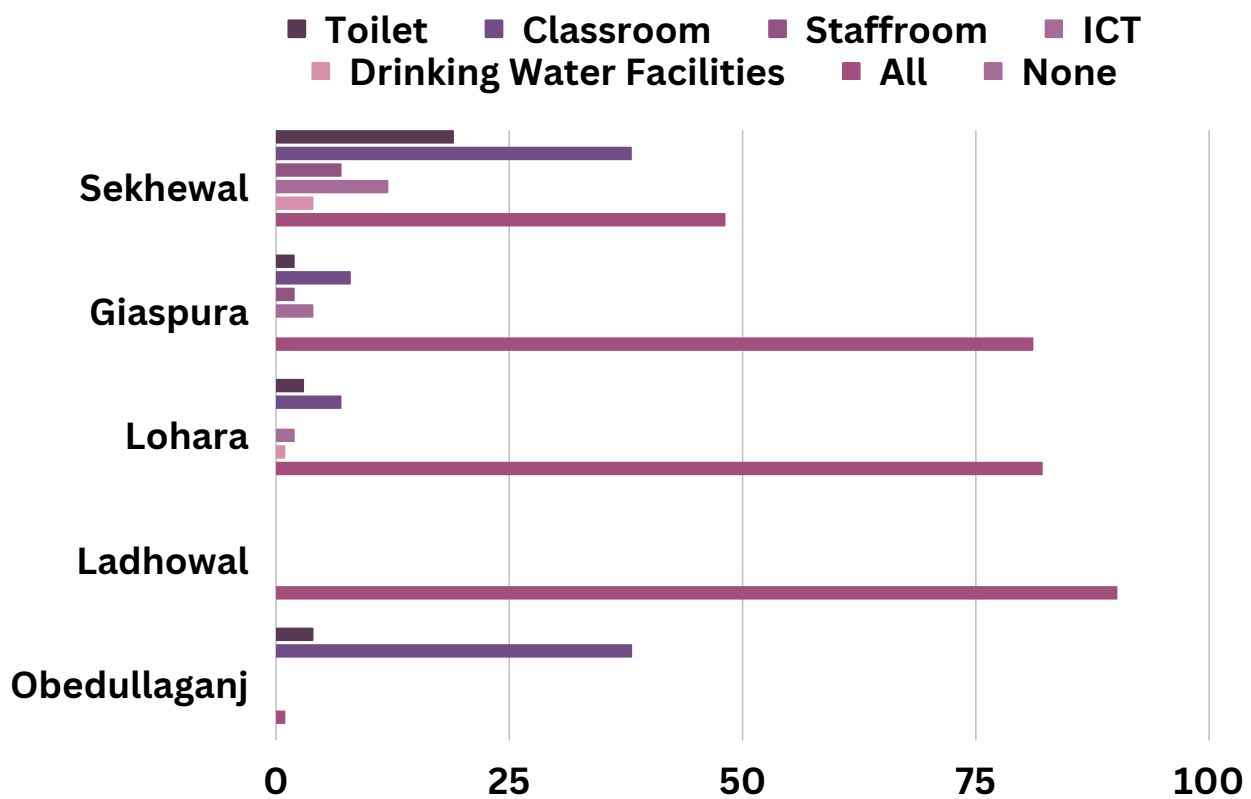
By introducing new infrastructure, the VSDP has effectively resolved the various issues that students encountered in their learning environment. These problems included inadequate classroom space, insufficient laboratory facilities, and the lack of separate lavatories for female and male students and staff members.

The program's efforts have led to an overall enhancement of the school's infrastructure, resulting in improved quality of education and better learning outcomes for the students.



VSDP Infrastructure Resolved Student Challenges

The positive outcomes observed can be attributed to the efforts made by the VSDP in providing the necessary resources and support to improve the school's infrastructure.



Analysis of Students' Perception of the Influence of VSDP Facilities on Academic Excellence across Schools

According to a survey conducted, 100% of the students acknowledged that the construction of facilities under the VSDP initiative has contributed positively towards their overall learning experience. Further analysis of the results showed that three-fourths of the students believed that all the constructed amenities have impacted their academic experience.

95% of the students expressed the opinion that the introduction of new facilities has a positive impact on their academic performance.

“ The VSDP has built a total of 12 classrooms, in addition to constructing 2 staff rooms. Moreover, the program has installed 6 urinal pots designated for boys and built 4 toilets that cater to the needs of girls.

- Teacher
Giaspura School



“ Under VSDP, 10-12 new classrooms were built in our school, which alleviated the issue of overcrowding and provided shelter to students who were previously forced to sit outside, exposed to various weather conditions.

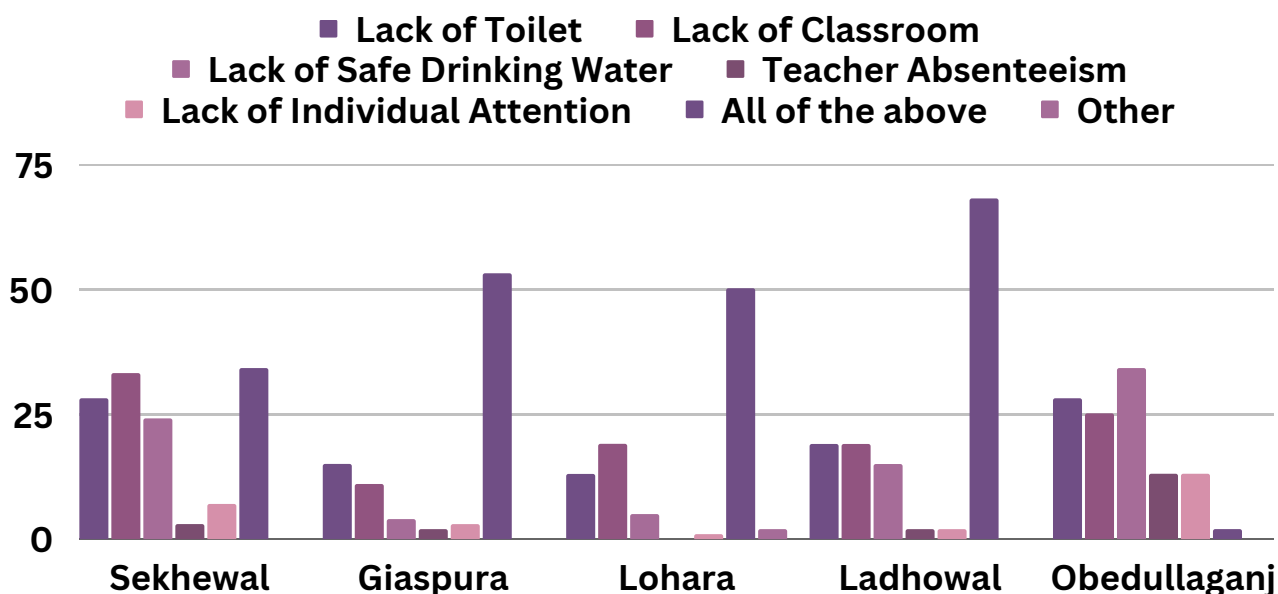
- Teachers,
Ladhowal School

“ Thanks to VSDP, we now have more than ten modern classrooms that provide a conducive learning environment. The program has also prioritized the installation of advanced water facilities, ensuring convenient access to safe drinking water during our recess. Moreover, they have built separate toilets for boys and girls which promotes privacy and hygiene of the students.

-FGD,
Students of Giaspura

Challenges before VSDP

Before the implementation of the Vardhman School Development Program (VSDP), the educational landscape faced numerous challenges. In order to gain insights from the students' perspective, a bottom-up approach was adopted. The students were asked about the challenges they encountered, and their responses were collected and analyzed. The graph below illustrates the key challenges identified by the students, providing valuable insights into the pre-intervention educational environment.



According to a survey conducted, 51% of the students reported that prior to the VSDP intervention, the school faced several challenges including an inadequate number of classrooms, limited access to safe drinking water, and the absence of proper toilet facilities. These factors led to teacher absenteeism and created a lack of individual attention from teachers towards the students.

The lack of basic infrastructure in the school affected the quality of education and had a negative impact on the students' academic performance. With the intervention of VSDP, the school was able to overcome these challenges and provide a better learning environment to the students. It is important to note that providing access to basic amenities such as clean water, toilets and sufficient classrooms not only improves the overall well-being of the students but also creates a conducive environment for learning. Thus, initiatives like VSDP can play a vital role in improving the education system and uplifting the quality of education in the community.

“ Before the implementation of VSDP, our school lacked proper infrastructure. There was no building, and the limited facilities were insufficient to cater to the needs of the students. Overcrowded classrooms resulted in students sitting on the floor, facing concentration issues, and teachers experiencing physical and mental stress.

-Teachers,
Lohara School ”

“ Previously, we had to raise our voices during classes due to the lack of concentration when students were studying in open spaces. Even the board classes had to sit outside. Now, we ensure that board classes take place inside the newly built classrooms. Teaching has become more enjoyable as the students' listening capabilities have improved.

Teachers,
Ladhowal School ”

“ We faced difficulties in studying due to various distractions and noise. However, with the construction of the new building, we have experienced a positive impact. The fans were often dysfunctional, and the rooms could only accommodate 20 students, despite having 45 students.

Students,
Ladhowal School ”

The findings of the Impact Assessment Study suggested that there was a severe scarcity of facilities in government schools, such as good classrooms, classroom furniture, and space for girls' menstrual hygiene needs.



Denial for Admission to Students by the School

Insufficient infrastructure resulted in denying admission to students. Limited classroom capacity decreased enrollment in each school.



Poor Health and Hygiene

Parents expressed discomfort in sending their children to schools lacking essential facilities, including classrooms, toilets, and safe drinking water, which negatively impacted children's health and hygiene. Children were hesitant to use makeshift washrooms and sit on the ground. Girls frequently missed school during menstruation, leading to dropouts.



Sense of inferiority among children

Students experienced feelings of inferiority when observing their friends attend well-furnished private schools. This resulted in some students preferring private schools, and dropping out of government schools.



High Drop-out Rate

Marginalized communities were disproportionately affected by poor access to quality education and inadequate infrastructure, resulting in a high rate of dropouts in government schools.



Learning Hampered by Weather Conditions

Classes were conducted under trees or in open-air environments which caused significant obstacles to the learning process. Weather conditions, including heat, rain, and cold weather, constantly affected students' sitting positions, leading to an unfavorable learning environment.

VSDP upgrades the infrastructure of government schools and enhances the quality and accessibility of education for children.

Impact of VSDP

Access to quality infrastructure and essential services, such as water, sanitation, and electricity, are vital elements for the success of any development program, including VSDP. The program recognizes the significance of these facilities, and their availability is considered a fundamental factor in ensuring program success. To assess their effectiveness, students were inquired about their access to facilities provided under VSDP. This information helps the program identify any gaps in service delivery, take corrective measures and provide necessary support to ensure the program's continued success.

BEFORE

AFTER



Testimonials of Teachers

“Due to the lack of a proper building and adequate infrastructure, our school had significant challenges to students and teachers alike. The limited space and overcrowded classrooms resulted in students sitting on the floor and struggling to concentrate, causing undue stress on both students and teachers. However, following the outbreak of COVID-19, the situation improved considerably. The newly constructed building and the introduction of education in the English medium impressed students, instilling a sense of pride and leading to an increase in enrollment. Notably, students previously attending private schools have now joined this school, reflecting the positive impact of VSDP interventions on the school's reputation.

Teachers
Lohara School”

“Our school previously had sanitation problems due to the lack of concrete flooring and proper drainage. However, after the VSDP intervention, the necessary upgrades were made and even inspired the construction of an indoor stadium.

Teachers
Sekhwal School”

“The school's inadequate infrastructure and facilities, including limited space and lack of proper classrooms, previously led to lower enrollment rates as parents had concerns about the quality of education. VSDP's intervention improved the infrastructure, resulting in fewer student absences due to illness and the introduction of new subjects, including Economics, History, and Political Science. These efforts have positively impacted the student's educational experience and overall welfare.

Teachers
Ladhowal School”

“Most students at our school complete their education without dropping out, but some still face family-related challenges. We encourage and support these students to continue their studies. Many migrant students attend our school and work part-time, but still manage to attend regularly. However, some students require financial assistance, particularly those with single parents, but there is no needs-based assistance system in place. We do what we can to help these students, especially those in board classes.

Teachers
Giaspura School”

Testimonials of Students and Principal

“With the upgraded infrastructure, our school has witnessed a significant increase in student enrollment. The number of students in each class has grown to around 100, and without the aid of technology, it would be incredibly challenging for our teachers to manage effectively. Thanks to the projectors provided by Vardhman, we can incorporate audio-visual aids into our teaching methods. This has made the learning process more engaging and efficient for both teachers and students. Our teachers can now explain complex concepts with ease, and their energy is channeled in a better manner.

Principal
Giaspura School”

“The implementation of the Vardhman School Development Program has brought significant improvements to our school, including the construction of new toilets, classrooms, and staff rooms. The spacious classrooms provide advantages for both students and teachers, allowing for effective teaching and learning experiences.

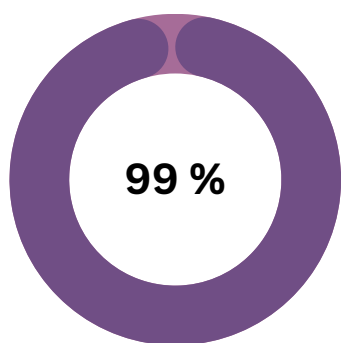
Student,
Lohara School”

“As part of the VSDP initiative, separate washrooms were built for boys and girls, along with a unisex washroom for staff. Additionally, we received two water coolers and a staff room. The sight of the new building being constructed for our school filled us with joy. At that time, our student strength was around 250, but now we have nearly 1000 students, with 980 students in the academic year 2022-2023. Our school attracts students from tribal areas, rural regions, and those economically disadvantaged backgrounds, including a significant number of SC, ST and EWS students. Vardhman has provided immense support to our school by enhancing our infrastructure. It is due to this support that our school recently received recognition under the CM Rise initiative, ranking 25th among all schools in Madhya Pradesh.

Principal
Obedullaganj School”

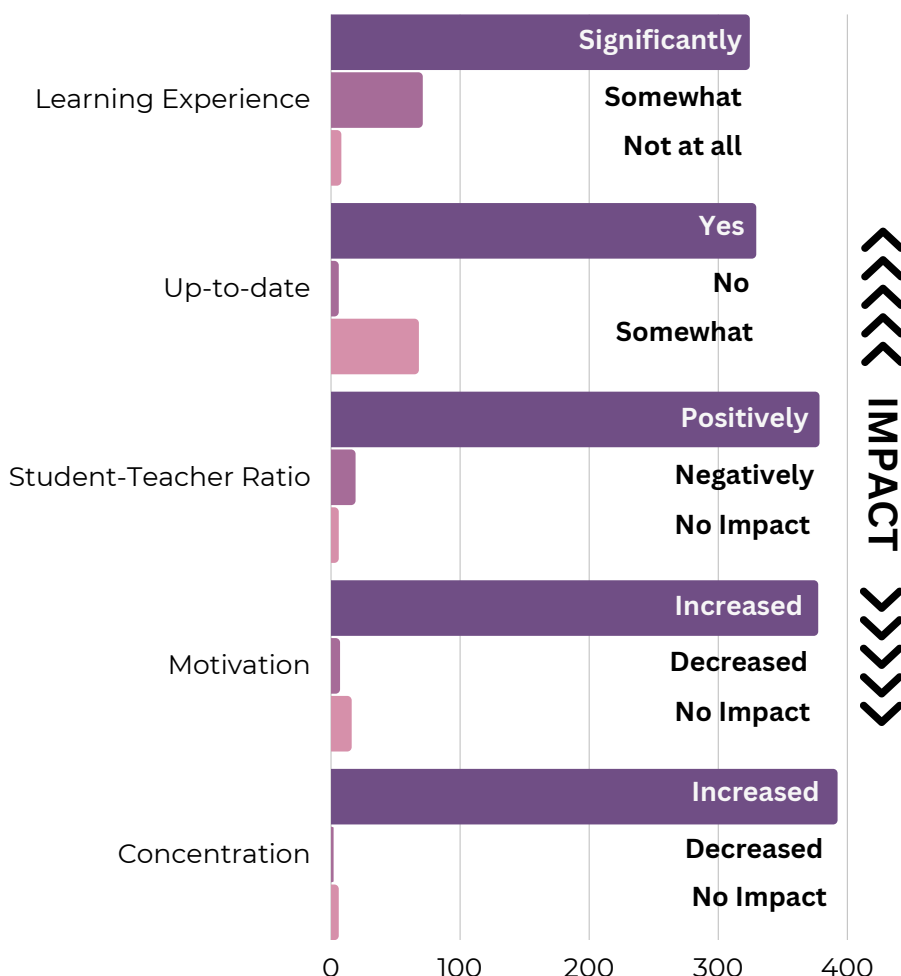
Classroom Facilities

Classroom facilities are imperative in ensuring the effective implementation of any educational program. Within the VSDP, the adequacy and availability of classroom facilities were determined as critical aspects that influence the quality of education. In the conducted survey, students were questioned about the accessibility of fundamental facilities in their classrooms, which yielded valuable insights on the prevailing gaps and required areas of development to create a conducive learning environment for students.



Students surveyed agreed that new VSDP-built classroom facilities have good lighting and ventilation, indicating that the facilities met students' expectations, thus providing a comfortable learning environment, which significantly impacted student learning outcomes.

The survey results reveal that the majority of students found that the new classroom facilities significantly impacted their classroom experience and other activities, with 80% reporting such an impact. Additionally, a high percentage of students reported an increase in motivation to attend classes (93.5%) and improved concentration in the classroom (97%) after the new classroom were built under VSDP.



Based on the survey results, it can be concluded that the new classroom facilities have had a positive impact on the student-teacher ratio, as reported by 94% of students. This implies that the upsurge in enrollment has corresponded with an increase in the count of teachers in selected schools.

82 %

students reported contentment with the provided classroom amenities, affirming that the facilities were sufficient and modern to cater to their educational needs. These findings emphasize the significance of investing in education infrastructure and providing students with adequate and modern learning environments. Furthermore, these results showcase the positive impact of Vardhman's CSR initiatives on the local community and the promotion of quality education in the selected government schools.

“ Earlier, teaching was a challenging task for us as students found it difficult to concentrate in the open space. Even the board classes such as tenth and twelfth were conducted outside which added to the distraction. However, with the new classrooms built under the VSDP, we are able to ensure that board classes are conducted indoors. This has resulted in a significant improvement in their concentration and listening capabilities. We no longer have to shout to get their attention and we find teaching them much more enjoyable now. Our classrooms are now equipped with benches, proper lighting, and fans to ensure students can study in a comfortable environment. However, in higher classes, we only offer the arts stream. Therefore, after 10th grade, many of our students who wish to pursue other fields have to go to other schools. In some cases, parents may not allow their daughters to attend other schools and as a result, their dreams are restricted.

Teachers
Ladhowal School

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“ Our school has three blocks, but the Vardhman block is the most beloved among our students. They eagerly anticipate studying in that building compared to the others.

Teachers
Giaspura School

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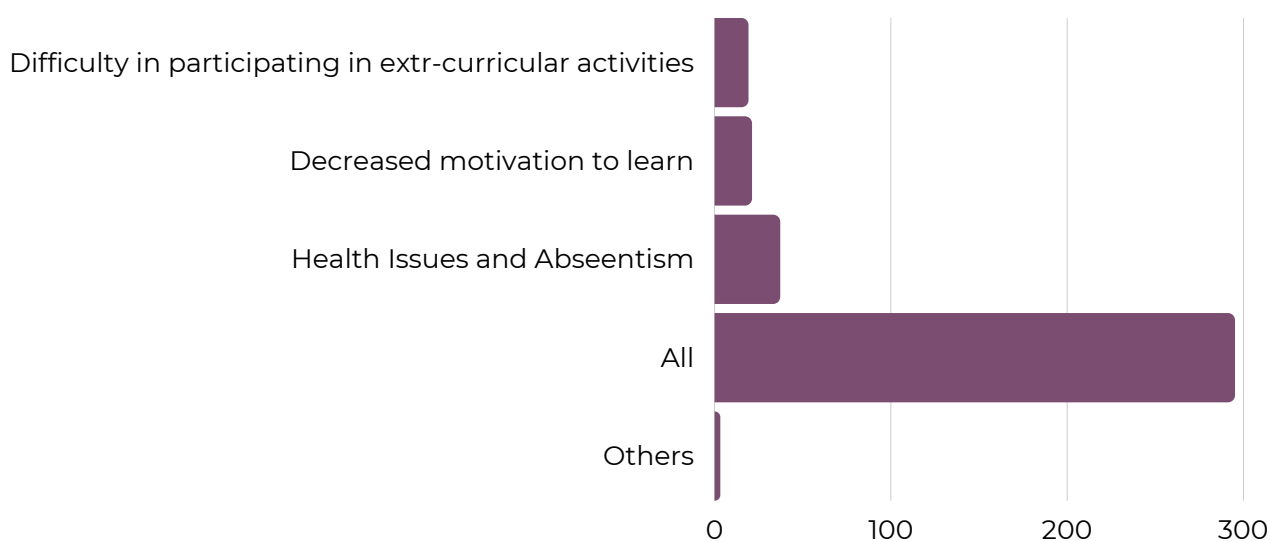
“ The quality of the boards has been enhanced, and we have also received new boards under the CM Rise initiative. Upon the completion of the building, it was equipped with furniture and electricity, meeting most of our learning requirements. Now, students enjoy the comfort of sitting on proper furniture, and our classrooms provide all the necessary facilities for an optimal learning environment.

Teacher
Obedullaganj School

“ Teachers find teaching in these new rooms much better as they are well-lit and ventilated with better seating arrangements. The desks and boards provided are of good quality with symmetry. In contrast, our old furniture was not symmetrical and caused distractions.

FGD
(Teachers Sekhewal)

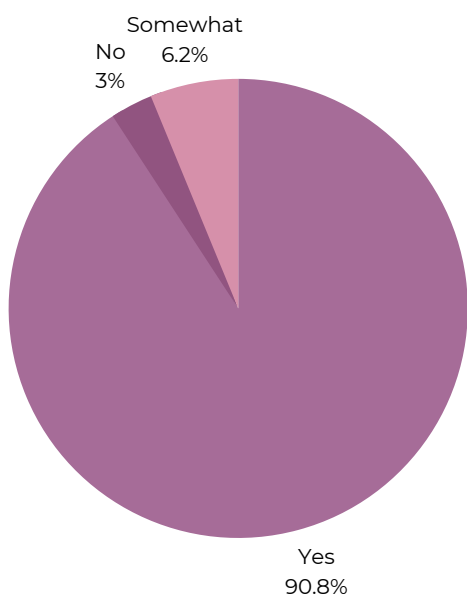
When classroom facilities were inadequate, 100% of students reported that they faced challenges that impeded their academic and personal growth. 80% reported that the lack of proper facilities affected their motivation to attend school, academic progress, participation in extracurricular activities, social and physical development, and increased absenteeism. Palpably, new classroom facilities play a crucial role in students' holistic development, and providing adequate facilities is necessary to create a conducive learning environment that fosters academic progress and personal growth.



Students' Response to Impediments Faced Without VSDP Facilities

Toilet Facilities

Access to hygienic toilet facilities is not only essential for promoting good health and sanitation but also for ensuring that students feel comfortable and respected at school. Inadequate or poorly maintained washrooms can cause students to feel embarrassed or uncomfortable, which can lead to reduced attendance and lower academic performance. Moreover, clean washrooms with proper facilities also promote gender equity and inclusivity. Therefore, ensuring that washrooms in schools are clean and well-maintained should be a priority in any educational development program.



The high percentage of respondents (approx. 91%) who reported that the availability of Toilet facilities has a significant effect on their academic performance suggests that the lack of clean and well-maintained facilities can lead to health issues, and discomfort, and ultimately, hinder academic progress. Out of this population, the majority of students (97%) reported having a positive experience in the school due to the construction of the Toilets.

Based on the survey results, it can be concluded that the absence of toilet facilities in schools can have significant negative impacts on the health, academic performance, and overall well-being of students. Approximately 80% of the respondents highlighted the potential difficulties that students may face, including health problems arising from holding urine and faeces for extended periods, unhygienic practices, and the spread of diseases. The lack of proper sanitation facilities can also lead to absenteeism and affect academic progress, particularly for girls who may miss school during their menstrual cycles. Therefore, it is crucial for schools to prioritize the provision of clean and well-maintained toilet facilities to create a safe and conducive learning environment that supports the holistic development of students.



During the survey, students were asked about the availability and condition of toilets in their schools. The responses of the students highlighted the need for improved sanitation facilities to ensure the health and well-being of the students. These insights were helpful to identify and prioritize the areas where improvement is needed to ensure better sanitation facilities for the students.

97.5%

students reported that they have toilet facilities in their school. This is a significant improvement from previous years when many schools lacked this basic infrastructure, which can have severe consequences for students' health and well-being. Access to clean and safe toilet facilities is crucial for promoting good hygiene practices and preventing the spread of diseases.

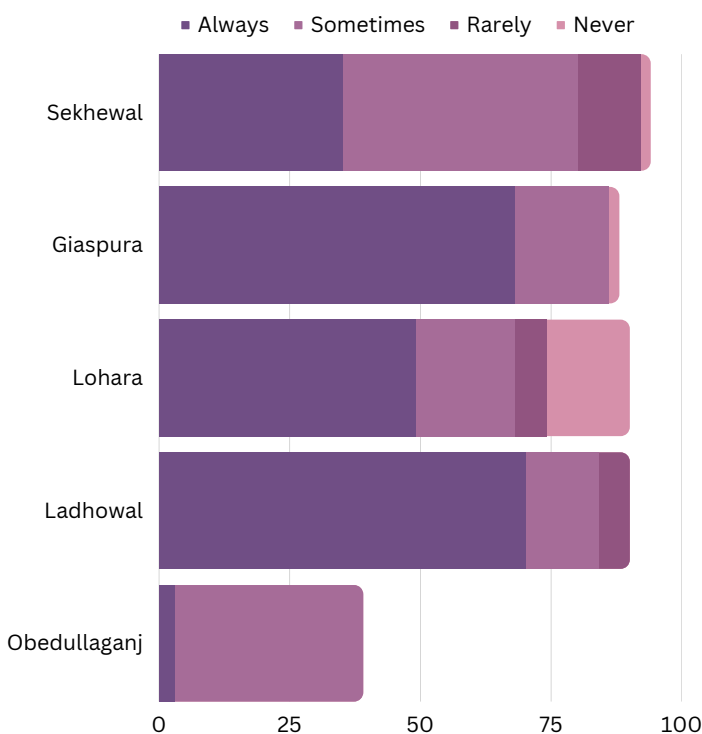
94.5%



students reported that they have separate toilet facilities for girls and boys in their schools.

This is a positive development, as it ensures that students can use the facilities comfortably and with privacy, promoting gender equality and addressing the needs of all students. The provision of separate toilet facilities for girls and boys is essential for creating a safe and inclusive learning environment, where students feel comfortable and respected.

The survey found that 56% of students reported clean and maintained toilet facilities, while 32% said they were cleaned sometimes. 7% reported rare cleaning and 5% never.



“ Vardhman provided us with a building, which includes separate washrooms for boys and girls. This has increased motivation among our students, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, our enrollment rate drastically increased. The good thing is that our students did not leave the school and stayed with us. In fact, many parents enrolled their other children in our school as well.

Teachers
Giaspura School”

“ Thanks to Vardhman, we now have washrooms for students and teachers with the latest facilities. We have also seen an increase in the number of washrooms. Earlier, we had only two washrooms each for boys and girls, but now we have 5 washrooms for each gender, making it a total of 14 washrooms.

Teachers
Sekhewal School”

“ Our school now has a dedicated washroom for the differently-abled, another for teachers, and two each for boys and girls. The students are very satisfied with these facilities.

Teachers
Lohara School”

“ Prior to the VSDP intervention, our old block had dilapidated toilets on the verge of collapse, causing immense inconvenience for both students and teachers. Additionally, water leakage was a persistent problem in the classrooms, negatively impacting the learning environment. We only had 10-12 usable rooms, all of which were in poor condition. The improvements in health and hygiene have been notable due to the efforts of Vardhman. Students are elated to have clean washrooms and have taken the responsibility to maintain their cleanliness. Adequate water facilities have been provided, ensuring a hygienic environment.

Teacher,
Obedullaganj School”

Drinking Water Facilities

Access to clean drinking water is a basic human right and a key element in achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, which aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Under VSDP, access to clean drinking water was identified as a crucial factor for promoting attendance and retention of students in schools, thereby contributing towards SDG 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. In the survey conducted, students were asked about the availability and type of drinking water facilities in their schools.



According to the survey, 72% of the student reported having access to safe drinking facilities in their school. This finding is indicative of the fact that schools under the VSDP have taken significant steps to ensure the availability of safe drinking water to their students. Access to safe drinking water is crucial for maintaining good health and hygiene among students, as contaminated water can cause various waterborne diseases.

Out of 311 respondents, i.e., 68%, reported the availability of taps in their respective schools. Around 31% of the respondents stated that their school has installed a water filtration system or Reverse Osmosis (RO) system to ensure the availability of clean drinking water. Interestingly, only a mere 1% of the respondents reported other sources such as a water cooler for drinking water in their schools. 92 respondents did not respond to this question.



87.5 % of the students shared that they may have faced several health issues such as dehydration and waterborne diseases in the absence of clean drinking water facilities in their schools, and it may have resulted in absenteeism and a decline in academic performance. In addition, the absence of proper drinking water facilities could adversely impact students' cognitive abilities. 0.5 % opined it would have reduced their participation in sports and other activities. 1.5 % thought it would have decreased their motivation to study and 10.5 % believed it would have created health issues for them.

Provided 30 Water Filters/Coolers & Installed RO systems in Government Schools

With access to safe drinking water, students have lesser instances of health problems

Testimonials

“ Earlier, the taps were not repaired, and the overall hygiene situation was quite poor. There was often garbage around, and we had limited access to clean water with only 3-4 taps. However, now we have enough water facilities, and the cleanliness has improved significantly. It is now easy for us to access drinking water during recess, whereas before, we had to wait in long queues, often missing out on our break time.

Students,
Ladhowal School ”

“ Our school previously had sanitation problems due to the lack of concrete flooring and proper drainage. However, after the VSDP intervention, the necessary upgrades were made and even inspired the construction of an indoor stadium

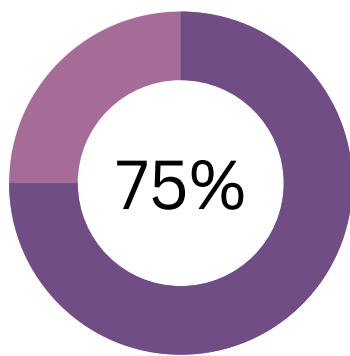
-Teachers,
Sekhewal School ”

Comprehensive Review of School Facilities

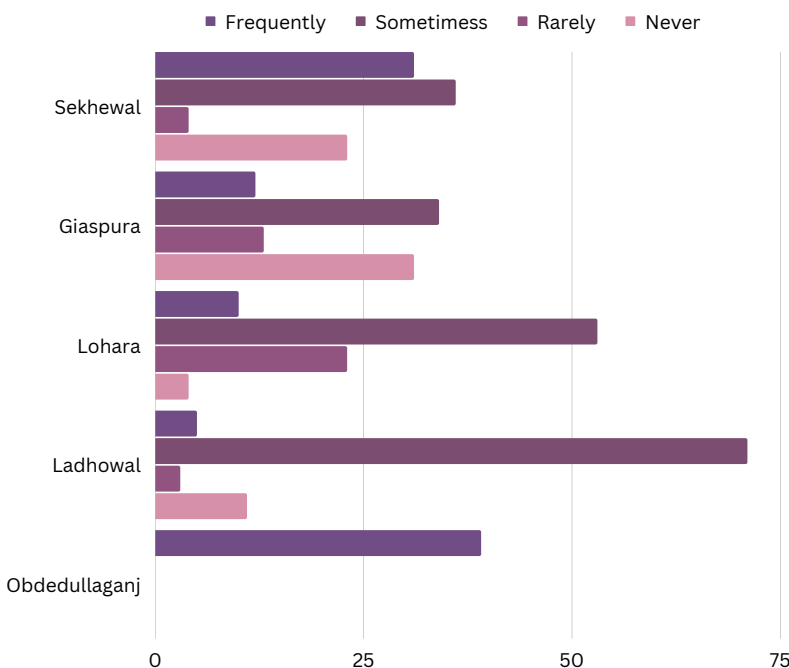
School Name	Facility	Students	Teachers
Government High School Giaspura	Classroom	★★★★★	★★★★★
	Toilet	★★★★	★★★★
	Drinking Water	★★★	★★★★
Government High School Lohara	Classroom	★★★★★	★★★★
	Toilet	★★★★★	★★★★★
	Drinking Water	★★★★	★★★★
Government Senior Secondary School Sekhewal	Classroom	★★★★★	★★★★★
	Toilet	★★★★	★★★★★
	Drinking Water	★★★	★★★★★
Government Senior Secondary School Ladhowal	Classroom	★★★★★	★★★★★
	Toilet	★★★★★	★★★
	Drinking Water	★★★	★★★★
Government Excellence Higher Secondary School, Obedullaganj	Classroom	★★★★	★★★★★
	Toilet	★★★★	★★★★★
	Drinking Water	★★★	★★★★

Internet and Communication Facilities

Access to computer facilities and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure in schools is anchored in various international treaties and national legal frameworks, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Indian Constitution under Article 21-A. The Right to Education Act 2009 emphasizes the need for providing quality education, which includes access to technology and digital resources. Access to ICT is particularly important for vulnerable sections of society, including those targeted by the VSDP, as digital technology becomes more prevalent in education and employment. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for technology-enabled education. In the survey conducted, students were asked about the availability of ICT facilities in their schools, providing insights into gaps and areas of improvement needed for equipping students to compete in the digital age.

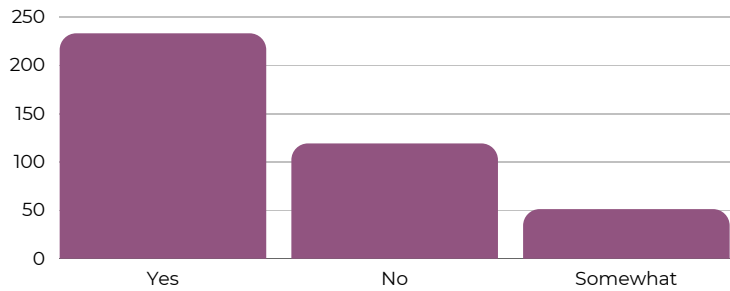


students confirmed the availability of ICT specifically computer facilities in their schools, but only 35.5 % reported easy access. 38 % reported difficulty in accessing them. While 26.5% expressed the need for more computers, these findings underscore the importance of accessible computer facilities in schools for student development.



Nearly one-fourth students reported that they frequently faced difficulties in accessing the computer facilities provided on the school premises, while half of the students reported facing occasional issues with accessibility. This means more efforts are required to ensure that these facilities are easily accessible to all students.

ICT Facilities



58% of the surveyed students reported that the computer facilities available in their school are sufficient and up-to-date to cater to their educational requirements. This is a positive indicator for the VSDP which is investing in providing modern ICT facilities to their students. However, it is important to note that the remaining 42% of students may require additional support and resources.

Testimonials

“ The availability of audio-visual aids, such as projectors, makes studying easier and more engaging. We watch educational videos on the projector, and then our teachers explain the concepts further.

-Students,
Giaspura School ”

“ We are fortunate to have a computer lab in our school, and all the computers are functioning well. Some students were even selected for computer training, enhancing their skills in operating computers.

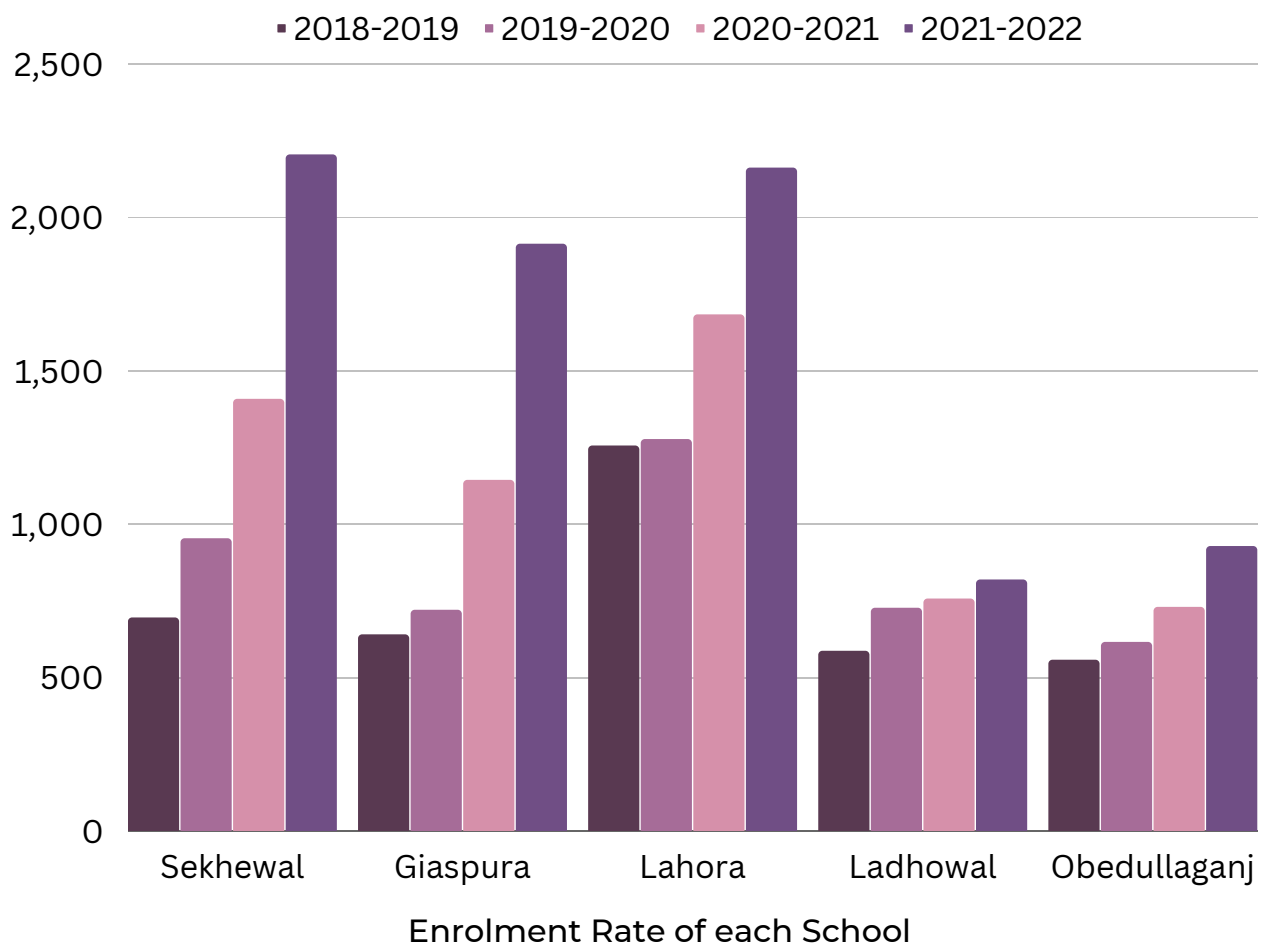
-Students,
Ladhowal School ”

“ The improved infrastructure has been a game-changer for both teachers and students. Teachers now have well-equipped classrooms, and students benefit from spacious and ventilated learning spaces. Additionally, the introduction of projectors has elevated our school to a smart school status. Recently, our school was honoured with the title of School of Eminence by CM Bhagwant Mann, further highlighting the remarkable progress we have made.

Teachers,
Sekhewal School ”

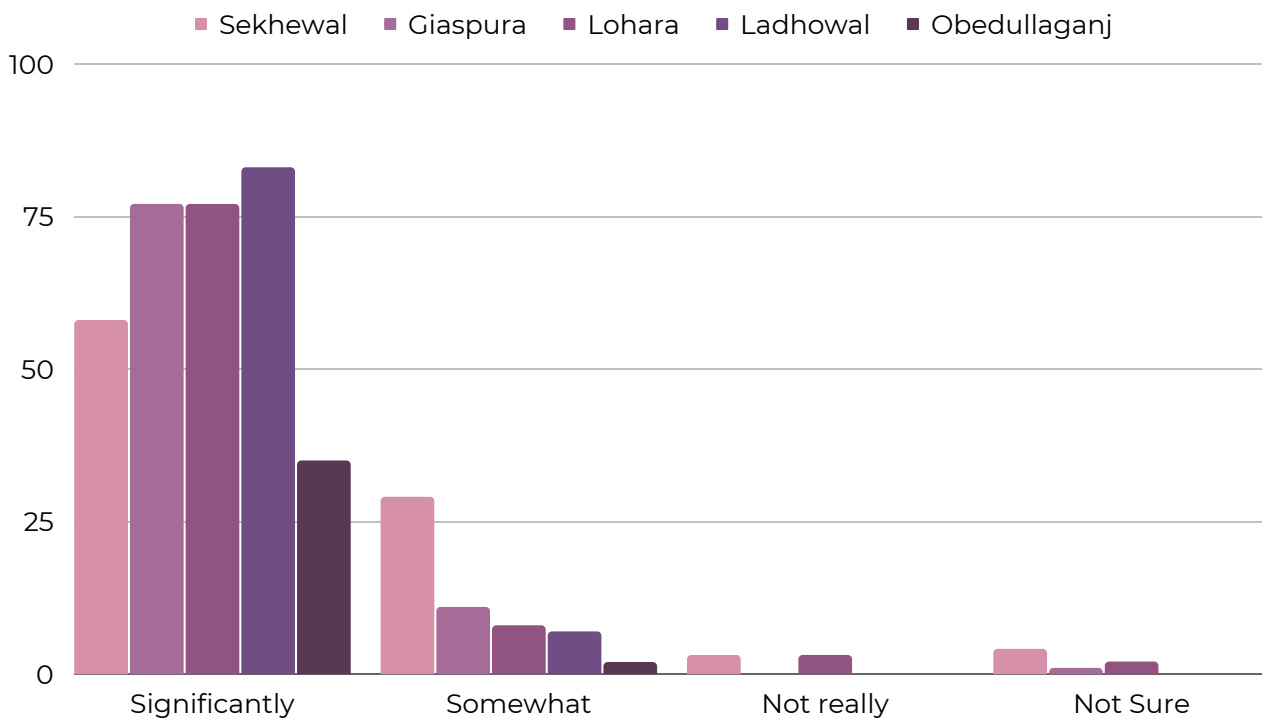
Academic Impact

The VSDP's primary aim is to provide quality education to the underprivileged sections of society, thereby promoting equal access to education. The academic impact of this program is evident in various ways, including increased enrolment and attendance rates, improved retention rates, and better academic performance. In order to obtain an insight into the academic impact of VSDP infrastructure, surveys and focus group discussions (FGDs) were employed to elicit feedback from the students.



84+ classrooms in addition to staff rooms have been constructed in seven selected schools.

The challenges related to school infrastructure were reduced and this increased the motivation and concentration of the students



Impact of Education Facilities on Overall Development

According to the survey data, a significant majority of **85 % of students affirmed** that the provision of facilities through the Vardhman School Development Program (VSDP) has played a pivotal role in their holistic development. The respondents acknowledged that the various amenities and resources made available to them have had a profound impact on their overall growth and progress.

By leveraging the upgraded facilities, students reported heightened motivation, improved engagement, and enhanced learning outcomes. The availability of well-equipped classrooms, modern furniture, and ICT technology fostered an optimal learning environment conducive to academic excellence. Furthermore, the provision of amenities such as clean and accessible washrooms, water facilities, and adequate ventilation significantly enhanced the overall well-being and comfort of the students. It is worth noting that the comprehensive impact of the facilities provided by VSDP has gone beyond the physical enhancements themselves. The benefits extend to social and emotional dimensions, with students experiencing a heightened sense of belonging, improved self-esteem, and increased camaraderie among their peers. These positive socio-emotional outcomes contribute to the holistic development of the students, nurturing their personal growth alongside their academic journey.

“The positive changes in our school's infrastructure have translated into a shift in students' perceptions. They now view our school as on par with private institutions, and their confidence levels have soared. We have also witnessed a substantial increase in applications, making it challenging to accommodate all students. To address this issue, we implemented a two-shift system starting in 2022. Parents are insistent on enrolling their children in our school, often expressing their willingness to have their children even sit on the ground if necessary. Their reasons for choosing our school include the improved infrastructure, quality of teaching, and the availability of science and commerce streams, which are not found in other schools in our area.

Teachers,
Sekhewal School”

“When we return to our village, we proudly share things about the new facilities and the growing strength of our school. Many students have enrolled from other schools, including private schools, after witnessing the good building and improved facilities. The two-story building in our school has become a symbol of progress and development for our community.

Students,
Ladhowal School”

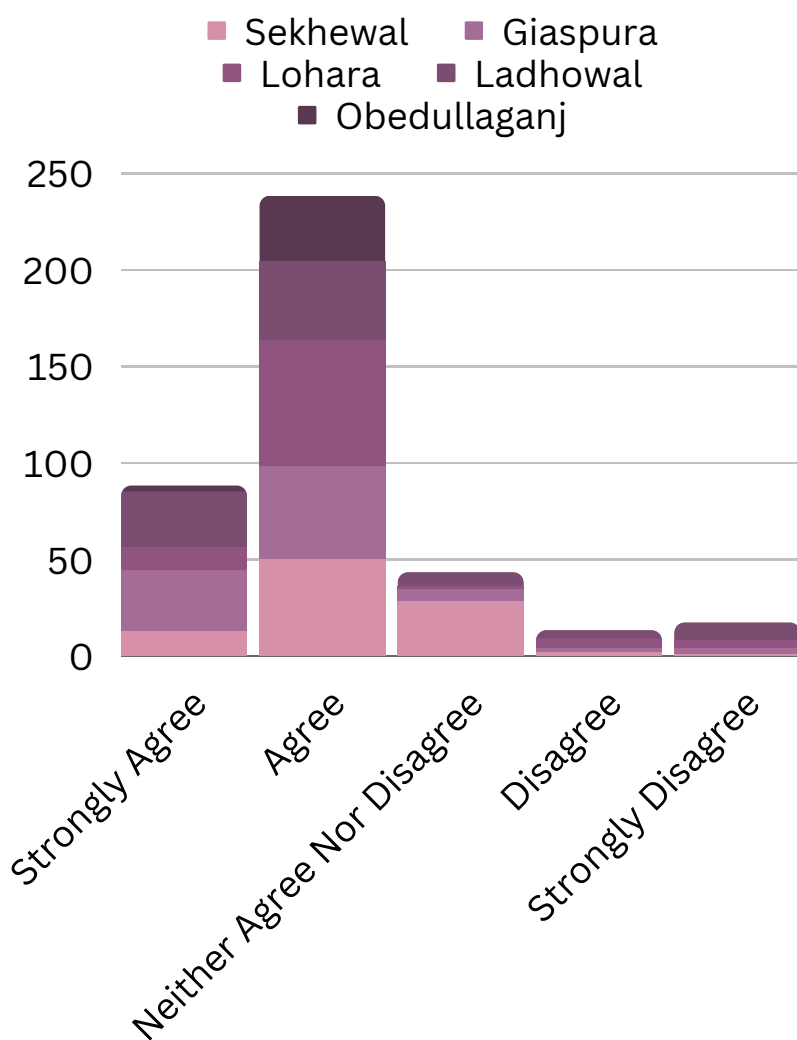
“Over the past eight years, the student population has increased from 900 to over 2300 students. We have a higher number of girls and a significant migrant population. In the classrooms, we lack nothing that we can think of. Students willingly attend school, and their concentration has improved.

Teachers,
Lohara School”

“While the cleanliness of our toilets is generally maintained, there are instances when they require attention. In such cases, we approach the Vice-Principal and request their assistance in ensuring that the toilets are cleaned promptly. Similarly, our classrooms are kept clean, and hygiene is prioritized to provide a conducive learning environment. All the provided facilities play a significant role in supporting our education. For instance, having access to clean and safe drinking water positively impacts our health, which, in turn, enhances our ability to focus and study effectively. Additionally, computer facilities have proven to be crucial in facilitating our learning and expanding our educational opportunities.

Students,
Obedullaganj School”

Adequacy of School Facilities



The findings of the survey indicate that a substantial proportion of 60% of the student cohort expressed their perception that the existing school facilities are satisfactory and contemporaneous in catering to their educational requirements.

It is noteworthy that within this cohort, an impressive 22% of respondents expressed an unequivocal and strong agreement with this assertion, underscoring the robustness of their conviction.

These findings bear substantial implications for the overall educational landscape. The recognition of the school facilities as meeting the students' expectations signifies a positive alignment between the student's educational requirements and the available resources. The acknowledgement of adequacy and contemporaneity in the school infrastructure demonstrates the institution's commitment to providing an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. Furthermore, the strong agreement observed within the 22% subset reflects a heightened level of conviction among a significant proportion of students. This suggests a particularly pronounced satisfaction with the current state of facilities, implying that these students perceive the resources as not only meeting their needs but exceeding their expectations.

“ The provision of safe and well-ventilated classrooms, equipped with blackboards and teachers, has positively influenced student belief in their teachers. Recently, eight students received laptops for their outstanding academic performance, with scores above 85 per cent. Moreover, 33 students participated in national-level competitions in baseball and draw the ball, showcasing their talents beyond classroom learning.

Teacher,
Obedullaganj School ”

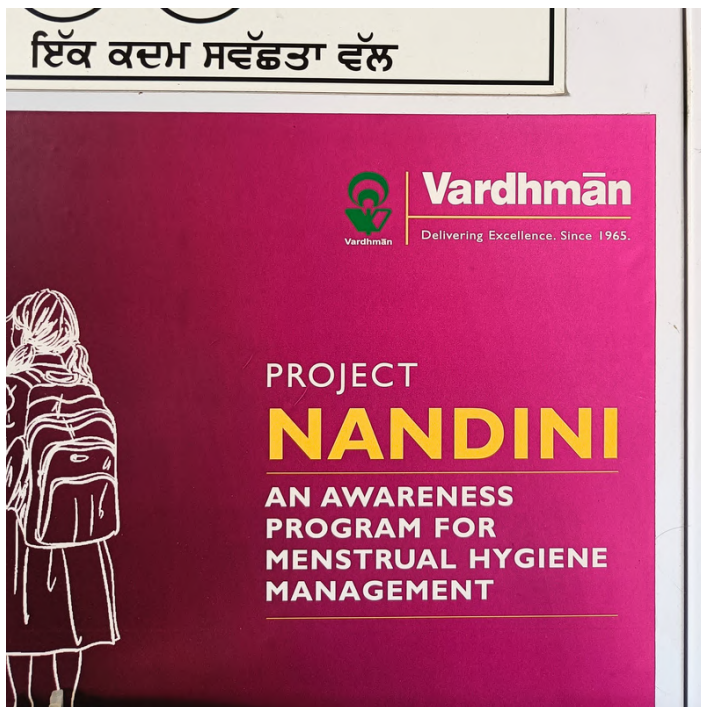
“ If we exclude VSDP from this school, it wouldn't be considered a smart school. Both well-qualified teachers and infrastructure are necessary for a school to be labelled as smart. The recognition given by the education board after the construction of the Vardhman block has also boosted our confidence. Previously, we would receive grants from the government, but the best part of VSDP is that they took care of everything, from soil testing to the architecture and foundation, in a systematic and organized manner. Looking at the previous buildings, it becomes evident that they were not constructed with a proper plan. It was the teachers who had to manage everything. VSDP has built a strong foundation.

Teachers,
Ladhowal School ”

“ Since the installation of the new building, we feel more motivated and enthusiastic about coming to school. We feel a sense of pride and motivation being a student here. Our parents are proud that we are studying in such a good school. In this environment, we have learned to speak confidently and actively participate in various competitions. Recently, we also participated in a quiz competition at the block level, and our school has provided us with many opportunities. We have also received the National Means Merit scholarship and were taken to GNA College for visit and career counselling session.

Students,
Lohara School ”

Project Nandini



Project Nandini is an impactful initiative aimed at addressing the challenges faced by girls in accessing education due to menstrual hygiene issues. By implementing various strategies, such as installing sanitary vending machines and promoting awareness about menstrual health, the project has significantly contributed to increasing girls' participation in schools. Through Project Nandini, girls are empowered to pursue their education and break down barriers that hinder their academic progress.

“ Our students have participated in awareness programs and we have a vending machine for sanitary pads under Project Nandini. We distribute pads as per the need, providing 3-6 packets to girls every three months, addressing the issue of period poverty. This initiative has had a significant impact on the health and hygiene of girls, who now dispose of pads in an incinerator. Girls have become more open about discussing such issues, and the exhibition on reproductive health, along with the movie screenings, has been instrumental in creating awareness.

Teachers,
Lohara School ”

“ Under the VSDP, our students have received training, and we have been provided with a sanitary pad dispensing machine and an incinerator. The dispensing machine is kept in the staff room as a backup in case of emergencies, as we also receive sanitary pads from the government. Unfortunately, the dispensing machine has not been functional for the past two months.

Teachers,
Giaspura School ”



Monitoring of the Facilities

Monitoring of the facilities under VSDP in the schools is a crucial aspect of ensuring their effective implementation and maintenance. Regular monitoring processes are in place to assess the condition and functionality of various facilities such as classrooms, toilets, laboratories, and digital infrastructure. Trained monitoring teams conduct on-site visits to evaluate the quality of facilities, identify any maintenance or repair needs, and address them promptly. This monitoring helps in identifying areas of improvement, ensuring compliance with safety standards, and enhancing the overall learning environment for students. It also helps in tracking the impact of the facilities on students' educational experience and enables necessary adjustments to optimize their effectiveness. Continuous monitoring ensures that the facilities provided under VSDP remain in good condition, contributing to the holistic development and growth of the schools. In order to obtain insight into the monitoring of infrastructure, focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDI) were conducted with students and teachers.

“ At our school, we actively engage in the maintenance of classrooms through the collective effort of students and teachers. To maintain cleanliness, we have employed a dedicated sweeper, for whom we pool funds from our own pockets. However, there are certain infrastructure needs that require external assistance. Specifically, we require well-designed rainwater harvesting systems and septic tanks to effectively manage water resources and sanitation.

Principal
Giaspura School

“ We have hired sweepers, and we closely monitor their work. However, with a large student body, maintaining the infrastructure is not an easy task. In the first year, Vardhman sent people for maintenance in the first year, during which the capacity of the building was checked. We maintain a WhatsApp group where we post photographs when necessary. We have taken several initiatives on our own. From the second year onwards, the deterioration became noticeable. So, It would be beneficial if the Vardhman Group could provide us with a plumber, electrician, and other required personnel on a periodic basis, such as every three months.

Principal
Sekhewal School

From Principal's Desk

Thanks to Vardhman, we now boast a block of ten classrooms that are beautifully painted, equipped with green boards, premium Kazaria flooring, and furnished with high-quality furniture and electricity. The foundation of the block was laid at an impressive depth of six to nine feet from Natural Ground Level (NGL), ensuring its durability for years to come. The infrastructure provided by Vardhman has had a significant impact on our students' learning experience.



Previously, due to inadequate infrastructure, our students had to sit outside the classrooms, facing distractions from the nearby highway, other classes, and administrative activities. It was challenging for teachers to reach students sitting at the back. Classes 11 and 12 had nearly seventy students, making effective management difficult. Moreover, weather conditions posed hurdles to their learning. With the new infrastructure, we can protect our students from these disruptions, resulting in improved enrollment rates and better academic performance. Not only do students from our immediate vicinity attend our school, but also those from nearby villages like Bonkar Dogra, Cholya, Faguwal, Fatehpur Gujra, and Talwandi. Despite having a middle school in Talwandi, these villages prefer sending their children to our school. In the past, I even personally visited households to invite students, but due to the lack of infrastructure, many refused to join. Today, students from those very villages enrol in our school starting from class 7. Other schools, including middle schools in nearby regions, approach us to enrol their students due to our excellent academic track record. We anticipate further growth in enrollment in the coming years, potentially reaching 1000 students.

Dropout rates have significantly reduced, except in cases where parents lack awareness about the importance of education, leading to early marriages and subsequent pregnancies among girls. However, we continue to support and motivate these girls to continue their education, even in challenging circumstances.

During summer holidays, the education department directs us to organize summer camps. Students eagerly participate and often request an extended duration. Our dedicated teachers engage in a wide range of activities, fostering holistic and healthy development in children. This achievement would not have been possible without the infrastructure provided by Vardhman.

With the establishment of the Vardhman Block, we have overcome the challenges we faced before. The impact has been so significant that other companies have approached us to build additional infrastructure. Versatile Group has contributed by providing toilet facilities, while ILO Company has supplied furniture for teachers, RO systems, tanks for students, and even a mid-day meal shed.

We have been fortunate to receive two staffrooms and eight classrooms as part of the VSDP initiative. The teaching staff greatly appreciates these facilities and has taken note of the improvements brought about by the Vardhman Block. They express a desire for continued collaboration with Vardhman in the future. The government has provided us with five projectors, which we have utilized in the Vardhman Block for board classes, creating a conducive learning environment for our students. Vardhman consistently invites our students to participate in a variety of activities, and their achievements bring honour to our school.

Vardhman has been supportive throughout the entire process, offering maintenance and regular check-ups of the building. In the education department, we feel that there is always a need for more resources and facilities to compete with private schools. Our students deserve the best, and it is their potential and growth that drives us forward. We must remain committed and honest in providing them with everything they require. Based on our observations and needs, we have a few recommendations for further improvements: more classrooms, functional computer facilities and toilets.

**Mrs Zareena,
Principal,
Ladhowal School**

Vardhman Sport Complex

Under a CSR initiative, the Vardhman Group embarked on the Sports Complex project, a significant endeavour that aimed to enhance sports facilities in the community. The project was handover in 2022 and encompassed the construction of two state-of-the-art indoor badminton courts. Additionally, separate toilets for men and women, an administrative office, and well-equipped change rooms with lockers were incorporated into the complex. The estimated cost of Rs 1.2 crore was invested to ensure the successful completion of the project. As a result, the Sports Complex now serves as a valuable asset, providing access to modern sports facilities to 600 families residing in the Police Lines area. Moreover, approximately 4,000 students from the Police DAV School have gained the opportunity to utilize these upgraded amenities, fostering their athletic development and well-being. The completion of the project has not only enhanced the local sporting infrastructure but also demonstrated the Vardhman Group's commitment to community development and promoting a culture of active living.





The efforts of Vardhman CSR and the project VSDP have a larger contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. The facilities created have contributed to and improved the lives of people in many ways. VSDP has directly contributed to SDG 4 and SDG 6. It has also indirectly contributed to SDG 2.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

TARGET 4.1

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

INDICATOR 4.1.2

Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)

VSDP has improved the facilities and structure of the schools and has ensured better access to clean and regular drinking water and an improved toilet and sanitation facility in the school. The program has also provided assistance to improve the educational experience of the students. This has reduced the dropout rate and has increased the intake/ admission of students in school. The students are now completing their entire schooling without dropping out of school, ensuring an equitable opportunity for primary and secondary education for all.

TARGET 4.5

By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

INDICATOR 4.5.1

Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated.

Many of the students belong to the migrant population (labourer) who cannot afford expensive private schooling. Also many of the female students, in the absence of the toilet and sanitation facility face issues. VSDP has catered to both beneficiaries by providing affordable and quality education and improved health and sanitation facility.

TARGET 4.a

Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

INDICATOR 4.a.1

Proportion of schools offering basic services, by type of service

VSDP has directly influenced the basic services offered by the schools by improving the basic services and facilities viz; better classrooms, toilets, and sanitation, drinking water facilities etc offered by the school.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

TARGET 6.1

By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.

INDICATOR 6.1.1

The proportion of the population using safely managed drinking water services.

VSDP has ensured accessible and safe drinking water by providing and building facilities and equipment for water dispensing.

TARGET 6.2

By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

INDICATOR 6.1.2

Proportion of population using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water

VSDP has improved the sanitation facilities of the school by constructing better and improved toilet facilities. this has ensured cleanliness among the students

2 ZERO HUNGER



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

TARGET 2.1

By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

The school meal program by VSDP in a few schools has ensured that students won't remain on an empty stomach. This helps the students to have better focus and concentration during the entire day of school.

NEXT STEPS

To ensure the continuity and expansion of the program, Vardhman can consider following steps

01 Program Monitoring

Continuous evaluation and monitoring of the program's impact on student outcomes and learning environments.

02 Sustenance

Providing ongoing support for schools, including maintenance of infrastructure and access to educational resources.

03 Partnership

Creating partnerships with other organizations, government agencies, and businesses to leverage additional resources and expertise to support the program's goals.

04 Sustainability

Ensuring sustainability by developing a long-term plan for the program's continuation and expansion.

SPECIFIC STEPS

Facility	Recommendation
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of New Classrooms: Build new classrooms for seating arrangements and avoid overcrowding. • Storage Cupboards: Equip classrooms and staffrooms with small cupboards. • Establishment of New Laboratories: Set up labs for senior secondary students. Subject-Specific Labs should be created for physics, chemistry, and biology labs for hands-on learning. • Additional Teachers and Classroom Space: Fund salaries for five teachers and acquire land for classrooms • Railing in Classrooms: Add railings to protect walls and promote discipline.
Drinking Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize Drinking Water Facilities: Provide convenient and accessible drinking water facilities for the well-being of students and staff. • Improve Access to Drinking Water: Enhance access to water facilities to meet the growing needs of the school community.
Toilet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor-wise Toilets: Provide toilets on each floor of the school building for convenient and accessible use. • Increased Toilet Facilities: Build more toilets to accommodate the growing number of students in the school. • Dedicated Staff for Toilet Maintenance: Assign a female staff member specifically for toilet maintenance and hygiene, considering the presence of 33 female staff members.

Facility	Recommendation
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely Maintenance: Ensure timely maintenance, preferably every two to three years, and provide a spacious staff room to meet the essential needs of our school through VSDP. • Conduct Maintenance and Inspections: Regularly conduct maintenance and inspections to uphold the upkeep of school facilities. • Priority on Regular Maintenance: Emphasize regular maintenance activities to preserve the infrastructure's condition, including routine checks, repairs, and prompt issue resolution, for a conducive learning environment.
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramps for Accessibility: Install ramps in the school premises (wherever applicable) to enhance accessibility for differently-abled students and promote independent mobility. • Increased Computer Resources: Expand the computer lab by adding more computers to enhance digital learning opportunities for students and ensure access to necessary technological resources. • Accessibility Measures: Install ramps and establish linkages between old and new buildings to ensure smooth movement and connectivity within the school premises. • Dedicated Rooms for Music and Sports: Allocate separate rooms equipped with instruments, equipment, and resources for music and sports activities. • Disaster Management Equipment: Equip the school with disaster management-related equipment to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff during emergencies. • Additional Teaching Staff: Recruit more teachers to maintain a favourable teacher-student ratio and provide individual attention to students.

CONCLUSION

We believe that every child has the right to quality education, regardless of their socio-economic background.

Improved Infrastructure:

VSDP has significantly improved the infrastructure of government schools in Ludhiana and Obedullaganj, providing facilities such as classrooms, washrooms, water supply, and furniture.

ICT Integration:

VSDP has integrated ICT (Information and Communications Technology) in the classroom, providing students with access to digital learning resources, including audio-visual aids.

Impact on Student Outcomes

VSDP has positively impacted student outcomes, as evidenced by improved enrolment rates, higher academic achievement, and increased participation in extracurricular activities.



Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.

-Nelson Mandela

The Impact Assessment Study conducted on the Vardhman School Development Program (VSDP) aimed to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the program. This study utilized a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, to gather comprehensive insights. Through field data collection, the study captured perspectives from various stakeholders directly involved in the implementation of the VSDP, including students, beneficiaries, and staff. Qualitative data, obtained through interviews and Focus Group Discussions, provided depth and insight into the experiences and perceptions of these stakeholders.

The study revealed several positive impacts of the VSDP on academic excellence, infrastructure development, and student well-being. The expansion of classrooms and the provision of additional facilities, such as washrooms and laboratories, significantly improved the learning environment and enhanced students' access to quality education. The introduction of technology, such as computers and smart boards, enriched the learning experiences and equipped students with essential digital skills. Moreover, the study highlighted the positive influence of the VSDP on student motivation, engagement, and overall well-being.

The Vardhman School Development Program (VSDP) has proven to be an instrumental initiative in addressing various challenges and improving the educational landscape. Through its interventions and infrastructure development, the VSDP has effectively resolved issues faced by students, teachers, and staff, leading to enhanced academic excellence and overall school experience. The program's impact has been evident in the positive responses from students, who have experienced improved learning environments and access to essential facilities. The recommendations provided by the students highlight the importance of ongoing maintenance, expansion of infrastructure, and the integration of technology for a holistic and inclusive educational environment. The VSDP's commitment to sustainable development goals, particularly in the areas of education, health, and infrastructure, has significantly contributed to the advancement of quality education and the overall well-being of the school community. The program serves as a testament to the power of collaborative efforts and proactive interventions in transforming educational institutions and creating a conducive learning environment for all stakeholders.

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- **Note:** The comments and testimonials have been transliterated and selectively quoted from the interview of the participants.