



Empowerment, Sustainability and Harmony in Integral Humanism

An Ethnographic Study Report

Empowerment, Sustainability and Harmony in Integral Humanism

An Ethnographic Study Report

Integral Humanism Initiative

(Supported by Star Pipe Foundry, Rajkot-India)

November 2023



**CENTRE FOR
HUMAN SCIENCES**
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When nature is channeled according to the principles of Dharma, we have culture and civilization.

-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya

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*Unity in diversity and the expressions of
unity in various forms has remained the
thought of Indian Culture.*

Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya

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National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune.

Swami Vivekananda

FOREWORD

Vice Chancellor, Rishihood University

*Indian Democracy's greatest strength is
that we have always put nation ahead of
politics.*

-Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee

FOREWORD

CEO, Rishihood University

*Politics detached from realities is not only
meaningless but dangerous.*

-Shri Shyama Prasad Mukherjee

FOREWORD

Director, CHS, Rishihood University

*The Soul of India is one and indivisible.
India is conscious of her mission in the
world. She is waiting for the exterior means
of manifestation.*

The Mother

(Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry)

PREFACE

The journey of societal transformation often unfolds in the intersection of ideas and action. It is in this spirit that we get on three transformative field visits, spanning from June 23rd to July 12th, 2023, to Auroville and Alternative Schools in Puducherry, Doddamadhure village in Karnataka, and Deendayal Research Institute (DRI) Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh. These field visits were not mere explorations, but voyages into the heart of **Integral Humanism** – a profound philosophy that seeks to harmonize progress with human values.

As part of the Integral Humanism Initiative, our focus extended to two fundamental aspects of human life—Educational and Socio-Economic. Through these field visits, we aimed to bridge the gap between theory and practical application, delving into the socio-economic and academic aspects. Our quest for knowledge led us to Puducherry, where we delved into the academic aspects of human life. In Puducherry, we explored the impact of Integral Education and its pivotal role in shaping holistic individuals. We ventured into institutions such as Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville, and alternative schools, all dedicated to the pursuit of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Education.

Our next destination, Bangalore, brought us to the Centre for Education and Social Sciences (CESS) at the office of Chanakya University. Here, we engaged in a round table discussion centred around the Swagramamitra Fellowship, led by M S Chaitra, an Associate Professor at the School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, Chanakya University. This discourse provided us with a panoramic view of the multifaceted dimensions of the fellowship and its pivotal role in community development. The pinnacle of our journey was the immersive experience in Doddamadhure Village, where we attempted into the heart of rural India, far removed from the urban hustle and bustle. This village epitomizes the core principles of Integral

Humanism, and our time there was dedicated to a comprehensive field study and ethnographic exploration. This allowed us to witness firsthand the intricate tapestry of socio-economic dynamics and the profound impact of self-reliance initiatives. Doddamadhure Village stands as a testament to the "My Village-My Pride" program, a collaborative effort in which Chanakya University plays a pivotal role, in synergy with other consortium members. Our expedition had a clear objective - to comprehend the socio-economic intricacies underlying education and self-reliance within a rural community.

Our final stop was Chitrakoot, where we conducted a field study at the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI). This experience presented us with a unique and unparalleled opportunity to witness the practical application of the Integral Humanism philosophy, as envisioned by the eminent thinker Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya. Within the realm of rural development, we scrutinized the actualization of Upadhyaya's principles, shedding light on the intricate interplay between theoretical frameworks and on-ground implementation. Through this immersive experience, our aim was to unravel the dynamics that shape the integration of integral humanism values with community development, contributing to a deeper understanding of how these principles can foster sustainable and holistic progress within rural communities. By critically analysing the initiatives, methodologies, and outcomes at DRI Chitrakoot, this field study endeavours to illuminate the potential of Upadhyaya's philosophy as a driving force behind transformative and people-centric development models.

In the pages that follow, you will find a meticulous documentation of our experiences, insights, and reflections, as we journey through these diverse landscapes in pursuit of a deeper comprehension of Integral Humanism and its role in shaping a better future for society.

Each nation has a main current in life in India it is religion. Make it strong and the waters on either side must move along with it.

-Swami Vivekananda

ABOUT RISHIHOOD UNIVERSITY

Rishihood University is India's first and only impact-focused university. The university's mission is to cultivate enthusiastic learners who can address the significant challenges that lie ahead in the future. Throughout history, the achievements and accomplishments that stand out have been accomplished by individuals who were willing to pursue a higher and more meaningful path. Rishihood University extends an invitation to potential students, encouraging them to embark on an educational journey that goes beyond conventional boundaries. At Rishihood, learning is not confined by limits, and students are encouraged to explore, grow, and evolve. The university believes in unlocking the inherent potential within each student and embracing the concept of change.

*May the Lord help us, each one of us here,
to realise the Rishihood for our own
salvation and for that of others.*

Swami Vivekananda

ABOUT CENTRE FOR HUMAN SCIENCES

The mission of the Centre for Human Sciences, Rishihood University, is to carry forward the vision of the seers and sages of Bharat through various academic programs and activities. The Centre for Human Sciences is dedicated towards contextualizing Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, Indian Knowledge Systems and Sanskrit to a large number of socio-cultural settings and strengthening India's soft power with an objective to solve contemporary problems and attain spiritual unity of mankind.

Ongoing Research Projects:

1. Robotics in Ancient India: project has been sponsored by the IKS Division of AICTE, Ministry of Education, Gol, under IKS Internships Program 2023-24(भारतीयज्ञानसंवाहनकार्यक्रम: -3).
2. Sanskrit Literature for Children:In association with Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi, under the Ashtaadashi Scheme.
3. Integral Humanism Initiative: This initiative is supported by Star Pipe Foundry, Rajkot, India.
4. Avadhanakala and Consciousness Studies: project is sponsored by the IKS division of AICTE.
5. Translation of Kavyakantha Vashishtha Ganapati Muni's Works: Centre for Human Sciences, Rishihood University, Sonipat & A Joint Initiative by Vande Mataram Library Trust

ABOUT INTEGRAL HUMANISM INITIATIVE

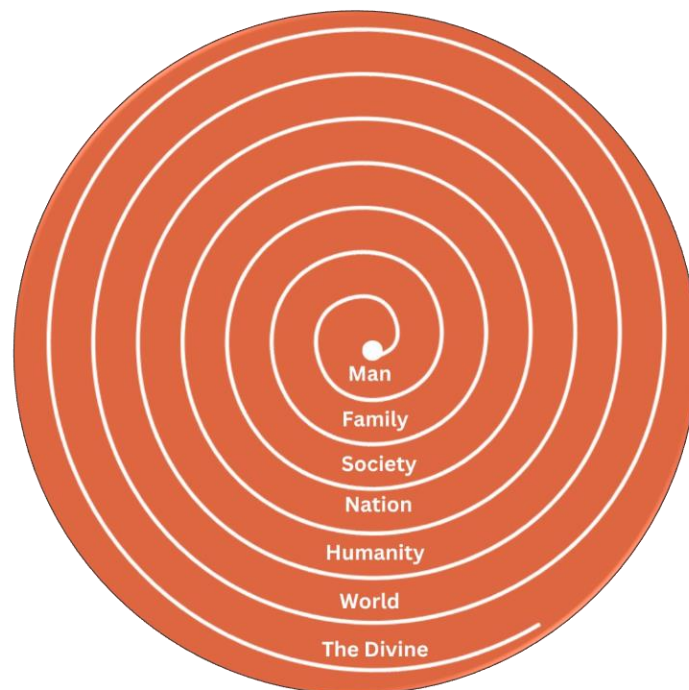
Foundation of humanity, embedded in the pursuit of balance integration of humans and its surroundings. Human societies in various cultures and geographies have offered paths to this very integration, for the co-existence and mutual dependence of forms of lives on each other. The material (Bhautik) basis of integration demonstrates a fundamental part in achieving the goal of mutual dependence; however, the spiritual integration helps us achieve the understanding of the co-existence of the smallest to the grandest, all forms, and of all nature, char achar (animate and inanimate). Both, the material and spiritual integration combined, results into a balance functioning of world. Hence, it contributes to the wholistic wellbeing of the individual, and the communities.

To achieve the balance integration thinkers have propounded various social models to achieve this integration. Amid many social-political, and economic models like aristocracy, authoritarianism, monarchy, socialism, communism, and capitalism. Indian thinkers like Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Swami-Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, M.K Gandhi, Ambedkar, Ram Manohar Lohia and others have offered indigenous methods of socio-political, and economic model of development based on Indian traditions.

Deen Dayal ji and Sri Aurobindo offers their perspective on integration, namely as Ekatma Manav Darsan, and Integral Education. Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay's thoughts and works that talk about the concept of "Integral Humanism", which refers to looking at the world from a human-centric point of view. It envisions an organic unity and integrity between materiality and spirituality and vies them as a collective entity.

Integral Humanism Initiative at Centre for Human Sciences, Rishihood University has the following objectives:

- To compare this idea with other social theories such as capitalism, communism, and socialism.
- To explore the similarities between Deen Dayal Ji's Integral Humanism and Sri Aurobindo's Integral Education.
- To suggest a Value Education intervention based on the SDGs in the context of Ekatma Manava Darsan and Integral Education.
- To evaluate the efficacy of government policies under Antyodaya.
- To examine Ekatma Manava Darsan from multi-disciplinary research activities.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through the Integral Humanism Initiative, we sought to demonstrate the profound impact of Deen Dayal Upadhyay's philosophy in bridging the divide between the individual and society, spirituality and nation-building, and economics and society. We focused our efforts on three distinct domains: Academics, Social & Economics, and Corporates. During our field visits, we collected data to understand the application and outcomes of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay's ideology in the Academic and Social & Economics sectors.

A. Academic Sector

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya emphasized the Indian ethos, emphasizing the realization of '*yyashti*', '*samashti*', '*srishti*', and '*parameshti*', with education being the key to understanding these illuminated values. Given the New National Education Policy's focus on preserving Indian values, we aimed to instil a love and understanding of these values in students and teachers, combining formal education with '*sanskar shiksha*.' Our research methodology involved visiting schools and educational institutions, conducting interviews and surveys with students, teachers, and parents, and engaging in discussions to improve the curriculum.

Puducherry

Our visit to Puducherry, where we explored the impact of meditation and concentration at *Matrimandir* and Sri Aurobindo Ashram. It highlighted the significance of Silence, Meditation and Concentration as the holistic development and spirituality in education. We also examined Integral Education models in Schools as part of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education and alternative schools in Auroville. Through the Integral

Education approach, we find out the new aim of education is to help the child to develop his intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, moral, spiritual being and his communal life and impulses out of his own temperament and capacities. The approach is therefore not merely academic but dynamic and integral.

Bangaluru (Doddamadhure)

Our visit to Government Higher Primary school in Doddamadhure Village was a pivotal moment in our field exploration. Here, we engaged in an in-depth analysis of the educational practices and systems that are fundamental to the village's educational landscape. The mainstream education system facilitated by the government. It typically adheres to a standardized curriculum and teaching methods that are prevalent across the region or country. The curriculum often focuses on academic subjects and examinations as the primary indicators of educational success. Our examination of this system allowed us to assess its strengths and limitations within the context of Doddamadhure Village.

Chitrakoot

In Chitrakoot, the academic landscape is marked by a strong commitment to well-rounded education and traditional values. Notably, SPGV School stands out as a residential and day school offering a curriculum aligned with the Madhya Pradesh Government's standards. Beyond traditional subjects, it places a significant emphasis on moral sciences, General Knowledge, Gardening, Music, Arts, and Sports, fostering holistic development. Gurukul Sankul serves as a centre for imparting ancient knowledge and values, highlighting the region's dedication to preserving and promoting traditional education methods. KDBA Vidyalaya, a residential school for tribal girls, focuses on their overall development through education, vocational training, and character-building, with an aim to integrate

marginalized communities into the national mainstream. Similarly, PAPVP Vidyalaya Ganivan is dedicated to providing quality education to the local community, emphasizing education's transformative power in empowering the younger generation and promoting holistic growth. These educational institutions collectively underscore the paramount importance of academic aspects and holistic development in Chitrakoot.

B. Social and Economic Sector:

In our Socio-Economics sector, we know there are lot of important institutions to regulate and to help carry on the social life. In our field visit we focused the social and economic aspects for helps in the development of our human qualities or civilizations and enables us to attain harmony. Integral Humanism places a significant emphasis on the inseparable connection between social and economic aspects in achieving the well-being of individuals within society. Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay's philosophy stresses that any economic system must provide for the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and shelter. This was clear during the field visit as we witnessed the critical need to ensure equitable access to these essentials, particularly among marginalized communities. Additionally, Integral Humanism emphasizes that society must enable individuals to fulfil their obligations to society. By addressing economic disparities and ensuring access to social services, it can empower individuals to participate actively in social and economic activities, thereby fostering a more just and equitable society.

Puducherry (Auroville)

The insights from Shradhanjali, the Sound Park, and Matrimandir collectively showcase Auroville's holistic approach to social and economic development. Auroville's unique model emphasizes spiritual growth, sustainability, and conscious living as essential components of economic

progress. This approach fosters a sense of unity and shared purpose among its residents, making Auroville a remarkable example of a community where social and economic development are intricately intertwined with spiritual and sustainable values.

Bangaluru (Doddamadhure)

This field study underscores the importance of integral humanism in the context of community development programs in rural areas. It highlights how a balanced approach to addressing individual needs, community well-being, and sustainable resource management can lead to meaningful and lasting societal progress. The Swagrama Fellowship Program in Doddamadhure village serves as a tangible example of how these principles can be put into action, creating positive change at the grassroots level.

Chitrakoot

The field study at the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI) in Chitrakoot is a unique opportunity to examine the practical application of integral humanism, a philosophy championed by Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, in the context of rural development. This endeavour delves into the real-world implementation of Upadhyaya's principles, bridging the gap between theory and practice. Through this immersive experience, the study seeks to understand how integral humanism values can be integrated into community development, contributing to sustainable and holistic progress in rural areas. By analyzing the initiatives, methodologies, and outcomes at DRI Chitrakoot, this field study aims to showcase the potential of Upadhyaya's philosophy in driving transformative and people-centric development models.

Objectives

- 1. Analysing Practical Application of Integral Humanism:** This entails exploring how integral humanism bridges the gap between individual and societal needs, spirituality and nation-building, and economics and society. The goal is to illustrate the tangible impact of this philosophy on ground-level development.
- 2. Integration of Values in Academics:** It aims to demonstrate how education can instill a love and understanding of Indian values in both students and teachers. Additionally, it seeks to examine the incorporation of 'sanskar shiksha' and curriculum improvements as part of a holistic approach to education.
- 3. Assessment of Mainstream Education:** The goal is to understand the extent of curriculum adherence, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and the balance between academic subjects and holistic education, shedding light on the strengths and limitations of the current system.
- 4. Socio-Economic Integration:** It aims to highlight the importance of addressing basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter, particularly among marginalized communities. It also focuses on how society can enable individuals to fulfill their obligations, promoting a more equitable and just society.
- 5. Potential of Integral Humanism in Development Models:** This is exemplified through community development initiatives observed during field visits, such as the Swagrama Fellowship Program and the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI) in Chitrakoot. The goal is to provide concrete examples of how integral humanism can bring about sustainable and holistic progress in rural communities.

Methodology

- 1. Puducherry:** The research methodology is designed as a multifaceted approach to explore Integral Education within the Sri Aurobindo Ashram School in Pondicherry and its practical applications in the Auroville community. For the school, a descriptive and qualitative approach is employed, involving extensive observation of school activities, structured interviews with faculty and Sri Aurobindo society members, and active engagement in school routines. To understand the philosophy's real-world implementation, site visits, semi-structured interviews with community members, and participant observation in community events are conducted.
- 2. Bengaluru:** The research study utilizes an Ethnography research methodology, a qualitative approach that emphasizes immersion and deep understanding. This methodology incorporates on-site observations, semi-structured interviews, and interactions with various stakeholders, including Community Development individuals and students. Moreover, round-table discussions are conducted with representatives from Chanakya University CESS and Youth for Seva (NGO). Additionally, document analysis is employed to gather a holistic and thorough understanding of the Swagrama Fellowship Program and its intricate connection to the principles of integral humanism. This multi-faceted approach ensures a comprehensive exploration of the program and its alignment with the core tenets of integral humanism.
- 3. Chittrakoot:** The study employed a qualitative approach, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. Participants comprised community members, local leaders, and subject matter experts.

Key Findings

- 1. Holistic Development:** The philosophy of integral humanism was translated into a comprehensive development approach encompassing physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social aspects.
- 2. Community Empowerment:** Community-driven initiatives were found to lead to greater empowerment and self-reliance.
- 3. Sustainable Practices:** Integration of traditional wisdom in agriculture and healthcare showcased how indigenous knowledge systems can contribute to sustainable rural development.
- 4. Cultural Preservation:** Initiatives such as museums and Gurukuls were instrumental in preserving local culture and identity.
- 5. Innovative Education Models:** The study highlighted unique educational models fostering comprehensive human development.

INTRODUCTION

The transition from an ordinary "Man" to the realization of an "Integral Man" (*vyashti*) represents a profound philosophical journey deeply rooted in the visionary ideas of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. His philosophy transcends the boundaries of individual self-development, extends its reach to encompass a broader societal and socio-economic context. This transformational concept holds particular significance within the academic and socio-economic sectors, as it advocates for a comprehensive and harmonious approach to human existence and societal advancement.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's vision of the "Integral Man" (*vyashti*) transcends the mere physical existence of an individual, delving into a deeper understanding of human nature. It seeks to harmonize the material and spiritual facets of life, paving the way for a holistic and interconnected worldview. By delving into the essence of this philosophy, we can gather valuable insights into how the academic and socio-economic sectors can be moulded to cultivate individual growth, promote societal well-being, and nurture a sustainable and equitable future.

According to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, the ultimate goal of "education" in India should be the attainment of true knowledge or "*jnana*." This pursuit of knowledge leads to the realization of "*ekatva*" or oneness. It means, welfare of all or "*Sarvodaya*." In echoing Mahatma Gandhi's critique of modernity and the contemporary education system. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya also cautioned against the detrimental effects of imposing an alien education system, primarily driven by economic and materialistic objectives. He emphasized the importance of nurturing the creative power inherent in the people of India, which he considered as the "*chitti*" or soul of the nation. It stifled and impaired by such an education system.

Education, as both a product and process, plays a transformative role in socio-economic development. It serves as the foundation upon which

individuals build their skills, knowledge, and character. At its core, education empowers individuals to transcend their limitations, raising a sense of responsibility, values, and a broader understanding of the world around them. As individuals grow, they become capable of contributing more effectively to society. This holistic education, when intertwined with socio-economic development, forms the backbone of a flourishing and harmonious society. It is the bridge that connects individual growth with collective welfare, working towards a sustainable and equitable future for all.

This Field Study Report get on an exploration of how Upadhyaya's philosophy can serve as a guiding beacon for the academic sector. It emphasizes the need for holistic education that not only imparts knowledge but also nurtures character, values, and a profound sense of responsibility among individuals. Furthermore, our investigation delves into the socio-economic sector, underscoring the significance of equitable development, social justice, and sustainable progress as integral components of a flourishing society. Through this exploration, we aim to shed light on the enduring relevance and practical application of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy in shaping a more inclusive and harmonious society, where the individual and the collective thrive in unison.

Vision of the Field Study

The vision of Integral Humanism is to infuse the spirit of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's universal philosophy into Academics, Socio- economics, and corporate sectors. In this field visit we focused on the Academics and Socio-economic aspects of IHI. Integral Humanism Initiative is a dynamic and transformative movement that embraces and embodies a set of core values aimed at fostering comprehensive and balanced development. At its core, it recognizes the interconnectedness of the individual and the universal, starting with self-realization and progressing towards the upliftment of all. Guided by the principles of self-reliance (*swalambana*), individuals are encouraged to fulfil their intrinsic responsibilities (*swadharma*), empowering themselves and cultivating a sense of self-governance

(*swaraj*). By embracing self-sufficiency (*Swadeshi*), they contribute to a mutual interdependency (*parasparalambana*) that nurtures sustainable growth. The Initiative recognizes the importance of decentralization (*vikendrikaran*), empowering communities to shape their own destinies. It places a special emphasis on the upliftment of the most marginalized individuals (*antyyodaya*), striving for the holistic upliftment of all (*sarvodaya*). In alignment with the National Soul (*chiti*), the Initiative seeks to foster integral development (*samagra vikas*) that harmonizes diverse dimensions of human existence. Grounded in the belief that "The world is one family" (*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*), it promotes global solidarity and interconnectedness, transcending artificial barriers.

The Integral Humanism Initiative embodies a vision that propels individuals and societies towards a future of balanced growth, where self-realization, mutual interdependency, and inclusive development flourish. It serves as a transformative force, embracing the values that pave the way for a harmonious and interconnected world, where every individual thrives as an integral part of the universal family.

Aims and Objectives

- 1. Practical Application of Integral Humanism:** This entails exploring how integral humanism bridges the gap between individual and societal needs, spirituality and nation-building, and economics and society. The goal is to illustrate the tangible impact of this philosophy on ground-level development.
- 2. Integration of Values in Academics:** It aims to demonstrate how education can instil a love and understanding of Indian values in both students and teachers. Additionally, it seeks to examine the incorporation of '*sanskar shiksha*' and curriculum improvements as part of a holistic approach to education.

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Methodology

- 1. Puducherry:** The research methodology is designed as a multifaceted approach to explore Integral Education within the Sri Aurobindo Ashram School in Pondicherry and its practical applications in the Auroville community. For the school, a descriptive and qualitative approach is employed, involving extensive observation of school activities, structured interviews with faculty and Sri Aurobindo society members, and active engagement in school routines. To understand the philosophy's real-world implementation, site visits, semi-structured interviews with community members, and participant observation in community events are conducted.
- 2. Bengaluru:** The research study utilizes an Ethnography research methodology, a qualitative approach that emphasizes immersion and deep understanding. This methodology incorporates on-site

observations, semi-structured interviews, and interactions with various stakeholders, including Community Development individuals and students. Moreover, round-table discussions are conducted with representatives from Chanakya University CESS and Youth for Seva (NGO). Additionally, document analysis is employed to gather a holistic and thorough understanding of the Swagrama Fellowship Program and its intricate connection to the principles of integral humanism. This multi-faceted approach ensures a comprehensive exploration of the program and its alignment with the core tenets of integral humanism.

- 3. Chitrakoot:** The methodology for the field study report is centered around an ethnographic qualitative approach, aiming to thoroughly examine rural development initiatives at DRI Chitrakoot in the context of Integral Humanism. This approach involves immersive engagement with the community to gain nuanced insights into how these principles are practically implemented and experienced. Primary data was collected through interviews with stakeholders from various organizations, including community members, local leaders, and experts closely involved in DRI Chitrakoot's projects. Extensive field observations were conducted to assess the integration of Integral Humanism principles into daily life, recorded through field notes. A document analysis of relevant reports and materials provided historical context and insights into operational strategies. The study's participant diversity ensured a holistic view of the subject matter. By employing this multifaceted methodology, the study achieved a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and outcomes of Integral Humanism in rural development at DRI Chitrakoot.

Review of Literature

The field study at hand draws its foundation and theoretical framework from a comprehensive selection of primary sources, each contributing significantly to the understanding and exploration of integral humanism in both the academic and socio-economic sectors. The following literature review provides an overview of the chosen sources and their relevance to the study's objectives.

Academic Sector

1. **New Education Policy (2020) drafted by the Government of India:**

The New Education Policy (NEP) of 2020, crafted by the Government of India, stands as a pivotal source for the academic sector's aspect of this field study. This policy document outlines a transformative vision for India's educational landscape, with a focus on holistic, multidisciplinary, and research-oriented education. The NEP aligns with integral humanism's emphasis on a harmonious approach to human development. It underscores the significance of knowledge as both a product and a process, facilitating a deeper understanding of the interconnection between the individual and society.

2. **Upadhyay, P. D. (1968). "Rastra Chintan" - Rashtradharm Pustak**

Prakashan, Lucknow: Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's "Rastra Chintan" serves as a foundational philosophical text, delving into the concept of integral humanism and its implications for the academic sector. This source offers profound insights into the principles of *vyashti* (individual), *samashti* (society), *shrishti* (cosmic self), and *parameshti* (supreme self), key elements of integral humanism. Upadhyaya's vision of a balanced, value-based education system finds resonance with the NEP's objectives, making this source crucial for understanding the philosophical underpinnings of the study.

3. **Aurobindo, S. (1966). "Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education"**

- Sri Aurobindo Ashram: Sri Aurobindo's work on education, as captured in "Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education," provides a

spiritual and holistic perspective that aligns with integral humanism's philosophy. This source emphasizes the development of the whole being, integrating the physical, vital, mental, and spiritual dimensions of education. Sri Aurobindo's ideas are pertinent to the study's academic sector, offering valuable insights into the cultivation of character, values, and a sense of responsibility within the educational framework.

Socio-economic Sector

1. **Dharmapal. (2017). "Collected Writings in Five Volumes" - Other India Press, Goa:** Dharmapal's "Collected Writings" encompass a comprehensive collection of essays and writings that shed light on the socio-economic aspects of integral humanism. These writings are rooted in the cultural and traditional wisdom of India and emphasize self-reliance, sustainability, and community participation, mirroring the principles integral to socio-economic development. This source offers critical insights into how rural communities preserve and integrate traditional knowledge and practices, aligning with the study's socio-economic objectives.
2. **Upadhyay, P. D. (1968). "Rastra Chintan" - Rashtradharm Pustak Prakashan, Lucknow:** Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's "Rastra Chintan" serves as a foundational source for both the academic and socio-economic sectors of this study. Upadhyaya's philosophical work underpins the principles of integral humanism, encompassing socio-economic development as a vital facet. His vision of self-reliance, community empowerment, and equitable progress forms the basis for the study's exploration of the socio-economic sector.
3. **Sharma, D. M. C. (2017). "Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya" - Publications Division Ministry of Information & Broadcasting:** D. M. C. Sharma's work on Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya offers a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic vision and

initiatives of this integral humanist thinker. This source provides insights into the practical applications of Upadhyaya's philosophy in the socio-economic sector. It is instrumental in examining the alignment and effectiveness of initiatives by developmental organizations in realizing integral humanism's human ideals.

The selected primary sources encompass a diverse range of perspectives, from government policies and educational philosophies to cultural preservation and socio-economic development. These sources provide a strong theoretical foundation for the field study, contributing to a nuanced understanding of integral humanism in both the academic and socio-economic sectors. The collective wisdom contained within these sources enhances the depth and breadth of the study's exploration of integral humanism in action, offering valuable insights and guidance for future research and practical applications.

Part-A

Academic Sector

INTRODUCTION

“An Integral Education which could, with some variations, be adopted to all the nations of the world should bring back the legitimate authority of the spirit over a matter fully developed and utilized.”

It encapsulates the profound vision of education that extends beyond borders and resonates with the timeless pursuit of holistic, spiritually secured learning. These words were articulated by the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Puducherry, during a significant moment in 1965 when Dr. K.G. Sayiddin, a member of the Education Commission (Kothari Commission, 1964-66), visited the Ashram. The message delivered by the Mother remains as relevant and inspiring today as it was then, reflecting the urgency of reimagining education in a manner that transcends mere structural and logistical considerations.

Education is a vast and transformative enterprise, one that holds the power to shape not only individual destinies but also the route of nations and the course of humanity at large. Yet, its potential is far from realized when viewed through the narrow lens of organizational frameworks and administrative processes. To comprehend the true essence of education, one must delve into its very core, scrutinizing its fundamental connection to human development. Its dynamic interaction with the environment, and its dual role as both a product of society and a catalyst for societal change.

At its core, education is the preparation for life. It serves as the vessel where individuals are moulded, where their intellectual, emotional, and moral facets are honed. However, one of the persistent critiques of the contemporary education system is that it often falls short in its ability to prepare individuals adequately for the complexities of life. In this context, it

is essential to recognize that life is not confined to the realm of the individual but extends to encompass the communities they belong to, the nations they are citizens of, and, in a broader context, humanity at large. Education's domain encompasses all these facets of life, and to compartmentalize it, neglecting one aspect in favour of another, would be woefully inadequate.

Education, in its truest form, should provide a holistic and comprehensive view of life. It should equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, values, and moral compass to navigate the intricate web of existence. It should empower them to address not only their personal aspirations but also their roles and responsibilities within their communities, nations, and the global society. The Mother's message underscores the intricate interlinking of these aspects and the vital need for an all-encompassing perspective.

In this Field study report, this discussion will explore the multifaceted dimensions of education in light of the Mother's message. It will delve into the philosophy and principles that underpin integral education and examine how this holistic vision can be realized in diverse educational contexts. The discourse will also address the challenges and opportunities that lie on the path to achieving this vision and the transformative impact it can have on individuals, communities, and the world as a whole. Through the examination of integral education in the Indian context, this discussion will offer insights and inspiration that extend far beyond national boundaries, providing a universal perspective on the transformative power of education focus was on the need for interdisciplinary scholarship and for breaking down the silos between disciplines.

IHI Perspectives in Academic Sector

The Integral Humanism Initiative project in the academic sector should prioritize several key areas to effectively align with the principles of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and the New National Education Policy (NEP). These areas

of focus are crucial for creating a more comprehensive and value-based education system:

- **Integration of Cultural Values:** IHI should concentrate on integrating cultural values into the education system. This involves infusing the curriculum with a deep appreciation of India's rich cultural heritage and traditions, aligning with the NEP's emphasis on preserving and promoting Indian values.
- **Holistic Development:** A core area of focus should be the promotion of holistic development in students. This entails nurturing multi-dimensional personalities with strong character traits and values. The curriculum should instil 21st-century values such as self-dependence, self-control, and sustainability, which resonate with the broader concept of integral education.
- **Effective Research Methodologies:** To improve the quality of education, IHI should employ effective research methodologies. This includes visiting schools and educational institutions, engaging with students and teachers through interviews and surveys, and conducting discussions and evaluations of the curriculum. Research is essential for continuous improvement.
- **Collaborations for Knowledge Dissemination:** Collaboration with various educational institutions is vital for spreading the philosophy of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and integral education. This can be achieved through various means, such as sponsorships, fellowships, conferences, symposiums, workshops, videos, courses, textbooks, and more, to disseminate knowledge and best practices.
- **Understanding Alternative Education:** To accommodate both mainstream and alternative educational approaches, the project should focus on understanding alternative education. Sri Aurobindo and Mother's Integral Education Curricula in Puducherry offer valuable insights into alternative approaches, aligning with the NEP's vision for a more inclusive and flexible education system. The project's

exploration of alternative schools from Puducherry is a significant step in this direction.

- **Balanced and Comprehensive Approach:** The NEP advocates reducing the emphasis on rote learning and promoting critical thinking and creativity. These principles align with the broader ideas of holistic and integral education. Therefore, field work's choice to explore both alternative and mainstream education, including visits to schools in Bangalore and Chitrakoot, is well-founded and necessary for achieving a balanced and comprehensive approach to education.

By addressing these key areas of focus, the Integral Humanism Initiative project can contribute to the development of a more inclusive, culturally rich, and comprehensive education system that aligns with the principles of integral humanism and the NEP. This initiative has the potential to impact the quality of education, foster holistic development, and ensure that cultural values are deeply ingrained in the learning process, ultimately benefiting students, teachers, and the educational landscape in India.

Mapping Educational Landscapes: An Alignment with National Education Policy

The Integral Humanism Initiative project within the academic sector has strategically selected various regions and approaches to address the evolving landscape of education in India. The project's focus is influenced by a combination of historical significance, alignment with the principles of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's integral humanism, and the mandates of the New National Education Policy (NEP).

- **Selection of Puducherry for Alternative School Education:** The Field visit has chosen Puducherry as a significant region for the exploration of alternative school education, specifically the Integral Education Curricula inspired by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. This decision is driven by the deep philosophical underpinnings of integral education,

which align with the core values of integral humanism. Integral education emphasizes the holistic development of individuals, merging spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical growth. It resonates with the NEP's aspiration for a balanced and comprehensive approach to education, focusing on reducing rote learning and encouraging critical thinking and creativity. The choice of Puducherry is founded on the philosophical congruence between integral education and integral humanism, making it a relevant and inspirational model.

- **Selection of Doddamadhure for Mainstream Education in South India:** In the context of mainstream education, Doddamadhure Village in Bangalore is chosen as a representative location in South India. This selection is significant because it embodies the mainstream education system under state government syllabi. It allows the project to understand the challenges and opportunities within mainstream education, especially in a region known for its diverse educational landscape. The NEP's mandate for a more inclusive and flexible education system, accommodating both mainstream and alternative approaches, underscores the importance of exploring the mainstream education sector.
- **Selection of Chitrakoot for Mainstream Education in North India:** Chitrakoot in North India serves as the complementary focal point for mainstream education. This choice provides insights into the educational landscape of the northern region and its alignment with the NEP. Chitrakoot's diversity and representation of both government and private authority schools contribute to a comprehensive understanding of mainstream education, enabling the project to assess how the NEP's principles are being implemented.
- **Alignment with the NEP:** The NEP seeks to create an education system that is more learner-centric and adaptable to individual students' needs. It advocates for a reduced emphasis on rote learning and an increased focus on critical thinking, creativity, and holistic

development. These principles align closely with the integral education philosophy, as promoted by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, which emphasizes the holistic development of students and the nurturing of their intellectual, emotional, and moral facets. The Integral Humanism Initiative, through its exploration of both mainstream and alternative education models, aims to understand how these principles are being realized and how they can be further integrated into the broader educational system. The visit's choice of Puducherry, Doddamadhure, and Chitrakoot serves as a comprehensive and diverse representation of these educational approaches and their implications within the NEP's framework.

By addressing these varied aspects and regions, the initiative endeavours to provide a nuanced and holistic understanding of how education, both mainstream and alternative, can be more closely aligned with the principles of integral humanism and the mandates of the NEP. It aims to offer valuable insights and recommendations for a more inclusive, culturally rooted, and learner-centric education system in India.

Alternative School Education Model in Puducherry

Alternative education has been a significant and enduring aspect of India's educational landscape. It encompasses diverse methods, philosophies, and pedagogies that deviate from the conventional mainstream educational approaches. While India witnessed the acceptance of mainstream education during and after British colonial rule, it is essential to acknowledge that the country had a much richer and diverse educational system before this period, as highlighted in Dharampal's seminal work, "The Beautiful Tree." This historical context underscores the long-standing tradition of alternative education in India.

In the post-colonial era, alternative education continued to thrive and evolve. Mahatma Gandhi's concept of Nai Taleem and Gijubhai Badheka's

adaptation of Montessori methods for the Indian context exemplify this ongoing tradition. Visionary leaders and thinkers such as Swami Vivekananda, Jiddu Krishnamurti, and Sri Aurobindo also contributed to this educational landscape by establishing schools across the nation. Their objective was to explore alternative and holistic approaches to schooling, aligning with their philosophies and visions.

Among these prominent figures, the Integral Education model proposed by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in Puducherry holds a unique position. This initiative chooses to focus on Sri Aurobindo's Integral Education as an exemplary alternative education model for several reasons. The Integral Education model aligns closely with the initiative's overarching theme of integral humanism and resonates with the principles emphasized in the New National Education Policy (NEP).

Integral Education, rooted in spiritual and holistic development, strives to nurture individuals who are not only academically proficient but also possess a deep understanding of their inner selves and their roles in society. This harmonious and all-encompassing approach to education is particularly relevant to the contemporary educational landscape, where there is a growing recognition of the need for holistic and learner-centric approaches.

By delving into Sri Aurobindo's Integral Education model in Puducherry, this visit aims to explore how alternative education can offer innovative and inclusive educational pathways. It seeks to understand how this model aligns with the principles of integral humanism and the mandates of the NEP, ultimately contributing to the enrichment and diversification of India's educational system.

Integral Education in the Context of India

Integral education is an educational approach that seeks to develop the whole person rather than just focusing on academic knowledge. This

approach has been gaining popularity in India in recent years to address traditional education's limitations and create a more holistic education system. Integral education in India emphasizes the development of the mind, body, and spirit, including various Vedic educational faculties and other spiritual practices. This approach also includes the study of traditional Indian knowledge systems such as Ayurveda, astrology, and traditional Indian sciences, which are considered to be essential for the development of the whole person.

Sri Aurobindo was a major proponent of this approach. He developed a unique vision of integral education that combined traditional academic subjects with spiritual practices and the study of traditional Indian knowledge systems. Sri Aurobindo believed that traditional education focused too heavily on the development of the intellect, neglecting the development of the other aspects of the human being, such as the emotional and spiritual aspects. He believed that an integral education should aim to develop the whole person, including the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects.

He emphasized the importance of studying traditional Indian knowledge systems, such as yoga, meditation, and Ayurveda, which he believed were essential for the development of the whole person. He also believed that studying these traditional knowledge systems could help restore India's cultural and spiritual heritage and contribute to the spiritual and cultural upliftment of the nation. Sri Aurobindo also believed that an integral education should include the study of Western knowledge and science. However, he emphasized the importance of integrating this knowledge with the traditional knowledge of India. He believed that this integration would lead to a more holistic understanding of the world and help develop the student's ability to think critically and creatively.

In addition, Sri Aurobindo believed that integral education should also include the development of moral and ethical values, such as compassion, empathy, and responsibility. He believed cultivating these values was

essential for creating a better society and achieving true self-realization. His vision of integral education has significantly impacted the education system in India, and his ideas continue to be studied and applied by educators worldwide. Today, several institutions in India offer integral education programs based on Sri Aurobindo's vision of education.

The Principles of Integral Education

One of the main principles of integral education is integrating academic knowledge with the practical skills of being a functional human of a civilized society. This approach is seen as a way to instill concrete worldly knowledge into pupils and encourage introspective awareness in their psyches. Integral education also strongly emphasizes the development of moral and ethical values, such as compassion, empathy, and responsibility, which are essential for creating a better society. This approach also encourages students to develop a sense of social and environmental responsibility and work towards improving their communities.

- The first principle is that nothing can be taught. The teacher is an aid and a guide rather than an instructor or taskmaster. His job is to suggest; he is not there to impose. He demonstrates to the student how to sharpen his tools of knowledge and supports and encourages him as he does so, not training the student's mind. He demonstrates how to learn things for himself rather than impart knowledge to him. He reveals to him where the information is hidden and how it might be trained to come to the surface; he does not summon the wisdom that is within forth.
- According to the second principle, the mind must be consulted in order for it to expand. A cruel and dumb superstition is the notion that the child should be hammered into the shape that the parent or instructor wants. He has to be persuaded to grow in line with his nature. The biggest mistake a parent can do is to plan for his kid to

acquire specific skills, knowledge, and values or to be ready for a specific job. Nature would be permanently harmed, its growth would be mutilated, and its purity would be defaced if we forced it to give up its dharma.

- The third Principle states working from close to far, from the present to the future. The foundation of a man's personality is nearly always his heredity, his surroundings, his nationality, his country, the land from which he gets nutrition, the air he breathes, the sights, sounds, and habits to which he has grown used, in addition to the past of his soul. They still strongly influence him despite his insensibility, so that is where we must start. We must neither uproot nature from the soil where it must develop nor fill the mind with mental representations of life distinct from the one in which it must physically exist.

Institutions Offering Integral Education

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in integral education in India, and several institutions have begun to offer integral education programs. These programs often combine traditional academic subjects, such as science, math, and literature, with spiritual practices, such as yoga and meditation, and traditional Indian knowledge systems. Several institutions in India offer integral education programs based on Sri Aurobindo's vision of education. Some of the well-known institutions that offer integral education in India are:

- Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE), located in Pondicherry, offers an integral education program combining traditional academic subjects with spiritual practices and studying traditional Indian knowledge systems.
- Sri Aurobindo Ashram, also located in Pondicherry, offers an integral education program that includes the study of traditional Indian

knowledge systems, such as yoga and meditation, as well as academic subjects, such as science, math, and literature.

- The Sri Aurobindo International Institute for Educational Research, located in Delhi, offers an integral education program that studies traditional Indian knowledge systems, spiritual practices, and academic subjects.
- The Sri Aurobindo International School, located in Hyderabad, offers an integral education program combining traditional academic subjects with spiritual practices and studying traditional Indian knowledge systems.
- The Sri Aurobindo Society, with branches all over India, offers various programs and courses on integral education, yoga and meditation, and traditional Indian knowledge systems.
- Mirambika Free Progress School is a primary school located in New Delhi that integrates spiritual practices into the routines of elementary education.

These are just a few examples of the institutions that offer integral education in India; many other institutes, organizations, and communities offer integral education.

EXPLORING INTEGRAL EDUCATION IN PUDUCHERRY: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD STUDY REFLECTION

In our field visit, we directed our attention to Puducherry, a region renowned for housing two distinctive centres of integral education: Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram, situated in Puducherry, is not only a spiritual and philosophical hub but also a pioneering institution in the realm of integral education. Sri Aurobindo's vision, coupled with The Mother's insights, laid the foundation for an educational approach that transcends conventional paradigms. Their philosophy emphasizes the holistic development of students, instilling a deep understanding of their inner selves while nurturing their intellectual growth. As part of our exploration in the academic sector, we visited Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE) in Sri Aurobindo Ashram, seeking insights into how their pedagogical approach aligns with the ideals of integral education.

In close proximity to Puducherry lies Auroville, an experimental township that embodies the principles of integral living and education. Auroville hosts educational institutions that align with Sri Aurobindo's vision, offering an environment where alternative education is actively explored. These schools' endeavour to cultivate individuals who not only excel academically but also exhibit a profound sense of spirituality and moral values. Our field visit to Auroville included two schools, "The Last School" and "Deepanam School," where we explored the academic aspects of integral education and its alignment with integral humanism principles and the New National Education Policy (NEP).

Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE)

Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE), an integral part of Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Puducherry, stands as a testament to the pioneering vision of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother in the realm of education. Serving as a field for experimentation and research, SAICE embodies the aspiration to prepare humanity for a future characterized by divine consciousness and a harmonious existence on Earth. This institution's journey is a remarkable testament to the transformative power of integral education.

The genesis of SAICE can be traced back to December 2, 1943, when The Mother opened a school for children under the influence of Sri Aurobindo's vision. This pivotal moment marked the beginning of a profound experiment in education, one that would continue to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing landscape of educational challenges. For years, Sri Aurobindo recognized that forging a new educational system was a potent means of nurturing a future humanity capable of manifesting divine ideals on Earth.

The significance of this institution deepened in 1951 when a convention held in Pondicherry resolved to establish an International University Centre, an endeavor that would serve as a fitting memorial to Sri Aurobindo. The Mother inaugurated the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre on January 6, 1952. However, in 1959, The Mother decided to rename the institution, leading to its current identity as the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.

SAICE is a comprehensive educational hub that caters to students from kindergarten to college levels of study. Its diverse faculties span across Humanities, Sciences, Languages, Engineering Technology, and Physical Education, offering a wide spectrum of academic opportunities. However, what sets SAICE apart is its commitment to holistic development, fostering an environment that nurtures creativity, spirituality, and moral values.

The institution provides students with access to a plethora of artistic and creative outlets, including drawing, painting, handiwork, music, dancing (both Indian and Western), dramatics, and arts and crafts. Alongside well-equipped libraries and laboratories, SAICE encourages practical and manual work, fostering a balanced and well-rounded approach to education.

One of SAICE's most inspiring objectives is to serve as an international center of education, embodying the ideal that each nation should contribute uniquely to a cultural synthesis that promotes mutual understanding and human unity. In this pursuit, SAICE strives to represent the cultures of different regions of the world, offering a glimpse into the rich tapestry of human diversity. Through this holistic approach to education, the institution contributes to the realization of the ideals of integral humanism and the New National Education Policy (NEP).

SAICE's journey encapsulates the transformative power of integral education. It serves as a testament to the potential of an educational system that transcends traditional paradigms and nurtures individuals who not only excel academically but also exhibit a profound sense of spirituality, creativity, and moral values. As we delve deeper into the academic sector during our field visit, SAICE's philosophy and practices stand as an inspirational model, providing valuable insights into the academic aspects of integral education and its alignment with integral humanism principles.

SAICE's Mission and Methodology

Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE) is dedicated to fostering a holistic system of education, nurturing the development of all facets of a child's personality: the physical, vital, mental, psychic, and spiritual. Within its walls, SAICE encourages students to explore subjects without the confines of specialization or career pressures.

The institution's approach transcends the conventional boundaries of academics, embracing a dynamic philosophy. Rather than merely imparting knowledge, SAICE presents carefully chosen materials and

opportunities in a manner that stimulates students' inner activity, guiding them to discover the knowledge that resides within them.

At the heart of SAICE's mission is the belief that education's primary task is to lead students on a journey of self-discovery, helping them unveil their life's purpose and their unique roles in it. This perspective places life within a divine framework, where education serves as a catalyst for students to discern their individual destinies.

The Centre's approach revolves around integral and harmonious development. It aims to provide students with a comprehensive physical foundation, channel their life-energy into pursuits that foster personal growth, hone their mental faculties in the humanities and sciences, and create a spiritual ambiance conducive to the soul's emergence and eventual governance of the entire being. With approximately 400 students, SAICE maintains a relatively small scale, ensuring that teachers and instructors can dedicate considerable attention to each child. Most classes consist of no more than twelve or thirteen students, and many are even smaller.

The Mother, in her wisdom, articulated that the ultimate objective of education is not solely to prepare students for success in life and society but to elevate their perfectibility to the highest degree. In alignment with this philosophy, the Centre of Education does not grant degrees or diplomas. Instead, it cultivates an environment where knowledge is pursued for its intrinsic value and character development, transcending the conventional measures of achievement.

Academic Programme Structure

The academic curriculum at the Centre of Education spans eighteen years and encompasses various levels, including kindergarten, primary, lower secondary, higher secondary, and the Higher Course. The Higher Course, offered as a three-year undergraduate program in Arts and Sciences, also provides a five-year course in Engineering Technology.

A diverse array of subjects forms the academic landscape, covering English, French, Sanskrit, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Applied Sciences, Computer Science, History, Geography, Indian languages, foreign languages, Music, Dance, Drawing, Painting, and Handiwork.

The student body reflects a rich diversity, hailing not only from different states across India but also from international locations. English serves as the medium of instruction for subjects such as English, History, and Geography, while French is employed for French, Mathematics, and Science. The curriculum encompasses the teaching of various Indian and foreign languages, with most students focusing on their mother tongue. Additionally, Sanskrit is a mandatory subject until the completion of the Higher Course.

Admitted in the Kindergarten at the age of three, the child moves through the following academic sections:

Name	Level	Age	Years
Jardin d'Enfant	Kindergarten	3-6	3 years
Avenir	Primary	6-9	3 years
Progrès	Primary	9-12	3 years
En Avant vers la Perfection	Secondary	12-18	6 years
Cours Supérieur	College	18-21	3 years

Assessment: The Centre of Education adopts a distinctive approach by eschewing traditional examinations or tests. Instead, the primary methods for evaluating student progress involve close observation and continuous assessment by the teachers. Notably, the Centre does not confer degrees or diplomas upon its students. However, upon successful completion of the Higher Course, a certificate is issued to the student upon request, acknowledging their accomplishment.

Physical Education

The Centre of Education distinguishes itself with a unique evaluation approach, steering clear of traditional examinations or tests. Instead, the teachers employ close observation and continuous assessment as the primary tools for gauging student progress. Notably, the Centre refrains from conferring degrees or diplomas upon its students. However, upon the successful completion of the Higher Course, students can request a certificate, acknowledging their accomplishments.

In the realm of Physical Education, the Centre boasts a comprehensive infrastructure, featuring a four-lane cinder track, playing fields and courts for football, cricket, hockey, volleyball, basketball, and tennis. Additional amenities include a swimming pool, gymnasiums dedicated to bodybuilding and gymnastics, as well as facilities for boxing, Indian wrestling, Judo, and roller-skating.

To ensure the well-being of the students, annual medical check-ups are conducted, verifying their fitness for participation in various activities. The Corner House, a separate dining hall, caters to the nutritional needs of the growing bodies, providing healthy and wholesome food. The Department of Physical Education maintains a dedicated library, regularly receiving a plethora of magazines and periodicals related to health and physical education.

Reflections based on NEP

The curriculum at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE) embodies a holistic approach, integrating both academic and physical education to nurture well-rounded individuals. This aligns with the principles outlined in the New National Education Policy (NEP) in several ways.

Firstly, SAICE's unique evaluation methodology, centered around close observation and continuous assessment rather than conventional examinations, resonates with the NEP's emphasis on moving away from rote learning and traditional testing methods. The focus on assessing students through ongoing observation aligns with the NEP's goal of fostering critical thinking and creativity.

Secondly, the comprehensive infrastructure and physical education facilities at SAICE, including a range of sports and fitness activities, mirror the NEP's commitment to promoting a holistic development approach. The NEP recognizes the importance of physical well-being and the overall development of students beyond academic pursuits. SAICE's dedication to physical education, including facilities for various sports and fitness activities, complements this aspect of the NEP.

Additionally, SAICE's approach to issuing certificates upon successful completion of the Higher Course, in lieu of degrees or diplomas, reflects a departure from the conventional degree-centric focus. This resonates with the NEP's encouragement of a more flexible and multidisciplinary education system, allowing students to explore diverse areas of interest.

The Last School in Auroville

The Last School, established in 1985, underwent a significant relocation to its permanent home in the Cultural zone in July 2014. Catering to students aged 14 to 18 years and above, the school operates under the unique educational approach termed 'Free Progress,' as envisioned by the Mother. This method underscores the need for the school's structure and programs to exhibit diversity and flexibility, ensuring a responsive alignment with each student's individual path of progress. The relocation to the Cultural zone signifies a new phase for the Last School, marking its commitment to providing an environment conducive to free progress and tailored learning experiences for students.

Furthermore, the Last School extends its educational outreach to include young working Aurovilians and adults. These individuals actively participate in sessions delving into Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and engage in classes focusing on the plastic arts. The school day commences at 8:30 am and concludes at 3:30 pm, with an extension until 5:30 pm on days that include sports activities. The school operates five days a week, from Monday to Friday, requiring students to adhere to a full timetable. Additionally, students are encouraged to participate in physical education activities after classes on all school days, emphasizing a holistic approach to education that encompasses both intellectual and physical well-being.

Mission and Methodology

The Last School's educational philosophy is centered on the comprehensive development of students, targeting the faculties of the mind, the powers of the will, the refinement of the aesthetic and emotional being, all grounded upon a robust and balanced physical foundation. This holistic approach consciously addresses each element of the youth's psychological nature, with a fundamental emphasis on consultation rather than imposition in the teaching process. The school encourages the active participation of students in their own growth and development, involving them in the formulation of the school program and timetable.

Individualization is a key aspect of the educational process at the Last School, where activities are tailored for students based on their preferences and choices of subjects and teachers. The school facilitates students' pursuit of specific interests or involvement in larger Auroville activities, developing a sense of autonomy and self-directed learning. Teachers guide students in setting and achieving their goals for each term, with older and more self-governing students benefiting from a highly individualized and flexible time schedule.

The Last School operates as a compound network of personalized timetables for both students and teachers, reflecting the diverse and unique needs of each individual. This approach necessitates students to be self-

motivated, actively participating in decision-making processes and changes that impact the school community. In the classroom, student feedback is valued, and teachers support them in constructing their own worldview. Many classes incorporate the ideas of Mother and Sri Aurobindo, adapting the content according to the students' levels of interest.

Academic Programme

The Last School offers a diverse and comprehensive program that encompasses various disciplines to cater to the holistic development of students. The curriculum includes language studies, incorporating the four languages emphasized by Mother for Auroville, alongside numerous others. Literary and poetic studies, exploration of pure sciences such as physics and chemistry, life sciences including biology, mathematics, and social sciences like history, geography, and economics are integral components of the educational offering. The curriculum extends to philosophy and cultural studies, computer programming, systems administration, 3D design, film editing, and the arts, with a particular emphasis on the latter.

Notably, the program also includes subjects dedicated to the exploration of Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's works, which are formally 'offered' separately. However, the fluidity of classroom life often leads to the integration of these subjects, allowing for a more interconnected and holistic learning experience. This approach aligns with the school's philosophy of encouraging students to engage actively in their education and pursue a well-rounded understanding of various disciplines.

The Last School's emphasis on the arts signifies its recognition of the transformative power of creative expression and the importance of nurturing artistic talents. By offering a range of subjects across diverse fields, the school seeks to provide students with a rich and multidimensional educational experience, fostering a love for learning and an appreciation for the interconnectedness of knowledge.

Reflections Based on NEP

The NEP advocates for a shift towards a more holistic and multidisciplinary education system, encouraging schools to move beyond traditional subject boundaries. The Last School's curriculum, which covers a wide array of subjects including languages, pure sciences, social sciences, philosophy, and the arts, resonates with the NEP's vision of a flexible and inclusive education system.

Moreover, the NEP emphasizes the importance of fostering creativity, critical thinking, and a love for learning. The Last School's special emphasis on the arts and the integration of Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's works into the curriculum reflects a commitment to nurturing creativity and providing students with a well-rounded education that goes beyond rote learning.

The Last School's approach to self-motivation, active student participation, and individualized learning aligns with the NEP's emphasis on learner-centric education. The encouragement for students to be involved in decision-making processes, goal-setting, and the pursuit of specific interests mirrors the NEP's vision of empowering students to take ownership of their learning journey.

In terms of physical education, the Last School's inclusion of various sports and physical activities corresponds with the NEP's emphasis on promoting holistic well-being and physical fitness as integral components of the education system. The Last School's curriculum and educational philosophy share common ground with the principles outlined in the NEP, reflecting a commitment to holistic, learner-centric, and multidisciplinary education.

The Deepanam School in Auroville

Deepanam School, situated near Matrimandir in Auroville, was established in the year 2000 and has been expanding since. It caters to children aged 6 - 14, providing English medium education from primary to middle levels. Operating from 8.30 am to 3.30 pm, the school is committed

to the concept of Free Progress, collaborating with Transition School, Nandanam, and Kindergarten. The educational focus is on the integral development of each child.

Mission and Methodology

Deepanam School is dedicated to fostering an understanding, openness, and devotion to Mother and Sri Aurobindo. The school creates a warm and trustful atmosphere to facilitate steady and truthful progress based on their unique methodology of education. The mission includes instilling in students a love for learning, and since October 2006, the school has been encouraging children to take responsibility for themselves. A collaborative schedule is created for each group, promoting initiative and participation in daily activities.

Academic Programme Structure

The school, operating on the principle of Free Progress, incorporates a schedule co-created by teachers and students. Mixed-age groups engage in various activities like French, handicrafts, and field trips. The educational approach emphasizes involvement in daily life activities, including room arrangement, cleaning, gardening, and cooking. Deepanam School places significant importance on artistic education, incorporating painting, music, dance, singing, drama, alongside the formal curriculum. The aim is to fully implement the four key languages – English, French, Sanskrit, Tamil – as specified by The Mother.

New Approach to Education: ATB (Awareness Through Body)

Deepanam School integrates Awareness Through the Body (ATB) into its curriculum, utilizing this practice as a valuable tool to enhance self-awareness and self-regulation in both children and adults. Commencing in July 1992 with a focus on improving the posture of school children, ATB has evolved into a comprehensive program fostering attention, concentration, and relaxation while promoting an understanding of one's own complexity.

ATB's activities are designed to be creative and enjoyable, gradually developing skills such as concentration, focus, relaxation, and a sense of accomplishment. The practice initiates by connecting individuals with their body sensations, creating receptivity to internal and external stimuli. It guides participants in exploring the intricate amalgamation of their being and equips them with tools to effectively manage this complexity. A pivotal aspect of ATB involves cultivating the witness attitude—an observational stance that neutrally observes one's internal movements without judgment or analysis.

It means, ATB harnesses personal body-felt-sense-experience to facilitate the development of soft-sustain attention, concentration, self-awareness, self-knowledge, and self-regulation. While traditional school subjects are typically approached through various pedagogic methods, the study of oneself is a rare inclusion in academic curricula. ATB addresses this gap by offering a unique experiential approach that goes beyond conceptual understanding, making the exploration of one's being engaging and relevant.

Acknowledging the inherent complexity of the human body, ATB recognizes the absence of a manual for self-management. Individuals navigate the intricacies of self-regulation without explicit instructions, often encountering dysfunctional patterns over time. ATB seeks to bridge this gap by providing a platform for both children and adults to understand, connect with, and effectively manage their bodies, minds, and emotions in more fulfilling ways. The practice aligns with the broader philosophy of holistic education, emphasizing the importance of self-discovery and personal growth in the educational journey.

Reflections based on NEP

Deepanam School's commitment to Free Progress and encouraging self-responsibility aligns with the New Education Policy's emphasis on holistic

and learner-centric education. The school's focus on artistic education, mixed-age group activities, and languages resonates with the NEP's vision of a flexible and multidisciplinary curriculum. As the school aims for growth, it reflects the NEP's emphasis on increasing access to quality education. The unique methodology of Deepanam School presents an opportunity to explore alternative educational models in the context of the NEP's transformative vision for education in India.

Data Collection Methods in Puducherry Field Visit

The application of the Integral Education model in alternative education schools is a dynamic exploration of holistic learning and personal development. To gain insights into the practical implementation of this model, our team conducted interviews with key individuals and observed activities at Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE), The Last School in Auroville, and Deepanam School. The focus was on understanding the physical education system, gaining perspectives from school staff, and delving into the unique aspects of each institution.

Interviews at SAICE: To comprehend the physical education system at SAICE, an interview was conducted with Mr. Rajkumar, a staff member well-versed in the intricacies of the school's approach to physical development. Insights into SAICE's distinctive methods and their alignment with the Integral Education model were explored. Additionally, Mrs. Gayatri Ji, the Headmistress at SAICE, shared her perspectives on how the integral approach is woven into the fabric of daily educational practices.

Observing School Activities: A significant component of our exploration involved firsthand observation of school activities at SAICE. This included attending classes, engaging with students, and immersing ourselves in the unique atmosphere cultivated by the Integral Education model. The observation process allowed us to witness the practical manifestation of the holistic approach, providing valuable context for our study.

Interviews at The Last School: Moving beyond SAICE, our team extended its inquiry to The Last School in Auroville. Interviews with school teachers provided insights into how the Integral Education model is tailored to suit the needs of students aged 14 to 18. The Last School, existing since 1985, employs the 'Free Progress' method, emphasizing diverse and flexible structures to accommodate each student's unique learning journey. This aligns with the integral philosophy of nurturing individual progress in harmony with broader educational goals.

Interviews at Deepanam School: Our exploration further expanded to Deepanam School, established in 2000, with interviews conducted with teachers and representatives from Awareness Through Body (ATB), namely Aloka and John. These interviews focused on the mission and methodology of Deepanam School, aiming for integral development through an increasing understanding of Mother and Sri Aurobindo. The school's emphasis on artistic education, mixed-age group activities, and languages reflected the holistic principles of the Integral Education model.

Synthesizing Perspectives: By engaging with key stakeholders and observing activities in alternative education settings, our study aimed to synthesize perspectives on the application of Integral Education. The diverse insights from SAICE, The Last School, and Deepanam School contribute to a comprehensive understanding of how the Integral Education model manifests in alternative educational contexts. This synthesis not only enriches academic discourse but also serves as a catalyst for real change in the paradigms of education, aligning with the richness and complexity of human nature and societal interconnectedness.

An Overview of Puducherry Field Visit

The comprehensive field study undertaken, focusing on Integral Education in Puducherry, particularly at institutions like Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE), The Last School, and Deepanam School, offers

valuable insights into the dynamic landscape of alternative education. The exploration of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Education and its application in these institutions sheds light on their relevance and potential contributions to the contemporary educational paradigm, especially in the context of the New National Education Policy (NEP).

Sri Aurobindo's Integral Education, rooted in the ideals of holistic development, self-discovery, and the integration of physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions, resonates with the aspirations of the NEP. The NEP envisions a learner-centric education system that promotes critical thinking, creativity, and a comprehensive understanding of diverse subjects. The alternative education models observed in Puducherry align closely with these principles, emphasizing the importance of self-motivation, individualized learning, and a harmonious development of various facets of a student's personality.

SAICE, with its diverse curriculum and commitment to nurturing self-directed beings, serves as a testament to the transformative potential of integral education. The Last School, with its 'Free Progress' methodology, encourages students to take charge of their learning journey, fostering a sense of responsibility and individualized growth. Deepanam School, incorporating Awareness Through the Body (ATB) into its curriculum, exemplifies the innovative approaches that alternative schools adopt to enhance self-awareness, concentration, and overall well-being.

In the context of the NEP, which emphasizes flexibility, inclusivity, and a holistic approach to education, the insights gained from these alternative education models are invaluable. The emphasis on languages, arts, and a personalized timetable in these schools aligns with the NEP's focus on a multidisciplinary approach and a learner-centric system. The holistic development of students, including physical education and the integration of arts, mirrors the NEP's vision of a well-rounded education that goes beyond conventional academic subjects.

Moreover, the field study emphasizes the importance of individualized attention, a feature prominent in alternative schools, which can significantly contribute to achieving the NEP's goal of ensuring universal access to quality education. The experiential and self-directed learning approaches observed in these schools resonate with the NEP's emphasis on reducing rote learning and fostering critical thinking skills.

The field study provides a nuanced understanding of alternative education models, particularly in the context of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Education. The principles and practices observed in these schools not only align with the vision of the NEP but also offer innovative pathways to address the evolving needs of learners in the 21st century. Integrating elements of integral education into mainstream educational discourse can contribute to the broader goals outlined in the NEP, shaping a more inclusive, flexible, and holistic education system for the present and future generations.

EXPLORATION INTO MAINSTREAM SCHOOL EDUCATION MODEL

Mainstream school education in India is the cornerstone of the nation's academic landscape, providing formalized instruction to millions of students across diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. The education system is characterized by a structured curriculum, standardized assessments, and adherence to a set of guidelines prescribed by educational boards and authorities. The roots of mainstream education in India can be traced back to the colonial era when the British introduced a Western-style education system. Over the years, this system has evolved, incorporating indigenous elements and responding to the changing needs of society. Today, mainstream education plays a pivotal role in shaping the intellectual, social, and ethical fabric of the country.

One of the fundamental aspects of mainstream education is its adherence to a prescribed curriculum. Subjects such as mathematics, science, languages, social studies, and the arts are taught systematically, with a focus on building a comprehensive knowledge base. This structured approach is designed to impart a well-rounded education that equips students with the skills and knowledge needed for higher education and future careers. Standardized assessments, often in the form of board examinations, are a hallmark of mainstream education. These assessments serve as a yardstick to evaluate students' academic performance and determine their eligibility for further studies. The competitive nature of these exams reflects the intense academic environment prevalent in mainstream schools, where students strive for excellence to secure admission to reputable colleges and universities.

Mainstream education in India operates through various educational boards, each with its own set of syllabi, examination patterns, and evaluation criteria. Prominent boards include the Central Board of Secondary

Education (CBSE), the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), and various state boards. The diversity of these boards contributes to the rich developments of education in India, allowing for regional variations and preferences. Beyond academics, mainstream education also emphasizes extracurricular activities, developing the holistic development of students. Sports, cultural events, and other co-curricular pursuits play a crucial role in shaping students' personalities, instilling values of teamwork, discipline, and leadership.

However, the mainstream education system in India is not without its challenges. Issues such as rote memorization, a rigid examination-centric approach, and disparities in educational infrastructure and quality persist. Efforts are continually underway to address these concerns, with education policymakers striving to introduce reforms that promote critical thinking, creativity, and a more inclusive learning environment. Mainstream school education in India forms the bedrock of the nation's intellectual capital. It has evolved over time, integrating global educational practices with indigenous elements. While facing challenges, the system plays a pivotal role in shaping the academic trajectory of millions of students, reflecting the dynamic and diverse educational landscape of the country.

Mainstream School Education Model in Doddamadhure Village (Bangaluru)

In our effort to assess mainstream education and delve into curricular nuances, our field visit took us to the quaint village of Doddamadhure. Nestled in rural surroundings, Doddamadhure embodies a community deeply connected to cultural roots, evident not only in their way of life but also in their preference for mainstream education, primarily through government schools. Doddamadhure, being a rural area, predominantly attracts financially backward students who opt for education in government schools. Our selection of government schools for this field visit

stems from the desire to comprehend the mainstream school education model within the context of rural communities. Government schools in such areas often grapple with infrastructural challenges and have a smaller student population.

Our exploration focused on two key institutions: the Government Higher Primary School and the Government High School in Doddamadhure. These schools, while being instrumental in providing education to the local youth, also reflect the prevalent merits and demerits of mainstream education. The financial constraints faced by the students and the schools' infrastructural limitations add a layer of complexity to the mainstream education landscape in rural settings. During our visits, we engaged with the school authorities, teachers, and students to gain insights into the challenges they encounter in the current mainstream education scenario. Issues related to infrastructure, student strength, emergence of new private schools and the overall effectiveness of the education system were discussed, shedding light on the unique dynamics of mainstream education in rural areas.

Our assessment aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of mainstream education in Doddamadhure, allowing us to draw comparisons, identify challenges, and propose recommendations for improvement. By focusing on government schools, we aim to contribute valuable insights that may inform educational policies and practices, particularly in the context of rural education and the mainstream schooling model.

Government Primary School, Doddamadhure

The Government Primary School, Doddamadhure, established in 1936 and managed by the Department of Education, is situated in the rural area of the Kunigal block in the Tumakuru district of Karnataka. The co-educational institution caters to students from Grades 1 to 7, following the academic session that commences in April. The medium of instruction is Kannada.

Infrastructure of the School: The school boasts a government building with 8 classrooms dedicated to instructional purposes. Additionally, there are 2 rooms designated for non-teaching activities, along with a separate room for the Headmaster/Teacher. The property are enclosed by a durable pucca boundary wall. The school is well-equipped with essential facilities, including well (natural resource) water for drinking, functional boys' and girls' toilets, a playground, and a library housing 1008 books. However, it currently lacks computers for teaching and learning purposes and does not have a computer-aided learning lab.

Faculties of the School: The teaching staff plays a crucial role in imparting education. The school has qualified and dedicated teachers who contribute to the academic growth of the students. The emphasis is on maintaining a positive and culturally rich learning environment.

Curricula Related to Karnataka State Government Syllabus: The school aligns its curricula with the Karnataka State Government syllabus, ensuring that students receive education in accordance with the state's academic standards. This adherence helps maintain consistency and quality in the learning process.

Drawbacks of Mainstream Education: Despite the school's commitment to education, there are certain drawbacks in both infrastructure and academic programs. The absence of computers for teaching and learning reflects a gap in technology integration. Additionally, the lack of a computer-aided learning lab suggests limited exposure to modern educational tools.

Initiatives by Alumni: In a commendable initiative, alumni of the school have contributed to its development by establishing a new classroom for kindergarten children. They have also taken the initiative to appoint a teacher for this section. Notably, this effort is independent of government involvement. The focus is on maintaining a connection with the village's culture and preserving its purity.

This detailed field study provides insights into the Government Higher Primary School, Doddamadure, emphasizing both its strengths and areas that warrant attention for further improvement.

Government High School in Doddamadure

Established in 1984, the Government High School Doddamadure, managed by the Department of Education, is situated in the rural area of Kuigal block in Tumakuru district, Karnataka. Catering to Grades 8 to 10, the school follows a co-educational system with Kannada as the medium of instruction. The academic session typically commences in April.

Infrastructure: The school's physical infrastructure includes a government building comprising one classroom dedicated to each grade. All classrooms are reported to be in good condition. Additionally, there are two rooms allocated for non-teaching activities, and a separate room is designated for the Headmaster/Teacher. Notably, the school lacks a boundary wall and an electric connection.

Faculties: The school boasts a library housing 1120 books, contributing to the academic resources available to students. However, the absence of computers for teaching and learning purposes, as well as the lack of a computer-aided learning lab, indicates a gap in technology integration.

Curricula and State Government Syllabus: Aligned with the Karnataka state government syllabus, the school's curriculum adheres to the educational standards set by the state. The implementation of state-prescribed syllabi ensures uniformity and compliance with broader educational frameworks.

Hostel Facility: A noteworthy feature is the presence of a hostel for girls, accommodating around 15 students. The hostel, constructed through the collective efforts of villagers, stands as a testament to the community's

commitment to providing residential facilities for girls pursuing education. The hostel is managed by a female warden.

Drawbacks: Despite the commendable efforts, certain drawbacks need consideration. The absence of a boundary wall and electric connection poses security and operational challenges. Furthermore, the lack of computer facilities indicates a potential gap in students' exposure to technological advancements, which is increasingly crucial in modern education.

While Government High School Doddamadhure plays a vital role in providing education to the rural community, addressing infrastructure gaps and enhancing technological resources could contribute to a more comprehensive and effective learning environment.

Data Collection Methods in Doddamadhure

Headmaster Interview: Our exploration began with a comprehensive interview with the headmaster of Govt. Higher Primary School. This method provided a structured overview of the primary education landscape, addressing administrative, pedagogical, and infrastructural aspects.

Student Engagements: To gain insights into the early stages of education, we interacted with kindergarten and third standard students. This direct engagement allowed us to observe the learning environment and understand the challenges faced by young learners.

Kindergarten Teacher Interview: A semi-structured interview with a kindergarten teacher provided deeper insights into the pedagogical approaches used in early childhood education. This method shed light on teaching methods, curriculum challenges, and the overall dynamics of the kindergarten stage.

Community Perspectives: Insights from Community Resource people and alumni added a qualitative layer to our study. Their explanations and

perspectives enriched our understanding of the school's dynamics, bringing in community-specific insights.

Interaction with 9th Standard Students: Shifting our focus to high school, we engaged directly with 9th standard students. This interaction method offered firsthand perspectives on the challenges and aspirations of students transitioning into higher grades.

Observations and Explanations: Our study was further supported by observations and explanations provided by Community Resource people and alumni. These qualitative data collection methods ensured a comprehensive view of the educational practices in Doddamadhure.

Reflections over Doddamadhure Field Study based on NEP

The field visit to Doddamadhure summarizes a multifaceted narrative, reflecting the complexities and aspirations of rural education within the ambit of the National Education Policy (NEP). As we delve into the educational landscape of this Karnataka village, a dichotomy emerges — a commitment to value-oriented education deeply rooted in local culture and geography, compared against the evident gaps in technical skills and holistic development.

In the context of Karnataka's state board education system, the curriculum intricately weaves subjects and pedagogy reflective of the region's rich agricultural history and cultural-sustainable development. This value-oriented approach, championed by the government, serves as a commendable effort to preserve the essence of the local context in education. However, it comes at a cost — a cost borne by students who find themselves lacking in technical skills crucial for contemporary demands.

A pivotal observation pertains to the absence of computer labs and technical support in government schools, echoing a broader challenge faced by rural students nationwide. As the world advances rapidly in

technology, these students, deeply connected to their cultural roots, risk falling behind in the digital era. The NEP's vision of providing a well-rounded, holistic education encounters obstacles in the form of infrastructure limitations, hindering the development of technical prowess among students in Doddamadhure.

Furthermore, the examination-oriented focus in government schools, a common phenomenon in rural areas, underscores a prioritization of completing syllabi over promoting mental and physical development. The rush to cover curriculum within stipulated timeframes leaves limited room for comprehensive learning experiences that nurture the cognitive, emotional, and physical facets of a student's development.

As we conclude our exploration of Doddamadhure's educational landscape, the intricate balance between preserving cultural values and equipping students with modern skills becomes apparent. It is imperative for educational policies, especially those aligned with the NEP, to bridge this gap. Initiatives fostering the integration of technical education, providing access to computer labs, and reimagining examination patterns to allow for holistic development merit urgent consideration.

Doddamadhure serves as a microcosm reflecting the broader challenges and opportunities in rural education, urging stakeholders to craft interventions that harmonize traditional values with the demands of a rapidly evolving world. The National Education Policy, with its emphasis on flexibility and a multidisciplinary approach, provides a roadmap. It is now the responsibility of educational authorities to translate this roadmap into actionable strategies that ensure a well-rounded, inclusive, and forward-looking education for every student, irrespective of their geographical location or cultural context.

Mainstream School Education Model in Chitrakoot (DRI)

Our exploration of Chitrakoot's educational landscape led us to the impactful initiatives of the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI). Nestled in the heart of this region, DRI's projects are emblematic of its commitment to holistic development, guided by the visionary philosophy of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. The institute's focus extends beyond conventional education, encompassing vital sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, and technical vocational training, all integral components of its comprehensive research agenda.

Central to DRI's mission is the profound concept of "Antyodaya," championed by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay. This philosophy underscores the upliftment of the last person in society, with education identified as the cornerstone of this transformative journey. DRI's approach to mainstream education is not confined to traditional paradigms; rather, it serves as a catalyst for societal upliftment, instilled with a purpose that transcends academic boundaries.

During our visit, we had the privilege of immersing ourselves in the ethos of several educational institutions that exemplify DRI's commitment to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay's vision. SPGV School, Gurukul Sankul, KDBA Vidyalaya, and PAPVP Vidyalaya in Ganivan emerged as vibrant centers of learning, each embodying the principles of Antyodaya.

Surendrapaul Gramoday Vidyalaya (SPGV School)

Background: Surrendra Paul, a graduate from MIT deeply inspired by Swami Vivekananda's principles, met an untimely demise. In his memory, SURENDRAPPAUL Gramodaya Vidyalaya (SPGV) was established in 1992 at Chitrakoot, dedicated to spreading knowledge in India's most underprivileged regions.

Objective: SPGV challenges the prevailing education system, aiming to go beyond income generation. The institute strives to reintroduce sensibilities

and social responsibilities among students, addressing tendencies unbecoming of a well-rounded individual.

Vision: Guided by a visionary outlook, SPGV's vision revolves around social reconstruction through education. The institution is committed to the all-round development of its students, fostering a scientific approach, creativity, and an appreciation for the significance of labor.

Strategies:

- Establishing economic viability for indigenous cattle in society.
- Conserving native breeds through in-situ methods.
- Maintaining a farmer-centric cow population with high-potential bulls for breeding.
- Developing a replicable model of a sustainable Gaushala.

Curriculum and Approach: SPGV functions as both a residential and day school, offering education from LKG to 12th class in Hindi, following the curriculum prescribed by the Madhya Pradesh Government. In addition to traditional subjects, the institute incorporates moral sciences, general knowledge, gardening, music, arts, and sports into its holistic educational approach.

Infrastructure: SPGV boasts a nature-based atmosphere, creating a small world that resembles the real one, challenging the conventional notion of a school. The institute's infrastructure transforms the educational space into a beautiful park, emphasizing a natural-based educational approach that fosters a deep connection with the surroundings.

Surendrapaul Gramodaya Vidyalaya serves not only as an educational institution but also as a tribute to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's ideals. It strives to bring about transformative change in the lives of its students and the community, embodying a commitment to education that goes beyond conventional boundaries.

Gurukul Sankul: A Unique Educational Experiment

Gurukul Sankul in Chitrakoot is a pioneering initiative, bringing together 80 children with retired couples, forming groups of 10 children each. This distinctive experiment not only nurtures values in the children but also creates an inspiring atmosphere for their study and overall growth.

Objective:

- **Utilization of Local Resources:** Gurukul Sankul aims to promote science education by tapping into local resources. The objective is to create an educational environment that utilizes the richness of the region to enhance the learning experience.
- **Science Teachers Program:** The institute is committed to organizing science teacher programs within a 50 km radius around Chitrakoot, collaborating with other institutions and organizations. This initiative seeks to uplift science education in the broader community.
- **Mobile Science Lab:** Gurukul Sankul facilitates science education through practical means by demonstrating life-related science experiments and educational CDs using a mobile science lab. This hands-on approach aims to make learning a dynamic and engaging experience.

Children as the Foundation of a Nation:

Recognizing children as the life-stream of a nation, Gurukul Sankul emphasizes the crucial role of proper development in laying a strong foundation for a dynamic society. Unfortunately, the neglect of initiatives for children by the government has had a detrimental impact on the natural process of nurturing the nation's future citizens.

Vision: Wiping Out Illiteracy in a 50 km Radius of Chitrakoot Villages

- **Educational Reconstruction:** Gurukul Sankul envisions achieving a 50 km radius of Chitrakoot villages by eradicating illiteracy. This ambitious vision aligns with the institute's commitment to

educational reconstruction and the holistic development of the region.

- **Purpose:** Yuganukul Educational Reconstruction: The institute focuses on Yuganukul Educational Reconstruction, emphasizing that the pre-primary level (ages three to five) is optimal for promoting observational qualities and mental receptivity. The approach of "learning while playing" is central to this stage, with teachers acting as facilitators of the learning process.
- **Infrastructure:** Creating an Inspiring Learning Environment

Gurukul Sankul's infrastructure is designed to foster an inspiring learning atmosphere. The experiment involves housing children with retired couples, creating a family-like environment. The intentional grouping of 10 children per set ensures personalized attention and a supportive community. The emphasis on utilizing local resources extends to the physical space, creating a unique educational setting that goes beyond traditional norms.

Undoubtedly, Gurukul Sankul stands as a beacon of educational innovation, combining values, local engagement, and a holistic approach to nurture the future generations of Chitrakoot.

Krishna Devi Banvasi Balika Awasiya Vidyalaya (KDBA Vidyalaya)

Krishna Devi Banvasi Balika Awasiya Vidyalaya (KDBA Vidyalaya) is a transformative project with a mission to achieve the all-round development of downtrodden scheduled tribe students through education, training, and fostering good conduct. The project aims to extend and disseminate education in tribal villages, connecting them with the national mainstream, and aspires to be a role model for other educational institutes.

Vision:

The vision of KDBA Vidyalaya is to bring about total transformation and development in society. This is envisioned through the design and

implementation of a framework that achieves and sustains self-reliance in villages. The initiative seeks to empower villagers with replicable, definable, and tangible parameters, contributing to the holistic development of the community.

Innovative Experiments:

- **Bhojan Mantra:** A unique approach to improve the speaking power and pronunciation of school children.
- **Treatment of Common Diseases:** Implementing remedies like honey and pipari mixture for curing cough, emphasizing practical health solutions.
- **Plantation Initiatives:** Students actively participate in planting MPT trees in their villages during Raksha Bandhan holidays, promoting environmental awareness.
- **Programs for Integral Humanism:** The institution conducts programs to spread the message of "Integral Humanism," fostering a holistic approach to personal and societal well-being.
- **Academic Initiatives:** Ongoing efforts include the opening of new accounts and potential changes in account names. The institution remains flexible and adaptive to current needs.

Team Building Initiatives:

- Regular employee meetings twice a month facilitate communication and collaboration.
- Core committee and management committee meetings for strategic planning and coordination.
- Annual personality development programs organized for continuous learning and growth.

Community Engagement:

- Mother and parents meet to strengthen the partnership between the institution and families.
- Personal contact initiatives with villagers enhance the institution's understanding of local needs and concerns.

KDBA Vidyalaya not only focuses on academic excellence but also integrates innovative experiments, community engagement, and a holistic vision for the upliftment of downtrodden scheduled tribe students. The institution's commitment to total transformation and self-reliance positions it as a beacon for educational initiatives in the region.

Paramanand Ashram Padhati Vidyalaya (PAPV Ganivan)

Paramanand Ashram Padhati Vidyalaya (PAPV) in Ganivan is on a mission to cultivate holistic growth among its students. This mission extends beyond conventional education, encompassing a vision for comprehensive development.

Vision:

PAPV Ganivan's vision revolves around integrating agricultural practices into the educational experience. Students are provided with hands-on training on farming practices, fostering a deep connection with the land and practical knowledge of agricultural operations.

Purpose:

The purpose of PAPV Ganivan goes beyond traditional education. Two new farm fields spanning 4.5 acres have been prepared, becoming a unique platform for collective learning. Both school staff and students actively contribute voluntary services, engaging in agricultural operations and gaining practical insights.

Achievements:

The achievements of PAPV Ganivan are rooted in its commitment to agricultural literacy. Through hands-on training and collective efforts, students not only gain theoretical knowledge but also develop practical skills in farming practices. This initiative aligns with the broader goal of nurturing well-rounded individuals.

Academic Curriculum:

- **Agricultural Training:** The academic curriculum at PAPV Ganivan extends to practical agricultural training. Students participate in hands-on learning experiences, gaining valuable insights into farming practices.
- **Skill Development:** Beyond traditional subjects, the curriculum focuses on skill development in agriculture. This approach equips students with practical skills that contribute to their overall growth and self-reliance.

Infrastructure:

- **Farm Fields:** PAPV Ganivan boasts two new farm fields spanning 4.5 acres, serving as an extended classroom for students. These fields provide a real-world setting for agricultural learning and practice.
- **Learning Spaces:** The infrastructure of PAPV Ganivan is designed to bridge the gap between education and agriculture. Learning spaces are not confined to traditional classrooms but extend to the farm fields, creating a unique and immersive educational environment.

Paramanand Ashram Padhati Vidyalaya in Ganivan transcends traditional education, integrating agriculture into its curriculum. Through collective learning and hands-on experiences, the institution is cultivating a generation of students with a deep understanding of farming practices and a vision for holistic growth.

Data Collection Method in Chitrakoot Field Visit

DRI (Deendayal Research Institute):

- **Documentary Analysis:** Collected and analysed official documents and publications of DRI to understand its mission, projects, and comprehensive research agenda.
- **Interviews:** Conducted interviews with key personnel at DRI to gain insights into their initiatives, focusing on education, healthcare, agriculture, and technical vocational training.

SPGV School (Surendrapaul Gramoday Vidyalaya):

- **Observation:** Observed the nature-based atmosphere and infrastructure of SPGV School, noting the elements that challenge conventional school norms.
- **Interaction with Mr. Ashok Pandey:** Engaged in in-depth interviews with Mr. Ashok Pandey- The first batch of Samaj Shilpi Dampati, focusing on various approach of DRI to education, challenges faced, and successes achieved.

Gurukul Sankul:

- **Participatory Observation:** Engaged in participatory observation by immersing in the educational experiment at Gurukul Sankul, noting interactions between retired couples and students.
- **Interviews with Staff:** Conducted interviews with students at Gurukul Sankul to understand their experiences, values instilled, and the impact of the unique educational approach.

KDBA Vidyalaya (Krishna Devi Banvasi Balika Awasiya Vidyalaya):

- **Analysis of Academic Initiatives:** Reviewed academic initiatives such as the "Bhojan Mantra" and disease treatment to understand the innovative experiments implemented in the curriculum.

- Interviews with School Headmaster: Conducted interviews with administrators to gain insights into the vision and purpose of KDBA Vidyalaya, focusing on achievements and challenges.

PAPV Ganivan (Paramanand Ashram Padhati Vidyalaya):

- Field Visits to Farm Fields: Observing students' hands-on training in agricultural practices.
- Interviews with Students and Staff: Engage in interviews with students and staff to understand the purpose of agricultural integration, achievements in agricultural literacy, and the impact on students.
- Focus Group Discussions: Organized focus group discussions with representatives from each institution and samaj shilpi dampati to compare and contrast their approaches, challenges faced, and lessons learned.

Overall Data Synthesis:

- Data Compilation: Compiled data from all sources, including interviews, observations, and surveys.
- Thematic Analysis: Conducted thematic analysis to identify common themes, challenges, and success factors across the educational institutions.
- Feedback Sessions: Organized feedback sessions with key stakeholders to validate findings and gather additional insights.

By employing a combination of observational, interview-based, and documentary analysis methods, this comprehensive data collection approach aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of the educational landscape in Chitrakoot.

Reflections over Chitrakoot Field Visit based on NEP

The exploration of Chitrakoot's educational landscape has unveiled a striking alignment with the core tenets of the National Education Policy (NEP). The initiatives observed in institutions such as Surendrapaul Gramoday Vidyalaya (SPGV School), Gurukul Sankul, Krishna Devi Banvasi Balika Awasiya Vidyalaya (KDBA Vidyalaya), and Paramanand Ashram Padhati Vidyalaya (PAPV Ganivan) resonates with the spirit of the NEP, exemplifying a commitment to holistic development, experiential learning, and community engagement.

Holistic Development: One of the fundamental pillars of the NEP is the emphasis on holistic development, recognizing education as a tool for shaping not just academically proficient individuals but well-rounded personalities. The institutions in Chitrakoot transcend the conventional boundaries of education, adopting an approach that nurtures scientific thinking, creativity, and an appreciation for labor, as evident in the vision of SPGV School. The intentional grouping of children with retired couples in Gurukul Sankul and the incorporation of programs like "Integral Humanism" at KDBA Vidyalaya reflect a holistic educational philosophy that goes beyond traditional academics.

Experiential Learning: The NEP underscores the significance of experiential learning, encouraging educational institutions to move beyond rote memorization and embrace practical, hands-on experiences. Gurukul Sankul's approach to science education through a mobile science lab and Paramanand Ashram Padhati Vidyalaya's integration of agriculture into the curriculum epitomize the NEP's call for experiential learning. These initiatives provide students with real-world insights, fostering a deep connection with their surroundings and practical knowledge that extends beyond textbook learning.

Community Engagement: A cornerstone of the NEP is the promotion of community engagement, recognizing the role of education in societal

development. Institutions in Chitrakoot, such as KDBA Vidyalaya, actively engage with the community through programs like "Bhojan Mantra" and tree plantation initiatives during Raksha Bandhan holidays. The focus on team-building initiatives, parent meetings, and interactions with villagers further strengthens the ties between educational institutions and the community, aligning with the NEP's vision of education as a community-driven endeavor.

Contributing to Societal Development: The NEP envisions education as a catalyst for societal development, aiming to equip individuals with the skills and values needed to contribute meaningfully to society. The transformative initiatives witnessed in Chitrakoot, particularly in SPGV School's strategies for economic viability and conservation efforts, Gurukul Sankul's vision for eradicating illiteracy, and PAPV Ganivan's commitment to agricultural literacy, echo the NEP's emphasis on education as a tool for positive societal transformation.

our field visit to Chitrakoot has illuminated a remarkable synergy between the educational initiatives observed and the principles outlined in the National Education Policy. These institutions, guided by visionary principles, transcend the conventional boundaries of education to embody the NEP's vision of fostering well-rounded individuals capable of contributing to societal development. The transformative power of education, as witnessed in Chitrakoot, stands as a testament to the progressive aspirations of the NEP, painting a vivid picture of an educational landscape that not only imparts knowledge but also instills values, promotes community engagement, and fosters holistic development.

INSIGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

The comprehensive field study, delving into Integral Education in Puducherry, rural education in Doddamadhure, and educational initiatives in Chitrakoot, provides profound insights into the diverse facets of the Indian educational landscape. This exploration primarily focuses on the comparison between mainstream education and alternative education, shedding light on their implications for the evolving educational paradigm and their contributions to the National Education Policy (NEP).

Integral Education in Puducherry: The alternative education models observed in Puducherry, particularly at institutions like Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (SAICE), The Last School, and Deepanam School, showcase a holistic approach rooted in Sri Aurobindo's Integral Education. The alignment between these alternative models and the NEP's principles is evident, emphasizing learner-centricity, critical thinking, and a multidisciplinary approach.

The learner-centric ethos, self-motivation, and individualized learning witnessed at SAICE and The Last School resonate with the NEP's vision of a flexible and inclusive education system. Moreover, the innovative approaches, such as 'Free Progress' methodology and Awareness Through the Body (ATB), exemplify how alternative schools address the contemporary needs of students, emphasizing well-being, concentration, and a harmonious development of personality.

The alternative education models' emphasis on languages, arts, and personalized timetables aligns with the NEP's multidisciplinary focus, signaling a potential for integration into mainstream education. The nuanced understanding gained from the field study underscores the transformative potential of integral education, contributing innovative pathways to the broader goals outlined in the NEP.

Doddamadhure's Rural Education Landscape: The exploration of Doddamadhure reveals a dichotomy between a value-oriented education

deeply rooted in local culture and geography and the evident gaps in technical skills essential for contemporary demands. The Karnataka state board's commendable effort to preserve local context in education, while fostering cultural sustainability, is juxtaposed against the challenges faced by students lacking technical prowess.

The absence of computer labs and technical support in government schools presents a significant obstacle to achieving the NEP's vision of a well-rounded, holistic education. The examination-oriented focus in government schools, sacrificing comprehensive learning experiences for syllabus completion, further highlights the need for interventions aligned with the NEP's emphasis on flexibility and multidisciplinary approaches.

Doddamadhure serves as a microcosm reflecting the broader challenges and opportunities in rural education, urging stakeholders to craft interventions that harmonize traditional values with the demands of a rapidly evolving world.

Chitrakoot's Educational Initiatives: The educational landscape in Chitrakoot remarkably aligns with the core tenets of the NEP, as evidenced by initiatives in institutions such as Surendrapaul Gramoday Vidyalaya, Gurukul Sankul, Krishna Devi Banvasi Balika Awasiya Vidyalaya, and Paramanand Ashram Padhati Vidyalaya. The emphasis on holistic development, experiential learning, and community engagement resonates with the NEP's spirit.

Holistic development, a fundamental NEP pillar, is exemplified in institutions like SPGV School, where education goes beyond academics to nurture well-rounded personalities. Experiential learning finds expression in initiatives like mobile science labs, integrating agriculture into the curriculum, providing real-world insights aligned with the NEP's call for practical experiences.

Community engagement emerges as a cornerstone, with institutions actively participating in societal development through programs like

"Bhojan Mantra" and tree plantation initiatives. The transformative power of education, witnessed in Chitrakoot, stands as a testament to the progressive aspirations of the NEP, portraying an educational landscape that imparts knowledge, instills values, promotes community engagement, and fosters holistic development.

The field study's insights into integral education, rural education, and educational initiatives collectively underscore the potential of alternative models to enrich the mainstream educational discourse. Integrating the principles and practices observed in alternative education into mainstream education can contribute significantly to the broader goals outlined in the NEP, shaping a more inclusive, flexible, and holistic education system for the present and future generations. The challenges identified, especially in rural education, necessitate urgent interventions aligned with the NEP's vision to ensure a well-rounded, inclusive, and forward-looking education for every student, regardless of their geographical location or cultural context.

OBSERVATIONS AND KEY FINDINGS

The extensive field study encompassing Integral Education in Puducherry, rural education in Doddamadhure, and educational initiatives in Chitrakoot has yielded profound observations and key findings, offering a nuanced understanding of the Indian academic sector.

Integral Education in Puducherry

- **Alignment with NEP Principles:** The alternative education models in Puducherry, particularly at institutions like SAICE and The Last School, showcase a remarkable alignment with the principles of the National Education Policy (NEP). The emphasis on holistic development, learner-centricity, and innovative methodologies resonates with the NEP's vision of a flexible and inclusive education system.
- **Innovative Approaches:** The field study unveiled innovative approaches such as 'Free Progress' methodology and Awareness Through the Body (ATB) at The Last School and Deepanam School, respectively. These approaches contribute to a harmonious development of students, emphasizing self-motivation, responsibility, and well-being.
- **Multidisciplinary Focus:** The alternative education models' emphasis on languages, arts, and personalized timetables aligns with the NEP's multidisciplinary focus. This underscores the potential for integrating elements of integral education into mainstream educational discourse to foster a more inclusive, flexible, and holistic education system.

Doddamadhure's Rural Education Landscape

- **Dichotomy in Education:** The exploration of Doddamadhure reveals a significant dichotomy between a value-oriented education rooted in local culture and geography and the evident gaps in technical skills required for contemporary demands. This dichotomy poses

challenges to achieving the NEP's vision of a well-rounded, holistic education.

- **Technical Education Barriers:** The absence of computer labs and technical support in government schools emerges as a critical barrier hindering the development of technical prowess among students. This poses a direct challenge to the NEP's emphasis on a comprehensive education that prepares students for the digital era.
- **Examination-Centric Focus:** Government schools in Doddamadhure exhibit an examination-oriented focus, prioritizing syllabus completion over the holistic development of students. This observation aligns with the NEP's call for a shift in focus towards flexibility and multidisciplinary approaches.

Chitrakoot's Educational Initiatives

- **Alignment with NEP Core Tenets:** The educational landscape in Chitrakoot aligns seamlessly with the core tenets of the NEP, exemplifying a commitment to holistic development, experiential learning, and community engagement.
- **Holistic Development Initiatives:** Institutions like SPGV School transcend conventional academic boundaries, fostering holistic development by nurturing scientific thinking, creativity, and an appreciation for labour. This resonates with the NEP's emphasis on education as a tool for shaping well-rounded personalities.
- **Experiential Learning Practices:** Chitrakoot's institutions embrace experiential learning through initiatives like mobile science labs and integrating agriculture into the curriculum. These practices align with the NEP's call for a shift from rote memorization to practical, hands-on learning experiences.
- **Community Engagement as a Cornerstone:** The focus on community engagement, witnessed through initiatives like "Bhojan Mantra" and tree plantation, reflects the NEP's vision of education as

a community-driven endeavor. Institutions actively contribute to societal development, embodying the NEP's goal of education as a catalyst for positive transformation.

The field study's observations and key findings illuminate the complexities and opportunities within the Indian academic sector. While alternative education models in Puducherry showcase the transformative potential of holistic approaches, Doddamadhure's rural education landscape underscores challenges in balancing traditional values with modern skills. Chitrakoot's educational initiatives stand as a beacon of alignment with the NEP's core tenets. These insights collectively emphasize the need for interventions that integrate alternative education practices into the mainstream, address infrastructure limitations in rural areas, and promote a holistic, flexible, and inclusive education system in alignment with the NEP's vision.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The field study spanning Integral Education in Puducherry, rural education in Doddamadhure, and educational initiatives in Chitrakoot reveals compelling insights. Building upon these observations, the following recommendations and implications are proposed to enhance the Indian educational landscape:

Integration of Alternative Education Models

- **Recommendation:** Encourage the integration of successful alternative education models observed in Puducherry, such as the Integral Education practices at SAICE and The Last School, into mainstream educational discourse.
- **Implication:** This integration can diversify educational methodologies, fostering holistic development, and aligning with the learner-centric principles of the National Education Policy (NEP).

Technology Integration in Rural Education

- **Recommendation:** Address the digital divide by prioritizing the establishment of computer labs and technical support in rural schools, particularly in areas like Doddamadhure.
- **Implication:** Bridging this technological gap will empower students to meet contemporary demands, ensuring the NEP's vision of providing a well-rounded, future-ready education.

Flexible Examination Patterns:

- **Recommendation:** Reform examination patterns in rural schools to accommodate holistic development, allowing for a more comprehensive assessment of students' cognitive, emotional, and physical growth.

- **Implication:** Shifting the focus from examination-centric education to a more flexible and multidisciplinary approach aligns with the NEP's emphasis on a broad-based learning experience.

Experiential Learning Initiatives

- **Recommendation:** Promote the adoption of experiential learning practices, inspired by examples from Chitrakoot, in schools across the country.
- **Implication:** Hands-on experiences in science education, agriculture, and other fields contribute to a deeper understanding, aligning with the NEP's call for a shift away from rote memorization.

Community-Driven Education

- **Recommendation:** Encourage community engagement initiatives, as witnessed in Chitrakoot, by incorporating them into the curriculum and promoting collaboration between schools and local communities.
- **Implication:** Education becomes a community-driven endeavor, fostering a sense of responsibility, societal contribution, and aligning with the NEP's vision of education as a catalyst for positive societal transformation.

Teacher Training and Development:

- **Recommendation:** Invest in teacher training programs that equip educators with the skills to implement alternative and experiential teaching methodologies effectively.
- **Implication:** Well-trained teachers play a pivotal role in delivering quality education and realizing the transformative potential of

alternative education models, addressing the goals outlined in the NEP.

Infrastructure Development in Rural Areas

- **Recommendation:** Prioritize infrastructure development in rural areas, ensuring that schools have the necessary facilities and resources to deliver a well-rounded education.
- **Implication:** This addresses challenges identified in Doddamadhure, supporting the NEP's goal of universal access to quality education.

Implementing these recommendations can contribute to creating a more inclusive, flexible, and holistic educational system in line with the aspirations of the National Education Policy. It requires collaborative efforts from policymakers, educational institutions, and communities to nurture an environment where every student receives a well-rounded education, preparing them for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

CONCLUSION

As the Integral Humanism Initiative unfolds its discoveries across the educational landscapes of Puducherry, Doddamadhure, and Chitrakoot, a resounding call to redefine the essence of education emerges. Education, often constrained within bureaucratic frameworks, reveals itself, through this expansive field study, as a catalyst capable of shaping destinies and charting the course of nations. Beyond the administrative intricacies lies the fundamental connection between education and human development, a dynamic interaction with the environment, and the dual role of education as a societal product and a force for societal evolution.

The heart of education lies in its preparation for life, a life that extends beyond individual realms to encompass communities, nations, and the collective human experience. Criticisms of the contemporary education system stem from its perceived inadequacies in preparing individuals for the complexities of such a holistic life. Thus, the narrow lens of organizational processes proves insufficient, necessitating an education system that harmoniously addresses all facets of existence.

Integral education, rooted in visionary principles, emerges as the beacon lighting the path forward. It advocates for a holistic, comprehensive understanding of life, equipping individuals not just with knowledge but with the skills, values, and moral compass to navigate the intricate web of existence. The journey through Puducherry, Doddamadhure, and Chitrakoot reveals the transformative potential of such an approach.

These chosen regions, emblematic of India's diverse educational tapestry, strategically align with the integral humanism of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and the directives of the New National Education Policy (NEP). In Puducherry, alternative education models inspired by integral education showcase a harmonious blend of spiritual, intellectual, and physical development. Doddamadhure, representing rural education in South India, highlights the challenges faced in a technologically advancing era.

Meanwhile, Chitrakoot's initiatives mirror the NEP's emphasis on holistic development, experiential learning, and community engagement.

The recommendations and implications distilled in this report advocate for the integration of successful alternative education models, technological empowerment in rural education, flexible examination paradigms, experiential learning initiatives, community-driven education, teacher training, and infrastructure development. If embraced, these recommendations hold the promise of fostering a more inclusive, flexible, and holistic education system, aligning harmoniously with the aspirations of the NEP.

Therefore, the Integral Humanism Initiative, in its exhaustive exploration, underscores the imperative for education that transcends geographical confines and aligns with universal principles. The odyssey from Puducherry to Doddamadhure and Chitrakoot signifies not just a geographic traverse but a profound journey through the realms of education, philosophy, and societal metamorphosis. The vision of integral education beckons India to weave a tapestry of enlightenment, inclusivity, and resonance into its educational fabric.

Part-B
Social and Economic Sector

INTRODUCTION

Integral Humanism, the visionary philosophy propounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, emerges as a comprehensive paradigm that interweaves the material and economic facets into the very fabric of human life. Upholding a multi-disciplinary approach, Pandit ji posits that the study of economics, among other disciplines, demands a nuanced understanding that transcends conventional boundaries. At its core, Integral Humanism champions an enlightened society, embodied by the principle of "*Na Rajyam Na Raja Aasit*," suggesting that minimal or no government intervention is possible only within the framework of an enlightened and values-centric society.

Challenging the traditional role of government, Upadhyaya contends that it is but one of several social institutions, not elevated above all else. The path to a society with limited government lies in a people-centric governance model, active participation in policy-making, and the embodiment of participatory democracy. This transformative shift from a market-centric to a people-centric growth model, encapsulated in the concept of "Wage-led growth," stands as a cornerstone for the economic empowerment of individuals and the augmentation of their purchasing power.

Integral Humanism, deeply entrenched in Indian cultural ethos, unfolds a distinctive model for managing social institutions. Drawing inspiration from the family model, India's approach to labour relations, education, governance, and national identity significantly diverges from the individualistic and consumerist culture prevalent in the West. Concepts such as the global family ("*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*"), education rooted in the Gurukula tradition, and the representation of Bharat Mata underscore an alternative perspective that contrasts sharply with Western paradigms.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's critique of the modern "consumerist culture" and the principle of "borrow and enjoy" resonates with ancient Indian wisdom that rejected such approaches. The prevailing exclusive

growth phenomenon, where a privileged section of society disproportionately reaps the benefits, starkly contradicts Upadhyaya's vision of integral development. The pivotal concept of "*Antyodaya*," anchored in the principles of "*Sarva jana Sukhaya*" and "*Sarve pi Sukhina Santhu*," underscores the imperative of inclusive development, leaving no individual marginalized.

In navigating the intricate relationship between growth indicators and social well-being, Integral Humanism advocates for an integral or holistic approach. This approach, championed by Upadhyaya, harmonizes the quality of life with the standard of living, and the ease of living with the ease of doing business. To actualize this vision, Upadhyaya advocates for a decentralized political system, economic structure, and labour relations.

As we embark on our field study, this exploration seeks to unravel the socio-economic dimensions of Integral Humanism. Our goal is to comprehend, interpret, and contribute to the vision of a society where every individual directly benefits from the development process. This journey endeavours to shed light on the practical manifestations of Integral Humanism in the socio-economic landscape, recognizing its potential to shape a more inclusive and equitable future.

IHI PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC SECTOR

Integral Humanism, as envisioned by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya (DDU), offers profound perspectives on socio-economic development, intertwining individual well-being with the collective growth of society. At the heart of these perspectives lies the intricate connection between 'Vyashti' (individual), 'Samashti' (society), 'Srishti' (creation), and 'Parameshti' (the ultimate reality). Based on these, IHI has some important perspectives in Social and Economic sectors. They are :

- 1. Foundations of Nation-Building:** Emphasis on developing individuals, families, societies, and institutions through inculcating Bhartiya values in education. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya laid the foundation for nation-building by advocating the development of individuals rooted in Indian ethos, ensuring a strong character to lead at various societal levels.
- 2. Education for the 21st Century:** Education as a tool for inculcating values like sustainable development, self-dependence, individual freedom, social justice, and culture preservation. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya envisioned education as a transformative force that shapes individuals with values essential for the 21st century, aligning with the broader goals of societal progress.
- 3. Spiritual and Moral Development:** Utmost emphasis on spiritual and moral development through adherence to Dharma and the four aggregate attributes. The integral diagram illustrates the interconnectedness of body, mind, heart, and intellect, emphasizing the path to spiritual realization and harmony with the universe.
- 4. Critique of Western Philosophies:** Critique of Western philosophies leading to exploitation, excessive consumerism, capitalism, and socialism. Upadhyaya's critique highlights the divergence between Western and Bharatiya cultures, emphasizing harmony with nature, protection of the weak, and the rejection of conflict-based ideologies.

- 5. Antyodaya and Rural Empowerment:** Advocacy for Antyodaya to uplift the bottom of society, emphasizing agriculture, employment, and rural strength. Upadhyaya's slogan "*Har hath ko kaam har khet ko paani*" underscores the importance of a robust rural sector in boosting the economy and raising overall living standards.
- 6. Balanced Resource Utilization:** Discussion of '*Ekatma Arthneeti*' for balanced resource use, contrasting Western addiction to wealth acquisition. Deendayal Upadhyaya emphasized a holistic approach to resource utilization, opposing the singular pursuit of wealth. This aligns with his rejection of Western economic ideologies.
- 7. Adoption of Technology and Decentralization:** Belief in adopting the latest technologies, rational technology use, and emphasis on decentralization. Upadhyaya advocated for embracing technology with a humanistic focus, emphasizing its role in societal development. Additionally, he stressed decentralization, local production, and private ownership.

In navigating the socio-economic landscape through the lens of Integral Humanism, these perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for inclusive development, guided by values deeply rooted in the Indian ethos.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF FIELD VISIT AREA

As we explore the socio-economic landscape through the lens of Integral Humanism, this field study endeavours to untangle the complex interplay among Vyashti, Samashti, Srishti, and Parameshti. The primary objective is to comprehend how the integration of these dimensions can be harnessed to facilitate GDP growth while safeguarding the nation's soul ('Chitti'). The investigation carefully navigates the delicate equilibrium between economic progress and the upholding of cultural, spiritual, and national values, echoing the enduring wisdom inherent in the Integral Humanism philosophy of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya.

Selection of Puducherry for Sampurna Vikas (Integral Development): The Integral Humanism team strategically chose Puducherry as the focal point for their field visit, driven by the goal of understanding the socio-economic landscape through the lens of Integral Humanism. Puducherry's cultural diversity and spiritual heritage offer a rich context to explore the intricate relationships among Vyashti, Samashti, Srishti, and Parameshti. The team's selection reflects a deliberate effort to examine how the integration of these dimensions can drive economic advancement while preserving the nation's core values. Visits to significant sites like Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville's Matrimandir aim to extract insights from socio-economic activities rooted in cultural and spiritual values. The team anticipates uncovering sustainable growth models that align with Integral Humanism principles, shedding light on strategies contributing to GDP growth while honouring the nation's cultural ethos.

Selection of Doddamadhure for Swalambana (Self-Reliance): Doddamadhure was chosen as the field study destination for the Integral Humanism team to delve into the socio-economic sector through a holistic lens. This choice aligns with Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy, emphasizing the interplay between individual, societal, and universal dimensions. The focus on the Swagrama Fellowship Program illustrates the practical application of integral humanism, promoting self-reliance, cultural

preservation, and community empowerment. By acknowledging the village's cultural identity and distinct characteristics, the program ensures locally relevant solutions, skill development, and a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation. This approach, in line with Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya's vision, redefines societal progress by emphasizing the interdependence of Vyashti, Samashti, Srishti, and Parameshti, making Doddamadhure a noteworthy case study for global development practitioners seeking sustainable and culturally sensitive approaches.

Selection of Chitrakoot for Antyodaya (Upliftment of the Last Person):

The team chose Chitrakoot as a field visit destination to address prevalent challenges in top-down developmental models, especially in rural areas. The investigation stems from issues associated with these models, such as insufficient community participation, rigidity, dependency on external resources, and the erosion of indigenous knowledge systems. These constraints not only disrupt the socio-economic equilibrium of rural communities but also contradict the integral humanism philosophy, which emphasizes the importance of bottom-up approaches in development. The selection of Chitrakoot reflects a commitment to exploring alternative models that align with the principles of integral humanism, striving for community empowerment, and preserving local wisdom for sustainable socio-economic progress.

PUDUCHERRY: A MODEL OF INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT

This unique Union Territory in India encapsulates the essence of integral humanism, rooted in the visionary perspectives of Sri Aurobindo and Mother. It advocates for the integration of various facets of human life to achieve comprehensive progress. Our exploration delved into the tangible manifestations of this philosophy across these diverse landmarks.

From a social perspective, Puducherry vividly exemplifies a diverse and inclusive community, where individuals from different backgrounds coexist harmoniously. The cultural amalgamation in this region not only underscores the importance of unity in diversity but also highlights the pivotal role of social cohesion in fostering a conducive environment for growth. Active communal participation by the residents reflects a collective commitment to social well-being, with Auroville serving as an exemplary model for such endeavours.

On the economic front, Puducherry strategically showcases a balanced approach to development, placing emphasis on sustainable practices and inclusive economic policies. The region has experienced prudent economic planning, actively encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation. This concerted effort has resulted in a thriving local economy that not only caters to the needs of its residents but also fosters a business-friendly environment conducive to growth and prosperity.

Puducherry's integral development model seamlessly weaves together social harmony and economic prosperity, standing as a beacon for regions aspiring to embrace the principles of integral humanism. Through a holistic approach that addresses both social and economic aspects, Puducherry not only sets an example but also offers valuable insights into the potential benefits of integrating diverse elements for the greater good of society.

To gain a richer experiential understanding of Integral Development in the socio-economic sector of Puducherry, our team embarked on a comprehensive exploration of key landmarks, including the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Shradhanjali, Swaram - Sound Garden, Matrimandir, Solar Kitchen, Savitri Bhavan, and Solitude Farm. In the realm of integral humanism, Puducherry stands as a remarkable testament to the seamless intertwining of social and economic dimensions, embodying a harmonious synthesis that fosters holistic progress.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram

The Sri Aurobindo Ashram, situated in the serene town of Pondicherry within the Indian territory of Puducherry, is more than a spiritual sanctuary—it is a dynamic force shaping the socio-economic fabric of the region. Its origins can be traced back to a small community of disciples gathered around Sri Aurobindo after his withdrawal from politics in 1910, when he settled in Pondicherry. On 24 November 1926, following a major spiritual realization, Sri Aurobindo withdrew from public view, entrusting the responsibility for the inner and outer lives of the sadhaks (spiritual aspirants) and the ashram to his spiritual collaborator, "The Mother," also known as Mirra Alfassa. This pivotal date is recognized as the founding day of the ashram, a place that Sri Aurobindo acknowledged as having "less been created than grown around him as its centre."

From Informal Community to Formal Ashram

The early life in the community that preceded the ashram was informal, with Sri Aurobindo dedicating most of his time to writing and meditation. The handful of young men who had followed him to Pondicherry in 1910 lived with him and managed the household, enjoying a degree of freedom in their pursuits. The outbreak of World War I prompted the Mother and French writer Paul Richard, who had joined the community in 1914, to

propose the creation of a monthly review. However, circumstances led to their departure from India, leaving Sri Aurobindo to shoulder much of the review's work with assistance from the young men.

In April 1920, the Mother returned to Pondicherry, marking a turning point as the community began to take on the formal shape of an ashram. This transformation was driven more by the sadhaks' desire to entrust their entire inner and outer lives to the Mother than by any predefined plan. After its formal establishment in 1926, the ashram experienced rapid growth, expanding from around 24 members in the beginning of 1927 to over 150 in 1934. The surge in membership slowed in 1934 due to a shortage of suitable housing. During these formative years, the ashram established a regular routine. Every morning at 6:00, the Mother would appear on the ashram balcony, blessing the day and setting the tone for the sadhaks. The day would commence with early morning activities, including meditation, followed by an assembly under the balcony to receive the Mother's blessings.

As the ashram continued to grow, various departments emerged, each overseen by the sadhaks as part of their sadhana (spiritual practice). These departments ranged from offices and libraries to dining rooms, workshops, sports facilities, art galleries, farms, dairies, and more. The Mother would meet department heads in the morning, providing blessings and guidance. Additionally, she conducted individual meetings with sadhaks at 10 am and led evening meditations at 5:30 pm. Four times a year, both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother held public Darshans, spiritual gatherings where thousands of devotees gathered to receive their blessings.

Expansion and Impact

From its humble beginnings confined to a few buildings in one corner of Pondicherry, the ashram's growth has led to its physical expansion in all directions. Presently, Ashramites live and work in over 400 buildings spread

throughout the town. The central focal point remains a group of houses, including those where Sri Aurobindo and the Mother resided for most of their lives. This interconnected block, known as "the Ashram main-building" or simply "the Ashram," surrounds a tree-shaded courtyard housing the flower-covered "Samadhi." This white marble shrine holds the physical remains of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in two separate chambers. Pondicherry, once a quaint town, has now become a significant destination for spiritual seekers and tourists alike. Thousands of visitors from around the world journey to the ashram, bearing witness to its impact on both spiritual and socio-economic dimensions.

Beyond Renunciation to Spiritual Evolution

According to Sri Aurobindo, the Ashram was created with a distinct purpose, differing from the usual objectives of such institutions. It was not intended for the renunciation of the world but rather as a center and field of practice for the evolution of a different kind and form of life. This envisioned life, in the final reckoning, would be propelled by a higher spiritual consciousness and embody a greater life of the spirit.

Integral Yoga, as explained by Sri Aurobindo, does not follow set mental teachings or prescribed forms of meditation but relies on aspiration, self-concentration, self-opening to divine influence, and the rejection of all that is foreign to these principles. The complete method of Integral Yoga seeks to transform human life into a divine life, with the highest aim being the state of oneness with the Divine, without renouncing life in the world. However, this transformation is not confined to a select few; it requires a general spiritual awakening and aspiration in humanity, leading to a dynamic recreation of individual manhood in the spiritual type. This process is envisioned to culminate in the emergence of a new type of being—the gnostic being—holding the hope for a more harmonious evolutionary order in terrestrial Nature.

Disseminating Spiritual Wisdom

The Sri Aurobindo Ashram serves as the primary publisher of the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. With around 200 publications in English in print, including 78 books by Sri Aurobindo, 44 books by the Mother, and 27 compilations from their works, the ashram has been instrumental in disseminating spiritual wisdom. These publications are printed at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, in operation since the 1940s.

The ashram's book distribution service, SABDA, established in the 1950s, ensures that these publications reach a global audience. SABDA not only carries books by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother but also includes works related to their yoga brought out by other publishers, making the total number of English books on their list exceed 600. Beyond English, the ashram publishes books in 17 other European and Indian languages, totaling more than 550 publications. SABDA's extensive catalog, with 1678 titles in 23 languages, underscores the ashram's commitment to sharing spiritual insights with a diverse global readership. The photographs of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, printed in-house, are available through the Ashram Reception Service, offering visual representations of the spiritual luminaries. These photographs come in various sizes to suit table-top displays to large wall frames.

Preserving and Perpetuating Wisdom

The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, issued in 37 volumes with 36 already published in a new edition, stand as a testament to the ashram's commitment to preserving and perpetuating spiritual wisdom. The Collected Works of the Mother, presented in 17 volumes, further contribute to the comprehensive collection of teachings and insights. Established in 1955, the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust administers the community and its assets. Comprising five Trustees, the first of whom were chosen by the Mother herself, the trust board has continued its stewardship after her

passing in 1973. Trustees select replacements through consensus, ensuring the continued management and dissemination of the ashram's teachings.

Socio-Economic Reflections of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Visit

The socio-economic impact of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram extends far beyond its spiritual teachings, weaving an intricate tapestry that encompasses communal living, education, healthcare, cottage industries, and environmental sustainability.

Communal Living and Social Harmony

The heart of the ashram beats in unison with the spirit of communal living. Individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and nationalities converge in this spiritual abode to engage in a shared journey of self-discovery and collective evolution. This communal living not only fosters a sense of interconnectedness but also generates a social synergy that extends beyond the ashram's boundaries. Within this communal framework, the ashram has become a microcosm of unity in diversity. Residents actively participate in communal activities, reinforcing the importance of social cohesion in fostering an environment conducive to growth. This social interconnectedness transcends the confines of the ashram, radiating positive influences into the broader community of Puducherry.

Educational Initiatives: Empowering Minds and Shaping Futures

Education occupies a central place in the socio-economic initiatives of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The ashram runs a spectrum of educational institutions, ranging from primary schools to higher education colleges. These institutions are not mere academic enclaves; rather, they are crucibles for holistic development, emphasizing spiritual values, character building, and the pursuit of excellence. The integral education imparted by the ashram aligns with its socio-economic goals of empowering individuals with knowledge and skills that extend beyond traditional academic boundaries. Students are nurtured not only to excel academically but also

to become responsible, compassionate, and well-rounded individuals capable of contributing meaningfully to society.

Healthcare Services: Nurturing Well-being

The ashram extends its socio-economic impact through the provision of healthcare services. Beyond its spiritual teachings, the institution recognizes the importance of physical well-being in the overall development of individuals and communities. The ashram's healthcare facilities cater not only to the needs of its residents but also extend a healing touch to the wider community. From conventional medical care to alternative therapies, the ashram's healthcare services embrace a holistic approach. This not only addresses immediate health concerns but also promotes preventive care and wellness. By providing accessible and comprehensive healthcare, the ashram contributes significantly to the socio-economic well-being of the region.

Cottage Industries: Empowering Through Enterprise

In the pursuit of socio-economic sustainability, the Sri Aurobindo Ashram supports various cottage industries within its community. Residents actively engage in activities such as handloom weaving, incense making, and other traditional crafts. These initiatives not only preserve cultural heritage but also provide viable avenues for employment and skill development. The cottage industries supported by the ashram are not isolated endeavors but integral components of a larger vision for sustainable living. By empowering individuals to participate in these activities, the ashram contributes to economic resilience, fostering a sense of self-reliance and community interdependence.

Environmental Sustainability: A Green Paradigm

The Sri Aurobindo Ashram takes a proactive stance in promoting environmental sustainability. Recognizing the interconnectedness of humanity with the natural world, the ashram integrates eco-friendly practices into its daily operations. This includes organic farming, waste management initiatives, and a commitment to renewable energy sources.

The emphasis on environmental sustainability aligns with the ashram's socio-economic vision by addressing the imperative of responsible living. By practicing and advocating for sustainable initiatives, the ashram sets an example for the community and beyond, contributing to the broader goal of environmental stewardship.

A Living Model of Transformation

The socio-economic impact of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram extends far beyond its spiritual origins. It is woven intricately into the social, educational, healthcare, economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions of Puducherry. Through a comprehensive approach that integrates communal living, education, healthcare, cottage industries, artistic endeavors, and environmental sustainability, the ashram has become a transformative force. The ashram's impact on the socio-economic landscape is not just theoretical but is evident in the tangible and sustainable initiatives it undertakes.

Auroville

Nestled in the serene Viluppuram district of Tamil Nadu, India, Auroville stands as a groundbreaking international experiment in communal living and spiritual progress. Founded in 1968 by Mirra Alfassa, a spiritual collaborator of Sri Aurobindo, and crafted by the visionary architect Roger Anger, Auroville's essence lies in its pursuit of becoming a universal town where individuals from diverse cultures coexist harmoniously, transcending the boundaries of nationality and belief systems.

Guided by the profound principles of human unity and the quest for spiritual consciousness, Auroville has emerged as a living testament to sustainable living and holistic development. The town intricately weaves together the arts, education, and communal living, fostering an environment that emphasizes interconnectedness with the environment and each other.

At the heart of Auroville is the iconic Matrimandir, a meditation center and architectural marvel that symbolizes the spiritual aspirations of the town. Recognized globally, it serves as a focal point for collective reflection and meditation, embodying the integral approach to human progress that defines Auroville.

Our team embarked on a journey within Auroville, exploring key landmarks to delve into the significance of integral progress based on the integral humanism initiative. From the spiritual haven of Matrimandir to the educational center of Savitri Bhavan, the memorial site Shradhanjali, the sustainable practices at Solar Kitchen, the agricultural hub of Solitude Farm, to the artistic retreat of Swaram - Sound Garden, each place visited contributes to Auroville's unique model of harmonizing spiritual principles with practical, integral living.

Matrimandir

Exploration of Matrimandir in Auroville unfolded as a transformative odyssey, delving into the heart of spiritual consciousness and integral progress. Before our encounter with this sacred space, an orientation

session illuminated the geographical and physical dimensions of Matrimandir, setting the stage for a profound experience. The architectural marvel comprises eight distinct parts, each meticulously designed to evoke inner stillness, harmony, and connection, contributing to the integral progress of individuals.

Integral progress, or Sampurna Vikas, was intricately connected to the geographical overview of Matrimandir. From the Outer Gardens, adorned with lush greenery and serene pathways, to the Central Peace Area bathed in diffused light, each element played a role in fostering tranquility and spiritual exploration. The significance of maintaining silence within the Matrimandir was emphasized, intertwining this practice with the holistic development of individuals.

A centennial Banyan tree, a symbol of unity and interconnectedness, stood as an integral part of the Matrimandir complex. Its aerial roots, spreading across 50 meters, represented the tapestry of interconnected life, emphasizing our connection to a larger whole. The tree, a timeless emblem of wisdom and endurance, echoed the continuity of spiritual wisdom and the importance of ecological harmony.

Exploring Matrimandir itself was a sensory journey. Lush greenery and blooming flowers along the pathway created an atmosphere of serenity. Removing electronic devices, we immersed ourselves in the surroundings, appreciating vibrant water lilies in small canals. Stepping into the sacred space, a wave of stillness washed over us, inviting a departure from the noise of the outside world.

Within the Inner Chamber, the purity and stillness allowed for a deep self-reflection. The circular Central Peace Area became a focal point for inner exploration, a sacred space resonating with the interconnectedness of all life. The journey left an indelible mark, emphasizing the importance of silence, environmental sustainability, and spiritual wisdom in the integral progress of individuals. Matrimandir, with its iconic presence, stands as a

beacon for those on a quest for Sampurna Vikas, offering a sanctuary for inner peace and connection with the universal essence.

Savitri Bhavan

Embarking on a spiritual journey from Matrimandir, our team met Sanskrit scholar Aravind Maheswari, ushering in a meaningful exploration of Savitri Bhavan in Auroville. Stepping into this sacred space unveiled a rich spiritual heritage and transformative energy. The serene ambiance invited a departure from the external world, immersing in the present moment.

Savitri Bhavan welcomed with a tranquil atmosphere, exuding reverence. Adorned walls became visual narratives, capturing the profound teachings and life of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, illuminating the spiritual journey.

The meditation hall, with whispers of peace, became a sanctuary for introspection. Bathed in natural light, it fostered a hushed contemplative atmosphere. Surrendering to the stillness, time dissolved into a timeless realm of inner exploration. The experience left a renewed sense of clarity and purpose, a testament to the transformative power of the spiritual environment.

Teachings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother resonated throughout Savitri Bhavan. Exhibition spaces dedicated to different facets of the spiritual journey, adorned with art, photographs, and personal belongings, offered glimpses into the lives of these spiritual luminaries. Deepening the connection to their legacy, the encounter fueled inspiration for personal and collective transformation.

Exiting Savitri Bhavan, a profound sense of gratitude and reverence lingered. The visit had not only opened doors within the soul but also emphasized the vastness of the spiritual path and the potential for transformative inner exploration. In a world filled with noise, Savitri Bhavan stood as a sanctuary, inviting a renewed commitment to the spiritual journey and integral progress.

Shradhanjali

In the wake of our exploration at Savitri Bhavan, our journey continued to Shradhanjali, where we had the privilege of meeting Abha Ji, the pivotal figure in this remarkable unit. Shradhanjali's inception traces back to a small corner in the Aspiration community, where the dreams of two young Indian women materialized into a venture aimed at generating income for Auroville through the creation of exquisite handmade products.

The handicrafts produced at Shradhanjali are a testament to artistry and craftsmanship. Utilizing flowers and foliage from their organic garden, the artisans employ traditional methods such as drying with cardboard presses and sun-drying seeds and seed pods. Each step, from cultivation to packaging, is meticulously done by hand using organic practices.

A distinctive aspect of Shradhanjali is its commitment to environmentally friendly processes. Handmade paper, crafted from recycled cotton rags and natural fibers, reflects their dedication to sustainability and ethical practices. The individuals working at Shradhanjali embody passion and dedication, considering their role in the Auroville community a privilege and responsibility.

Interaction with Abha Ji provided insights into the unit's ethos. Their decision to eschew machinery in favor of handmade processes aligns with a desire for a silent and nature-centric approach to work. The dialogue also touched upon the workers' lives, emphasizing that despite coming from various villages, they acquire self-confidence and the ability to manage social, economic, and family life.

The conversation delved into Shradhanjali's selection process, the uniqueness of handmade products in the global market, and their export processes. Abha Ji's responses illuminated the unit's commitment to preserving traditional skills, fostering a sense of unity and diversity within Auroville.

Visiting Shradhanjali was not just an exploration of handicrafts; it was a profound encounter with a community driven by conscious and ethical practices. The unity of artistry, sustainability, and social responsibility showcased the potential of small industrial development in alignment with Swadeshi and self-reliance values. Shradhanjali, relying solely on natural resources, exemplifies the integration of man and nature, contributing to the integral progress of both individuals and the Auroville community.

Swaram- Sound Garden

Embarking on a journey through Auroville, our path led to Svaram, an Auroville enterprise initiated in 2003 as a rural developmental project. Globally recognized by the UN initiative "Music as a Global Resource," Svaram stands as one of the inaugural 50 projects in this domain. Situated 12 kilometers from Pondicherry city, Svaram beckons visitors into a guided tour, a transformative experience intertwining art, music, and the celebration of natural resources.

Entering the Svaram showroom unfolds an array of musical instruments crafted by skilled artisans. The guided tour, available for a nominal fee, commences with a 15-minute session where Svaram artisans demonstrate instruments like the Wing chime, Plate gong, Pungi, Natural Stone, Metallophone, and more. This auditory journey immerses participants in the world of sound, awakening a deep appreciation for the craftsmanship and creativity inherent in each instrument.

The tour progresses to the enchanting Sound Garden, a space where installations invite visitors to experience the artwork in a multisensory manner. Here, Svaram artisans unravel the intricacies of instruments such as the "Plate Bow Harp" that resonates like a veena, the powerful and specific-frequency tones produced by the "Plate Gond," and the captivating "Spinner," a drum hanging from a tree where rotating the spring releases a symphony of resonance.

The Sound Garden offers interactive activities, including "Sound balance," where standing on an instrument balances a ball through a labyrinth while listening to its sound. "The Listening Ear" provides a unique space to explore the rhythm of listening and speaking with a partner on the other end. Visitors are not mere spectators; they are encouraged to actively participate, playing the instruments under the guidance of the artisans for a delightful ten-minute session.

What makes Svaram exceptional is its commitment to utilizing natural resources in crafting these instruments. The harmonious integration of human creativity and the bounty of nature is evident in every note played. Svaram's Sound Garden serves as a testament to the profound connection between man and natural elements, evoking a sense of unity and appreciation for the inherent beauty of both art and the environment. The experience at Svaram imparts a newfound understanding of music and a deep reverence for the sustainable and artistic possibilities rooted in the marriage of human creativity and the resources provided by Mother Earth.

Solar Kitchen

The Solar Kitchen in Auroville exemplifies a unique and innovative approach to sustainable living and communal dining. Functioning as a central collective kitchen for the Auroville community, it goes beyond serving delicious vegetarian meals, becoming a symbol of eco-conscious culinary practices. Named after the impressive Solar Bowl on its roof, the kitchen harnesses solar power to provide steam for cooking, aligning seamlessly with Auroville's dedication to sustainable energy sources. While solar steam is the primary source, a diesel-fired boiler supplements it to ensure consistent cooking capabilities.

The Solar Kitchen prepares approximately 1000 lunches daily, distributing them across Auroville. A significant portion is sent to schools, nourishing young minds. Tiffins with meals are dispatched to individuals and groups, and 260 to 300 people dine in the inviting Dining Hall. Notably, since September 2006, the Dining Hall opens on Sundays. The menu showcases

a fusion of Indian and cosmopolitan cuisines, offering a diverse range from traditional Indian dishes to western choices. Freshly made juices and daily curd complement the meals.

Beyond its immediate community, the Solar Kitchen extends its reach to outlying communities, supplying meals to around 200 individuals. Special tiffins designed for various dishes cater to remote diners. The kitchen also delivers meals to Auroville's schools and service centers. After the staff has their meals, the daily count surpasses 1000, emphasizing its integral role in nourishing the Auroville community. A visit to the Solar Kitchen not only promises a culinary delight but also provides insights into Auroville's commitment to sustainability, communal living, and eco-conscious practices. It stands as a testament to the harmonious and responsible way of life embraced by the community, where food becomes a reflection of these values.

Solitude Farm

Solitude Farm in Auroville is a journey of rediscovery and reconnection with nature, local cuisine, and community. The farm celebrates local culture through permaculture techniques and natural farming, serving as an example of returning to nature while sustaining the environment. Emphasizing the importance of local food, Solitude Farm raises awareness and promotes the use of locally grown produce. Through workshops and farm tours, they empower people to rediscover and incorporate forgotten foods into daily routines. Their mission extends beyond the farm, aiming to propagate this philosophy throughout Auroville. Participants in Solitude Farm's hands-on experience engage in harvesting, preparing, and cooking meals using a diverse range of produce, gaining insights into plant properties and cultivation. This immersive week-long program fosters an appreciation for nutritious and flavorful food seamlessly integrating into their lives. Solitude Farm's notable initiative involves creating circle gardens for the Auroville community, envisioning their proliferation in schools, public spaces, and homes. The success depends on community engagement,

exemplified by offering free harvests at the Town Hall. In 2015, they initiated community gardens in Auroville, sharing plants, seeds, and knowledge. Revived during the 2020 lockdown, the project, led by Krishna, resulted in recognized vegetables, school usage of drumstick spinach, and collaborative community gardening projects, showcasing the power of community engagement in building a sustainable and locally connected food system.

Socio-Economic Reflections in Auroville Exploration

Exploring Auroville reveals a fascinating blend of socio-economic aspects, where the intricate dynamics of community living, sustainable development, and the integration of spirituality and material life create a distinctive picture. Auroville, located in Tamil Nadu, serves as an international experiment in communal living and spiritual progress. This overview delves into the profound socio-economic dimensions observed during the exploration, navigating through the town's landmarks and initiatives that showcase its commitment to harmonious coexistence, ecological consciousness, and the fusion of material and spiritual pursuits.

Community Living in Auroville: Auroville stands as an exemplary model of community living, transcending cultural and national boundaries. Founded on principles of human unity, residents live harmoniously, fostering an environment where diverse cultures coexist. Integral to community living is the iconic Matrimandir, symbolizing collective spiritual aspirations. The interconnectedness of lives within Auroville is evident in shared spaces, from meditation halls to communal kitchens, emphasizing the collaborative journey towards Sampurna Vikas—integral progress.

Sustainable Development in Auroville: Auroville is a crucible of sustainable development, integrating ecological consciousness with daily life. From the Solar Kitchen's innovative use of solar power to provide communal meals to Solitude Farm's permaculture practices, the community embodies eco-

conscious living. The commitment to sustainable agriculture, waste reduction, and renewable energy aligns with Auroville's dedication to minimizing its ecological footprint. Each visitation site underscores Auroville's mission to pursue holistic development that sustains both the environment and the community.

Natural Resource-Based Life in Auroville: Auroville's residents embrace a life deeply rooted in natural resources. From Shradhanjali's handicrafts crafted solely from organic materials to Svaram's musical instruments celebrating the bounty of nature, the community exemplifies a symbiotic relationship with the environment. Solitude Farm's emphasis on local produce and permaculture techniques reinforces the community's commitment to utilizing nature's gifts responsibly. Auroville's natural resource-based life not only promotes sustainability but also serves as a reminder of the inherent connection between humanity and the Earth.

Small Industries in Auroville: The visit to Shradhanjali sheds light on Auroville's support for small industries. Originating as a modest venture, Shradhanjali has grown into a unit providing employment opportunities while channeling profits back into Auroville. The commitment to handmade craftsmanship, devoid of machinery, reflects a conscious choice to preserve traditional skills. Shradhanjali, alongside other small enterprises, symbolizes the community's dedication to Swadeshi values and self-reliance, showcasing the potential of small-scale industries to contribute to Auroville's economic sustainability.

Integration of Spirituality and Material Life in Auroville: Auroville uniquely integrates spirituality with material life, as seen in the transformative experience at Matrimandir and Savitri Bhavan. The architectural marvel of Matrimandir and its surrounding gardens becomes a canvas for inner exploration, emphasizing the role of silence and interconnectedness in spiritual progress. Savitri Bhavan, adorned with spiritual teachings, becomes a sanctuary for introspection. Auroville's endeavor to harmonize spiritual principles with practical living is evident in every facet, from the handicrafts

at Shradhanjali to the sustainable practices at Solitude Farm. The journey through Auroville serves as a testament to the community's commitment to a life where spirituality and material existence coalesce seamlessly.

Socio-Economic Synergy in Auroville and Sri Aurobindo Ashram (A Swadeshi, Swalamban, Parasparavalamban, Sarvodaya, and Sampurna Vikas Perspective)

Our journey through Auroville and Sri Aurobindo Ashram unfolded a rich avenue of socio-economic dimensions intricately woven with the values of Swadeshi, Swalamban, Parasparavalamban, Sarvodaya, and Sampurna Vikas. This exploration traversed through iconic landmarks, including Shradhanjali and Svaram Sound Garden in Auroville, as well as various initiatives within Sri Aurobindo Ashram, providing a holistic perspective on sustainable living and spiritual integration.

Swadeshi: Local Self-Reliance for Economic Sustainability In Auroville, our visit to Shradhanjali, a cottage industry unit, illuminated the embodiment of Swadeshi values. This small unit within the community supports local craftsmanship, providing employment opportunities while channeling profits back into Auroville. The commitment to handmade craftsmanship, devoid of machinery, reflects a conscious choice to preserve traditional skills and promote self-reliance. This resonates with the Vyashti principle of individual self-reliance and economic sustainability.

Within Sri Aurobindo Ashram, a similar ethos is observed in various cottage industries. These units empower individuals at the Samashti level, fostering a sense of community self-reliance. The handicrafts produced at Shradhanjali and other units showcase the community's dedication to Swadeshi principles. Both Auroville and the ashram highlight the significance of local self-reliance in sustaining their economic ecosystems, aligning with the Srishti principle of collective well-being.

Swalamban: Nurturing Self-Sufficiency through Sustainable Practices
Auroville's commitment to Swalamban is evident in its sustainable development initiatives. The Solar Kitchen, utilizing solar power for communal meals, and Solitude Farm, employing permaculture practices, exemplify self-sufficiency intertwined with ecological consciousness. The emphasis on renewable energy, waste reduction, and sustainable agriculture aligns with Auroville's dedication to minimizing its ecological footprint. This reflects the Samashti principle of collective self-sufficiency and environmental harmony.

In Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Swalamban extends beyond sustainability practices to education and healthcare. The integral education provided in ashram institutions nurtures self-sufficient individuals capable of making meaningful contributions to society. The ashram's integration of alternative therapies aligns with the ethos of Swalamban, emphasizing holistic well-being through self-sufficiency. This connects with the Vyashti principle of individual self-sufficiency and personal growth.

Parasparavalamban: Community Living and Interconnected Prosperity
Auroville stands as a model of Parasparavalamban, where diverse residents coexist harmoniously, fostering shared prosperity. Our exploration included shared spaces like the Svaram Sound Garden, where communal engagement and interconnectedness are celebrated through interactive musical experiences. This resonates with the Samashti principle of community interdependence and prosperity.

Similarly, Sri Aurobindo Ashram creates a microcosm of unity in diversity through communal living. This interconnectedness positively influences the broader community of Puducherry, exemplifying the principle of Parasparavalamban. Our visit to Shradhanjali in Auroville also highlighted how communal efforts contribute to economic resilience and community interdependence, reinforcing the Srishti principle of collective well-being.

Sarvodaya: Collective Welfare through Education and Healthcare In Auroville, educational institutions and healthcare services contribute to Sarvodaya. The integral education provided nurtures individuals for meaningful contributions to society. Our exploration included the serene Savitri Bhavan, emphasizing the ashram's commitment to character building and spiritual values for collective welfare. This aligns with the Parameshti principle of transcendent and collective well-being.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram extends its commitment to Sarvodaya beyond its residents, promoting collective welfare for the broader community. The emphasis on character building and spiritual values contributes to the holistic well-being of individuals. The ashram's healthcare facilities cater not only to the needs of its residents but also extend a healing touch to the wider community. This embodies the Samashti principle of collective well-being and prosperity.

Sampurna Vikas: Harmonizing Spirituality and Material Life Auroville's Sampurna Vikas is evident in the fusion of spirituality and material life. The transformative experiences at Matrimandir and Savitri Bhavan emphasize silence, interconnectedness, and inner exploration. Our exploration of Svaram Sound Garden showcased the profound connection between art, music, and natural elements, imparting a deep understanding of Sampurna Vikas. This aligns with the Vyashti principle of individual holistic progress.

In Sri Aurobindo Ashram, the harmonization of spirituality and material life is evident in every facet, from the handicrafts at Shradhanjali to the sustainable practices at Solitude Farm. The ashram's endeavor to integrate spiritual principles with practical living is reflected in spaces like Savitri Bhavan, creating a holistic approach to development. This connects with the Parameshti principle of transcendent and collective progress.

The socio-economic synergy observed in Auroville and Sri Aurobindo Ashram reflects a harmonious blend of Swadeshi, Swalamban, Parasparavalamban, Sarvodaya, and Sampurna Vikas. This synthesis offers

valuable insights into creating societies that are economically sustainable, self-sufficient, interconnected, welfare-oriented, and holistically progressing. Through our exploration of these diverse yet interconnected places, we witnessed the embodiment of these values, demonstrating their potential to shape a vibrant and harmonious society at the levels of Vyashti, Samashti, Srishti, and Parameshti integral humanism.

Policy Proposal: Augmenting GDP with Reverence for Chiti in Puducherry

This analysis aims to outline a strategic framework for boosting GDP in Puducherry while safeguarding and enhancing the national soul (Chiti). The recent exploration of socio-economic initiatives in Auroville and Sri Aurobindo Ashram serves as a foundation for crafting policies that integrate economic growth with spiritual values.

Sustainable Economic Development

Policy Implementation: Promote sustainable practices that contribute to economic growth without compromising environmental integrity. Encourage industries to adopt eco-friendly measures, invest in renewable energy, and implement waste reduction initiatives.

Expected Impact: A sustainable economic model will attract environmentally conscious businesses, bolstering GDP while aligning with Chiti's reverence for nature.

Cottage Industries and Local Entrepreneurship

Policy Implementation: Provide incentives for the growth of cottage industries and locally rooted entrepreneurship. Foster a supportive ecosystem for small-scale enterprises, preserving cultural heritage and promoting Swadeshi values.

Expected Impact: Strengthening local economies and cultural identity, contributing positively to GDP growth while respecting Chiti's emphasis on self-reliance.

Holistic Education and Skill Development

Policy Implementation: Reform the education system to integrate spiritual values, ethical principles, and holistic skill development. Cultivate a workforce that is not only academically proficient but also spiritually and ethically conscious.

Expected Impact: A skilled workforce enhances economic productivity, fostering GDP growth without compromising the cultural and spiritual fabric of Chiti.

Healthcare Initiatives for Community Well-being

Policy Implementation: Develop healthcare policies that prioritize preventive care and community well-being. Extend healthcare services beyond treatment to emphasize overall wellness, aligning with Chiti's focus on holistic health.

Expected Impact: Improved public health results in a more productive workforce, contributing positively to GDP without compromising Chiti's commitment to overall well-being.

Spiritual Tourism Promotion

Policy Implementation: Develop infrastructure for spiritual tourism around landmarks like Matrimandir and Savitri Bhavan. Ensure that tourism practices align with the spiritual ethos, providing economic benefits while preserving the sanctity of the sites.

Expected Impact: Increased tourism revenue contributes to GDP growth while safeguarding the spiritual and cultural significance of the region in line with Chiti's reverence for heritage.

Public-Private Partnerships for Integral Development

Policy Implementation: Encourage collaborations between the government, private sector, and spiritual communities. Leverage diverse resources and expertise to create comprehensive development plans that benefit society as a whole.

Expected Impact: Efficient resource utilization, shared responsibility, and a robust economy reflecting the interconnected prosperity envisioned by Chiti.

Above mentioned proposal underscores the significance of integrating economic growth with spiritual values in Puducherry. By adopting these policies, we can augment GDP without compromising the essence of Chiti. The strategic alignment of economic development with sustainability, cultural preservation, and spiritual well-being ensures a balanced approach that respects and enhances the national soul while fostering economic prosperity. This way, Puducherry can achieve robust GDP growth while nurturing its unique cultural, spiritual, and environmental identity.

DODDAMADHURE: A MODEL OF SELF-RELIANCE

In the pursuit of holistic societal progress, the concept of integral humanism plays a pivotal role by highlighting the significance of factors beyond materialism. It emphasizes the harmonious interplay between individual needs, community well-being, and a balanced utilization of resources. This Field study report explores the relevance of community development programs in rural areas, with a focus on the Swagrama Fellowship Program in Doddamadhure village near Bangalore, Karnataka. Integral humanism, as advocated by Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya, underscores the synergy between character, society, and the universe, while promoting self-reliance and sustainable growth.

Integral humanism lifts the discourse from a purely materialistic approach to development, recognizing that social progress encompasses diverse dimensions. This philosophy highlights the difference between individual needs and those of the state, encouraging a balanced distribution of resources and skill utilization. It establishes the foundation for a society that encourages healthy competition, acknowledges the value of human skill, and emphasizes the ultimate authority of the supreme. Doddamadhure, a rural village near Bangalore in Karnataka district, exemplifies the transformative potential of community development initiatives. As per the Integral Humanism Initiative perspective, that community development initiatives rooted in integral humanism. The Swagrama Fellowship Program embodies a bottom-up approach to development. It centres on empowering local communities, promoting self-reliance, and preserving cultural and societal uniqueness. By recognizing the village's Chiti (cultural identity or village soul) and Virat (distinct characteristics), the program tailors interventions to the specific needs of the community, ensuring relevance and effectiveness.

Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya's vision of integral humanism provides a roadmap for achieving self-reliance, particularly in rural settings. We find out there are some similarities between Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy and the

Swagramamitra Fellowship Program in Doddamadhure integrates their own philosophy by promoting locally relevant solutions, encouraging skill development, and nurturing an environment where traditional wisdom collaborates with contemporary innovation. The program's success lies in its commitment to holistic growth, leveraging the strengths of the community while addressing its challenges. Pandit ji's articulation of integral humanism transcends national boundaries, offering a unique perspective on political thinking and development. By aligning societal progress with cultural roots and historical insights, this ideology presents a model that balances continuity with adaptation. The Swagrama Fellowship Program demonstrates the practical implementation of these principles, making it a noteworthy case study for global development practitioners seeking sustainable and culturally sensitive approaches.

This approach, advocated by Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya, redefines societal progress by emphasizing the interdependence of *vyashti*, *Samashti*, *Srishti* and *Parameshti*. By aligning developmental interventions with local cultural identities and needs, community development programs can pave the way for self-reliance, sustainability, and a harmonious coexistence of tradition and innovation.

Importance of Community Development Program and its connection to Integral Humanism

Community development programs play a pivotal role in fostering holistic and sustainable progress within societies. These programs aim to empower local communities by addressing their specific needs and aspirations. One significant philosophical framework that resonates strongly with the principles of community development is Integral Humanism, championed by Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya. This philosophy emphasizes the harmonious development of individuals, communities, and the nation, rooted in cultural, moral, and spiritual values. Community development

programs are designed to uplift communities by involving them in the decision-making processes that shape their own development trajectory. These programs recognize that local communities possess valuable knowledge about their needs and resources. By engaging communities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of initiatives, community development programs ensure relevance, ownership, and sustainability. The goals of community development include poverty reduction, improved living standards, social inclusion, and enhanced self-reliance.

Integral Humanism, aligns remarkably with the objectives of community development programs:

Decentralized Governance: Integral Humanism stresses the importance of decentralized governance, where decision-making power is devolved to the local level. This resonates with community development, where active community participation is a cornerstone. Both Integral Humanism and community development advocate for bottom-up approaches to governance and development.

Cultural Preservation: Integral Humanism values the preservation of cultural and spiritual heritage. In community development, recognizing and integrating local cultural practices ensures that initiatives respect and resonate with the communities they serve. This approach fosters community ownership and long-term sustainability.

Holistic Development: Integral Humanism envisions the development of individuals in all aspects of life. Community development programs, too, emphasize holistic progress, addressing social, economic, and cultural dimensions. This alignment ensures that development is well-rounded and beneficial to communities in the long run.

Self-Reliance and Self-Sufficiency: Integral Humanism emphasizes self-reliance and self-sufficiency, advocating for individuals' economic empowerment. Community development programs share this goal by

equipping communities with the skills, resources, and knowledge to lead their own development and reduce dependency.

Inclusivity and Social Justice: Integral Humanism emphasizes the importance of social justice and inclusivity. Similarly, community development aims to create inclusive societies where marginalized groups have equal opportunities and rights. Both philosophies prioritize addressing inequalities.

Community Participation: Both Integral Humanism and community development underscore the significance of community participation. Integral Humanism emphasizes collective decision-making, while community development programs actively involve communities in identifying their needs and solutions, fostering a sense of ownership.

Community development programs, driven by the principles of participation, empowerment, and inclusivity, align seamlessly with the philosophy of Integral Humanism. Both seek to create empowered, self-reliant, and culturally enriched societies where individuals and communities thrive. By integrating the doctrines of Integral Humanism into community development initiatives, we can ensure that progress is not just material but also deeply rooted in cultural and moral values, ultimately contributing to the well-being of both individuals and the nation as a whole.

Swagrama Fellowship: Nurturing India's Essence through Rural Renewal

As India marks 75 years of hard-won independence in the "*Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*," a profound introspection beckons. At the crossroads of history, the Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University (KSRDPU) embarks on a transformative three-year journey named "Gram Swarajya: Reflections and Commitments." This visionary initiative, in collaboration with esteemed partners like Youth for Seva, Chanakya

University, and the Abdul Nazeer Sab Chair at Kuvempu University, seeks to navigate the labyrinth of India's identity—a nation rooted in centuries of resistance and resilience.

A. Rural Realities: Unravelling Challenges in Development Models

The shadow of rural-urban disparity looms large over India's development trajectory. Despite various attempts, rural self-governance models, particularly Panchayat Raj institutions, face criticism for their inadequacy and detachment from ground realities. The challenge lies in the discrepancy between governance models and the values cherished by rural communities. Bureaucracy often stifles participatory governance despite the democratic structure. To make a tangible impact, initiatives must pivot toward capacity building, fostering interdependence, and promoting participatory governance aligned with the aspirations of rural India.

B. Village Dynamics: Bridging the Gap between Tradition and Modernity

India's essence is intrinsically tied to its villages, a vision underscored by Mahatma Gandhi's call to rejuvenate the nation through thriving villages. However, challenges persist. Villages experience a continuous exodus, unemployment woes persist, and the rural-urban divide remains a societal discourse. Stereotypes depicting villages as uncivilized further complicate the narrative. The crux of the issue lies in the disconnect between modern progress imposed by the state and the traditions upheld by villagers. Recognizing the unique identity or "svabhava" of each village becomes imperative for successful interventions.

C. Swagrama Fellowship's Vision: A Paradigm Shift for Rural Renaissance

As India celebrates its 75th year of independence, the Swagrama Fellowship emerges as a beacon of hope and transformation. This initiative transcends the conventional, aiming to understand and align with the essence that has shaped the soul of India through centuries. By delving into the intricacies of

rural life and promoting participatory governance, the fellowship seeks to bridge the gap between historical values and future aspirations.

D. Participatory Governance: Empowering Villages for Sustainable Progress

The Swagrama Fellowship recognizes that sustainable progress in rural India hinges on participatory governance. It advocates for a shift from top-down approaches to ones where villagers collectively envision their future. This ensures that interventions become catalysts for realizing a shared vision rather than superficial solutions imposed on communities. This paradigm shift is crucial for recalibrating the focus toward comprehensive development that respects the unique identity of each village.

Genesis and Evolution of Swagrama Fellowship

The Swagram Fellowship, a unique group initiative, envisions holistic rural development. It is a part-time fellowship, allowing sustainability beyond its duration. The fellowship's objectives encompass identifying and equipping inspired individuals, fostering village development based on a holistic vision, and building models grounded in the village's "self" or "svabhava."

Uniqueness of the Fellowship

The fellowship's distinctiveness lies in building a rural development model based on the village's intrinsic identity. It supports teams of two residing in the village and one with roots elsewhere, providing a monthly stipend for three years. The fellowship encourages collaborative efforts, balancing regular jobs with part-time commitments, and upholds serious volunteering with assistance.

Approach

The application process involved a meticulous selection of 100 teams, culminating in a 9-day residential boot camp. Quarterly refresher training

and review camps, along with mentorship from rural development experts, ensure sustained engagement. The goal is to sustain at least 75 villages over the full 3-year term.

Roles in Villages

Swagrama Mitras, as fellows are named, dedicate 12–15 hours per week to village projects, focusing on participatory activities. Their role includes bringing people together, establishing diverse committees, and facilitating collective decision-making.

Specific Activities

The fellowship's activities span four categories, emphasizing communal relations and cooperation. From conducting village surveys to reintroducing traditional practices, fellows engage in projects that resonate with the village's unique identity.

Expected Outcomes

Anticipated outcomes encompass participatory village management, positive developments across six domains, and the revival of traditional practices and sports. The fellowship envisions long-term planning led by villagers, fostering interdependence and cooperation.

Illuminating the Path to Holistic Rural Development

The Swagrama Fellowship stands as a transformative odyssey, addressing the core challenges of rural development by exploring and understanding India's identity. By fostering participatory governance and aligning interventions with the essence of each village, the fellowship aims to bridge the gap between historical values and future aspirations, ensuring a harmonious journey into the next phase of India's development. As the nation navigates the path between its rich past and the challenges of the future, the Swagrama Fellowship becomes a guiding light, illuminating the way toward holistic and sustainable rural development.

Social- Economic Background of Doddamadhure Village

Doddamadhure is a village located in Kunigal Taluk of Tumkur District, in the state of Karnataka, India. Situated approximately 4 kilometers away from Yadiyur Sri Siddalingeshwara Swamy's divine temple along the national highway, the village is flanked on two sides by the holy shrines of Shri Hattilakamma Devi and Shri Jaladhigere Ammanavaru. With around 240 households, the village is a peaceful abode for various communities, including Okkaligas, Lingayats, Brahmins, Nayakas, Vishwakarmas, Settis, and other reserved categories. The uniqueness of this village lies in the harmony among different communities. It is noteworthy that there have been no disputes among any groups, teams, or parties within the village till date.

Historical Background

Although there may not be concrete historical evidence to substantiate the name "Doddamadhure," the village is indeed ancient. The ancient and renowned Shri Chennakeshava Swami temple in the village is considered to have existed since the Chola period, as attested by local elders. The temple is believed to have been built overnight. The Cholas ruled the region from the 9th to the 12th century, followed by the Hoyasalas who might have undertaken renovation work on the temple between the 10th and 14th centuries, when the Hoyasalas were powerful in this region. The idol of Shri Ramanujacharya is also present in this temple. During the Vijayanagara Empire (14th to 16th centuries), the rulers also ruled over this region and possibly made contributions to the temples. The construction of the temple towers (Gopurams) is significant, and the Vimana Gopuram might have been built during the Vijayanagara Empire. Doddamadhure village boasts a rich history shaped by these factors, making it a repository of its own heritage.

Doddamadhure village is not merely known as a village of temples. In this village, the village deity is Goddess Honnaadevi, and the festival is celebrated by all villagers with great enthusiasm. This festival is specifically

dedicated to celebrating and honoring girl children. The festival continues for a week without interruption. During this festival, various activities like "Soman Kunita" by Sri Veerabhadra Swami, Kondotsava, Rangakunita, Sobane pada, are performed in the village, along with a unique tradition known as "Nooru Onde Yade," which is a bitter incident witnessed by the Nadakajanaga community.

Prominent temples in the village include the shrines of Sri Mallikarjuna Swami, Sri Channakeshava Swami, Rathasaptami, Hosabatte Suvudu, Sri Shaneshwara Swami Temple, and the annual Deepotsava. Additionally, the presence of shrines like Sri Hucchammadevi, Sri Kempammadevi, Sri Bhairaveshwara Swami, and Sri Rama Mandira can also be observed in the village.

Although these temples do not generate significant revenue, the community members fulfill their responsibilities diligently. However, recently, certain community members who used to play musical instruments during the temple festivals have stopped due to various reasons. While the village continues to prosper without significant revenue, there are two primary sources contributing to its income. One is the funds collected in the form of a tax from the Meenina Haraaji (a pond) in Doddamadhure, and the other is the funds collected through the Doddamadhure Community Hall, currently utilized for the development projects of the Sri Honnaadevi Community Hall and the restoration of Sri Honnaadevi Temple.

The funds collected are currently being utilized for the growth and development projects of the Sri Honnaadevi Community Hall and also for the restoration of the Sri Honnaadevi Temple.

Story of Shulldappan

Shulldappan was honest, loyal to his master, and had immense self-respect. When he faced adversity, he stood firm in his resolve. He imparted a curse

to some communities, which some believed to be false, while others thought it could be true. As an annual tradition, the entire village would visit him and offer prayers to seek his blessings.

Shastric Tradition and Listening Sessions

Some argue that this is a superstition. It has been a common practice for people from our village as well as neighboring villages to come and listen to scriptures. Going to our village and seeking wisdom from scriptures is a common practice, and it is a routine for people from other villages as well.

Bhajana Program at Rama Temple

Recently, villagers have taken up the initiative to renovate the Rama Temple. Every Saturday, a bhajana (devotional singing) program is organized, contributing to another proud achievement for the village. This serves as a unifying act and helps cleanse the minds, led by Sri Marihucchayya.

Role of Women's Groups

Women's groups play a significant role, as they are crucial not only in terms of their numerical strength but also economically in achieving self-reliance. Many women's empowerment and religious groups exist. However, in the context of the "Alcohol-Free Village" campaign, these women's groups played a pivotal role. These women's groups contribute significantly to the empowerment of the weak and the helpless in the village. In meetings of women's associations, external individuals provide information about government schemes.

Natu Vaidya

Some people offer home remedies, for example, they provide a concoction for those who haven't eaten, and if someone is breathless, they suggest

using an inhaler. The practice of massaging feet and hands to remove fatigue is common. In the village, there is a community Ayurvedic health centre and a small health centre that provides homeopathic treatment, which has recently been established.

Sobane Pad/Kolata/Harikathe/Ranga Pad/Janapada

In the present village, Sobane is performed by one person, and Laxmakanavaru continued it. Bettayya Ramanavar sings Ranga Pad, and scholars like Gooti Meshteru and Siddannanavaru narrate Harikathe. There is a need to think about these arts after their era, as these arts are now disappearing completely. If they were continued by the youth of today, it could have saved these arts. However, today's youth are not interested in preserving this folk culture and art. Only if we continue with this tradition, our village's pride and Shri Nanjappanavaru's pride will be upheld. If the youth's interest and thinking about this increases, they will not doubt the importance of this and will continue these arts.

In Doddamadhure village, the practice of walking with God, holding a plate during God's festivals, and offering a plate during God's celebrations, continues. Shri Mariamma continues the tradition of Rama Bhajana. Every Saturday, without fail, a Bhajana program is conducted. This responsibility is taken by Shri Mariyachayyanavaru.

Shri Veerabhadra Swami and Somas, the village deities, have a special role in the village festivals. In the village's annual jathre, there is a tug of war competition. But it only takes place on one day of the year. The need for the present youth to continue this is there. The Koni Konde (folk songs for Kolata) sung during the Kolata dance of the village are continued by Bettayya Ramanavaru.

To protect our culture in the village, for the past 18 years, the Kannada Rajyotsava is celebrated with the cooperation of the villagers. Shri Marichayyanavaru is leading this.

Participating in the Khoko and Kabaddi tournaments at the hobli level organized by the Yadavooru Gram Panchayat, Doddamadhure village has secured the first place in both.

In the village, every year, mythological plays are performed and people who have painted on most of the houses in the village are awarded. Therefore, our village is called "Kalagram Doddamadhure," which means an artistic village."

Challenges in the Village

Education: Everyone is educated, but in this village, there are no lawyers who have completed LLB, no one has become a doctor after MBBS, no one is a trained government teacher, no one is a government engineer. Some are engaged in specialized jobs in the city, some are involved in business. There is a need to find youth engaged in agriculture in the village. In this village, there is only one or two elderly people in about 40 houses. This reflects the old age home-like situation in village.

Family Values: Brothers and sisters who were born together, grew up together, have now become enemies: This proverb holds true in Doddamadhure. Within a family, people used to sit together and talk to solve problems, maintain relationships, and keep the bond intact. But nowadays, brothers and sisters have turned into enemies, fighting over land and disturbing not only the atmosphere of the house but also the social health.

Justice System: Earlier, the justice system had a lot of respect and importance in the village. No one aspired to become a police officer. Many problems were resolved in front of the village heads and elders. However, recently, due to some differences, the Panchayat system has weakened and is on the verge of losing its significance. There is a strong need for an impartial justice verdict for the revival of the Panchayat system.

Art/Culture/Sports: Doddamadhure Village is a hub of art and culture, and the saying "Art is in the air" seems to hold true here. People who have played roles in mythological plays within families may be found in our village. Also, every year, the Kannada Rajyotsava is celebrated, and through this celebration, some good deeds are done, along with sports activities like kabaddi and cricket.

Ray of Hope

Village representatives have brought some level of improvement in the village. They could do much more work. Their role is essential for the village's development. However, at times, they act more like house Panchayat members than village Panchayat members. They need to participate actively in the development of the village school and contribute to educational reforms by taking guidance from Girish Sir of the Hemavathi Hostel and the Swagram Fellowship.

At its core, Doddamadhure's strength lies in unity and mutual reliance—a testament to its commitment to preserving its cultural heritage while adapting to changing times. The village's story is one of resilience, cultural pride, and an unwavering connection to its roots, highlighting the significance of localized research to unveil the layers of a community's identity.

Socio-Economic Impacts of Swagramamitra in Doddamadhure Village

Doddamadhure village's journey towards development has been rooted in their rich connection with the common village pond, which serves as a pivotal resource for their economic progress. The utilization of this resource has paved the way for the exploration of other natural assets, leading to increased income generation. The availability of water has significantly enhanced their agricultural output, resulting in greater economic stability among families. The village had faced a challenge with the migration of its youth to Bangalore, largely due to economic reasons. However, the allure of urban life soon faded, prompting their return to the village. This return was motivated by the realization that the village's existence was intricately tied to agriculture, and thus, a reliable source of water was imperative. Unfortunately, governmental water supply to the canals had ceased in the past. This water scarcity issue prompted the villagers to organize and initiate a solution.

Through collective efforts, the villagers formed a group that focused on understanding available provisions and regulations, aiming to secure their water resources. Initially, the efforts centered around Doddamadhure, but as neighboring villages joined forces due to common interests, a larger movement emerged. Demonstrations and strikes led by Doddamadhure inspired others to unite and raise questions to the government. This joint effort eventually led to the inspection and cleaning of canals, culminating in the restoration of water supply.

This success story rippled across 24 villages, leading to the establishment of a "Hoobli," a sub-district administrative unit. Doddamadhure became the nucleus of this Hoobli structure, marked by the formation of the Hoobli level farmers' association. The federation named "Neeru Valakkaidharata Samga" (Water Utilization Group) was created to maintain the canal system and ensure equitable water distribution. Regular general body meetings were conducted to assess canal conditions, plan water supply improvements, and

set goals for the upcoming year. With consistent water supply, the village diversified its activities, including venturing into fisheries. Those granted the pond tender contributed to the village fund as stakeholders, promoting community-driven development. These contributions were directed towards the creation of a Community Hall for various purposes such as ceremonies and events, thereby generating additional income for village progress. The revenue from this initiative was also directed towards enhancing school facilities and other basic amenities.

Preserving cultural traditions remained a priority for the villagers, prompting them to focus on reviving traditional practices. Additionally, they concentrated on education by establishing a kindergarten school through alumni contributions. Village students continued to uphold traditional values while studying in the Kannada medium. Spiritual development also found its place in the community's endeavours. At the core of these coordinated activities stands the figure of the Swagramamitra, the Community Development Person, who has played a vital role in guiding and nurturing these efforts. Through their dedication and leadership, Doddamadhure village has managed to achieve self-reliance and socio-economic growth, thereby ensuring a brighter future for its residents.

Swagrama Fellowship is a Collaborative Initiative

The collaborative initiative "Gram Swarajya – Reflections and Commitments" was launched by Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University (KSRDPU), in partnership with Youth for Seva, Chanakya University, and Abdul Nazeer Sab Chair of Kuvempu University, to address the pressing issue of inadequate government initiatives and challenges in community development programs. The common problem faced by villages across India is the lack of awareness about existing policies and schemes aimed at village development. Even when awareness exists, there is often confusion about who truly deserves the benefits of these schemes. In response, this transformative three-year project seeks to empower

villages through grassroot-level leadership with a service-oriented approach, ensuring the well-being and holistic development of rural areas. The initiative's goal is to bridge the gap between available development policies and their effective implementation by fostering strong local leadership and a deep sense of commitment to the upliftment of villages.

Grassroot Level Implementation Strategies of Swagrama Fellowship

If we want to know about the village functioning under swagrama fellowship, primarily we understand about the village facing Problem, its economic resources and Livelihood strategies. To ensure the effective operation of the Swagrama Fellowship Program, two committees were established, reflecting the program's grassroots nature and its emphasis on bottom-up implementation. These committees are organized in a hierarchical manner, allowing for a well-structured execution from the local level upwards. The formation of these committees highlights the program's commitment to inclusivity, community involvement, and strategic coordination, ensuring that the initiative aligns with the unique needs and aspirations of the villages it aims to serve.

Functions of the Project:

The Swagrama Fellowship Project's Functional Analysis across Three Levels:

1. Daily Task Evaluation
2. Weekly Review Sessions
3. Monthly Progress Meetings

Utilizing this function analysis, we can analyse the following Implementation Strategies' functions.

1. Functions of Core Committee

- Policy
- Finance
- Direction Settings
- Address the Working Committee recommendation.

2. Functions of Working Committee

- Implementers and Supportive team
- Daily basis work monitoring
- Recommendation to core committee

3. Functions of Motivation and Supporting System

- Planning
- Track all app
- WhatsApp Group
- Google Meet
- Village Visit
- Mentoring
- Honorary Benefit
- Quarterly Reviews

These elements constitute the foundation of the grassroots-level execution of the Swagrama Fellowship Project. To establish this context, it's essential to first grasp the structure underlying village operations as per the Swagram Fellowship Project framework.

Village Level Functioning

The Swagrama Fellowship Project in village functioning encompasses a comprehensive approach to uplift and empower rural areas through collaborative efforts and sustainable strategies. This project is aimed at addressing various aspects of development, including education, health, livelihood, infrastructure, and overall well-being, with the active participation of local communities.

Swagrama Mitras: Swagrama Mitras, meaning "Friends of the Village," play a crucial role in this initiative. They are individuals selected from the village itself who act as catalysts and facilitators of change. Swagrama Mitras act as connectors between the community and the various resources, knowledge, and opportunities that the development program brings. They help bridge the gap between the villagers and external agencies, ensuring that the

initiatives are contextually relevant and effectively implemented. In a village has two Swagrama mitras.

Grama Vikasa Samithi: Grama Vikasa Samithi, or Village Development Committee, serves as a local governing body, responsible for planning, implementing, and overseeing various development activities within the village. Comprising representatives from different sections of the community, this committee ensures that the initiatives align with the needs and aspirations of the villagers. Grama Vikasa Samithi acts as a platform for collective decisionmaking and participatory development. This is not the part of panchayat, but one panchayat member involve in this committee.

Hitachinthaka: Hitachinthakas, also known as "Community Observers," are individuals who reside outside the village but maintain a strong connection with the community. These individuals are the village intellectuals, elders, and influencers who bring their wisdom and experience to guide the community development initiatives. Hitachinthakas help in shaping the direction of the initiatives, providing insights into cultural norms, traditions, and local practices that need to be preserved while progressing.

Mentors: Mentors play a mentoring role, guiding and nurturing the talents and potential of individuals, especially the youth, within the village. They provide guidance, skill development, and support to help individuals achieve their personal and professional aspirations. Mentors are instrumental in fostering a sense of self-reliance and empowerment among the youth, contributing to the overall growth of the community.

To summarise, the community development initiative in village functioning integrates these key roles to create a holistic and sustainable approach to uplift rural areas. It recognizes the importance of local wisdom, participation, and collaboration in driving positive change and ensuring that development efforts are in harmony with the unique identity and aspirations of each village.

Functions of Motivation and Supporting System

1. Planning

- Every training session (boot camp or quarterly review meetings) concludes with a planning framework.
- In this framework, both compulsory activities and activities suggested by villagers are included.
- Swagrama Mitras, with the support of Grama vikasa samithi and Villagers, will create the plan based on the principles and theories of the Swagrama fellowship.
- The plan will be broken down into monthly and quarterly objectives.
- Weekly and monthly meeting will review the plan.

2. Track all app

- The app has been developed, and all team members are using the app.
- They fill in the information based on the tasks assigned to them.
- Villagers are trying to fill in their information and submit documents for the first time.

3. WhatsApp

- Swagrama Mitras will share their activities and support team share their information.
- Mitras work Appreciation and Guiding.
- A dedicated communication platform.

4. Google Meet

- The Zone Coordinator conducts a weekly Google Meet Session.
- Monthly meetings are held on specific topics.
- Google Meet sessions are scheduled upon request or suggested by the team.

5. Village Visit

- The State project coordinator and Zone coordinator regularly visit the village.
- A minimum of 20-25 village visits per month.

- If there are specific conditions, other support team also visit the village.
- They will submit the report weekly basis to working committee.

6. Mentoring

- Experts are identified and assigned to Swagrama Mitras.
- They conduct training session on the Swagrama Project.
- Share the framework of the work.
- One person can mentor more than one village.
- The minimum requirement is at least one monthly visit to the selected village.
- They receive calls to clarify, guide and support the team in achieving their plans.
- Face to face meetings are conducted every quarter.
- Only travel expenses are covered, no other financial support is provided.

7. Honorary Benefit

- Each Mitra will receive INR 5000 per month.
- This amount is meant to cover all expenses.
- Many team members are using this amount for village development.

8. Quarterly Review

- Every three months conducted face to face review meeting.
- Smaller group discussions take place.
- Review the activities of each group.

The village-level functioning of the program encompasses a comprehensive framework facilitated by key roles. Swagrama Mitras, as village catalysts, bridge the gap between the community and external resources. Grama Vikasa Samithi, the village development committee, acts as a localized governing body, steering the initiatives towards contextually relevant goals. The presence of Hitachinthakas and mentors enhances the program's impact, infusing local wisdom and guidance.

The success of the program is augmented by a robust motivation and support system. Tools such as planning frameworks, communication platforms like WhatsApp and Google Meet, village visits, mentoring sessions, and quarterly reviews enhance collaboration, communication, and accountability. The system not only encourages participatory engagement but also nurtures leadership and ownership at the village level.

The Swagrama Fellowship Program manifests as a dynamic initiative that acknowledges the innate strengths of villages while addressing their unique challenges. Through a blend of structured planning, community involvement, and sustainable strategies, the program exemplifies a thoughtful approach to village development. By fostering self-reliance, embracing local wisdom, and encouraging holistic growth, the program epitomizes a promising journey towards empowered and thriving rural communities.

Socio-Economic Synergy in Doddamadhure (Swabhava, Swalamban, and Parasparavalamban)

The Swagrama Fellowship program, deeply rooted in Integral Humanism values, embarks on a transformative journey addressing the challenges hindering the growth of rural communities. It explicitly focuses on the integral humanism principles of Swabhava (essence), Swalamban (self-reliance), and Parasparavalamban (mutual cooperation).

Integral Humanism Alignment: The Swagrama Fellowship not only echoes but actively embodies the integral humanism philosophy. By identifying and empowering dedicated individuals within or connected to villages, known as "Swagrama Mitras," the program aligns Swabhava with the essence of each village. The formation of teams, comprising two villagers and one with roots elsewhere, represents the integral humanism concept of interconnectedness and mutual cooperation.

Empowering Grassroot Leadership: Integral humanism values, particularly Swabhava, are mirrored in the fellowship's goal to empower grassroot leadership. Swagrama Mitras serve as catalysts for holistic rural development, fostering self-reliance (Swalamban) and preserving the unique identity (Swabhava) of each village. This aligns with Deendayal Ji's vision of participatory governance and cooperative self-sufficiency.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage: Preserving cultural heritage, encapsulated in Swabhava, is a core focus of both integral humanism and the Swagrama Fellowship. The initiative actively reintroduces traditional practices, rural games, and art forms, emphasizing the importance of cultural continuity and self-reliance (Swalamban).

Community-Centric Approach: Integral humanism's emphasis on community-centric approaches, rooted in mutual cooperation (Parasparavalamban), finds resonance in the Swagrama Fellowship's village-centric methodology. Both philosophies highlight the significance

of local wisdom and encourage community-led initiatives for holistic development, fostering cooperative interdependence.

Bottom-Up Empowerment Model: The success of the Swagrama Fellowship, based on decentralized governance and grassroots involvement, aligns with integral humanism's emphasis on mutual cooperation (Parasparavalamban). The bottom-up empowerment model fosters autonomy, self-reliance (Swalamban), and a sense of collective responsibility among villagers.

Holistic Development Focus: Integral humanism's holistic approach, reflecting mutual cooperation (Parasparavalamban), is mirrored in the Swagrama Fellowship's commitment to addressing multiple dimensions of village life—social, economic, and cultural. The program contributes to the resilience of communities, aligning with the comprehensive approach of integral humanism.

Long-Term Sustainability: The field trip reveals that the Swagrama Fellowship's emphasis on long-term sustainability aligns with integral humanism's focus on enduring societal progress. Both philosophies share a commitment deeply rooted in cultural and moral values, ensuring continuity through generations.

The Socio-Economic Synergy Doddamadhure, viewed through the prism of Swabhava, Swalamban, and Parasparavalamban, embodies the spirit of the Swagrama Fellowship. This transformative force actively integrates these integral humanism values, fostering self-reliance, preserving cultural heritage, and empowering communities through mutual cooperation.

CHITRAKOOT: A MODEL OF UPLIFTMENT OF THE LAST PERSON

Introduction

The intricacies of human life and the interwoven fabric of societal relationships find resonance in Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's seminal speech, 'Integral Humanism.' This philosophical doctrine transcends abstraction, serving as a pragmatic guide for a harmonious and progressive society, akin to the natural functional flow of the human body.

In alignment with this profound philosophy, the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI) has embarked on the Chitrakoot Project, a living testament to the principles of Integral Humanism and Antyodaya. Antyodaya, a key tenet in Integral Humanism, emphasizes uplifting the last person in the social order, ensuring that the benefits of development reach the most marginalized. This resonates deeply with the essence of Chitrakoot, where the focus on self-reliance, health and wellbeing, and cooperation is not an abstract concept but a transformative force touching the lives of those at the grassroots.

The Chitrakoot Project reflects a deep understanding of the rural Indian reality, with an explicit commitment to Antyodaya. It emphasizes the pivotal elements of self-reliance, health and wellbeing, cooperation, and the embodiment of the nation's soul, known as "Chiti." Our comprehensive exploration encompassed diverse facets, including income generation, health and hygiene, social consciousness, education, and the unique Self-Reliance Campaign that has metamorphosed the lives of thousands in the villages surrounding Chitrakoot.

At the heart of the Chitrakoot Project lies a harmonious blend of traditional wisdom and modern techniques, addressing a broad spectrum of societal needs from agriculture and industry to healthcare and education. The success of this project, buttressed by adherence to the Quality Management System Standard ISO 9001:2008, stands as an illuminating example of how

the integral humanistic philosophy, deeply rooted in the principles of Antyodaya, can be translated into a tangible reality.

As a result of our deep exploration into the various domains where Integral Humanism and Antyodaya have been applied in the context of rural development, aims to cast light on the contemporary relevance of these philosophies. It delves into the potential of Integral Humanism, with a specific focus on Antyodaya, as a model for future global developmental solutions. Through our sincere gratitude to the Deendayal Research Institute, we acknowledge their openness in sharing knowledge and insights. Their unwavering dedication and relentless pursuit of a self-reliant, prosperous society serve as a profound inspiration for our research and contribute significantly to the intellectual heritage of humanistic philosophy.

Philosophy of Integral Humanism

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Integral Humanism has been an intellectual landmark in Indian socio-political discourse. Born in 1916 in Nagla Chandrabhan, Uttar Pradesh, Upadhyaya endured the early loss of both parents but was fortified by the values imparted by his maternal grandfather. He later attended Sanatan Dharma College in Kanpur, becoming actively involved in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu nationalist organization that shaped his political ideals.

Upon completing his college education, Upadhyaya delved into journalism and editing for various RSS publications, alongside his burgeoning political engagement. This journey led him to be elected to the Lok Sabha in 1957 and hold the position of general secretary of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) from 1951 to 1968.

The Emergence of Integral Humanism

Integral Humanism, Upadhyaya's groundbreaking philosophy, was birthed through a series of four lectures he delivered in 1960. This doctrine presented a reinterpretation of ancient Indian wisdom, underpinning the concept of

"Vasudeva Kutumbam" – the idea that the world is one family. It provided an alternative viewpoint to the ideologies of communism and capitalism, proposing a development paradigm grounded in India's cultural and Hindu values.

At its core, Integral Humanism embraced several fundamental principles:

- **Social Responsibility:** Recognizing that society comprises individuals, it exists to enhance their well-being and collective growth.
- **Environmental Integration:** The philosophy underscored the integral connection between society and the environment, fostering a duty to preserve it for future generations.
- **Balanced Growth:** Upadhyaya advocated for balanced progress across the realms of the individual, society, and nature, countering the extremities of western individualism and Marxist socialism, while appreciating the contributions of western science.
- **Decentralization and Participation:** He championed decentralized governance and economy, empowering local communities while preserving their cultural and spiritual heritage.

The Enduring Impact

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya played a foundational role in shaping the Jana Sangh, a precursor to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). His philosophy deeply influenced the party's ideology, steering Indian politics towards a novel trajectory.

While some critics contend that Integral Humanism may be idealistic or challenging to practically implement, its holistic ethos and emphasis on interconnectedness remain relevant in contemporary Indian society. This philosophy has left an indelible mark on governance and policy-making, standing as a testament to humanistic aspirations for India's progress. Tragically, Upadhyaya's life was cut short under mysterious circumstances in 1968. Nonetheless, his legacy endures, with Integral Humanism serving as

the official ideology of the BJP and finding resonance among various political entities and organizations.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's life journey and the philosophy of Integral Humanism continue to inspire and guide Indian politics. His belief in the harmony between the individual, society, and nature, his rejection of extreme ideologies, and his advocacy for a decentralized and human-centric approach to development collectively form a comprehensive and timeless philosophy. This legacy transcends political boundaries, offering an enduring vision that continues to shape India's trajectory.

The Concept of Complementarity in Human Life and Society

Integral Humanism, as articulated by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, resonates with the interconnectedness inherent in human existence. Central to this philosophy is the concept of complementarity – a dynamic interplay between the individual and society, encapsulated in the notions of *vyashti*, *samashti*, *shrishti*, and *parmeshti*.

- **Vyashti:** The Individual Self *Vyashti* embodies the individual self, the wellspring of creativity, curiosity, and expression. As the basic unit of society, it encompasses personal aspirations and desires. Upadhyaya believed that individuals possess unique qualities called *purusharthas*, which, when nurtured, contribute to the collective good.
- **Samashti:** The Collective Self *Samashti* represents the collective self or society itself. It symbolizes cooperation, harmony, and solidarity, encompassing societal norms, values, and institutions known as *dharma*. The relationship between *vyashti* and *samashti* is symbiotic, with each nurturing the growth and well-being of the other.
- **Shrishti:** The Cosmic Self *Shrishti* signifies the cosmic self or the universe. It reflects the diversity, beauty, and sustainability of creation. Governed by its own patterns and cycles, referred to as *rta*, it compels

individuals and societies to cultivate harmony with the natural world. Upadhyaya's philosophy underscores the importance of recognizing the principles of shrishti for responsible and sustainable environmental interaction.

- **Parmeshti:** The Supreme Self Parmeshti represents the Supreme Being or transcendence itself. It serves as the ultimate reality, a source of love, bliss, and liberation. Upadhyaya advocated spiritual practices like yoga and meditation as paths to establish a connection with pameshti, leading to an understanding of divine will and grace.

Interconnectedness in Harmony

These above four concepts aren't isolated or contradictory; they are intertwined and harmonious. Together, they weave a holistic and humanistic tapestry that respects individual dignity while nurturing a sense of responsibility towards the greater whole. By embracing balanced growth across these levels, Integral Humanism aims to realize the concept of virat purusha, the universal human being – a vision that encapsulates Upadhyaya's aspirations for India.

The Concept of Chiti and its role in Nation building

In the philosophy of Integral Humanism, the concept of "Chiti" signifies much more than mere patriotism; it refers to the soul or collective consciousness of a nation. This complex term embodies shared values, traditions, beliefs, and collective memories that help to define a nation's identity (Gupta, 2016). Rather than being a fleeting sentiment or a shallow form of loyalty, Chiti operates at a deeper, metaphysical level. It captures the essence of what it means to belong to a particular national community, transcending geographical boundaries and political constructs.

The role of Chiti in nation-building cannot be overstated. It serves as a fundamental framework for knitting together the diverse threads of a society into a coherent whole. More than just a rallying cry for unity, Chiti offers a profound sense of national identity and communal solidarity. It aids in creating a social milieu where people, despite their individual differences,

feel connected through shared cultural values, thereby promoting common goals and fostering cooperation among community members (Chakraborty, 2018).

Furthermore, the significance of Chiti extends to enhancing community collaboration. In a society where the concept of Chiti is emphasized, the sense of shared responsibilities and interconnectedness among community members is heightened. This is because the understanding of a collective soul or consciousness reinforces a sense of belonging and amplifies collective efforts toward achieving common objectives. In such a context, collaboration becomes more than a social or economic necessity; it transforms into a spiritual and cultural imperative, deeply embedded in the very fabric of the community (Sharma, 2019).

Undoubtedly, Chiti, as envisioned in the philosophy of Integral Humanism, offers an expansive and spiritually rooted framework for understanding and enhancing nation-building and community collaboration. It serves as a cornerstone for fostering a unified national identity, and it lays the groundwork for genuine, meaningful cooperation among community members.

Practical Application of Complementarity

The concept of complementarity finds practical application across various facets of human and societal development. In education, it entails fostering individual talents alongside teamwork; in workplaces, it encourages a culture of respect and collaboration; in politics, it prioritizes dialogue over conflict; and in the environment, it drives collective efforts to conserve natural resources. Embracing complementarity can pave the way for a more harmonious and sustainable world.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism, encapsulated in the notions of vyashti, samashti, shrishti, and parmeshti, offers a profound and multi-dimensional perspective on the interconnectedness of human life. The interplay of these concepts charts a thoughtful course towards building

an equitable and just society, reflecting the timeless wisdom of Indian philosophy.

Brief Biography of Nana Ji Deshmukh (Founder-DRI)

Nana Ji Deshmukh, born on October 11, 1916, in Kadoli, Maharashtra, was not just a political stalwart but a multidimensional personality deeply committed to social service and nationbuilding. Rising from a modest background, where he had to sell vegetables to finance his education, Deshmukh demonstrated an indomitable spirit and an insatiable quest for knowledge from a young age. His early influences included the nationalist ideology of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the mentorship of Dr. K.B. Hedgewar, the founder of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Initiating his career in public life with the RSS, Nana Ji was sent to Uttar Pradesh as a Pracharak. His profound respect for education manifested early when he established India's first Saraswati Sishu Mandir in Gorakhpur in 1950. Notably, he was among the pivotal figures responsible for launching prominent publications such as "Rashtradharma," "Panchjanya," and the newspaper "Swadesh" in 1947, working alongside Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Deendayal Upadhyaya.

Apart from his political undertakings, which included being an architect of the Janata Party and representing the Balrampur constituency in Uttar Pradesh, Nana Ji was also significantly involved in social movements. His participation in the Bhoodan Movement under Vinoba Bhave and his support for Jai Prakash Narayan's "Total Revolution" bear testament to his broad vision for societal change. Notably, he declined a ministerial position offered by Prime Minister Morarji Desai, emphasizing that for him, politics was not a career but a mission. Subsequently, he announced his retirement from politics.

Post-retirement, Nana Ji devoted his life to the Deendayal Research Institute, which he founded in 1968. Under his leadership, the institute

initiated projects like Chitrakoot Gramodya Vishwavidyalaya, India's first rural university. In 1999, he was nominated to the Rajya Sabha and was also honoured with the Padma Vibhushan for his exceptional contributions to social service.

Nana Ji Deshmukh's life philosophy was deeply rooted in the principles of "Gramodaya" (rural upliftment) and "Swavalamban" (self-reliance), echoing the philosophies of luminaries like Swami Vivekananda, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Mahatma Gandhi. His meticulous planning and able leadership in various social projects have inspired thousands of youths and yielded astonishingly successful outcomes.

Nana Ji Deshmukh was a paragon of integral humanism, whose life and work blended visionary foresight with pragmatic action. His contributions to social reforms and nation-building remain an enduring legacy, resonating with principles that continue to be relevant for contemporary India (Gupta, S. 2017, "The Social and Political Contributions of Nanaji Deshmukh," Journal of Social Science Studies).

Deendayal Research Institute (DRI)

Deendayal Research Institute (DRI) is a non-profit organization established in 1972 by statesman and social scientist Nanaji Deshmukh. Located in Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh, India, the organization was founded with the noble goal of validating and operationalizing the philosophy of Integral Humanism, a philosophical doctrine propounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya.

Historical Background and Founding

The inception of DRI was inspired by the need to provide a practical application to the principles of Integral Humanism. Nanaji Deshmukh, deeply influenced by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, founded the institute to apply these principles on the ground and create self-reliant and prosperous

rural communities. The focus was to offer a localized solution that resonated with the Indian ethos and philosophy.

Objectives of DRI

The primary objectives of DRI are multifaceted and holistic, reflecting the core philosophy of Integral Humanism:

- **Promoting Integral Humanism:** DRI serves as a hub for the study, promotion, and practical application of Integral Humanism. It hosts conferences, workshops, and training programs to foster understanding of this philosophy.
- **Implementing Rural Development Programs:** The institute aims to create sustainable and resilient rural communities through various initiatives based on the principles of Integral Humanism.
- **Education and Training in Integral Humanism:** DRI plays an essential role in nurturing scholars, practitioners, and leaders aligned with the philosophy of Integral Humanism.
- **Conducting Research across Various Fields:** By applying Integral Humanism in fields like education, health, agriculture, and economics, DRI explores new avenues for socially responsible development.

Contributions and Impact

DRI's work has made a tangible impact in the following different areas:

- **Health Initiatives:** By setting up primary health centres in rural areas, providing training to healthcare workers, and working on sanitation and hygiene, DRI has brought critical health services to underserved communities.
- **Educational Programs:** DRI has established schools and colleges, provided scholarships to deserving students, and worked on adult education and literacy, thus contributing to rural educational empowerment.

- **Agriculture Development:** With an emphasis on sustainable agricultural practices, DRI has provided training to farmers to improve their yields using environmentally friendly methods.
- **Water Conservation:** The institute has undertaken water conservation initiatives by building dams and reservoirs, ensuring optimal utilization of water resources.

Specific Research and Innovative Projects

DRI is at the forefront of innovative applications of Integral Humanism, conducting research and pioneering projects. Some of these include:

- **Economic Models:** Development of localized economic models to ensure sustainable growth in alignment with Integral Humanism.
- **Social Justice Initiatives:** Fostering principles of equality, justice, and compassion within society through tailored interventions.
- **Environmental Protection:** Researching and implementing methods to align economic growth with environmental stewardship.

Legacy and Future Prospects

DRI's legacy is defined by its unwavering commitment to Integral Humanism. With over 50 years of experience, the institute is now a leading voice in the philosophy's application and a vital resource for scholars and practitioners alike. Its future prospects include expanding its reach, continually innovating in its research, and creating broader societal impacts.

Deendayal Research Institute, inspired by the philosophy of Integral Humanism, has shaped the landscape of rural development in India. Through its rigorous research, diverse programs, and innovative initiatives, DRI demonstrates the practical applicability and enduring relevance of Integral Humanism. The institute stands as a beacon of hope for equitable and sustainable development and continues to inspire similar endeavours globally.

DRI's Chitrakoot Project

In the domain of rural development, the Chitrakoot Project emerges as a seminal initiative grounded in the philosophy of Integral Humanism. Implemented by the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI) and launched in 2002, the project spans 500 villages in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, aiming to engender self-reliant communities through a multi-faceted development model. This model addresses economic growth, social upliftment, and environmental conservation as equally critical elements.

Conceptually, the Chitrakoot Project derives its ethos from Integral Humanism as expounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. The philosophy emphasizes a holistic understanding of development, recognizing the intricate interconnections between individuals, society, and the environment. The project aims to create a balanced ecosystem benefiting all community layers, guided by these principles.

The Chitrakoot Project's execution is structured into three distinct but interconnected phases: Economic Development, Social Development, and Environmental Protection. The economic phase focuses on laying a financial foundation through self-help groups, entrepreneurship training, sustainable agriculture, and rural industries. This is followed by a social development phase that involves constructing schools, health centres, and other community facilities while advocating for women empowerment and cultural revival. The final phase emphasizes environmental sustainability, which includes afforestation and renewable energy initiatives.

The project's impact has been notably multidimensional. Economic empowerment has been achieved through self-help groups and entrepreneurship training, leading to increased income levels and decreased migration rates. Educational and healthcare infrastructures have similarly been uplifted, leading to significant improvements in literacy rates and overall health conditions in the community. Moreover, targeted

initiatives for women's empowerment and environmental conservation have yielded impressive results.

The success of the Chitrakoot Project has not only been recognized domestically but has also received international acclaim, including endorsements from organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank. The project serves as a blueprint for applying the philosophy of Integral Humanism in tangible development work, offering scalable and adaptable strategies for rural development across different settings. In summation, the Chitrakoot Project stands as a living testament to the capabilities of community-driven, integral humanistic development, and provides valuable insights for future rural development initiatives.

The institute has established a network of institutions and centres that form the backbone of the Chitrakoot project, aimed at empowering villagers in diverse sectors. These entities encompass both academic and practical domains, focusing on uplifting not just individuals but the entire community.

- **Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs):** DRI operates two model farms in Majhgawan (M.P.) and Ganivan (U.P.), providing hands-on support to farmers. Through these KVKs, sustainable agricultural practices, watershed management, and skill enhancement are promoted to bolster both farm and non-farm income.
- **Arogyadham:** The Ayurveda & Naturopathy Campus at Chitrakoot stands as a vital hub for health and wellness. Equipped with modern diagnostic facilities, in-patient care, maternity and pediatric centers, yoga and meditation facilities, naturopathy resources, and an Ayurvedic research centre, Arogyadham caters to both preventive and curative health needs.
- **Udaymita Vidyapeeth:** This production-cum-training centre serves as an avenue for skill development. By imparting training and

nurturing innovative concepts like one village-one product, it empowers villagers to earn and contributes to the self-reliance agenda.

- **Educational Institutions:** Institutions like Surrendra Paul Gramodaya Vidyalaya, Ramnath Ashramshala, Parmanad Ashram Paddhati Vidyalaya, Krishna Devi Banwasi Balika Awasiya Vidyalaya, and Gurukul are crucial in fostering education and values among diverse sections of the population, including tribal and scheduled caste children.
- **Chitrakoot Ras Shala:** This in-house Ayurvedic pharmacy meets the medicinal needs of Arogyadham while also offering various Ayurvedic preparations to the wider community.
- **Govansh Vikas Avam Anusadhan Kendra:** The Gaushala in Chitrakoot serves a dual purpose by preserving pure Indian breeds and engaging in livestock research and crossbreeding initiatives to enhance livestock yields.
- **Resource and Educational Resource Centers:** These centers play pivotal roles in channeling interventions to villagers through Samaj Shilpi Dampati (SSD), the catalysts of change in the self-reliance campaign. Moreover, the Educational Resource Center innovates educational aids and implements literacy programs.
- **Ramnath Goenka Smarak:** Symbolizing the essence of communal engagement, this public bathing ghat along the banks of the Mandakini River provides a space for spiritual and communal activities, fostering a sense of unity and belonging.

The Chitrakoot project stands as a living embodiment of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Integral Humanism. Drawing inspiration from Upadhyaya's vision, the initiative integrates various dimensions of human life, from health and education to economic empowerment and cultural preservation. The legacy of Chitrakoot project continues to illuminate the

path towards holistic and sustainable rural development, making a lasting impact on the lives of individuals and communities.

Analysis of DRI's Dynamic Infrastructure

Farming and Agricultural Centres

- **Research on Sustainable Agricultural Practices:** DRI's farming centers actively engage in research focusing on soil health, watershed management, organic farming, and innovative cultivation techniques. This includes studying different soil types and climates to understand what crops will thrive and finding new ways to conserve water.
- **Training and Technical Assistance:** Through Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) at Majhgawan and Ganivan, DRI offers intensive hands-on training and demonstrations to farmers. These sessions educate farmers about modern farming techniques, including integrated pest management, agroforestry, and the use of organic fertilizers and pesticides. The ultimate goal is to help farmers improve yields and embrace sustainable agricultural practices.
- **Promoting Renewable Energy:** DRI promotes the use of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind energy, in farming. This not only lowers farmers' costs but also contributes to environmental conservation.

Health and Medical Facilities

- **Primary Care Services:** Deendayal Arogya Sansthan (DAS) is a 100-bed hospital offering outpatient treatment, maternity care, childcare, and family planning services. It provides essential healthcare services to the rural population at affordable rates, ensuring that high-quality care is accessible to all.
- **Specialized Care:** DAS is equipped with modern facilities like an operation theatre, ICU, pathology lab, X-ray, ultrasound, and ECG. These allow for specialized care ranging from surgeries to complex diagnostic tests, ensuring that rural populations have access to advanced medical services.
- **Community Outreach:** Regular health camps and awareness programs are conducted in villages to promote preventive healthcare.

These initiatives reach people where they live, ensuring that medical care is not limited to those who can travel to a hospital.

Education and Training Institutions

- **Vocational Training:** Deendayal Industrial Training Center (ITI) and Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) offer a wide range of vocational courses, providing rural youth with skills that lead to employment. From electrician training to tailoring, these institutions foster self-sufficiency and entrepreneurship.
- **Research & Development:** Deendayal Shodh Sansthan (DSS) is a dedicated research wing that conducts extensive studies on rural development, integral humanism, and social reform. It's a hub for scholars and academics to explore and innovate solutions for rural India's unique challenges.
- **Women's Empowerment:** Programs targeting rural women focus on empowering them through education and skill development. Courses like embroidery, beauty culture, and computer literacy are tailored to their needs and interests, enhancing their autonomy and economic potential.

Special Initiatives and Experiments

- **Gaushala:** Gaushala is a special initiative focusing on maintaining pure Indian breeds of cows. It conducts research on cross-breeding, artificial insemination, and biogas production. This integration of traditional knowledge with modern scientific methods is reflective of DRI's holistic approach.
- **Chitrakoot Project:** This ambitious pilot project aims to create a model of sustainable development in 500 villages around Chitrakoot. It incorporates principles of integral humanism, utilizing a community-centered approach to foster self-reliance and socioeconomic growth.
- **Deendayal Grameen Kaushal Vikas Yojana (DGKVY):** DGKVY is a comprehensive skill development program for rural youth. It offers

training in employable skills like plumbing, carpentry, welding, and tailoring, ensuring that youth can find meaningful employment or start their own businesses.

- **Gramodaya Mela:** An annual fair, Gramodaya Mela, celebrates rural industries and artisans. By showcasing their products and achievements, it promotes local craftsmanship and fosters community pride.

DRI's comprehensive infrastructure in farming, healthcare, education, and special initiatives underlines its mission to transform rural India. By integrating state-of-the-art practices with the rich philosophy of integral humanism, DRI is shaping a future where rural communities are self-reliant, sustainable, and empowered.

Collectively, these distinct areas form a comprehensive mosaic that reflects the dedication, innovation, and humanistic ideals underlying the Integral Humanism Initiative. The IHI team's meticulous data collection has illuminated the essence of this transformational journey, shedding light on the pivotal role each element plays in shaping a self-reliant, empowered, and harmonious rural society. As the journey continues, these insights will undoubtedly guide and inspire future endeavours in rural development, both within Chitrakoot and beyond.

Social and Economic Reflections in Chitrakoot Project

Envisioned and executed by the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI), the Chitrakoot Project stands as an embodiment of rural development rooted in Integral Humanism. Initiated in 2002, this expansive endeavor encompasses 500 villages spanning the Chitrakoot region of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. At its core, the project aspires to foster self-sustaining communities, uniting economic prosperity, social elevation, and environmental preservation under a singular banner.

Philosophical Underpinning: The very essence of the Chitrakoot Project is rooted in the philosophy of Integral Humanism, a doctrine eloquently enunciated by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. This philosophical framework envisions a harmonious interdependence between individuals, society, and nature, culminating in a holistic development strategy that benefits every stratum of the community.

Implementation Phases:

The project's journey unfolds through three meticulously orchestrated phases:

1. **Economic Development (Phase I):** The inaugural phase laid the bedrock for financial autonomy, orchestrating the rise of self-help groups, entrepreneurial acumen, sustainable agricultural methodologies, and the inception of rural industries.
2. **Social Development (Phase II):** Shifting the spotlight to social infrastructure, this phase saw the construction of schools, healthcare facilities, and communal amenities, while also championing the empowerment of women and the revival of cultural heritage.
3. **Environmental Protection (Phase III):** The concluding phase shines the spotlight on ecological preservation, highlighting the imperative of environmental sustainability through endeavours like land reforestation and the adoption of renewable energy sources.

Specific Initiatives and Achievements

The Chitrakoot Project radiates a spectrum of impactful initiatives:

- **Economic Empowerment:** The project has elevated farmers' incomes and stemmed migration by nurturing self-help groups and imparting entrepreneurial skills.
- **Educational Advancement:** Through the establishment of schools, a significant surge in literacy rates has been achieved.
- **Healthcare Accessibility:** The region's health status has been elevated through the establishment of health centres.
- **Women's Empowerment:** The project's targeted efforts have emboldened women economically, socially, and politically.
- **Environmental Preservation:** Notable strides in watershed management, afforestation, and renewable energy have fostered substantial environmental betterment.

Impact and Recognition

The Chitrakoot Project has revolutionized lives, weaving a tapestry of economic, social, and environmental prosperity. Its presence signifies social harmony and a collective cooperative spirit. The project's triumph has merited recognition from esteemed entities including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank. Its narrative has graced the pages of esteemed publications like the World Bank's Rural Development Magazine.

Lessons and Future Directions

The Chitrakoot Project stands as a living testimony to the potency of Integral Humanism in driving sustainable development. Its success underscores that rural betterment need not entail environmental compromise. A source of wisdom for organizations vested in rural advancement, the project offers adaptable strategies ready for customization to diverse contexts.

Through its all-encompassing, human-centered approach, the Chitrakoot Project animates the very essence of Integral Humanism. Its triumph resonates beyond the confines of Chitrakoot, rousing kindred endeavors

across India and the global landscape. This project's narrative radiates the enduring energy of community-driven development and serves as an inspiring guiding light for future rural empowerment endeavours.

Social and Economic Reflections of Self-Reliance Campaign

In the vibrant geography of India, rural development plays an indispensable role in upholding the economic and social fabric of its diverse population. Drawing inspiration from Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Integral Humanism, the visionary Chitrakoot Project was conceived to fashion a self-reliant rural society anchored in family, education, and local unity. This exposition navigates the intricate contours of the Chitrakoot Project, an integrated campaign for holistic rural development inaugurated on 26th January 2002.

Phases and Expansion

The project casts its transformative mantle over 500 villages encircling Chitrakoot, unfolding through two sequential phases. The inaugural phase saw 80 villages attaining self-reliance by 15th August 2005, with the remaining villages emulating this feat by 15th August 2010. Expanding its wings, the campaign's influence extended to Gonda and Beed districts, a testament to its widening scope.

First Phase: Economic Emphasis (2002 - 2005)

The first phase of the Self-Reliance Campaign commenced on 26th January 2002 and was concluded on 15th August 2005. During this phase, the focus was predominantly on economic development.

- **Formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs):** The campaign initiated the establishment of SHGs to empower local communities, particularly women, to become financially independent.
- **Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture:** Efforts were made to increase the income of farmers by 300% through techniques that ensure environmental sustainability.
- **Reduction in Migration:** By creating local opportunities, migration was reduced by 80%.
- **Improvement in Literacy and Health:** Literacy rates were improved by 40%, and health status was enhanced by 50%.

- **Empowerment of Women:** Women's empowerment was achieved by 60%.
- **Environmental Preservation:** The phase also led to a 70% improvement in preserving the environment through various ecological initiatives.

Second Phase: Holistic Development (2005 - 2010)

The second phase started on 15th August 2005, expanding the campaign to 420 villages. This phase aimed to take the learnings from the first phase to a higher level by focusing on social development and environmental protection.

- **Income Enhancement:** The income of farmers increased by 500%.
- **Further Reduction in Migration:** Migration was reduced further by 90%.
- **Literacy and Health:** There was an increase in literacy by 60% and enhancement of health status by 70%.
- **Women Empowerment:** Women's empowerment was taken a notch higher, achieving 80%.
- **Environmental Preservation:** The environment's preservation was increased to 80%.
- **Implementation of Samaj Shilpi Dampati (SSD):** This unique concept involved graduate couples living within the villages, acting as catalysts for change, and assisting in finding solutions using local resources and knowledge.

Village Oath for Self-Reliance

The Village Oath for Self-Reliance is a formal commitment taken by villagers participating in the Self-Reliance Campaign. This pledge symbolizes the unity and collective responsibility of the villagers towards the development of their village. The oath reads as follows:

"We, the people of this village, pledge to work together to achieve self-reliance for our village. We will do this by:

Establishing self-help groups

Promoting sustainable agriculture

Conserving our natural resources

Providing education and healthcare for all

Promoting social harmony and cooperation"

This oath is not merely symbolic but serves as a powerful tool for mobilizing the villagers. It encapsulates the principles of integral humanism and fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among the villagers.

The Concept of Samaj Shilpi Dampati (SSD)

Central to the Chitrakoot Project's narrative is the pivotal role played by Samaj Shilpi Dampati (SSD) - 'graduate couples' who reside within the villages. These torchbearers ignite the spark of change, orchestrating the guidance and motivation of clusters encompassing five villages, fostering a community-driven ethos.

Income Generation

Engraved at the heart of the project's ethos is income generation, steered by the sustainable management of watersheds, revolutionary farming technologies, and the promotion of non-agricultural avenues. Pioneering initiatives like the 2.5 and 1.5-acre model farms tailor solutions for small and marginal farmers, constituting 80% of the rural populace, empowering them to meet their requisites and amass savings.

Health and Hygiene

The project orchestrates an alchemical blend of Ayurveda, Naturopathy, and Allopathic interventions to address health and hygiene needs. Anchored in local resource availability, populace necessities, and the doctor-to-resident ratio, this approach crystallizes into a sustainable healthcare solution.

Education and Social Consciousness

The Chitrakoot Project orchestrates a 'functional literacy campaign,' entwined with the propagation of human values through unique initiatives like the Ram Darshan museum. This emphasis on literacy and social values fosters cooperation and harmony, stitching together the tapestry of the villagers' lives.

Measurable Outputs and Standards

The Self-Reliance Campaign's results speak a measurable language, attaining international recognition through standards such as ISO 9001:2000, 9001:2008, and 9001:2015. Acknowledged by the Government of India as a Scientific & Industrial Research Organization (SIRO), the Deendayal Research Institute (DRI) heralds its scientific mettle.

Challenges and Future Directions

While celebrated, the project encountered challenges stemming from waning communication between the Institute and the village. This disconnect curtailed committee work and the implementation of novel schemes. To surmount these hurdles, Associate Volunteers, or Gram Sahyogi Karyakartas (GSKs), emerge as stewards, safeguarding the Self-Reliance Model's perpetuity.

Concluding remarks

The Chitrakoot Project, an opus of rural development, emerges as a beacon, harmoniously weaving together economic strides, social awakening, education, and health. A potent amalgam of traditional wisdom and modern methodologies, this project crystallizes a blueprint ready for replication in analogous rural landscapes. A repository of insights and wisdom, the project not only enriches policymakers but also resonates as an indomitable force propelling India's rural metamorphosis.

Socio-Economic Reflections of the SSD Model

The Samaj Shilpi Dampati (SSD) paradigm, crafted by Deendayal Research Institute (DRI), is an innovative framework aimed at catalyzing holistic rural development. By espousing the principles of integral humanism, this approach marks a groundbreaking integration of the individual, societal, and environmental facets of development. SSDs, graduate couples usually at the beginning of their matrimonial journey, are tasked with embedding themselves in rural communities to guide them toward sustainable growth.

Core Tenets of the SSD Model

- **Communal Assimilation:** Residing in basic conditions and embracing local customs and traditions, SSDs engender a milieu of trust and mutual respect, key components for instigating social change.
- **Holistic Strategies:** SSDs orchestrate multifaceted interventions, ranging from education and healthcare to agriculture and economic sustainability, thereby guiding the villagers toward autonomy.
- **Inclusive Framework:** The model capitalizes on a participative methodology, allowing villagers to articulate their concerns and actively partake in the solution-formulation process.
- **Coordinated Engagement:** Through liaisons with governmental and non-profit organizations, SSDs act as conduits to ensure that villagers gain from a myriad of welfare schemes.

The Role of SSDs in Motivation and Guidance

The Samaj Shilpi Dampati (SSD) model, developed by Deendayal Research Institute (DRI), has come to symbolize a revolutionary approach to rural development. A significant aspect of the SSDs' work is their role in motivation and guidance of villagers. This involves multifaceted efforts, as detailed below.

- **Education and Training:** SSDs are instrumental in providing training and education on diverse subjects like sustainable agriculture, entrepreneurship, women's empowerment, and health. These

educational endeavors are customized to suit the specific needs of different villages. For instance, by teaching organic farming techniques, SSDs ensure that the farmers understand the ecological benefits and economic viability of shifting from traditional chemical-based farming to sustainable practices. Training in entrepreneurship opens new vistas for the villagers, enabling them to explore alternative livelihood options, thereby reducing unemployment.

- **Identification of Needs and Solution Development:** SSDs actively engage with the villagers to recognize their needs, aspirations, and challenges. This inclusive approach ensures that solutions are not externally imposed but are a product of collective thinking between SSDs and the villagers. This participatory method helps in creating solutions that are most relevant to the villagers' needs, ensuring better compliance and sustainability.
- **Emotional Support and Encouragement:** Living as part of the community, sharing the villagers' joys and sorrows, SSDs provide emotional support and encouragement. Their presence as empathetic listeners and motivators creates a sense of trust and respect among the villagers.
 - o Regular celebration of villagers' achievements, no matter how small, contributes to building self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment.
- **Linking with External Agencies:** SSDs act as the bridge between villagers and various governmental and non-governmental organizations. By coordinating with these external agencies, SSDs ensure that the villagers are able to access schemes, grants, and benefits they are entitled to.
 - o Their role as facilitators enables villagers to navigate the often complex bureaucratic systems, making development more accessible.

Impact of SSDs on Village Development

The impact of SSDs on village development is multifaceted, reaching into various aspects of rural life. Below are the critical areas where SSDs have made a significant difference.

Agricultural Transformation:

- SSDs have been at the forefront of promoting sustainable agricultural practices, such as crop rotation, water conservation, and organic farming. These methods have led to increased crop yields, reduced pesticide usage, and overall sustainability.
- In villages like Devgarh, Madhya Pradesh, such initiatives have transformed agricultural practices, contributing to both environmental preservation and economic gain.

Education and Healthcare Accessibility:

- By aiding in building schools and health centers, SSDs have enhanced the quality of life in many villages. In Shankargarh, Bihar, the newly established school and health center stand as monuments to the transformational power of community-driven development.

Women's Empowerment:

- Women's empowerment programs have resulted in the formation of self-help groups providing loans to women entrepreneurs. In Ramgarh, Uttar Pradesh, such initiatives have improved the socio-economic status of women.

Poverty and Unemployment Reduction:

- By promoting various livelihood opportunities and providing guidance in entrepreneurship, SSDs have managed to reduce poverty and unemployment rates in numerous villages.

Social Harmony and Cooperation:

- Building social harmony and cooperation stands as one of the fundamental contributions of SSDs. Their approach promotes collective strength, voice, and a sense of unity among villagers.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- SSDs' roles extend to collecting baseline data, conducting surveys, implementing and supervising various schemes, evaluating impact, and identifying gaps and challenges. o Their continuous assessment and reporting ensure that the development initiatives are on the right track, with learnings and best practices being documented for future reference.

The Samaj Shilpi Dampati model's remarkable success in both motivating and guiding villagers and impacting holistic village development is a beacon for rural transformation. It stands as evidence that development, when rooted in empathy, participation, and community-driven efforts, can create sustainable and far-reaching impacts. The SSD model's underlying principles of integral humanism make it a promising blueprint that can be emulated not just in other parts of India but globally.

Challenges faced by SSD

Some of the challenges faced by SSDs in their work are:

- **Infrastructure Deficiency:** Lack of adequate infrastructure and facilities in the rural areas, such as roads, electricity, water, sanitation, health care, education, etc., which affect the quality of life and work of the SSDs and the villagers.
- **Local Resistance:** Resistance and apathy from some sections of the villagers, especially the traditional and conservative ones, who may not trust or cooperate with the SSDs or may oppose their initiatives for social change.

- **Lack of Awareness:** Lack of awareness and participation from some sections of the villagers, especially the poor and marginalized ones, who may not know or access their rights and entitlements or may not join the self-help groups or cooperatives.
- **Resource Constraints:** Lack of resources and support from the government and nongovernment organizations, which may affect the implementation and sustainability of the schemes and programs in the villages.
- **Personal Struggles:** Personal and professional challenges faced by the SSDs, such as living in harsh conditions, adjusting to a different culture and lifestyle, balancing their family and work responsibilities, coping with stress and isolation, etc.

However, despite these challenges DRI supports SSDs through various capacity-building initiatives, including orientation programs, regular training, and logistical and financial assistance. DRI supports and trains SSDs in various ways, such as:

- Providing them with orientation and induction programs to familiarize them with the vision, mission and values of DRI, the concept and role of SSDs, and the socioeconomic and cultural context of the rural areas.
- Organizing regular training and workshops on various aspects of rural development, such as health, education, agriculture, livelihood, etc., to enhance their knowledge, skills and competencies.
- Providing them with mentoring and guidance from senior staff and experts of DRI, who monitor their performance, provide feedback and suggestions, and resolve their issues and challenges.
- Providing them with logistical and financial support to facilitate their work in the villages, such as accommodation, transportation, communication, equipment, etc].

- Providing them with recognition and incentives to motivate them and appreciate their efforts, such as certificates, awards, promotions, etc.

Achievements of SSD

Some of the achievements of SSD in their work are:

- Improving the health and hygiene of the villagers by organizing health camps, distributing medicines, promoting sanitation and cleanliness, etc.
- Enhancing the education and literacy of the villagers by enrolling children in schools, providing books and stationery, conducting adult education classes, etc.
- Increasing the agricultural productivity and income of the villagers by introducing organic farming practices, watershed management projects, rural industries promotion, etc.
- Empowering the women and youth of the villagers by forming self-help groups, cooperatives, committees, etc., and providing them with training and credit facilities.
- Creating a harmonious and peaceful society of the villagers by resolving disputes, celebrating festivals, organizing cultural programs, etc.

Replicability and Scope

The model's success in over 1000 villages across India demonstrates its potential for scalability. Its underlying principles of participation, empowerment, and holistic thinking provide a strong theoretical foundation that can be adapted and replicated in various parts of the world.

The SSD model has provided a novel path for rural development that goes beyond economic growth to include community self-reliance and dignity. The integral humanistic principles that underlie this model offer a replicable blueprint for similar initiatives worldwide.

Socio-Economic Synergy in Chitrakoot (Swadeshi, Swalamban, Parasparavalamban, Antyodaya, Vikendrikaran and Sampurna Vikas Perspective)

The Deendayal Research Institute (DRI) at Chitrakoot stands as a testament to a transformative narrative in rural development, weaving together the rich tapestry of Swadeshi, Swalamban, Parasparavalamban, Antyodaya, Vikendrikaran, and Sampurna Vikas principles. This holistic integration of values has redefined the socio-economic landscape of the region, fostering sustainable progress while preserving cultural values and empowering the local community.

Swadeshi

Embracing an Indigenous Economic Paradigm: At the core of DRI Chitrakoot's success lies a commitment to Swadeshi, championing an indigenous economic model that resonates with the region's traditional wisdom. The institute's commendable success in promoting sustainable agriculture exemplifies this shift, incorporating practices such as crop rotation, water conservation, and organic farming. These initiatives not only enhance soil fertility but also contribute to increased productivity and profitability, aligning with the Swadeshi spirit of self-reliance.

The establishment of Udaymita Vidyapeeth further underscores the empowerment of local individuals, especially the youth, through entrepreneurship training. This initiative promotes skill development in sectors like pottery, carpentry, tailoring, and soap making, echoing the Swadeshi principle of fostering self-sufficiency. The "one village-one product" concept reinforces localized economies, supporting the indigenous ethos.

Swalamban

Nurturing Self-Reliance through Skill Development: Swalamban, the principle of self-reliance, is a guiding force in DRI Chitrakoot's initiatives. Entrepreneurship training, particularly through Udaymita Vidyapeeth, becomes a vehicle for nurturing self-reliance by providing skill development opportunities. This not only equips individuals with practical skills but also instills a sense of self-sufficiency, contributing to a more empowered and economically independent local populace.

Parasparavalamban

Mutual Cooperation for Collective Progress: The principle of Parasparavalamban, mutual cooperation, is deeply embedded in DRI Chitrakoot's operational philosophy. The institute's effective networking with government agencies and external organizations serves as a pivotal bridge between policy initiatives and on-the-ground realities. This collaboration ensures that resources and services reach the intended beneficiaries, forging a stronger bond between governance and the community. Parasparavalamban, or mutual cooperation, becomes a cornerstone for sustainable and inclusive development.

Antyodaya

Uplifting the Last Person: Antyodaya, the philosophy of uplifting the last person in the societal hierarchy, is vividly reflected in DRI Chitrakoot's educational and health initiatives. The establishment of schools like Surrendra Paul Gramodaya Vidyalaya embodies a commitment to providing quality education, ensuring inclusivity, and uplifting every individual through knowledge.

DRI Chitrakoot's contributions to clean drinking water, sanitation, and health awareness campaigns directly address the basic needs of the most marginalized. This commitment to Antyodaya goes beyond mere rhetoric,

translating into tangible efforts that uplift the socio-economic status of the underprivileged.

Vikendrikaran

Integrated Development for Comprehensive Progress: Vikendrikaran, or integrated development, is at the heart of DRI Chitrakoot's multi-faceted approach. The institute's initiatives span various domains, including education, health, economic empowerment, and social awareness. By recognizing that holistic progress requires addressing multiple dimensions of development, DRI Chitrakoot exemplifies the principles of Vikendrikaran.

Sampurna Vikas

Holistic Development for Lasting Impact: Sampurna Vikas, or holistic development, is the overarching theme that ties together DRI Chitrakoot's diverse initiatives. The formation of Village Development Committees (VDCs) represents a novel approach to decentralized governance, ensuring that development activities align with the comprehensive needs of the community. This participatory decision-making structure encourages local ownership, accountability, and ensures that development efforts are holistic and sustainable.

Conclusion

In the synthesis of Swadeshi, Swalamban, Parasparavalamban, Antyodaya, Vikendrikaran, and Sampurna Vikas principles, DRI Chitrakoot has crafted a model of rural development that stands as a beacon for harmonious and sustainable progress. This holistic socio-economic synergy seamlessly blends tradition with modernity, providing a roadmap for policymakers and communities alike. The success of DRI Chitrakoot not only transforms the socio-economic landscape of the region but also offers invaluable insights

for the formulation of effective policies, program implementation, and community engagement. The institute's model exemplifies a holistic approach to equitable and sustainable development, balancing material progress with cultural values, preserving heritage, empowering individuals, and paving the way for harmonious and prosperous rural communities.

INSIGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

Auroville and Sri Aurobindo Ashram

Swadeshi (Local Self-Reliance):

- Shradhanjali and cottage industries embody handmade craftsmanship, preserving traditional skills.
- Commitment to Swadeshi principles reflects Vyashti and Srishti aspects of collective well-being.

Swalamban (Self-Sufficiency):

- Auroville's sustainable initiatives like the Solar Kitchen and Solitude Farm showcase self-sufficiency.
- Emphasis on renewable energy, waste reduction, and sustainable agriculture aligns with Samashti principles.

Parasparavalamban (Community Cooperation):

- Communal living fosters shared prosperity, seen in the Svaram Sound Garden and Sri Aurobindo Ashram.
- Highlights interconnectedness, reflecting Srishti principles of collective well-being.

Sarvodaya (Collective Welfare):

- Educational institutions and healthcare services contribute to collective welfare in Auroville.
- Extends commitment beyond residents, embodying Samashti principles of collective well-being.

Sampurna Vikas (Harmonizing Spirituality and Material Life):

- Fusion of spirituality and material life seen in transformative experiences at Matrimandir and Savitri Bhavan.
- Integration of spiritual principles with practical living reflects Parameshti principles of transcendent and collective progress.

Doddamadhure's Swagrama Fellowship

Integral Humanism Alignment:

- Program actively embodies integral humanism through Swabhava, Swalamban, and Parasparavalamban.
- Empowers grassroots leadership aligning with Deendayal Ji's vision of participatory governance.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage:

- Focus on preserving cultural heritage resonates with Swabhava and Integral Humanism.
- Reintroduction of traditional practices aligns with Swalamban principles.

Community-Centric Approach:

- Emphasis on community-centric approaches rooted in mutual cooperation reflects Parasparavalamban.
- Bottom-up empowerment model fosters autonomy, self-reliance, and collective responsibility.

Holistic Development Focus:

- Swagrama Fellowship's comprehensive approach mirrors integral humanism's emphasis on addressing multiple dimensions.
- Contribution to the resilience of communities aligns with the Parasparavalamban principle.

Chitrakoot's Deendayal Research Institute (DRI):

- Swadeshi - Embracing an Indigenous Economic Paradigm
 - Commitment to Swadeshi seen in the promotion of sustainable agriculture and entrepreneurship.
 - Entrepreneurship training and self-help groups exemplify Swalamban, nurturing self-reliance.
- Parasparavalamban - Mutual Cooperation for Collective Progress
 - Networking with government agencies serves as a bridge between policy initiatives and on-the-ground realities.

- Collaboration ensures resources and services reach intended beneficiaries, embodying Parasparavalamban.
- Antyodaya - Uplifting the Last Person
 - Efforts towards education, health, and sanitation directly address basic needs of the marginalized.
 - Tangible efforts uplift socio-economic status, reflecting Antyodaya principles.
- Vikendrikan - Integrated Development for Comprehensive Progress
 - Multi-faceted approach addresses various domains, exemplifying the principles of Vikendrikan.
- Sampurna Vikas - Holistic Development for Lasting Impact:
 - Village Development Committees and participatory decision-making embody Parasparavalamban and Sampurna Vikas.
 - Reflects holistic socio-economic synergy, balancing tradition with modernity.

Overall Insights

The amalgamation of Swadeshi, Swalamban, Parasparavalamban, Sarvodaya, and Sampurna Vikas principles across Auroville, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Doddamadhure's Swagrama Fellowship, and DRI Chitrakoot offers profound insights. These principles, deeply rooted in Integral Humanism, have the transformative potential to shape vibrant and harmonious societies at the levels of Vyashti, Samashti, Srishti, and Parameshti integral humanism.

OBSERVATION AND KEY FINDINGS

Holistic Education in Auroville and Sri Aurobindo Ashram

- **Comprehensive Learning:** The field trip emphasizes the importance of holistic education that goes beyond traditional academics. It encompasses values, character development, and personal growth.
- **Spirituality in Education:** Auroville and Aurobindo Ashram School underscore the significance of integrating spiritual teachings into education for a deeper understanding of life and personal growth.
- **Conscious Evolution:** Conversations with educators highlight the concept of conscious evolution, challenging conventional education norms by prioritizing inner growth and spiritual development.

Inclusivity, Unity, and Sustainability in Auroville

- **Philosophical Resonance:** Auroville's commitment to inclusivity and unity aligns with philosophical ideas of societal well-being, demonstrating the impactful role of education and philosophy.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** Auroville's sustainability practices reflect a philosophy that intertwines education with environmental consciousness and social responsibility.
- **Balancing Tradition and Progress:** Discussions emphasize the need to balance tradition and progress, fostering openness to contemporary ideas while respecting cultural heritage.

Empowerment through Knowledge and Vibrant Community Participation in Doddamadhure

- **Conscious Choices:** Education is portrayed as a tool to empower individuals, providing knowledge and abilities for personal improvement and positive contributions to society.
- **Community Participation:** The Swagrama Fellowship's success hinges on vibrant community participation, aligning with the core

principle of Integral Humanism, emphasizing decentralized governance and active involvement.

Preservation of Cultural Identity and Bottom-Up Empowerment in Doddamadhure:

- **Cultural Heritage Integration:** Swagram Mitras' efforts highlight the importance of preserving cultural identity in development, aligning with Integral Humanism's emphasis on cultural and spiritual values.
- **Bottom-Up Empowerment:** The Swagrama Fellowship's success stems from a bottom-up empowerment model, mirroring Integral Humanism's call for grassroots-driven change and fostering autonomy.

Holistic Development, Long-Term Sustainability, and Integrated Approaches at DRI Chitrakoot

- **Holistic Development:** The Swagrama Fellowship prioritizes holistic development, addressing social, economic, and cultural dimensions, in line with Integral Humanism's comprehensive approach.
- **Long-Term Sustainability:** The initiative's impact extends beyond the short term, aligning with Integral Humanism's focus on enduring societal progress deeply rooted in cultural and moral values.
- **Integrated Approaches:** DRI Chitrakoot's success in sustainable agriculture, income generation, health initiatives, and literacy underscores an integrated approach that aligns with the principles of Integral Humanism.

Income Generation Strategies and Health Initiatives at DRI Chitrakoot

- **Sustainable Agriculture:** DRI Chitrakoot's adoption of sustainable agricultural practices aligns with ecological balance, promoting productivity and profitability.
- **Entrepreneurship Training:** Udaymita Vidyapeeth empowers local youth through entrepreneurship training, fostering self-sufficiency and supporting localized economies.

- **Health and Hygiene Initiatives:** Clean drinking water, sanitation, health awareness, and nutrition programs showcase DRI Chitrakoot's commitment to holistic well-being.

Literacy, Social Consciousness, and Village Cooperation at DRI Chitrakoot

- **Education Initiatives:** DRI Chitrakoot's commitment to quality education, adult literacy, and awareness campaigns on social issues align with the principles of Integral Humanism.
- **Village Cooperation:** The institute's focus on community events, mediation, and Village Development Committees promotes social cohesion, harmony, and decentralized governance.

Culmination of Observations at DRI Chitrakoot

- **Transformation in Rural Development:** DRI Chitrakoot's integrated approach is redefining rural development, balancing tradition with modernity, and empowering communities for sustainable progress.
- **Invaluable Insights:** Findings from DRI Chitrakoot offer crucial insights for policy formulation, program implementation, and community engagement, exemplifying a holistic approach to development.
- **Equitable and Sustainable Development:** DRI Chitrakoot's model provides a roadmap for harmonious and prosperous rural communities, ensuring a balance between material progress and cultural values.

The observations and key findings from diverse educational and developmental settings emphasize the transformative power of holistic education, inclusive development, and sustainable practices, aligning with the principles of Integral Humanism and offering valuable insights for shaping a more harmonious and equitable society.

Recommendations and Implications

Holistic Education Enhancement

- **Curriculum Enrichment:** Incorporate spiritual teachings, character development, and personal growth components into mainstream education curricula to foster holistic development.
- **Teacher Training Programs:** Implement training programs for educators to effectively integrate conscious evolution principles into teaching methodologies.

Inclusivity and Unity Initiatives

- **Community Engagement Platforms:** Establish platforms that encourage dialogue, understanding, and collaboration among diverse communities, fostering inclusivity and unity.
- **Education for Social Harmony:** Develop educational programs emphasizing shared values, cultural diversity, and social responsibility to contribute to societal well-being.

Empowerment and Community Participation

- **Decentralized Governance Training:** Provide training programs to promote decentralized governance, empowering local communities to actively participate in decision-making processes.
- **Community-Led Initiatives:** Support and fund initiatives that emerge from local communities, ensuring they have the resources and autonomy to drive their own development.

Preservation of Cultural Identity:

- **Cultural Integration Programs:** Implement programs that integrate traditional practices into modern initiatives, respecting and preserving cultural heritage within evolving societies.
- **Community Workshops:** Conduct workshops to raise awareness about the importance of cultural identity, fostering a sense of pride and continuity.

Sustainable Development Strategies

- **Replicable Models:** Document and share successful sustainable development models from Auroville, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, and DRI Chittrakoot as replicable examples for other regions.
- **Educational Campaigns:** Launch campaigns promoting environmental consciousness, responsibility, and sustainable practices at the community level.

Integrated Approaches for Rural Development

- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration across sectors for a more integrated approach to rural development, combining agriculture, education, health, and entrepreneurship.
- **Knowledge Exchange Platforms:** Establish platforms for knowledge exchange between successful initiatives like the Swagrama Fellowship and DRI Chittrakoot for cross-learning opportunities.

Enhanced Income Generation and Health Initiatives

- **Skill Development Programs:** Expand entrepreneurship training programs similar to Udaymita Vidyapeeth to empower individuals in diverse sectors, promoting self-sufficiency.
- **Health Literacy Campaigns:** Launch health literacy campaigns to raise awareness about preventive healthcare, nutrition, and holistic well-being in rural areas.

Literacy and Social Consciousness Programs:

- **Adult Literacy Expansion:** Scale up adult literacy programs to reach more communities, enhancing not only reading and writing skills but also life skills and social awareness.
- **Interactive Social Awareness Initiatives:** Implement initiatives like museums or awareness campaigns that facilitate dialogues on social issues, human values, and cultural heritage.

Village Cooperation and Harmony Building

- **Conflict Resolution Training:** Provide training in conflict resolution mechanisms to build peaceful and harmonious societies, reducing disputes and promoting empathy.
- **Community Celebration Platforms:** Support initiatives that organize community events and cultural activities, fostering unity, celebrating diversity, and nurturing social cohesion.

Knowledge Sharing and Policy Integration

- **Policy Integration Platforms:** Create platforms for policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders to share insights, facilitating the integration of successful models into regional and national policies.
- **Research Collaborations:** Encourage collaborations between academic institutions and development organizations to conduct research on the long-term impact of holistic development models.

Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

- **Impact Assessment Frameworks:** Develop comprehensive frameworks for monitoring and evaluating the impact of initiatives on various aspects of holistic development.
- **Continuous Improvement Mechanisms:** Establish mechanisms that allow for continuous improvement based on feedback and evolving community needs.

Public Awareness Campaigns

- **Communication Strategies:** Launch campaigns to raise public awareness about the principles of holistic development, Integral Humanism, and the importance of community-driven initiatives.
- **Media Partnerships:** Collaborate with media outlets to disseminate success stories, inspiring a broader audience to engage in holistic development practices.

These recommendations aim to build on the strengths observed during the field trips and draw from the collective wisdom of Auroville, Sri Aurobindo

Ashram, and DRI Chitrakoot. By implementing these suggestions, communities, policymakers, and educators can contribute to the advancement of holistic development, fostering sustainable, inclusive, and culturally rich societies.

Conclusion

The examination of Integral Humanism (IHI) in the socio-economic context uncovers meaningful insights into Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's visionary philosophy and its practical applications. At the heart of Integral Humanism lies a comprehensive paradigm seamlessly integrating material and economic aspects into the fabric of human life. This exploration unveils key perspectives and principles, providing a roadmap for inclusive development, sustainable progress, and the harmonization of individual and collective well-being. Integral Humanism underscores the development of individuals rooted in Bhartiya values, forming the bedrock for nation-building. Upadhyaya's vision advocates for robust character development, fostering leaders at various societal levels and cultivating a society deeply rooted in cultural ethos for collective progress.

Education, as envisioned by Integral Humanism, is a transformative force shaping individuals with values crucial for the 21st century. The philosophy emphasizes sustainable development, self-dependence, individual freedom, social justice, and cultural preservation, aligning education with societal progress and individual well-being. The philosophy places utmost emphasis on spiritual and moral development, intertwining the interconnectedness of body, mind, heart, and intellect. This holistic approach highlights the path to spiritual realization and harmony with the universe, emphasizing the importance of aligning personal growth with a higher purpose.

Integral Humanism critiques Western philosophies that lead to exploitation, excessive consumerism, capitalism, and socialism. Upadhyaya's vision emphasizes harmony with nature, protection of the weak, and the rejection of conflict-based ideologies, offering an alternative perspective deeply rooted in Bharatiya cultures. Advocating for Antyodaya, Integral Humanism places emphasis on uplifting the bottom of society, particularly in agriculture, employment, and rural strength. The slogan "Har hath ko kaam

har khet ko paani" underscores the philosophy's commitment to a robust rural sector as a key driver of economic growth and overall well-being.

Integral Humanism discusses 'Ekatma Arthneeti' for balanced resource use, contrasting the Western addiction to wealth acquisition. Upadhyaya's emphasis on a holistic approach to resource utilization rejects the singular pursuit of wealth, aligning with his broader rejection of Western economic ideologies. Believing in adopting the latest technologies with a humanistic focus, Integral Humanism emphasizes rational technology use and decentralization. Upadhyaya's advocacy for embracing technology and decentralization aligns with the philosophy's goal of societal development and the importance of local production and private ownership.

In navigating the socio-economic landscape through the lens of Integral Humanism, these perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for inclusive development, guided by values deeply rooted in Indian ethos. The field study, conducted in Puducherry, Doddamadhure, and Chitrakoot, serves as a practical exploration of these principles in diverse settings. Each location offers unique insights, showcasing the adaptability and relevance of Integral Humanism in addressing the intricacies of Vyashti, Samashti, Srishti, and Parameshti. As we delve into Integral Humanism, it becomes evident that its principles guide not only economic policies but also shape the very soul of the nation. The socio-economic sector, viewed through the lens of Integral Humanism, becomes a canvas where the interplay of individual, societal, and universal dimensions converges, fostering a holistic and inclusive vision for the future. Integral Humanism emerges not merely as a philosophy but as a guiding light, illuminating a path towards a balanced and harmonious society where economic growth coexists with cultural values, spiritual well-being, and the upliftment of every individual.

CONCLUSION

The profound journey from an ordinary "Man" to the realization of an "Integral Man" is intricately woven into the visionary ideas of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. This transformative concept extends beyond individual self-development, reaching into broader societal and socio-economic realms. Its significance within academia and socio-economic spheres lies in its advocacy for a comprehensive and harmonious approach to human existence and societal advancement.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's vision of the "Integral Man" goes beyond mere physical existence, seeking to harmonize material and spiritual facets, laying the foundation for a holistic worldview. Unraveling the essence of this philosophy provides valuable insights into how academia and socio-economic sectors can be molded to cultivate individual growth, promote societal well-being, and nurture a sustainable and equitable future.

The field study is a journey into the practical application of Integral Humanism, emphasizing the need for holistic education that imparts knowledge while nurturing character, values, and a profound sense of responsibility. In the socio-economic sector, it underscores the significance of equitable development, social justice, and sustainable progress as integral components of a flourishing society. Through this exploration, we shed light on the enduring relevance and practical application of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy in shaping a more inclusive and harmonious society, where the individual and the collective thrive in unison.

The vision of Integral Humanism, aiming to infuse Deendayal Upadhyaya's universal philosophy into academics, socio-economics, and corporate sectors, becomes a transformative force. This initiative embodies core values fostering comprehensive and balanced development, recognizing the interconnectedness of the individual and the universal. Grounded in principles like self-reliance, Swadharma, Swaraj, Swadeshi, Parasparalambana, Vikendrikaran, Antyodaya, and Samagra Vikas, it

envisions a future of balanced growth where self-realization, mutual interdependency, and inclusive development flourish.

The study's objectives are meticulously crafted to delve into the practical application of Integral Humanism, the integration of values in academics, the assessment of mainstream education, socio-economic integration, and exploring the potential of Integral Humanism in development models. Methodologically, the study employs diverse approaches, from descriptive and qualitative methods in Puducherry to ethnography in Bengaluru and Chittrakoot. A review of literature draws from foundational texts and policies, providing a robust theoretical framework.

The Integral Humanism field study unveils the essence of a transformative philosophy. It showcases the adaptability and relevance of Integral Humanism in diverse settings, emphasizing its role in bridging the gap between individual and societal needs, spirituality and nation-building, and economics and society. The journey from philosophical exploration to practical application underscores the enduring wisdom inherent in Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's vision, offering a guiding light for a future where every individual thrives as an integral part of the universal family. This odyssey into Integral Humanism is not merely an academic pursuit; it is a call to action, an invitation to weave its principles into the fabric of our collective existence for a more harmonious and interconnected world.

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APPENDICES

SITE-1: PUDUCHERRY

Appendix 1: Transcription of conversation with Smt. Abha at Shradhanjali (Auroville)

Sampadananda Mishra asked:

How different is the life of these people than the life of others?

Abha ji said it's good to have one-on-one conversations with all the employees there at Shradhanjali.

If we want to make students understand the beauty of nature, how can we?

As we can observe, all these works can be done via machines and other things, but at Shradhanjali, we are not using that; rather, you are choosing the handmade. So why did you choose the old mechanism or take the use of handmade?

Abha ji says- Although the handmade is very minimal because India has children with the wealth of craft knowledge and earlier would live with what they had in villages. Earlier, people used to make baskets out of straws, eat whatever they found in forests; they used to have a simple living with skills, like many handmade things. But today we are not preserving that tradition; instead, we are losing its importance and value. Everything has become so quick today that people also expect so much quickness. But there lies the value of these crafts knowledge people. The majority of the work here is mostly quiet, and the nature around Auroville to the others makes a huge difference.

She shares why they started Shradhanjali?

Before there were a lot of problems in Auroville. Auroville had to become self-sufficient at the same time. Some group decided to generate some

income via hands. Shradhanjali mostly works with the ladies. And women had a really very participating role in rural India. When a woman studies, the whole society studies, and there lies a beauty of giving to others. So, to teach very simple skills, it has many more layers in the person, in family, and in society. And it takes time to be aware of action, creativity, and it changes the thought process, so it basically takes time. Our aim is to give perfection towards our work; that is something for what mother has invited all the people; Aurobindo's whole philosophy is based on Self-Perfection. But our main work is manual. At Shradhanjali, there are a total of 19 people working from morning to evening. We also do health check-ups for all of 19 people. All the workers come under the government employee and get all their PF, also in addition to that they have proper Health checkups. If there is any serious problem, they have huge help from the hospitals. At Shradhanjali, Abha ji also teaches the basic necessity to all the workers regarding them and their families. As women never take care of themselves, they take care of men or their children.

Have you ever written about Shradhanjali, or any documentations?

Not much has been written; someone did Shradhanjali's one interview 30 years ago, now it is 43 years of Shradhanjali. So, it's a written interview.

All workers are Aurovillians?

Nobody is Aurovillians; there are around 19 people from 11 different villages around Auroville. It is another unique aspect of Auroville. The realization of Auroville has to do with the surrounding villages. It has to be harmonious; it has to spread in this region. There is also a group in which 40 regions work in Auroville. Organic farming, organic food they know, water conservation; actually, there is not much garbage control, but there is an awareness. There is a lot of greenery and health awareness.

What is the selection process?

They do a very basic test, like folding the card, fixing the edges; if they can listen and do what is told that is a very basic test. Like pasting flowers, mostly women know, but they do a test to recruit the person. There are people who have worked for many years; they get married and then also still carry on the work.

In Auroville there is dignity of work, dignity of people, very strong and important as well. All the workers are on a basis. They have their salary with PF etc., so they follow the same rules as the other small-scale industries. They follow all GOI rules.

Have you ever thought to take all these skills to the outside world of Auroville?

So according to material, interest, and need of the work, there should be a skill in the particular person and region. She says once we went to some organization and gifted some gift, but it doesn't make sense to people what it is; rather, it could make more sense if people come here and then see all the things. Every region has its uniqueness and needs different plants and people.

People are very much fond of handmade products, so how do you meet the need of the people regarding the products?

Abha ji says that we say to them, see this is our capacity to produce, because we have to have flowers also, and it is a long process. And our final goal is not to make a profit but to grow as humans, work consciously. Abha ji has clients outside India whose need is not too much but to explore the beauty of the products. Earlier, we used to have shops, but now it has all closed. Mostly people who are inclined towards clean, organic, handmade things only take orders. Before covid, Shradhanjali had many small shops in Chandigarh, Dharamshala, Amritsar, but now we had very few. They also had a social media handle on Instagram i.e., shrandajaliauroville.com. But they are not very active on Instagram. Students from different schools of

design come here for internships, but due to covid, it is almost diminished. But Auroville has many students.

Summary and Analysis of the Transcription

Abha ji emphasizes the importance of one-on-one conversations with the employees at Shradhanjali to understand their unique way of life. The discussion touches upon teaching students about the beauty of nature and the value of handmade crafts in today's fast-paced world. Abha ji highlights the significance of preserving traditional craft knowledge and simple living with skills. Shradhanjali was established to address economic challenges in Auroville and primarily involves working with women. Women's participation in rural India is crucial, and teaching them skills has multi-layered benefits for individuals, families, and society. The aim is to achieve perfection in work, aligning with Aurobindo's philosophy of Self-Perfection. Shradhanjali employs 19 people who receive government benefits and health check-ups. Abha ji educates workers about basic necessities for themselves and their families. The interview sheds light on the lack of documentation about Shradhanjali's work. Workers at Shradhanjali come from various villages around Auroville, emphasizing the community's harmonious integration. Selection involves basic tests to assess skills like folding cards and pasting flowers. Auroville upholds dignity in work and follows government rules and regulations. The discussion considers taking Shradhanjali's skills to the wider world and the uniqueness of each region's needs. Abha ji explains how they communicate their capacity to produce handmade products to potential clients. Shradhanjali has faced challenges due to COVID-19, impacting its presence in physical shops and online platforms. The organization has hosted design students for internships in the past, though this was affected by the pandemic

Appendix 2: *Transcription of conversation with Shri Deven* **(Auroville)**

Devan ji: When Auroville was started, it was one of the structures approved by the Government of India, allowing it to operate independently without government involvement. Mother's vision was profound; she emphasized that nobody should govern, and if everyone is connected to their souls, and those souls are connected to the divine, then the divine will manifest. This vision might take a hundred years or more. She established the Sri Aurobindo Society as a trust to legally oversee the vast land of Auroville. The society's role was to raise funds and provide resources for Aurovillians to consciously work towards self-sufficiency.

Government intervention was minimal, and even the land was acquired through donations from Sri Aurobindo and Mother. Mother placed the trust offices in both Pondicherry and Auroville, intending for the society to provide resources when needed. The government did not contribute financially. The government's role was later solidified with the Auroville Foundation Act, which was enacted to resolve disputes between Auroville and the society. This act brought Auroville's assets under the ministry of Education, India. Three key governing bodies were established: the Governing Board appointed by the Government of India, the International Advisory Council, and the Resident Assembly, representing all residents collectively.

Over the 40 years since the act was passed, some deviations from Mother's vision have occurred. For instance, the city's design was not aligned with her plan, leading to land being used for agriculture instead of housing residents. Some individuals were allocated land with the understanding that it would be vacated for residents, but they did not vacate as intended. Government directives to align with Mother's vision have sparked debates and protests within Auroville. There were also changes in the selection of groups responsible for various aspects of Auroville, transitioning from community-driven selections to government-appointed bodies. Despite the challenges,

the ultimate question remains: How can the consciousness of all Aurovillians align with the plan? Auroville has around 3.5 thousand residents, and the harmony between individual freedom and responsibility is crucial.

Economic Structure:

In terms of economics, the ideal was for Auroville to become fully self-supporting over time. Units were supposed to fulfill the community's needs first and then generate surplus for income. However, when Auroville split from society, financial support was cut, leading to financial difficulties for many residents. Units like Shradhanjali were created to generate income using savings. Units like a candle-making unit sell their products at higher prices because they're unique. From an economic standpoint, Auroville primarily relies on its approximately 300 units, ranging from small to large in scale, to generate profits. These units are responsible for Auroville's main sources of income. There is a balance between the need for self-sufficiency and the reality of dependence on funds.

Unity in Diversity:

Auroville's intention is to embrace unity in diversity, and this is reflected in its various housing communities, each with its guidelines and principles. For instance, some communities prioritize solar power and use fans powered by solar energy. Others focus on sustainability by using water mugs and small holes instead of taps. Some allow the use of AC and refrigerators, while others opt for shared kitchens. Each community sets its values and guidelines, contributing to the diversity within Auroville.

Housing Selection:

When newcomers arrive in Auroville, they have two options for housing selection. They can either create a new community and establish guidelines for choosing residents, or they can join an existing vacant house. There's a nominal rate of around 5,000 rupees for a 2BHK when families first move to

Auroville. After a year, families decide which community they want to be part of, and there is flexibility for residents to switch between communities.

Devan ji's Background:

Devan ji transitioned from a corporate career in finance and software to a non-profit organization in Goa for eight years before becoming part of the service unit called Flourish in Auroville. His focus in Auroville is on education, particularly teaching entrepreneurship.

Appendix 3: *Transcription of conversation with Shri Alok Pandey (Sri Aurobindo Ashram)*

Q1 (Sampadananda Mishra): What do you think about Sri Aurobindo's concept of a spiritualized society, and its relevance to bringing about a massive change in the political field?

Alok Pandey ji: Sri Aurobindo's concept of a spiritualized society is indeed significant, especially for initiating substantial changes in politics. However, we should understand that Sri Aurobindo's stance shifted around 1930, where he transitioned from speaking about Yoga for the sake of humanity to Yoga for the sake of the divine. This shift created confusion among people and led to his withdrawal from active politics. Many didn't take him seriously at that time, and only a few of his books were available. People didn't grasp the vastness of his teachings. Two key elements need to be highlighted from Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. First, man is not the final stage of evolution, which distinguishes his teachings. While Vedanta stops at human beings, Sri Aurobindo's philosophy extends beyond human evolution. Second, he introduced the concept of conscious evolution, emphasizing the need for individuals and society to evolve consciously.

Q2 (Akhil ji): How do you view semiotics in religions, and are they considering or focusing on the human core?

Alok Pandey ji: Semiotics in religions often overlook the core and tend to reinforce the idea of survival of the fittest. This perspective seeks to extend religious beliefs to future generations and immortalize their dogmas. However, the human evolutionary process introduces the concept of progress, unlike animals where there is no such progression. In Indian thought, there is a recognition that progress is essential. The question to raise is whether there are universal standards of conduct. Instead of imposing answers on children, they should be encouraged to contemplate

these questions. Children often possess innate wisdom, and we should listen to their insights.

Q3 (Abhishek ji): In the process of developing a curriculum that includes the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda, who should be invited to participate, and should teachers be involved?

Alok Pandey ji: The invitation should extend to individuals who genuinely aspire to go beyond conventional boundaries. Participation should not be limited to individuals from the humanities but also those from different backgrounds, provided they are spiritually inclined.

Regarding teachers, it's essential to engage those who understand that education is about inculcating knowledge by self-discovery rather than merely imparting information. Teachers should encourage students to think critically and explore choices. Democracy without education is insufficient for societal progress.

Q4 (Sampadananda Mishra): Is there a way to expose children to the essence of Sanatan Dharma through nature and natural processes?

Alok Pandey ji: Yes, exposing children to the essence of Sanatan Dharma through nature is an effective approach. For instance, assigning tasks like writing an essay on a cow can lead to deeper discussions about its symbolism in Indian culture. Projects that encourage students to connect with the sacredness of nature and their surroundings can be beneficial. Encourage them to explore and understand the deeper essence of things. Holistic knowledge can be imparted through Sanskrit shlokas and teachings about the five elements, creating a taste-driven process. Additionally, separate classes, such as awakening or conscious living classes, once or twice a week, can help children delve deeper into these concepts and reflect on their experiences and learnings. It's important to foster a

culture of self-evaluation and critical thinking among both students and teachers.

Appendix 4: *Transcription of conversation with Shri Kittu Reddy (Sri Aurobindo Ashram)*

Q1 (Akhil ji): We are working on an initiative called The Integral Humanism Initiative, looking at the perspectives of Deendayal ji and Sri Aurobindo. How can we effectively teach children these values?

Kittu Reddy Da: The question is not where the problem lies, but where you see harmony. Mother once advised me to maintain unwavering goodwill towards everyone, regardless of the situation. Psychologically, it's essential not to hold grudges and to step back unless you believe you can bring about change.

Q2 (Akhil ji): Can you share your experiences with Sri Aurobindo and Mother?

Kittu Reddy Da: I had the darshan of Sri Aurobindo 42 times. However, I never interacted with him orally or in writing since I arrived at the Ashram in 1941, while he had retired in 1926. I did have the opportunity to see him from a close distance. One memorable moment was when he leaned towards Mother and said, "The future is now safe." Another time was in 1946 when I was in the Ashram hall, and he commented on a meeting he had in 1939.

Q3 (Sampadananda Mishra): What was your experience with Mother?

Kittu Reddy Da: Mother was an epitome of love. I remember standing below her on the staircase, and I was involved in a small fight with my friends. I knew she might scold me, but instead, she called me, asked if I could read French, and had me read a poem. She praised my reading and patted me on the head. She expected me to visit her daily, and I did so, sitting beside her to receive her affectionate patting.

Q4 (Sampadananda Mishra): You've written a book; what inspired you to do so?

Kittu Reddy Da: I never wrote a book on my own initiative. In 1973, someone requested Mother to teach history, and she suggested I write a history book. At that time, there were no computers, so it took me a long time to write it. After 15 or 20 years, I started writing long chapters, gave them to Kireet Joshi, and it eventually got published. I continued writing series after series.

Q5 (Akhil ji): Given your experiences with Sri Aurobindo and Mother, what do you think we should teach children, especially in the age group of 5-8?

Kittu Reddy Da: Don't force theories upon them. Connect them with stories of Sri Aurobindo and Mother as children prefer stories to theories. Children between 9 and 10 are sensitive and can absorb teachings through experiences. To know life, you have to taste it, just as you season fruits to make jam without tasting them.

Q6 (Akhil ji): In your opinion, what is the secret to a good life?

Kittu Reddy Da: "One Earth, One family, One Future."

Q7 (Akhil ji): Nowadays, children seem to be very fragmented. How can we correct this?

Kittu Reddy Da: Interestingly, it's the opposite. Nowadays, children are more connected due to technology.

Q8 (Akhil ji): May I ask your age?

Kittu Reddy Da: I am 87 years old, and this Sunday is my birthday.

Q9 (Akhil ji): What do you usually do on your birthdays?

Kittu Reddy Da: My friends order cakes and sometimes food. I visit the Ashram, offer prayers, make donations, and go to Andhra Bhavan. I enjoy sweets too. I also meet with students.

Q10 (Sampadananda Mishra): We're currently working on the Integral Humanism project on Deendayal Dayal Upadhyaya. We're exploring Sri Aurobindo's Integral Humanism, Yoga, and its applications in community living. Kittu Reddy Da: I used to teach the military about Sri Aurobindo and

soft skills. I believe every Indian should serve in the military, both physically and psychologically. Mother and Sri Aurobindo had tremendous respect for the Indian Army. I also have some art pieces gifted by Mother and Sri Aurobindo with their autographs, including one with Mother's footprints.

Appendix 5: Transcription of conversation with Shri DeshPandey (Sri Aurobindo Ashram)

Q1 (Sampadananda Mishra): How is Sanskrit related to Integral Humanism?

Deshpandey Ji: Sanskrit draws itself from Vedanta.

Q2 (Sampadananda Mishra): Deshpandey Ji began by introducing each of us. He then asked what Integral Humanism (IH) means to everybody.

Akhil Ji: IH signifies the interconnectedness of the individual and society, a fascinating idea about how everything is interconnected.

Deshpandey Ji: But why did the founder of IH draw inspiration from Vedanta, and what are its predictions for the future? Drawing inspiration is one thing, but recreating something relevant to the current time is another. Are you satisfied with what IH proposes?

Abhishek Ji: He talks about self-reliance. Deshpandey Ji: Has he explicitly mentioned self-reliance?

Abhishek Ji: Yes, he has categorically stated why India needs it, emphasizing the continuity with our past. IH connects this with swadeshi, advocating self-reliance to align with Indian needs. We should adopt what comes from outside but adapt it to our context.

Deshpandey Ji: Self-reliance is not possible without creativity. Beyond self-reliance, IH's philosophy should address the originality of our creative spirit. Agriculture and industry are secondary; the primary issue is what's lacking within us. We need to prepare for that and be self-creative. Currently, in many fields, we are just copies of copies. IH hasn't created a significant impact because it hasn't fostered originality. The vision of totality is absent.

Q3 (Sampadananda Mishra): There are two major objectives of this project - how to integrate the teachings of these masters into school education and whether schools run by the Ashram can assimilate them. Can this be done?

Deshpandey Ji: I have reservations about the National Education Policy (NEP). It dismisses the universality and quality of English. We shouldn't ignore English or Indian languages but appreciate the universality of English. If we disregard the spirit of the English language, we

may lose touch with Sri Aurobindo. Nationalism doesn't mean limiting ourselves to our culture and values; we must embrace more. We need to consider modern ways of communication and living to take the nation forward. IH is not in tune with the times.

Q4 (Akhil Ji): How can we prepare young children spiritually and in practical life?

Deshpandey Ji: Set aside all "isms" and think originally and deeply. Prepare for the future that awaits expression, both spiritually and practically.

Q5 (Neelabh Ji): DDU talks about the integration of human beings with the world, borrowing technological advancements, and integrating them according to swabhav and swadharma. How do we ensure this integration?

Deshpandey Ji: These possibilities must be assimilated into our own system, not just taken, or given. It should be a spontaneous interchange, integration, and enrichment of our own prospects. We need to focus on the genesis and initiation of such ideas and understand how India can grow.

Q6 (Neelabh Ji): The idea of industry, as you mentioned, doesn't align with India's status as a third-world nation. How much more capitalism do we need to progress?

Deshpandey Ji: Capitalism, with its skills and resources, is essential for progress. The exploitation aspects are distortions, and we shouldn't throw away capitalism but address these distortions. Capitalism is necessary for modern advancements like bullet trains and space travel. We need to promote skills, not classify individuals based on caste. Chaturvarna is about harmony and integration, not separation.

Akhil Ji: Please share some personal experiences with Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

Deshpandey Ji: DDU touched upon various crucial aspects like social humanization, democratic humanization, and human humanization. The Greek and Latin civilizations were essentially humanistic, and after Christ, Europe became humanized. However, Indians couldn't be human in the same way, so we had to grow differently to promote humanity. The task is to discover what is superhuman. Sri Aurobindo's motto is "The whole life is yoga," which leads to divine humanism, not just human humanism. It involves governance by a higher supramental power, integrating knowledge of matter and spirit.

Appendix 6: Transcription of conversation with Shri Rajkumar (Sri Aurobindo Ashram School)

Riya: Can you explain the program for physical activities at the school?

Rajkumar Ji: The program has been consistent for the last 50 years, with each day dedicated to specific activities like basketball, volleyball, wrestling, gym, gymnastics, swimming, football, and hockey. We have coaches and captains for each group, and we even have lady coaches for the girls. All our coaches have grown up in the ashram.

Akhil: Could you describe the facilities available in the ashram for sports and physical activities?

Rajkumar Ji: We have various facilities, including playgrounds, gymnastics areas, and bodybuilding spaces. Meditation is also a part of our daily routine, practiced twice a day. On Saturdays, we screen films with a 36mm screen, and our schedule revolves around the film timing. We have all sorts of games and athletics. Additionally, we have a tennis ground, a wrestling pit, and optional sports like tennis, table tennis, and cricket. These three are available if you express interest.

Riya: How do you maintain discipline and punctuality among the students?

Rajkumar Ji: We have a well-structured timetable, and the maintenance is done before the children arrive. We have specific teams for tasks like carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, and more. Even changing a light requires six people. Our students practice gymnastics daily, divided into divisions according to their capacity. Coaches assign exercises based on their capabilities. We focus on spiritual aspects of physical education and practical approaches.

Akhil: What motivates you to stay at the ashram?

Rajkumar Ji: My parents wanted me to pursue sports, and my elder brother was head of the family. It was a natural progression for me. I haven't left Pondicherry for 35 years, except for ashram-related sports work. My brother is a strong devotee of Sri Aurobindo and Mother, which has also influenced me. We have a lot of freedom here, and Mother's concepts of Physical Education guide our activities.

Riya: How do you teach discipline and punctuality to the students?

Rajkumar Ji: We don't have to emphasize discipline and punctuality much. We follow a well-established timetable, and students tend to adhere to it. Our approach to Physical Education includes both spiritual and practical aspects.

Akhil: Can you share some of the concepts of Physical Education given by Mother?

Rajkumar Ji: Mother stressed the importance of instilling ambition and a desire for physical fitness in children. She also discussed the meaning of sports and strength. We have posters that motivate students, and we use ashram-made bodybuilding equipment. Meditation is a crucial part of our approach, teaching students to calm their thoughts and minds.

Appendix 7: Transcription of conversation with Smt. Gayatri (Sri Aurobindo Ashram School)

Question: How many years of schooling does the Aurobindo Ashram School provide?

Answer: The school provides up to 18 years of schooling. Kindergarten is for three years (ages 3 to 5), followed by three years from ages 5 to 8.

Question: What languages are used for communication in the school?

Answer: The entire communication in the school is conducted in two languages: French and Sanskrit. French is used for science and mathematics, while Sanskrit is taught alongside the mother tongue, which includes languages like Oriya, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, and Telugu. Ashram teachers teach these languages.

Question: How is English integrated into the curriculum?

Answer: English is introduced as a subject in English medium classes. It covers subjects like History and Geography. At the college level, students can choose to learn additional languages such as Italian, German, Russian, Korean, etc.

Question: What is the student-to-teacher ratio in the classes?

Answer: Classes typically consist of 5 students per teacher, and there are never more than 10 to 12 students in a class.

Question: What activities do students engage in apart from regular studies?

Answer: Apart from academics, students are taught various practical skills, including carpentry, clay work, pottery, and sculpture. Computer literacy was introduced after kindergarten.

Question: How is homework managed in school?

Answer: Students are not required to carry heavy bags. They only need to bring a notebook for homework. If they don't complete homework, they are not scolded. Additionally, each child is given a storybook in either French or English.

Question: What other extracurricular activities are available to students?

Answer: The school offers a wide range of extracurricular activities, including music, dance, Indian classical dances (such as Bharatanatyam, Odissi, and Kathak), and various artistic activities.

Question: How is discipline maintained in the school?

Answer: The school follows a routine that includes prayer and meditation. Activities begin with concentration and end with discussions. Discipline is not enforced through punishment but rather through self-realization.

Question: What is the approach to education inspired by Sri Aurobindo's philosophy?

Answer: The school follows an Integral Education approach, covering subjects like science, mathematics, history, geography, and languages. It also includes computer science, engineering, biology, gardening, and various artistic and creative activities.

Question: How does the school encourage self-discovery and freedom in learning?

Answer: The school follows a free progress system, where students are given significant freedom to choose their interests and pace of learning. Students can choose single or multiple activities based on their interests.

Question: How is project-based learning implemented in the school?

Answer: Project-based learning allows students to explore topics of interest in depth. Students are given resources and time to research, experiment, and present their findings. It encourages a deeper understanding of subjects.

Question: What happens when students graduate from school?

Answer: Graduates have the choice to continue their studies outside the ashram or remain within the ashram. The school's focus is not on career-oriented education but on holistic development.

Question: How do students prepare for entrance exams if they choose to continue their studies outside the ashram?

Answer: The school's recognition by the central government in 1962 allows students to prepare for competitive exams like UPSC, banks, and university entrance exams. The teachers also keep in touch with the students to provide guidance and support.

Question: Do students have access to the internet?

Answer: Students have access to the internet under the guidance of teachers, ensuring responsible and supervised use.

Appendix 8: Transcription of conversation with Sri Aurobindo Ashram School Teachers.

Question: How does the Integral Education at Ashram School practically manifest Sri Aurobindo and Mother's vision?

Answer: The school is a practical example of Integral Education, emphasizing community living and bringing various units together. It offers a different approach compared to mainstream education.

Question: How long has Satya been at the Aurobindo Ashram School, and what is the main focus of education there?

Answer: Satya has been at the school for 26 to 27 years. The focus is not just to impart education but to help students live a beautiful life. The emphasis is on personality development and conscious decision-making.

Question: What are the initial plans for the project involving curriculum and modules for K-12 students?

Answer: The project aims to create curriculum modules, textbooks, kids' books, games, and work on understanding the psyche of students. It will focus on alternative and free progress schooling methods.

Question: How does Ashram School approach teaching topics like Sri Aurobindo's life?

Answer: The school doesn't impose topics on students. Instead, it allows students to express their interests. If a student wants to learn about Sri Aurobindo, they are taught accordingly.

Question: What role does interaction play between teachers and students in the school?

Answer: Interaction between teachers and students is extensive, from breakfast to playground activities. There's no hierarchy in the school, and

teachers are an integral part of ashram life. Students subconsciously imbibe the ashram's values.

Question: How does the school maintain continuity in education when students and classes shift frequently?

Answer: The school teaches at various levels and adapts to students' interests, creating a holistic approach. This approach leads to an intimate connection between students and the ashram school.

Question: How does the school handle the evaluation process and report cards?

Answer: Ashram School does not follow the traditional marks-based pattern. They use classroom interactions and assignments to evaluate students. The small class sizes allow for individual attention, providing a global view of each child's progress.

SITE 2: DODDAMADHURE (BANGALURU- CHANAKYA UNIVERSITY)

Appendix 9: Summary of Round Table Discussion with Prof. M. S. Chaitra, Chanakya University, CESS Faculties and Youth For Seva People.

On the 28th of June 2023, a significant meeting transpired between representatives from Chanakya University and Youth For Sewa. The gathering aimed to discuss the collective efforts behind the revitalization of Indian villages through the "Swagrama Fellowship – My Village, My Pride" initiative. The meeting featured a diverse group of attendees, each contributing unique perspectives to the discourse.

Introduction and Attendees: The meeting commenced with Prof. Chaitra, who initiated the proceedings by inviting attendees to introduce themselves. Among the attendees were Prof. Sadananda and Prof. Sampadananda Mishra, both eminent scholars in their respective fields. The participants included individuals with diverse backgrounds such as political science, literature, sociology, and more. The gathering embodied a collaborative spirit, representative of the multidisciplinary approach pursued by the initiative.

Context and Historical Overview: Prof. Chaitra provided valuable insights into the historical context that led to the conceptualization of the "Swagrama Fellowship" initiative. He drew parallels to Mahatma Gandhi's idea of Swaraj (self-governance) and the contributions of Dharampal ji, whose works sought to integrate traditional knowledge with contemporary development. Prof. Chaitra highlighted the shifting understanding of villages over time, from British colonial perspectives to the emergence of Village Studies in Indian sociology during the 1990s.

Challenges and Interventions: The discussion delved into the challenges faced by Indian villages over the past several decades. Prof. Chaitra

highlighted the consistent complaints regarding villagers' lack of participation in development programs. He juxtaposed this with historical data from Dharampal ji's archival reports, which depicted villagers as cohesive communities coming together for various activities. The dichotomy between community engagement and the skepticism towards government interventions presented a thoughtprovoking paradox.

Revitalization and Swaraj: Prof. Chaitra emphasized the need to rejuvenate villages at their core, envisioning a scalable model that aligns with the spirit of "Swaraj" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India). The initiative aimed to redefine the relationship between villages and modernity, striving to foster a renewed sense of self-reliance and cultural identity.

Key Takeaways:

- The meeting fostered a diverse and collaborative environment, reflecting the multidisciplinary approach of the initiative.
- Prof. Chaitra's insights highlighted the historical evolution of village perspectives and the challenges posed by government interventions.
- The paradox of villagers' communal engagement and their skepticism towards external interventions sparked thoughtful discussions.
- The initiative's core objective of revitalizing villages aligned with the principles of selfgovernance and self-reliance.

Closing Thoughts: The meeting provided a platform for thought-provoking discussions, shedding light on the historical, sociological, and developmental aspects of the "Swagrama Fellowship" initiative. Attendees left the meeting with a heightened sense of purpose, recognizing the significance of fostering self-reliance and community engagement as cornerstones of holistic village development.

In the context of village intervention and the innovative "Swagrama Fellowship" initiative, a comprehensive discussion took place. The meeting aimed to explore the nuances of addressing village development and the

unique approach undertaken by the fellowship program. The following key points were highlighted during the discourse:

Understanding Villages and Preconditions: The meeting initiated by probing the fundamental question of how villages should be perceived. It was established that any intervention in a village necessitates certain preconditions for effective implementation. The primary precondition underscored the importance of recognizing interventions that are essential for the village itself, as opposed to imposing solutions perceived by outsiders. This distinction was critical to enhance community participation.

Embracing Village Uniqueness: The notion of village uniqueness emerged as a central theme. Each village was viewed as a distinct entity with its own cultural, societal, and historical characteristics. Drawing an analogy to a biological organism, villages were likened to having their own personality or "swabhava." This perspective resonated with villagers, fostering a connection to their individuality. It was acknowledged that understanding a village's unique essence was vital for effective interventions.

Participatory Approach and Community Involvement: A participatory approach was championed as the cornerstone of successful interventions. The fellowship program aimed to shift away from a top-down model where outsiders dictate solutions. Instead, it emphasized collaboration with villagers to identify and address their actual needs. The idea of "change makers" was questioned, and the focus shifted towards empowering communities rather than relying solely on motivated individuals.

Overcoming Stereotypes and Moral Equivalence: A critical aspect addressed was dispelling the stereotype of "changing" villagers through interventions. It was emphasized that villagers were morally upright and intelligent individuals, not in need of external moral development. The approach shifted from defining actions for villagers to allowing them to determine their path. The importance of respecting the autonomy and intelligence of villagers was underscored.

Program Structure and Implementation: The fellowship program's structure was outlined, involving collaboration between five partner organizations, including Karnataka State Panchayat Raj University, Youth for Sewa, Chanakya University, Abdul Nazeer Saab Chair, and Prajna Pravah. The program aimed to foster collaboration between village residents, known as "swagrama mitra," and an external supporter named "hitachintaka." The team consisted of three members, two residing in the village with stipends and one external supporter. The collaboration extended to managing teams, ensuring technical and logistical support.

Impressive Response and Ongoing Reviews: The "Swagrama Fellowship" initiative garnered substantial interest, as evidenced by an unexpected 1800+ applications against an anticipated 200. While the screening process posed challenges, the enthusiasm reflected a keen interest in community-driven interventions. The meeting highlighted that the initiative's approach was built upon both ancestral successes and failures, acknowledging the importance of learning from history.

Conclusion: The meeting provided an insightful perspective on village intervention through a participatory approach. It underlined the significance of understanding villages as unique entities, fostering collaboration with communities, and transcending stereotypes. The "Swagrama Fellowship" initiative emerged as a promising endeavor, driven by the desire to empower villagers, respect their autonomy, and establish a collaborative model for holistic village development.

The meeting delved into a profound discussion encompassing the impact of a two-century colonial legacy, the resilience of indigenous knowledge traditions, and the crucial need to foster cultural vibrancy. The session also featured Tippeswamy ji's presentation on the "Grama Fellowship" initiative, which sought to empower villages and create a collaborative framework for holistic development.

Colonial Legacy and Cultural Enthusiasm: The discourse commenced by acknowledging the enduring effects of a 200-year colonial legacy on India. While colonialism disrupted many facets of traditional knowledge, it was emphasized that these traditions remained intact and resilient. The enthusiasm to witness cultural resurgence and vitality was palpable, signifying a collective aspiration to revive and celebrate indigenous knowledge systems.

Addressing the Missing Dialogue: A notable point of discussion was the absence of a comprehensive conversation on uniting communities. This conversation was identified as an essential component for fostering unity, bridging cultural divides, and revitalizing shared traditions. The concept of "Paramparik Jeevan" (traditional way of life) was underscored, emphasizing the importance of preserving village identities from excessive state intervention.

Challenges of State Intervention: The discussion gravitated towards the challenge of excessive state intervention, which was seen as eroding the authentic identity of villages. It was noted that while the Indian state's involvement in village affairs was intended to bring progress, it sometimes resulted in the loss of genuine village character. This intervention was described as a "tragedy," as it disrupted traditional practices and values.

The Essence of Freedom and Collaboration: The conversation pivoted to the essence of Indian identity, characterized by a unique blend of freedom, politeness, and sophistication. It was highlighted that Indians inherently possess a strong sense of freedom, which is intertwined with their cultural identity. The importance of fostering a commensal relationship and "paraspara-amalabwan" (mutual interdependence) among communities was emphasized. The interconnectedness of villages in their functioning was a vital aspect of this understanding.

Presentation on "Grama Fellowship": Tippeswamy ji's presentation shed light on the "Grama Fellowship" initiative, initiated on November 2, 2022. The

program aimed to empower villages through a comprehensive approach. Noteworthy aspects of the presentation included:

- Daily routine and structure of the fellowship program.
- Participation statistics, with 94 teams attending a 9-day boot camp, comprising 146 male candidates and 38 female candidates, culminating in the selection of 75 teams.

Creating Technological Platforms: The presentation highlighted the need to establish four manuals to develop a technological platform that could serve as a repository of essential information. The focus shifted towards transforming the relationship between the state and villages, advocating for the state's inclusion within the village framework rather than vice versa.

Preservation of Rituals and Local Solutions: The issue of government involvement in village rituals and its potential effects was addressed. The example of government agencies like the ASI and Endowment departments was cited, indicating their impact on traditional practices. The discussion emphasized the need for localized solutions and the importance of allowing communities to drive the revival of their unique rituals and practices, steering clear of external imposition.

The meeting encapsulated a multifaceted dialogue, ranging from historical legacies to contemporary village interventions. The "Grama Fellowship" presentation highlighted a promising initiative that aligned with the values of collaboration, cultural preservation, and participatory development.

The session provided an insightful overview of the significant progress achieved through the "Grama Fellowship" initiative. Several key activities and strategies were outlined, showcasing the comprehensive approach taken to empower villages and facilitate their holistic development.

Utilization of Technological Tools: The use of the Track All app was highlighted as a pivotal tool in the initiative's implementation. Team members utilized this app to document their tasks and assignments,

submitting essential information for the first time. This approach ensured efficient data management and tracking of progress.

Effective Communication Channels: The establishment of a WhatsApp Group emerged as an instrumental platform for communication among the "Mitra" team members. It facilitated seamless interaction, allowing for the exchange of ideas, updates on ongoing work, and expressions of appreciation for noteworthy contributions. Additionally, Google Meet sessions were organized with zone coordinators, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing.

On-Site Village Visits: A crucial aspect of the initiative involved on-site visits to villages. These visits were orchestrated by both the state project coordinator and zone coordinator, who played integral roles in overseeing and coordinating the activities at the grassroots level. These visits allowed for a direct understanding of the challenges and opportunities within each village.

Guidance and Mentoring: Mentoring sessions were initiated to provide a structured framework for the team's activities. Frameworks of work were shared during these sessions, offering guidance and direction for effective execution. Regular meetings were convened to ensure that these mentoring sessions were impactful and addressed the evolving needs of the villages.

Comprehensive Approach to Activities: The implementation of the initiative was organized into distinct categories, known as "pipes of activities." The first category focused on addressing the most pressing issues within the villages. Subsequently, teams worked on these identified problems for a span of three months, enabling them to delve deeply into resolving specific challenges. This approach ensured a targeted and effective intervention strategy.

Surveys and Ritual Engagement: The second category encompassed conducting certain surveys to gather essential data and insights. The third

category involved mandatory engagement with village rituals, such as the tree plantation ritual performed during the birth of a child. This practice held cultural significance, and efforts were directed towards preserving and revitalizing such customs.

Strengthening Health and Cultural Practices: Additional initiatives included the creation of a database of alumni, highlighting the enduring impact of the fellowship program. The implementation also extended to promoting dietary practices and providing health diet bags for emergency situations. Efforts were made to reintroduce traditional medicines and revitalize festival games that fostered community participation.

Optional Endeavors and Honorary Benefits: The initiative offered flexibility through optional activities that aimed to uplift the village infrastructure and secure funds for vital needs. Moreover, the "Grama Fellowship" provided honorary benefits of INR 5000 per month to participants, acknowledging their dedicated contributions to village development.

Regular Review and Monitoring: Quarterly review meetings were established as a cornerstone of the initiative's success. These face-to-face meetings provided a platform for indepth discussions, assessments of progress, and adjustments to strategies. This commitment to regular reviews ensured the alignment of efforts with the overarching goals of the initiative.

The report underscores the robust execution of the "Grama Fellowship" initiatives, revealing a well-structured approach that combines technological innovation, community engagement, and sustainable development practices.

The session delved into the intricacies of the Comprehensive Mapping for Community Action Plan (CAP), highlighting its significance, implementation process, and outcomes. The discussion unveiled a participatory and community-centric approach aimed at enhancing village development through holistic mapping practices.

Rationale for Mapping: The session commenced by addressing the pivotal question of "why mapping?" The response revealed a keen interest in understanding the multifaceted dynamics of villages. Mapping emerged as a powerful tool to capture the essence of villages and their potential for growth and transformation.

Participatory and Collaborative Approach: The core ethos of the CAP initiative rested on the principles of participation and collaboration. The mapping process was not imposed from an external source but entrusted to the villagers themselves. This participatory model echoed the idea of mapping by the people, for the people, and showcased the villagers as agents of change.

Mapping Domains: The session elaborated on the diverse domains covered under the CAP mapping framework, shedding light on the comprehensive nature of the initiative.

- 1. Social Mapping:** Villagers actively participated in drawing maps during policy boot camps. These maps captured the landscapes and features of the villages, offering insights into the possibilities and limitations for development. Spatial mapping enabled the collection of data that, when inputted, generated maps that provided a comprehensive view of the village.
- 2. Swagram Mitra's Role:** The involvement of "Swagram Mitra" was emphasized as they conducted household visits to gather essential data. This data included family members' demographics, age, gender, education levels, literacy rates, housing types, cultural practices (sampradaya and jati), conflicts, cooperations, and even Rudra Bhumi, reflecting the village's sacred spaces.
- 3. Ritual Mappings:** The initiative included ritual mappings, which aimed to revive forgotten practices and address disputes related to rituals and temples. This facet underscored the importance of preserving cultural traditions within the context of village development.

4. Resource and Economic Mapping: Resource mapping was highlighted as an avenue to assess the availability of resources within the village. Additionally, economic aspects were considered, including mapping political leadership roles and their influence on governance, health and well-being practices, literacy rates, and occupational distributions.

5. Fostering Traditional Practices: The discussion underscored the importance of preserving and enhancing traditional practices. The idea of village development was aligned with flourishing within existing cultural contexts, with an emphasis on avoiding practices that lead to migration.

Books Discussed: During the session, several pertinent books were mentioned, including "Daishik Shastra" (Hindi Translations), critiques of 5-year plans, and Ravindra Mahajan's "Encyclopedia." These references enriched the dialogue by providing historical and intellectual contexts.

Concluding Remarks: The session concluded with insightful suggestions from Prof. Chaitra ji and Sampadananda Sir. It was highlighted that while the proposal's expressiveness is commendable, attention should be directed towards refining its formulation. The creation of a fundamental understanding of key terms was recommended, along with a focus on nurturing a conscious new generation.

Promoting a Conscious New Generation: A significant suggestion encompassed the creation of a module that could be readily implemented in the 75 villages. This module could potentially encompass various forms of media, including vocal applications, newspapers, and even a barter market.

The session offered a deep dive into the intricate aspects of Comprehensive Mapping for CAP, demonstrating its potential to empower villages, preserve cultural identities, and drive meaningful change.

The meeting provided valuable insights into the Swagrama Fellowship initiative's objectives, methodology, and outcomes. It underscored the need to bridge the gap between academic research, local wisdom, and

sustainable village development, encapsulating the spirit of selfreliance and participatory progress.

SITE 3: CHITRAKOOT

Appendix 10: Transcript of Interview with a Samaj Shilpi Dampati from the First Batch

During my research on the Samaj Shilpi Dampati (SSD) model, I had the opportunity to interview a SSD couple who were part of the first batch to engage with communities. Below is the transcript, presented in the first-person perspective, capturing the experiences and reflections of this couple. The whole conversation has been thematically organised for the ease of understanding and identifying the context.

Social Issues and Early Interventions

"When we first arrived in the village, my wife and I noticed numerous social issues. For instance, there was a young girl named Sunita whose grandmother was old and whose mother was neglectful. We took the initiative to find a suitable match for her, and the entire community pitched in with donations for the wedding, from jewellery to household items."

Local Reverence and Community Health

"People began to respect us highly, almost to the point of worship. We became especially known after helping a malnourished boy named Chhotelal. Under the guidance of Vaidya Rajendra Patel from Arogya Dham, he was treated with traditional remedies, and eventually recovered, gaining back his mortgaged land and finding work as a labourer."

Challenges and Strategy

"Nana Ji (Nana Ji Deshmukh) advised me not to start with a survey, as real issues wouldn't be revealed immediately. So, I waited for six months, until we had earned the villagers' trust, to conduct the survey." **Agricultural**

Initiatives

"In partnership with local authorities like Mr. Tejvant Singh, the Block Development Officer (BDO), we spearheaded a tree-planting initiative. The

village, Arjunpur, was eventually declared an 'Amla Gram' due to the proliferation of gooseberry trees. We also experimented with planting pomegranate and Kaner for their quick yields and usability in worship."

Veterinary Interventions

"In 1998, the village faced an animal health crisis. We took proactive measures, vaccinating healthy animals and safely disposing of deceased ones, effectively controlling the spread of the disease."

Education and Community Involvement

"We also focused on education. Noticing the limitations of government schools, we organized 'Bal Shivirs' and later managed to establish a large private school, employing local graduates as teachers. The school began as a no-fee institution, later charging a minimal registration fee."

Motivation and Vision

"Nana Ji always said, 'People talk about village development but seldom engage directly.' My wife, with her Master's in Social Work, and I, holding a Ph.D., had other job opportunities, but we chose this path. The real soul of India lies in its villages."

The Journey Forward

"After my son grew up and became self-sufficient, we expanded our reach, training more SSDs who then went on to start their own initiatives, like the Adarsh Charitable Trust for the Sahariya tribes. Mahendra Namdev, a Ph.D. holder from Patna, even wrote a book on the subject called 'Gram Swablamban.'"

Challenges and Sustainability

"After the passing of Nanaji, our institution faced numerous financial challenges. However, the need for more SSDs is pressing, and we aim to train 108 more couples."

Legacy and Documentation

"Various publications and resources, such as the 'Ekatma Darshan' library in Delhi, document the life and teachings of Nanaji, aiding us in our endeavors."

This conversation highlights the SSD model's adaptability, its capacity for localized interventions, and the dedication required to bring about substantial community development. It also shines light on the multiple challenges SSDs face, from social complexities to financial sustainability, emphasizing the ongoing nature of this work.

Appendix II: Transcript of Interview with Samaj Shilpi Dampati of Current Batch

The interviewee couple is a graduate since 2006 and has been involved in various social development activities in rural settings under the Samaj Sewi Dampati Yojana. They are currently working in a 50-km work area, known as Karya Kshetra, spanning multiple villages.

On Initial Endeavours

When we started, villagers were suspicious. We initially connected with the children, organizing rallies and cleanliness drives. Gradually, we became familiar figures, and villagers became more receptive to our initiatives. As of now, 18 Dampati work in our area while some others have joined different projects.

Working Structure

Our hierarchical structure starts from the grassroot level with groups of Gram panchayats, followed by Samaj Prabhari, Samaj Sewi Dampati, Core Committee, and finally Sangathan Sachiv. Volunteers from the villages contribute 1-2 hours daily, aiding in various sectors like agriculture, health, and animal husbandry.

Financial Aspects

DRI provides an initial financial support of 10,000 rupees, free residence, and free education for kids. Additionally, we are offered some financial assistance for medical emergencies.

Recruitment Challenges

The criteria for recruitment under the Dampati scheme are stringent, requiring candidates to be qualified, aged between 25-35, willing to live and work in villages, among other factors. This year, out of 10 applicants, only one qualified.

Role of Panchayat

We maintain a cooperative relationship with the Panchayat, mutually benefiting from our respective roles aimed at village development.

Behavioural Changes in the Villagers

Initially, the community was somewhat resistant to change. However, we have observed a growing acceptance for education, even among girl children, which marks a positive change in the village's social fabric.

Safety and Challenges

We have faced various difficulties, including a kidnapping incident involving one of the tribes.

However, due to our established goodwill, the villagers intervened and secured my release.

Health Initiatives

We have successfully managed to dispel rumours surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine, achieving a 100% vaccination rate in our work area, which is primarily composed of tribal communities. **Skill Development**

Skill enhancement initiatives have also been a focus area, especially among the women of the village. We either train them ourselves or arrange for skilled trainers to educate them in various arts like stitching, pickle-making, etc.

Cultural and Social Bonding

We partake in the village's cultural and ritualistic practices, thereby fostering a sense of community. For instance, we organize events like Samuhik Rakshabandhan and participate in weekly Ramcharitmanas recitations.

Final Thoughts

Our journey has been a fulfilling one, albeit fraught with challenges that required us to be patient and optimistic. It's a work in progress, and we

continue to adapt our plans based on the evolving needs and feedback from the villagers.

The Samaj Shilpi Dampati's approach provides a multi-faceted and adaptive model for rural development. Their work aligns with the broader aims of community-centric and sustainable development.

Appendix 12: Dadi Maa Ka Batua

In historical contexts, it was common for grandmothers within family structures to maintain a satchel containing an assortment of locally-sourced medicinal items. These were utilized to address various minor health ailments, representing a body of indigenous knowledge accrued over time. Mirroring this tradition, Arogyadham has developed a specialized medicinal kit. This kit is comprised of 33 herbal formulations, produced in-house in Arogyadham's Rasashala. The kit aims to serve as a comprehensive treatment solution for a range of commonly occurring health conditions. Notably, all medicines within the kit are crafted from locally available botanical resources, offering an economical health solution. The kit has garnered widespread acclaim within local communities. Clear, straightforward guidelines for administering these medicines are provided with the kit, enhancing its usability. Once equipped with this kit, individuals can effectively manage a variety of common health concerns independently, thereby promoting self-sufficiency even among economically disadvantaged populations. Additionally, community members with a heightened sense of social responsibility have been trained in the application of these medicinal solutions, thus acting as local healthcare providers. Cases requiring more specialized medical intervention are referred to Arogyadham's main facility in Chitrakoot for advanced treatment.

These 33 herbal formulations are as follows:

Sl. No	Name of Medicines	Uses	Dose	Instruction
TABLETS				
1	Chitrakadi Vati	Loss of Appetite, Chronic Amoebiasis	1-2 Pill	Chew 3 times a day

2	Sanjeevani Vati	Fever, Common cold	1-2 Pill	With hot water 3 times a day
3	Soolhar Vati	Body ache, Joint pain	1-2 Pill	With hot water 3 times a day
4	Laghu Shootshekhar Vati	Hyperacidity, Fever	1-2 Pill	With water 3 times a day
5	Triphla Vati	Oedema, Blunt Injury, pain	1-2 Pill	With hot water 3 times a day
6	Lavangadi Vati	Cough	1-2 Pill	Chew 3-4 times a day
7	Kutaj Vati	Dysentery, Diarrhea	1-2 Pill	With hot water 3 times a day
POWDERS				
8	Sankhpushpi Churna	Mental tonic	3-5 gm.	With hot water 2 times a day
9	Shakti Churna	General tonic	2-5 gm.	With milk 3 times a day

Sl. No	Name of Medicines	Uses	Dose	Instruction
10	Kaph Nashak Churna	Cough	3-5 gm.	With hot water 3 times a day

11	Pachan Churna	Loss of Appetite, Colic pain, Gastric Disorder, Chronic, Amoebiasis	2-5 gm.	With hot water 3 times a day
12	Triphla Churna	Constipation, Gastric Disorder	1-5 gm.	With hot water before sleeping
13	Bal Rog nashak Churna	In all Pediatric Diseases	125 gm.	With Honey 2 times a day
14	Jwar Nashak Churna	Fever, Body ache	3-5 gm.	With hot water 2 times a day
15	Dhat Nashak Churna	Leucorrhoea	3-6 gm.	With rose water (Maand) 3 times a day
16	Mutra Roghar Churna	Kidney and Urinary Disorder	3-5 gm.	With water 3 times a day
17	Swashanti Churna	Bronchial Asthma	3-5 gm.	With hot water 3 times a day
18	Krimi Nashak Churna	Worms Infection	1-2 Teaspoon	With hot water at a night
OILS				

19	Shoolhar Tail	Muscular pain, Joint pain	For local application	To be massaged gently over the affected area
20	Charm Rog Nashak Tail	Skin Disease	For local application	To be applied gently in the skin over the affected area
21	Bilwa Tail	Ear Disease (Otitis Media)	2-3 Drops	2 times a day
22	Irmidadi Tail	For toothache & Gingivitis	2-3 Drops	2 times a day
OTHERS				
23	Netra Bindu	Conjunctivitis. Eye disease	2-3 Drops	2 times a day
24	Mayurpichha Masi	Nausea, Vomiting	125 mg.	With honey 2 times a day
25	Sarjaras Malham	Skin burns	For local application	To be applied gently in affected area
26	Sudhha Tankan	Stomatitis	125 mg./for local application with honey	To be applied inside the mouth
Sl. No	Name of Medicines	Uses	Dose	Instruction

KWATH CHURNA				
27	Kantakari Kwath Churna	Cough, Bronchitis	10 gm	Mix 10 gm of Kwath Churna with a glass of water and boil till ¼ is left. Filter and drink twice a day.
28	Vasa Kwath Churna	Dry Cough, Asthma	10 gm	" "
29	Chirayata Kwath Churna	Fever, Pain, Body ache	10 gm	" "
30	Guduchi Kwath Churna	Fever, Gout, Pain	10 gm	" "
31	Triphla Kwath Churna	Constipation, Fever	10 gm	" "
32	Dashmool Kwath Churna	Pain, Fever, Common cold	10 gm	" "
33	Gokshur Kwath Churna	Kidney and Urinary Disorder	10 gm	" "

Appendix 13: Gaushala as a Model for Cow-Based Rural Development

The first day of the field study focused on Integral humanism's applicability in agriculture and cow-based economy. Here is a small report on the observation at DRI's Gaushala. The Gaushala project embodies an integrated development model and is anchored in the principles of Ekatma Manav Darshan (EMD).

It aims to:

- **Economic Viability:** Validate the economic potential of indigenous cattle breeds in sustaining rural livelihoods.
- **Conservation:** Utilize in situ conservation methods to preserve indigenous cattle breeds.
- **Sustainable Breeding:** Elevate the breeding potential by deploying high-potential bulls, rigorously tested on reproductive, productive, and physical traits, to maintain a stable cow population at the grassroots level.
- **Replicable Sustainability:** Develop a sustainable and replicable model for Gaushalas that can be adopted across different rural settings.

Key Features of the Gaushala Project

- **Livestock Diversity:** The Gaushala boasts a varied stock including breeds and crossbreeds like Sahiwal and Murrah bull.
- **Energy Efficiency:** The project utilizes a biogas plant run on cow dung, reducing the reliance on non-renewable energy sources. This biogas is employed in heating vessels for processing Gau-mutra Arka and other products.

- **Research & Development:** Clinical trials are being pursued with research institutions to substantiate the therapeutic properties of Gau-mutra Arka. The product currently enjoys high demand and can benefit from further scientific validation.
- **Skill Development:** The Gaushala serves as a demonstration unit for agriculture-based skill development, aligned with the tenets of EMD that emphasize local employment and self-reliance.
- **Local Production:** The project actively involves the local population in the production of herbal products, soaps, Ayurvedic medicines, and various oil-based products for both local consumption and broader marketing.

Challenges in Self-Sustaining the Gaushala

- **Evolution of Agricultural Practices:** The use of male cows in agriculture has drastically reduced due to the availability of mechanized equipment and government subsidies. This shift poses challenges for the maintenance of male cattle, traditionally used for ploughing.
- **Operational Costs:** The cost of maintaining male cattle for breeding purposes remains high, making their upkeep challenging.
- **Product Diversification:** Initiatives like paint production from cow dung have been explored but are constrained by the Gaushala's current cattle population and the need for separate processing units.
- **Genetic Enhancement:** Maintaining a robust cow population demands the integration of both natural and artificial breeding methods, including climatic adaptation strategies for breeds like Sahiwal from Haryana.

The Gaushala project serves as a critical node for the implementation of Ekatma Manav Darshan principles. However, it is essential to navigate the operational and economic challenges to build a scalable and sustainable model. Government intervention, community engagement, and continued R&D could be the enablers for making this project a replicable success.
