

## Jnanabhumi Portal - Government of Andhra Pradesh

### Introduction

The Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC, ST, OBC, minority, differently abled, EBC and Kapu community in Andhra Pradesh was being delivered through a digital platform, namely e-Pass, until 2017. However, the large and complex eco-system consisting of over 16 lakh students, 2300+ courses, 8000+ colleges and 30+ affiliating authorities resulted in remarkably high turn-around time at every stage. Problems related to redundancy, duplicity, convoluted processing and insulation amongst departments and stakeholders ultimately led to wide dissatisfaction among beneficiaries. It became imperative, therefore, to streamline the process, improve external service delivery and internal processing times.

### Intervention

Jnanabhumi was introduced in 2017 which sought to address two key issues: (i) introducing parity of opportunity through government-aided education; and (ii) upgrading the necessary state infrastructure to facilitate the aid in a uniform, integrated and transparent manner.

The platform ultimately aims to become the unified repository for propagating education through intersection of necessary parties and processes so as to ensure a seamless and accountable environment for both the marginalized and non-marginalized strata of the society.

Jnanabhumi is a holistic and distilled platform meant for delivering services related to education and scholarships. Principally, the conceptual objectives of the platform could be (i) actualizing equal educational opportunities for all; (ii) providing single desk for scholarships for all communities; and (iii) facilitating a central system of education and welfare ecosystem covering the entire student lifecycle.

The locus of control under Jnanabhumi was re-organized by integrating scholarship with admissions, augmented by government directives and e-Enablement, resulting in dispensing away physical presence requirements and creation of master data seeding by concerned affiliating authorities. The database integration across services lead to seamless information exchange without discretionary errors. Utilizing Aadhaar ensured integrity, which was further supported by digital signature-enabled transactions. This process re-engineering was reinforced with a dedicated 24x7 helpdesk, establishment of state and district level PMUs, Kaizala Application for monitoring, communication and updates as well as Dashboard for providing relevant and up-to-date statistics.

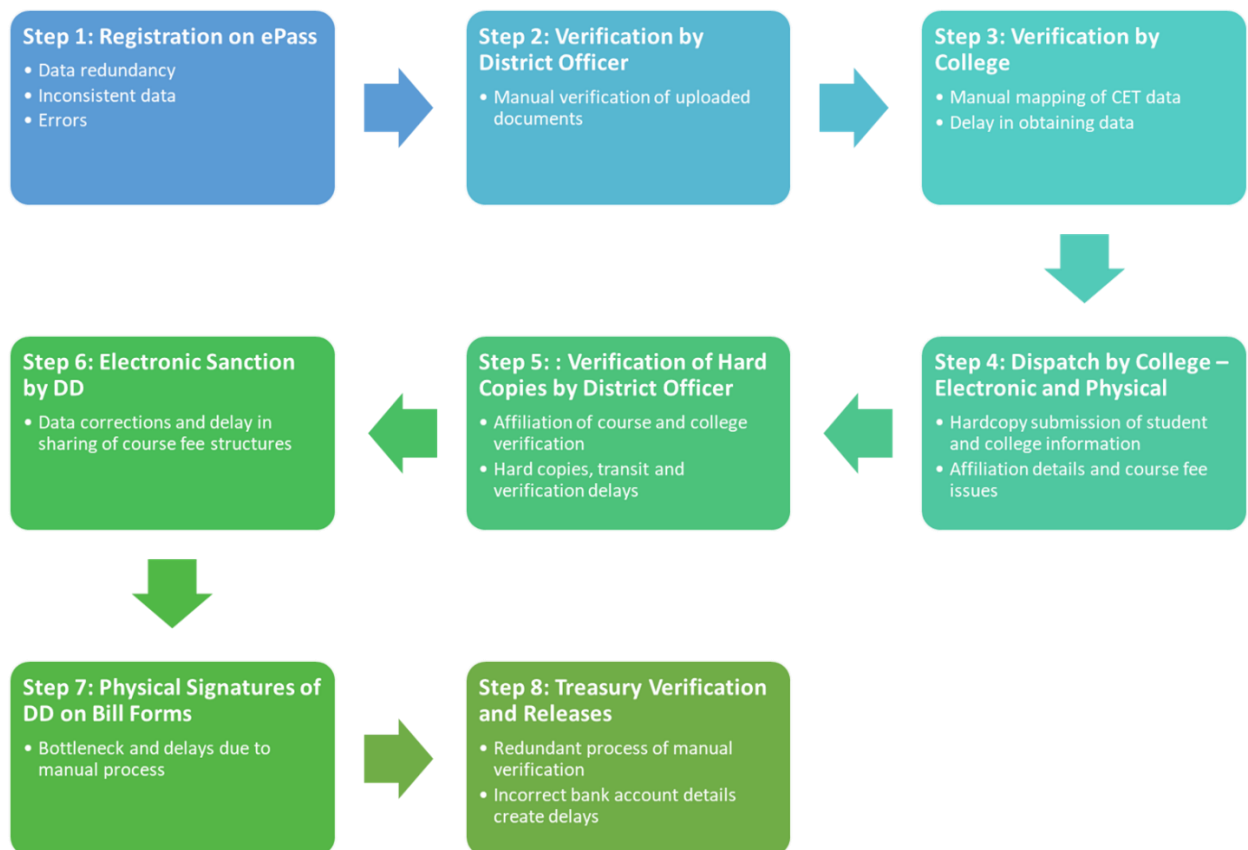
In terms of operational principles, the platform seeks to realize timely releases and disbursements with minimal touchpoints while maintaining enhanced levels of accountability and transparency. The idea behind process re-engineering, therefore, was to introduce transformation through digital means, resulting in a secure, convenient and paperless experience.

## Impact

Jnanabhumi’s paperless and digital approach has been tremendously successful in ensuring process simplification and in easing the burden of students. Through structural changes and elimination of intermediaries, the portal has significantly reduced the tedious aspects of community participation and the resultant institutional pressures that had plagued implementation of the scheme earlier. The subsequent impact can be broadly categorized as:

(i) impact on the individual; and (ii) impact on the institution. Before assessing the impact, however, it becomes imperative to understand the scenario that prevailed before the implementation of Jnanabhumi.

**Figure 1: Situation Before the Deployment of Jnanabhumi**



Source: KPMG Analysis

As the illustration highlights, the process was largely plagued by overwhelming duplicity and redundancy at various stages of implementation.

For students, this meant re-registering every year despite the original data being available with the authorities and subsequent re-entry to the college, making the process unnecessarily cumbersome due to completely avoidable duplicity. The addition of biometric authorization was sub-optimally utilized as applications were manually verified by district welfare officers, an arduous task given that student applications numbered at over 17 lakhs. This pendulous activity between the college, the welfare department and the students led to inordinate delays and the process was highly susceptible to errors and manipulation. Owing to manual entries, the bank account information would often be incorrect, leading to the funds being stuck with the treasury department as they manually verified and signed bills.

For authorities, the task of manual verification and signing of applications resulted in unnecessary loss of resources and productivity. Additionally, the parallel verification activity of college registration and affiliation, along with course affiliation, resulted in district welfare officer working greatly out of the locus of control and authority, resulting in further delays. The lack of directive, apart from affecting uniformity, hampered course fee mapping as well; since the affiliating authorities responsibility stood outside the sphere of influence, they often operated in non-conformist ways.

Beyond procedural irritants, these operational hurdles negatively affected the core idea of the initiative. Delay of both maintenance (monthly) and tuition (quarterly) fees resulted in students being forced to incur loans to cover basic expenses as the gaps in financing made colleges enforce measures to recover tuition directly from students. And as both these stakeholders grappled with difficulties, the state and district offices, as ombudsman, were burdened with multiplicity of disputes and issues involving the students and the colleges. Lastly, the education department, despite being an essential stakeholder, was not part of the process and planning out of strategy for increase in cohesion. This presented further challenges, compounded by absence of data analytics and impact assessment.

**Figure 2: Complete Digital Overhaul of Processes Following the Deployment of Jnanabhumi**

Maker Checker Approver	Seamless Information Exchange	Biometric Attendance and Academics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabled the Maker - Checker and Approver flow for all Master Data creation at University level and approval of College Information</li> <li>• Approver enabled with eSign to authorize the information</li> <li>• Course mapping and Course Fee details entry through single platform</li> <li>• Zero redundancy, zero duplicity and authentic information entry - Fail safe and high fidelity system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMS based alerts to all College Principals, Registrars, Students and Last Mile Officers</li> <li>• Kaizala app integration for Last mile Monitoring, Daily Instruction communication to Districts and reporting</li> <li>• Integration with MeeKosam 1100 support of AP Govt. for 24/7 Help Desk for grievance redressal</li> <li>• Outbound information disbursement calls</li> <li>• 8 Day Turn around time</li> <li>• Last mile officer mapping and inbuilt sms and calling facility</li> <li>• Integration of Jnanabhumi with grievance handling database</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Jnanabhumi platform integrates Biometric Attendance of Students with payments thus minimizing misrepresentation / misappropriations</li> <li>• Integration of Universities on to the platform brings in the seamless integration of Academic calendar creating accountability for the attendance submitted</li> <li>• Student Academics module will allow analysis on measurable outcomes for the huge flow of tax payers money</li> </ul>

Source: Government of Andhra Pradesh

**Table 1: Scenario for Students Pre and Post Deployment of Jnanabhumi**

PRE-DEPLOYMENT SCENARIO FOR STUDENTS							
	Student Application		Admission		Submission by College to Welfare	Verification by Welfare	Push to & Release by Treasury
	New	Renewal	New	Renewal			
<b>Turn Around Time</b>	6 months	6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No such module .</li> <li>Scholarship not tied with admission.</li> <li>Process delays.</li> </ul>		Year long	Year long	Year long
<b>Responsible Party</b>	Student				College	Welfare officer	Treasury
<b>Process to Fetch Data</b>	Student applies; followed by scrutiny by welfare officer				IT platform		
<b>Main Gap</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Third party enters data, errors and duplicity of data, incorrect courses applied for.</li> <li>For existing students (renewal), data re-entered by student &amp; reapplies.</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manual verification of documents of 16 lakh students.</li> <li>Signing of hard copies.</li> <li>Error correction difficult at this stage.</li> <li>Delays due to affiliations and course affiliations .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manual process of verification and signing of documents.</li> <li>Corrections difficult at this stage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manually signed proceedings and verification.</li> <li>Incorrect bank information leads to transaction delay.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	Delay in transaction due to incorrect entry of personal & course details.				Delay in transit and other processing due to having to attach and authorize hard copies.		Manual process delays. Stuck transactions lead to banks enjoying a float rate.
POST-DEPLOYMENT SCENARIO FOR STUDENTS							
	Student Application	Admission		Submission by College to Welfare	Verification by Welfare	Push to & Release by Treasury	
<b>Activity Turnaround Time</b>	60 man-days				Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
<b>Responsible Party</b>	College					Welfare Officer	Treasury
<b>Process to Fetch Data</b>	The student scholarship application is merged with the admission process of Jnanabhumi.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College principal e-signs the new admission and pushes to welfare.</li> <li>Renewal admissions pushed via OTP-based confirmation.</li> </ul>	Verify data pushed via e-sign and push data to treasury using e-sign.	
<b>Main Gap</b>	NONE						

Source: Government of Andhra Pradesh

<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 to 10 months shaved off the process of application and admission with minimized errors.</li> <li>Paperless &amp; high-fidelity transactions.</li> <li>Authentic student attendance.</li> <li>Validated communication data of students to reach out to and monitor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No transit delay on hard copies.</li> <li>Zero hard copies.</li> <li>Bank accounts errors minimized.</li> </ul>
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**Additional Modules to e-Enable and Aid Educational Institutions in Planning, Design, Execution and Monitoring**

**Table 2: Scenario for Authorities Pre and Post Deployment of Jnanabhumi**

<b>PRE-DEPLOYMENT SCENARIO FOR AUTHORITIES</b>					
	<b>College Affiliation</b>	<b>Course Affiliation</b>	<b>Course Fees</b>	<b>College to Course Mapping</b>	<b>Course Intake</b>
<b>Activity Turnaround Time</b>	Year long			6 months	
<b>Responsible Party</b>	Welfare officer				
<b>Process to Fetch Data</b>	Physical visits		Mail & phone communication	Jnanabhumi Platform	
<b>Main Gap</b>	External to locus of control, no uniformity in course information & no data repository.				
<b>Impact</b>	Delays in tuition fee and maintenance fee release.		Delays in tuition fee.	Delays in tuition fee and maintenance fee release.	Needed for cross-verification.
<b>POST-DEPLOYMENT SCENARIO FOR AUTHORITIES</b>					
	<b>College Affiliation</b>	<b>Course Affiliation</b>	<b>Course Fees</b>	<b>College to Course Mapping</b>	<b>Course Intake</b>
<b>Activity Turn Around Time</b>	2 months				
<b>Responsible Party</b>	College & affiliating authority/university				
<b>Process to Fetch Data</b>	College information pushed for affiliating authority approval. E-sign & zero hardcopies. Entire process e-Enabled				
<b>Main Gap</b>	None				
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seamless, smooth processing and on time full delivery.</li> <li>Approximately 10 months man days saved per process.</li> <li>Affiliating authority has the locus of control over the colleges and is made owner of the process – rescued welfare officer by de-coupling him from the process chain.</li> <li>Zero man days expended by the welfare officer compared to year-long engagement in previous deployment.</li> <li>Authentic information from affiliating authorities.</li> <li>Welfare officer available for other pertinent tasks.</li> <li>Students not in debt and reduction in drop-out rates.</li> </ul>				

Source: Government of Andhra Pradesh