

# Case Study- Opportunity Equalizer

## Project Background

Being future ready begins from when you are in school. Unfortunately in India the disparity between the quality of education in private institutions and government/ municipal run institutions are massive. Two out of five first-grade students will not complete the primary cycles of 4 to 5 years (depending on the State),<sup>16</sup> and the learning achievement of those graduating is low. Children from poorer families are at a greater disadvantage. The drop-out rate for the poorest households is about four times that of the richest ones. Fifty-three percent of students drop out before completing primary school. The issue today is not a lack of demand, but rather quality of supply. Students often drop out because their public school experiences are often so poor that they learn very little even after being enrolled for 4 to 5 years.

## Project Objectives

The organization aided by Talentedge wanted to narrow the chasm between the children's education and the opportunity they would be presented once they graduated. The project aimed at improving their self- confidence by creating an environment that would facilitate them being on par with children from private institutes and standing their ground when presented with opportunities for future growth.

Talentedge provided support to one of the most respected social service organisations in the country. The aim of the project was to create interest in the underprivileged children of the city to learn the basics of the English language and to string simple grammatically correct sentences.

The project spanned 3 years, started in 2011 – 12 and continued till 2014. The Program has successfully transferred this knowledge and skill to the students. The target audience was students from Classes 5 to 8. The program that was designed was fun and interactive and was conducted using organic methods of learning. The experiential learning produced significant changes in the students.

## Challenges Faced

- Student drop out due to unforeseeable reasons
- Attrition of students due to child labour
- Obstacles for inclusion of classes in the time-table due to bureaucracy
- Knowledge retention capabilities of students
- Non availabilities of basic facilities in these schools

## Our Solution

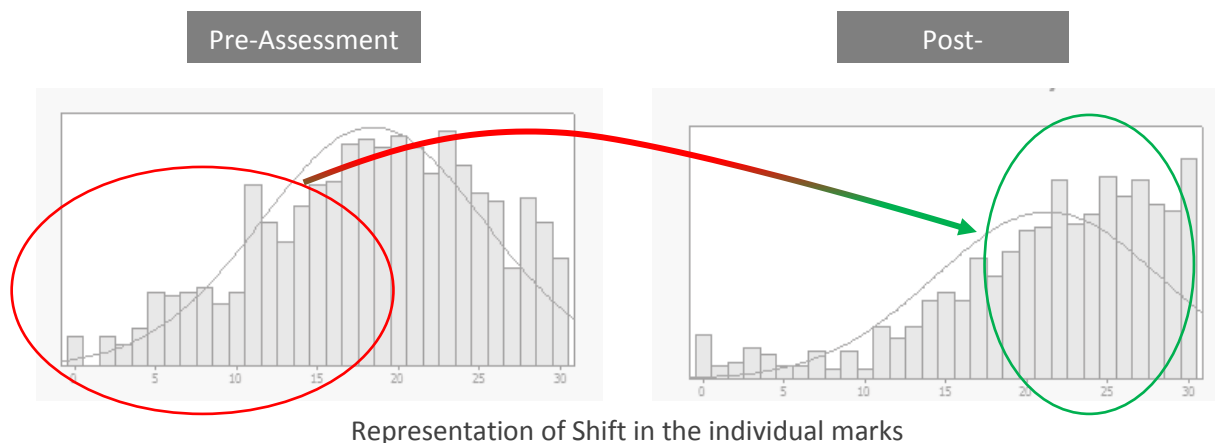
- **Teacher Selection:** Considering the demographic of the students, teachers were hand-picked after an extensive selection process. Their background with dealing with children from special backgrounds were taken into consideration for this project.
- **Curriculum designing:** The curriculum was designed keeping in mind the target audience. The program was extremely experiential. There were a lot of practical application of what was

taught. The pedagogy that was used was designed after consultation of experienced professionals from that field.

- **Classroom Training:** The classroom trainings were mostly bilingual; this was done to keep it comfortable for the students learning a new language. Charts and posters were used to stimulate learning. The students were encouraged to sing and speak in front of the class. This proved very useful as a majority of the students overcame extreme shyness.
- **Teacher Audits:** There were weekly meetings with the teachers to share feedback observed from the classroom. Sessions were recorded and played back to the teachers so that they are able to place the feedback in context. This proved very effective as there was a great scope for learning and improvement. There were also provisions for peer learning which proved very beneficial.
- **Evaluation:** To measure the progress of the project, the students were evaluated twice. Once before the program began to measure their baseline scores. And once the training was completed. Depending on the attendance of the student and other circumstantial factors, there was a marked improvement in the students who were a part of the program.

### Project Outcomes

- Increased awareness about the world outside of their school
- Greater willingness and confidence to speak in English
- Breakthroughs for a lot of students who gained greater self confidence
- Trackable change in their communication skills



**Around 70% of students have shown positive shift in their scores**

## Medial Gallery



Children of 7<sup>th</sup> Standard, Powai School reciting a jazz chant they've learnt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZtH8pf5jII&feature=youtu.be>

Montage of Powai school children

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNrlU\\_Lhw0w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNrlU_Lhw0w)