SHREE SHAKTI CONSCIOUSNESS FOUNDATION

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House No. 335, Sector 21, Gurugram,
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Digital Literacy and Civic Awareness Program for Underprivileged Students

Duration: 08th January 2025 to 18 March 2015

Funder: Boston Consulting Group

PROJECT REPORT

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Contents

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Executive Summary

Background of the issue addressed by the project

The digital divide remains a significant barrier to socio-economic development in underprivileged communities, particularly in urban slums. In Gurgaon, Haryana, primary school children from low-income families have limited access to IT education and infrastructure, with minimal exposure to technology and digital learning tools. This lack of early digital literacy perpetuates the cycle of inequality, leaving children unaware of digital opportunities, vulnerable to scams, and unprepared for the demands of the digital era.

Additionally, the absence of civic education further limits their ability to understand their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities as citizens. This dual gap in digital and civic awareness hinders their potential to contribute meaningfully to their communities and access e-governance services.

Recognizing this pressing need, SSCF launched its **Digital Literacy and Civic Education** Initiative to empower young learners with essential IT skills, foster creativity, and introduce a sense of civic responsibility. The project targeted primary school children (ages 6–12) in urban slum areas, aiming to bridge the digital divide and create a foundation for lifelong learning and active citizenship.

Major achievements during the implementation period

The project successfully achieved its key objectives, delivering measurable impact and laying the groundwork for sustainable change. Major achievements include:

- The program reached its target of 25 students, running two batches. These children, who previously had no access to digital education, are now equipped with foundational IT skills and civic awareness
- The project enhanced its infrastructure by procuring 12 new laptops, ensuring that students had access to modern technology for hands-on learning
- Two additional skilled instructors, along with teaching assistant, were brought on board, improving the quality of training and enabling personalized attention for students.

- Course content was specifically designed for children aged 6–12, ensuring that it was simple, interactive, and easy to understand
- The incorporation of civic education modules empowered children to understand their roles as responsible citizens, fostering a sense of community and social responsibility
- The after-school program nurtured creativity and talent through interactive sessions, including digital storytelling, basic coding exercises, and civic role-playing activities

How project activities contributed to the larger goal of increasing awareness on digital literacy

The project activities were designed not only to impart skills but also to raise awareness about the importance of digital literacy and civic engagement. Key contributions include:

- Introducing basic IT skills and digital literacy helped children and their families see how technology can change lives. Many parents, who were initially doubtful, began to realize that digital education could open better opportunities for their children
- While interacting with students' parents, the project emphasized the importance of early digital exposure and civic education. This message reached not just students but also parents, teachers, and local leaders, creating a ripple effect of understanding and support
- Through discussions on rights, responsibilities, and community issues, students became more aware of their roles in society. They shared their learnings with family and friends, spreading awareness beyond the classroom
- The project showed that digital skills are not a luxury but a necessity. By demonstrating the real benefits of digital literacy, it helped overcome doubts and encouraged the community to see technology as a tool for empowerment

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Overall Strategy adopted for the implementation of the project

The project was implemented using a **holistic, community-centric, and sustainable approach** to ensure maximum impact and long-term benefits. The strategy was designed to address the dual challenges of digital illiteracy and lack of civic awareness among primary school children in urban slums. Key elements of the strategy included:

1. **Needs Assessment**
   - Conducted baseline surveys to understand the specific needs and challenges of the target group.
   - Engaged with parents, local schools to build trust and ensure enrolment for the program.
2. **Structured Curriculum Design**:
   - Developed a curriculum focusing on digital literacy (basic computer skills, internet usage, and digital safety) and **civic education** (rights, responsibilities, and community participation).
   - Ensured the curriculum was age-appropriate, interactive, and aligned with the children's learning capabilities.
3. **Infrastructure Development**:
   - Procured 12 new laptops and set up a learning centre with reliable internet access to create a conducive learning environment.
4. **Capacity Building**:
   - On-boarded skilled instructors to deliver high-quality, engaging sessions.
   - Provided guidance to keep them updated on the latest digital tools and teaching methodologies.
5. **Interactive and Inclusive Learning**:
   - Used hands-on, activity-based learning methods, including digital storytelling, basic coding exercises, and civic role-playing, to make learning fun and impactful.

- Ensured inclusivity by identifying and enrolling children from the most marginalized families.

Methodology adopted for the implementation of the project

The project adopted a participatory and phased methodology to ensure effective implementation and measurable outcomes:

1. **Planning Phase**:
   - Conducted a baseline survey to assess the digital and civic awareness levels of the target group
   - Designed the curriculum using real-life relatable examples (e.g., comparing CPU to a mother cooking food) to help students connect new concepts with existing knowledge
2. **Implementation Phase**:
   - Set up the learning centre with necessary infrastructure (laptops, internet, learning materials)
   - Delivered training using Activity-Based Learning (ABL)—students practiced browsing government websites, sending emails, and creating presentations.
   - Used images, videos, and diagrams, along with interactive discussions and hands-on exercises such as typing, clicking, and online form submissions to enhance the learning experience
3. **Monitoring and Evaluation**:
   - Conducted pre- and post-assessments to measure impact on digital literacy and civic awareness
   - Used feedback loops to refine the program, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital citizenship
4. **Documentation and Reporting**:
   - Captured success stories, challenges, and lessons learned to improve future interventions

- Prepared detailed reports for stakeholders, highlighting program achievements and long-term impact.

Achievements against the strategic objectives

The project was designed with clear strategic objectives to address the digital and civic education gaps among underprivileged children. Below is a summary of achievements against each objective:

Strategic Objective	Achievements
Increase student reach by running two batches of 12 students in batch and 13 students in another each (25 students total).	Successfully enrolled and trained 24 students in two batches, achieving 100% of the target.
Upgrade infrastructure with 12 new laptops.	Procured and deployed 12 new laptops, ensuring each student had access to a device during sessions.
Enhance program delivery by bringing additional skilled instructors	Hired two additional instructors, improving the student-teacher ratio and ensuring personalized attention.
Develop course content, including civic education specific to children aged 6–12	Developed customized course content, incorporating civic education tailored for children aged 6–12
Improve digital literacy and IT skills among students.	Students gained hands-on experience with basic computer operations, internet usage, and digital safety, improving their confidence and competence in using technology.
Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms	Implemented feedback sessions and assessment tests to track student progress and adapt teaching methods accordingly

Impact Assessment

Short-Term Impact:

- Students gained foundational IT skills, including basic computer operations, internet usage, and digital safety
- Children developed an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, fostering a sense of community and social responsibility
- Interactive learning methods boosted students' confidence and creativity, enabling them to express themselves more effectively
- Parents and other community members became more aware of the importance of digital literacy and civic education through these children

Long-Term Impact:

- The project laid the foundation for a digitally inclusive society by equipping underprivileged children with essential IT skills
- Students are better prepared to access e-governance services, pursue higher education, and secure future job opportunities
- By nurturing responsible and informed citizens, the project has the potential to inspire positive change within families and communities
- The program's success has created a replicable model for expanding digital literacy and civic education initiatives to different age groups and other underserved areas.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

1. Many parents were initially sceptical about the benefits of digital literacy. Awareness sessions and open discussions helped break initial scepticism, ensuring greater student participation
2. The program attracted significant interest, with more students wanting to enrol. However, due to limited infrastructure, resources, and logistical constraints, we could only accommodate a fixed number of students. To meet demand, additional funding, and larger venues is critical for expanding access and ensuring no child is left behind

3. Some students struggled to attend sessions regularly due to household responsibilities or lack of parental support. Providing self-paced learning materials, take-home exercises, and engaging parents can help ensure continuous learning
4. Many students had never used a computer before, making it challenging to teach even basic functions, requiring extra time for familiarization. Introducing a customized curriculum with foundational IT skills helped students build confidence before moving on to more advanced topics
5. Some children grasped concepts quickly, while others required additional support, making it difficult to maintain a uniform learning pace. Implementing small group sessions and tailored teaching methods ensured that all students received the support they needed

Performance Monitoring

Quantitative Feedback

Indicator	Pre-Program Assessment	Target	Achieved	Remarks
Number of students Enrolled	NA	25	25	Achieved as planned. Two batches were formed—one with 12 students and another with 13 students. A total of 25 students successfully completed the program
Total training hours	NA	186	186	Achieved as planned
Student attendance rate	NA	90%	85%	Slightly lower due to household responsibilities.
% of students demonstrating basic IT skills	10%	90%	95%	Significant improvement observed

				through pre- and post-assessments.
% of students understanding civic rights	2%	80%	85%	Improvement observed based on the types of questions students asked
% of students using digital tools at home or school	25%	70%	75%	Students reported applying skills outside the program.
Number of students teaching peers or family members digital skills	0	10	15	Many students became digital ambassadors in their communities and getting more friends to enrolment for future batches
% of students expressing interest in pursuing IT-related education	30%	60%	70%	Students demonstrated increased confidence and interest in technology.
Number of students accessing e-governance services with family support	0	10	12	Civic education helped families utilize digital government services like Aadhar Card, Land records and easy banking
New queries to conduct digital literacy workshop for bigger classes	NA	5	14	Increased demand for larger sessions due to positive impact

Qualitative Feedback

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Area of Improvement	Before the Program	After the Program
Confidence in using computers & the internet	Hesitant, unsure how to navigate basic digital tools.	Comfortable using computers independently for various tasks.
Navigating the internet for learning & personal benefit	Limited knowledge of search engines, struggled to find relevant information.	Able to search for educational content, apply for jobs, and access government portals.
Using digital tools (Word, Excel, basic coding)	Little to no exposure to office tools and coding platforms.	Created documents, used spreadsheets, and explored beginner coding programs.
Peer-to-peer learning & guiding others	Rarely shared digital knowledge with family or peers.	Actively taught family members and peers, increasing program outreach.
Real-world application of digital literacy	Uncertain how digital skills could benefit them.	Reported improvements in academics, job applications, and everyday problem-solving.
Behavioural changes (curiosity, proactiveness)	Passive learners, hesitant to ask questions.	More engaged, curious about technology, and willing to experiment.

Awareness of digital security & responsible usage	Unaware of online scams, weak cybersecurity habits.	Recognizes online threats, practices safer internet habits.
Area of Improvement	Before the Program	After the Program

Conclusion

The Digital Literacy and Civic Education Initiative effectively bridged the essential gaps in IT education and civic consciousness among primary school students in Gurgaon's urban slums. Through organized digital literacy training and engaging civic education, the project equipped young learners with vital skills for the digital era.

The impact of the program went beyond the classroom, as it instilled a culture of digital literacy in families and societies. Not only did students develop confidence in handling technology, but they also became champions of digital learning, spreading their expertise to family and friends. Moreover, the provision of civic education instilled a sense of responsibility and active citizenship in those who took part.

The program showed that exposure to digital skills at an early stage is life-changing, giving students the skills to meet contemporary challenges and opportunities. Nevertheless, this impact must be reinforced, scaled up, and harmonized with other efforts in education.

Recommendation

To leverage the success of this program and promote long-term effects, the following suggestions are made:

- Double the number of students in every batch to meet growing demand
- Explore collaborations with local government schools to conduct Digital Literacy and Civic Education program in their schools
- Introduce more advanced modules, such as coding, cybersecurity, and digital financial literacy

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- Set up an additional learning centre in Remote areas in Haryana and Uttarakhand to reach more underprivileged children
- Invest in additional laptops and improve infrastructure by maximizing the seating space to accommodate more children
- Set up technology-enabled classrooms to conduct live online sessions, ensuring wider reach and accessibility
- Develop bilingual (Hindi & English) digital tools and curriculum to cater to diverse linguistic backgrounds
- Introduce advanced training sessions for senior students to enhance their employability
- Partner with local businesses and organizations to provide students with career guidance and mentorship

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Week 1 Highlights

- Enrolment of 25 students for the program and Issuing personalized ID cards for identity and belonging
- Introduced computer but sharing importance of computers in daily life
- Introduced parts of computer and their basic functions
- Touched upon Safe and appropriate handling of electronic devices.
- Proper handwashing techniques and the importance of sanitization
- Ensured students sanitized their hands before attending sessions

Week 2 Highlights

- Reviewed computer parts and basic software and students practiced on how to find and open programs
- Introduced MS Paint and showed how to draw, change colors, and save pictures
- Encouraged teamwork through fun computer tasks
- Introduced how banks work and talked about how deposits and interest on savings

Week 3 Highlights

- Introduced Internet and email communication
- Discussed the importance of email, its uses, and where it is required.
- Introduced Google Meet and similar platforms for online communication.
- Students practiced dummy email writing activity in MS Word.
- Explored Myaadhar website – understanding its uses and services
- Conducted small awareness session on safe internet usage, websites, and online behaviour

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Week 4 Highlights

- Talked about safe internet usage, websites, and online behaviour.
- Students watched animal videos and played educational games.
- Studied how to safely shop online
- Students were given a real-life situation: *"What if your parents ask you to book a train?"*
- They attempted to find train schedules and book tickets.
- We explored train booking websites and checked live train status, spending extra time helping those who struggled.
- Explored world wonders & monuments.

Civic Awareness: Voting Rights,

Briefly discussed voting rights (since their parents were voting in Delhi elections)

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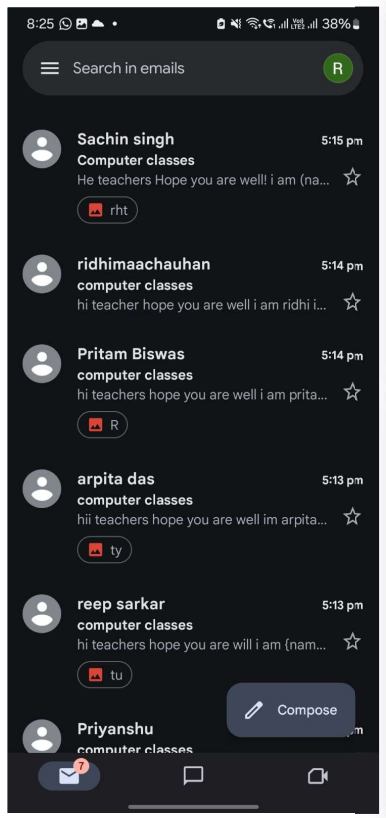
Week 5 Highlights

- Created email accounts for students
- Explored Gmail features (inbox, starred, trash, etc.)
- Students sent a test email to practice composing and sending emails
- Learned about Google Maps and how to navigate using it
- Studied how to write a proper email, including CC and BCC
- Task: Students emailed their learning feedback with an attached picture
- Explored ChatGPT to understand how it can help with exams and studies.



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Week 6 Highlights

- Discussed useful websites for learning, government information, services, and entertainment
- Explored Khan Academy for solving math problems
- Played educational games on Pratham Open School
- Learned how to search for textbook answers, sample papers, and study materials online.
- Introduction to PowerPoint (PPT) – learned basic features
- Hands-on PPT activity: Created a presentation on *India*.
- Students freely explored PowerPoint tools through hands-on learning

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Week 7 Highlights

- Students created a presentation on “My Family”.
- Added animations, transitions, recorded slideshow, and mailed the final PPT
- Used YouTube and online search to solve doubts independently
- Students showcased their PPTs and viewed each other's work.
- Health & Hygiene Activity: Played *Passing the Parcel* – the student holding the notebook enacted a healthy hygiene habit
- Discussed the importance of "Sorry," "Thank You," and "Please."
- Identified healthy and unhealthy foods through a quiz
- Discussed respecting others and their belongings

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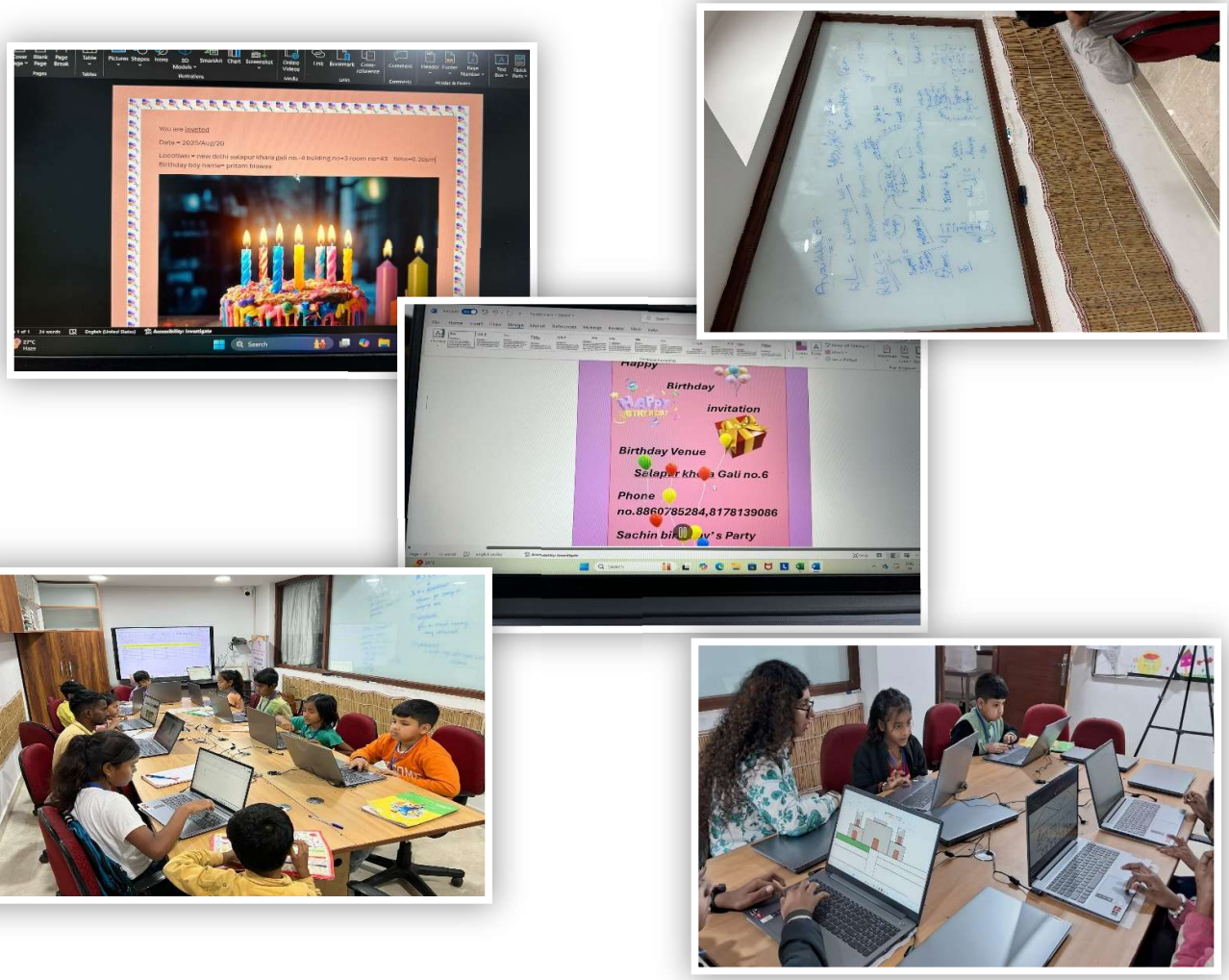
Week 8 Highlights

- Talked about data privacy, cyber-crimes, and security.
- Reviewed Gmail basics, and students sent emails to each other.
- Introduced Banking concepts and explored a banking simulator.
- Aadhaar Download Challenge: Faced difficulty as students/parents didn't know the linked mobile number required for OTP verification.
- Students sent *Happy Holi* emails to each other



Week 9 Highlights

- Students created a table with names, ages, and details of their classmates.
- Learned how to use formulas to add numbers and create a multiplication table of 3. Some struggled with formulas but manually calculated and completed the tasks
- Typing Games & Typing Test for speed and accuracy improvement.
- Certificates of Completion were distributed to students for successfully completing the program
- Interacted with respected Doctors and Police General and shared their learning about the program