

Knowledge Centre

The Knowledge Centre has the aim of making quality afterschool education available for rural girls and focuses on reducing gender inequality and social disparity. The Knowledge Centre was set up in 2014, in collaboration with Primavera Trust in the Kishanpura Village, of Jaipur district. The centre helped the girls gain wider knowledge and skills to face challenges of life and helped them feel motivated to continue in school, and builds their confidence and self-esteem so that they may resist pressure to marry at an early age. This opportunity was provided to the government school female students who otherwise do not get enough chances or resources to study. Considering the low literacy level of parents who struggle for daily bread and butter and hence do not have enough time, these girls lack the scholarly exposure. Thus, this knowledge center was started to provide high quality education to rural students of grade 8 to 12. Moreover, nutritional supplements were provided every day, keeping in mind their health standards. The subjects taught were Science, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, English, Political Science, History, Hindi, Sanskrit and Computer Technology for students studying in classes 8th to 12th. It is necessary to make them technology proficient so they can keep up with fast paced society; therefore, the center provides a computer lab for girls to work with.

On the weekends and holidays, life-skill education was being imparted to instigate scientific thought, including logic and reasoning skills. We also trained them in self-defence mechanisms and improve their access to services. Through participatory methods of teaching, various activities and games, a lot of significant and predominant issues get covered connecting them better with the outside world.

Achievements:

- The girls displayed an overall increase in confidence, communication skills, leadership qualities, in addition to academic performance.
- Improved health standards in the students due to healthy nutritional supplements. An increased awareness of important health issues and how to mitigate issues, as well as access to medicinal resources.
- Increased attendance in the extra classes as compared to the regular classes in the school.
- The school results were very excellent in all the years. The top 5 positions in each class in their school were from this centre.
- 50% of them got prestigious Gargi Puruskar and some of them got laptop from the Govt. of Rajasthan.
- Besides education, considerable transformation in the life style and behavior of the students.
- Enhanced interest towards subjects like Mathematics, Science, English and Computer among the students.
- Rise in confidence level of the students.

- Enhanced interest towards education.
- Increase in satisfaction and enthusiasm among the parents.
- Encouraging feedback from the school teachers who appreciated the organization for its collaborative approach.

Parinati (Leadership Project for Girls) 2016 - 2019

In association with Ekakanya, the Parinati project was created in July 2016 to with the vision of giving girls the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential and become leaders of change and then create positive changes in their own lives and in their community. Hence to instil transformation and work on such issues, the project trained a group of 30 girls who evolved as change leaders. We also focused on ensuring these girls have outlets to pursue further education for their own academic or skill-based betterment. Parinati aimed to increase directly the full capacity of each student. A few of the objectives included the provision of scholarships for further education, engagement of women and girls to work productively and efficiently, teaching the art of negotiation for brighter future and building their critical and creative thinking skills. After 3 years, a lot of development was noticed in the mind-sets and thought processes of these girls. Being a part of Parinati at a young age helped them to shape their ideologies and opinions in a more constructive and sensible way.

Achievements:

- Remarkable positive changes were seen in themselves.
- Positive changes were also seen in their behavior towards their parents, peers and society.
- They have become highly independent and thoughtful.
- Now they are empowered with many soft skills like managing emotions, problem solving, managing time, knowledge of health and wellness etc.
- Now they have become as confident and acting as change leaders for the society.

Adult Literacy Program

In the rural parts of Rajasthan, the literacy level is a major concern, especially amongst women. Therefore, SMILE, in collaboration with Bosch India Foundation, took initiative to teach rural women from scratch. The Adult Literacy Program of the 7 villages of Bassi and Sanganer block had a remarkable impact on all the women involved empowering them and giving a sense of confidence and pride. The main agenda of the program was to make them independent and self-reliant so that they could smoothly read newspapers and crucial documents, and handle the basic monetary transactions of day to day life. Through education we wanted to instil in them a sense of accomplishment and fulfilment. This initiative was also taken to empower and boost their self-esteem. By using unconventional methods, women were taught to read and write basics of Hindi, and simple maths.

Capacity Building workshop was held regularly for the trainers to understand the concepts well and learn the process of teaching. The art of communicating to middle-aged women through songs, classroom activities, games and other participatory methods were also taught in ToT. Provision of literacy related books to further develop reading and learning habits was done by SMILE.

Empowering women through vocational and soft skills (Beauty culture and Cutting and Tailoring Course)

After exploring the economic opportunities of some villages SMILE had completed 9 above courses in 7 villages. These course programmed for 6 months, was carefully and meticulously planned month-wise. The women did not have any previous experience in stitching. Hence, initially the importance of the course and the skills were discussed and later a detailed syllabus with all the processes and methods was designed, which covers various forms of clothing styles Indian (their local traditional dress) as well as Western wear. They felt a sense of satisfaction and confidence while learning and sewing. They no more felt dependent on market provisions all the time. Along with the course, workshops on legal laws, gender, health, machine repairing were also organised to make them aware about the rights regarding the crimes and violence they face on a quotidian level. Workshops on entrepreneurship and women empowerment made them realize their identity and importance. Similarly beauty culture course were organised for 3 months along with the above workshops and exposure visit of some beauty parlours and wellness centre were organised.

Remedial classes to improve quality of education of primary section

SMILE is organising remedial classes for the students of class 1 to 5 studding in Govt. school from 2008. Now from 2018 we have started teaching of 30 students in each school who are not able to cope up with their respective classes. Centers are running in school premises of 5 Govt. schools 4 hours daily. Learning with creativity and no subject boundaries, children are learning more effectively.

Achievements

- Students are attending the classes with more interest.
- They are enjoying their studies because of too many innovative learning methods we are using.
- Most of the students are now able to read few sentences and do simple math's.
- We have not created subjects boundaries so students are learning Hindi, English, Math's and EVS together.
- With songs, games and activities the learning would be long lasting.