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An Evaluation of UMEED in Ahmedabad: Analysis through Narratives

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Abstract

Urban poverty is a pertinent problem facing the Government of India since independence and the Government has taken up a number of approaches for Urban Poverty Alleviation (UPA) in India. The Government has adopted four-pronged strategy of employment creation housing, social development and environmental improvement of slums to alleviate poverty in India. This research is an attempt to analyse one such programme- UMEED launched by the Government of Gujarat as part of the employment creation strategy. Eight case studies were chosen from Ahmedabad through random sampling and responses were elicited to gauge the success or failure of UMEED. The case studies revealed that the programme has been really effective as an inventive idea to provide training for skill development to the youth of urban poor. It has provided a platform where employable youth can be trained to meet the human resource needs of the business and industry.

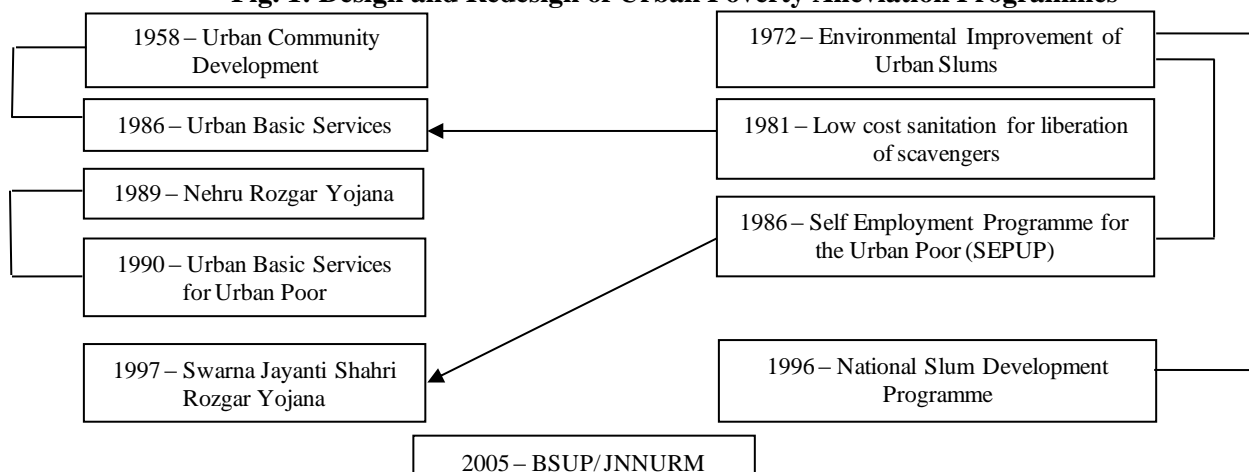
Keywords: Urban poverty, UMEED, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, employment generation, urban poor, skill development, youth

1. Five Year Plans and Urban Poverty Alleviation

The government policies and programmes on urban poverty reduction have moved from a stage where it was seen primarily in terms of social and economic inequities in the First Plan and later as distortion in the income distribution in the Fourth Plan and now as a problem of access to productive employment, shelter and services (NRCUP, 2008). The policy thrust articulated in the Eleventh Plan approach paper is eradication of poverty, both economic and of opportunities and living conditions.

The origin of Urban Poverty Alleviation (UPA) initiatives can be traced to the Community Development Programme which began in the early 1950s (Jain, 1988). The first formal attempt to experiment with Community Development Approach in cities was the Urban Community Development (UCD) pilot project which was started in 1958 and followed by a series of UCD pilot projects based on “Area Oriented Approach” (see figure 1).

Fig. 1: Design and Redesign of Urban Poverty Alleviation Programmes



Source: Author's work

Subsequently, Urban Improvement of Urban Slums (EIUS) was identified as a basic need of the slum population in the Fifth Plan. The scheme was later transferred to state governments for onward implementation in 1974. The approach of EIUS was also “Area-oriented”. The Seventh Plan made the first conscious attempt to address urban poverty issues directly instead of treating them as mere adjunct of rural poverty. In the Plan, the Central Government decided to expand the Urban Basic Services (UBS) programme, implemented during 1981-84 in 42 towns in collaboration with UNICEF, to 168 towns. The UBS aimed to catering to the basic physical and social needs of the urban poor with a view to improving their living conditions. The important feature of the programme was its “Community Participatory Approach”.

The NCU had recommended that amelioration of urban poverty should be accorded the same priority as given to rural poverty. In addition, it recommended that community development should be the strategy for improvement of living conditions of the urban poor. Consequently, as a follow up of the recommendations made by NCU, the first major comprehensive intervention of addressing the issues of growing incidence of poverty in urban areas was started in 1989. The Government of India adopted a four-pronged strategy comprising:

- a) Employment creation for low income communities through promotion of micro-enterprises and public works;
- b) Housing and shelter up-gradation.
- c) Social development planning with special focus on development of children and women; and
- d) Environmental improvement of slums.

2. UMEED - GUJARAT

Various states run different programmes under SJSRY, one among them being UMEED in Gujarat. UMEED is an inventive idea to provide training for skill development to the youth of urban poor considering need of market in particular area, so that employment of youth can be ensured. It promotes partnerships between stakeholders at multiple levels. Stakeholders are youth, slum communities, government departments, civil society, business councils, professional trainers, local businesses and financial investors.

UMEED offers 15 different technical courses each of 3 months duration, building the capacity of both young women and men, between the ages of 18-35 years. It intends to place them in appropriate jobs in industries with a minimum salary of about Rs. 3000 per month. Often these youth are first generation entrants into the organized sector and this capacity building helps them bring themselves and their families out of poverty over a period of time. This programme is the only programme for livelihood provision for urban poor in Ahmedabad and hence been taken as a case study to be tested for its success/failure in this particular city under consideration. The programme started in 2007 and is running for the past seven years in Ahmedabad.

2.1. Aim

To study the performance and relevance of anti-poverty programme-UMEED-running in Ahmedabad for livelihood provision for the urban poor.

2.2. Objectives

1. Identify and explain the socio-economic background of the participants of UMEED
2. Assess whether the programme incorporates the views of participants in the entire process of implementation of the programme, from designing the course content to the final placement of the participants.
3. Assess the effectiveness of the programme through advantages (economic as well as social) obtained by the urban poor by being a part of UMEED.

2.3. Selection Criteria and Categories

Since UMEED is the main livelihood provision programme for Gujarat state in general, and Ahmedabad, in particular, hence the sample population for the survey has been selected from the participants of this programme. Through random sampling the present study identifies the sample comprising of alumni of UMEED and already placed somewhere. A case study approach has been adopted to understand the impact of the programme.

2.4. Selection Area

Ahmedabad has been chosen for carrying out the study which is the seventh largest metropolis in India. The city is emerging as a financial centre with a diversified economy including engineering and chemical industries and a rapidly expanding service sector. Ahmedabad Urban Agglomeration (AUA) covers an area of 310 km² and a population estimated at 4.67 million in 2001.

However, roughly 15% of the urban population lives Below the Poverty Line (BPL). Thus looking at the sprawling problem of urban poverty, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation decided to take an inventory of the urban poor in Ahmedabad in association with Government of Gujarat, NGOs, academics, urban poor, AUDA and various industry giants. It finally came up with innovative solutions to creating choices for the urban poor through various solutions and multiple dimensions. The main dimensions can be categorized as: housing for urban poor, livelihood provision for urban poor and provision of basic services for urban poor.

Thus, this study primarily looks into the livelihoods aspect of urban poor in Ahmedabad city as the economic status of urban poor is the base for overall development of this section of society.

Since UMEED is the only programme for livelihood provision in Gujarat, in general and in Ahmedabad, in particular, hence this programme is being taken up as a background study to test against its own success or failure. UMEED is an ongoing initiative under the Rs 13,000-crore Garib Samruddhi Yojana of the Gujarat government scheme which aims to achieve sustained reduction in the vulnerability and poverty of the poor. A thrust area identified is livelihood creation for the youth in the age group of 18 – 35 years from economically weaker sections.

The programme is jointly run by four organizations- SAATH, CAP Foundation, Aid-et-Action and SkillPro Foundation- as region-wise resources agencies for conducting training.

Municipalities and Corporations assist civil societies to implement the Project at the city level. Additional CEO, GUDM, Coordinates the Project at the state level. The first centre of UMEED was established in Behrampura under the name Ek Mouka Udaan which was a joint venture between SAATH and Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation in the month of September 2005 in which more than 1,200 youth got employment. Thereafter, in the month of February 2007 the program was taken up by the government of Gujarat and renamed as UMEED. In Ahmedabad, there are 24 centers of UMEED, 13 run by SAATH, 3 run by Parivartan, 2 run by CITD, 2 run by Orchid and 1 each run by WEC, Daksh Skills, Inner Voice and SLS. Thus the study is being carried out in 13 centers of SAATH and two centers each of CITD, Parivartan and Orchid.

2.5. Case Studies

2.5.1. Case Study 1

2.5.1.1. Name of the Beneficiary: Sonal Ramtek

Sonal is a 22 year-old unmarried girl. She is a Commerce graduate from Saraspur Arts and Commerce College, Ahmedabad. She is an English teacher in Udgam School, Bapunagar. She also takes English tuition classes at Akshar Educare, near Bapunagar Crossroad. She completed the course of Tally from UMEED, Saraspur on 30th September, 2009.



2.5.1.2. Social Description of the Household

Sonal's family stays in Bapunagar in their own house. A family of six members wherein all the members are educated with an average education level of the household of 10th, Sonal has three siblings (all un-married), one sister and two brothers. While her sister has cleared 12th class and working as a tele-caller, her brothers are still studying in 10th class and B.Com (1st Year).

2.5.1.3. Economic Description of the Household

There are three earning members in the family, including Sonal with an average income of Rs. 1,900 per month. The total Income of the household is Rs. 5,700 per month while the total expenditure is Rs. 5,000 with a saving of Rs. 700 per month. Sonal's sister is a Tele-Caller in a private domestic call-centre and her father is a labourer in a factory earning Rs. 2,500 per month. Sonal used to work in a courier company earlier where she used to earn Rs. 1,000. She was highly dissatisfied in her previous job. Today she has to put in much less number of hours in her present job compared to her previous job. Her school is only 1 kilometre away from home and she thus goes by walking and saves money on travelling.

2.5.1.4. Training from UMEED and transformation brought therein

Sonal got to know about UMEED programme through her brother and got enrolled in the Saraspur Centre for the batch commencing on 16th June, 2009. Saraspur Centre was not only quite close to her place of residence, i.e. Bapunagar (2.3 kms.) but also offered her the course of her own choice i.e. **Tally**. In **Tally** programme she learnt various accounting features as Unified Ledgers, Complete Book-keeping, Comprehensive Accounting, and inventory features as Multi-location Stock Control, Aged stocks Analysis, Batch- related stock reports etc. Her aim in life is to become an accounts manager in a good company. Sonal believes she has gained a lot of social/ intangible benefits which can be explained as below.

2.5.1.5. Benefits gained from UMEED

1. Computer Knowledge
2. Development of Communication skills and public speaking
3. Increase in Typing Speed
4. Opportunity to learn Tally
5. English speaking
6. Overall personality development

2.5.1.6. Suggestions for Improving the Programme

According to Sonal, the programme is very good in every aspect. Since English speaking has brought a drastic change in her life, so Sonal wants the programme to emphasize more on English speaking and few other courses like Tally, DTP, BPO etc.

2.5.2. Case Study 2

2.5.2.1. Name of the Beneficiary: Kinjal S. Parmar

Kinjal is a 19 year old unmarried girl. She has cleared class 10th and completed her course of Desk Top Publishing (DTP) from UMEED, Chandlodia on 30th August, 2009. She works with Planet Health, Ambawadi and is quite satisfied with her present job. She wants to be a teacher.



2.5.2.2. Social Description of the Household

Kinjal's family stays in Chandkheda in their own house. Theirs' is a family of five members wherein all the members are educated. While Kinjal, her father and mother have all cleared class 10th, her elder sister is in second year of Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com) while her younger brother is in class 7th.

2.5.2.3. Economic Description of the household

There are two earning members in the family, including Kinjal. While Kinjal is a Sales Assistant in Planet Health, Ambawadi, her father has a Printing Press and earns Rs. 3,000 per month. Her mother is a housewife and her siblings, a brother and a sister are still studying. The total Income of the household is Rs. 5,000 per month while the total expenditure is Rs. 4,000 with a saving of Rs. 1,000 per month. Kinjal's place of work is approximately 11 kms. away from her place of residence in Chandkheda and she commutes by bus spending 45 minutes – 1 hour to reach Planet Health, Ambawadi. She works for 10 hours a day, 9 am to 7 pm.

2.5.2.4. Training from UMEED and transformation brought therein

Kinjal got to know about the UMEED programme through the pamphlet given to her by the Road Show team of UMEED. She got inspired by the Mobilization Team and got herself enrolled in UMEED Chandkheda for the batch from 1st June till 30th August, 2009.

As she stays in Chandkheda, thus the Chandkheda centre was the obvious choice. She opted to learn **Desk Top Publishing (DTP)** in UMEED. Desktop publishing (also known as DTP) basically refers to page layout skills for either large scale publishing or small scale local multifunction peripheral output or distribution. In DTP programme she learnt troubleshooting office automation i.e. mail merge, database creation, spreadsheet calculations and presentations. Moreover she learnt a number of softwares as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe PageMaker, Microsoft Office Publisher and Corel DRAW. Kinjal learnt a lot in UMEED and now aspires to be a teacher. She gained a number of benefits by being a part of UMEED which have been discussed as below:

2.5.2.5. Benefits gained from UMEED

1. Computer Knowledge
2. English speaking
3. Boost in self-confidence
4. Improvement in communication skills
5. Has become self-dependent
6. Ability to face all the problems with courage
7. Overall personality development

2.5.2.6. Suggestions for Improving the Programme

Kinjal is really happy that she was a student of UMEED. She has some important suggestions to make the programme better in future. These are:

1. **The course duration of 3 months should be increased:** Although she did not specify the ideal duration of the programme, yet she feels that 3 months is too less to learn any programme and thus it should be increased appropriately.
2. **New courses should be started under UMEED:** The course suggested by her is Communication Centre Management (CCM). The Communication Center Manager (CCM) Course is one-of-a-kind program that presents the latest management and leadership practices used by successful businesses and how to implement them in today's communication center. She thinks this course can help students be useful for students in the sales and marketing field to sell their products better.

2.5.3. Case Study 3

2.5.3.1. Name of the Beneficiary: Bhavana R. Dodiya

Bhavana is a 24 year-old unmarried girl. She is a commerce graduate from Vivekanand College of commerce, Raipur Darwaza. She is a sales girl in Deepkamal Electronics showroom in Shukan Mall, Sabarmati. She successfully completed the course of Tally from UMEED, Chandkheda on 30th September, 2009.



2.5.3.2. Social Description of the Household

Sonal's family stays in their own house in Chandkheda. Theirs' is a family of eight members wherein all the members are educated. Bhavana has four siblings, two sisters and two brothers.

While the eldest sister is married, the other three siblings are younger to Bhavana and are un-married. The younger sister is a science graduate and her brothers are still studying in school in class 12th and 10th. The eldest sister is a post-graduate in Arts, and is married. At present only seven members stay in their present house at Chandkheda.

2.5.3.3. Economic Description of the Household

There are three earning members in the family, including Bhavana. While Bhavana is a sales girl in an electronic showroom in Shukan Mall in Sabarmati, her grandfather is a retired teacher. Her father is a telephone operator and the main bread earner of the family with a per month income of Rs. 20,000. The total Income of the household is Rs. 5,700 per month while the total expenditure is Rs. 5,000 with a saving of Rs. 700 per month. This is Bhavana's first job and her place of work is in Sabarmati, 6 kms. away from her place of residence in Chandkheda, she works for 11 hours a day, 10 am to 9 pm. She is quite satisfied with her present job and feels more satisfied by being more self-dependent today than earlier.

2.5.3.4. Training from UMEED and transformation brought therein

Bhavana got to know about the UMEED programme through her friend and got enrolled in the Chandkheda Centre for the batch commencing on 1st June, 2009. The choice of this centre was primarily because of the proximity of the centre to her place of residence. The course she opted for in the centre was **Tally**. The duration of the course was 1st June to 30th September, 2009. She was taught both, Tally 7.2 as well as Tally 9. In Tally programme she learnt various accounting and inventory features. Her aim in life is to become a Bank Clerk.

2.5.3.5. Benefits gained from UMEED

1. Computer Knowledge
2. Development of Communication skills and public speaking
3. Increase in Typing Speed
4. Opportunity to learn Tally
5. English speaking
6. Overall personality development

2.5.3.6. Suggestions for Improving the Programme

Bhavana is really satisfied with the programme. Yet she has a couple of suggestions to improve this programme in future. Her suggestions are as follows:

1. A person should be given a chance to pursue another course in UMEED even though he/ she already completed one. This will help the students to become self-dependent in future.
2. The number of Computers should be increased in the centre and be in accordance with the number of students. If the number of computers are as many as the number of students or even if in a ratio of 1:2, then the students can practice better and learn the concepts better. The ratio of computers to students should, however, not increase beyond 1:2.
3. The duration of the course should be increased from the present duration of 3 months. This is required as it is a short duration to grasp fundamentals of any subject being taught.
4. New state-of-the-art computer softwares and languages must be started as C++, Java, Microsoft Office Publisher and Tally 9. This will help the students to be more updated and stand at par with students learning these courses in private coaching centers.

2.5.4. Case Study 4

2.5.4.1. Name of the Beneficiary: Ashik M.Patel

Ashik is a 20 year old unmarried person. He is a graduate in Arts from Swaminarayan Arts College, Ghatlodia and has his own business of computer hardware started recently after the completion of his course (Computer Hardware) at UMEED, Chandlodia on 8th October 2009. Today he is a much more disciplined, confident and self-dependent boy with an ambition to become famous and rich in life.



1.5.3.1 Social Description of the Household

Ashik's family stays in Ghatlodia in their own house. Theirs' is a family of seven members wherein all the members are well educated with the least educated being the grandmother who has cleared class 8th.

2.5.4.2. Economic Description of the Household

There are five earning members in the family, including Ashik with an average income of Rs. 2,500 per month. The total Income of the household is approximately Rs. 13,000 per month and the total expenditure is approximately Rs. 8,000 with a saving of Rs. 5,000 per month.

While Ashik's mother and sister-in-law are both teachers, his brother is a typist in a private company and Ashik and his father run their computer hardware business. Recently after the completion of the course from UMEED, Ashik has started his own computer hardware business. He earns about Rs. 3,000 per month. He works very hard, from 9 am till 9 pm, yet he is very satisfied today as has become self-dependent. Earlier he was a customer care executive in Vodafone where he used to get Rs. 1,000 per month and was highly dissatisfied with his job.

2.5.4.3. Training from UMEED and transformation brought therein

Ashik got to know about the UMEED programme through one of his friends and got himself enrolled in the Chandlodia Centre for the batch commencing on 8th July, 2009. He chose the Chandlodia centre as this centre was the closest to his place of residence i.e. Ghatlodia (less than 1 km). The course he opted for was **Computer Hardware**. In Computer Hardware programme he got an overview of computer's components, motherboard processors, printers, Operating System, hardware installation/ configuration, and preventive maintenance/ troubleshooting using system tools/ diagnostic software. His aim in life is to start his computer hardware business.

2.5.4.4. Benefits gained from UMEED

1. Confidence boost
2. Computer Knowledge
3. Disciplined life
4. Time Management
5. Development of Communication skills and public speaking
6. Improvement in presentation skills
7. English speaking
8. Overall personality development

2.5.4.5. Suggestions for Improving the Programme

According to Ashik, the programme is really very good and due to the dedication of the teachers, the programme is bound to spread far and wide.

Ashik believes that the programme boosts a students' confidence to such an extent that a student should be given one more chance to study another related course at UMEED so that he can gain more and more from such a programme.

2.5.5. Case Study 5

2.5.5.1. Name of the Beneficiary: Meet Tak

Meet is a 20 year old unmarried boy. He is a Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com) graduate from Sabarmati College of Arts and Commerce. He is presently working in Online Ad-Posting for the past one month. He completed the course of Computer Hardware from UMEED, Chandkheda on 30th August, 2009. He aspires to be a businessman having his own business of Computer hardware and software.



2.5.5.2. Social Description of the Household

Meet's family stays in Sabarmati in their own house. Theirs' is a family of four members wherein all the members are educated with the least educated being his mother who is also 10th pass. Meet's father and elder sister have both cleared class 12th.

2.5.5.3. Economic Description of the Household

There are two earning member in the family, including Meet with an average income of Rs. 4,000 per month. While Meet does the job of "Online Ad-Posting" and earns Rs. 3,000, his father has his own shop selling Jeans and earns Rs. 5,000 per month. The total Income of the household is Rs. 8,000 per month and total expenditure is Rs. 7,000 with a saving of Rs. 1,000 per month. Meet's mother is a housewife and his elder sister is still studying in B.A. (1st year). Meet's office is in Chandkheda and he goes to his work place walking. He works for 8 hours from 10 am till 6 pm. This is his first job and he finally wants to start his own business of computer hardware and software.

2.5.5.4. Training from UMEED and transformation brought therein

Meet got to know about the UMEED programme through the pamphlet given by the Road Show team of UMEED which visited his house in May. Finally he got himself enrolled at the UMEED, Chandkheda centre on 30th May, 2009. He chose the Chandkheda centre as this centre was the closest to his place of residence i.e. Sabarmati (at a distance of 3 kms). The course he opted for was **Computer Hardware**. The duration of the course was 1st June to 30th August, 2009. In Computer Hardware programme he got an overview of computer's components, motherboard processors, printers, Operating System, hardware installation/ configuration, and preventive maintenance/ troubleshooting using system tools/ diagnostic software. Now his aim in life is to start his own computer hardware and software business and spread it far and wide.

2.5.5.5. Benefits gained from UMEED

1. Confidence boost
2. Computer Knowledge
3. Better Communication skills and public speaking
4. English speaking
5. Increased sense of self-dependence
6. Positive thinking
7. Overall personality development

2.5.5.6. Suggestions for Improving the Programme

Meet is really satisfied with the programme, the centre and the faculty. He has few suggestions to make, though:

1. There should be an increase in number of computers in the centre: Meet says that basic computer is taught to practically all the students enrolled in a batch in a session. However, usage of Computers is really high for those opting for computer hardware, and Tally. Thus for these two courses, at least the ratio of computers to students should be 1:1 and not more.
2. Second, Meet said that there was shortage of computer hardware tools in the centre. Hence the quantity of computer hardware tools in the centre should be increased so that the students of computer hardware are able to practice more.

These are centre specific problems. However, Meet has no problem with the course curriculum or the entire structure of the course and hence is quite satisfied and proud student of UMEED and wants the programme to become very successful in future.

2.5.6. Case Study 6

2.5.6.1. Name of the Beneficiary: Miral Patel

Miral is a 20 year-old unmarried girl. She has completed her B.E in Electrical Engineering from L.D. College of Engineering, Gujarat University and is presently teaching at Shriji Coaching Centre at Bapunagar. She completed Desk Top Publishing (DTP) from UMEED, Saraspur on 30th September, 2009.



2.5.6.2. Social Description of the Household

Miral's family stays in Bapunagar in their own house. Theirs' is a family of five members wherein all the members are educated. Sonal has two siblings (both un-married), one sister and one brother. Both her siblings are younger to her and are presently studying.

2.5.6.3. Economic Description of the Household

There are three earning member in the family, including Miral with an average income of Rs. 2,200 per month. The total Income of the household is Rs. 6,500 per month and the total expenditure is Rs. 5,000 with a saving of Rs. 1,500 per month. Miral has been teaching in Shriji Engineering Coaching classes for the past two years.

2.5.6.4. Training from UMEED and transformation brought therein

Miral got to know about the UMEED programme through her friend and got herself enrolled in the Saraspur Centre for the batch commencing on 16th June, 2009. She opted to learn **Desk Top Publishing (DTP)** in UMEED. Desktop publishing basically refers to page layout skills for either large scale publishing or small scale local multifunction peripheral output or distribution. In DTP programme she learnt troubleshooting office automation i.e. mail merge, database creation, spreadsheet calculations and presentations. Moreover she learnt softwares as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe PageMaker, Microsoft Office Publisher and Corel DRAW.

2.5.6.5. Benefits gained from UMEED

1. Computer Knowledge
2. Better use of computer and Internet in particular
3. English speaking
4. Increase in Typing speed
5. Importance of Discipline in life
6. Boost in self-confidence
7. Better expression of ideas
8. Positive thinking
9. Good Manners and behaviour
10. Overall personality development

2.5.6.6. Suggestions for Improving the Programme

Miral is impressed by the programme and wants it to continue as she finds it to be really useful. Moreover, she has a desire to come back to the institute and learn more. The only suggestion she has is that the students should be given one more chance to come back to UMEED and learn another course as learning more courses from UMEED will make them confident and better equipped to face any challenge in personal and professional life.

2.5.7. Case Study 7

2.5.7.1. Name of the Beneficiary: Rahul Boyat

Rahul is a 19 year-old unmarried boy. He is a security guard in Torrent Power. He successfully completed the course of ITeS from UMEED, Chandkheda on 30th May, 2009. Coming from a very poor background, the achievement of Rahul in terms of job and salary earned today is really commendable and inspiring.



2.5.7.2. Social Description of the Household

Rahul's family stays in their own house in Chandkheda. Theirs' is a family of four members. Rahul's parents are not so well educated. However, his elder brother, Manoj, has done B.Com and is working in a private firm.

2.5.7.3. Economic Description of the Household

There are three earning members in the family, including Rahul. While Rahul is a Security Guard, his father is peon in a Government Department and earns Rs. 6,000 per month. His brother works in a private company as a clerk in a private firm and earns Rs. 10,000 per month. The total Income of the household is Rs. 20,500 per month and the total expenditure is Rs. 14,800 with a saving of Rs. 5,700 per month. Rahul's place of work is approximately 9 kms. away from his place of residence, He works for 8 hours a day, 10 am to 6 pm. Rahul has been self-dependent since a tender age of 8 years, yet feels his life has transformed completely after coming to UMEED. He is quite happy in his present job and wants to go ahead in life.

2.5.7.4. Training from UMEED and transformation brought therein

Rahul got to know about the UMEED programme through the pamphlet given by the *Road Show Team* of UMEED, Chandkheda. He got motivated by the mobilization team and decided to join the Chandkheda Centre for the batch commencing on 1st April, 2009. The choice of this centre was primarily because of the proximity of the centre to his place of residence. The course he opted for was **Information Technology enabled Services (ITeS)**. ITeS is basically the outsourcing of processes that can be enabled with IT and covers diverse areas like Finance, HR, Administration, health care and telecommunication etc. Armed with technology and manpower, these services are provided from e-enabled locations. The main components of the programme are Customer Relations Management, Accent Neutralization and functional English.

After passing out from UMEED, Rahul now aspires to start his own video version marketing business.

2.5.7.5. Benefits gained from UMEED

1. Habit of working hard
2. Giving respect to every kind of work
3. Increase in Self-Confidence
4. English Speaking
5. Computer Knowledge
6. Overall personality development

2.5.7.6. Suggestions for Improving the Programme

Rahul has gained a lot from UMEED and thus has made some keen observations. After a lot of deliberation, he has come up with the following suggestions for improving the programme:

1. Students of UMEED must be given a chance to pursue another course after completion of one as today's market is very competitive and students need to be well-equipped to face this tough competition by being multi-skilled.
2. There should be no upper age-limit for entry into the programme as someone may realize at the age of 36 years that he/she needs to learn and do a job. But he/she should not be denied entry into the programme because he is beyond the age-limit set for the programme .
3. New and innovative courses must be introduced in the centre eg. Animation, voice dubbing etc. so that the vast market of mass-communication opens up for the unemployed yet talented youth of today.

2.5.8. Case Study 8

2.5.8.1. Name of the Beneficiary: Kaushik Kumar Shrimali

Kaushik is a 19 year-old unmarried boy. He is a graduate in science (B.Sc) and is pursuing his Masters in science (M.Sc) right now from Vishwakarma Government Engineering College. He is still studying yet he aims to get a job of computer software professional or software designer in future in a good company. He completed the course of Desk Top Publishing (DTP) from UMEED Chandkheda on 30th August, 2009.



2.5.8.2. Social Description of the Household

Kaushik's family stays in their own house in Chandkheda. Theirs' is a family of six members. All the members of the household are well educated except his mother who has cleared class 5th. His father has done Primary Teachers Course (PTC) and is presently a teacher in a government school.

Kaushik has two elder brothers and a sister-in-law. While his eldest brother is married and has done Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com.), the brother immediate elder to him is unmarried and is a graduate in Arts (B.A.). He is still studying and pursuing Masters in Arts (M.A.). His sister-in-law has also done B.A. and is a housewife.

2.5.8.3. Economic Description of the Household

There are two earning members in the family, Kaushik's father and eldest brother. While Kaushik's father is a teacher in a government school and earns Rs. 18,000 his brother is graduate in commerce and in a Data Entry Clerk in a private firm and earns Rs. 2,000 per month. The total Income of the household is Rs. 20,000 per month and the total expenditure is Rs. 18,000 with a saving of Rs. 2,000 per month. Kaushik and his elder brother are still studying.

2.5.8.4. Training from UMEED and transformation brought therein

Kaushik got to know about the UMEED programme through the pamphlet given to him by the Road Show team of UMEED. He got inspired by the Mobilization Team and got himself enrolled in UMEED Chandkheda for the batch from 1st June till 30th August, 2009. He opted to learn **Desk Top Publishing (DTP)** in UMEED. Desktop publishing basically refers to page layout skills for either large scale publishing or small scale local multifunction peripheral output or distribution. In DTP programme he learnt troubleshooting office automation i.e. mail merge, database creation, spreadsheet calculations and presentations.

Moreover he learnt a number of softwares as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe PageMaker, Microsoft Office Publisher and Corel DRAW. Kaushik learnt a lot in UMEED and aspires to be a computer professional in future.

2.5.8.5. Benefits gained from UMEED

1. Computer Knowledge
2. English speaking
3. Boost in self-confidence
4. Better communication skills
5. Overall personality development

2.5.8.6. Suggestions for improving the programme

Kaushik is really happy with the programme – UMEED and does not have many drastic suggestions to make to improve the programme. The main suggestions are:

1. The course duration of 3 months should be increased: He feels that the course duration should be at least 6 months to help students learn the course chosen by them in detail. He says, “3 months is too less to learn any programme and thus, I feel, it should be increased to 6 months to help students get into the depth of any topic they are learning”.
2. He feels that other courses being taught in other centres of UMEED must be started in the Chandkheda centre too as the present number of courses are too few and thus if they are introduced then students will have a wider choice of subjects to choose from.
3. Another major suggestion given by Kaushik is pertaining to the computers being used in the centre. He says, “There was immense shortage of computers in the centre. Thus everyone did not get enough time to practice on the computer”. Moreover he says that there is no proper maintenance of computers at the centre due to which the students have to students. Thus his suggestion is to increase the number of computers in the centre and properly maintain and service them from time to time.

3. Conclusion

The benefits of the programme and the suggestions to improve it in future were elicited from a Focused Group Discussion with the beneficiaries. The aims and objectives and the actual achievements have been summed up in table 1.

Table 1: Comparative Assessment of Aims and Objectives and Achievements So Far

Aims and Objectives	Achievements of the programme as assessed by the survey
Aims to cultivate career aspirations and livelihood skills of young people living in slum areas with the view to employment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Boost in self-confidence</u>: The programme has given the beneficiaries the confidence to face the world and have confidence in themselves. 2. <u>Positive Thinking</u>: UMEED has inculcated an optimistic outlook towards life. It is basically the feeling of never losing hope in any distressed situation in life and ability to face all problems with courage. 3. <u>Time Management</u>: The understanding of the benefit of time management in life has made the beneficiaries motivated to achieve a lot in life in a short span of time. 4. <u>Disciplined life</u>: Now the beneficiaries lead a disciplined life as a direct outcome of better time management in life. 5. <u>Good Manners and behaviour</u>: The beneficiaries have learnt to present themselves in society through better dressing sense, better value system and improved behaviour in society.
Instill confidence and helps develop enterprise to meet the needs of growing service and economy.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Computer Knowledge</u>: Beneficiaries have gained knowledge of basic computer and few state-of-the-art softwares necessary to be learnt in today's technologically advancing world. 2. <u>English speaking</u>: The beneficiaries have learnt spoken English and ability to hold a basic conversation in English effectively and fluently. 3. <u>Development of Communication skills and public speaking</u>: Stage fear of the beneficiaries has vanished and now they are able to convey their ideas convincingly and able to participate in discussions and debates. 4. <u>Improvement in presentation skills</u>: The beneficiaries can represent their ideas now and convince the public at large (the customers at their work place) through better presentation of ideas and opinions.
UMEED trains people and links youth from poor, vulnerable families to career opportunities, placing them in lasting careers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Self-dependence</u>: The beneficiaries have become self-dependent after seeking a decent job and are able to contribute to their household income. 57% respondents are employed today. They have developed Computer Skills, Communication Skills, Human Resource Management skills, Time management skills, Data Presentation skills, Self presentation skills, Organization skills and Team Work skills. 2. <u>Habit of working hard and giving respect to every kind of work</u>: The beneficiaries have realized the importance of hard work in their professional life. Moreover they have learnt to respect work now. 3. <u>Overall personality development</u>: UMEED has gifted the beneficiaries a better and improved personality, immense self-confidence and belief on their ability to achieve their ambitions in life.

Source: Author's work

3.1. Benefits of UMEED

The programme has been very effective and following advantages have been sought from the programme by the beneficiaries:

1. Computer Knowledge: Beneficiaries have gained knowledge of basic computer and few state-of-the-art softwares necessary to be learnt in today's technologically advancing world.
2. English speaking: The beneficiaries have acquired basic knowledge of spoken English and ability to have basic conversation in English effectively and fluently.
3. Development of Communication skills and public speaking: The stage fear of the beneficiaries has vanished and now they are able to convey their ideas convincingly to others and able to participate in discussions and debates at a larger scale.
4. Improvement in presentation skills: Beneficiaries can better represent their ideas now and convince the public at large through better presentation skills.

5. *Self-dependence*: The beneficiaries have become dependent on themselves after seeking a decent job and are able to contribute to their household income.
6. *Boost in self-confidence*: The programme has given the beneficiaries the confidence to face the world and have confidence in themselves.
7. *Positive Thinking*: UMEED has inculcated an optimistic outlook towards life in beneficiaries. It is basically the feeling of never losing hope in any distressed situation in life and ability to face all problems with courage and hope.
8. *Time Management*: This refers to better management of limited time one has in life. The understanding of the benefit of time management in life has made the beneficiaries to be motivated to achieve a lot in life in a short span of time.
9. *Disciplined life*: There has been an improvement in the life-style of the beneficiaries. Now they lead a disciplined life as a direct outcome of better time management.
10. *Good Manners and behaviour*: The beneficiaries have learnt to present themselves in society through better dressing sense, better value system and improved behaviour in society.
11. *Habit of working hard and giving respect to every kind of work*: The beneficiaries have realized the importance of hard work in their professional life. Moreover they have learnt to respect every kind of occupation and give value to every profession.
12. *Overall personality development*: UMEED has gifted the beneficiaries a better and improved personality, immense self-confidence and belief in themselves to achieve their ambitions.

3.2. Suggestions to Improve the Programme

1. *The course duration of 3 months should be increased*: The duration of the course should be increased from the present duration of 3 months. The beneficiaries feel that this is required as this is too short a duration to grasp the fundamentals of any subject being taught.
2. *New courses should be started under UMEED*: The courses suggested by the beneficiaries are Communication Centre Management (CCM), new state-of-the-art computer softwares and languages as C++, Java, Microsoft Office Publisher, Animation, and voice dubbing.
3. *Second chance for admission*: The beneficiaries told that a person should be given a chance to pursue another course in UMEED even though he/ she have already completed one. This will help the students to become more self-dependent in future.
4. *No restriction on Age-Limit*: There should not be any upper age-limit for entry into the programme. A person should not be denied entry because he is beyond the age-limit set for the programme i.e. 35 years.
5. *New course on English*: Since English speaking has brought a drastic change in the life of the beneficiaries, hence they want the programme to emphasize more on English speaking and if possible a new course on English should be started as other courses like Tally, DTP, BPO etc. If more and more emphasis is laid on English, then, they believe, there will be drastic change in the personality of all the students which can help them feel more confident and perform better in their professional lives.
6. *Improvement in Infrastructure*: The beneficiaries especially at the Chandkheda centre feel that that the number of computers should be increased in the centre and should be in accordance with the number of students. If the number of computers are as many as the number of students or even if in a ratio of 1:2, then the students can practice better and learn the concepts better. The ratio of computers should, however, not increase beyond 1:2.

Moreover, there is usually shortage of computer hardware tools in the centre. Hence the tools should be increased so that the students of computer hardware are able to practice more.

Thus UMEED has been really effective as an inventive idea to provide training for skill development to the youth of urban poor considering need of market in particular area, so that employment of youth can be ensured. It has provided a platform where employable youth can be trained to meet the HR needs of business and industry. The success of the programme has been summed up by Pratik Soyantar, Area Head (HR), Eureka Forbes in following words:

The program is a good source for readymade talent.

As of now, UMEED is functioning in 29 cities (70 centers) of Gujarat for which three resource agencies are engaged for implementation. Till date, 34,832 candidates have enrolled in UMEED out of which 23,464 have completed training and 19,524 have been placed. Since the first phase of the scheme is nearing completion, expansion plans to cover the rest of the urban centers in Gujarat thereby achieving the target of creating 1, 00,000 livelihoods are well underway.

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