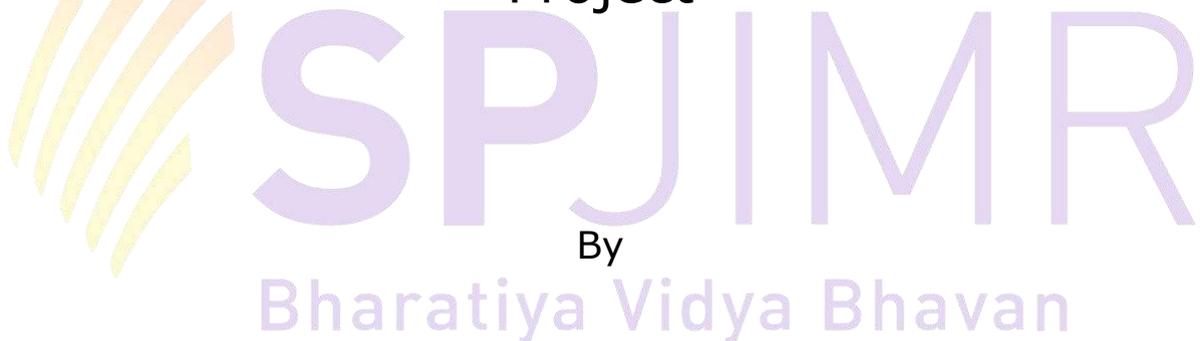## DoCC Project Report

Panchavati Rural Development Society

Strategic Plan – Operational and Hiring, Marketing and Fundraising for the E-Literacy Project

By

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**Center for Development of Corporate Citizenship
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PREFACE

The Development of Corporate Citizenship (DOCC) is a non-classroom initiative at SPJIMR, Mumbai where the students get a unique opportunity to spend 1 month at a rural location for a social internship. We, the students get sensitized with the local needs and come up with a business plan for the empowerment of the local community. While we get some of invaluable experience working at the grassroots levels of our society, the NGOs get from us business inputs and managerial insights aimed at solving some of their problems and pain points.

DOCC focuses on building managerial solutions to issues pertaining to a vast array of fields such as Micro Finance, Infrastructure development, Health, education, agriculture, women empowerment and many more. The students are expected to perform critical analysis of the issues at hand through understanding involving a series of field visits and getting to interact with the rural poor. This gives the students a great practical hands-on experience of working on the field in an unstructured environment. This ensures that the social development of the students also goes on in tandem.
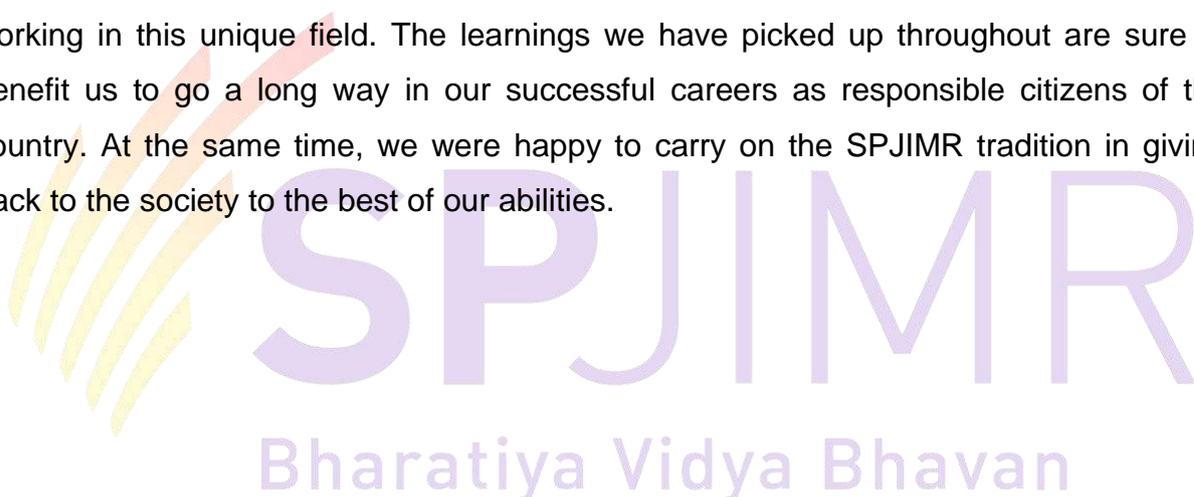
During this internship, we got the chance to work with Mr. Muralidhar Atchula, a veteran in the field of social work with more than 30 years of experience. He is currently the secretary of the NGO, Panchavati Rural Development Society, operational since 1994 in Hyderabad having previously worked on initiatives like Environmental Education, Micro Finance and Capability Building. Their current initiative is about taking e-literacy to the grass roots level at their doorstep.

There exists a huge skill gap in the state of Telangana which stands fifth in terms of unemployed youth numbers and sixth in terms of overall unemployed population, primarily due to inadequate infrastructure and training personnel in the rural parts of the state. The purpose of this report is to devise strategies that aims to close this gap by providing computer education and employability skills to the local unemployed rural youth and school children in the two talukas of Hayathnagar and Abdullapurmet in Rangareddy district in Telangana. Our project is based on devising strategies to scale up this initiative in a planned manner, majorly focused on two things, setting up of an effective hiring plan to attract man power for the initiatives planned as well as creating various channels for fundraiser for the infrastructure costs involved in setting up of computer labs at the taluq level.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our sincere gratitude and are thankful to Mr. Muralidhar Atchula, the Secretary of Panchavati Rural Development Society for inviting us and giving us a chance to work on the project under DOCC program in his NGO. His guidance and unwavering support have given us an extensive learning opportunity in the last few weeks. His undying passion for contributing towards imparting computer education at the grassroots level as well as his desire to expand it to benefit the high numbers of unemployed youth in society as a whole has left a lasting impression.

We would also like to thank Dr. Chandrika Parmar and the entire DOCC team for assigning us this project and giving us the wonderful opportunity to gain experience by working in this unique field. The learnings we have picked up throughout are sure to benefit us to go a long way in our successful careers as responsible citizens of the country. At the same time, we were happy to carry on the SPJIMR tradition in giving back to the society to the best of our abilities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is submitted to SPJIMR, Mumbai covering the work done during the Development of Corporate Citizenship (DOCC) project done at Panchavati Rural Development Society, Hyderabad. The NGO which is now operational more than 26 years, had worked towards upliftment of rural population through different means and programs across various fields. It is currently working actively in the field of education, promoting e-literacy and employment level skills training among the rural youth, women and government school children.

In this fast changing world, we are in an era of digitization which has its effects in every aspects of our lives and has changed our day to day activities from the core. While India has on the other-hand leaving behind its vast majority of the population from the path of digital awareness and such skills training. Contrary to the popular statistics, most of the digital penetration is not actually, not being experienced by the rural population. This is due to the mainly the inadequate infrastructure and qualified teaching personnel in government schools as well as curriculum which has not been updated to reflect the growing employment needs in the sector. It is evident from the fact that in Telangana, 70% government schools do not have access to computer, and for the ones that have, do not have training personnel.

There are no formalized means to impart the required digital skills to the high school children especially in rural India, which ultimately leads to a high volume of unemployed youth across various states. As a matter of fact, Telangana state is ranked 7th among 22 states[1] in terms of unemployment rates and 5th in terms of number of unemployed youth. The buzzword these days are that India is at an advantage due to its demographic advantage but at the very foundation, if that high numbers of working age youth remain unemployed, that is a big concern going ahead.

Panchavati is working to bridge this gap or the digital divide prevailing in especially rural India, currently operating in the Hayathnagar taluq in Telangana. It is helping computer education to reach the government schools as well as the unemployed youth by

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[1] Reference - https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/telangana/2019/jun/03/telangana-unemployment-rates-one-of-highest-in-country-national-statistical-office-1985217.html

imparting basic skillsets of working of common softwares like MS Office, C/C++ programming, etc. This will serve as a great launchpad for them to be able to qualify better for employment opportunities and thereby secure a job and regular income flows for their families. Panchavati already runs various programs in government schools in the villages of Telangana and covered 3500 plus children of 15 high schools and 5 primary schools from 2016 to 2019 and conducted computer education classes, Besides, it has also collaborated with various youth associations to help impart the knowledge and importance of digital literacy.

Now, Panchavati is looking to scale up its operation by setting up a computer lab at the Hayathnagar taluq which will be used to serve more and more of such aspirants and also reach out to those who need certain skill-up certification courses to be able to stand in better grounds for employment opportunities. Hence our project is based on mainly three things:

1. Setting up of an operational and hiring strategy to onboard permanent workers in form of computer teachers as well as village community workers.
2. Preparing pamphlets, brochures and posters that can be used to spread the awareness and initiatives taken by Panchavati.
3. Designing a funding strategy to raise funds for setting up of the computer lab.

Although our stay at Panchavati had been cut short to just 10 days due to the outbreak of Covid-19 in India, we have got an immense learning opportunity by getting to know the ground level realities prevailing in rural India as well as the true picture of the penetration of digital literacy skills in India, especially in the rural parts which constitutes 70% of all Indian population. Our journey with Panchavati has just begun and we hope to continue helping the society in its noble approach towards imparting digital skills and enhance employability skills to rural India.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2018, India's working age population i.e. people in between ages 15 to 64 years has grown larger than the dependent population or the non-working population of children below 14 years of age or people above 65 years of age. Even more striking is the fact that at the current stage, more than 50% of India's population is below the age of 25 years[2]. This bulge in the working age population is expected to last till 2055, so India is well on the road to a dynamic transformation turning population burden of the past into a demographic dividend in the future, reflected by the prediction that by 2030, India's dependency ratio should just be over 0.4[3]. The expected average age of an Indian is 29 years in 2020 whereas for it's 37 for China or 48 for Japan[4]. So naturally, India's rising demographic advantage are the envy of the world, as the populations in countries like China, Japan and US are getting older, India's population getting younger.

As per a research done by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)[5], the reasons that are propelling India's rise in working age population are the decline in birth rates and death rates. India's age dependency ratio, the ratio of dependents (children and the elderly) to the working-age population (14 to 65 years olds) is expected to stay within favorable limits and only expected to rise beyond 2040 as per the estimate of UN[6]. This puts forward a golden period of opportunities for steady economic growth for India. While in theory this increase in working age population should generate demographic dividend that can power enormous economic growth, in practical terms as per the research RBI, it will greatly depend on how well India can address the issue of declining labour force participation among its enormous numbers of youth population and women.

The demographic dividend can be fully exploited only if the people in the working age are actually working. And second, if those working have proper education and skills, making them productive in the workplace. India's labour force participation rate is

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[2] Reference - http://mospi.nic.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Youth_in_India-2017.pdf
[3] Reference - http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6911544.stm
[4] Reference - https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/WPA2015_Report.pdf
[5] Reference - https://rbi.org.in/scripts/BS_ViewBulletin.aspx?Id=18348
[6] Reference - https://m.economictimes.com/news/economy/indicators/india-enters-37-year-period-of-demographic-dividend/articleshow/70324782.cms

declining especially among the rural youth (15 to 29 years olds) and women. India can actually benefit from its favorable demographics only if it can tackle this critical issue of rising youth unemployment and for that empowering them with the right skillsets is of utmost importance. A survey suggests that more than 50% of the literates are not employable due to lack of proper job skills[7] for which the most important ones are soft skills and digital literacy. One more highlight in this aspect is the regional disparity in access to the Quality Education with urban India presenting greater chances of acquiring these training as compared to rural India.

In today's digital era, having basic set of digital literacy skills is not only important from a professional point of view, but also from a personal point of view. Benefits vary across a range of e-activities like mobile recharges, gas cylinder booking, travel booking, money transactions (Paytm /Google Pay), online shopping etc. Yet more than 90% of rural households in India do not have access to computers[8]. Thus they are left out of the utilizing the endless opportunities that are coming up. The state of Telangana, as per the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report (2017-18)[9] stood at 7th among 22 states with the highest unemployment rates at 7.6%. More alarming is the fact that it stood at 5th in terms of unemployed youth numbers at 32.8%, youth which can give us the demographic dividend we are so optimistic about. It is evident from the fact that in Telangana, 70% government schools do not have access to computer, and for the ones that have, do not have training personnel. The below chart from the 2017-18 PLFS report highlights the growing rate of unemployment rate among the Indian youth.

Statement 33: Unemployment rate (in per cent) among the youth (15 to 29 years) in usual status (ps+ss) during NSS 61st (2004-05), 66th (2009-10), 68th (2011-12) rounds and PLFS (2017-18)				
				all-India
category of persons	NSS round (period)			
	61st round (2004-2005)	66th round (2009-2010)	68th round (2011-2012)	PLFS (2017-18)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
rural male	3.9	4.7	5.0	17.4
rural female	4.2	4.6	4.8	13.6
urban male	8.8	7.5	8.1	18.7
urban female	14.9	14.3	13.1	27.2

Figure 1- PLFS report 2017-18 on Unemployed youth

[7] Reference - http://employmentnews.gov.in/NewEmp/MoreContentNew.aspx?n=InDepthJobs&k=10176
[8] Reference - https://gadgets.ndtv.com/laptops/news/over-15-crore-rural-households-dont-have-computers-says-chaudhary-1679631
[9] Reference - https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/telangana/2019/jun/03/telangana-unemployment-rates-one-of-highest-in-country-national-statistical-office-1985217.html

In most government schools and colleges, the infrastructure, qualified staff and curriculum has not been updated to reflect the growing employment needs in the sector and neither are there formalized means to impart the digital skills to the unemployed youth. Thus the inadequacy of resources both at homes as well as schools is giving rise to a digital divide for the young population in India which constitutes more than 50% of India's population, and if not checked, this divide would become wider and India would miss the golden chance of taking advantage of its favorable demographics.

To bridge the gap between the current need of the underserved sections of the society for digital education and the Government initiatives, Panchavati launched its e-literacy program in 2016 in Rangareddy district, Hyderabad, Telangana. Since then, it has imparted basic computer education and awareness to more than 15 government schools covering more than 3500 students through live demonstrations and in some cases students getting practical experience by getting to operate computer themselves at those learning sessions. Realizing the importance of practical hands-on knowledge of computers these days for not only the rural government school students but also the rising unemployed youth, Panchavati is in phase of expanding its operating mode of school to school imparting knowledge and setting up of a computer lab cum community information resource center in each taluq (covering around 25 villages), starting with Hayathnagar. Here the students and youth can come for skill up gradation focused on digital skills, soft skills and other life skills so that they stand better in chances of getting employed. These skills of using a computer and working on software's (MS Office, C, C++, etc.) will act as a great Launchpad for them to secure a job and have regular incomes flow into their families. Further they can help in our case by acting as agents of change in their respective villages and thereby aiding sustainable growth for all.

Currently the NGO is looking for hiring full time personnel and volunteers to carry out various activities and to raise funds to setup the computer lab which will be used to purchase laptops, PCs, projectors and other accessories. We, Anindya Mohan Mukherjee and Srajan Kulshrestha in **a short span of 10 days (March 12 to 21, 2020),** have stressed on understanding the organization, its background works, mission and vision, strengths and pain points as well as the various stake holders involved in the project. Our task involves developing a complete strategic plan involving operational and hiring strategy, marketing strategy and funding strategy to scale up its efforts going further to set up the computer lab in the Hayathnagar taluq.

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ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Panchavati Rural Development Society (PRDS) is a registered Voluntary organization operating out of Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts in Telangana (http://panchavatisociety.in). The organization works across various areas in supporting the upliftment of the rural people under its vision of "Cities without Slums". The domains that PRDS serves include:

1. <u>Education</u>: Literacy, Vocational Training, Digital skills, Life Skills training
2. <u>Environment</u>: Conservation of natural resources, Promotion of sustainable practices
3. <u>Agriculture</u>: Training and knowledge sharing with farmers, recommending new technologies and other best practices
4. <u>Healthcare</u>: Raising awareness about prevailing diseases, Provision of nutritious food and safe drinking water

The organization leverages existing institutions set up within the villages to help the residents in these areas. The organization's most recent focus has been in the education sector. Panchavati partners with the **government schools** in his geography and attempts to impart education beyond the existing curriculum to the students of classes 5th up till 10th. The organization believes that the infrastructure, qualified staff, and curriculum in most government schools and colleges has not been updated with the changing times and attempts to intervene here. Particularly the absence of computer education from their curriculum is a cause of major worry as it impacts the prospects of eventually getting a paid job. The younger students are introduced to the hardware and basic working of the computers as most of them have spent their life without ever encountering the machine in their homes or schools. Students above class 8th are taught to use the system for its functionalities. One of the major issues concerning Panchavati is the lack of infrastructure in the schools or even nearby areas to provide hands on training to these students and hence the NGO has laid the foundation for developing a computer lab at Taluq level itself. This facility will be accessible to all students who would be interested in furthering their practical experience with a PC or laptop beyond learnings from the classrooms.

While training school students has been the recent interest for the NGO, the mission of leveraging education as a tool for generating employment stands at the core. The NGO is also inclined towards including **the unemployed rural youth** in this program itself. A lot of job opportunities demand some level of computer skills that a large chunk of this population lacks and hence are unable to secure a job. By partnering with Youth Associations, the NGO plans to propagate its message across its target audience. Beyond these computer and computer software skills, the NGO will support the entire journey of getting employment through **life skills and personality development**. PRDS will enable the candidates to develop better communication skills and improve present ability while interviewing for a job. Partnerships with corporates for supporting their NGO will help open opportunities for these candidates.

There are five primary governing members in the NGO:

Name	Designation
Mr. Atchula Muralidhar	Secretary & Chief Functionary
Mr.D.V.Subba Rao	President
Ms.A. Manorama	Vice-President
Mr.L.S.Bhargava	Joint Secretary
Mr. V.Gurumurthy	Treasurer

Figure 2- Panchavati Rural Development Society Organization Structure

Our **mentor**, Mr. Atchula Muralidhar, is an extremely passionate and dedicated social worker. Having spent over 25 years in the social sector, he believes that there is an urgent need to work with the rural population and help in their upliftment in the society. Through his experience across different roles in government jobs and later as a community worker, he has acquired varied sets of skill and is currently the Secretary of Panchavati Society.

METHODOLOGY

MODES OF RESEARCH

As per the initial plans, we were supposed to visit government schools as well as interact, sensitize and motivate youth and women (19 to 29 years age group) in 5 villages and thereby assessing their inherent potential to get up-skilled for employment purposes. We based our research approach in two fronts, primary as mentioned as well as lots of secondary research on the ground level realities prevalent in the state of Telangana especially at the grassroots.

Primary –

Discussions with Mr. Muralidhar - We spent the initial few days working closely with Mr. Muralidhar, the secretary of Panchavati for understanding the entire history and roots of Panchavati Rural Development Society (PRDS). Established in 1994, we went through the entire 26 years of its existence and its focus areas down the years some of which have been Microfinance for women in villages, Capability Building for self-sustainability, Environmental Awareness through efficient waste management and water management initiatives.

Figure 3- Daily knowledge building sessions from Mr. Muralidhar

Field visits - Our initial plans were to visit government schools in the taluq of Hayathnagar as part of our field activities and collect insights regarding the ground level realities. But due to the outbreak of Covid-19, all the schools were shut down. Hence we conducted one field visit where we went along and met the local village unemployed youth and get their perspective, which we have detailed in the next section. We met with

local engineering college graduates and tried to understand their viewpoints on the importance on digital skills, its necessity for employment and what they felt regarding the currently existing opportunities available to get those kinds of practical training.

Secondary –

For secondary data, we went extensively through a host of news articles and previous reports on rural educational infrastructure, e-literacy, unemployment, and youth as well as women empowerment. Mr. Muralidhar has years of experience in this field and thus guided us in researching through a rich list of research materials.

Further we went through the various other reports listed below –

(i) <u>Vodafone Foundation's Connected Education</u> – listed all the various tech-based initiatives that Vodafone Foundation is driving across various geographies.

(ii) <u>Vodafone India Foundation's Jaadu Ginni Ka</u> – talked about basic technology driven financial literacy program, enabling adult learners with little or no experience in financial transactions through technology to learn about the basics of financial management and use technology in a manner relevant to their daily lives.

(iii) <u>ICT based opportunities for Rural Women Entrepreneurs</u> – talked about important it is to take IT benefits to the remote and neglected areas so that it can fragment society and bridge the digital divide, especially focusing on empowering women.

OPERATIONAL AND HIRING –

One important aspect of our project is to attract volunteers and full time employees to work for Panchavati for various roles ranging from computer teachers to village community outreach workers. For this, we have revamped and redesigned content for job portals for full time employees for Panchavati for the post of computer teachers. The updated content was posted in websites like www.indeed.co.in and the resulting number of applications were three times higher of what was achieved through the previous job posts.

A **computer teacher** at Panchavati is expected to carry out the following responsibilities and duties -

1. Visit government schools and teach batches of students of class 6th to 9th on computer courses and basic functions and conduct short quizzes.
2. To train the students at our training center on various software's (MS Office etc.)
3. Design schedules for conducting classes and quizzes for both these groups.
4. Assist in adding or editing course content whenever needed.
5. Help promote the NGO through various channels - schools, social media, posters, pamphlets etc.

The detailed job description for computer teacher that was put up in the indeed website (**LINK**) can be found in the document attached below –

INDEED Job posts -
Panchavati - Compu
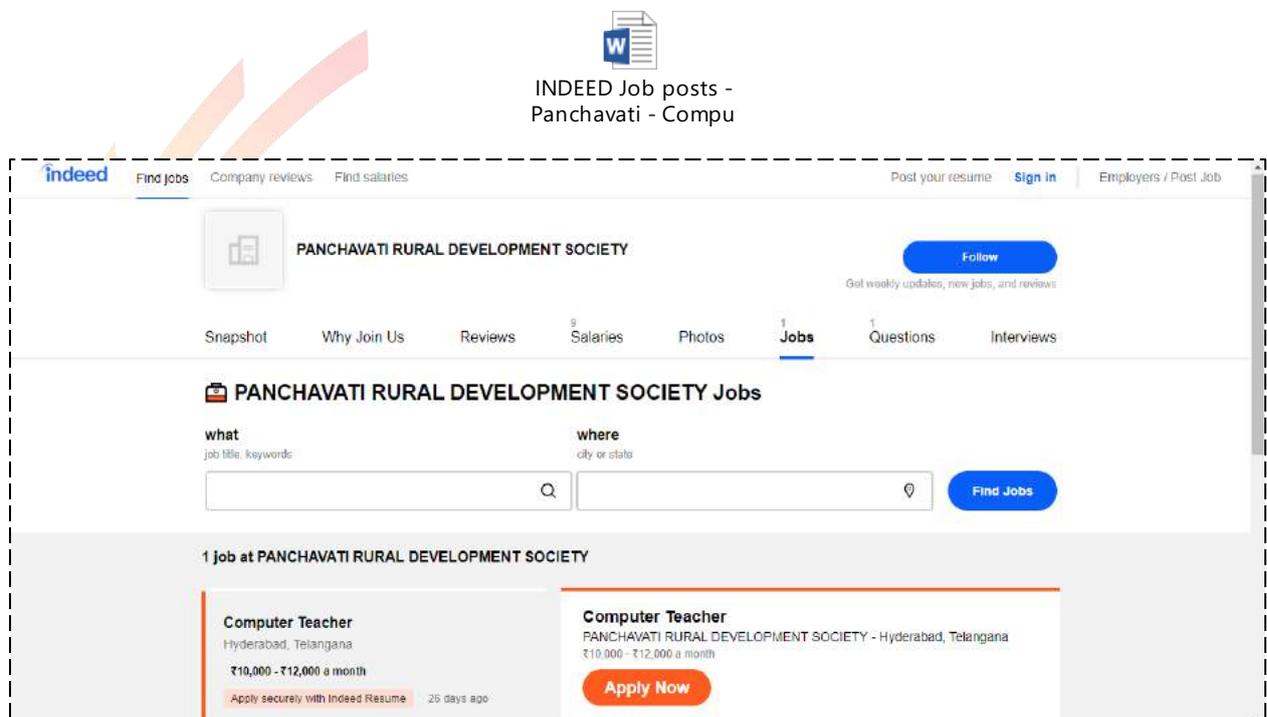
Figure 4- Indeed job post for Computer Teacher

Further, a **village community outreach worker** at Panchavati is expected to carry out the following activities –

1. Visit the areas in Rangareddy district and communicate the importance of computer education in providing employability to the children and youth.

2. Collect information from households and associations on current employment status in the village, current level of digital literacy and the skill gap in the individuals

3. Promote Panchavati training program and persuade them to join our facility for gaining such skills which are important for employment

4. Occasionally circulate forms to collect data from the village residents if required

The detailed job description for village community outreach worker, yet to be put up in the indeed website (due to the recent lockdown situation country wide) can be found in the document attached below **–**

Panchavati Job
Description - Comm

MARKETING –

(i) <u>Branding of Panchavati logo to reflect the 25 silver jubilee years completion</u>
Mr. Muralidhar requested us to design a logo for Panchavati depicting the completion of 25 years that can be used in all further communication across various channels. So we came up with a design as shown below.

Figure 5- Branding logo for PRDS completing 25 years

This design is being used and will be used along with the existing logo of Panchavati for all further communications.

(ii) <u>Design of marketing collaterals like posters and pamphlets to promote the initiatives taken by Panchavati through online and offline channels</u>

We have designed 10 posters that can be used for various posts across social media handles – Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn which can be used for fund raising campaigns going further. One such posters is as below –

Figure 6- One of the posters for fund raise intended for social media handles

All other posters can be found in the following zipped attachment –

PRDS_Posters.zip

Further, we have revamped and simplified an existing brochure for Panchavati into a one-pager pamphlet that can be used to approach corporates for CSR funding. The same is given below –

Figure 7- One pager pamphlet for PRDS intended for approaching corporates

FUND RAISING –

(i) <u>NASSCOM Foundation – Vodafone India Foundation Ideate for Impact contest</u>

This was an initiative to welcome new ideas based on feasible technology driven approach which can be turned into solutions creating huge impact on the social fabric of India, if proper **funding** can be provided to them.

We did an extensive research on the works of Vodafone Foundation across the world geography and came out with an idea that can be beneficial in the Indian context and solve the knowledge gap that Panchavati is trying to bridge.

Figure 8- Ideate for Impact contest where Panchavati has submitted our proposal

Our plan involves the already operational structure that Panchavati is carrying on in helping the basics of computer education to penetrate to the rural government school children. Further, we presented our idea to expand this into practical hands-on training by setting up of computer labs, where other than e-literacy training, Panchavati will also provide soft skills and life skills training so that the students get an overall employability up-skilling opportunity. Our objective will revolve around a mix of theory classes and hands-on practical knowledge gained through lab sessions. Here at this point, we have further proposed an **app** which will be **based on practice questions and knowledge repository** to help the youth and children. This app as per our suggestion will benefit the students to revisit the lectures from the video repositories as well as enable tests and quizzes features sitting at home so that the students are engaged and stay focused. One roadblock to the usage of apps can be lack of smartphone devices in the rural homes which is quite natural. To address this problem, our proposal is to enable rent based **electronic tablets** which can be given to the enrolled students who don't have smartphones. They can use them paying a one-time caution deposit and a minimal fee as rent and use if to access the app for learning from their homes.

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The digital literacy in our program is not just limited to teaching about computers and softwares, but also teaching them useful mobile apps helps them be more digitally strong and act as agents of change in their homes and villages at large. In sustainability terms, the infrastructure has been set up which will be continuously provide new opportunities and offer other skilled programs as per the need of the industry. Also, as the world moves into the digital era, it is imperative that such knowledge is imparted to keep the sub-urban and rural population in sync with the changing world. As the students complete the program, we will maintain a close connect with them and develop a sort of alumni network who could come back to teach the future generations and this could continue ahead.

Below are two attachments, one the document with our planned the features that the app will have, and next the presentation that we have proposed for the final submission in Ideate for Impact –

App design - Panchavati.docx

IdeateForImpact - Panchavati.pptx

(ii)   <u>Crowd-funding through various donation aiding websites like Milaap</u>

We have attempted our major fundraiser approach through the website www.milaap.org where we have started a 50 day campaign with a target to raise INR 5 lakhs (**LINK**) for setting up the computer lab at Hayathnagar taluq.

Figure 9- Crowd-funding post for Panchavati in Milaap

We have been promoting the campaign in various social media handles as well as among our close circles to raise funds. Besides, we are sharing the information in LinkedIn as well, through which the message will be circulated among a host of industry and corporate people and we are hoping that would facilitate the fund raiser.

FIELDWORK DATA

During the field visit, we approached the local Kuntloor village youth and get their viewpoints regarding the importance of digital skills training for helping in employment. Our goal was primarily to find the right points of contacts to help us propagate our goal and deliver information on the value add from our program.

Figure 10- Talking to youth associations to understand their viewpoint

Through guidance from different government institutions and some Self Help Groups, we attempted to connect with the Youth Association groups in the Hayathnagar district. As it was the first attempt at finding the right point of contact, we explored different government offices and the locals in the area. Mr. Muralidhar utilized some references and experiences from his days of working with the government schools and we arrived in Kuntloor village. Further on-ground research was done and we were directed to Pallavi Engineering College. Mr. Muralidhar believed that we would be gather a certain level of initial digital literacy levels through these engineering college students.

Figure 11- Engineering College where we talked to graduating youths

We met Saif, an engineering fourth year student from. Saif has completed his curriculum and waiting for his final graduation results and seeking employment opportunities himself. Some of our observations are as follows:

Figure 12- Talking to Saif, an engineering student, graduated from Pallavi Engineering College, Kuntloor

A final year engineering student in the Kuntloor village of Hayathnagar Taluq exhibits the following behavior:

ACTIVITIES
- Prepare well for end term exams and clear all backlogs
- Learning new skills and softwares by themselves
- Giving multiple aptitude tests and mock as well as live interviews

ENVIRONMENTS
- Engineering college equipped with a computer lab facility available
- One PC available at home to self-practice

INTERACTIONS
- Connecting with peers to explore job opportunities and new skills to learn
- Interacting with known contacts in corporates to find more opportunities

OBJECTS
- Utilizing the infrastructure of the college to hone computer skills
- Gathering business cards from people to generate more contacts

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USERS

- Peers looking for job prospects and gathering related information
- Placement officer and external agency providing training on campus
- Corporates and HR managers looking for candidates to hire.

Insights

For a student like Saif, the training program by Panchavati could be useful in his future plans by improving his profile and helping him find the right skills for the right employer:

- He understands the value of such software skills and has himself tried to learn web development using free courses available online.
- His college sees on campus placements mainly for the students of Computer Science Specialization which instills a need to learn computer skills.
- He feels that the corporate connect provided in the program will help open doors to employment where he is not even aware of.
- While engineering colleges have the infrastructure, other BCom and BBA institutes are not equipped to teach computers to the students.
- Students from such engineering colleges can act as spokesperson to Panchavati's digital literacy programs and directly influence the target audience in the importance of such skills trainings.

Figure 13- Inviting Saif to Panchavati for his preparations for employment, who seemed much interested

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Ideate for Impact – **Analyzing the proposed solution through Design Thinking terms**

Desirability – The solution is highly desirable because of the existing e-literacy skill gap especially among the rural high school students and youth which is most essential in the digital era in India. Also the high levels of unemployment among the youth calls for immediate action and up-skilling them keeping in mind employment opportunities will be a giant stride in the forward direction.

Feasibility – It will be an expansion from the current operating model of school to school learning and hence the 4 years of experience will help as the school headmasters, the parents of the students and the students themselves knows about the teaching programs at Panchavati. As per previous surveys done in past, there are considerable numbers of students who are interested to be a part of taluq level computer lab based training at a nominal cost if something of that sort is setup. So the only major concern will be the initial fund generation the setup of the lab.

Viability – As Panchavati is purely a non-profit organization, profits should not be the main concern, but students opting to pay a nominal fee for the courses will be helpful in sustaining the operation. Also the students once trained will be agents of change in their own villages and more students especially youth looking for employment will be interested in joining the up-skilling program.

Figure 14- Existing infrastructure for the lap which we plan to scale up by adding more laptops and PCs

RECOMMENDATIONS

Panchavati is looking at developing a complete strategy for their Education program to upskill the rural population through computers and other digital tools. Here are our recommendations presented for each vertical.

1. Marketing:

   - There are multiple channels of promoting the NGO's program that need to be employed: Banners, Pamphlets, and Facebook Groups etc.
   - The best and most effective in **the immediate sense will be word of mouth publicity** considering the target audience and their low awareness on the importance of such skills.
   - *Community outreach workers* are needed for each village who could connect with the households and identify the right audience and deliver them the much-needed information about the program.
   - Banners and signboards to be put up near high footfall areas – village ward office, Xerox shops and cyber cafes, bus stops, schools and colleges.

Figure 15 - Kuntloor Village Ward Office Figure 16 - Laxmi Cyber Café, RTC Colony, Hayathnagar

   - Social Media marketing, particularly using Facebook (Hyderabad Specific Groups, Youth Association Pages etc.) can be taken up in the long term.
   - Helped create a LinkedIn Page for PRDS to improve touchpoints with corporates for CSR funding, individual donations, donate old devices etc.

Implementation: Designed "25 years celebration" Logo, detailed promotional posters to be put up in college notice boards, and a 1-pager detailing the NGO's mission and achievements

2. **Hiring:**
    - Being understaffed, there is an immediate for PRDS to hire part time volunteers and more importantly, full time (paid) employees.
    - Researched on the hiring process of NGOs, identified and recommended the need to hire passionate individuals over skilled ones for a continued long-term engagement with the NGO.
    - Identified portals that were specific to NGO hiring over general job portals like Internshala or Monster.com.
    - Helped design interview questions for the candidates to be hired.
    - Prepared Job Descriptions for Teacher (Computer Lab) and Community Outreach worker.

Implementation: Generated more than 3 times the number of interested applicants on Indeed than previous job postings.

3. **Fundraising:**
    - To set up the new infrastructure and hire permanent employees, Panchavati is seeking funding.
    - The money is usually contributed by corporates (CSR) or individual donors or through NGO competitions organized by corporates.

Implementation: Submitted a report with detailed plan of implementation in the **"Ideate for Impact contest"** from NASSCOM and Vodafone-Idea. Also, created a post on Milaap.org to seek crowdfunding for the NGO.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

As per the initial tasks, our plans for field visits comprised visiting to nearby 5 villages and the government schools there. This is due to the current operations of Mr. Muralidhar Atchula going to different such schools and imparting computer literacy skills to primary school and high school students through presentations as well as verbal exchanges. We were supposed to interact with multiple stakeholders like the students, the existing teachers and the head masters of those schools and get our insights. But due to the unfortunate circumstances, our plans were squashed as all the schools, colleges and other educational institutions were shut down.

Figures 17, 18 - Hayathnagar Mandal Office

Hence we devised other plans to reach out to people for our research purpose. Since our intended target beneficiary group also comprises local rural unemployed youth, we planned to go out and look for any rural youth association so that we can meet them and talk to them in a group, ask what they feel about computer education, their aspirations to learn the same and what they feel about the employment chances after gaining such education.

On 19th March, '20 we went for our first visit targeting the nearby village of Kuntloor. Firstly, we visited the Hayathnagar taluka level government offices to get information regarding any youth association that we can approach to, describing us as social workers to help educate youth on digital skills.

Figures 19, 20 - Hayathnagar Resource Centre and Sneha Mahila Mutually aided Co-operative Thrift & Credit Society Ltd.

We visited quite many offices, Hayathnagar main mandal office followed by mandal level resource centre, tehsildar's office, sub-treasury office, women self-help groups, etc. but we couldn't get any information at places while at other they were reluctant to help out asking for orders from higher authorities. So we weren't able to get any official help and set out ourselves toward Kuntloor village to collect any information we can get.

Figures 21, 22 - Kuntloor ticket collector's office, talking to a few people there

We visited first the local ticket collector office in hope for any information, but to our dismay not even a single person was willing to help us out. Luckily we could find a e-Seva centre nearby where we met the in-charge there and he asked us to contact the next day for the contacts of local youth association. Considering the situation we were in, this much positive news was much welcomed. Furthermore, he advised us to visit an engineering college nearby and we might get a chance to interview a few students there as the place has hostel facilities attached. So we took an auto and reached Pallavi Engineering College.

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But the problem was the college had been officially closed too till 3st March, so the guards outside we not willing to allow us in at all.

Figures 23, 24 - Pallavi Engineering College, Kuntloor and our quick interview with one final year student Saif

We met with a final year student, Saif, who was coming out of the campus, he said that he had certain missed exams. Hence he had come to complete them. So we asked him a few set of questions as to what are his further plans were and if he had thought of any ways to pursue the same. He mentioned having great interest in computer science and programming but he could not learn them much in college one due to his specialization in mechanical, second due to lack of sufficient learning facilities in their college. So when we asked about our plan to setup computer learning centres and exclusively focus on enhancing employability skills, he seemed greatly interested. Since there were no such on campus hiring at their college, he was actively looking for employment opportunities. Mr. Atchula gave him a card and asked him to contact him so that he can visit our Hayathnagar office for a lengthy chat later.

With that our visit ended for the day. Since we couldn't visit any school as such, Mr. Atchula provided us with previous years' interview reports – covering school teachers, head masters as well as students and parents in form of interviews and related insights. So with those combined with our daily meetings and discussions, we could figure out the situation at a holistic level and the real need for action. The twin factors of inadequate infrastructures and unavailability of teaching personnel has resulted in minimum to zero reach of e-literacy training opportunities, mainly in the rural parts in Telangana. So from the school level itself the students are deprived of the chance to learn any form of digital skills and hence going ahead they find themselves misfit during the period of changing times when digital skills are of basic necessity for employment.

This increases unemployment rate and hence it's no wonder that Telangana is 6th highest in terms of unemployment rate and 5th highest in terms of highest number of unemployed youth population as per the latest PLFS reports. Although the usual prevalent desire amongst the masses is in favour of learning these skillsets, the lack of proper facilities is hindering them from proper learning opportunities.

Hence our plan is to enable a system of training (mix of theory as well as practical learning opportunities at the proposed taluka level computer labs) wherein the youth and the students will be empowered with e-literacy skills as well as a mix of soft skills and life skills to boost their employability. This will be a cyclic process and the students who will be trained by us will further help by acting as agents of change in their respective villages and enhance the sustainability of the model in the future.

Although we had plans for one or two more field visits and getting a chance to interact with the local unemployed youth, we were unfortunately not able to set up any other interaction due to schools and colleges being shut down. With the insights we have got during our field visit combined with our background research, we were able to create the plan and work with the NGO to help achieve the goal of the project.

The observations received from our field visits were very interesting for all of us. We immediately jotted them and had a discussion at length on how we can begin targeting the youth and spread awareness regarding our program. The observations and insights have been included in this report. The importance field visits as an essential component of this program became very evident for us. For a large portion of our first week, we didn't get a chance to visit and most of our discussions were limited to our understanding, previous knowledge and within the four walls of the office. However, reaching the areas, studying the environment, the institutions, the shops, the colleges, all the aspects which influence the people in the area are required to give the implementable recommendations, especially as these are spaces that we have never experienced before. Certainly, these add new perspectives to our management learnings as well.

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