

JOSH Site Visit

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(By Ankit Kumar - kumar.ankit351@gmail.com)

Summary

JOSH as the name suggests is all about empowering the community by enabling them with right training and skills. With their two centers currently being run in Trilokpuri area of Noida (one of the largest slum resettlement area in Delhi), they are rightly placed to make a long lasting for a better India.

Currently JOSH has two centers in Trilokpuri area. Focus of these centers is to teach English, Computers and basic job required skills (including resume, interview preparation) to 12th passed youth from the community and help them get placed in a better job in surrounding areas of Noida. While in this training, they also conduct workshops and course embedded materials to make them aware of RTI, RTE and other important rights to help them drive change in their community by using our constitution tools. Tech Mahindra Foundation partnership has been a great help as they have aided in development of good training materials and placing students in various companies.

They have also been working with local community to improve the governance of government schools in the vicinity with the help of community members driven School Management Committee, inspection councils and legally trained staffs. In an organic way of growth, they have slowly delved into women education & empowerment and have started creating a visible change especially in the Muslim community. With the help of a tie up with DCW (Delhi Commission of Women) , they have been able to help women who are dealing with abuse and other related cases.

Current Status

Center for youth training

This part is led by Aheli with the help of extremely motivated staffs who truly feel the value of their work is very high and dedicate 100% of their efforts to bring the change.

There are two centers of JOSH in Trilokpuri. One of them is run fully with the support of tech Mahindra foundation and is aimed at training youth in English, computer and basic job readiness. They also conduct workshops and embed RTI and RTE related info in their trainings which itself become agent of change. There is a dedicated placement coordinator

who is working to get the students placed by liasoning with right organizations, which matches students' skillset. This center has approx. 200+ students currently with quarterly batch. Wave, Big Bazaar, Cafe Coffee Day etc. have been some of the companies in which the students are placed. There also students who have gone into social sector by joining other NGOs.



The strong women staff of one of the centers of JOSH ! Super happy with my small gift :)

Another center, which is relatively small, works with 80 girl students. These girls are all 12th passed out and some of them are pursuing their bachelor degree. There are also married girls, which shows a big courageous effort from both student and JOSH side as they continue to overcome the society's challenges. The structure of courses are similar to the other center. But here there is also a focus to address concerns of women like family abuses, "Talak" cases which tries to become a threat to the whole program itself. With the help of Delhi Commission for Women, (JOSH has an official tie up), JOSH has been able to train legally some of their staff members to deal with such situations and the result has been amazing!

Stories of success in solving community problem including abuses, marriage issues and motivating women to come out and learn. It was good to see how women were very vocal about their dreams and their pursuit of doing something big in their life. The empowering voices itself is a big change which is not easy to come through.



The future of Trilokpuri! Some of the shine in their eyes as they try to do the best with their lifetime opportunity

SMCs (School Management Committee) and community driven school governance

This part is led by Saurabh who actively manages the SMCs and the community women (the core element of this side of the organization). By creating a community driven SMCs and empowering them to question authorities in government schools and government departments, the JOSH has created a true element of democracy in education in this community. All the SMC members are women who while also send their son/daughter to these schools but also regularly do checks to make sure all the basic facilities and education process is intact in these schools. There is also a separate group of women who regularly conduct month-end inspections to keep a tab on the government school process and report it regularly to principal of schools through regular meetings. These women have respect and voice which they hardly got earlier. Now with newfound confidence, they are planning to take next steps with tools like RTI to solve challenges with complementary exams and other relevant problems attached with schools. All of them reported an increased attendance and discipline in schools with the setup of this committee.



SMCs and JOSH community members who are the backbone of their efforts to improve school governance in government run schools. Their dream to bring the quality of these schools on par with private schools and even better !

Future of JOSH

People might question why is JOSH not extending this model to other such urban economically backward communities, but what we can clearly see is that it is just the initial phase of the change in the community. The organic growth of JOSH is justified and they clearly seems to be getting stronger in the community with active support from community step by step.

Aheli feels that potential growth factor for her side of work will be to extend further into 'anganwadis', which are totally missing in the community. In this way, she thinks another challenge which connects in the overall picture of education-enabled development will be solved. This will also require more learning into new areas including child education, nutrition , health of mothers and children etc.

Similarly, Saurabh feels that SMC growth is all about women empowerment, which will further trickle down further into solving education related challenges in the community and beyond.

Conclusion

I feel that the work done by both Aheli and Saurabh has been tremendous. They have been able to create agents of change within the community of Trilokpuri which is slowly solving the education and youth related challenges in a holistic way. I see that JOSH has a long way to go with a potential growth into multiple facets of community development. Crucial aspect will be to make JOSH sustainable for all these and make sure it can go on independently even when the founders decide to take a step somewhere else.

- *Ankit Kumar*

(Ankit was requested to conduct this visit by his friend Padmanava Sen, an Asha Bangalore Volunteer. Ankit lives in NCR. He spent most part of September 1st 2018 visiting the JOSH centers and talking to two Asha fellows - Aheli Chowdhury and Saurabh Sharma)