



Logo of RCGF

Title: Beyond Vision, The journey with candidates

**RCGF PROJECT SURYA
KOCHI, KERALA**

Beyond Vision, The journey with candidates

Understanding the Unique Learning and Behavioural Patterns of Visually impaired Individuals.

Abstract

Turning Negativity into Positive Impact in Education

Focus: Behavioural changes in candidates based on supporting systems, educational background, environment, personal challenges, etc. (This aligns perfectly with the "Challenge" and "RCG Foundation's Approach" sections of the abstract structure.)

Methodology: Real case studies (This is a powerful way to illustrate your points in the "Impact and Outcomes" section.)

Introduction

Some of the most significant aspects of life serve as great sources of inspiration. Words have immense power, and even a simple round of clapping after a program can provide a great boost. However, motivation is not always positive; sometimes, it comes in the form of negativity. What matters is how we transform that negativity into something positive. Learning to walk despite falling teaches us that failure often comes before success. This idea embodies the concept of "negative positivity."

Rotary Cochin Global Foundation (RCGF-Surya) is an initiative of Rotary Club of Cochin Global, a non-profit organization providing support to the needy; run in collaboration with Enable India. We proudly state that 90% of our alumni are employed in several firms across India, including reputed organizations and government offices. We have completed 19 major training batches under 'Foundation course in Computers and Employability'. Completed more than 35 minor batches through online and offline platforms.

The journey of the RCG Foundation reflects this principle—sometimes, the path to positivity emerges from challenges. Students come from different backgrounds, facing various prejudices, expectations, and circumstances. Bringing all these elements together in a training program is a complex task. Educators must also consider the students' mental states and cognitive limitations.

Every student has their own "vision limitation," which influences their character, behaviour, and attitude. To provide quality training, it is essential to understand and maximize each student's mental potential. This is a challenging task for any educational organization. The RCG Foundation offers online courses, but online learning comes with its own set of difficulties.

Many students in online courses struggle to stay engaged. Some, particularly those in smaller classes, pay little attention. Others enroll but drop out without notice. Teachers face the challenge of re-engaging these students, encouraging them to return and complete their courses. Providing quality training goes beyond delivering lessons—it requires an understanding of students' mental and emotional needs.

Not all students join courses of their own free will. Sometimes, parental pressure influences their decisions. Some students receive excessive pampering, while others lack any family support. Many are unprepared for basic responsibilities like managing their schedules, dressing appropriately, or even understanding how the world operates. These differences in upbringing and support systems make it crucial for educators to adapt their teaching methods to meet diverse needs.

Methodology and key findings

Based on my nine years of experience, I've learned that personalized support is crucial, fostering a sense of community is essential].

I worked with a student who was struggling with personal hygiene which includes brushing, bathing, washing cloths etc..... Going through the below case study give you more clarity.

Sury, the eldest child, was born to her parents after a considerable wait. Their overprotective nature resulted in her complete dependence, despite her physical abilities. Blind and with a learning disability, Sury struggles with spelling, despite holding a degree. Her spelling skills are extremely poor, and she also lacks computer proficiency. Sury presented challenges with personal hygiene. She suffered from halitosis and a noticeable body odor, and consistently wore unclean clothing. An incident where roommates reported a foul smell from her room, traced back to wet, undried clothes packed tightly in a bag with dry clothes, highlighted the extent of the issue. Surprisingly, after enrolling in our course, Sury began brushing her teeth, washing clothes, and bathing independently for the first time in her life. However, she still struggled to perform these tasks effectively. This necessitated focused efforts to improve her personal hygiene skills. Gradually, she gained confidence and proficiency in managing her personal care.

Over-pampering by parents can create excessive dependency in children. Even academically strong individuals may struggle to launch their careers due to this over-reliance. Developing job-readiness in these candidates often requires significant time and effort.

Let us go through the story of Priya.

Priya was born and raised in an upper-middle-class family. Her father is deceased, and her mother is a retired assistant professor from a private arts college. Her older sister is married and works as a nurse abroad. Priya has multiple disabilities, including blindness from birth and significant hearing impairment.

She relies on hearing aids to hear. From childhood, Priya has lived a sheltered life, with others always caring for her daily needs. She has a personal servant who assists her with all her activities. She has a pleasant demeanour, a helpful nature, and enjoys singing Christian devotional songs beautifully. She speaks politely and makes friends easily. Within her family, she can be a little stubborn and tends to want things her way. She deeply loves and cares for her mother, evident in her anxiety, concern, and sadness when her mother was hospitalized for a heart attack. However, Priya struggles with various independent living skills. For example, she uses the restroom with the door open and changes clothes completely in front of her hostel roommates, also with the door open. While she dresses neatly and maintains personal hygiene independently, she lacks patience when needing to use the restroom. If the bathroom is occupied, she may urinate where she stands, a behaviour that has caused problems in the hostel. Her lack of modesty when changing has also made her roommates uncomfortable. She seems unconcerned about others' opinions of her behaviour. Attempts to explain the issues to her are met with disregard. Regarding her education, Priya is a graduate with average communication skills. She is a good speller and proficient with computers. While she used to have limited mobility, her mobility skills have improved since joining the foundation course. The hostel warden is hesitant to accommodate students like her because she has urinated in the hostel room and balcony on several occasions. When confronted about this behaviour, she denies it and acts as if nothing happened. To help Priya understand the impact of her actions, we began engaging her in regular conversations, sharing anecdotes from our own lives, and discussing relevant case studies. We also encouraged her roommates to gently raise topics related to her behaviour and ask for her suggestions. We communicated with her parents about these issues as well. Slowly, Priya began to understand the reality of the situation and modify her behaviour. As she demonstrated increased understanding, we involved her more actively in sessions. She is now much happier, as are her parents.

While parental over-pampering creates dependency, parental neglect is also a significant issue. Some candidates experience vision loss later in life, while others are blind from birth. Accepting this disability is a major challenge, dependent on individual circumstances, environment, and mind-set. Support systems vary greatly. Candidates lacking support, or those excluded from family decision-making due to their disability, often exhibit distinct attitudes.

Look at the Joseph story

Joseph, from Kollam, Kerala, has been blind for six years. He completed his schooling at Don Bosco School, Pathanapuram, pre-degree at Government HSS Karuppadanna, and earned a B.Tech in Mechanical Engineering from Matha College of Technology in 2017.

Diagnosed with glaucoma in 2016, Joseph's vision progressively deteriorated over two years, culminating in total blindness. Despite this, he overcame depression through yoga and meditation.

After losing his sight, Joseph worked briefly as a contractual supervisor at NTPC, Jharkhand. However, his declining vision forced him to leave after three months. Despite seeking medical treatment in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, his vision loss was irreversible. His parents, believing he was incapable of independent living, restricted his movements, prioritizing his perceived safety. The family's subsequent isolation of Joseph, excluding him from social gatherings and family events, deeply affected him, fostering resentment towards

his parents. He became hyperactive, and upon joining our course, exhibited clingy behavior, forming intense attachments with trainers. Any perceived distance triggered extreme emotional reactions, sometimes bordering on irrational behaviour. He demanded constant attention, even asking trainers to act as maternal figures. This emotional dependence created challenges in managing the training program, particularly as he displayed jealousy towards other candidates receiving attention.

To address this, we implemented regular counselling sessions for Joseph and engaged in discussions with his parents. He is now gradually managing his emotions.

Within the training program, we engaged him in various activities, assigned him different responsibilities, and created opportunities for him to interact with people from the corporate sector and government officials as part of his project work. We also tasked him with organizing volunteer activities for the entire batch. Gaining confidence, he initiated and arranged additional activities, and even started a yoga class for students, demonstrating initiative and risk-taking. Slowly, he became fully involved in all activities and overcame his sadness.

Joseph has learned to use a white cane independently, restoring his ability to travel. Furthermore, tools like Excel, internet browsers, and Gmail have greatly improved his trading skills. The built-in grammar and spelling tools have also been invaluable in enhancing his written communication.

Joseph expresses deep gratitude for the course, which has provided him with valuable skills and connected him to a supportive community of blind individuals. The social and community projects within the course have significantly boosted his confidence, inspiring him to consider establishing a company for the blind in the future.

Key learnings and findings.

The diverse challenges arising from behavioural differences have driven us to develop solutions based on experience. Each candidate is unique, distinguished by their attitude, aptitude, support system, and environment.

Over-pampering: Creates dependency, hindering independent living and career readiness, even in academically strong individuals. Developing job skills and self-reliance in these individuals requires considerable effort. This issue has prompted us to plan awareness workshops for parents.

Neglect/Exclusion: Can be equally damaging, leading to emotional and behavioural issues. Exclusion from family life and decision-making can result in resentment and difficulty adapting to social situations. It's crucial to remember that despite their disabilities, these individuals have their own opinions, attitudes, and the right to make their own decisions.

Protective Restrictiveness: While well-intentioned, overly protective families can inadvertently limit the development of essential life skills and independence, negatively impacting self-esteem and creating resentment.

Acceptance: Adjusting to blindness, whether hereditary or acquired, is a significant personal journey influenced by individual mind-set, environment, and available support. Understanding each candidate

through focused attention is crucial. This allows us to provide appropriate guidance in all aspects of their development.

Conclusion:

The research underscores the significance of personalized education and behavioural support for visually impaired individuals. Beyond academic training, raise independence, confidence, and social adaptability is essential for their overall growth. Each individual's journey is shaped by their attitude, support system, and environment, highlighting the need for tailored interventions that address their unique challenges.

By transforming adversity into opportunity, visually impaired candidates can achieve greater autonomy and career success. The role of structured training, mentorship, and emotional guidance cannot be overstated in shaping their futures. Trainers learn to be more adaptable and patient, understanding that each student has unique needs. Incidents can teach teachers to stay calm, take a problem-solving approach, and develop strategies to support students' overall well-being and learning. By reflecting on and adapting to these experiences, both teachers and students can grow together in a positive and supportive environment.

Ultimately, a candidate's attitude toward reality and willingness to learn are the most crucial factors in their success.

#StudyVibes # Focused and learning in the RCGF Surya Digital Literacy Lab,



shopping spree mode: ON!

"Exploring all the amazing stores and treats at Lulu Mall! A perfect day out

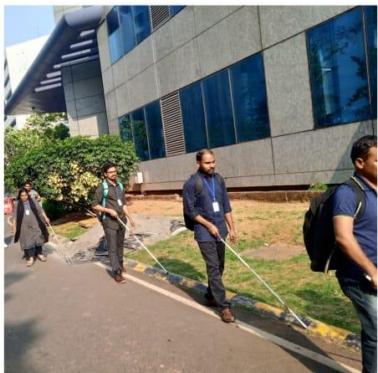
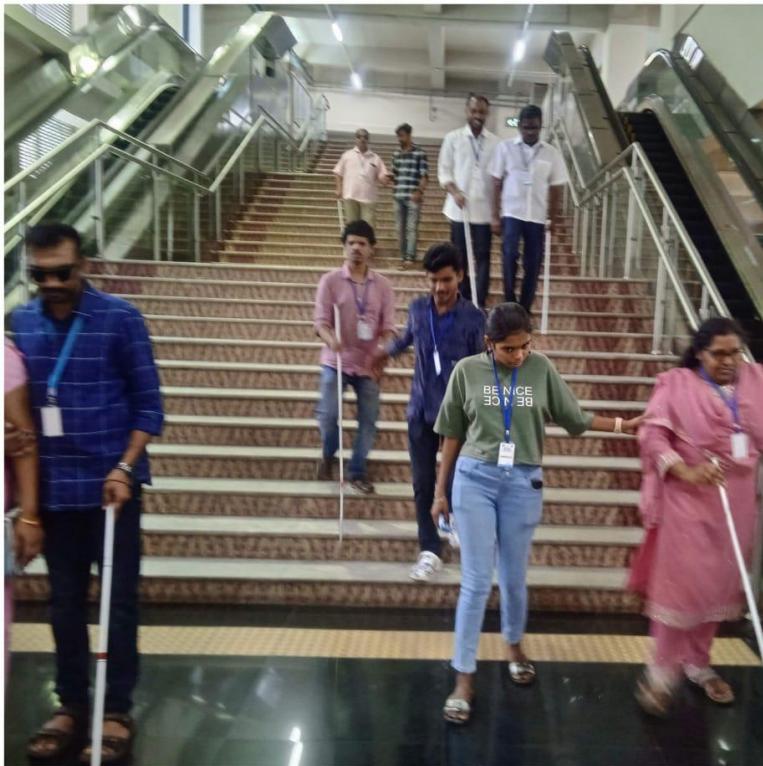


#KochiMetro #FirstRideFeels"

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#IndependentLiving #Empowerment"**



#FestivalOf Togetherness

A season of unity and joy – celebrating Christmas and Onam with the amazing RCGFstudents.



#RCGF LifeSkills # Building confidence, one skill at a time. Our life skills session is all about fostering



#CareerGoals #ProfessionalGrowth

Taking the next step in my professional journey—growth is the goal, progress is the path.

