

## Holistic Talent Profile (HTP) A Student Empowerment Model

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to help students of Grade X to look beyond marks while choosing the appropriate stream and subjects. The sample of 431 grade X students were selected from an Urban and Rural Trust run school as part of the CSR project of a Pharmaceutical Company. Students were administered the interest, aptitude and personality tests (HTP) and the findings of the Holistic Talent Profile was discussed with parents in the group session that was followed by one-to-one feedback to parents and the student. To make this project impactful, 72 teachers underwent intensive training to enhance their teaching techniques, class room management and soft skills; so that they could guide and support the students to maximize their performance. The findings indicate positive qualitative and quantitative improvement in students' performance, teachers approach and parental attitude. Teachers and parents became more empathic and supportive towards students. Students responded positively to the change and it was evident in their rigour and focus.

**Keywords:** *HTP, Study Habits, Aptitude, Interests and Personality tests, Sten Score, t-test Career Score Card, Behavioural and Attitudinal changes, Students and Parents' counseling, Teachers Training (T.O.T)*

High school marks the beginning of a journey towards making the most significant decisions of life – charting one's career. This gets complicated because intrinsic and extrinsic factors need to be considered in simultaneity at a very tender age. Many a times, parent's unfulfilled dreams and aspirations, new trends, academic performance of marks add to the pressure on a fragile and young mind. (Singh, N., 'From Talent to Career', 2016).

It is marked that every child goes through four phases of choice making till he finally decides his career option. All these phases are preparatory steps towards finally taking a plunge on the completion of grade 10. This is a trying period for the parent and student. (Singh, N., 'From Talent to Career', 2016).

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The current paper addresses the issue scientifically and focuses on the contents and processes in arriving at the optimal choices. Extensive community education, scientific student mapping, teacher training, parent counselling and institutional development activities were collectively implemented to make it impactful and life changing for all.

Anurag Behar, CEO of the Azim Premji Foundation, an education non-profit, noted that “the average school teacher in India does not get adequate pre-service or in-service education, nor does she get the support to overcome these problems.” Compounding this is the relatively low educational qualifications of many teachers themselves. In 2008-2009, on average, 45% of these teachers had not studied beyond the 12th grade.

The Indian government, at every level, recognizes the need for educational reform and has made a conscientious effort to achieve it; however there is still a huge gap in realizing this goal. To meet this goal and attain quality, it is crucial to focus upon Teachers’ Effectiveness on development of social skills and emotional self-regulation among students, *as children’s Social-emotional development is linked to academic success.*

The cultural and social context of family and community were found to be instrumental in how youth learn about careers and influential in the choice process. Extension strategies target parents and community to increase their involvement in youth career selection thus promote sound career decisions.

A similar study in Edo state aimed to identifying factors affecting career choices among senior secondary students in Esan North East Local Government Area of Edo state, found great benefit to establish guidance and counselling facilities. The study emphasizes the importance of guidance and counselling facilities to gain more focus and clarity of career decisions.

In one of the research papers ‘Factors Affecting High School Students’ Career Preference: A Basis for Career Planning Program by Dr. Pascuala T. Nancy published in the International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR) (2014) Volume 16, talks about Students’ career success can be best attained if proper guidance is given in choosing the right course in college, suited to students’ personality, ability and intellect. Integrating career plan with the curriculum would help the students to make good decisions for career and college choices. Collaborative effort of the school administrations, guidance counselor and parents should also be made to come-up with better career plan for every individual student.

This study reflects that the factors that influence student career trajectories indicate that the majority of the factors shaping high school students in the two of the schools from where the students participated in this study are mostly the same. Both were Trust run schools. It is observed that the students’ choices for the stream after 10<sup>th</sup> standard are highly influenced by

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parents, their peers, cultural values and gender aspects. This study also makes efforts to establish that for high school students - parents, teachers and career counselors play a prominent role. It highlights how teachers and parents play a significant role to motivate students to focus on the processes (good study habits) rather than the outcome. (marks)

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### *Aim*

- To facilitate and measure the influence of planned change on students, by training and sensitizing teachers and parents respectively.

#### *Objectives:*

1. To help students get more clarity while choosing the most appropriate stream and subjects for further studies as per their inner strengths.
2. To strengthen their study habits and make them more confident in understanding, planning and organizing themselves around their studies by empowering teachers with effective teaching techniques and skills.
3. To equip students with a complete plan of knowing themselves, building behavioural and social skills for life.
4. To equip teachers with skills of classroom management, role and self-related soft skills, child development theories and its applications in teaching, experiential approach to teaching and counselling.

#### *Design*

Teachers were assessed in the pre-training phase to determine their training needs and underwent two years training to meet the challenges to motivating students to develop effective study habits. The training modules are as follows.

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Self-Management & Personal Empowerment	Child Psychology Theories & Class Room Challenges	Plan, Apply And Review Class Room Teachings	Effective Learning Habits	Behavioral Skills and Soft Skill Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Johari Window</li> <li>• Time and Stress Management</li> <li>• Perception, Values and Beliefs</li> <li>• Balancing Personal and Professional Roles</li> <li>• Individual Learning and Individual Action Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drawing the universe of students.</li> <li>→ Physical</li> <li>→ Cognitive</li> <li>→ Social</li> <li>→ Emotional</li> <li>→ Behavioral</li> <li>• Theories of child development</li> <li>→ Piaget</li> <li>→ Erickson</li> <li>→ Freud</li> <li>→ Hurlock</li> <li>• Class room challenges</li> <li>• Counselling skills and listening skills</li> <li>• Case study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivation Theory</li> <li>• Structural Teaching – Presentation with Rubrics</li> <li>• PAR Model</li> <li>• Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC)</li> <li>• Learning Style Multiple Intelligence.</li> <li>→ V=Visual</li> <li>→ A=Auditory</li> <li>→ K=Kinesthetic</li> <li>• Principles Of Learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relaxation Techniques</li> <li>• Positive Attitude</li> <li>• Managing Stress And Anxiety</li> <li>• Memory Techniques</li> <li>• Goal Setting</li> <li>• Concentration</li> <li>• Time and Stress Management</li> <li>• Identification of Current Study Habits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Skill</li> <li>• Social Etiquette</li> <li>• Personal Grooming</li> <li>• Time and Stress Management</li> <li>• Body Language</li> <li>• Spoken Languages</li> <li>• Positive Attitude and Goal Setting</li> </ul>

Teachers were introduced to the purpose of study. Their Behavioral Profiling through demographic information sheet, Draw-a-Man and 16PF was done. Based on the outcome of the assessment the above 5 training modules were designed and imparted through – theories and concept discussion, games, role plays, audio-visual presentations, small group discussion, psycho-drama, skits, questionnaires and computer aided techniques.

In HTP a total of 431 students of standard 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> were covered from the intervention schools for 2 years consecutively.

#### **Test Types**

1. Aptitude Test: measures students' talents and abilities. It includes various sub-tests namely: Verbal Ability, Numerical Ability, Visualization, Mechanical, Clerical – Speed and Accuracy and Psychomotor skills.
2. Interest Test: measures students' interest in the following areas: Influential, Venturesome, Artistic, Scientific, Analytical, Social, Nature and Clerical areas.

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3. Personality Test: Helps to gain insights into the students' thoughts, feelings and behaviour. It specifically measures his/her social needs, intellectual ability, emotional maturity, values and beliefs.
4. Draw A Man and Personal Information Sheet (Questionnaire)

### *Measures*

1. Scientific mapping of the individual's interest, aptitudes and personality traits.
2. Psychologists' recommendation and developmental areas as identified from the above.
3. Individual's – Career Success Score Card.
4. Detailed results explained to Parents and Child.

### *Detail of participants*

Year	Grade	Rural	Urban	Total
2012-2013	IX & X	171	49	220
2013-2014	IX & X	165	46	211

### *Procedures*

Students appeared for the Aptitude, Interests and Personality tests, followed by scientific assessment of the test responses and Career Success Score Card together with the developmental strategies.

Once, the score cards are ready it is explained to the student and parents in a group sessions followed by individual counseling sessions of students with their parents by the expert counselors. In this session, parent and the student are explained in greater detail about the score card outcome and address the issues highlighted in the development strategy section of the score card.

In all the above aspects, teachers' active participation was sought so that they also get the insight about their students, their strong subjects and the areas where students needed support.

### *Summary of Design*

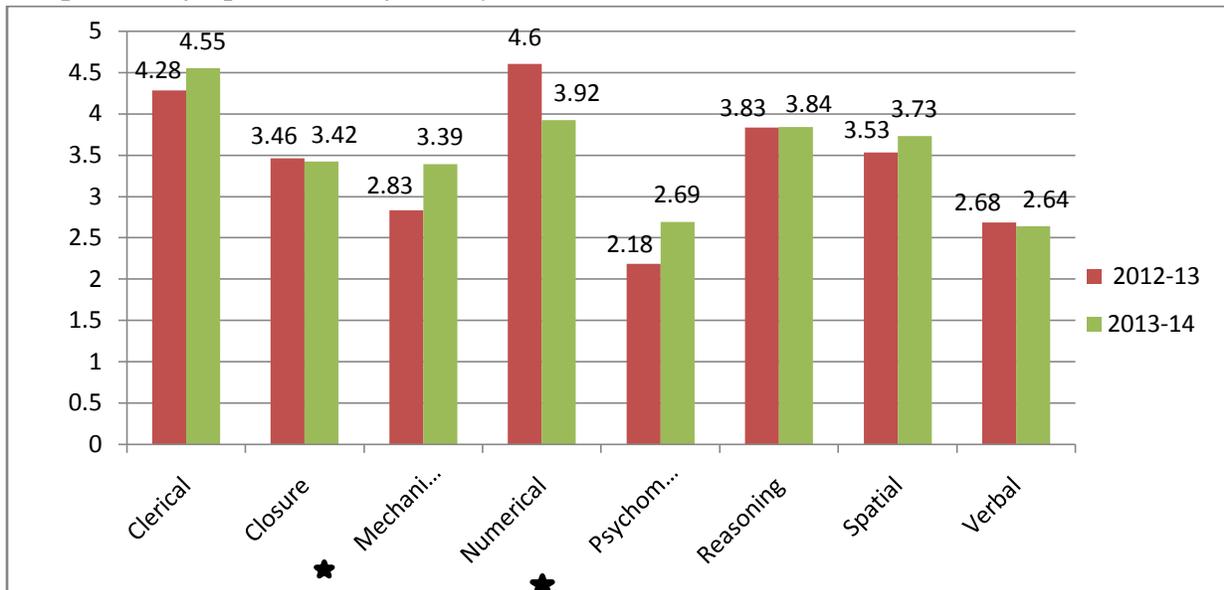
Teachers	Parents	Students
Personal and Professional Assessment and Training spread over two years	Group and Individual counselling sessions to deal with children.	Holistic Talent Profile (Interest, Aptitude, Personality Assessment). One to one career counselling.

### *Findings*

The findings revealed that the students' aptitudes and personality showed positive trend, specifying the significant changes in student's personality and Aptitudes are measured over 2 years. The findings are as below:

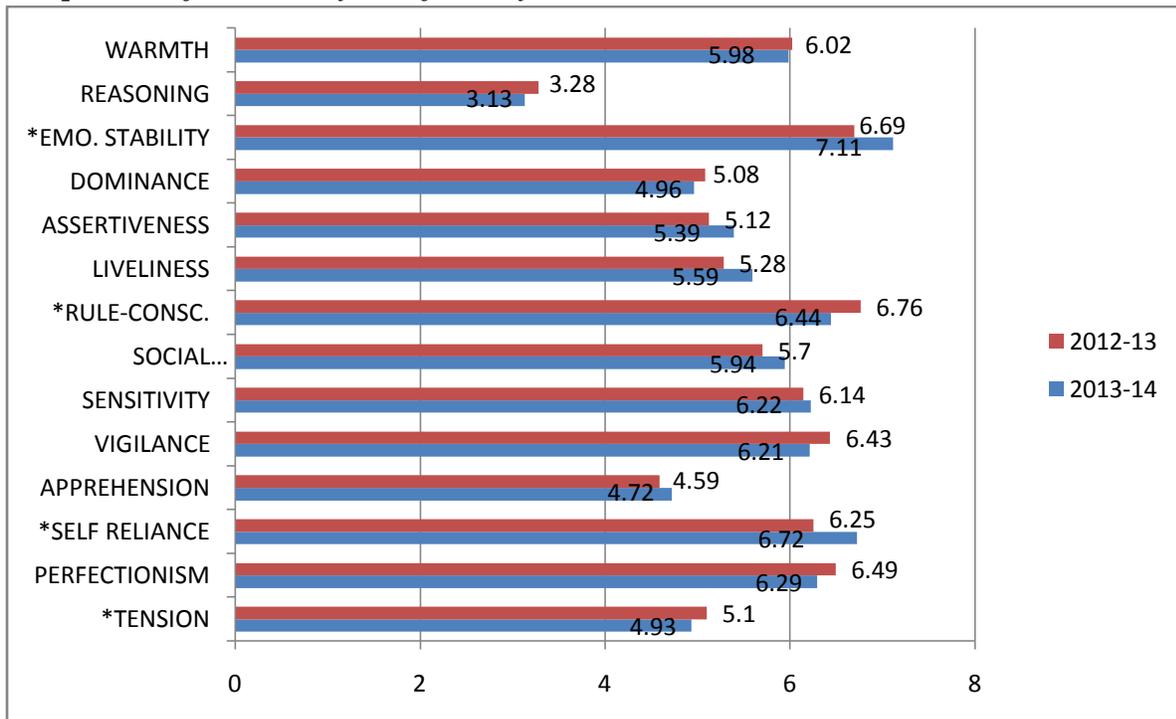
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### Comparison of Aptitude Test for the year 2012-2013 and 2013-2014.



As noted from the above findings, Mechanical reasoning and Psychomotor reasoning significantly improved; while numerical reasoning showed a negative trend. The positive results can be attributed to the teaching style. Science Teacher made 2-d and 3-d models to make difficult topics look easy and provided experiential learning and project work to students. Students were taken to science exhibitions and fairs.

### Comparison of Personality Test for the year 2012-13 and 2013-2014



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The personality test findings indicate a significant shift in 'self-reliant', 'resourceful' and 'self-sufficient' factors. They were less anxious (less anxiety around rules) and showed emotional stability and better ability to deal with stress.

The scores of the aptitude and personality tests were on sten scores and ranged between 1 to 10 stens. 5.5 is taken as the mean with 1.5 standard deviation on either direction. The mean of groups was tabulated and standard deviations were calculated to determine the significance values (t-scores). The t scores were highlighted if the difference between the means were significant at the .05 level.

The Students have overall increased their 'emotional stability', 'rule consciousness' and 'self-reliance' scores. This signifies that they are calmer and better equipped to face situations in a realistic manner as compared and their immediate seniors. They show a higher sense of responsibility and are more dutiful and disciplined. They are more resourceful and independent minded as compared to their immediate seniors.

What brought about certain favourable changes in the students aptitudes and personality factors? One of the significant contributions is the change in perspective of teachers towards themselves, their profession and the stake holder. (Student)

The post training assessment at workplace established that the teachers went through the training demonstrated enhanced self-awareness and self-management, which, in turn have improved their role effectively and enhanced their teaching performance. Teachers were tested in 2012 and then in 2014 on the DAM and 16PF.

Result indicate, Teachers as a group had higher scores on emotional well-being and sensitivity, showed improved social skills and enhanced planning and organizing abilities. The above findings are further reflected in the t-values of three factors of the 16PF.

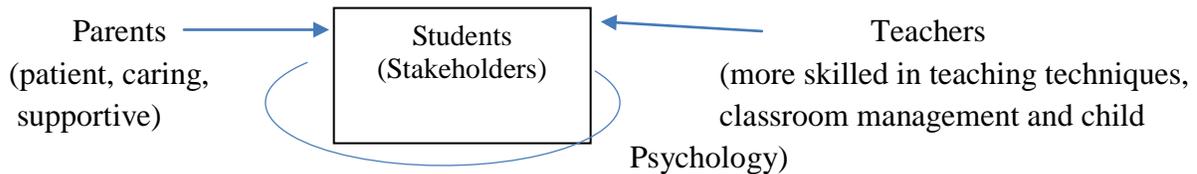
Teachers training in teaching habits and classroom management along with understanding – Counselling psychology helped align students - teachers and make them responsive towards each other. Stress is good provided it does not hamper performance. Good stress is fuel to movement. The focus of teachers shifted from teaching to learning. The PAR helped peer supervision and teacher jointly created teaching material to use the VAK Model.

They made more home visits if they observed the child had poor attendance, lacked serious in studies or went down in grade. This marked the beginning of a new relation with teachers and parents. So far teachers only complained about students. Parents too are weary when called to school. Now, the attendance of parents – teachers' meeting (PTA) grossly improved. (30% to 77%)

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*“Change for focus from Marks to Career”.*

The focus was on how to make studies / subjects easier. Hence, as seen below both parents at home and teachers in schools uplifted the learning environment and thus enthused the spirit of learning in students



During the training, the Teachers shared that their toughest problem was dealing with children exhibiting challenging behaviors since students were hostile, physically aggressive, and did not follow the classroom rules. When students exhibited such behavior, the teachers got punitive. With the help of self-awareness training, teachers initiated efforts to understand the reasons behind students' challenging behaviour. This resulted in better classroom environment and had increased interactions with students.

Teacher's wellbeing, social skills and sensitivity over two years helped them to facilitate student's development. Teachers were more planned and organized and there were no more complaints on time constraint to complete the syllabus as students were taught through VAK instead of traditional chalk and talk methods. This positively impacted the learning among the high school students; they actively participated in the learning as they learnt via doing activities. High Tower .A. M. et. al (2011); in his research work on Improving student learning by supporting quality teaching clearly indicates that quality teaching matters to student's learning. Teacher quality has been consistently identified as the most important school based factor in student achievement. (McCaffrey, Lockwood Koretz and Hamilton, 2003; Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2000, Rowan Corret and Miller, 2002; Wright, Horn and Sanders, 1997) and teacher effects on students learning has been found to be cumulative and long lasting (Kain, 1998; McCaffrey et al, 2003. Mendro, Jordan, Gomez, Anderson and Bembry, 1998; Rivers, 1999; Sanders and Rivers, 1996).

Students were less masked, more open, less vigilant and less rule abiding just to make teachers happy. In short, they were more like 'themselves' than before.

***Based on the findings of the HTP and the observations made by the Psychologists – the school was proposed to add activities and action plans to make learning more visible. They are as follows:-***

1. To strengthen their spoken language and general awareness, encourage debates, group discussions, and presentation on a specified topic as part of their classroom studies.

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2. To strengthen their mathematical concepts arithmetical problems daily is recommended.
3. To increase their learning, knowledge and application of science concepts provide them with opportunities, to create more science projects and exhibiting them, visiting science fairs and more hands-on practical experience.
4. Creative and outdoor activities was reinforced.
5. The focus can be on holistic development of the student rather than on the marks. Soft skills and social etiquettes sessions to be provided as part of the life skill program.

Ferry N. M., in the study 'Factors Influencing Career Choices of Adolescents and Young Adults in Rural Pennsylvania, observed that the cultural and social context of family and community were found to be instrumental in making career choices. Hence, further exploration of our study could be identifying more strategies that target parents and community to increase their involvement in youth career selection. Thus, reduce the focus on external demands and marks.

The focus could be on developing collaborative programs with innovate strategies to engage high school students, parents, teachers and community in a partnership that can help to change stakeholder's perceptions of their role in adolescent's career selection. At the same time, Schools are developed as a holistic institute which integrates the planned intervention at all the above three levels, right from the beginning, when a child enters in the school.

## DISCUSSION

Teachers and parents sensitivity had a positive effect on students. As results indicate students took more responsibility and felt more self-expressed and confident.

During Student and Parent counselling, it was brought to the parents' notice that their expectations of their child; getting higher scores put pressure on the child which resulted in stress, anxiety and at time the child went into his/her shell or become rebellious. The parents had taken such aspects into consideration and started to help their children in their studies. This support from parents paid-off and this marked the beginning to team work. The group counselling and individual counselling had brought the parent and children closer. Parents had stopped pushing their children and started taking interest and paying attention in their studies. The focus has changed from 'result- orientation' to 'process – orientation'. They are found to be more relaxed about their children. They are more participative in their learning in other activities. They were able to understand their strengths and limitation and accept the same.

Feedback on the personality aspects along with the development areas for change were explicitly provided and discussed with each student and parents. This process brought forth the unconscious or unexpressed feelings and thoughts and both the student and parent got the opportunity to see it objectively. Along with the finding, the students were even provided how to improve on these aspects. Hence, the HSPQ provided mirrors (insights) and windows (developmental areas) to the students. Awareness lead to change.

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Students got a realistic appraisal of their individual abilities and strengths in academic subjects (maths, physics, and languages) and their overall talents that were not measured by academics (visualization, speed, eye-hand motor coordination). This helped parents and students to realistically measure performance and effort required to reach the aspirations.

Teachers admitted that prior to this workshop, their rapport with students was not so good; and they didn't feel the need to reach out to students. After this workshop; teachers were able to understand the challenges faced by students in terms of their poor performance or learning difficulties and were able to guide them to resolve the same. This resulted in initiating a strong rapport with their students. This made the teacher more realistic about what to expect. Theories of Child development, Counselling Skills, Social, Cognitive, Emotional, Psychological changes in high school children and Strategies to deal with adolescence and their concerns were imparted to the Teachers during T.O.T. This has changed the teachers' perspective towards students and their behaviour. They have become more open and understanding towards students. Psychological mindedness and sensitivity towards children and their parents, as well as understanding of their macro roles in the life of a student contributed to the general wellbeing of teachers. There have been instances where teachers have visited the students' home to meet parents and influence them.

The teachers are trained to apply scientific methods to enhance study habits of students. This has helped teachers to take teaching techniques like – VAK (Visual, Audio and Kinesthetic), Graphic Organizer, Experience Learning Cycle (ELC), ESH (Effective Study Habits) – which has resulted in students' understanding and grasping the topics/ concepts comparatively better than earlier. The change in teaching methodology – like giving activities to students in small groups /peer learning together with project works and the teachers becoming facilitators/guides for students has also increased their learning skills through reflection and action. Creative ways of teaching difficult topics was experimentally presented during the refreshers course. This gave the entire subject teacher an opportunity to evolve newer ways of teaching the same subject. Many reported to have designed new tools and material relevant to teaching.

According to the study by Dr. Prakash Chandra Jena – “Teaching through Mentoring Model: Best Practices for Improved Learning” in 2012. A quality teacher is one who has a positive effect on student learning and development through a combination of content mastery, command of a broad set of pedagogic skills, and communication / interpersonal skills. Quality teachers are lifelong learners on their subject areas; teach with commitment and are reflective upon their teaching practice. They transfer knowledge in their subject matter and the learning process through good communication, diagnostic skills, understanding of different learning styles and knowledge about child development and the ability to marshal a broad array of techniques to meet student needs. They establish an environment conducive to learning and leverage a valuable resource outside as well as inside the classroom.

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A new paradigm is needed to construct a consistent vision of quality teaching – one that is anchored in a system of performance assessments and leveraged through the design of clinically based pre-service programs, comprehensive induction and collaborative, professional learning's. Analysis of longitudinal data reveals that teachers exert an accumulating influence – a series of superior teachers can overcome the learning deficits between low – income students and their more advantaged peers.

As stated by NCTE (1998) in Quality Concerns in Secondary Teacher Education, —*The teacher is the most important element in any educational program. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process at any stage.* Dr. Vijaya Kumari S.N. in her study – “Soft Skills and Teacher Accountability in the Context of Quality Education”, 2014 highlights that the main responsibility of shaping the behaviour of students is in the hands of teacher. Teachers in fact, are the designers of the future of their students, and thus, the society. This shows that it is imperative to invest in the preparation of teachers, so that the future of a nation is secure.

In sum, the dream of a learning society can become reality only when the dream teachers are well equipped with, psychological, intellectual and practical skills to communicate and convince the students through their efficient teaching.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the above, quantitative and qualitative findings, it can be concluded without doubts that the objective with which the project was initiated has shown encouraging results in both the schools. The starting point and pace of each school has been unique and different; yet both have shown marked improvements measured both in terms of quantitative increase in aptitudes and personality factors. This has been further substantiated by parental feedback, teachers' feedback and students' progress.

‘One of the important lessons from two decades of research has repeatedly highlighted that teachers are the fulcrum that determines whether any school initiative tips towards success or failure and mobilizing them to change. The focus from teaching to learning requires a change in the ‘mind set’ of the education system’. (Dr. Singh, N., Silakari Pramila S., in IJEPR, March 17) Ogowewo, Bidget, Oghenekome, IJISC, 2010 studied the factors influencing career choice among secondary school students; found that the choice of career was based on the number of factors including – interests, life ambition, challenging nature of career, prestige attached to profession, intellectual ability and salary potential. The result drew implications on the need for every secondary school in Guyana to have qualified school counsellors to employ their expertise to determine the aptitude and interests of students in their career choice. The study emphasizes the factors that influence rural young adults' selection of specific careers and the importance of ‘Guidance and Counselling’ in its Teachers Education Programme.

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This is a journey and hence it's mandatory to add rigor and planned intervention to continue and reap the benefits of transformational change. This transformation will be possible if a holistic approach of Organizational Development is taken through a three-pronged intervention at teachers' level and at the same time preparing students for learning effectively and initiate a dialogue through workshops with parents to support them to understand and help their children better. Longitudinal studies tracking the students' progress over three years by providing pre and post assessment; while intervening effort of motivating students with effective study habits, could be a futuristic design to the above study.

More consolidated efforts can be focused on the intrinsic motivations within the student. The focus from processes rather than more results would require a paradigm shift. The 'effective study habits' could propel this action. More such motivations are required to make learning a meaningful resources. Such that students rely lesser on the rote method of learning. This study can be extended to many schools and thus make learning academic accomplishment a gem in the world of work and thus reduce the gap between education and demands of the professional world.

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