

@ **plum**INSIGHTS

Showcasing the impact of Business Blasters for Udhyam

RESEARCH BY PLUM INSIGHTS | 2.05.2022

About Plum Insights

Plum is an agile, cultural insights consultancy.

We believe Insights and inspiration for businesses can come from unexpected sources. Tapping into this means not being bound by frameworks, definitions, methods, ways of working and fixed ways of seeing industries and businesses.

We blend methodological rigour, empathy, and intuitive creativity in all we do in order to create actionable and strategic insights. We bring insights to life through visual storytelling, immersive experiences, and a host of custom-built practices

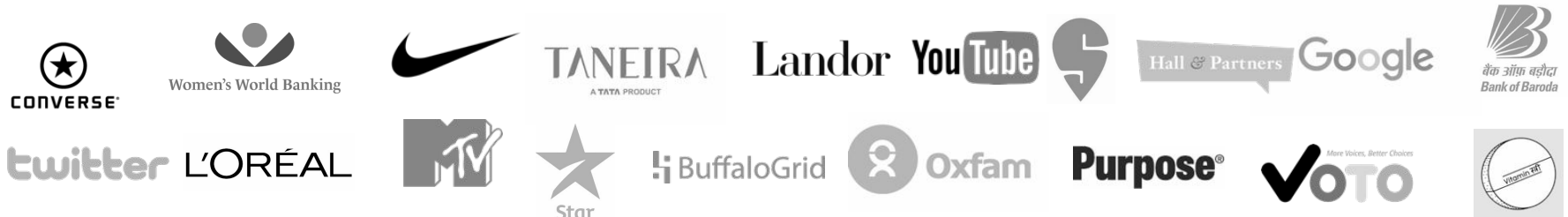
We help brands navigate shifting consumer realities

- Decode attitudes and behaviour
- Identify trajectory of change
- See and shape the future
- Find the right voice to communicate your brand

Founded in 2017, we are a team of 14, working remotely with partners across Asia

Our eclectic team of has backgrounds in brand strategy, qualitative research, anthropology, development economics, communications, urban planning and design

OUR PARTNERS:



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**Impact of Business
Blasters Program**



1. Background and Context

This report showcases the impact of Business Blasters (EMC) programme through narratives of growth (skill and mindset development) among students in Delhi Government schools

To chart this out, we engaged in conversations with 30 participating students, parents, teachers/EMC coordinators and mentors of:

Phase 1 ([LINK](#)):

Student teams not selected in Top 1000

Student teams selected in Top 1000

Phase 2:

Student teams selected in Top 126

Student teams selected in Top 1000





2. Understanding the Students' life context

**This
section will
cover**

1.

Key Influences on their lives

2.

**Current attitudes guiding their
approach towards the future**

Phase 1 gave us a sneak peek into the contexts of these students...



Tough circumstances and many responsibilities

Aware that their parents can afford less

That they have to make time for chores amidst school and friends

Don't have the liberty to take things for granted

So, **grab onto opportunities that will help them level up**

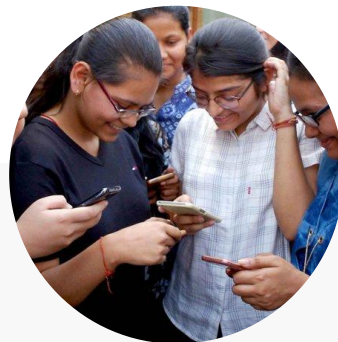


Conscious of their humble origins

Conscious that their family lacks privilege

That struggle is a fact of life, not an option unlike more privileged peers

Thus, **role models whose backgrounds are more relatable to theirs give them hope**



Hyper aware and informed of what they don't have

Mobile, digitally aware and equipped students

Part of the Social media, Tiktok era that allows them to express and look into the outside world

High **exposure has made them curious about what is possible**



Big dreams - of community and nation

The pandemic has forced an examination of their own ambitions, their role in the country's growth

Questioning the definition and pathways to success

Learning to **trust being skilled rather than relying on 'merit' to make a mark**



Family is a constant and despite the odds they try to channel their energies positively

Seen financial distress at close quarters and **know that their parents' own dreams** and ambitions have been **thwarted**

Despite the financial and social vulnerabilities, they are **encouraged by supportive** and understanding parents who do not wish for circumstances to hinder more children in the family

Often becoming the **first movers in their** family, they feel **lucky to be able to enjoy** the opportunities they already have access to

Thus, they are aware and **appreciative of the responsibility they bear**, want to ensure that they position themselves for better life chances

"I have done a lot in life but wasn't able to succeed in anything. I think that's why my son wants to go a step ahead and succeed in life. He doesn't want my kind of life. He's learning from my mistakes" - Father of Student, M, Selected Top 126

In their words:

"I used to do mobile repairs which stopped during lockdown. That's where she got the idea to make a website - 'Phonemend' where she can build a network of phone repair shops" - Father of Student, F, Selected Top 1000

"I spent my entire life trying to do something but couldn't, lost functionality in my legs in an accident. Now I'm able drive an auto to make some money, but my son sees our struggles and it makes him want to work harder each day" - Father of student, M, Selected Top 126

"My father works in a printing press where he can't use a fan so he struggles. I aim to do something for him in the future. If my father can work so hard for us, why can't I study well and work hard to do something for him?" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Their schooling environment holds a critical, multi-faceted role in their lives

Deeply aware of the infrastructure's inability to provide for all their needs (e.g. space constraints, lack of access to safe water, poor teacher-student ratios, having to travel long distances to access schools)

Despite this, a **love for all that schools** that offer:

- A **sanctuary** away from their impending responsibilities and realities
- An **influx of influences** through the friendships, experiences they wouldn't have access to otherwise

For most, their **teachers are a pivotal source for learning** - about textbooks and life, both

Taken the pandemic-induced lockdowns as a way of life - something to reshape their lives around - without compromising on their goals

"I love our teachers, I feel very close to them because I can call or text them whenever needed about exam doubts. Sometimes I even ask my class teacher for advice on my career - most of us are attached to her" - F, Student, Selected Top 126

In their words:

"I studied in a private school till 10th grade. I had to move to government school due to financial problems and I was not looking forward to it. I had a bad impression of the teachers and students. But once I joined, it exceeded my expectations. The teachers are so warm and the students are all hardworking - I'm always supported and inspired" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000

"We don't have too many classrooms we have to keep changing our location to study. It's troublesome but at least I'm never bored at school. There's always something interesting to see or do there" - F, Student, Selected Top 126

"If I was principal for a day, I would get more water tanks in our school. There are very less tanks right now - we have morning and evening batches so need is high. But during the summer, many children can't refill their bottles" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000

Not looking to latch onto one constant role model – instead, constantly inspired from a range of role models

Largely, three kinds of roles models are those who:



Connect at a personal level

Public figures with background or journey that they can resonate with - artist, sportsperson, dancer e.g. Remo D'souza, MS Dhoni

Teachers, coaches, those who make an extra effort to help them - guide them on **how to live life daily**

Relatives who have **become successful** - makes success feel **closer to home**, more achievable

Started looking up to their **parents** - **especially those who have their own business** - the shared background is a catalyst



Exemplify brilliance and who make them dream

Self-made startup founders i.e. those who made their big dream a reality, **the impossible a little more feasible**

This includes **Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Ritesh Agarwal** (Founder of OYO), **Aman Gupta** of BoAt



Remind of their sense of duty or purpose

Magnates who have a **give back attitude, a sense of responsibility towards the nation**

Their actions remind one of the **value of humility and staying grounded**

Charitable figures such as **Ratan Tata, Bill Gates**

In their words:



Connect at a personal level

“My role model is my class teacher - she understands all students well. She explains everything to us. She taught us that it’s important to be ‘sincere, not serious” - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Exemplify brilliance and who make them dream

“I found Harshad Mehta in the show Scam 1992 very inspiring - woh kahaan se kahaan pohunch gaya through his creativity. I felt bad for him when his career ended like that. I thought he had a good personality” - M, Student, Selected Top 1000



Remind of their sense of duty or purpose

“During the 26/11 attacks not only did Ratan Tata save the hotel guests but also helped people out on the streets and the family of his staff members. He treats his employees like family and he is very humble” - F, Student, Selected Top 1000

These pre-existing influences have shaped 4 key attitudes that guide their future action...

...and what they seek from the Business Blasters experience

1.

Learning both within and outside of school

"One of my favourite Youtube channels is Eklavya Study Point - I can clarify concepts even when I'm not in school through those videos" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000

2.

A constant state of hustle

"Without struggling, life is boring. If you give someone comfort since their childhood, they won't really achieve much. To make something out of myself, I know I'll have to keep working hard every day" - M, Student, Selected Top 1000

3.

Strong desire for power, if not certainty

"In entrepreneurship, you get to be your own boss. We want to have control over our profits, we can earn a lot while being at a high position if our business is doing well" - M, Student, Selected Top 1000

4.

A push into the 'Adulting' Zone

"She picked her field based on the people she saw in it who went through a lot of growth. She doesn't want to waste time, wants to directly focus on making money" - Father of Student, F, Selected Top 1000



“Because we spoke to the children a lot more during EMC, I found out that so many of them are already upskilling themselves after school. I know students who took graphic design courses and are freelancing now to practice and become better” - F, Teacher, Selected Top 1000

1. That learning manifests both within and outside of their school schedules

Their current routines are shaped around **their drive to fulfill needs** unmet by their schools

Acutely aware of what is inaccessible to them and have **placed the onus on themselves** to navigate towards a better life

For those who have recognised their career goals, upskilling outside of school occurs through the **hunt for free digital resources**

Hence, they actively engage with YouTube videos, online courses, and educational Instagram posts beyond their regular dose of entertainment



2. A constant state of hustle to make up for the missed opportunities

Expect a path of struggle ahead - know there's no glory without it

Hardwork and discipline is important still but are **impatient to already start achieving**

Speed, street smarts, competitive spirit are a prerequisite to ahead

Find **ways to maximize their resources** and time available (part-time jobs in graphic design, content creation, tuitions)

They want to **make accessible to others solutions** that helped them overcome their own struggles

"If I could ask a genie for a superpower - I'd ask for the ability to feel less emotion - for then I can become a better businessman" - M, Student, Selected Top 126



3. Strong desire for power if not certainty

Want their future to look drastically different and that's contingent upon having power

The **allure of IAS, IPS remains strong** because they see these jobs as providing not just stability but enabling power through **connections forged with those at cushy, influential positions** (e.g. government officials)

Have come to view entrepreneurship as a **means to acquire power** in the future - not report to anyone, no upper limits on income

A way to control their destiny, not rely on others but on their skills

"I have a lot of friends who want to clear UPSC - maybe to be able to have that power - aaj kal log kisike dabaav mai nahi rehna chahte, civil services main power hoti hai (nobody want to live under pressure, there's power in the civil services)" - M, Student, Selected Top 1000



4. A hard push into the ‘Adulthood Zone’

Social and economical struggles they have seen around them have forced them to be **pragmatic about their goals**

Start by looking for inspiration within their homes and extended families (e.g. *what can I already do? how can I already help my family*)

Too much of a real world orientation has meant thinking about **responsibilities, careers, money** early on to frame their goals

Know that they won't be handed anything on a silver platter and thus, **figuring out on their own is going to be key**

“It feels good to earn money and not ask my mother for small things like stationery and snacks. We don't have a lot of money so I want to work towards becoming a giver in the future, not someone who has to ask/beg from other people” - F, Student, Top 126



3. Mapping the Shifts in their Mindsets and Skillsets

**This
section will
cover**

1.

Mindset Shifts

2.

Skillset Shifts

Being part of the program has altered the Students' mindsets in defining ways

1

GOAL ORIENTATION

Thinking big and feeling ambitious

2

Discovering SELF-IDENTITY

Understanding and valuing oneself

3

Cultivating an INDEPENDENT Outlook

Learning to take decisions

4

Having GRIT

Courage and determined to get things done

5

BECOMING PROFESSIONAL

Feeling responsible and accountable

6

BEING RESOURCEFUL

Making the best of what's available

7

FACING CHALLENGES HEAD ON

Stepping out of their comfort zones

8

THE JOY OF LEARNING

Balancing work and play

9

GROWING TOGETHER, NOT ALONE

Aiming for collective upliftment

1. GOAL ORIENTATION

Thinking big and feeling ambitious

'Soch badi ho jaati hai'

Setting bigger goals

Dreaming confidently

"I've always had a dream to do a small business on the side, even if I'm doing a job, like I always wanted a cafe of mine where people could come and eat and read books. But after BB I want to expand, open many franchises. Now I think jitni salary month mein ayegi from a job, utna mein ek din mein kama sakta hoon (now a monthly salary can be earned in a day)" - M, Student, Selected Top 126



Krishna is an artist and a photography enthusiast. Business Blasters helped him realise how he could combine his love for the arts and build something profitable. Having made it to the Top 126 and secured Rs 17L in funding, he looks forward to coming back next year with bigger, ambitious goals

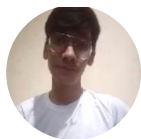
'Kuch kar dikhana'

Pushing oneself

The high of accomplishment

Deriving motivation from small wins

"When I had a single student I wasn't motivated enough. But then we started growing - we had over 60, 100 students. Eventually we met our target of 120 students. Now we'll do a major blast all over India to get out group noticed" - M, Student, Selected Top 126



The Dance Therapy Team teaches movement and dance to underprivileged children. Team leader Jayant has been learning dance for many years but never imagined monetizing his passion amidst discouraging society. With a growing business, he feels his effort has finally paid off

1. GOAL ORIENTATION

Thinking big and feeling ambitious

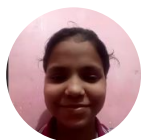
'Kuch kar dikhana'

Pushing oneself

The high of accomplishment

Deriving motivation from small wins

"Jitne aage badhoge, utna aur zyaada aage badhnega ki koshish karoge (the more you achieve, the harder you want to push yourself to move ahead). I too feel that my goals have become bigger. I made a front end design of a calculator but I don't feel satisfied with that anymore, want to make the entire app" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Nisha draws energy from her small wins. Having mapped small goals for herself as an aspiring app developer, she looks forward to achieving them swiftly and letting her achievements propel her further

2. Discovering SELF-IDENTITY

Understanding and Valuing oneself

'Apne aap ko pehechana'

Becoming aware of one's interests, likes, dislikes, ambitions, drawbacks

Discovering hidden talents

"Apne aap mai qualities dekhi jo chupi hui thi (I discovered hidden qualities within myself). I was able to generate new and interesting ideas, lead a team and even grasp commerce topics, like accounting, that we aren't taught in school" - M, Student, Selected Top 126

'Trust my abilities'

Recognizing one's potential

Gaining confidence about their abilities

Knowing one's worth

"Now we trust ourselves - the fear of profit and loss is gone because we know we can be successful. This trust came from us being selected in the Top 126. We can start our endeavours without any hesitation" - M, Student, Selected Top 126



Chetan's team makes products out of recycled waste. His team members are all from the Arts stream but have realised their ability to crunch numbers, create business statements. With the basics sorted, they are more focussed on their learning

2. Discovering SELF-IDENTITY

Understanding and Valuing oneself

'Chhaap chod ke jaana'

Leaving a positive legacy behind;
be remembered by my peers

Change others' perception

Inspiring others

"Our section was the least popular or "badnaam" in our school - so we wanted to change the perception through this project. Now students know us as "chocolate-wale" and are jealous of us too" - F, Student, Selected Top 126



Anjali's team wanted to make homemade chocolates, affordable and accessible to all. Aptly named 'The Hard Workers', decided to make the chocolates in school itself, which served them well, both in terms of logistics and in helping change their perception among peers

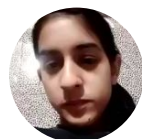
'Ek attitude aana'

Having social confidence

How to get noticed and present
oneself to others

Navigating unfamiliar social
situations

"We liked the fact that we got to go out and explore. Bargaining with the shopkeepers was a lot of fun, we told them hum bhi businessman hai, humey pata hai daam kitna hona chahiye (we told them we too are businessmen and know what the true prices of their products are)" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Priyanka and her team started off as a group that was shy and uncomfortable interacting with people outside of their circle. Stepping out to source materials and sell their products, helped them open up and explore the outside world

3. INDEPENDENCE

Cultivating an Independent Outlook

No more hand-holding

Informed decision-making
Navigating small problems
independently

"If we sold our product to other shopkeepers - they'd buy in bulk and bargain with us and we'd earn less money. So we decided to start selling in our neighbourhood first. I also thought my father will convince my relatives to pay but eventually, I learnt how to convince them to shell out money"- M, Student, Selected Top 1000



While Karan's father taught his team the basics of electrical wiring, Karan had to learn the ropes of sales and marketing on his own, the hard way. Learning to persuade others to pay based on the merit of his product and his communication skills has been rewarding

Valuing Financial Independence

Realising importance of money in
life
Empathy towards parents' efforts
to offer them a good life
Supporting oneself step by step

"Pehle aise America main hota tha ki bache kaam karte the aur college apna fund karte the and India mai toh sab parents karte hai. But ab hum bhi independent bann rahey hai, hum khud ke skills se paise kama sakte hai (In US kids fund their own college education but we can do the same here with our own skills now)" - F, Student, Selected Top 126

"Earlier we used to ask parents for money, now we feel like business people who can buy things for themselves" - F, Student, Selected Top 126



Kashish's team makes a range of textile products like woolen socks, god dresses. Looking at other teams' projects and achievement confirmed what she'd hoped - that she too can already start to finance some part of her life on her own

Real student image

4. HAVING GRIT

Not getting bogged down easily



'Hosla na chhodna'

Courage and Conviction

Being tenacious, not giving up

Steely determination

"I realised that there are people who have bigger and better ideas and are working a lot harder. I tried not to think so much about others and let it get to me. Instead I decided to focus on my own work and try to improve myself" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Payal felt daunted in the face of bigger, better projects at first but she managed to channel this exposure at the Business Blasters exhibition positively. Looking at the variety of projects, the creativity displayed inspired her to do the same for herself

'Affect na hona'

Tuning out negativity

Having a positive spirit

Desire to prove oneself

"Our first few attempts failed - the cycle's motor stopped responding, one tyre had an issue. Aas paas ke society log aur school ke kuch students ne bola ki hum yeh sab nahi kar sakte hai (people said we can't do this). But we kept at it - we learnt from Youtube when our mentors couldn't teach us. When our cycle finally worked, everyone was in awe of us" - M, Student, Selected Top 1000



Team Delta had an ambitious goal of making an electric cycle. Despite the loud skepticism around them, the team refused to stray from course. Finally, making the electric cycle work, they've come away with not just technical skills like electrical wiring, prototype testing but also of learning from failures, trial & error

*Real student image

5. BECOMING PROFESSIONAL

Feeling responsible and accountable



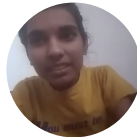
No more slacking off

Taking oneself seriously

Having agency

Doing things properly, not half-heartedly

"I didn't like to work earlier but I do some work with my team - I've also started working at home. We won't be 'kaamchors' (slackers) in our jobs or careers - we will work very hard" - F, Student, Selected Top 126



Neha worried about extra project work eating into her study time. But once her team, the 'Hard Workers' got the hang of running a profitable homemade chocolate business, she realised how her perspective towards work has changed. Now she believes that 'anything worth doing is worth doing well' - whether it's in her career or at home

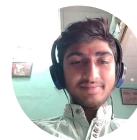
Owning it

Taking charge

Thinking about next steps

Sense of responsibility towards achieving outcomes

"I want to be an entrepreneur not just a businessman and for this I need to get experience at a big corporate job first. My plan is to work part time in college on my business idea and then work in a company before devoting myself full time to my project" - M, Student, Selected Top 1000



Akshay's father is a small business owner but he desires to be an 'entrepreneur' - somebody who's growth focussed rather than profit focussed. He believes experience in Corporate India will provide him the exposure to best practices he needs to bring to his own business in the long run

6. BEING RESOURCEFUL

Making the best of what's available

Smart money management

Not wasting resources, no matter how small

Understanding family, team and personal finances

“People used to say that ‘you live your basic life within your means but enjoy life with your parents money’. Now I know how much things cost and how hard our parents work to give us everything. Earlier we used to ask parents for money, now we feel like business people who can buy things for themselves” - F, Student, Selected Top 126



While budgeting for their small textiles business, Sneha realised the material costs of things and how small costs can add up and balloon. This shifted her outlook towards her personal spends. Now, she is excited to use the profits towards her stationery and travel needs

‘Apne skills se paise kamana’

Thinking creatively about making money

Being able to monetize their skills

Investing in their interests

“We know the wholesale rates, the manufacturing rates, how to price. Now I’m thinking ki ‘paise se paisa kaise banate hai’ (how to grow our money). My friend and I have also started selling on Meesho and Flipkart to earn more” - M, Student, Selected Top 126



Gautam and Chetan were glad to learn the intricacies of costing process through EMC curriculum and action in it in their team’s recycled products business. They’ve taken learning a beyond their neighbourhood and school into the e-commerce space

*Real student image

7. FACING CHALLENGES HEAD ON

Stepping out of their comfort zones



'Naye se na darna'

Adopting an exploratory attitude

Welcoming discomfort when necessary

"Earlier, I didn't like talking to anyone except for my family and friends. During the project, I knew I had to talk to shopkeepers in the market to sell our product no matter what. I got over my hesitation and started bargaining with shopkeepers properly" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Priyanka's team taught themselves how to embroider intricate designs for their project. They were an introverted bunch who kept to themselves even in the classroom. Through Business Blasters, they overcame their fear of dealing with unfamiliar social situations

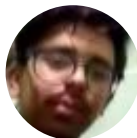
'Uncertainty accept karna'

Being open to non-linear career paths

Confidence to welcome uncharted territories

Staying grounded but not getting bogged down

"Business is very new for us but now we realise that a 9-5 job is not the only way to make money. We don't know everything about business yet but we know bohut mehnat lagegi par maza bhi bohut aayega (it will take a lot of work but we'll have fun too)" - M, Student, Selected Top 126



Jayant and team's dance therapy endeavour was unlike any other business idea in their vicinity. They didn't have people around them who were familiar with the concept - now they've reached a stage where they are hoping to expand this concept pan-India

*Real student image

7. FACING CHALLENGES HEAD ON

Stepping out of their comfort zones



'Naye upaay dhundna'

Taking risks to enhance creative solutions

Avoiding cookie-cutter approaches when navigating obstacles

"One month into our project, our candle business failed. We thought their unique shape would help but they ended up being expensive & not eco-friendly. Humne risk liya aur idea badal diya (we took a risk & changed our idea). Started researching on LED bulbs and made those - many people liked it and our sales increased" - M, Student, Not Selected

Top 1000



Amit and team hoped to have a profitable candle business due to Diwali coming up. When their candles turned out to be defective & more expensive than what was available in the market, they spoke with friends in their class about new ideas to gauge customer sentiment. They settled on the LED bulb business. While they were not selected, they feel motivated to continue this in the future

8. THE JOY OF LEARNING

Balancing work and play

'Ek nayi energy aana'

Being interested and excited

Recognising value in things they otherwise overlooked

Motivating oneself to do more

"My uncle has a shop where I help out sometimes. Before BB I used to be quiet and had no interest in the work there. But now I talk to the customers that come in and tell them about the products available. My uncle can trust me to handle the shop on my own"- F, Student, Selected Top 1000

'Kaam aur mazey dono karna'

Enjoying the process

Not stressing about the end goal

Being sincere but not serious

"Once when we were on a field visit, we were in a completely new area. We got lost in the gallis (lanes) and thought we wouldn't be able to find our destination. We asked people around us for directions and instead of getting stressed, decided to have fun with each other throughout it all"- F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Mausam and team had little interest in cross-stitching before this project. Throughout the process, they realised how they could have a good time with it. Now, they want to turn their team into a brand and add more products to their range

*Real student image

9. GROWING TOGETHER, NOT ALONE

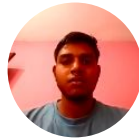
Aiming for collective upliftment

'Ek dusre ki madad karna'

Assisting teammates' in their learning & growth

Looking out for each other

"My teammates were very introverted and could not imagine going out in the market and selling our product. To help them come out of their shell slowly, I told them to talk to familiar people in their colonies first. This would help them practice how to speak outside" - M, Student, Selected Top 1000



Karan and his team saw their mothers struggle with washing dishes in Delhi's extreme winters. Noticing a market gap for low-cost geysers motivated them to learn the technicalities of electrical wiring and make their own geysers

'Samaaj ko aur behtar karna'

Empowering members of the community

Combining creativity & social productivity

"The women in our colony would make beautiful god dresses for their families, styles that you wouldn't find in the market. We decided we could include them in our project so that they can continue what they do but also get paid for it" - F, Student, Selected Top 126



Soni's team sold dresses for worship idols under the name 'Poshak.' After navigating the markets, they realised that the god dresses available did not reach the standard customers ideally wanted. Thus, they teamed up with priests from temples in their locality to start selling quality pieces

The growth in their Skill-sets is visible to them and those around them

1

NAVIGATING COMMUNICATION

Effectively Communicating their ideas

2

COLLABORATION

Being able to work with others

3

LEADING OTHERS

Helping team grow

4

TIME MANAGEMENT

Learning to balance and prioritize

5

CREATIVE CONFIDENCE

Belief in ability to ideate and create

6

CURATING KNOWLEDGE, INSPIRATION, & INFLUENCES

Carving their own learning path

7

HONING A BUSINESS BENT

Striving for technical excellence

1. NAVIGATING COMMUNICATION

Effectively communicating their ideas

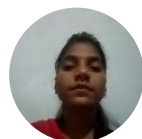
'Baat samjhna aur samjha pana'

Putting one's point across

Convincing parents and teachers of their ideas

Simplifying concepts for team mates

"Initially it was a challenge to convince the other team mates to give their entire money towards the project. After I managed to do that, I also had to convince the other girls' parents, who were very strict, to allow them to work at each other's houses" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Muskaan brought together her team to sell homemade paper envelopes. While everyone else was coming up with ideas that involved selling decorative items for diwali, she wanted to do something 'hatke' and convinced the others of the same

'Presenting oneself professionally'

Speaking outside of familiar circles

Negotiating with investors, vendors

"I noticed a change in the way the students communicated. They were already honing the skills that one expects from individuals in the corporate world. They were cool and confident in front of the camera and didn't interrupt each other. The leader didn't hog the limelight and gave everyone the time and space to talk" - M, Mentor, Selected Top 1000



Chander mentored a team of students who were making incense sticks out of flower waste. While most of them came from families with blue collared backgrounds, he felt their business acumen and professionalism was ahead of most others

2. COLLABORATION

Being able to work with others

'Saath mil kar kaam karna'

Building on different perspectives

Dealing with each others strengths and weaknesses effectively

"I feel that the reason we got selected was our teamwork. Humari team ne ek doosre ka saath diya aur ek doosre ko help kiya (our team members supported and helped each other). We divided roles based on what everyone was comfortable taking on" - F, Student, Selected Top 126



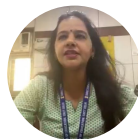
Diya and her team were interested in art and design and wanted that to translate into their business idea. Since all of them did not have a business orientation, they decided to divide their roles based on individual skills and comfort levels which worked well for them

'Doosron ko samajh pana'

Empathy towards team members

Resolving conflicts through healthy compromises

"There would be a lot of bickering and fights among students so the school counsellor made them all sit in a room discuss amongst each other, without any interference from her. Through discussion and fights, they learnt how to find a common ground and resolve their issues internally. Not only did they learn a business skill, but also a life skill" - F, Teacher, Selected Top 1000



The 'Breathe in Style' group's teacher noticed a change in her students who would earlier start fighting over the smallest of things now learnt how to talk it out and resolve their issues. After the project, she started seeing her students in a new light

3. LEADING OTHERS

Helping team grow



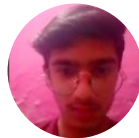
'Investing in others'

Taking charge

Upskilling team members

"I was good at communicating and explaining my POV, but my teammates were shy and lacked the confidence to do so. Next year, I will ensure that they too improve their confidence and communication skills" - M, Student, Selected

Top 126



Sachin's team upcycled plastic and other waste to create artistic decor items. After interacting with the investors, Sachin realised that while it was a skill he had mastered, his team was not prepared for it and decided to help them do so for the future

4. TIME MANAGEMENT

Learning to balance and prioritize

'Do-teen cheezein ek sath karna'

Multi-tasking

Striking a balance between business, academics & household chores

Having a side hustle

"While working on our business blasters project, we stuck to a schedule - allotted time to production and sales, so it won't interfere with our studies. Instead of playing outside or chilling at home, we dedicated our recreation time to work on the project together" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000

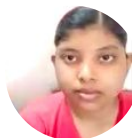


The Warrior's High team wanted to make the most of their time and each team members skills. Since most of them had to convince their parents to let them participate in business blasters, they decided to stick to a schedule to make sure they didn't neglect their studies

'Investing my time, not spending it'

Learning to prioritise

"I was trying to learn java, animation and app development simultaneously while developing my business idea. But I have now learnt how to narrow my focus onto programming since that's going to take the longest. I'm going to set small targets and move ahead step-by-step" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Nisha has dreams of building her own e-learning platform for which she wants to create the app and website herself. Being exposed to Business Blasters, she knows she has her work cut out for it and is trying to take it one step at a time

5. CREATIVE CONFIDENCE

Ability to ideate and create

A tinkering attitude

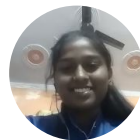
The urge to learn hands-on
Expanding their maker skills

“When we decided to make low-cost geysers, the first thing my friend and I did was getting a geyser and opening it up. We wanted to see the technicalities inside it ourselves, not through a video”- M, Student, Selected Top 1000



Karan’s father owns a business but Karan had no interest in it prior to Business Blasters. After handling the nitty-gritties of his own business, he felt capable enough to consider it as his future goal

“I knew how to stitch earlier but now I can make sturdy jute bags with ease. I learnt how to stitch them with iron threads to increase the quality. Now I feel confident in my skill, if someone gives me instruction I can stitch anything” - F, Student, Selected Top 126



Rifa’s team set out to make paper and jute bags as a replacement for polythene bags. Working with a material like jute was difficult for them - paint either spreads too easily or doesn’t stick on long enough. Additionally, finding the right quality in the market was a hassle. Despite this, they decided to pull through till the end and better their products every round

6. CURATING KNOWLEDGE, INSPIRATION, & INFLUENCES

Carving their own learning path

Choosing what & who they want to learn

Identifying sources for maximum upskilling

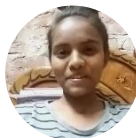
Carefully picking influences to sync with their goals

"I take self-portraits for my Instagram. I saw a dark-skinned model whose confidence really inspired me to continue building my profile. I also did a course in critical thinking and communication because it would help me with my future business"- M, Student, Selected Top 126



Krishna's team applies hyper-realistic portraits on recycled products. With an inclination towards photography, art, and digital content creation, he decided to introduce his artistic interests to their business model

"I spent a lot of time researching and found free courses on Great Learning, YouTube, and Google that would help me learn more about coding and android development"- F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Nisha hopes for finances to not hinder her programming dreams. Having no mentors around her to guide her, she takes it upon herself to find the right resources. She already has two start-up ideas that she wants to work on - DronGuru: an e-learning platform and PhoneMend: a digital network of phone repair stores with warranty-provisions

7. HONING A BUSINESS BENT

Striving for technical excellence

'Technical know-how'

Market and customer understanding

Comprehending business jargon

Business valuation

"I knew how to do business, but wasn't aware of things like ROI, Equity, how to deal with investors, money management, supply-demand chain etc. which is what I learnt during Business Blasters. I also learnt how to build partnerships to run a business" - M, Student, Selected Top 1000



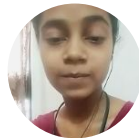
Amit and his team 'Unity' started an LED bulb business. Though their project did not get selected, armed with business skills, they are prepared to come back with a new and unique idea

'Manpower planning'

Team formation

Division of labour

"We contacted a lot of NGOs because we felt the need to increase our manpower. We thought we could pay them per product for their labour. This way we could complete our orders as well as benefit others. We went to their houses to teach them and now we have a lot of women on our team" - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



Mausam and team learned cross-stitching and crochet from scratch and decided to partner with an NGO where they went and taught others to help increase their manpower. They named their team 'Sunrise Girls' with the hope of shining light on a dying craft



4. Overall Impact of Business Blasters on Students' Lives

The Business Blasters process has prompted distinct impact areas in students' lives

1.

Transformed their perception of reality

2.

A navigational aid to the world of possibilities

3.

Launchpad vs Learning Opportunity

4.

Means to forge meaningful identities

5.

Built a long-term support system

6.

New entrepreneurial lens informing their future goals

7.

Gendered impact: A step into the real world for girls

8.

Transformed parents' outlook on children



Being immersed in the programme has transformed their *perception of reality*

They are now **shedding off their tunnel vision** - **disentangling** themselves a little from their **existing reminders** of economic insecurity, complicated homes, and **strait jacketed career paths**

The **idea and possibility** of being a **businessperson** is **not the stuff of fables anymore**

The archetype of the average businessman is now **more humanized**, the prospects of becoming one **much closer in reach**

Yet, they are keenly aware of the **volatility of any business** - a **contrast** against the **stability and guaranteed power of government jobs**. They are prepared to undertake an **all-round inspection** before settling into any future decisions

“Earlier, I saw businessmen in movies walking in big offices. The ground reality made me realise even a shopkeeper is a businessman” - M, Student, Selected Top 1000

The programme acts as a *navigational aid* to the world of possibilities

1.

Careers paths are no longer defined by subject streams

"I'm studying commerce in school but my interest lies in programming. I want to develop apps and websites in the future. Since they don't teach that in school, I'm doing online courses on my own"

- F, Student, Selected Top 1000

2.

Creating practical roadmaps to achieve their career goals, outside of the conventional structure

"I want to get a BFA, earlier I wanted to do it because I wanted to become an artist, now I want to do it because I feel it'll help me with my business. I'm also doing an IT course so that I can work part-time to support my college education"

- M, Student, Selected Top 126

3.

Increased focus on skill development over mainstream curriculum

"I learnt about wiring an electric cycle mostly on YouTube and now have a new skill, I can do small electric wiring tasks now"

- M, Student, Selected Top 1000

Not just a learning opportunity, for some, the programme transitioned into a launchpad to boost their ventures

LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

Do something outside the classroom structure

Get ideas about potential career options

Not necessarily thinking about own ventures yet

Goals are still being defined

Some **hesitation to digress from pre-defined pathways** but **thinking deeply about skills that will help them down the line** e.g. communication skills will help them get the job they want

Being exposed to the ideas and opportunities available helped narrow their focus on learning resources needed to achieve their goals

This stage is all about learning, introspection, and gaining exposure...

LAUNCHPAD

Already on the path they want to be on - Business Blasters gave them **access to resources to figure out next steps**

More clarity about career goals

In some cases, **already kickstarted their business journey.**
Now committed to **taking the business further**

Developing a **growth mindset** and **profit orientation**

With an enhanced business acumen, those who managed to secure a considerable investment are committed to actively taking the business beyond school

In this stage, students focus on confidence building, visioning, action and growth...



Many have found the means to forging meaningful identities here

The simple awareness (of options, finances, networks) has **seeded responsibilities** - to themselves and to their families

An enhanced clarity of their own interests has led to forming **a stable sense of self**

Armed with this new array of knowledge, they believe they **owe it to themselves** to hone their **growing conviction and ambition**

Having discovered a **purpose-led path**, they hope to **positively contribute** to **family and the community** at large

“Earlier people would tell me that pursuing dance isn't going to get me anywhere but I proved them wrong. Now when students call me Jayant sir, it feels so good” - M, Student, Selected Top 126

“I told my mother that I won't let her work for too long in life. Now I know what I am good at and that I can make money too. I want to keep expanding my business and employ more artisans” - F, Student, Selected Top 126



Understanding of the importance of partnerships in business helped them build a *long-term support system*

While building teams, they were mindful of partnering with those they could work with in the future

What initially started as a strategic partnership to maximise their seed funding ended up turning into **long-term relationships with them learning to lean on each other**

A positive change in even one member would have a **cascading impact** on the team. They learnt how to **catalyse growth in each other**

The **power of teamwork** helped them identify when and how to reach out for help, **seeking support from their peers and teachers/ mentors** when they felt stuck

For those who chose to work alone, their **parents and teachers took on the role of a confidante**

“If someone in the team doesn't understand something, we take the time to help him out and if we feel we can't help him, we'll ask our teachers” - M, Student, Selected Top 126

In their words:

“At first Sunil was reaching out to all the shopkeepers on his own. He was doing a lot of the work. We realised after watching him do that, it wasn't that difficult to talk to people. I tried helping him represent the team so that the load wasn't solely on him”
- M, Student, Selected Top 126

“Initially I couldn't find teammates who took the project in the same spirit as me. I reached out to my teacher and she helped me talk to more students and eventually I was able to find a group” - F, Student, Selected Top 126

“We used to hang out at each others homes - this helped our parents see us in action. They saw how we well we were able to communicate and manage ourselves. They were very willing to help us, they connected us to their friends so we could learn how to sell” - F, Student, Selected Top 1000

Have started to view their future business goals through a new entrepreneurial lens. This includes:

1.

Able to tell the difference between an entrepreneur vs. businessman mindset

“During our EMC classes, my teacher helped me realise that I actually want to be an entrepreneur. A businessman is profit-focused but an entrepreneur is growth-focused. Growth should be for the business, the society, and for the individual”

- M, Student, Selected Top 1000

2.

Finding the confidence not to compromise their own learning or community focus for financial stability

“I do want to expand my business but I also want to keep including people who may be interested. There are many who didn't get a chance to complete BB, I want to learn from them and offer them roles in my future brand”


- M, Student, Selected Top 126

3.

Fostering their own creative instincts

“It was important for me to make sure my idea is unique. I saw a lot of people copy directly from YouTube, I didn't want to do that”

- M, Student, Selected Top 1000

The background image shows two young girls in school uniforms (red sweaters over grey collared shirts) with their hair in braids. They are standing outdoors in front of a building. The girl on the right is giving a thumbs-up gesture. The text is overlaid on the image in white boxes with black text.

For girls, the programme opened more than just a business avenue

For most girls, the **barriers to navigating the world** outside their schools and neighbourhoods were multi-form

Earlier, they often needed both **permission and company** to move freely outside familiar peripheries

This programme pushed their families to let go. This **step into the real world** provided girls with the unique opportunity to **explore public spaces independently**

This equipped them with the **confidence to dream, trust themselves, make sense of the world, and secure a financially independent future**

“Earlier, I could never go to the market alone. Now after running a business with my team, I’m committed to being independent. I just hope I don’t have to get married before my career is set” - F, Student, Selected Top 1000



“Ab hamey pata chal gaya ki agar inhe hum thoda sahara dey, toh woh bohot taraqi karlengi (Now we know that if we support them a little, they will go far in life)” - Father of Student, Selected Top 1000

Business Blaster journeys have even transformed parents' outlook on their children

Throughout their child's Business Blaster's journey, most parents were exposed to a different aspect of their personality, **becoming aware of their hidden skills and talents**

Watching them achieve new heights led to **evolved expectations**

They developed a sense of **clarity** on their **own role** in their children's future - a **little support will go a long way**

Perceive their children now as **responsible, mature, soon-to-be adults**. Believe holistic education causes positive behavioural changes at home too (e.g. helping out more, less fighting with siblings)

They also found **a sense of comfort and security** in the fact that in the future, their child will **share their burden** and **contribute to the household** in a meaningful way

Some thought starters for future Business Blasters' cycles..



INCREASED TIMELINE

Start the process earlier in the school year to give the students enough time to think about possible ideas

Consider running the project parallel to school syllabus

More ideation time well before seed money provision



MENTORS

More mentors with specific expertise, especially in the fields of marketing and communication

Introduce mentors early, so that foundational errors can be discussed and rectified

Allow sufficient time in between the programme for rapport building

Align mentor-student pairing based on mutual interests and domains



ADDITIONAL ORIENTATION (Students)

Training in basic business investment technicalities as a pre-project process or practice

ADDITIONAL ORIENTATION (EMC/TEACHERS)

Increase training period for teachers, orient them thoroughly into the programme



DIVERSE SUPPORT & ACCEPTANCE

Infrastructural support required - dedicated space in school for groups to meet-up & work. People who live further away lose out on the execution process

Continued resources for non-selected students, as many hope to continue their work

Lower pressure on 'innovation', expect more levelled growth

New-format ideas, such as digital/social media ventures

IN SUM: The Role and Impact of Business Blasters Programme

1.

While Students participating in the Business Blasters programme come from varied backgrounds, their contexts are largely similar:

Tough circumstances and many responsibilities at home - at no liberty to take things for granted, they grab onto opportunities

Consciousness about their humble origins - that makes them seek out similar role models and prepare for a path of struggle

Hyper aware and informed through both online and offline worlds - has made them curious about options

Big dreams of community and nation - in the wake of the pandemic, learning to trust being skilled rather than 'merit' to make a mark, contribute to growth

2.

There are **3 key influences** in their lives:

1. Family:

A constant source of support, their family background encourages them to break away from their current financial and social situation. They are aware and appreciative of the responsibility they bare

2. Schools:

Their schooling environment holds a critical, multi-faceted role in their lives. Their peers and teachers are a key sources of learning and experiences they wouldn't have access to otherwise

3. Role Models:

Seek inspiration from a range of role models. Those who they connect with at a personal level, those who exemplify brilliance and those who remind them of their sense of duty

3.

Shaped by their influences, these **4 current attitudes** are **moulding future action:**

1. Learning both within & outside of school: Aware of what is inaccessible, which needs unmet by school, have defined career goals. Feel responsible to gain additional relevant knowledge on their own

2. Constant state of hustle: Expect to struggle and hence, maximise their time and resources (for upskilling & part-time jobs)

3. Strong desire for power if not certainty: Imagine a better, more comfortable future. Hold on to conventional (civil services) and new ideas of power (entrepreneurship - being your own boss)

4. Hard push into the Adulging Zone: Humble background & real world orientation informs pragmatism about future

IN SUM: The Role and Impact of Business Blasters Programme

4.

Being **active participants** in the programme has shifted the **students' mindsets in 9 ways:**

1. **Goal Orientation:** To feel ambitious, set bigger goals, push oneself with confidence
2. **Self-Identity:** Discovering one's likes, dislikes, hidden talents. Gauging own potential & self-worth. Growing self-confidence & leaving a legacy
3. **Independence:** Informed decision-making, wading through small problems on their own, valuing financial freedom
4. **Having Grit:** Being tenacious, courage to not give up, phase out negativity
5. **Becoming professional:** No slacking off, committed to doing things properly, sense of responsibility towards desired outcomes

6. **Being resourceful:** Smart money management (family, team, & personal level), creative & skill-based money-making

7. **Facing challenges head on:** Exploring outside comfort zone, confidence to accept uncertainty, considering non-linear career paths, risk-taking to expand creative solutions

8. **Joy of learning:** Enhanced interest in the new, recognising value in what they once overlooked, balancing work & play

9. **Growing together, not alone:** Aiming for team-level and community-level upliftment, looking out for each other

5.

There are **7 distinct skill-set shifts** visible in the students:

1. **Navigating communication:** Effectively relaying & convincing others of their ideas, interacting with investors & vendors
2. **Collaboration:** Understanding others' strengths, resolving conflicts with empathy, building on each others ideas
3. **Leading others:** Taking charge, helping team members grow & upskill
4. **Time Management:** Multi-tasking & learning to prioritise
5. **Creative confidence:** Urge to learn hands-on, develop tinkering attitude
6. **Curating knowledge, inspiration, & influences:** Syncing learning path with goals, identifying sources for upskilling
7. **Honing a business bent:** Nuances of the market, customer, and manpower planning

IN SUM: The Role and Impact of Business Blasters Programme

6.

The Business Blasters process has prompted **8 distinct impact areas** in students' lives:

1. Transformed their perception of reality

The idea and possibility of being a businessperson is not the stuff of fables anymore, the prospects of becoming one much closer in reach

2. A navigational aid to the world of possibilities

Their career paths are no longer defined by subject streams. They are creating practical roadmaps to achieve their career goals, outside of the conventional structure

3. Launchpad vs Learning Opportunity

While the program served as a learning opportunity for some, exposing them to the ideas and opportunities available. For others it transitioned into a launchpad to boost their ventures

4. Means to forge meaningful identities

An enhanced clarity of their own interests has led to forming a stable sense of self

5. Built a long-term support system

The power of teamwork allowed them to learn to lean on each other, seeking support from peer, teachers and parents when needed

6. New entrepreneurial lens informs future goals

Informed about the distinction between an entrepreneur (socially responsible) and a businessman (profit-led), they have started to view their future business goals through an entrepreneurial lens

7. Gendered impact: A step into the real world for girls

This step into the real world provided girls with the unique opportunity to explore public spaces independently and with a new found confidence

8. Transformed parents' outlook on children

Parents became aware of their children's hidden talents and capabilities, leading to evolved expectations as well as increased support towards their children's goals

Let's hear
from the
Sunrise
Girls...



Thank you

For questions, reach out to:
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