

The Impact of Performing Arts on Disabled Students at Sangbedan-a Social Welfare Organisation in Kolkata: A Case Study Report

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Abstract: This research paper explores the transformative impact of performing arts on ten disabled students at Sangbedan-a Social Welfare Organisation in Kolkata. The study examines how engagement in music, dance, and recitation has contributed to their cognitive, emotional, and social development. Through detailed case studies, this paper highlights the individual journeys of these students, showcasing the profound changes in their lives brought about by their participation in performing arts.

Keywords: Performing Arts, social inclusion, livelihoods, community engagement program, inclusive development, disability, youth development

INTRODUCTION

This report highlights the transformative impact of performing arts on ten disabled students at Sangbedan -a Social Welfare Organisation in Kolkata. The performing arts and training program, initiated by the NGO, aims to empower disabled students through various art forms such as dance, music and recitation.

Performing arts have long been recognized for their therapeutic benefits, offering a unique platform for expression and development. This study focuses on ten disabled students at this NGO in Kolkata, investigating how their involvement in performing arts has influenced their overall well-being. The research aims to provide insights into the specific benefits experienced by these students and to underline the importance of integrating performing arts into educational and therapeutic programs for disabled individuals.

Performing arts can have a profound influence on disabled individuals, offering numerous benefits that extend beyond entertainment and artistic expression. Here are some ways in which performing arts can positively impact disabled persons:

1. Emotional and Psychological Benefits

- **Boosting Self-Esteem:** Engaging in performing arts can significantly enhance self-esteem and confidence. Successfully performing in front of an audience can give a sense of accomplishment.
- **Emotional Expression:** The arts provide an outlet for expressing emotions and processing experiences, which can be particularly therapeutic.

2. Social Benefits

- **Building Community:** Participation in performing arts can foster a sense of belonging and community, helping individuals to build social networks and friendships.
- **Improving Communication Skills:** Engaging in drama, music, or dance can enhance communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, making it easier to interact with others.

Cognitive Benefits

- **Enhancing Concentration:** Learning lines, choreography, or music requires focus and concentration, which can sharpen cognitive abilities.
- **Creative Thinking:** Participation in the arts encourages creative problem-solving and innovative thinking.

Engaging in the arts is enjoyable and can bring a great deal of personal satisfaction and happiness.

Sense of Purpose: For many, the arts provide a meaningful way to contribute to society and express their identity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Purposive Sampling based on 10 students of Sangbedan-NGO to develop the case study.

Case Studies:

1. Name: Shreya

Age:12

Disability: Autism

Art Form: Dance & Recitation

Impact: She has shown significant improvement in her social skills and cognitive abilities. This helped her focus better and express her emotions.

2. Name: Tirtharaj

Age:30

Disability: Cerebral Palsy

Art Form: Singing

Impact: Tirtha's participation in music therapy helped him gain confidence and he enjoys performing in front of audience.

3. Name: Saikat

Age:28

Disability: Down Syndrome

Art Form: Recitation

Impact: Engaging in recitation activities has enhanced his communication skills and boosted his self-esteem. He has become more expressive and interactive with his peers.

4. Name: Soumik

Age:25

Disability: Autism

Art Form: Singing

Impact: His involvement in singing has been therapeutic, improving his auditory skills and emotional well-being. Moreover, he is a sound percussionist. He has become more confident and enjoys participating in musical events.

5. Name: Subhajit

Age:25

Disability: Autism

Art Form: Recitation

Impact: He has discovered a passion for recitation, which has provided him with a medium to express his creativity.

6. Name: Partha

Age:36

Disability: Autism

Art Form: Music & Recitation

Impact: He did improve upon his pronunciation and speech clarity.

7. Name: Badal

Age:32

Disability: Autism

Art Form: Recitation

Impact: He developed his speaking skills, otherwise he keeps himself socially alienated.

8. Name: Saikat

Age:28

Disability: Autism

Art Form: Music & Recitation

Impact: He is now a confident soul who can feel the pulse of the song and when it comes to speaking has developed clarity.

9. Ananya

Age:20

Disability: Autism

Art Form: Music

Impact: Unable to speak, she emotes expressions of happiness, claps and moves in response to the rhythm

10. Rohit

Age: 22

Art Form: Music

Impact: He feels delighted when he attends music classes.



Students of Sangbedan, performing recitation, at a popular café in Kolkata.



Students of Sangbedan, along with their Music Teachers, performing at the Inaugural Session of 'On the Roof-A Platform towards Inclusivity: An Independent Philanthropic Organisation' founded by Upama at Kolkata.

DISCUSSION

The case studies demonstrate the multifaceted benefits of performing arts for disabled students. The activities have not only facilitated physical and cognitive improvements but also fostered emotional resilience and social integration. The structured and supportive environment of the performing arts programs has been crucial in nurturing these positive changes.

CONCLUSION

The research underscores the importance of integrating performing arts into therapeutic and educational programs for disabled individuals. The ten students at the NGO in Kolkata have shown remarkable progress in various aspects of their lives, highlighting the transformative power of performing arts. This study advocates for increased support and resources to expand such programs, ensuring that more disabled individuals can benefit from the enriching experience of performing arts. Exposure to the Performing Arts provides significant skills development and social opportunities for disabled youth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Expand Performing Arts Programs:** Increase the availability and variety of performing arts activities to cater to a broader range of interests and abilities.
- **Specialized Training for Instructors:** Provide training for instructors to understand and address the unique needs of disabled students effectively.
- **Parental Involvement:** Encourage and facilitate parental involvement in performing arts activities to create a supportive home environment.
- **Regular Assessments:** Conduct regular assessments to monitor progress and adapt programs to meet the evolving needs of the students.
- **Community Engagement:** Organize performances and exhibitions to showcase the students' talents, fostering community awareness and support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Samit Saha, the Founder Member of Sangbedan, the instructors, the caregivers, the students, the volunteers and the broader community at the NGO for their unwavering support and dedication to the holistic development of these students. I am extremely grateful especially to

the students and their families for sharing their experiences and contributing to this study.

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