

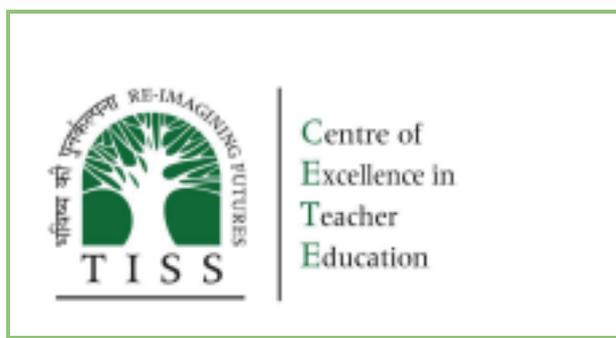


Centre of  
Excellence in  
Teacher  
Education

# Quizabled Impact Study Report Submitted to Seva-in-Action & LTI

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The Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education (CETE) at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai ([bit.ly/cetewebsite](http://bit.ly/cetewebsite)), aims to enable Right to Quality Education for all children in India by helping teachers respond to diverse and changing needs. Built around the central premise that professional qualified teachers can create lasting impact, the centre focuses on empowering teachers, improving professional development standards, supporting the teacher education ecosystem, and advocating the strengthening of policy on teaching and teacher education. Research at the centre is on the themes of quality in teaching, policy and scaling innovations, inclusion, curriculum and pedagogy, and EdTech. Academic teaching programmes include B.Ed.-M.Ed., M.A. Education, doctoral research, short term programmes through blended learning, and online offerings to enhance capabilities of teachers and teacher education faculty ([www.tissx.tiss.edu](http://www.tissx.tiss.edu)). Key field action projects are focused on improving inclusive teaching-learning at schools and employing technology thoughtfully in professional development of teachers. The Connected Learning Initiative ([www.tiss.clix.edu](http://www.tiss.clix.edu)), was awarded the UNESCO King Hamad Prize for the Use of ICTs in Education in 2018. CETE received seed support from the Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching, Government of India, and TATA TRUSTS.

Collaborating Organisation for this study: Seva in Action



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# Quizabled Impact Study Report

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education, CETE (formerly, Centre for Education, Innovation and Action Research, CEIAR) is an independent Centre at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Established as CEIAR in 2015, the Centre has been engaging with, and promoting innovation in school curriculum, teacher education and higher education curriculum and pedagogy. The Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education (CETE) continues to work towards revitalising the education sector through research, academic programmes, teaching, field action, policy advocacy, partnerships and collaborations. The present Impact Study on Quizabled brings together CETE and Seva In Action (SiA) in their combined efforts to assess the impact of Quizabled so far and suggest a road map for the program and going forward. Seva-in-Action (SiA), a voluntary organisation was established in the year 1985, with the mission of empowering persons with disabilities and to create equitable opportunities for an inclusive society. Realising the wide gap between the services available and services needed, SiA set out with identifying and reaching out rehabilitation programmes for children with disabilities (CWDs) working very closely with local communities to develop and implement socially, culturally and economically appropriate services with holistic approach. As a part of its several initiatives towards empowering children with disabilities SiA has collaborated with Larsen and Toubro Infotech (LTI) to conceptualise and design a distinctive quizzing program for children and youth who are differently abled. Beginning in the year 2016, the concept became a reality with LTI powering it since its inception. The program is first of its kind in India where children and youth with disabilities are given an opportunity to showcase knowledge and intellectual capabilities. The main purpose of this program is to provide a platform for the differently abled for knowledge development, to raise awareness by dispelling myths about the potentials of children & youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and to promote and encourage participation of the differently abled in quizzing events and even take part in competitive exams in the future. The presence of professional quizmasters ensures that the event is garnered with an adequate professional and positive environment to promote the quest for knowledge amongst the participants.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The present study follows a qualitative research methodology wherein interviews and focused group discussions were held with various stakeholders such as teachers, LTI team (leadership and organising committee), volunteers, students, parents and NGO partners i.e. Sujaya Foundation and Spastic Society, Tamil Nadu. The data collected through interviews and FGDs were recorded along with the notes of the researcher for the purpose of further analysis. In addition to this questionnaires and discussions were held with the conceptualizers of the

program and the quizzing partners. The data collected was used to understand the different objectives of conducting the Impact study including the changes in the perceptions and attitudes of the volunteers towards children with disabilities, difference in levels of participation among children with different forms of disabilities, ascertaining the learning experiences of children who participated in the quiz, exploring application of Universal Design of Learning (UDL) in quizzing and to assess the impact on schools that have participated in Quizabled for more than three years.

### Sample Selection

The respondents for the survey and the focused group discussions were people working in the organising team, planning team, leadership positions, teachers, parents, volunteers, quizmasters and students who had been associated with Quizabled. A nonprobability, convenience sampling technique was used to collect primary data and a total of 114 participants were selected for the FGDs and questionnaires.

Region	Participants of the Study											
	Teachers	Students					Volunteers	NGO partners	Quiz master	Funders	SiA Team	Parents
		A	B	C	D	Total						
Karnataka	15	11	4	4	5	39	2	0	1	5	3	3
Tamil Nadu	6	5	4	2	1	18	10	3	1			3
Mumbai	6	4	1	3	3	17	4	3	0			2
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>

Table 1: Participant Sample

## 3. PROCESSES OF THE EVENT

### 3.1. GENESIS AND CONCEPTUALIZATION

The process of the genesis of an event like Quizabled had arisen from SiA's long association and experience of engaging with children with disabilities. After being in the field of inclusive education and working extensively towards creating equal opportunities for an inclusive society the idea behind curating an event like Quizabled which demystifies the dominant perception about the potential of differently abled children came to the forefront. The following section sequentially highlights the process of conceptualization and genesis of

the quizabled.

- Upon working in the field for a long time the SiA team found a huge gap in the kind of intellectual stimulus provided to Children with Disability (CWD) and Persons with Disability (PWD). Society at large normalises its tendency to downplay the intellectual ability of individuals with disability, having witnessed their mainstream school attending non-disabled wards participate in quizzes the SiA team wanted to understand the capacity of Quizzing as a learning tool. The objective was to enable CWD and PWD evolve their intellectual capacity and give them a genuine chance to take stock of their own intellectual ability through a fun learning method.
- At this point in time LTI had become an IPO (Initial Public Offering) and was looking for a unique program to kick start their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) initiatives. Upon meeting SiA at the CSR conclave the organisation decided to collaborate with the NGO and fund the Quizabled event. Having been involved since the conceptualization stage the organisation has played a key role in shaping the entire program, more so at the planning level as a large number of volunteers/ organising committee members of Quizabled are employees of the organisation. The organisation was also responsible for identifying one of the NGO partners.

## **3.2. PROCESS OF SETTING UP**

The process of setting up the program from its conceptualization to implementation has been a long drawn process which saw extensive and constant collaboration between the various stakeholders. From understanding the needs of the differently abled students and overcoming their own apprehensions and perceptions with respect to CWD, to training the volunteers , finding a physical setting to conduct the program, providing technical support and providing the students with an appropriate platform to develop their skills in addition to challenging the popular dominant notions of learning, the process of conceptualising and implementing the program has been full of numerous challenges and learning for all the stakeholders involved.

### **3.2.1. SiA Team**

1. The organising team had to be cognizant of the temperament of students. Precautions were taken to ensure that the light does not focus on autistic children, videographers were informed to not focus on them as it might make them conscious.
2. The team made sure to give all students goodies to keep the spirits high. A number of students got upset over losing the event and their teachers requested for the groups to be further narrowed to decrease the bracket of intellectual capability their students competed with.

### **3.2.2. Funding Partners (Larsen Toubro Infotech Ltd.)**

The funders provided the volunteers with the handbook which features a list of Do's and Don'ts. While initially representatives from SiA oriented the volunteers and conducted the

volunteer induction process, having been associated with the event for several years the volunteers from the organisation were able to organise the same.

### **3.2.3. NGO Partners (Sujaya Foundation & Spastic Society, TN)**

1. One NGO partner has been in touch with SiA since the 90s while the other was roped into the project by LTI which has been previously working with them in the skill development domain.
2. While one of the NGO partners had their own venue, finding an accessible space in Mumbai was reported to be a challenge. The journey of hunting for the venue made the team realise how structurally alienating the world is for CWD and PWD. They note that a large number of the inaccessible halls were unwilling to make the space more accessible.
3. All NGO partners found it challenging to appease the initial hesitation of the parents and teachers who did not think their students would be capable of participating in the event.
4. Additionally SiA's prior experience of conducting the quiz proved to be quite useful for the NGO partners to contextualise the quiz material (language and region specific content) and organise the quiz in their regions effectively. SiA's documentation also helped the partners convince the parents and teachers about the ability of CWD.
5. The NGO partners took individual effort to ensure wifi facility for the online mode. 6. The SiA team and NGO partners have a robust mechanism of collecting feedback through regular team meetings to actively enable cross-learning.

## **4. CHALLENGES**

The process of genesis and implementation of Quizabled has been inclusive of various challenges that were encountered at every stage of the process. Apart from setting an example by organising a first of its kind event in the country the organising/planning/funder teams had to overcome their own attitudes and perceptions related to CWD and PWD, work upon creating an environment wherein the students do not feel overwhelmed but at the same time learn new things and enjoy themselves. The stakeholders faced numerous challenges right from conceptualization to implementation, some of these challenges that were identified by the stakeholders have been listed below:

- The initial apprehensions were around how quizmasters would frame questions for CWD. This was worked upon through the classroom observations the Quiz masters took up. They spoke to teachers and special educators about what they taught in schools. One of the quiz masters describes their research as, *"It is taking a "dip test" of the special children to try and understand the things that they are exposed to, the*

*things they know, the things they are taught or the things that they follow. After regularly conversing with special children, we understood their areas of interest and mapped questions based on that.*"A speech pathologist also supported the quiz masters in the creation of the questions.

- The other challenge (which remained till the end of the first edition) was the scepticism and apprehension from the teachers and the parents. When over 25 teams got the same score the stakeholders' apprehensions about the intellectual ability lessened. As noted by one of the members from SPASTN "*Quizabled was an eye opener for every single special educator who thought children with cerebral palsy, intellectual disability would not be able to understand the ethos and process of the event, it was a learning for parents/teachers and special educators that we haven't pushed the envelope enough*".
- The team also found it challenging to categorise the students into different groups given the wide age bracket they were dealing with (13-21).
- Finding nodal centres was observed to be another critical challenge. The event had to be held in different nodal centres to ensure the participation of students from rural areas. It was also essential to not hold the event on consecutive days as the participants had varying mood swings.
- Online edition has been a challenge in terms of setting up an accessible portal. Teachers were also apprehensive about the ability of students to handle digital devices. Due to the pandemic volunteers were not allowed inside the house and neither could they assist the students. These constraints made SiA come up with the competitive and non-competitive (A & B) quizzes for the different groups.
- Another significant challenge was to level the playing field and at the same time suit the needs of individual participants, as stated by a NGO member from Sujaya foundation one of the primary challenges was to find "*alternative format based on the nature of disabilities to level the playing field*".

## **5. PROFILES OF STAKEHOLDERS**

### **5.1. STUDENTS**

In order to ensure a level playing field the students participating in Quizabled were divided into groups of four i.e. A,B,C and D depending upon the nature of the disability. Group A comprised children with intellectual disability, group B of autism and cerebral palsy, group C of visually impaired and group D of hearing impaired children. The students for impact study were selected on the basis of several factors such as the type of school which they belonged to i.e. special/inclusive, locations of the schools (urban/rural), nature of the institutions i.e. government/private/NGO, students who had participated/won/finalists and students who had been participating in Quizabled since its inception in the year 2017. The students also

belonged to different regions such as Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. A total of 24 students from Karnataka, 12 from Tamil Nadu and 11 from Mumbai were identified for conducting the FGDs.

## STUDENT PROFILE

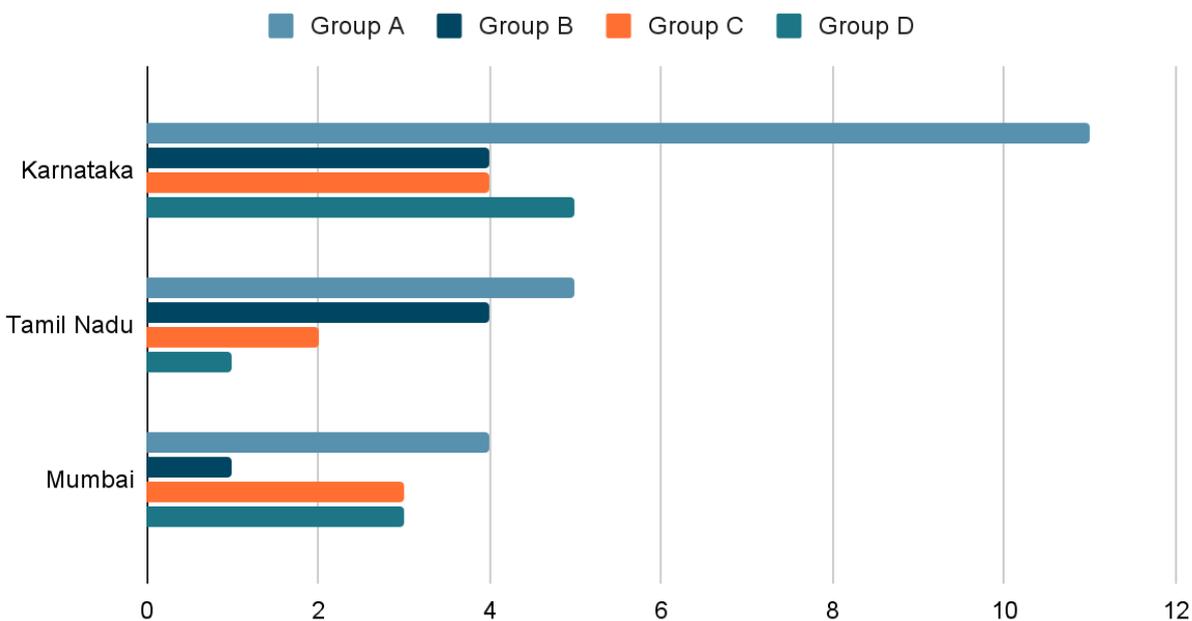


Figure 1: Profile of the students

## 5.2. TEACHERS

The researchers carried out Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) with the teachers/caretakers from schools that had been participating in Quizabled for a few years. The teachers were selected from a range of institutions such as government/private/special/inclusive. A total of 27 teachers were selected for the present study, 15 teachers from Karnataka and six each from Mumbai and Tamil Nadu were selected for the FGDs.

## TEACHER DISTRIBUTION

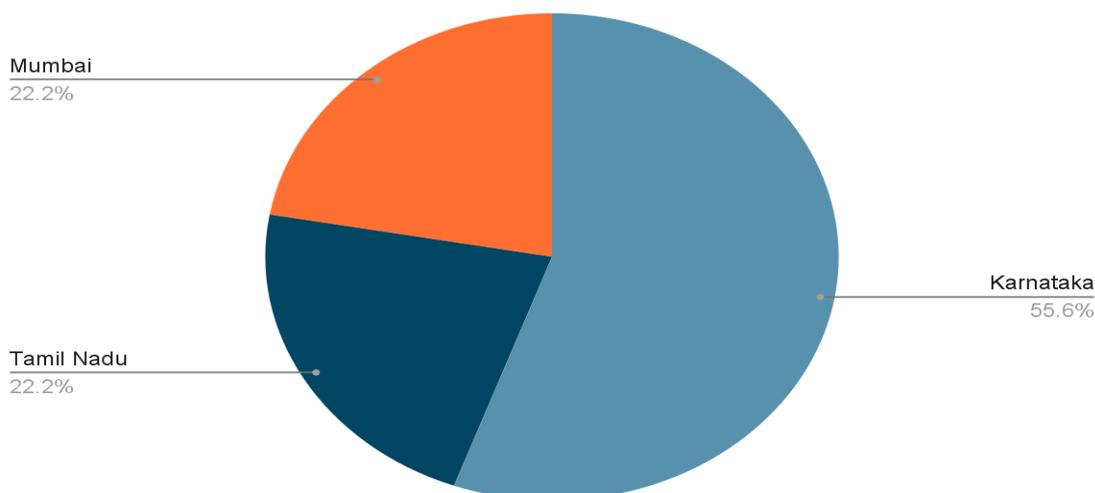


Figure 2: Distribution of the teachers region-wise

### 5.3. FUNDERS

The LTI team in collaboration with the organisers have been involved in the event since its conception in 2016. Besides supporting the event financially and as a part of its CSR initiative, LTI has been involved extensively in planning and implementing the program across the regions with SiA. In order to understand the changes within the organisation after being a part of the Quizabled, Senior project managers, CSR & Sustainability Project Managers along with three LTI members who have been a part of the organising committee were invited to participate in the FGDs. A total of five people from the funding team had participated in the FGDs conducted.

### 5.4. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers formed an essential part of the Quizabled and have been partly responsible for making the program what it is today. The volunteers from Sujaya Foundation, LTI team members, Spastic Society, Tamil Nadu, NSS members from BMS college and members from SiA and Christ University were identified for both in person and digital editions of Quizabled and a total of 16 volunteers were provided with questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of questions centered around understanding the beliefs and perceptions of the volunteers on the capabilities of CWDs, their prior experience of working with children with disabilities, the nature of support systems and structure that were required to facilitate the participation of the students, the nature of impact which the event had on them and enhancing the outreach of the program.

Age (years)	Number of volunteers
20-25	7
26-30	3
31-35	3
36-40	2
41-45	0
46-50	1

Table 2: Age groups of the volunteers

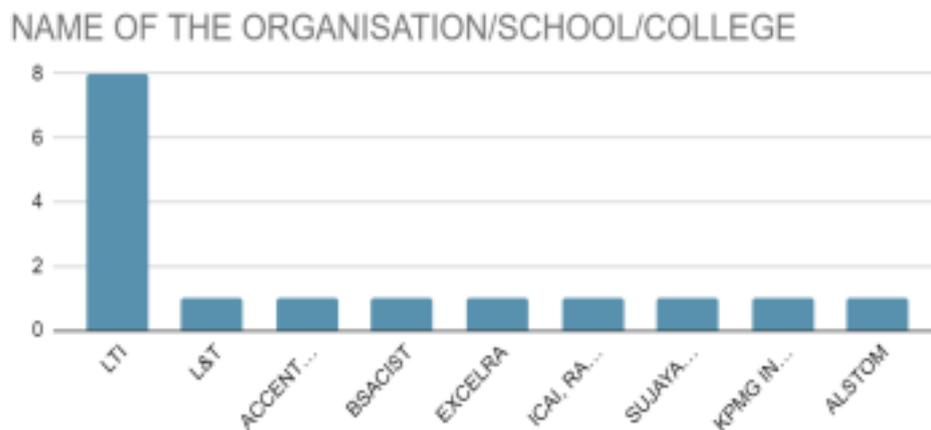


Figure 3: Organisation wise distribution of volunteers

## 5.5. NGO PARTNERS

Members from the organizing and leadership team were selected from the Spastic Society, Tamil Nadu and Sujaya Foundation for the purpose of conducting the FGD. The objective behind conducting the FGD was to understand the formation of the partnership between the organisers, funders and the NGO partners, assess the social impact brought about by the event, sustainability and evolution of the network between the different stakeholders. A total of six people from the partnering NGOs were identified for carrying out the FGDs with.

## 5.6. ORGANISERS

The organising team consisted of the members from SiA that were involved in the process of

conceptualization of the event as well as the process of data collection. The leadership and planning team from Seva in Action contributed significantly towards the genesis and implementation of the event. The essential purpose behind setting up of the program by the conceptualizers was to dispel the myths surrounding the abilities and potential of children with disabilities, providing a platform for development of knowledge and to create opportunities for their participation in many such future events. Additionally for the present impact study, the members were invited to participate in the FGDs to understand the processes that went behind the event, the nature of partnerships developed and the overall changes in the attitudes of the various stakeholders involved. A total of three members had participated in the FGDs.

### **5.7. QUIZMASTERS**

The quizmasters have been an integral part of the Quizabled event and have contributed significantly towards the smooth conduct of the event since its conception. The introduction of quizmasters was done to give an impression of professional experience to the entire event and create an interest amongst the participants towards a quest for knowledge. For the present impact study a total of two quizmasters were interviewed and their responses were further analysed to understand their overall experience of conducting and being a part of the Quizabled.

### **5.8. PARENTS**

The parents of the students who participated in the Quizabled are one of the most significant stakeholders who contributed significantly towards preparing their wards for the quiz as well and acted as an important link between the school and the participants. A lot of the parents were excited about the opportunity that Quizabled was providing them with and were eager for their wards to be a part of the same. Many of them were also apprehensive about the abilities of the students to effectively participate in it. The experiences of the parents were collected through FGDs for the impact assessment, a total of nine parents having children with visual impairment, cerebral palsy were a part of the FGDs and their experiences have been summarised in the later sections of the report.

## 6. FINDINGS

Based on the FGDs conducted, questionnaires and discussions held with the different stakeholders the below mentioned findings have been reported. The findings have been arranged in sections representing each stakeholder in order to highlight the learnings, challenges and experiences gained by each of them over the years after being a part of the Quizabled.

### 6.1. PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS

The following section addresses the dominant perceptions of the teachers/ caretakers about children with Disabilities, the change which they have observed over the years within the participants of the Quizabled, the nature of the quiz itself and its consequent impact over creating an inclusive atmosphere with respect to quizzing. Anecdotes from the FGDs conducted with teachers of varied disability groups i.e. A, B, C and D have subsequently been compiled in the given section in addition to summarising the overall experiences of the teachers with Quizabled.

1. Students generally get the opportunity to participate in dancing and singing competitions and not knowledge based events. Specifically CP students had previously never got the opportunity to participate in knowledge based events.
2. The students keep talking about Quizabled over the year and look forward to attending the same in the upcoming year. A teacher of Cerebral palsy students from Mumbai stated that *“we prepare the students extensively for the quizabled every year; they are eager and excited to participate in it, so we ensure that children are not mugging up the information but instead learning about the different things”*.
3. A teacher noted that students with non-disabled siblings have always felt left out as they could not participate in quizzes the way their siblings did; at such a juncture Quizabled made them feel on par with their non-disabled siblings. *“After being a part of the Quizabled they felt motivated and looked forward to it , so that interest and enthusiasm has built within the students over the years”* notes a teacher from a school with children having cerebral palsy from an urban region of Karnataka.
4. The quiz provided them the opportunity to learn new questions, the students approached the same with interest, enthusiasm, and displayed, *“Great hunger to gain knowledge”*
5. Although the teachers were initially not confident of how much knowledge their students could retain or how capable they were of participating in the online quiz, they witnessed a good outcome. As noted by a teacher from Kerala *“Even though we*

*prepare students for the quiz pretty well, the questions are sometimes difficult and tricky but I have seen that the children are able to handle them well”.*

6. The air and vibrancy of the event was reported to be exciting by the participants.
7. While on the one hand teachers were surprised by the competitiveness displayed by their students, on the other hand they noticed how their students were also happy for a friend’s win.
8. The event was a source of inspiration for the student, it has instilled in them an enhanced sense of self-esteem. A student with cerebral palsy from Karnataka stated that *“after participating in quizzabled I have gained a lot of self confidence and the curiosity to know about things around me”.*
9. Quite a few teachers also stated that they were surprised when their students answered questions from themes they had not taught them previously.
10. The event was also recognized as a forum for students to socialise. The students seemed to build great rapport with the volunteers and also made active efforts to speak with the other participants.
11. The event made a teacher reimagine her school assembly. She added news reading to keep children abreast of current affairs.

## **6.2. PARENTS**

Parents have remained one of the most significant stakeholders during the process of conducting and preparing students for Quizzabled. The event was a learning experience for not only the students but also their parents who at times found their perceptions and attitudes being challenged by the potential of their wards.

1. Parents were amazed at their ward’s ability to answer questions. Specifically, parents of students belonging to Group A were surprised when their ward was able to recollect answers they had taught them as they did not expect them to retain the knowledge. Parents to a large extent were even shocked when they noticed that their wards could answer questions they had not been prepared for. One mother specifically noted that although she knew her son liked cricket she did not know he had the ability to recall the names of the players and comprehend the rules of the game. It was a revelation for her when her son answered a question on the game of cricket and mythology that even she did not know the answer to.
2. A parent reports that her son now notices the change in Chief Minister at the state. Quizzabled in her opinion has provided her son the purpose to stay up-to-date with current affairs. He now asks questions every time he comes across a personality. While previously only students from higher grades were asked to read/engage with news now some schools have started engaging the younger classes in such activities.
3. Another parent from Karnataka having a child with autism spectrum noted that they had usually heard of and encouraged their child to be a part of dancing, singing, theatre competitions but an event like Quizzabled was their very first experience. The

parent stated that *“because it was the first time it was something challenging, something new so I thought lets do it and see how it goes”*.

4. While preparing for the quiz a mother was surprised to note her daughter’s interest in geography.
5. A few parents observed that the online registration process could be made much more accessible.

### **6.3. STUDENTS**

Quizabled has not only served as a platform for students to showcase their knowledge and abilities, but also provided them with an opportunity to break the dominant stereotypes about the potential of children with Disabilities. By allowing the children to compete in a friendly non judgemental environment, Quizabled for students has been a joyful learning experience and it was highlighted numerous times during the FGDs conducted with the students too. The following section brings to forefront the key observations and experiences of the students with respect to being a part of the Quizabled, the kind of relationships they forged with the organisers and various other people involved with Quizabled over the years, the change which they have observed within themselves and their overall growth after becoming a part of the Quizabled.

1. For all the students, Quizabled has been their first experience of participating in a knowledge based competitive event alongside other CWD/PWD. One student with visual impairment specifically noted that although he had participated in a Quiz alongside students from mainstream schools he felt left out as the quiz featured pictures. He also noted that he felt more comfortable collaborating with another student with visual impairment.
2. While a large number of students noted that after participating in Quizabled (and knowing that they would participate in the upcoming edition) they have started paying more attention to the news. Quizabled as an event has provided students a purpose to be more aware of current affairs, a student noted how for the first time he started paying attention to Olympics because of his introduction to the same through Quizabled. Students reported to watch/listen/read news through youtube, television, and newspapers. Another student said that quizzabled enabled him to use the phone for information. He now refers to magazines that prepare students for competitive exams and wishes to take administrative exams. He also mentioned that he has started using Google assistant and listens to online magazines. Most students were prepared by their schools/parents using the question bank provided by the SiA team.
3. Students used words such as exciting, challenging, new to describe Quizabled. A visually impaired student from Mumbai stated that *“it was an amazing experience, I had attended events made for normal people but they showed pictures in it and I could not participate in it, but to be a part of a quiz made specially for us, it was like a nice experience”*.

4. A number of students noted that participating in the event had made them more confident. The opportunity to be on stage has eased their stage fright. Witnessing the manner in which the quiz masters host the show, and the nature of questions has inspired students to ask questions and build their communication skills. Students in general were fascinated by the nature in which questions were framed.
5. Students were appreciative of the volunteers who were very “kind and helpful”. The inclusive structures and people at the venue who were always ready to help made the experience quite memorable for the students.
6. Most students like and prefer the physical edition of the quizzing event as the vibrancy and grandeur of the space is unmatched. They also noted that the opportunity to interact with other students was quite scarce in the online mode and they would like to have chat rooms for opportunities to interact. Students specifically missed the time they got to collaborate with their teammate before answering the question on stage. There were also some students who were shy and introverted and preferred the online mode to be more comfortable.
7. There is no common consensus on the difficulty of the quiz. While some students found it easy, some found it difficult. Most noted that the final round had some ‘tricky questions’.
8. Unlike their teachers and parents, most students (across disability, specifically Group A) were not surprised at their ability to win the quiz. Although they did acknowledge that Quizabled has made them more knowledgeable and definitely boosted their self esteem.
9. It seemed quite natural to students (across disabilities) that they made friends while participating in the event (volunteers & other students). They also noted that they had recommended Quizabled to their other classmates. It was common practice for them to discuss Quizabled with their classmates specifically post the final event. A visually impaired student from Mumbai noted that *“It was the first time that I was partnering with a student like myself, earlier I had participated with a person who could see, so he could answer very quickly, it was only a partnership in name”*. This brings to highlight the challenges faced by the CWD students
10. Students with visual impairment noted that Quizabled has provided the exposure that will be quite helpful for their preparation of competitive exams in the future. A student from Kerala noted that *“after participating in the quizabled, I have become more confident”*.
11. Students were quite candid about losing in the event. Although most of the FGD participants were students who had won the Quiz, the participants in a very matter-of-fact manner noted that failure is a part of life and needs to be accepted. Some even stated that they did indeed get upset but eventually they moved on to the next question/event.
12. Group A students found it enjoyable to answer questions related to sports, TV advertisements - logos, cartoons, music, movies - genres they actively engage with via the television on an everyday basis. Students across disabilities also strongly preferred

questions that were supported with audio and visual cues, specifically in the online mode. Students have also requested for better sign language expertise.

13. Group A drew constant reference to how the Quizabled event reminded them of the popular reality show Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC).
14. Participating in the quiz for over three years has helped a number of students understand the trick to break down questions and answer them in parts. Specifically a couple of students with visual impairment noted that quiz has a specific formula to crack it. One needs to learn that formula to crack questions irrespective of its subject matter. This showcases the nuanced understanding of the quizzing format as a pedagogic tool.
15. A number of students also noted that participating in Quizabled has helped them improve their score at school.

#### **6.4. QUIZ MASTERS**

The Quiz masters' perception has been greatly altered by their engagement with Quizabled. Following are the testimonials

- *“During the very first Chennai edition I thought that the children would not be able to answer even the simplest of questions. It was the edition that I was particularly scared about. I didn't want to showcase things that they had no clue about. But we understood that their capability is extremely high. Hence we increased the difficulty in 2020's offline edition, and they did not prove us wrong.”*
- *“It significantly changed the way I perceived the first two categories. Apart from specific challenges they face due to their disabilities I realised these kids are as normal as any able bodied individual.”*

The Quiz masters noted that they have not witnessed such camaraderie in any other quizzing event that they have hosted. They also observed that the participants attend the event to be a part of it and not to essentially compete with one another. They specifically note that in 2019, when a team just lost the third position by a point, they were appreciating and clapping for the podium finishers with no sense of disappointment.

- *“As far as teachers and parents are concerned, I wish I could tell them that getting these children to participate in this activity is a big win-win situation for everyone. They need to understand the importance of this and not obsess over their kids winning on stage. This itself will act as a huge morale boost for kids and will make them better prepared for a loss in the contest.”*

#### **6.5. VOLUNTEERS**

The volunteers were presented with questionnaires in order to understand the changes in their attitudes and perceptions towards children with disabilities and to assess the social learning

impact brought about by the event, the learnings gained through Quizabled and the overall experience of being a part of the event.

Select the editions of Quizabled you were a part of:

16 responses

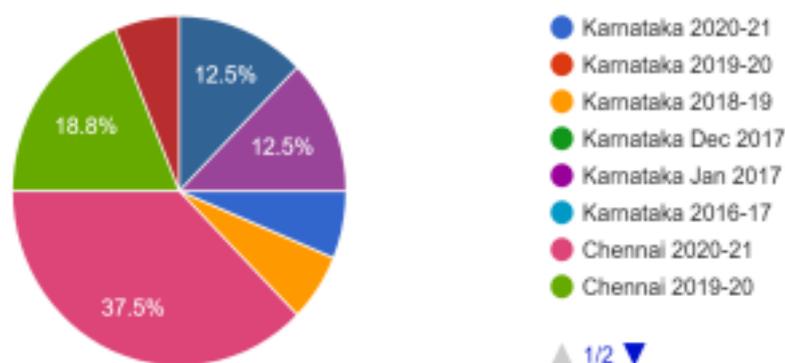


Figure 4. Distribution of volunteers year and region wise

Roles and responsibilities of volunteers:

- Registration desk
- Record keeping
- Scribe
- Help desk
- Participant assistance
- Certificate team
- Evaluation team

1. A large number of volunteers are from the funding organisation. Due to the immense impact the event has had on volunteers an individual continues to be a part of the organising committee despite moving out of organisation. The event was impactful to such an extent that one of the volunteers noted that *“The smile on the face of candidates throughout the event, the excitement in volunteers to do their best, The pride that the teachers and parents feel seeing the candidates achieve on each level. This sums up my experience and for sure, a memory for a lifetime!”*
2. The LTI volunteers note that they constantly circulate images of the event across the organisation and it draws more people to join year after year. Many volunteers recounted their experience as being joyful and immensely engaging for the parents as well as the teachers, one of the volunteers stated that *“I feel it made their parents feel that their kids, in such conditions, can blossom in future and make them proud. Also, as part of the organisation, our motto 'to work for society' is truly fulfilled. Teachers also play a crucial role in laying down their foundation.”*

3. Given how closely the volunteers worked with the organising team feedback was collected from volunteers from the third edition of the event. The team noted that the nuanced feedback which captured the tiniest of inconveniences faced by the participants proves how diligently the volunteers work with the students.
4. Volunteers are overwhelmed by the fact that the children recall their names although they meet them once a year. The volunteers note that they cherish the company of children and learn how to deal with losses from them. They observe that their interactions with the students deeply moved them. One volunteer specifically noted that the student who won the competition told him that he was going to save the money he won to build a house for his parents. This, the volunteer notes, changed his perception of how mature a CWD can be. Another volunteer stated that *“I have always admired and been in awe of the capabilities of these students. Quizabled was proof of the pudding..the students were just amazing! They are sharp and brilliant and if given the right platform and nurtured properly they can do wonders.”* With respect to their own apprehension towards the potential of the CWD another volunteer noted that *“As the name suggests, the children are specially abled and they are really special. I had no assumptions and I wanted to witness how all the children enthusiastically participated in the event.”*
5. Although children with CP do not interact much, the floor management team recounted that they managed to engage the students in dancing and singing on stage.
6. Volunteers are enthused by the fact that all students now look forward to Quizabled during December. Even schools are noted to plan their annual day around the event. The enthusiasm for the event amongst the students was observed by the volunteers too and one of them also stated that *“I knew that these kids/adults have high energy but difficult to channelize their energy to a single process, so I thought the quiz process for the children wouldn't attract many participants. Quizabled showed how the energy of these children is channelized beautifully on right things and also showed a glimpse of how highly intelligent they can be. I got to know that many children are eagerly awaiting this event every year.”*
7. A huge number of volunteers have joined the event through word of mouth and almost all volunteers are noted to display a strong sense of ownership. The volunteers went beyond and also many a times invited their colleagues or friends to be a part of the event too, the ownership was highlighted by one of the volunteers when he stated that for *“Sensitization and awareness building. I had invited the youth from the NGOs to volunteer. I call it "pay it forward" ... doing for somebody else rather than repaying the ones who did it for you. They were touched, driven to tears and thrilled they could be of help to others who had even less than they did. I'm proud that I evolved them into better people.”*

## **6.6. FUNDERS**

Apart from funding the event the LTI team was closely associated with the genesis as well as

the implementation of the program. The management and leadership team engaged on a regular basis with the conceptualizers on various aspects of the event and have been responsible for the successful growth of the Quizabled over the years.

- As a large number of volunteers were employees from the funding organisation. They have been closely involved since the planning stage. They are closely involved in the work for over 2-3 months. They work and decide every aspect of the event starting from the seating arrangement to the number of rounds of quiz to be held.
- The management and leadership cadre across locations regularly participate in the event.
- The CSR lead of the organisation notes that the leadership's participation in the event definitely impacted the way they viewed the capabilities of PWD. The organisation has PWD as employees but there have not been any policy level changes at the organisational level because of the event.
- As the event has grown in scale the organisation has dedicated a project manager for the Quizabled project.
- The team considers it is a success that the organisation's annual report and the sustainability featured the Quizabled event, as not many CSR initiatives make it to these reports.
- The team and employees look forward to the Quizabled more than they do for the organisation's annual awards ceremony.
- Being involved since the conceptualization stage has enabled the funders and their employees to document their learnings and provide it as a volunteer handbook to the incoming volunteers every year. The examples in the handbook include but are not limited to how Children with Cerebral Palsy do not like to be touched and Children with Visual impairment need to be guided in a particular manner.
- The impact of the event on the volunteers can also be seen through the instance where one employee of LTI who was involved in the organisation of Quizabled continues to be part of the Quizzabled even after switching jobs. An assurance from LTI that he could continue to be part of this program was a big relief for him when he quit the company.

## **6.7. SiA TEAM & NGO PARTNERS**

- The first edition made students ask their teachers to expose them to current affairs, logical questions and a whole range of questions that they had come across for the first time through the Quizabled event.
- When children who are usually scared of competitions participate and win in the event it exponentially boosts their morale. There have been several instances where these students started participating in Quizabled regularly post winning for the first time.
- There has also been a headmaster who had hosted the event in his campus but was sceptical to let his own students participate. Post witnessing the event he had changed

his mind and enabled his students to participate next year.

- The NGO partners observe that the success of the event lies in the fact that they were able to provide a platform for not just the students but for the teacher, parents, special educators and the larger society to challenge their notions and perceptions about the intellectual capability of CWD and PWD. Everyone got the opportunity to understand the capability of the students.
- The online mode enabled the NGOs to reach out to a larger audience. This has also seeded the idea of making Quizabled a Pan-India event.

## **7. NATURE OF THE QUIZ**

### **7.1. Quizzing format**

The Quiz Master describes the quizzing format in the following way:

“Group A - Understanding that they have intellectual ability, the focus of the questions made sure that they didn't think much. Questions revolved around everyday things like the sound of cow mooing, or the sound of dogs, or pictures of MS Dhoni, etc. We also successfully tested a puzzle round in the offline Chennai edition in 2019 for this category.

Group B - The questions for the category over the past few years have been increasing in difficulty. We've identified that the knowledge of autistic or CP children is in line with students studying in Class 5 / 6. So, we've been framing the sets much like how we would for a primary school quiz.

Group C - The visual impaired have very strong knowledge. Over the years, the standard of questions has been extremely high and we've found that they are finding it easier to answer questions with each passing year. The first attempt at standardising the questions took place during the 2019 Chennai edition to try and figure if they would be able to answer some of the questions asked in competitive school quiz shows however the participants breezed through the questions in no time.

Group D - Figuring the questions for Group D has become a challenge over the years. The usage of multiple sign language was one issue and their inability to read sentences was another. So, we've stuck to image based questions that require direct answers.”

The Quiz masters explanation of what questions are framed for each group is very well in alignment with the kind of questions students have recommended in the FGD. The absence of a portal which follows the UDL principles seems to be the reason why the students are reiterating the need for an accessible format. Similarly the quizmasters note how crosswords and puzzles which were specifically designed to increase engagement weren't possible in the online mode and this led to the dip in participant engagement.

2. Speaking of the nature of question the Quiz master notes:

*“We wanted Quizabled to not just be a question and answer event but much more. Hence, we introduced crosswords to help them solve or figure out the answer even without knowing the answer to the question, there was a timeline round that made them think about events in the past year and helped them crack the answers. The rounds were conceptualised not to just test their knowledge, but to help them make the right guesses.”*

Interestingly the quiz masters rationale of creating the quiz as a platform to make the right guesses is well aligned with the student’s understanding of how quiz is a formula that needs to be cracked.

3. The quiz masters focused on enabling students to update themselves everyday with the happenings around the world. *“Thus, we’ve been setting questions based on the events that took place in the past year. We’ve seen that there’s been a significant amount of learning since the participants are able to answer questions that have been increasing in difficulty with each passing year.”* The students’ manner of learning through news is well in sync with the expectations of the Quiz masters. It is significant to note that this sync has been built in by SiA’s distribution of question banks to the schools and teachers to prepare the students for the upcoming quiz. As noted by a teacher this also raises the question of, ‘is the event promoting a ‘teach to test’ loop?’

## **7.2. Preparation Process ( Quiz)**

1. Quiz was conducted at the school level on a monthly basis to prepare the students for the event (while at some schools other non-knowledge based extra curricular events were always conducted, in some Quizabled inspired the entire concept of intra-school contests). Students who usually did not participate in Quizabled were encouraged and motivated to participate in the intra-school quiz sessions.
2. Parents also showcased interest in preparing their children (autism, CP, Dyslexia), as noted by one of the parents of a child with cerebral palsy *“we were provided with enough tests and modules, information booklets from the school which helped me prepare her for the quiz thoroughly”*.
3. Through the process of preparing their students for the quiz and observing their participation on-stage teachers identified that some of their students were quicker while responding to visuals.
4. The preparation process made teachers think that the quiz might be difficult for their students to engage with but their students far exceeded their expectations and surprised them.
5. Based on the sample question paper sent by SiA the teachers prepare their students. Topics and themes are drawn from the sample question bank and teachers prepare similar questions from newspapers.
6. Students are usually prepared in General Knowledge, science and current affairs.

Questions were usually drawn from the question banks provided by SiA, but in recent times schools have encouraged students to read the newspaper, watch news on television. Specifically during the pandemic students have developed the skill of gathering and synthesising information from watching news on television. While previously only students from higher grades were asked to read/engage with news now some schools have started engaging the younger classes in such activities. Students have started identifying changes in state politics. A parent reports that her son now notices the change in Chief Minister at the state. Quizabled in her opinion has provided her Son the purpose to stay up-to-date with current affairs. He now asks questions every time he comes across a personality. While previously only students from higher grades were asked to read/engage with news now some schools have started engaging the younger classes in such activities.

7. Parents played a key role in preparing the students for the quiz during the covid-19 pandemic induced school closures.
8. Teachers also note that the preparation process in some sense resembles the exam preparation process as the portions and sample questions are given beforehand.
9. A teacher noted that the school used to provide all students with participation certificates to encourage them but have eventually stopped the same to ensure students learn to handle failures. This in the teacher's opinion has improved the manner in which students engage with emotions they feel when they lose a competition.
10. Teachers also observed that their students were very responsible towards preparing for the Quiz. They noticed that students who had been participating in the Quizabled event for over two years anticipated the upcoming edition, consistently prepared, and diligently followed-up on details about the Quizabled event. One of the students also noted that *"we prepare for the quiz beforehand, on various topics from current affairs to history, geography or any other subject"*.
11. The learning has reportedly been tremendous while students prepare for the event as also stated by one of the teachers from Mumbai *"for example when students learn about Jallian Wala Bagh they do not just learn the year but so much more, the students thoroughly enjoy knowing more"*. *The preparation has also induced a continual learning process in students.*
12. Students have reportedly learnt to ask questions post participating in Quizabled.
13. When a student is interested and knows a specific topic well they proactively share and discuss it with the rest of the students. Giving students ownership for specific topics and then having them present to the rest of the team has made the preparation process enjoyable.
14. Students staying in hostels were also observed to share their learnings with their peers, this has increased their team spirit.
15. Teachers have noted that it would be more helpful if mock-questions were sourced from all schools and circulated as a question. Parents observed that the preparation would be more effective if the question banks were shared with them.
16. There has been mixed response on the question of the event being conducted more

than once a year. A number of teachers noted that the students will lose their interest if the event is held in an ongoing manner. However there was consensus that schools should conduct intra-school competitions to prepare students for the Quizabled annual event.

### **7.2.1. Preparation (of students)**

- While a large number of students noted that they prepared for the Quiz using the guidance of their teachers and parents, a number of students also noted that they did not prepare dedicatedly for the quiz. Most of their preparation was based on what they regularly learnt in school. One of the parents stated that the *“school gave so much practice, there were so many videos, practice materials, logos from the internet , so what all was important we gave her all of that”*. *It was a practice of two to three months from the school side and our side too”*.
- Some students noted that they memorised a set number of questions for the quiz. • The school level quizzes were acknowledged to be helpful in practising and building confidence. The quizzing format as reported by students gave them an opportunity to learn from their mistakes. Although they were initially nervous, participating over the years has made them comfortable. The parents stated that *“I am very thankful to the school team, the way they gave us the materials and all those tutorials that they shared, the practice and tests, this was something new which our children were getting prepared for and to know so many other things other than academics was a wonderful thing in itself”*.

## **7.3. IMPLEMENTATION**

Deviating from its previous physical setting in the course of this Pandemic Era, ‘Quizabled’ was launched on a virtual platform in the year, ‘2021 -22’ to keep up with the new normal. By launching the event online, it has opened up a series of positive collaborations with the existing/new stakeholders, Corporate & NGO partners and also ascertained that the interest and enthusiasm of the participants never faded. However the event was not without its share of challenges and problems, these experiences and challenges faced by the parents, teachers and the participants during the conduct of the event via online mode have been highlighted in the following section.

### **7.3.1. Online Mode**

1. The role of parents is integral and significant in the online mode.
2. The online mode had a flexible schedule which in turn decreased the pressure on the students. Attending a whole-day event in-person can get tiring for the students.
3. Both teachers and parents were surprised by students’ ability to handle electronic devices diligently.

4. The online mode was challenging for students with visual impairment because they found it difficult to mute and unmute without the support of volunteers.
5. In the case of students with hearing impairment the online mode has been quite challenging, although the teachers aim to prepare their students better for the upcoming event, it would be better if the quizzing portal has audio/sign language support (UDL principles) for every question. Specifically in the absence of an interpreter parents who cannot read fluently struggle to help their children. The audio/video support was also noted as a requirement for Group A students. Other basic UDL principles such as the ability to zoom in and zoom out of the screen needs to be incorporated to make the online quiz format more accessible.
6. While answering in the online mode students (especially Group A) were observed to have found it easier to respond to multiple choice questions that were supported with visual clues. But for students with hearing impairment in order to participate in the online mode independently, teachers recommended that the quiz masters provide such questions (for example: on monuments, personalities) that are largely based on images.

#### Exception in Sample:

One teacher noted that their students (Group D) also participated in science inspiring awards, Baal Olympiad, Unnati competition, Chinthana, Maths Inter school quiz competition.

## 7.4. NETWORKING

The event not only allowed students to showcase their knowledge but also provided opportunities for students to interact with each other as well as the other stakeholders to form a close network wherein they could share their experiences and work on future collaborations. Through the FGDs conducted the stakeholders were asked about their suggestions on improving the association further. Some of the key responses and suggestions from the teachers and parents have been summarised below:

1. Although teachers recognized the event as a great opportunity for them to interact and learn from teachers of other schools, teachers observed that during the event they hardly had any time to do the same. It has been observed that it would be quite useful to have a separate session for teachers to engage as a community and learn from each other's experience of preparing their students for the quiz. (Community of Practice)
2. Parents and teachers noted that they have found the advocacy sessions organised by SiA quite helpful. They have requested for more such sessions that help them understand how they could support their children/students in pursuing a career and lead an independent life.
3. A parent noted that it felt encouraging to meet other parents of children with disabilities. It gave her hope in knowing that there were parents who shared similar challenges and experiences as her.

## **7.5. FEEDBACK BY STAKEHOLDERS**

On the basis of the FGDs and interviews that were held by the researchers, the following feedback received by the different stakeholders has been presented below.

### **7.5.1. Teachers**

- A few teachers have noted that they had difficulty in categorising the students. They have requested for a session on the same.
- Teachers noted that Quizabled as a platform could also include abstract and logical reasoning questions to raise the standard for the students.

### **7.5.2. Parents**

- A parent has requested for questions to be from different genres and not just current affairs. She believes it might demotivate students if they are unable to answer any questions at all.

### **7.5.3. Students**

- Some students have noted time constraints while using the online mode.
- Network issues have also been noted as a constraint.
- One student has noted that language support for non-regional language speakers would be a requirement.
- A student also noted that it is very unpleasant to call the groups 'A, B, C, D', he wants the names to be changed to something more generic but not impersonal.

### **7.5.4. Volunteers**

- *“More coordination, being better organised at the back end (between Sujaya Foundation and the organisers). Clear cut instructions for each.”*
- *“We could have a larger space to accommodate the audience. The food stalls and quiz area were too close and led to some chaos while movement.”*
- *“Accommodating many children and proper communication about the event on the day to the caretakers and the volunteers/before that”*

### **7.5.5. Quiz Masters**

- The Quizmasters note that a lot more insight and research is required to curate content for group 4. With regard to the hosting of the online quiz for the students with hearing impairment the Quiz master notes that *“Communicating with hearing impaired children was particularly a difficult task even with an interpreter around. Differences in sign language, level of word comprehension were possibly the reasons for this.”*

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon analysing the data collected through FGDs, interviews and questionnaires held with the various stakeholders the following recommendations have been provided to consolidate the findings and to address the challenges that have been brought to highlight by the organisers, funders, participants, parents and all the other people involved in curating and designing the event.

- Instead of making Quizabled a year long event, efforts could be invested in developing a quizzing pedagogic module for teachers/parents to transact in the classroom.
- Utilising the network to build support structures, communities of practice for teachers is a direct suggestion from teachers themselves. Given the scale of the event it would be significant to form support groups for parents, and students alike.
- Orienting teachers with developmental framework (specifically for intellectual ability) and understanding how best to provide support structures.
- Conducting the Quiz for 11th and 12th students (specifically Students with visual impairment) to prepare them for competitive exams.
- Although the volunteers (including volunteers from the funding organisation) testimonials come across as deeply empathetic their language of speaking of disability is not rights based. In a number of places the participants (funders & volunteers) of the FGD made statements using - the word “disability” that has been removed from the organisation’s dictionary some of the volunteers stated that *although they (referring to CWD) have less and we have more there is so much for us to learn from them*. It would be vital to introduce the volunteers and other stakeholders to the human rights based approach to disability which implies that “all people are active subjects with legal claims and that persons with disabilities need to participate in all spheres of society on an equal basis with their non-disabled peers.” The volunteer orientation sessions should also be inclusive of the same.

### Quizabled Portal:

- It should provide a repository of OER resources.
- A Support module for teachers and students based on Quizabled experiences.
- UDL principles to be adopted for the portal.
- The site to be made dynamic.

## 9. MILESTONES

- Previously in Tamil Nadu students with visual impairment could not opt for the science group in their higher secondary education. A Quizabled winner (for 3 consecutive years) challenged the same at court as he scored good marks in his 10th board exams and had also won in Quizabled, a knowledge based event. His arguments were

considered by the court and a Government Order has been issued by the Education Department that irrespective of one's identity as a CWD, students must be granted the choice to pursue the stream of their choice if they prove to be capable of the same. The specific student had also participated in other Quiz contests and science exhibitions (conducted by inclusive schools) after gaining the exposure and confidence to quizzing through Quizabled.

- Students with hearing impairment were generally noted to have relatively low levels of reading comprehension. Despite being a topper the student struggled to comprehend the questions correctly. Quizabled put the students at a spot where they had no other choice but to comprehend the question independently. This setting has enabled students to raise the bar for their reading levels and provided them an opportunity to try.
- When students from mainstream schools visited their schools for a science fair displayed by students with visual impairment they were surprised to know that the students had participated in quizzing contests. The teacher noted that this incident has acted as a great source of awareness for not just themselves but also for the larger society.

## **10. MOVING FORWARD**

Based on the learnings gained from organising the event successfully over the years and the nature of feedback that the event has received from the participants, the team of funders and organisers have come up with several ideas and plans to take the event forward and to expand its outreach beyond the areas in which it is conducted annually.

1. The team wants to make Quizabled a pan-India event organised via blended mode which would also host inter-district, inter-state, and nationals.
  2. The funders want to organise the event at every location in which they have a centre.
  3. The team aspires to include the rural areas.
  4. Conducting an event in a specific space also changes the manner in which mainstream school children perceive CWD and PWD. Hence they plan to provide more visibility to the event.
  5. The team wants to make quizzes a regular activity in the schools.
  6. The funding team also notes that there are plans to take the event to other countries.
- As an Information Technology company they also aim to leverage technology to scale up the event.



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