



BIG DREAMS, BIG STEPS

When family income drops, why does the girl-child suffer the most in terms of education and quality of life? DET's intervention shows Savitri a way out of this situation and presents her with a new set of opportunities.

"As a girl-child, I was always taught that my needs should come last. At DET, I learnt to value myself and my goals - after all, if I don't, who will?"

"Marriages are expensive affairs," says Savitri pensively. "My sister's marriage took a big toll on our family. Overnight we had a Rs 70,000 loan which had to be paid off." Her family, consisting of five members, lived mostly off the income brought in by agriculture. Their village of Chikkodi offered no opportunities for any other kind of occupation, with most subsisting on smallholder agriculture.

A topper in her school and college, Savitri was one of the most promising students in her village, even receiving awards for social work for her role in supporting the building of toilets in the village. Already a BA graduate, she aspired to study further and complete her MA.

There is considerable evidence suggesting that in BOP families, a girl's education is more affected by family income volatility than that of boys. In Savitri's case, as well, her family asked her to put her studies on hold and work to help pay off the loan. "I had to find a job quick," she says. It was at this time that the DET team came to her college to talk about the program. Seeing a unique opportunity to quickly get a job and help her family, Savitri decided to join the DSF program.

The DET Experience: New roads to be crossed

Her low-income background notwithstanding, Savitri found that life at DET presented a new set of challenges that she had never experienced before. "I was sharing a bathroom with 13 other girls. It was something I had taken for granted at home." At DET, the residential nature of the course is designed deliberately to ensure that students develop the ability to cope with high levels of pressure and rigor. As a teaching method, it has been found to be more effective than any theory class on discipline or time management.

"With a lot of dedication to the work they do, Deshpande Educational Trust's fellows have proved themselves to be patient, calm and highly professional individuals."
- Emmanuel, Homeocare International Pvt. Ltd.

WHAT WORKED FOR SAVITRI

- English communication
- Basic computing skills
- Critical thinking
- Risk-taking

SAVITRI | Deshpande Susandhi Fellowship Program (Frontline Management) Alumna, 2016



I learnt a lot from DET.
All that I know and that I have a job, it is all because of DET.

DET's approach to pedagogy is based not on bombarding students with information, but on creating an engaging and lively environment in which students feel relaxed and yet imbibe key learnings. Savitri recalls a learning activity that was particularly memorable to her, in which students were tasked with an assignment to take a selfie of a beautiful person. She remembers how students went around the class asking people they thought were beautiful if they could take a selfie with them. In the end, the trainer posed a shocking question - why had they not taken a selfie of themselves? For Savitri, this question prompted an empowering realization of how much she undervalued herself and the need to change her perceptions.

Apart from improving her spoken English skills and being exposed to digital technology and software, Savitri credits DET with changing her at a deeper level - imbuing her with a newfound sense of self esteem, the ability to take initiative and problem-solve, and last but not the least, a conviction that transformative change is possible if she works hard.

Productive Careers: A happier place

Savitri's first job on graduating was a sales role at a financial organization. She did not, however, enjoy this and decided to leave after two months. With support from the DET team, she was placed at a healthcare organization - maintaining patient records and guiding patients. Having joined as a Service Executive, she has now been promoted to Service Head.

Her job involves counseling patients and motivating them to continue treatment. Both tasks allow her to apply the various motivation techniques she learnt at DET. Today Savitri earns more than she ever thought possible and has been able to support her family. "We are on track with paying off the loan," she says, smiling. While the quantifiable impact of increased income is clearly evinced, what shines through is the immeasurable impact of DET's effort in facilitating the growth of a confident young woman.

STUDENT PROFILE AND IMPACT POST-DET

Educational qualification	BA
First generation learner	Yes
Pre-DET monthly household income	Rs. 9,000
Sector of employment	Sales
Hailing from	Belgaum
Working in	Belgaum

Salary Increment (INR):

