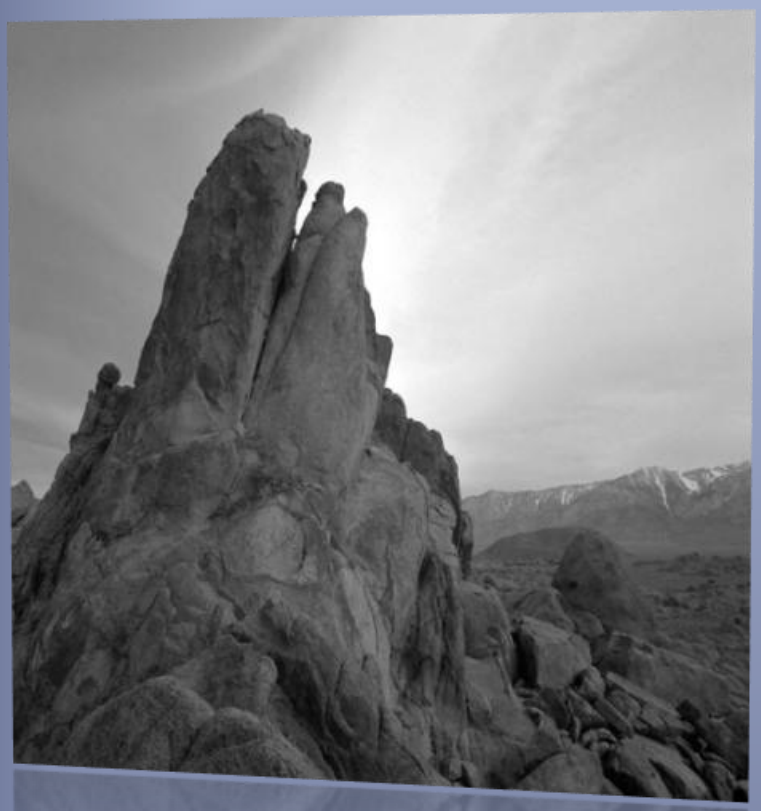


Hard facts about how the young people develop their soft skills after their participation on “Living and Learning Abroad”

Abstract

The following research is made by Bhagavat Educational Trust for better understanding on the impact of the project. The questionnaire is been developed according to the needs of the young people and considering their state and disabilities. Its main aim is to provide information and better understanding on how the project affected the young people lives after they go back home. The short questionnaire is being filled by the team leaders (AP) as they are the only people that are able to see the difference in the participants’ behavior before and after the project. This survey reveals 97% overal satisfaction rate amongs AP.

1. Basic information

12 different team leaders took a part in that research. They visited Bulgaria in the period 2009- 2010. The questionnaire they filled consists 12 questions- 9 closed and 3 open. The filled forms give information about the fallowing soft skills:

- Motivation,
- Organisational skills
- Sociability
- Happiness
- Efforts in the career development
- Patience
- Tolerance
- Empathy with colleagues
- Understanding
- Levels of aggression

A part of that, every team leader has to give his own opinion on how the project can be improved for the young people, for the accompanying people and for their organization. They also answer a question related to the benefits for their organization and the young people if Bhagavat Educational Trust acquired extra funding and was able to plan such projects on a long term basis- for 3 or 4 years in advance.

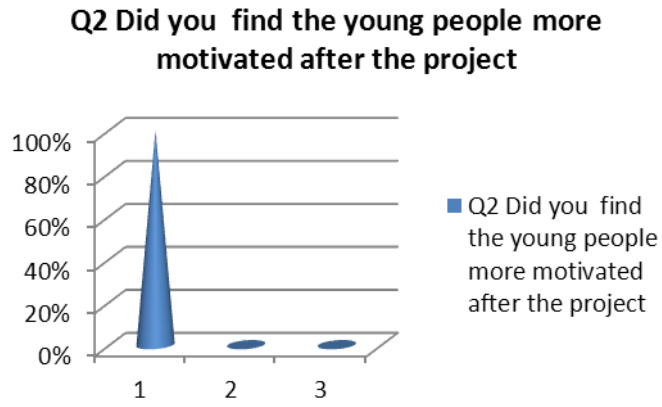


2. A research overview

Findings include that soft skills can not only improve employee performance and satisfaction but can also prepare technical workers for promotion into supervisory roles. Considering the target group and low level of efficiency participants have prior to the project, the results of that research are more than satisfactory. The research shows that the positive effect of the project for the young people is quite high. The participants feel more confident, more satisfied with themselves.

- ***Motivation***

100% of the team leaders find their young people more motivated after the project (please see fig. 1)



"The young people were hugely motivated to move forward with their lives and appeared to take responsibility for themselves."
Richard Bastille

Fig.1

That motivation is visible in their future plans, in their behavior in their relationships with people around them. The 2 weeks stay helps the young people to see a different reality and gives a new meaning to their lives.

- ***Organisational skills, hardworking;***

92% of the questioned team leaders think that the team challenge in Bulgaria helped the young people to be more organized and work harder.

"All the young people have moved on in their lives and I have been reinvigorated."

D.J. Richardson

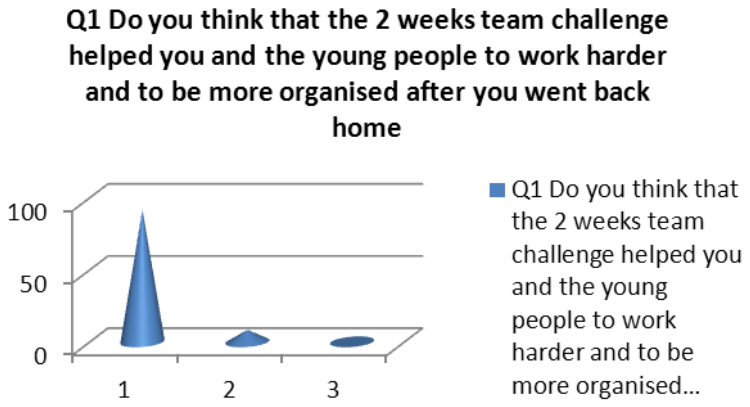


Fig.2

- ***Sociability, efforts in the career development***

All team leaders agree that after the team challenge the young people are more sociable and they are definitely putting more efforts in their career development (please view fig.3 and fig.4).

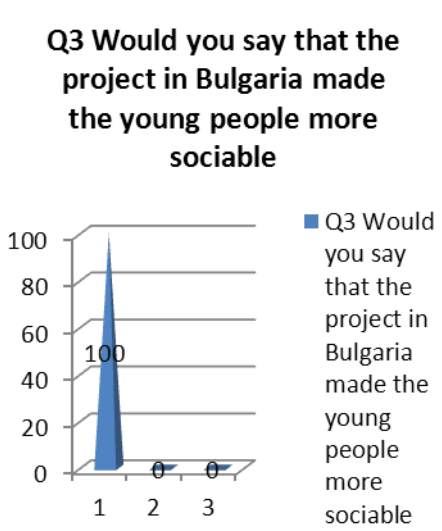


Fig.3

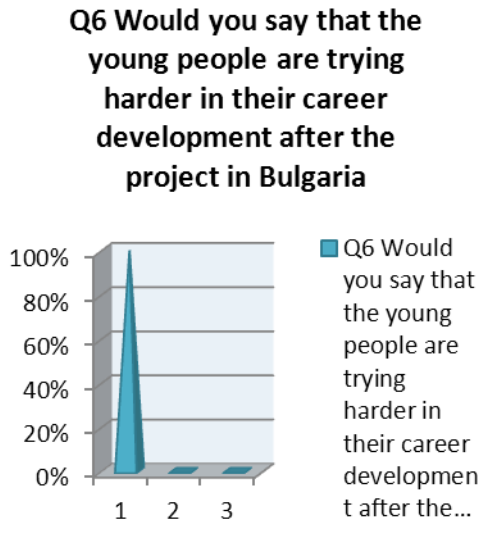


Fig.4

That research indicates that young people not only lack the soft skills themselves but the opportunity to develop them. Most students say they are not being sufficiently challenged in high school, their work is not relevant to potential future careers, and they experience few significant career-building opportunities such as internships or such team challenge. The soft skills deficits are even more prominent among young people of our target group – young people coming from low-income families, and whose parents didn't graduate from high school, the deficits cross the lines of race, ethnicity, education level, and disabled people. Employees recognize that the incoming workforce will need expensive remedial training to learn critical soft skills. The research shows that the team challenge

with Bhagavat Educational Trust could be such training. The results shown after the 2 weeks are more than satisfactory regarding soft skills and experience.

"The group is now making positive steps in developing their lives; some are attending college; others are in work, either temporally or in permanent positions. This can only be described as miraculous."

Terrence Bradley, Team leader

- ***Happiness***

Although it is quite hard to measure happiness, we believe such question would help us have better understanding on how well young people feel after they go back home. 92% find the participants happier after the project. That fact could be very easily explained with the satisfaction after the project.

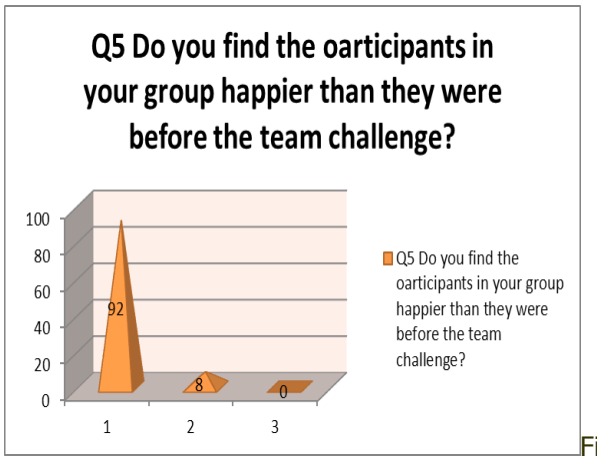


Fig. 5

"The group is clearly happier; the positivity they now show and implement in their lives is both priceless and life changing. They are content with life, and inspire to improve their situations."

Terrence Bradley

- ***Patience, Tolerance, Empathy with colleagues, Understanding***

100% of the team leaders see in their young people greater patience, tolerance and understanding; 92% see greater empathy with colleagues:

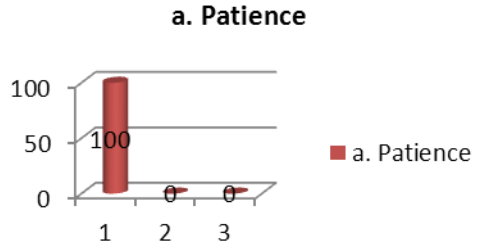


Fig.6

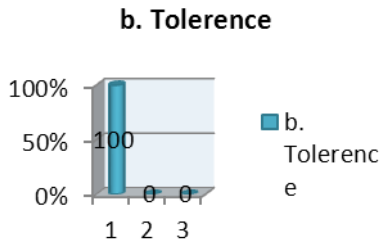


Fig.7

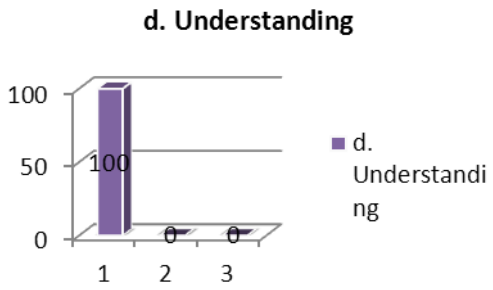


Fig.8

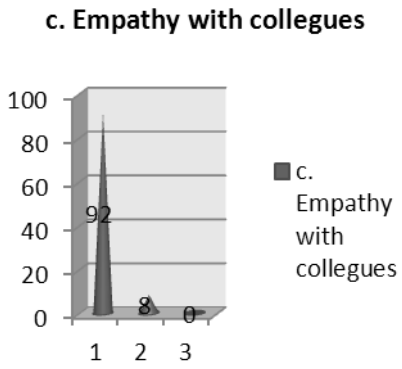


Fig.9

"Whether it is with family or in group situation, the changes are visible. Most importantly the group is more tolerant with themselves; this has a vital role in their continued development and acceptance of the pace of life: the realization that life goals have to be attained and earned and they are not just automatically given."

Terrence Bradley