

EVENING STUDY CENTERS
DR. AMBEDKAR CULTURAL ACADEMY
Mandela Nagar, Madurai - 22, TN, India

ANNUAL REPORT 2021 – 2022

CONTEXT

Dr Ambedkar Cultural Academy (DACA), with its motto Knowledge is Power, serves the marginalized children with the fundamental aim of enhancing holistic development: Education, Personality and Community. Evening Study Centres (ESCs) play vital role in making the dream of DACA come true. There is a constant formation of students through various activities throughout the year. Therefore, the holistic growth of students is ensured at every stage. Around 3500 students hailing from 98 villages of five districts benefit from our ESCs.

On the contrary, as accepted in common, the Covid-19 has modified the learning pattern of the children everywhere, particularly in India. It is true that the Covid-19 has brought disorders in the academic life of students. The mode of online classes was not very much successful to students who come from rural background. Online classes demanded students to own by all means individual mobile phones. Indeed, it was difficult for the students who really struggle for their daily bread and butter. Hence, the learning was interrupted. Furthermore, those who somehow managed to own mobile phones became victims of mobile-addicts. Moreover, the behaviour of student community has totally changed as they were away from school for long months.

Against this background, we reopened our DACA - ESCs on 2nd August 2021. The ESCs eventually tried to imbibe the spirit of learning and inculcate holistic education. We are happy to present you the Annual report of ESCs for 2021 – 2022.

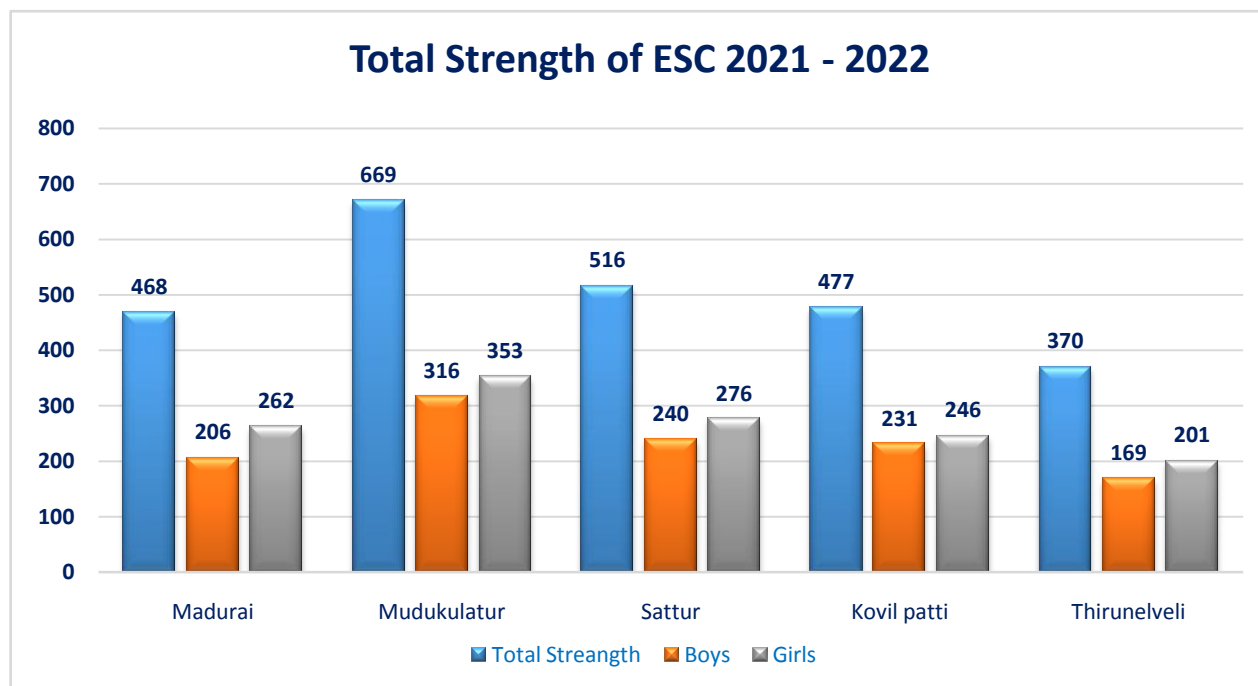
I. ACTIVITY UNDERTAKEN FOR THE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. GENERAL PRACTICE



The Chief Coordinator addressing the Children at Kumarakurichi Centre

Everyday students were given two hours of special coaching to develop their basic knowledge. Students ranging from 1st to 5th were taught alphabets of Tamil, English and basic Mathematics. Students ranging from 6th to 10th were given reading practice in Tamil, English and advanced Mathematics. Weekly tests were conducted to assess the level of students. Special coaching was given to 10th and 12th standard students to score higher marks in public exams. Parents meeting were conducted periodically to report the performance of students.



1.2. COMPETITIVE EXAM

The State Govt. conducts a yearly **NMMS** exam for the students of 8th Standard to obtain scholarship for their higher studies. This year, we had encouraged 42 students from five zones and distributed e-materials through social media and conducted periodical test for the students.

TRUST (Tamil Nadu Rural Students Talent Search Examination) is conducted by the State Govt. for the 9th standard students to give scholarships for their higher studies. As a new initiative this year three students wrote TRUST exam and one successfully passed out.

NTSE (National Talent Search Examination) is a National level exam conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training for the 10th students. This year M. Priya, 10th std, Thittankulam Study Centre, Kovilpatti Zone wrote this exam.

1.3. FR. S. MARIANATHAN SJ AWARD

This year, Fr. S. Marianathan SJ Award was given away to four Students of 12th standard for securing more than 80% marks in the GOVT public examinations held in March 2021. They are **V. KRISHNAVENI**, 536.74/600, from Keelakannicheri Centre, Muthukulathur Zone, **M. VEERALAKSHIMI**, 506.25/600, from Chinna Kollapatti Centre, Sattur Zone, **M. AAKASHINI**

528.87/600, for Thittankulam Centre, Kovilpatti Zone and S. MUTHUSELVI 531.33/600, from Vadakupatti Centre, Kovilpatti Zone.



V. KRISHNAVENI receives Fr. Marianathan Award for her academic achievement

1.4. SCIENCE EXHIBITION

The Science Festival, the ever first event in the history of DACA's Evening Study Centre, was conducted in the month of September, 2021 at various dates. It provided an opportunity to our children to showcase their scientific projects in a common place. Around 390 students from 86 villages were actively took part in the event. Most of the projects were thought-provoking and relevant to their contexts. The judges were very much taken aback by the efforts and hard work of students.

Name of the Zone	date	No. ESCs	No. Students	Prize list
Madurai	19.09.2021	16	71	I - Mangalapuram, II - Chinna Udaipu, III - Muniyandipuram
Mudukulatur	5.09.2021	18	83	I - Maruthagam, II - Indira Nagar, III - Keezhakannicheri
Sattur	26.09.2021	16	75	I - Thulukankurichi, II - Kuppamadam, III - Periya thathampatti
Kovil patti	26.09.2021	19	86	I - Therku thittankulam, II - Vadakupatti, III - Keezhneeethanallur
Thirunelveli	19.09.2021	17	75	I - Unnakulam, II - Nochikulam, III - Sivanthipatti
Total		86	390	15



The Children of Muthukulathur Zone exhibit their Science Projects

1.5. KNOWLEDGE FEST

DACA organized 'Arivu Thiruvizha' **KNOWLEDGE FEST** for its children every year. This year, 1000 questions were purposefully taken from the subjects of classes 6th to 10th and given to children for preparation. The Mega Quiz programme was conducted at zonal level in the month of December, 2021 on various dates. Nearly 654 children from 77 villages enthusiastically took part in the event. The rounds of the quiz were innovative, thoughtful and interesting and made the children to be at their best.

Name of the Zone	date	No. ESCs	No. Students	Prize list
Madurai	12.12.2021	18	145	I - Kuthiraikuthi, II - Paapanam, III - China Udaipu
Mudukulatur	05.12.2021	19	166	I - Gandhi Nagar, II - Kathaiyan, III - Supramaniyapuram
Sattur	19.12.2021	12	96	I - Chokalampatti, II - Sirukulam, III - Kunnur
Kovil patti	19.12.2021	16	141	I - Azhakaneri II - Therku thittankulam, III - Vadakupatti
Thirunelveli	12.12.2021	12	106	I - Sivanthipatti, II - Nochikulam, III - Kanmaniyan kudiirupu
Total		77	654	15

II. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN FOR THE PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

2.1. ANNUAL DAY

The Annual Day is a new concept in the history lane of DACA's Evening Study Centres. This event was conducted to exhibit the innovative talents of student in the public place so that they parents could witness the children's performance and be able to appreciate them. It was conducted at Zonal level at different dates in the months of February, March and April, 2022. 733 children and hundreds of people from 59 villages witnessed the event. There were dances, debates, dramas, telling quotes of B.R. Ambedkar, folk dances and martial arts, etc.

Date	Name of the zone	Place	No. ESCs	No. Students
27.02.2022	Mudukulathur	Kumarakurichi	19	228
20.03.2022	Thirunelveli	Kallathi	10	128
27.03.2022	Madurai	Kuthiraikuthi	19	217
03.04.2022	Sattur	Pethurettupatti	11	160
Total			59	733



The Children of Madurai make stage performances in the Annual Day

2.2. INDEPENDENCE DAY

On August 15, 2021, all our Study Centres observed the 75th Independence Day of India by organizing a singing contest. Totally 1822 students from 84 ESCs took part in the celebration. The winners of the contest were given away good prizes.

S.N	Name of Zone	No. of ESCs	No. of Students
01	Madurai	19	413
02	Mudukulathur	19	513
03	Sattur	11	276
04	Kovilpatti	19	332
05	Thirunelveli	16	288
Total		84	1822

2.3. DR. AMBEDKAR's MONTH

The month of December is dedicated to Dr. Ambedkar, in commemorating his death anniversary on 6th Dec. In December, a quote of Ambedkar was written on a board and recited by all every day. An awareness song was also taught to the students to excel their singing talent. On 6th December, all the centres commemorated the death anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar in a meaningful way by conducting various cultural and sports events. They also sentimentally expressed a sense of gratitude to him by paying homage to his statue, garlanding him.

2.4. THE DACA DAY

On 21st January we celebrated the **DACA DAY**. It is the birth day of Fr. Anthony Raj, the founder of DACA. This is the first time that we celebrated his birthday after his death. DACA's ESCs greatly remembered his contribution, commitment and hard work for the welfare of the oppressed people. The Children of our centres took oath to empower others by following his footsteps.

2.5. WOMEN'S DAY

The commemoration of Women's day on 8th March was celebrated at the centres level. In many villages, students celebrated this day by conducting cultural events, rally, singing awareness songs and debates on women empowerment. Many youngsters and parents actively took part in the events especially in the debate and added colour to the program. In some villages, a gift was given to women participants as a token of appreciation.

2.6. ONE -DAY TEACHER

ONE-DAY TEACHER scheme was introduced to our ESCs to develop the personality growth of our students. Each day a student takes in-charge voluntarily and leads the group creatively and interactively. This practice overcomes the stage fear gradually and helps to know the strength of oneself.



One Day Student Teacher teaches his friends

III. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 CHILDREN PARLIAMENT

Children Parliament (CP) is a democratic movement which works for multiple development of the Community as well as individuals. Through CP, students get to know the better understanding of democracy and politics. Through this activity students come to know the importance of choosing a right leader. The elected members were given certain responsibility to have smooth sailing of the ESCs and the society. This committee, in collaboration with the people, files petitions to respective persons in order to fulfil the needs of the village.

3.2. OBSERVANCE OF SIGNIFICANT DAYS

Observing the significant days of a month is a unique act which helps to understand the society in a better way. It also keeps the centres interactive. Children's Day, Farmers' Day, Human Rights Day, Indian Constitution Day, National Science Day, Republic Day, Pongal, New Year and Christmas are some of the days observed thematically. On a significant day, there's a special talk by resource persons, awareness rally, parent's meeting, etc. arranged to commemorate the special features.

3.3. HANDING OVER PETITION IN GRAMASABA MEETING

On 24th April 2022, there was **Gramasaba** Meeting held in all the panchayat where 29 ESCs of DACA gave petition to the Local Government officials through children parliament. It was a new initiative taken from our students to voice out for the needs of the villages. This developed the social awareness among the students. The people and government officials appreciated their social commitment for the welfare of the people.



Our Children gives a petition to Village Administrator demanding their rights

3.4. PLANTING TREES

This year we have planted 371 tree saplings in 69 villages having the motto of “*Caring for our Common Home.*” This activity has created a great impact on our ESC students to keep our mother green and clean. There were also rallies conducted among the people to create awareness of environment.

3.5. SUCCESS CENTERS

To improve the involvement of our Evening Study centres in social activity. There was a circular sent among the ESCs saying that ‘if a centre gives petition to government officials and the work done upon the petition will go for a one day picnic’. This had encouraged our ESCs to move one step forward in social activity. As a fruit of this circular, five ESCs successfully achieved their goals. 1. ESC -Indira Nagar, Muthukulathur Zone petition done on road to common water tank, 2. ESC – Sirukulam, Sattur Zone petition done on stopping the bus at Dalit area, 3. ESC- Vengalakurichi, Muthukulathur Zone petition done on repairing 5 street lights, 4.ESC- Kezhakannicheri, Muthukulathur Zone petition done on erecting solar street light, 5. ESC- Maruthagam, Muthukulathur Zone petition done on repairing 20 street lights. (Please look at the Annexure)

3.6. AWARDING THE ACHIEVERS

Four Motivational awards were announced for the outstanding performance of the Coordinator, Animator and the Centers at a zonal level. The awards are FOUNDER Award – Best Animator, DACA Award – Best Center and AMBEDKAR Award – Socially committed Centers and one more award was newly introduced this year DACA SUDAR Award – Best coordinator. More than thirty nominees applied for these awards. A team of appointed experts went to the nominees’ villages and evaluated their centers based on the given guidelines to identify the Best animator and centres for the above said awards. On 11th May 2022, all the animators gathered at Madurai for the Award Ceremony. Three distinguished guests were invited and their experiential sharing was very stimulating and captivating. The guests were highly impressed with the activities of our study centres. For the academic year 2021 – 2022, totally 19 were given away the awards. 2 – Best Animator Award, 2 – Best Center Award, 14 – Ambedkar Award and 1- DACA SUDAR Award. It was a fulfilling culmination of the academic year 2021-2022 to honour and motivate them for the betterment of study centres.



The Achievers are appreciated with various Awards

IV. CHALLENGES FACED

1. It was a herculean task for animators to gather the students for the evening study as schools were closed for primary schools and online classes for the high schools were taken for granted.
2. Due to the pandemic, most of our students have lost interest in studying and acquiring knowledge. Therefore, it was very difficult for our animators to prepare them for quiz contest.
3. In a given situation, many programs were conducted at zonal level and could not make state level competitions except a final program.
4. Many students got addicted to mobile phones and video games. Hence, parents and teachers find it difficult to enkindle them to excel in study.

V. SUCCESS STORIES

A. KISHORE, 6th Std., Sathirakondan, Kovilpatti Zone



It's been three years since I have joined DACA's ESC. In the beginning I was very dull in my academics, personality and social activity. I had less interest in reading and writing. But, after joining this DACA's ESC, there is a gradual growth in my studies, personality and social activity. Even my teachers wonder at my performance in class and school. This DACA's ESC gave me holistic growth by providing three dimensional (Education, Personality and Community) activities, such as two hours of study, planting trees, developing the habit of saving money, celebrating important days and creating leadership quality through participating in children's parliament. This year I have saved Rs 1200 from my savings and my parents were happy. I have planted 3 trees in my village. Now, I stand first in my class this is because of my DACA's ESC. Thanks to DACA for providing a wonderful opportunity.

MS. ABINAYA BAANU, Animator, Mangalapuram, Madurai Zone



I feel that this academic year was something unique than the previous year. In this academic year there were some new activities such as Science Exhibition, Knowledge Fest and Annual Day celebration. These activities have become some of the fine platforms for the students to exhibit their talents, skills and intellectual calibre. As an animator I have learned some new teaching methods to educate the students. Quiz competition was one of the exceptional programmes to develop the knowledge of students and animators. For choosing the best centres Award Function it would be appreciable if you visit the centres that had given the forms.

K. AARTHI, 8th Std., Kallamanayakanpatti, Sattur Zone



Journeying with DACA's ESC is something unique and special. I have learned many good lessons in this centre which had helped me to stand out from other students. I got 56/60 in Tamil Exam. I cultivated the habit of saving money. I sang an awareness song in the Independence Day and got prize. Through planting trees, cleaning and keeping place green makes me to have a gentle approach towards nature. I have participated in all the competition that had conducted by DACA's ESC which gives me a new exposure and environment to

improve my knowledge. Celebrating significant days of the month teaches me the importance of the day. I have also participated in the summer camp conducted by DACA which was totally a new experience. Here I have learnt basic Tamil, English, and Maths.

MR. JOSEPH KUMAR, Coordinator, Thirunelveli Zone



The Thirunelveli Zone came into existence on 06 Dec, 2020, the master mind behind this action was Mr. Arockiasamy, Professor, St Xaviers School, Palayamkottai. After my B.E. in Mechanical I was working in a small company. During the COVID situation I have lost the job. At that time, I have received an invitation from Professor Arokiasamy to join the DACA's ESC as a coordinator. In the beginning, I thought that this also just another job but as the days passed, I started to realize that this is something connected with social service. I have started preparing myself for group exam in order to help my animator by becoming a government official. Through this work I have developed a lot of contacts with people, students and social activists. As a fruit of this, I am visiting and encouraging the youths in nearby villages with the help of Mr. Oosikattan for the government posts. It gives me great consolation that in a way I am helping my fellow human towards a brighter future.

VI. GRATITUDE

We take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to **Stiftung Jesuiten Weltweit** and **Stiftung Bachmann Foundation** for their continued support to DACA's ESCs in the past years. It is because of your generosity, our children are able to come out from the psychological barriers of centuries old caste discrimination and grow holistically. Rev. Dr. Antony Raj, SJ, the founder of DACA once said 'If Dalits only get an opportunity; they will reach the Promised Land where there is no bondage and servitude and they will be the fearless Children of modern society, who will be able to assert themselves'². Today, I can affirm and announce that the **STIFTUNG JESUITEN WELTWEIT** and **LEOPOLD BACHMANN STIFTUNG** play the role of Moses leading our Dalit children from darkness to light, illiteracy to knowledge, despair to hope and oppression to liberation through the stick of education. Once again on behalf of DACA Jesuits and the Coordinators, Animators and Children of its ESCs, We wholeheartedly thank each and every one of you for your continued love and service. With grateful heart to the **STIFTUNG JESUITEN WELTWEIT** and **LEOPOLD BACHMANN STIFTUNG**, I earnestly seek your continued support to DACA's ESCs in the coming new academic year (2022 – 2023) too. (*Please look at the budget proposal attached*).

Report by

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The Education Coordinator of DACA

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