

**Rajiv Soni.** CA, educationist, social entrepreneur. Founding Trustee at [Soni Memorial Trust](#)

**Journey:**

**1969:** Teaching alphabet and numbers to teenaged son of our janitor

**1975/76:** Heading Social Service Project 'Shramdaan' in High school, teaching rural children at village Jaunapur, near Delhi. And helping improve sanitation.

**2000:** Started computer based literacy at Jaunapur village . Project covered by Star TV News

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIJKI66K\\_G8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIJKI66K_G8)

**2001:** Replicated the above model at an important parliamentary constituency.

**2004-2019** Teaching academics and 'Employable Skills' to students in 'Young India'.

[http://www.edmatrix.us/study\\_centre.asp](http://www.edmatrix.us/study_centre.asp)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifMjYoExVyU>

**2020:** Wanting to focus only on poorest-of-the-poor children, I set up MY SCHOOL with 5 children of a poor farmer family in Gurgaon who had never been to a school before. Nine months later, (Sept 2021) had 3 of them admitted into regular school.

<http://edmatrix.us/smtrust/myschool.html>

**2021: Identified** 3 underprivileged students desirous of undertaking the arduous Chartered Accountancy course, guiding them and paying all study/examination expenses.

<http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/Students.asp>

**Feb 2022:** Moved to Kanhei Gaon, Sector 45, Gurgaon and started 'teaching under a tree'.

In Sept. introduced teaching via the Internet; As of 5<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2022, 48 students are enrolled, after moving 23 to regular school. Girls outnumber the boys. <http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/2nd-Initiative.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWhRi4QKpOk>

**2020-2022:** Prepare and distribute food to hungry, unemployed laborers, twice a month, at Sikanderpur Chowk, Gurgaon.

✓ **Outcome in relation to community**

A. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMxxF-oyhQM>

**First,** in terms of enrolment, attendance, retention rate and in transfer to regular school; girls outnumber the boys.

<http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/images/kidspic.jpg>

**Second,** we will be preparing a route-map in a child's educational trajectory beginning from pre-school to continue through their school years until they become employable, yielding a positive outcome in the community.

**Third,** focus at MY SCHOOL is to familiarize children on specific curricula (numeracy and literacy) for a child's acceptance in regular school; and also to introduce them to social skills and emotional balance for success as they grow up.

(a) The first part is accomplished by '*Teacher led Instruction*'

<http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/images/Instruction.jpg> using white-board, videos covering subjects, work sheets, weekly tests, '*Learning via the Internet*'

<https://youtu.be/q5AsRtCl0as>

(b) The second through *Volunteer sessions* using toys, games, art, music and movement; introducing them to song and dance, painting, creative arts, storytelling.

**Fourth,** our communication of 'work done' through unified, compelling, and storytelling has brought in several volunteers.

**We take pride in having earned their trust through complete transparency in operations.**

**Measurable outcome:**

(i) 23 marginalized students [http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/Student\\_list.asp](http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/Student_list.asp) into regular school  
(ii) 7000+ meals distributed <http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/MidDayMeals.asp> in last 2 years  
(iii) Confidence of philanthropists in our work increasing- evidenced by their increased numbers  
Recently, School of Hospitality & Tourism (GD Goenka University, Sohna) sent in students <http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/IMG-GD.jpg> to understand how food was prepared by me for the small children and for unemployed adult laborers; how this food was packed, carted, distributed. They will be sending in students regularly to understand and appreciate Food production, distribution and consumption ethics.

**Not measurable:**

(i) **Fostering communal harmony.** Students pray <https://youtu.be/hl3k6oIECAU>, learn <http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/images/8th.png> and eat together <http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/images/11th.jpg> irrespective of faiths and castes

(ii) **Students introduced to Social Skills** <http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/images/UndertheTree.jpg> concepts including: Civility and civic sense, Good manners and behavior, Tolerance, Kindness, Discipline, Adaptability & Resilience, Patriotism, Truthfulness, Being respectful to elders and ladies, being helpful yet respecting another's privacy. Undoubtedly, teaching children is much easier than teaching adults with more widespread result.

(iii) **Introduced concepts of: Environment management** <https://youtu.be/qhjajglpsIY>

(iv) **Personal hygiene** <https://youtu.be/B83z4QwnU48>

(v) **Public speaking** [https://youtube.com/shorts/Wtvb0QJwt\\_8?feature=share](https://youtube.com/shorts/Wtvb0QJwt_8?feature=share)

(vi) **Twenty minutes daily reading** <https://youtube.com/shorts/eAYxuu60gIg> English/Hindi books

(vii) **Community participation** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLX5bqqQcRI> (parents, nearby shop owners, Sarpanch ji) that supports learning

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B. Helping deserving students <http://edmatrix.us/SMTrust/images/CAstudents.jpeg> start professional courses.

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**Financial impact to society**

Poor families, in my opinion, are not able to meet the cost of education and once initial years pass, the problem has multiplied enormously- both financially and otherwise. It decreases a child's readiness for school through aspects of being age-inappropriate for a class, health, home life, documentation and neighborhood. And pushes them into menial jobs, petty crime etc later increasing the financial cost of their rehabilitation and unemployment.

**Services provided Free/subsidized**

Considering malnutrition, diseases, inferior living conditions, inadequate sanitation and many other hardships faced by the children of our marginalized strata and poor laborers, all services provided over last 3 years are completely Free.