



**Successful stories
of online
AEMP at Bhutan**

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In the era of digital world where technology plays a crucial role, the epidemic occurred worldwide has pushed to the forefront the need for effective online/virtual learning modes.

The expanded wings of AIMS Media, an education solution company have not only touched Indian states and territories but have also extended its reach in overseas. It has impacted lives of thousands of people with diverse needs across India and overseas. In 2019, AIMS Media was approached by Bhutan Foundation and Perkins International, an arm of Perkins School for the Blind, USA, to partner with them on supporting skill development in youth with disabilities in Bhutan. A mix of online and in-person support was conceptualized and leveraged the existing work of these organizations in Bhutan, promoting meaningful participation of people with disabilities in Bhutanese society. The partnership harmoniously brought together the strengths of each organization as well as the philosophy of service delivery. AIMS Media with its prior expertise and well-tested model, could offer online training, supplemented by in-person support. The program, already focused on parent empowerment as well as independence and skill building of the participant, was further enhanced by incorporating the Total Life Curriculum approach of Perkins International, that infuses teaching methods and guidance that promotes development of life skills within the curriculum design. Strong in-country support and linkages provided by Bhutan Foundation completed the package and set a solid foundation to the new venture.

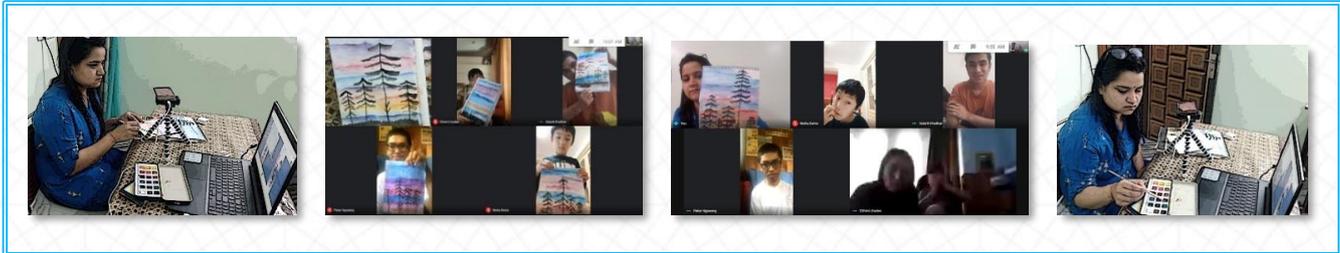
In December 2019 AIMS Media in association with The Bhutan Foundation and Perkins International conducted an assessment for the group of 12 students with special abilities. The assessment tool named "AEMP Creative Quotient - A scientific tool" is designed and developed by AIMS Media and helps to assess the creative abilities on the basis of 12 prominent activities focused on different regions of creativity. After the comprehensive evaluation 9 individuals were enrolled for the online training of AEMP's (Ability Enhancement Multimedia Program) flagship program called "LBAEMP (Learning Based AEMP)".



BACKGROUND:

Several projects have been initiated by The Bhutan Foundation and Perkins International for the people with disabilities across Bhutan of which one of the initiatives is to use the AEMP to enable youth with disabilities to develop skills that will help them transition successfully into work and life as young adults.

AEMP: Ability Enhancement Multimedia Program (AEMP) has a range of different therapeutic, academic and vocational program developed and designed by a team of educational psychologists, academicians and multimedia professionals keeping in mind different age, abilities and difficulties. The purpose of this program is to educate, enable and empower people with disabilities/diverse needs through multimedia, art and technology-based skill development programs which eventually help to build sustainable and independent livelihood.

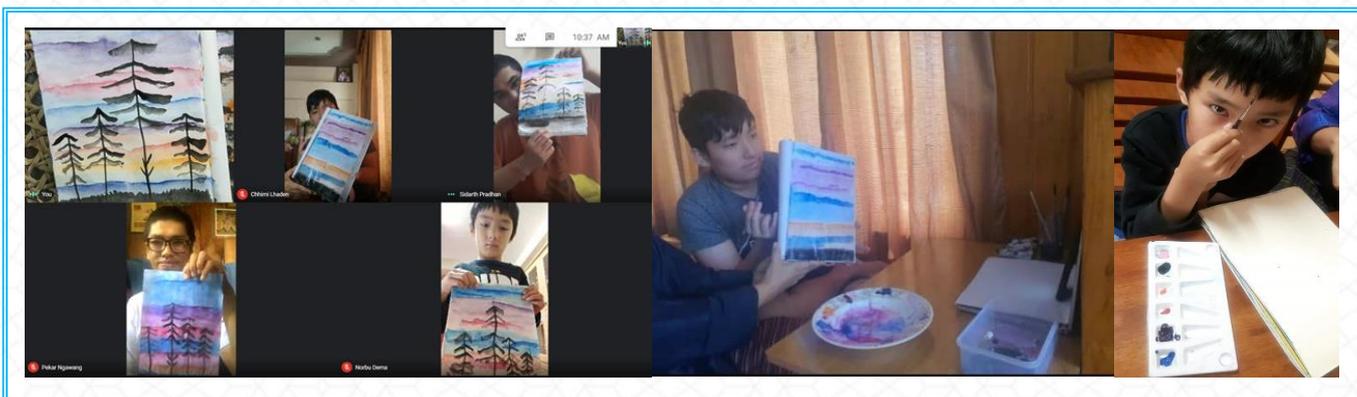


EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES BEHIND THE SUCCESS:

 <p>Effective and dynamic pedagogical solutions</p>	 <p>Easy, accessible and inclusive online training platforms</p>	 <p>E-assignments and video tutorials</p>	 <p>Use of effective, interesting and appropriate examples</p>	 <p>Productive and meaningful engagement of students and parents</p>
 <p>Collective teaching learning method</p>	 <p>Innovative and interactive learning ecosystem</p>	 <p>Rigorous training and mentoring</p>	 <p>Continuous monitoring and revisions</p>	 <p>Periodical assessment and evaluation</p>



IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM:



Case Study 1



UGYEN SINGEY



BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES:

One of the first participants to show interest was a boy named Ugyen Singye Tshering from Thimphu, Bhutan who was diagnosed with Autism at the age of 4 years. At age 6, his family sent him to a private school, Early Learning Centre, so he could learn reading, writing and life skills. After completing his 6th standard, as the difficulties in school increased, they switched to home-schooling. His mother Ms. Chhimi describes him as a sweet-natured boy, with good comprehension but limited expressive skills. He needed lot of supervision and constant prompts to do most tasks. He was very dependent on support, looking for assurance again when given a task. He to play by himself and not interact with others around him. He was often fixated on one thing and had difficulty in moving beyond it.



SOLUTIONS:

In December 2019, a turning point came when Ugyen was given an opportunity to appear for the creative assessment to evaluate his eligibility to enroll him for the multimedia-based program. He fell under one of the instructional categories of AEMP- Ability Enhancement Multimedia Program Namely Learning Based-AEMP on a virtual platform designed by AIMS Media. The program offers systematic instruction, allowing children learning from home the opportunity for regular and well-structured instruction that ensures they learn skills that would be productive for them in the future. This program is market oriented and helps the participant in employment opportunities. The best part of the program is PTS (Parents Training Session) i.e. parents are equally learning with students throughout the journey. Ms. Chhimi co-ordinates the group of families in Bhutan who are currently participating in the program.

Evaluation of the child is been done every month by the monthly report covers different areas like Attention span, Engrossment, Motor skills, Interpersonal behaviors etc. Although the program has just run a few months, Ugyen's report reveals the improvement he is making across several areas.

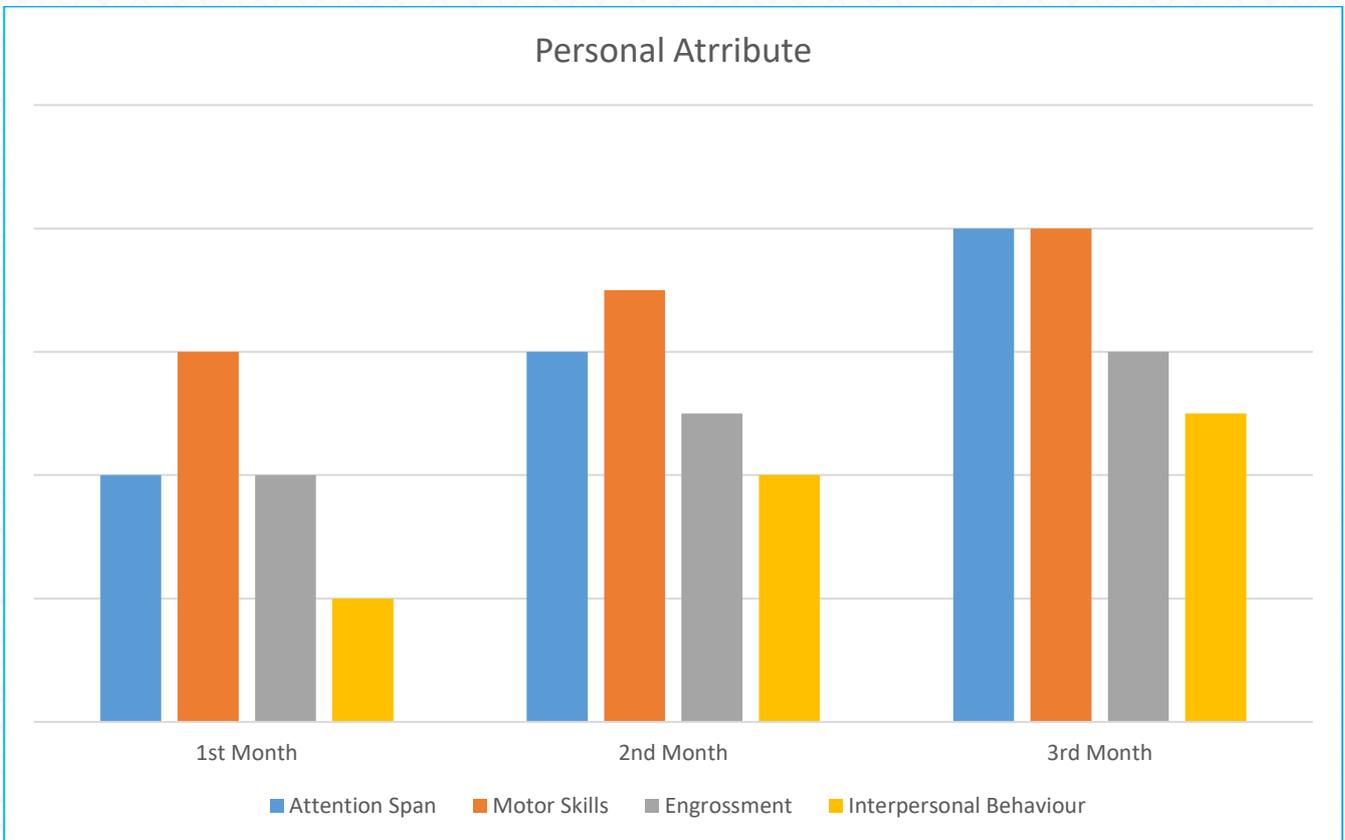


FACTS & IMPACT OF LB-AEMP (Quarter report analysis):

After 3 months from the commencement of the program sessions, Ugyen was able to develop attention span, overcome certain behavioral challenges, demonstrates enhanced artistic sense and improved sitting tolerance. His mother has learnt to step back and Ugyen is able to work more unsupervised and takes responsibility for his own work, his work materials and work area.



STATISTICAL FACTS:



TEACHING STRATEGIES:

Although this is the first time that the students are taking online sessions through video conferencing, they are fully engaged. This is achieved because the classes are well structured, daily lesson plans are ready in advance and the home assignments are designed to reinforce the work skills, attitudes and techniques and reinforce the work in class. The educator is well-trained and uses effective pedagogies to handle the student with calmness and patience. The approach is individualized to each student's need and goals.



PARENT TESTIMONY: The program so far has impacted certain areas such as attention span, behavior and sitting tolerance of my child. I see that all students are already more focused and enthusiastic I am sure LBAEMP strategies will bring out the most out of our children to make their lives more meaningful by making them independent.

Case Study 2



**RIGZEN PELDRUP
PHUNTSHOK**



BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES:

The youngest member of the class is Rigzen Peldrup Phuntshok from Thimphu, Bhutan. Rigzen is 9 years old now and he was diagnosed with global development delay with mild Autism when he was 3 years. He did not speak until 4 years old and early intervention at home started at age 3 plus. He was enrolled in day care at the age of 3 plus with his nanny assisting him in day care. He used to be aggressive and violent till his speech was fully developed. Numerous behavioural therapy and speech therapy approaches were explored when he was young. He is currently studying in grade 4 and has been going to main stream school right after 2 years in day care. Rigzen is a child with speech delay, challenges in comprehension, poor muscle tone and gross motor skills. He is unable to handle change and as a result needs to control everything from playing with friends, his routine and transitioning from one task to another.



SOLUTIONS:

Rigzen was one of the last children to be tested and accepted into the group. Significantly younger than the others, and with many concerns about ability to be engaged in online sessions, there was hesitation all around. However, since the family was willing and eager to try, and Rigzen showed so much inherent capacity in the test, it was decided to try it out. The pandemic and resultant break in routine put an additional worry and stress on the whole program. Yet, the structure offered by the program, the thorough engagement with the chance to express himself through creative media and the constant availability of support from experts at AIMS and Perkins International, ensured that Rigzen and his family stayed engaged with the program and visibly benefited in both personal and technical skills.

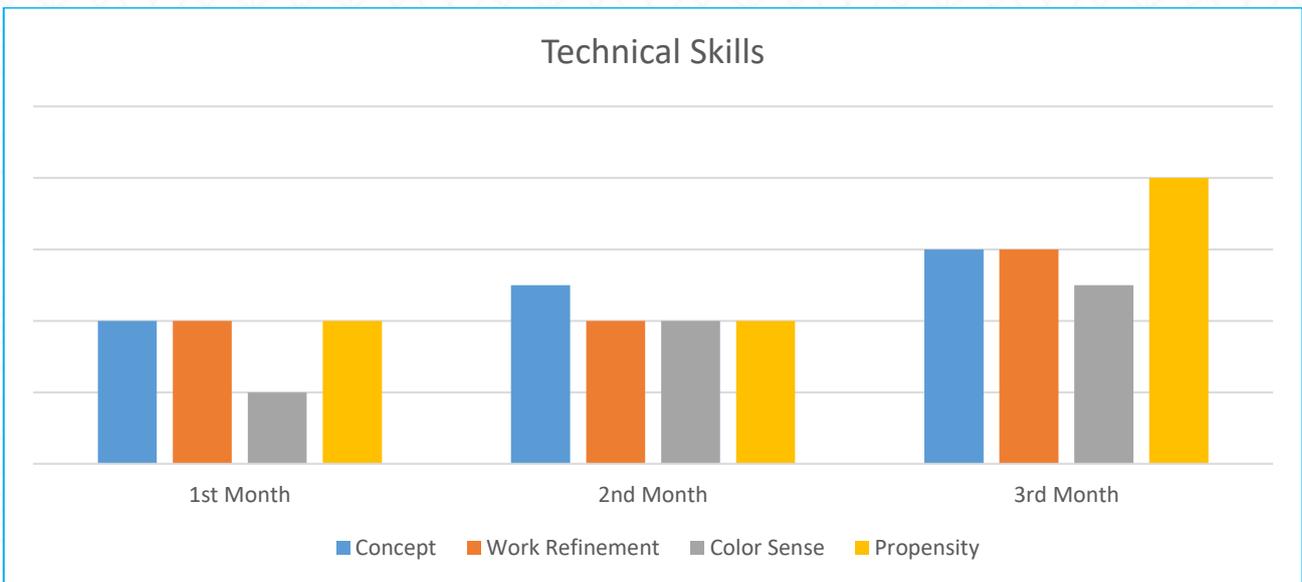
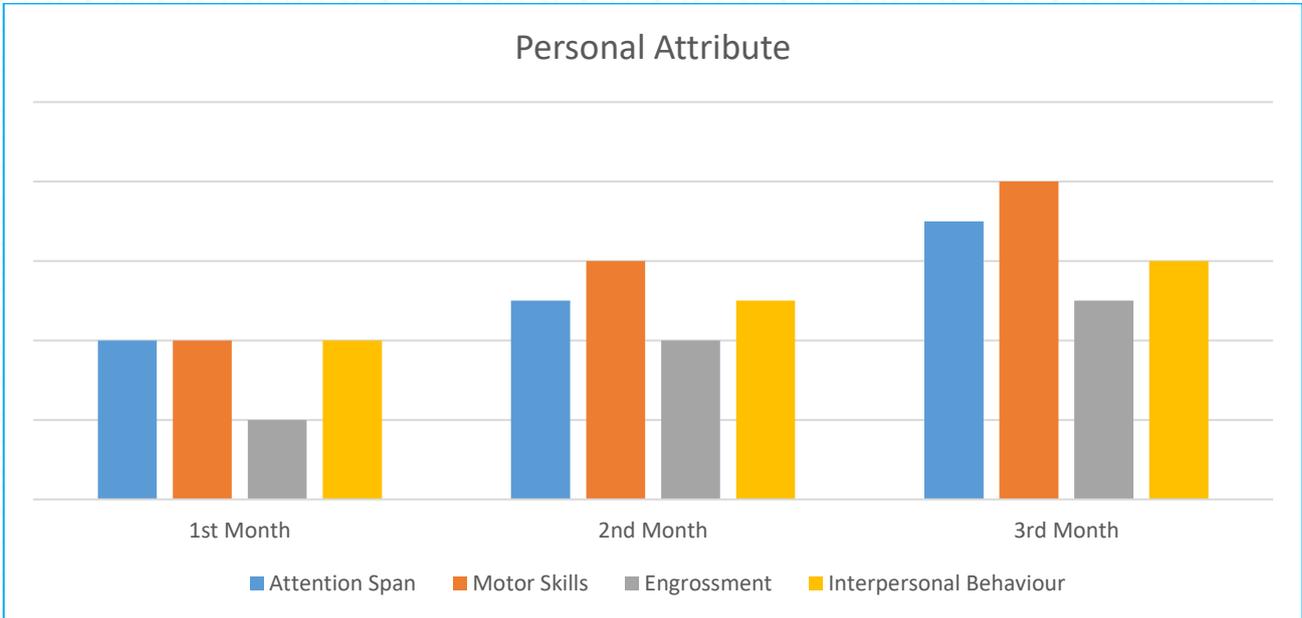


FACTS AND IMPACTS OF LBAEMP (QUARTER REPORT ANALYSIS): Rigzin showed progress in two different aspects of parameters

1. Personal Attribute: Improvement and enhancement shown in attention span, motor skills, engrossment and interpersonal behavior.
2. Technical skills: Improved and developed color sense, conceptual skills, work refinement and propensity.



STATISTICAL FACTS:



PARENT TESTIMONY: Rigzen motor skills seem to have improved a bit and it adds variation to his routine. He knows when to expect the class the days and time and for how long. The program does offer a lot for the future especially for my son who is not academically inclined and has all these problems.



FUTURE PROSPECTS

The Bhutan Foundation in-partnership with Perkins International have been working on improving the lives of children and youth with disabilities in Bhutan, mainly in the area of Transition planning from home to Day care, day care to school and school to adulthood.

“The AEMP program seemed to be a great fit for our youth with disabilities as it would equip them with various multimedia skills which could possibility lead to a career in the future. It also allows them to learn other life and work skill which is crucial to living a wholesome life. It’s been a very inspiring journey - just observing how the students are very excited to begin class and dedicated in their project. We observe students becoming more independent as they submit their own work, get their materials ready and hopefully this will continue. By the end of this program, we will hope students would have acquired various multimedia skills for them to start exploring career options.”

Sonam Yangden Tobgyel
Program Manager, Bhutan Foundation

“We believe that all children can learn, and that it is the responsibility of the systems of support and education to provide them with thoughtfully designed experiences so that they can participate meaningfully now and in the future. In AIMS media, we have found a program that exemplifies this principle. The important focus on real-life work skills supports participants and the adults around them, to change how they see themselves, from being dependent and in need of help to being capable, talented and worthy. All individuals rise in response to being treated with respect and dignity. We are thrilled to see the steady progress of change in the students and families of the program.

Dr. Namita Jacob
Senior Education Specialist, Perkins International

" The significant association of AIMS Media with The Bhutan Foundation and Perkins International collectively is to accomplish the objective of the program to create a sustainable model through implementation of Online Training sessions of AEMP (Ability Enhancement Multimedia Program) in Bhutan. Equal and active participation of management, parents and students during the tenure of 3 months has been incredible and highly appreciable in consideration to which we hope that we would be able to achieve the desired outcomes. It is Bhutan's first of its kind initiative to incorporate multimedia program for the people with disability/diverse needs in which they perceive utilization of innovative art and multimedia techniques to further learn to apply in graphic designing and animation. Periodical assessment and evaluation help the students to improve and develop multiple skills. For the upliftment of students every month Parents Training Session is scheduled to simultaneously train the parents to further create a sustainable livelihood for the children."

Dr. Maria Kapasi
Operational Head, AIMS Media Pvt. Ltd.