Impact Assessment of Projects undertaken by ITC's Social Investments Programme across India under Theme: Human Capital Development – Support to Education and Skilling of Youth

ITC Limited

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Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP

About the Thematic interventions under Assessment

Theme 1: Support to Education Programme	Theme 2: Skilling of Youth Programme
ITC's education initiatives focus on enhancing school infrastructure and learning outcomes for socially disadvantaged children using innovative child-friendly pedagogy. These efforts target Anganwadis and Primary and Upper Primary schools near ITC's manufacturing and agri-business sites. The program's major sub-components assessed by PW include (a) developing child-friendly infrastructure and promoting health and hygiene education, (b) enhancing functional literacy and numeracy, and (c) supporting Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).	The "Skilling of Youth Programme" by ITC aims to provide skill training to marginalised youth, offering courses in trades like hospitality, electrical, computer skills, and more, enhancing their livelihood opportunities and self-esteem. The initiatives operate in 34 districts across 16 states and has benefited 1.27 lakh youth. This programme not only improves employment prospects but also contributes to the overall well-being of their families.

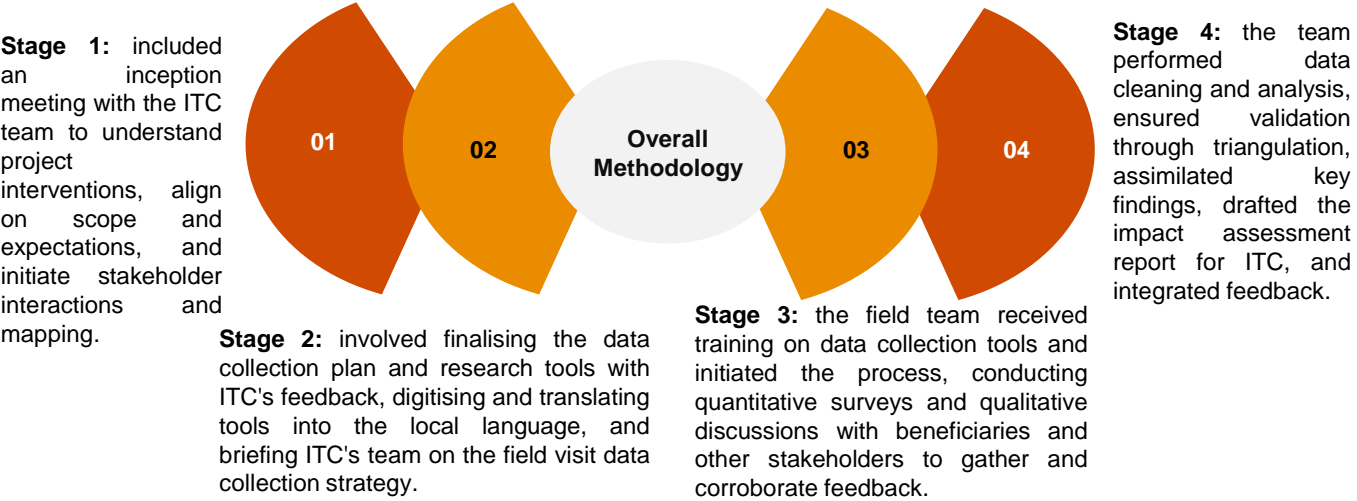| Specifics of "Support to Education Initiatives": Scope of Impact Assessment	Specifics of "Support to Education Initiatives": Scope of Impact Assessment
Geographical Presence: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal	**Geographical Presence:** Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal
Total number of beneficiaries: Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme - 65,935 Anganwadi children (along with their mothers), 9,197 school children (Read India Programme), 53 Schools & 22 Anganwadi centres (Infrastructure Support)	**Total number of beneficiaries:** 2,195 youth from marginalised sections of the society
Implementation partners: Rural development Organisation, FXB India Suraksha, Pratham, Water Sanitation and Hygiene Institute	**Implementation partners:** Bright Light Society, Anudip Foundation, Pratham and Don Bosco Tech Society
Period of Review: FY 2022-23	**Period of Review:** FY 2022-23

PWCALLP

Approach & Methodology

ITC Limited has engaged PWCALLP to carry out the impact assessment of its Social Investments Programme, focusing on two thematic areas (1) Support to Education and (2) Skilling of Youth. The assessment aimed to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of ITC's social impact initiatives under the aforesaid themes. The assessment was undertaken using the quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the impact of the activities undertaken under the CSR projects in mutual discussion with ITC. The scope of work involved conducting the desk review of the project documents, mapping of key programme stakeholders, developing research methodology, data collection from the field (Quantitative and Qualitative), analysis and report writing.

Stage 1: included an inception meeting with the ITC team to understand project interventions, align on scope and expectations, and initiate stakeholder interactions and mapping.

Stage 2: involved finalising the data collection plan and research tools with ITC's feedback, digitising and translating tools into the local language, and briefing ITC's team on the field visit data collection strategy.

Stage 3: the field team received training on data collection tools and initiated the process, conducting quantitative surveys and qualitative discussions with beneficiaries and other stakeholders to gather and corroborate feedback.

Stage 4: the team performed data cleaning and analysis, ensured validation through triangulation, assimilated key findings, drafted the impact assessment report for ITC, and integrated feedback.

01 02 Overall Methodology 03 04

Sampling Plan

Quantitative Sample

Theme	Sample Size for Case Group	Actual Coverage for Case Group	Sample Size for Control Group	Actual Coverage for Control Group
Support to Education	550	575	95	123
Skilling of Youth	350	373	91	109
TOTAL	**900**	**948**	**186**	**232**

Qualitative Sample

Theme	Sample size for KII*	Actual Coverage for KII	Sample Size for FGD*	Actual Coverage for FGD
Support to Education	57	57	20	20
Skilling of Youth	48	48	8	8
TOTAL	**105**	**105**	**28**	**28**

The control group was randomly selected through convenient sampling from respondents residing within the vicinity of the ITC Centers' catchment area. Efforts were made to ensure that both the case and control groups have similar socio-economic demographic profile as much as possible.

IRECS Framework used for the assessment

Inclusiveness

Ability of different stakeholders, particularly poorest and most marginalised - to access the benefits of activities

Relevance

Are the services /inputs in the project able to meet community priorities? How was the planning done ? Was it participatory ?

Effectiveness

Have the activities been able to effectively address community expectations? How efficiently have the resources been deployed, monitored and utilised?

Convergence

Degree of convergence with government/other partnerships; relationship between individuals, community, institutions and other stakeholders

Sustainability

Do communities feel ownership over the assets created by the activities and/or will the Project initiated community interventions sustain even after the exit?

Key Findings – Support to Education

Profile of the respondents

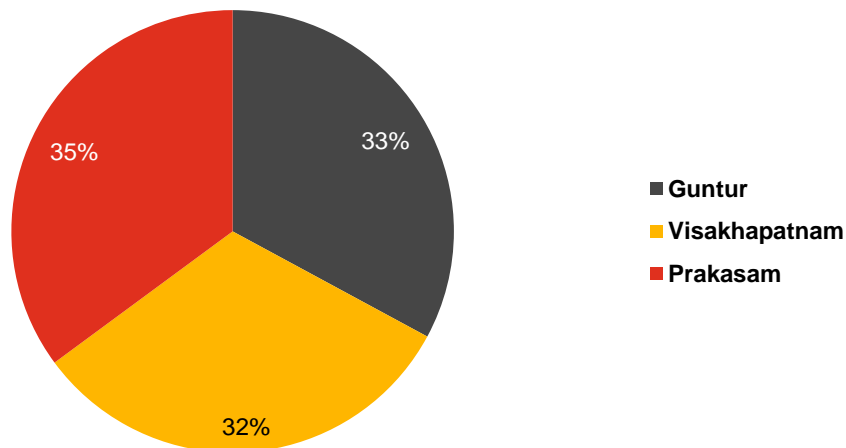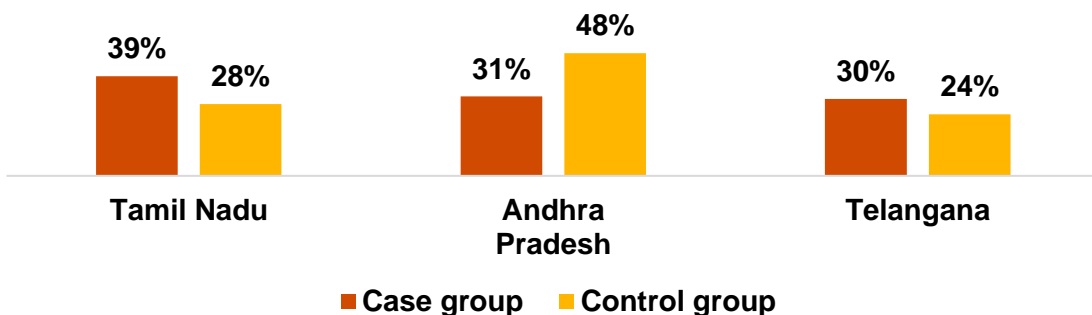**Figure 1: Beneficiary distribution for ECCE intervention (n=225)**

- Guntur
- Visakhapatnam
- Prakasam

Figure 2: Respondent distribution amongst case (n=350) and control (n=123) groups for Read India Programme

■ Case group   ■ Control group

Note: Infrastructure support to schools and Anganwadis has been assessed qualitatively

Support to ECCE intervention*

❑ A total of 225 interactions were held with the respondents, in Anganwadis, with 33% being covered from Guntur, 32% from Visakhapatnam, and **35% from Prakasam districts in the state of Andhra Pradesh.**

❑ All the surveyed respondents **(100%, n=225) being Anganwadi Sevikas were females**

Read India Programme

❑ A total of 350 (student) interactions were done with the case group, with 39%, 31%, and 30% interactions being covered from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana respectively.

❑ Further, as a part of control group survey, 123 interactions (student) were conducted with the school children, with 28%, 48%, and 24% interactions being covered from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana respectively.

❑ Survey findings indicate that **51% (n=350) of the respondents in the case group are females, whereas 63% (n=123) respondents in the control group are females**.

*A PPP project implemented by ITC Limited in partnership with Women Development and Child Welfare Department, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh

# Impact Findings - Effective Social and Cognitive Skills Development

A large majority of respondents **(98%, n=225) rated the programme's impact on social skills development with scores of 4 or 5**. The average score of 4.74 indicates consistent positive feedback. High ratings support the programme's activities and approach, showing **its potential as a model for similar initiatives in social skill enhancement for children**

Figure 3: Observed improvement in social skills of children (n=225)

- 73% Cooperation
- 81% Communication
- 79% Sharing
- 53% Empathy
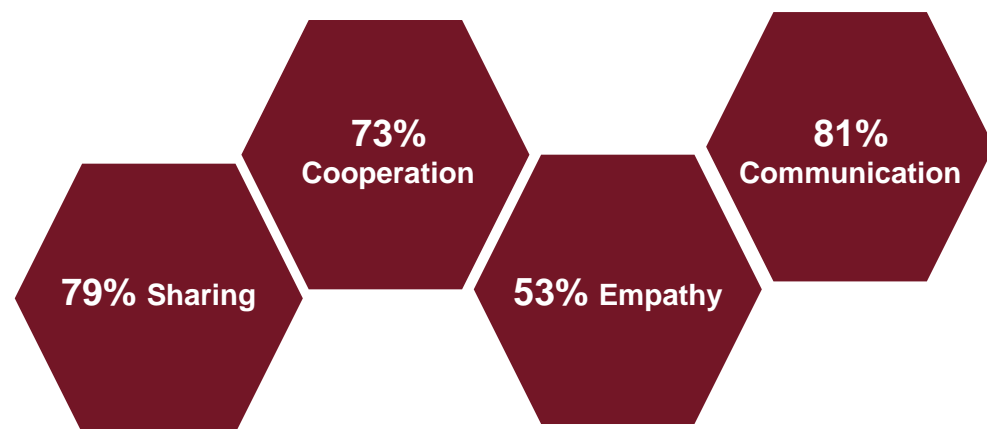
❑ The programme has significantly **enhanced children's communication skills (81%, n=225)**, against baseline allowing them to express thoughts and feelings more effectively. Previously limited to single words or short phrases, children now form full sentences, improving their engagement in home and classroom discussions and interactions with peers and adults.

❑ Sharing skills **have also improved (79%, n=225), against baseline, fostering empathy and understanding**. For example, children now often share crayons or paper during craft sessions at the Anganwadi centre without teacher prompting.

❑ **Cooperation skills have increased notably (73%, n=225), against baselines,** enabling children to work collaboratively towards common goals, essential for group activities and future workplaces. During group storytelling activities, children take turns contributing and listen attentively to each other's ideas.

❑ The programme's structured activities and play sessions simulate real-world social interactions, **providing a safe environment for practicing social skills** through group games, role-playing, and collaborative tasks. These activities help children navigate social contexts, enhancing adaptability and understanding of social norms.

❑ Improved communication **reduces frustration and conflicts,** while enhanced cooperation fosters teamwork and respect. By equipping children with conflict resolution abilities and enhancing peer relationships, the programme supports healthier social environments, crucial during formative years.

Figure 4: Children's Preferences towards cognitive activity (n=225)

- Story Telling 88%
- Drawing 62%
- Building Blocks 82%
- Puzzles 79%
- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04
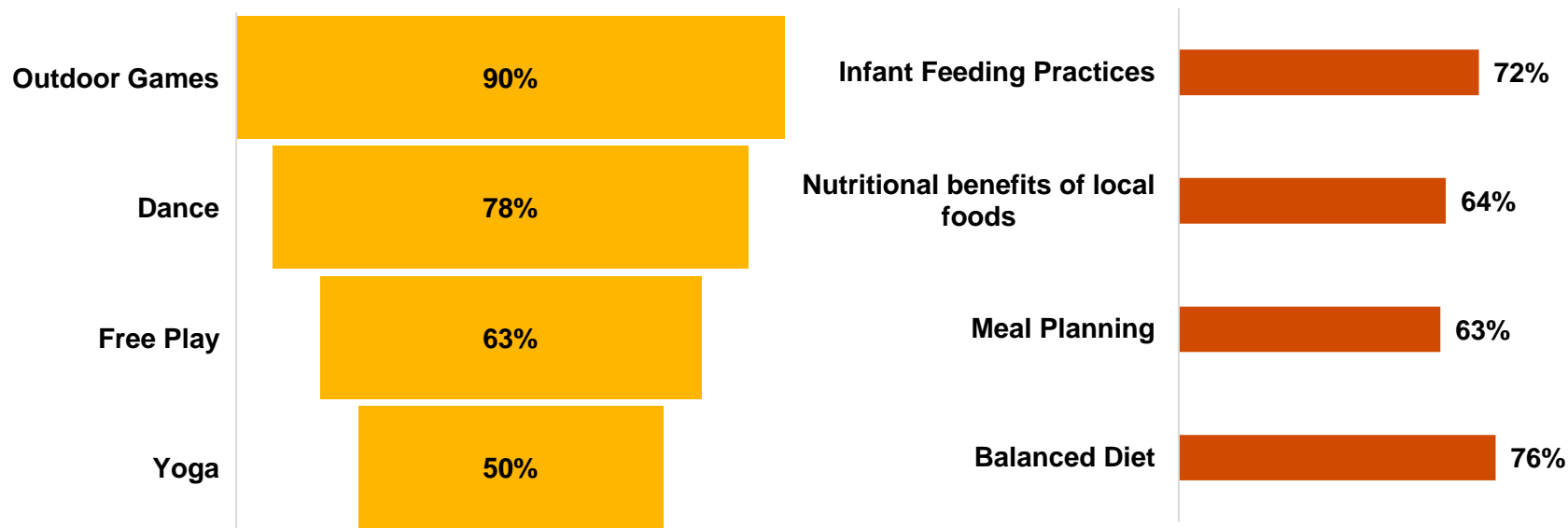
Children's Preferences towards cognitive activity (n=225)
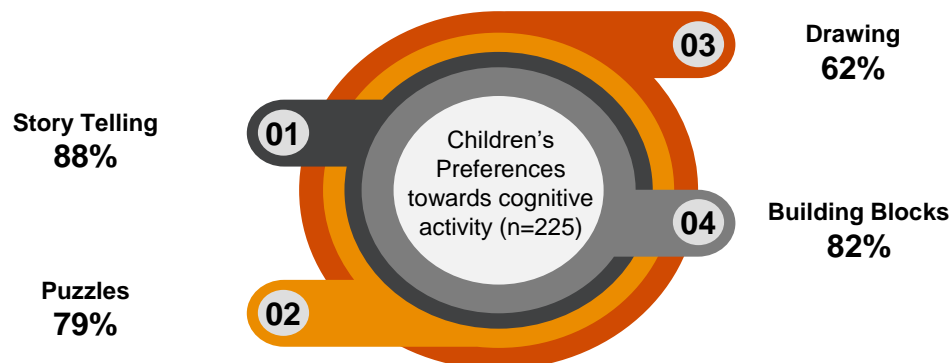
❑ The programme on ECCE **focuses on cultivating empathy and emotional literacy to build resilience and emotional intelligence in children**. It uses a holistic approach, including activities like role-playing, storytelling, group activities, and community engagement, such as planting trees or visiting elderly community members, to help children connect with others and adapt to diverse social environments.

❑ Key cognitive enhancement activities in the programme **include storytelling (88%, n=225), which stimulates imagination, creativity**, and critical thinking while supporting language development and comprehension skills crucial for academic success. **Building Blocks (82%, n=225) promote problem-solving, logical thinking, and spatial awareness**, aiding cognitive development necessary for complex tasks in school.

❑ The programme empowers Anganwadi sevikas to engage children in play-based learning, emphasising story telling and building blocks to nurture emotional intelligence and cognitive abilities.

Impact Findings - Enhanced Physical & Nutritional Education

The programme has been rated **highly effective (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest) in promoting physical activities amongst the children** as reported by 98% of respondents (n=225). This high level of engagement indicates an approval for the programme's approach to enhancing physical health. The respondents stated that the **emphasis on outdoor activities not only contributes to physical fitness but also reinforces the importance of cooperation and communication in group settings**.

Figure 5: Outdoor activities and Nutritional Topics liked by Children and Mothers respectively (n=225)

Outdoor Games 90%
Dance 78%
Free Play 63%
Yoga 50%

Infant Feeding Practices 72%
Nutritional benefits of local foods 64%
Meal Planning 63%
Balanced Diet 76%

❑ With a mean score of 4.75 (n=225), the programme is rated highly effective in educating mothers about nutrition. Topics such as **balanced diets and infant feeding practices, rated as the most important nutrition topics by 76% and 72% of respondents (n=225) respectively**, empower parents and families of the children to make informed and healthier dietary choices.

❑ As stated by the respondents, information on these topics **equips families with the knowledge necessary for fostering healthy eating habits.** This empowerment can **lead to improved long-term health outcomes for children,** ensuring they receive the necessary nutrients for growth and development.

❑ The programme's comprehensive approach addresses both immediate and future health needs, fostering a culture of wellness in the community. Further, it **complements both physical and nutritional well-being, fostering lifelong healthy habits.**

Impact Findings - Effective Community and Parental Engagement

The programme has been instrumental in fostering community and parental engagement, with **98% of respondents (n=225) acknowledging regular parental involvement since the programme has been implemented.** This indicates a robust connection between the programme and the families it serves, emphasising the importance of active participation in child development.
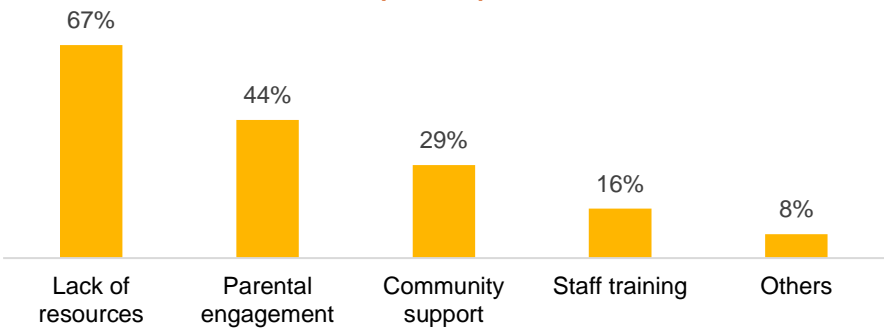
Figure 6: Specific challenges faced during implementation (n=225)

- □ **In-person meetings have been identified as the most effective communication medium by 88% of respondents (n=225).** These face-to-face interactions facilitate direct communication and feedback, strengthening the relationship between the programme and the community.
- □ Further, there are mother groups formed which facilitate communication with several stakeholders at one time. This may be either through group meetings within the Anganwadis or through virtual messages over mediums such as WhatsApp. This method **allows for real-time problem-solving and fosters a sense of trust and collaboration among participants.**
- □ However, challenges such as **resource limitations (67%, n=225)** and **difficulty in sustaining parental engagement (44%, n=225)** suggest areas for improvement.
- □ As mentioned earlier, WhatsApp messages were one of the ways for parental engagement. However, on probing further, some respondents stated that sustaining parental engagement through in-person meetings becomes a challenge since in most of the cases, both the parents of these children are daily wage workers.
- □ To address the challenge of parental engagement, virtual touch-points like WhatsApp messages are being utilised to enhance communication and involvement.
- □ It was clarified during the interactions with the AWWs that the issue of "lack of resources" is primarily related to government support rather than the design of the programme itself.
- □ Challenges related to community support are being managed through consistent interactions and meetings with local organisations, such as the Panchayat offices, while staff training is improved through regular follow-up sessions and refresher courses for Anganwadi Workers in the intervention areas.

Table 1: Effectiveness of the programme on facets of development among children

Parameters	5-point scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Children develop social skills	0%	0%	2%	22%	76%
Foster emotional development among children	0%	0%	2%	22%	76%
Children adjust to group activities	0%	0%	5%	30%	65%
Enhancing children`s problem-solving abilities	0%	0%	4%	24%	71%

"The programme, along with the parental engagement techniques we learned, has significantly enhanced parental involvement in their children's education. The mother groups have been instrumental in this process, serving as a vital platform for maintaining connections with mothers. Even if we can't engage with each mother individually, the group setting ensures that important messages reach them, even when they can't attend in-person meetings."

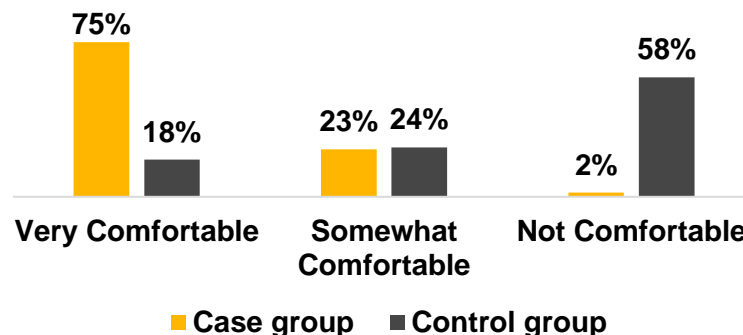**As narrated by one of the Anganwadi Sevika in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh**

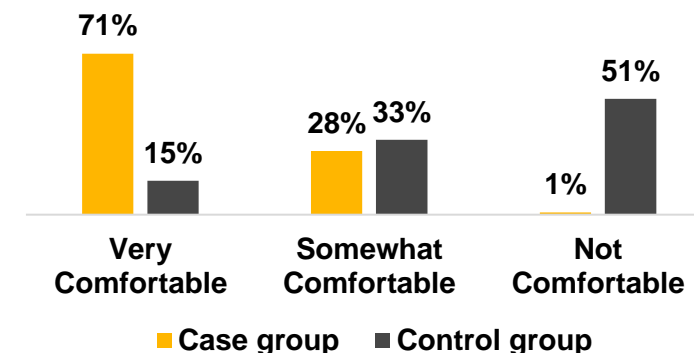# Impact Findings - Math and Reading Skills Improvement

Figure 7: Case and Control respondents Improvement on Reading skills (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)
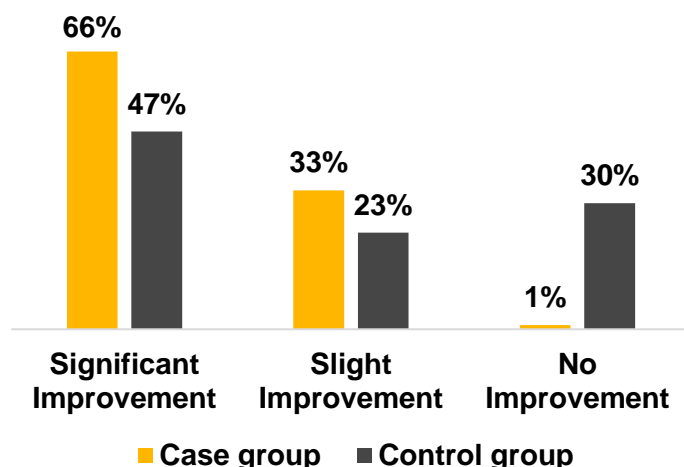

■ Case group ■ Control group
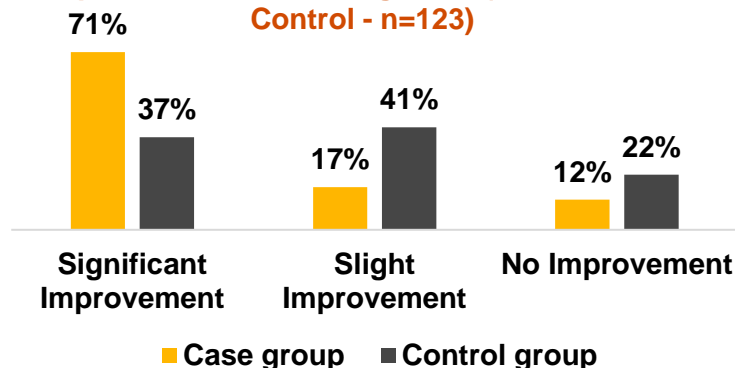
Figure 8: Case and Control respondents' comfort on Reading skills (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)

■ Case group ■ Control group

Figure 9: Case and Control respondents' comfort on Maths skills (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)

■ Case group ■ Control group

Figure 10: Case and Control respondents Improvement on Math Problem –Solving skills (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)
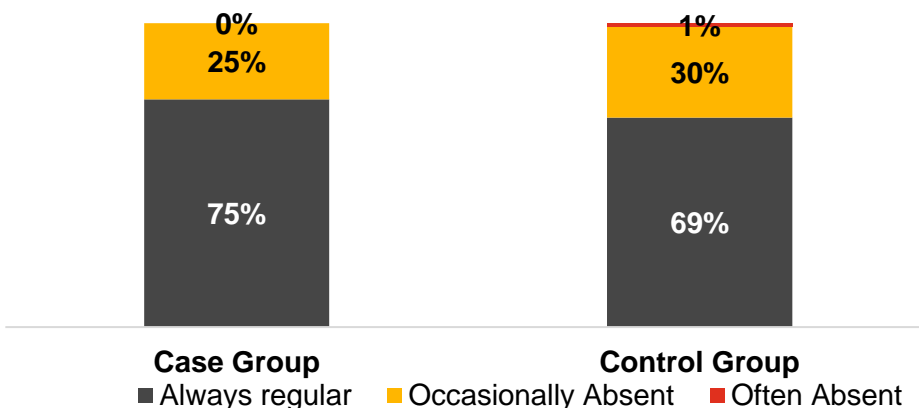

■ Case group ■ Control group

❑ **Reading Improvement:** 71% of the case group (n=350) reported improved reading skills, significantly, since FY 2022-23, compared to 37% in the control group (n=123), demonstrating the effectiveness of tailored reading methods in programme locations.

❑ **Comfort with Reading:** 75% of the case group felt "Very Comfortable" with reading texts, while only 17% in the control group felt the same, highlighting the programme's positive impact on reading comprehension.

❑ **Personalised Content:** Tailored reading programmes offered personalised content that resonated with students, helping them overcome literacy challenges through engaging materials.

❑ **Math Skills Improvement:** 66% of the case group showed significant improvement in math problem-solving skills, versus 47% in the control group, indicating success of specialised Math workshops.

❑ **Confidence in Math:** 71% of the case group reported being "Very Comfortable" in solving Maths, compared to 15% in the control group.

❑ **Interactive Math Workshops:** Specialised Math workshops were hands-on and contextual, effectively building students' confidence and competence.

❑ **Programme Effectiveness:** Significant improvements in both reading and math skills among the case group students were attributed to personalised, engaging educational strategies that addressed students' individual needs.

Note: For the analysis depicted in figures 7, 8, 9 and 10, the respondents were asked to rate their improvement and / or comfort on a 3-point Likert scale, wherein 1 indicates "No Improvement" or "Not comfortable", 2 indicates "Slight Improvement" or "Somewhat Comfortable", and 3 indicates "Significant Improvement" or "Very Comfortable".

The numbers used here are weighted average of the responses

# Impact Findings - Improved School Attendance and Participation

Figure 11: Case and Control comparison on regularity in Schools (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)

- ❑ In terms of regular school attendance, **75% of the case group (n 350) reported being "always regular" compared to 69% in the control group (n= 123)**. This reflects the intervention's effectiveness in reducing absenteeism. Further, the respondents were probed on any changes in the attendance of their classmates since the intervention year. **78% of the case group respondents (n=350) stated that their classmates have been more regular to the classes, while only 21% of the control group respondents (n=123) stated the same.** Also, the teachers from schools in intervention locations, shared that the attendance in the schools was considerably lower earlier, than what it is now.

- ❑ The intervention focused on identifying and addressing barriers to attendance, such as lack of motivation. By creating a more welcoming and supportive environment, **students felt more inclined to attend regularly.** Team also noted that teaching methods were not engaging/ relatable and hence, students used to lose interest leading to the lack of motivation to attend the schools. Teachers added that this programme has been able to address this aspect effectively.

Figure 12: Case and Control comparison on classmates' attendance (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)
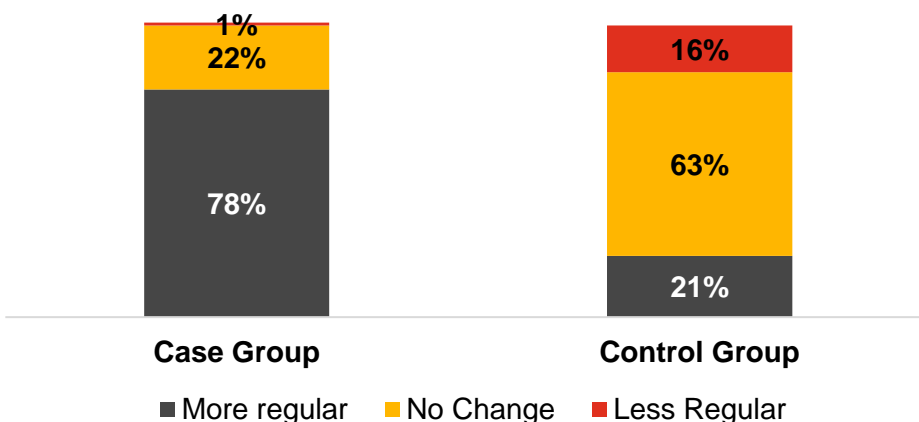
- ❑ Participation in group discussions was slightly **higher in the Case group, with 67% (n=350) participating actively, compared to 57% in the Control group (n=123)**. This indicates to a more inclusive classroom environment fostered by the intervention. The higher participation rates in group discussions within the case group suggests that the programme interventions have successfully enhanced student engagement. This is achieved through **deploying strategies aimed at developing students' communication and discussion skills.** This factor could be one of the potential reasons to contribute to greater confidence among students in expressing their ideas and opinions during discussions.

- ❑ The increase in active participation indicates that the **intervention fostered a classroom environment where students felt safe to express their ideas.** As stated by the teachers, this was due to the component of the intervention, which emphasised on inclusive teaching practices and collaborative learning.

Impact Findings – Enhanced Critical Thinking and Confidence

Supportive Environment leading to Enhanced Critical Thinking

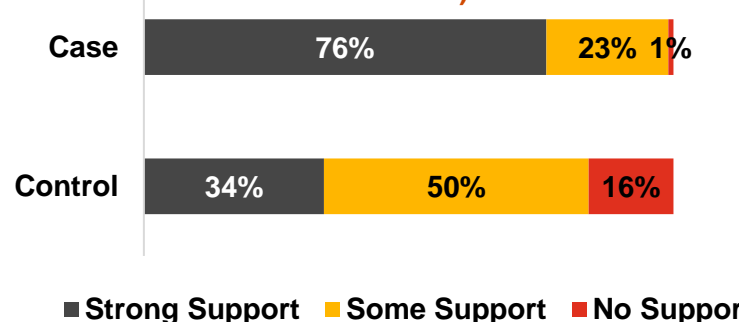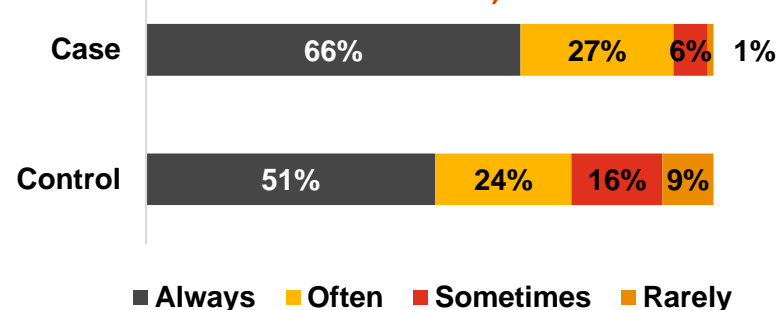**Figure 13: Case and Control group comparison on perceived teachers' support (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)**

Case: 76% | 23% | 1%
Control: 34% | 50% | 16%

- Strong Support
- Some Support
- No Suppor

Figure 14: Case and Control group comparison on usage of critical thinking (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)

Case: 66% | 27% | 6% | 1%
Control: 51% | 24% | 16% | 9%

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely

☐ The intervention improved perceived teacher support, with **76% of the Case group feeling well-supported versus 34% of the Control group**, enhancing student-teacher relationships and fostering critical thinking.

☐ Survey results show **66% of the Case group regularly applied critical thinking skills in their schoolwork compared to 51% of the Control group**, affirming the programme's success in creating a supportive and stimulating educational environment.

Improved Confidence and Motivation among the Children

Figure 15: Case and Control group comparison on confidence (Case - n=350, Control - n=123)
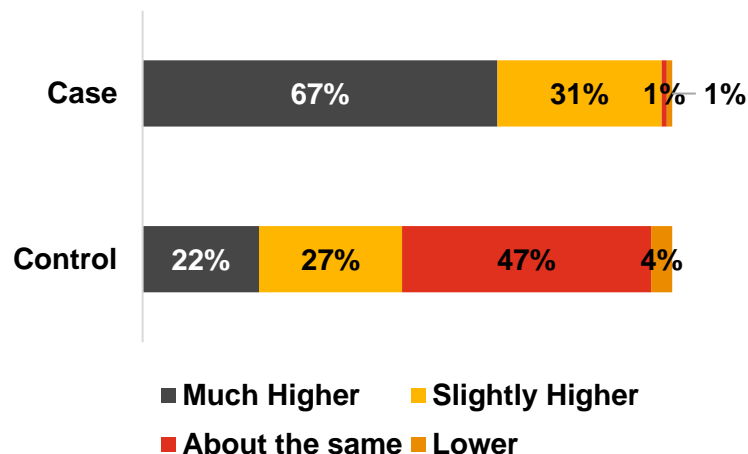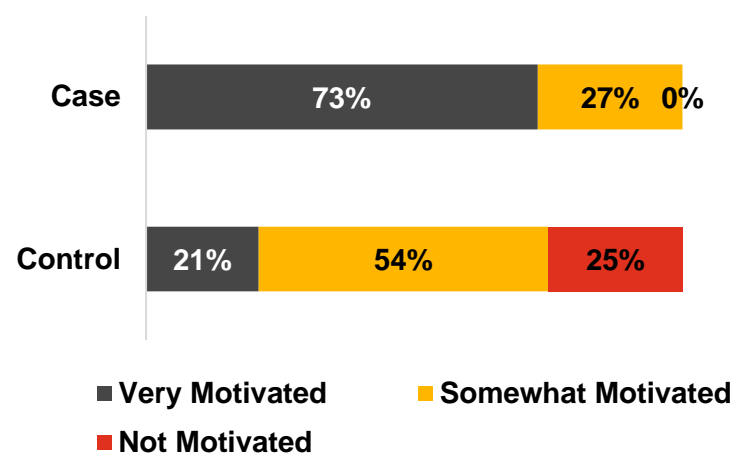
Case: 67% | 31% | 1% | 1%
Control: 22% | 27% | 47% | 4%

- Much Higher
- Slightly Higher
- About the same
- Lower

Figure 16: Case and Control group comparison on motivation (Case- n=350, Control- n=123)

Case: 73% | 27% | 0%
Control: 21% | 54% | 25%

- Very Motivated
- Somewhat Motivated
- Not Motivated

☐ Post-intervention, **67% of the Case group reported increased confidence compared to 22% in the Control group**, with 73% feeling motivated to learn, highlighting the intervention's success through activities that connect academic content to real-world contexts and use innovative teaching methods.

☐ Enhanced educational aspirations were evident, with **73% of the Case group felt very motivated to continue their studies,** implying the intervention's positive impact on both students' outlook towards education and motivation to pursue learning.

PWCALLP

Impact Findings – Creating a Holistic Impact

Improvement in School Infrastructure

❑ ITC's Support to Education initiative upgraded Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, improving hygiene through new child-friendly toilets and handwashing stations in 53 schools and 22 Anganwadi centers.

❑ The programme also enhances infrastructure by building boundary walls, renovating kitchens, and upgrading school buildings for a secure and supportive educational environment.

❑ School Management Development Committees (SMDCs/SMCs) play a key role in maintaining these improvements, emphasising the importance of community engagement in sustaining educational progress.

Improved Hygiene and Sanitation Practices

❑ The programme has increased hygiene awareness among students and staff through comprehensive training, improving school cleanliness and reducing illness-related absenteeism.

❑ The initiative extends beyond schools, with mothers' groups and community platforms reinforcing hygiene at home, supported by training sessions for students and parents.

❑ Key aspects include integrating hygiene practices into school routines, establishing soap banks, and involving Child Cabinets, promoting a culture of responsibility and reducing illness risk.

Increased Student Engagement and Attendance

❑ The programme has increased student engagement and attendance, particularly among girls, by addressing hygiene issues and eliminating barriers like unclean toilets. Attendance rates have risen to over 82%.

❑ Initiatives, such as soap donations and maintenance contributions, foster ownership and responsibility among students, boosting participation in school life.

❑ Students are encouraged to maintain school hygiene, enhancing their commitment and building life skills through a deeper connection to their educational environment.

Parental and Community Involvement

❑ The programme emphasises parental and community involvement in maintaining school hygiene and infrastructure, encouraging participation to ensure WASH facilities remain functional and clean.

❑ Strengthened SMCs and PTAs empower local stakeholders in school management, enhancing programme sustainability and fostering community ownership.

❑ Mothers' groups boost home-based learning and support school activities, increasing parental involvement and creating a supportive environment for students' educational development.

❑ Community platforms reinforce learning and hygiene, while an O&M box manages funds for maintaining facilities post-project, promoting long-term sustainability and community responsibility.

PWCALLP

IRECS Analysis

Parameter	Assessment from Study
Inclusiveness	❑ The programme targets gender disparities by promoting universal access to education and aims to close gender and social category gaps specifically in elementary schooling. ❑ Read India Programme actively involves students in the three states where it has been implemented, namely, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana. ❑ The ECCE initiative has a strong element of women inclusion, through capacity building of Anganwadi Sevikas, 100% of which are female.
Relevance	❑ The programme's personalised educational strategies enhanced learning experiences, addressing individual student needs. Specialised math workshops were interactive, helping 71% of the case group feel "Very Confident" in solving word problems. ❑ The Read India Programme focused on foundational skills in Language and Math for students aged 6 to 14 years.
Effectiveness	❑ The ECCE project significantly enhanced children's social skills, with 98% of respondents (n=225) rating its impact highly, averaging a score of 4.74. Improvements were noted in communication, sharing, and cooperation skills, crucial for interactions at home and school. The programme also promoted cognitive and emotional growth through activities like storytelling and building blocks, which encouraged imagination, creativity, and problem-solving. ❑ Community and parental engagement was strengthened, with 98% of respondents acknowledging regular involvement and a strong connection with families. ❑ In the Read India Initiative, 71% of the case group showed improvement in Reading Skills, compared to 37% in the control group, and 66% showed improvement in Math skills versus 47% in the control group. ❑ Enhanced WASH infrastructure in schools and anganwadis improved hygiene and sanitation, reducing absenteeism due to illness and raising awareness about personal hygiene and sanitation among students and staff.
Convergence	❑ The Education programme contributes to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 ❑ The ECCE programme is implemented with a PPP model in collaboration with the Government of Andhra Pradesh utilises a hub and spoke model in Anganwadis to disseminate educational practices effectively, enhancing early childhood care and education. It also serves as a model showcasing that impact at scale can be achieved through such initiatives. ❑ The WASH initiative supports the Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya campaign by improving water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities in government schools, promoting healthier and cleaner learning environments. ❑ Collaboration with School Management Development Committees (SMDCs) encourages parental involvement and helps maintain and manage the enhanced school facilities.
Sustainability	❑ The ECCE project emphasises the involvement of parents and community members to promote collaboration and ownership, enhancing the sustainability of early childhood education initiatives. ❑ Anganwadi Sevikas receive training sessions focused on modern teaching methods and resource management, ensuring effective education practices beyond initial interventions. ❑ The programme fosters student accountability through initiatives such as soap donations and maintenance contributions, while engaging parents and community members in maintaining school facilities using tools like the O&M box, thereby ensuring the functionality and cleanliness of WASH facilities.

Recommendations

ECCE Programme

Refresher trainings for Anganwadi Sevikas	To enhance the effectiveness of AWWs, it is recommended to implement a comprehensive approach that includes both regular refresher courses and the integration of digital learning platforms. Regular refresher courses should be conducted quarterly or bi-annually to keep AWWs updated with the latest developments in early childhood education, pedagogy, and childcare practices. These courses would cover critical areas such as cognitive and emotional development, nutrition, child safety, and inclusive education. By focusing on these topics, AWWs can cater to the diverse needs of children more effectively.
Focused strategies to amplify parental engagement	It was noted during the field visits that many of the parents are daily wage laborers. This inhibits their involvement in the Anganwadi's activities. There could be targeted strategies, involving more door-to-door meetings at suitable time of the day to engage such parents further. While the mother groups facilitate some degree of contact, AWWs were of the opinion that in-person meetings with the individual mothers would be further beneficial to propagate the programme impact.

Read India Programme

Targeted intervention to focus on Language skills	While the programme focuses on both on Numeracy and Literacy improvement, there could be targeted interventions specifically around improvement of Language skills. This is evidenced through the quantitative findings, where the students in both case and control groups perceive similar improvements in such skills during the same duration. Further, teachers have also highlighted that the programme has been more effective in building on the Math skills as compared to the Language skills

Infrastructure Support to Schools and Anganwadis

|	
Empowerment of SMDCs	Empowering School Management and Development Committees (SMDCs) is vital for better school governance and educational outcomes. Focus on training SMDC members in resource management, leadership, decision-making, and collaboration. Conduct workshops on financial planning and community resource leveraging. Develop leadership skills through team building and strategic planning sessions. Enhance decision-making with frameworks and data-driven approaches to align with school goals. Facilitate networking through regional forums and online platforms for sharing best practices. These initiatives will enable SMDCs to manage schools more effectively, advocate for improvements, and foster environments that support student success..
Regular feedback mechanism	The team observed that while there have been notable improvements in school infrastructure, there remains significant room for further enhancement. For instance, some schools have expressed a need for smart classrooms, but implementation has been delayed due to insufficient funding. To address this, it is recommended that a regular feedback mechanism be established to accurately capture the evolving needs and demands within schools and Anganwadis. This mechanism should involve students, parents, and teachers in providing input on infrastructure improvements. By regularly collecting and analysing feedback from these stakeholders, continuous quality enhancement can be ensured which can better align resources with the most pressing needs, ultimately creating more effective learning environments

Key Findings – Skilling of Youth Programme
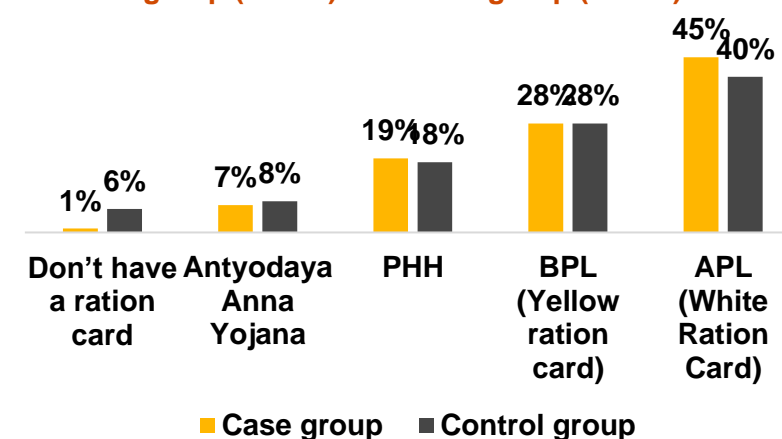
Profile of the respondents

Figure 17: Gender Distribution of the respondents Case group (n=373) & (n=109)
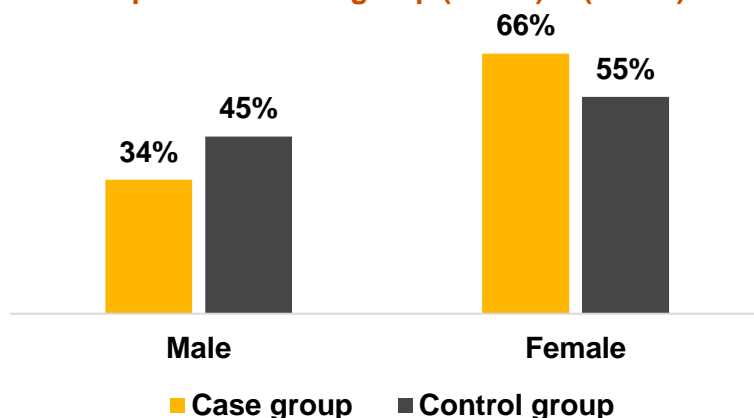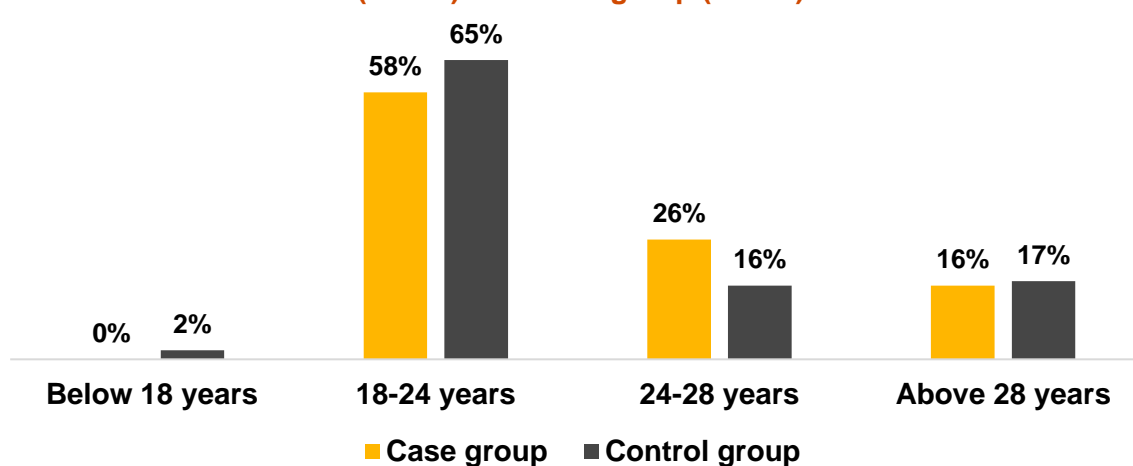

Figure 18: Social category-wise distribution Case group (n=373) & Control group (n=109)
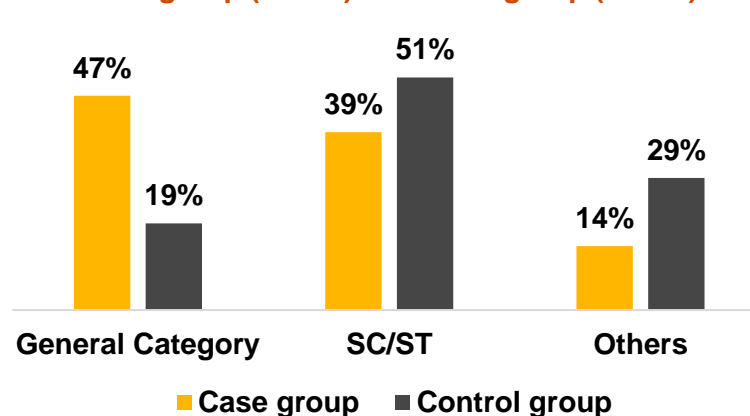
Figure 19: Types of ration cards with the Case group (n=373) & Control group (n=109)

Figure 20: Age-wise distribution of the respondents Case group (n=373) & Control group (n=109)

Case Group:

❑ Gender: 66% female, 34% male.
❑ Age: 31% aged 20-22, 20% aged 22-24.
❑ Education: Only 26% completed a diploma or higher, indicating limited access to education and potential employment challenges.
❑ Poverty: 99% own ration cards with 7% AAY, 19% Priority Household Cards (PHH), and 28% BPL, showing household poverty and effective targeting of marginalised and economically disadvantaged youth.
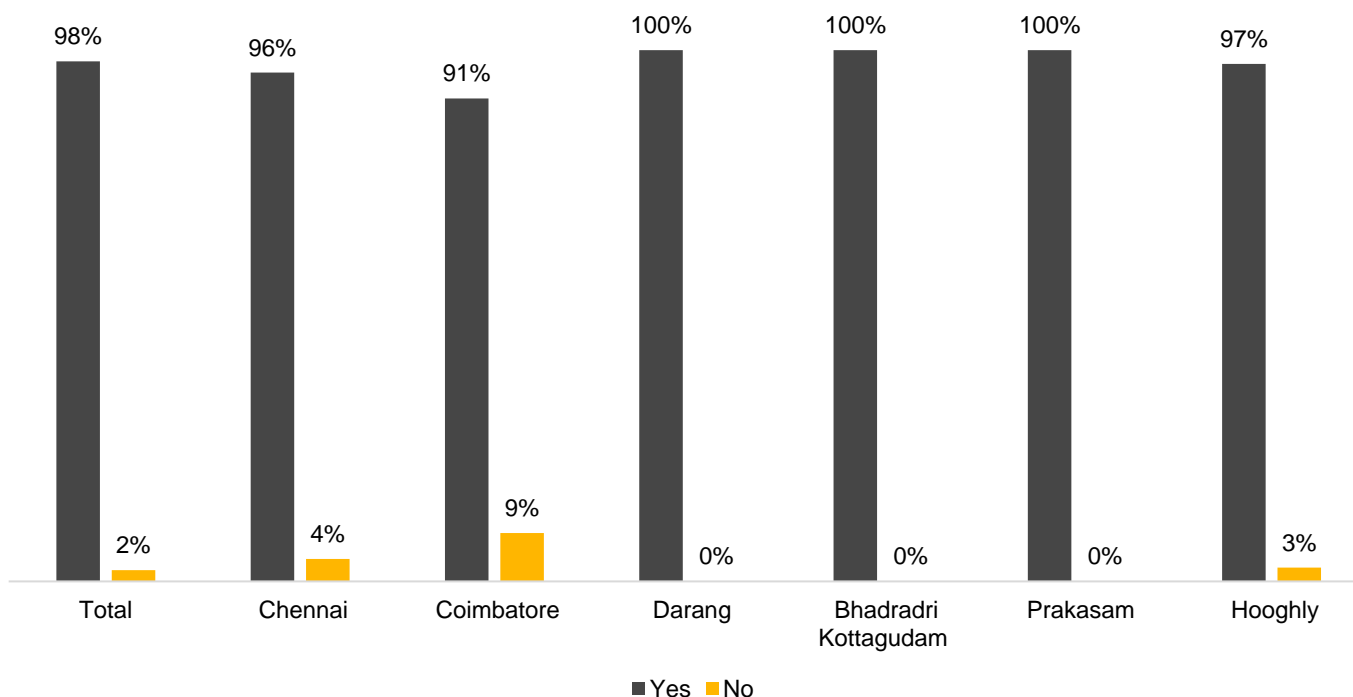
Control Group:

❑ Gender: 55% female, 45% male.
❑ Age: 41% aged 18-20, 17% above 28 years.
❑ Education: 23% completed a diploma or higher, similar access challenges as the case group.
❑ Poverty: 99% own ration cards with 8% AAY, 18% PHH, and 28% BPL, indicating prevalent household poverty.

Impact Findings: Creating a Pool of Skilled and Certified Workforce

The following section of the report highlights the key findings and analysis of the impact created by the "Skilling of Youth programme" among the beneficiaries. These **findings and analysis are based on the responses of 373 participants (n=373) from the case group and 109 participants (n=109)** from the control group (wherever relevant) of the quantitative study along with information gathered during the interactions with key stakeholders.

Figure 21: Percentage of the respondent completed the assessment & obtaining third-party certificates (n=373)

Legend: ■ Yes ■ No

Bar chart data:
- Total: Yes 98%, No 2%
- Chennai: Yes 96%, No 4%
- Coimbatore: Yes 91%, No 9%
- Darang: Yes 100%, No 0%
- Bhadradri Kottagudam: Yes 100%, No 0%
- Prakasam: Yes 100%, No 0%
- Hooghly: Yes 97%, No 3%

❑ The programme allows trainees to attend the first seven days without commitment, enabling them to assess its alignment with their goals. This reduces dropout rates **to 5-10% as individuals can opt out early without repercussions.**

❑ Early filtering of less committed participants ensures that those who continue are highly motivated, fostering a cohesive and focused learning environment conducive to engagement and mutual support.

❑ With **98% of respondents (n=373) passing the final assessment and earning an NSDC* certificate**, the programme demonstrates its effectiveness in enhancing participants' job prospects and career advancement opportunities.

❑ Evaluations by **NSDC-recognised third parties ensure unbiased, standardised assessments aligned with national standards**, boosting trainees' employability and competitive edge in the job market.

❑ Adherence to SOPs at training centres **enhances the effectiveness and impact of skill training programmes**, ensuring that operational and educational standards are consistently met.

❑ The programme transforms underserved regions by equipping trainees with market-relevant skills, highlighting the **importance of expanding access to similar initiatives for economic and social progress**.

*** NSDC – National Skill Development Corporation**

Impact Findings: Improved Income

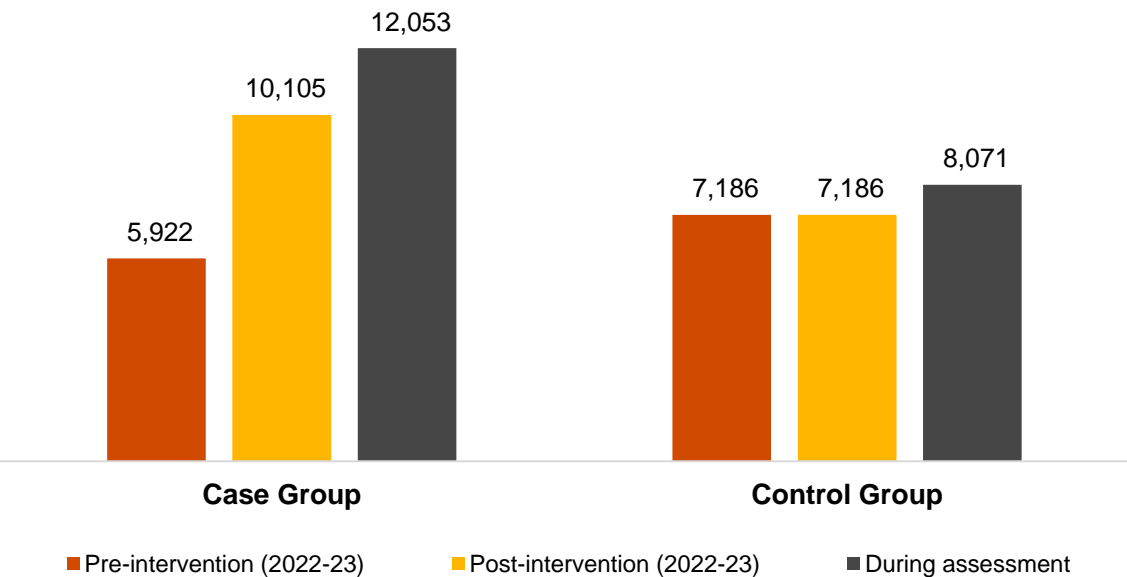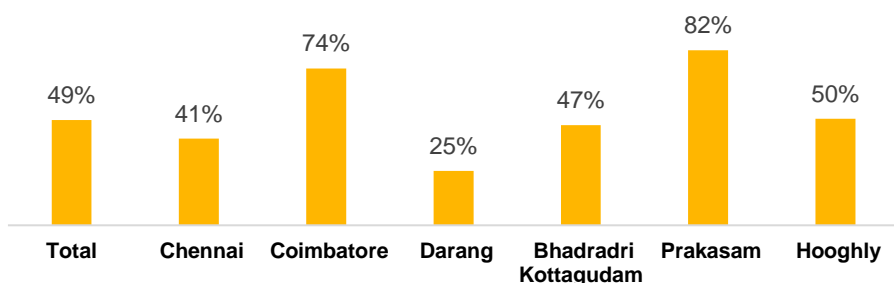**Figure 22: Change in the Average Salary of the Respondents (in Rs.)**

Table 2 : Center-wise change in the Average Salary of the Respondents (in Rs.)

Location	CASE GROUP			CONTROL GROUP	
	Pre-intervention (In 2022-23)	Post-intervention (Post 2022-23)	During assessment	In 2022-23	During assessment
Chennai	6,455	10,076	12,000	8,220	9,350
Coimbatore	7,400	10,711	12,737	7,571	8,500
Darang	6,933	9,964	12,036	6,500	7,917
Bhadradri Kottagudem	4,176	10,076	11,894	6,317	7,606
Prakasam	5,750	10,056	11,878	6,250	8,000
Hooghly	5,500	10,136	12,186	-	8,000

❑ Before the programme, only 21% of respondents (n=373) in the case group were employed **with an average income of Rs. 5,922/-.** After training, 86% of certified respondents (n=365), totaling 314 individuals, **were placed or self-employed, earning an initial average income of Rs. 10,105/-**, showing the program's effectiveness in improving employment opportunities.

❑ Of the placed and self-employed individuals (n=314), **87% secured roles related to their training**, indicating alignment with industry needs. Their average income rose **from Rs. 10,105/- to Rs. 12,053/- over time,** demonstrating career progression and sustainable income growth post-training.

❑ In contrast, the control group, which did not participate in the programme, had 27% employment (n=109) in FY 2022-23, **increasing to 31% currently, with incomes rising from Rs. 6,962/- to Rs. 8,070/-.** The lower employment and income growth compared to participants suggests the training provides skills and opportunities leading to higher employment rates and incomes.

❑ Additionally, the case group's increased income has been invested in improving quality of life areas such as **assets acquisition, children's education, better food quality, and enhanced healthcare.**
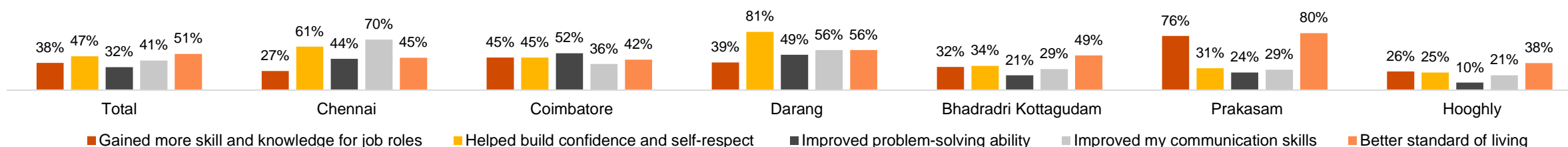
Impact Findings: Enhanced Purchasing Power and Soft-skills and Confidence

Figure 23: Percentage of youth reporting asset creation due to improved income (n=314)

- Total: 49%
- Chennai: 41%
- Coimbatore: 74%
- Darang: 25%
- Bhadradri Kottagudam: 47%
- Prakasam: 82%
- Hooghly: 50%

❑ The programme not only provides economic benefits but also contributes to broader social improvements. By enhancing Human Development Indices, participants are able to move beyond meeting basic needs, allowing them to plan for improved living conditions.

❑ With more consistent and higher incomes, participants gain financial stability, enabling them to make strategic financial decisions. This stability allows them to allocate resources toward acquiring assets, promoting long-term financial planning.

❑ By equipping individuals with skills and facilitating employment in their trained sectors, the programme enhances economic well-being. This leads to social stability and personal growth, as participants experience a sense of security and engage more actively in their communities.

❑ With increased purchasing power, participants are able to invest their savings in assets such as motorcycles, computers, and smartphones, further contributing to their economic independence and societal development.

❑ Training in Darang focused on job roles with limited local opportunities (such as hospitality). Hence, participants often migrate for better prospects but may not choose to accumulate assets due to the temporary nature of these job locations.

Figure 24: Percentage of candidates reporting how has the training programme helped them (n=373)

- Total: 38%, 47%, 32%, 41%, 51%
- Chennai: 27%, 61%, 44%, 70%, 45%
- Coimbatore: 45%, 45%, 52%, 36%, 42%
- Darang: 39%, 81%, 49%, 56%, 56%
- Bhadradri Kottagudam: 32%, 34%, 21%, 29%, 49%
- Prakasam: 76%, 31%, 24%, 29%, 80%
- Hooghly: 26%, 25%, 10%, 21%, 38%

■ Gained more skill and knowledge for job roles ■ Helped build confidence and self-respect ■ Improved problem-solving ability ■ Improved my communication skills ■ Better standard of living
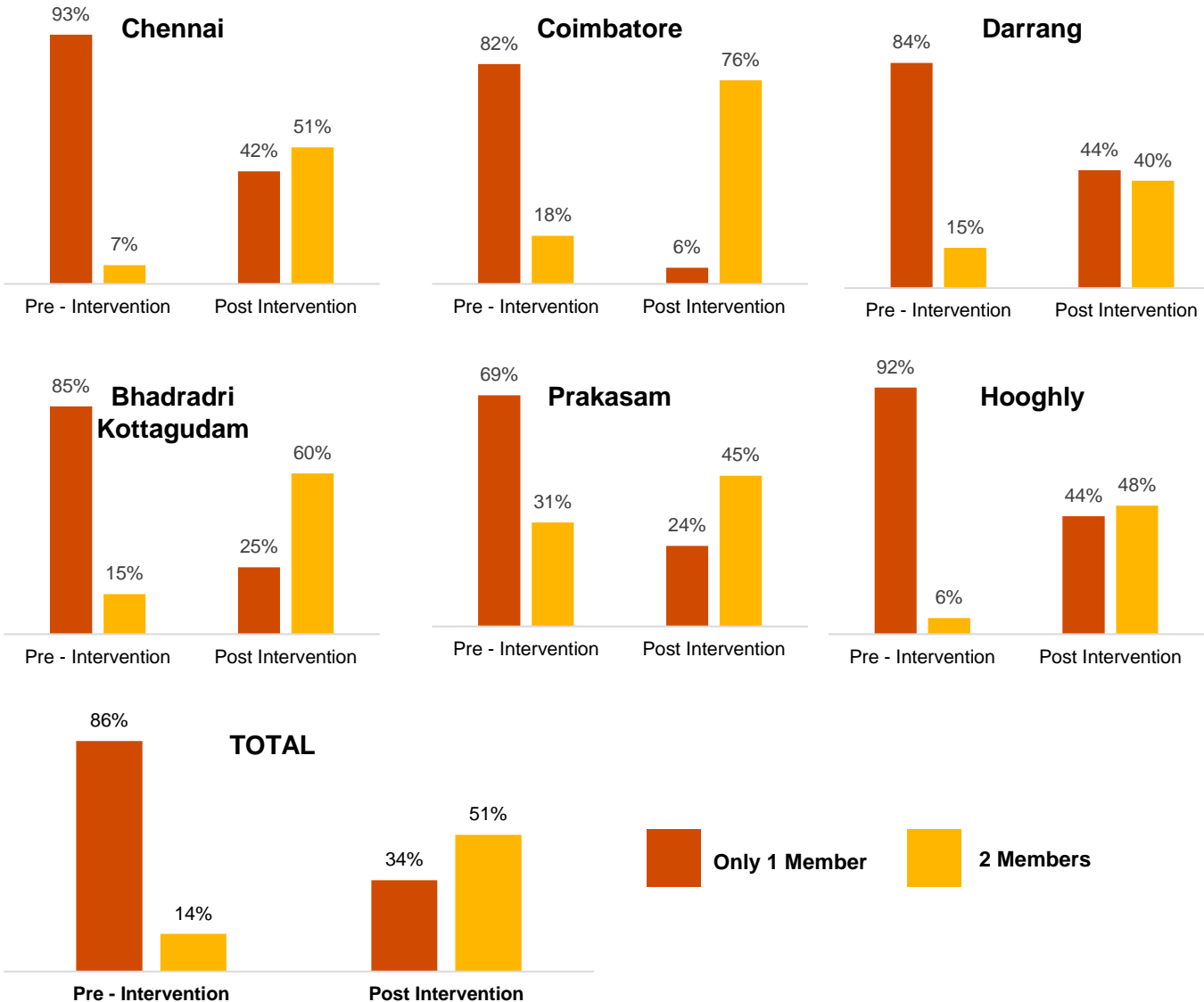
Multiple choice question, total may not add up to 100%

❑ The training programme has been instrumental in equipping trainees with essential soft skills, which are valuable for both their current roles and overall career growth. During qualitative discussions, trainees have emphasised the importance of skills like communication and problem-solving, which enhance collaboration, negotiation, and the ability to manage complex situations.

❑ Communication skills enable trainees to express ideas clearly and interact effectively with colleagues and clients, crucial for teamwork and maintaining good customer relations. Problem-solving abilities help them address challenges efficiently, improving job performance and productivity.

❑ The training has also significantly boosted trainees' confidence and self-assurance, thanks to its comprehensive approach focusing on skill development and personality growth.

❑ An analysis of 373 respondents shows substantial improvements in professional and personal growth, with 53% reported that the training has helped them with an increase in income.

"The focus on soft skills is one of the programme's strongest aspects. Trainees emerge with enhanced communication and problem-solving abilities, which are crucial in any workplace. This boost in confidence is evident in their interactions and performance, making them valuable assets to any employer."

- As reported by an Employer in Bhadradri Kothagudem district, Telangana

Impact Findings: Sustained Livelihoods post the training

Figure 25: Number of Earning members in the Household (Pre and Post)

Chennai — Pre - Intervention: 93%, 7%; Post Intervention: 42%, 51%

Coimbatore — Pre - Intervention: 82%, 18%; Post Intervention: 6%, 76%

Darrang — Pre - Intervention: 84%, 15%; Post Intervention: 44%, 40%

Bhadradri Kottagudam — Pre - Intervention: 85%, 15%; Post Intervention: 25%, 60%

Prakasam — Pre - Intervention: 69%, 31%; Post Intervention: 24%, 45%

Hooghly — Pre - Intervention: 92%, 6%; Post Intervention: 44%, 48%

TOTAL — Pre - Intervention: 86%, 14%; Post Intervention: 34%, 51%

Legend: ■ Only 1 Member ■ 2 Members

❑ All the respondents (n=314) who were employed at the time they completed their training are either still in their jobs or remain self-employed. This underscores the effectiveness of the training programs in equipping individuals for the workforce, demonstrating strong job placement strategies and relevant skill development. Among these employed individuals, 49% have remained in their initial job roles or self-employment ventures, indicating satisfaction with their roles or stability within those positions. The other 51% have moved to new jobs, seeking better salaries or improved working conditions. This transition reflects increased opportunities and the ability to leverage their skills and experience, which are crucial for career advancement and personal development.

❑ Prior to the training intervention, a significant majority (86%, n=373) of households depended on a single income earner, making them vulnerable to economic shocks and limiting their financial security during crises. Post-training, this figure has decreased to 34% (n=373), indicating that more family members are now participating in income-generating activities. This diversification enhances household resilience against financial uncertainties and contributes to a more stable economic environment for families.

❑ The increase from 37% to 98% (n=373) of households earning more than Rs. 10,000 per month is remarkable. This surge in income likely results from higher wages due to improved skills and employment opportunities for the trainees, as well as diversified income streams within families. Such an income boost not only enhances the immediate living standards of the trainees' families but also enables them to invest in education, health, and other critical areas, fostering long-term economic growth and development.

❑ A noted best practice by the ITC was providing follow-up support to trained candidates after their training and placement. Continued guidance was offered for one year to ensure that skills were applied effectively and to address any challenges promptly. For candidates wishing to transition between companies, ongoing guidance and mentorship support were provided, achieving successful and sustainable skill development outcomes.

Impact Findings: Overall Feedback on the trainings

Table 3 : Respondents' ratings on various components of the trainings (n=373)

Parameters	5-point scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Training Pedagogy	0%	1%	14%	39%	46%
Quality of trainers	0%	2%	13%	34%	52%
Training Content and Material	0%	1%	12%	36%	50%
Time allocated for trainings	0%	2%	13%	38%	46%
Training Relevance	0%	2%	10%	40%	48%

"The training programme is well-structured and effectively meets the needs of the participants. The high satisfaction rates among trainees are a testament to the quality of the curriculum and the dedication of the trainers. The programme not only prepares individuals for the job market but also instils a sense of confidence and ambition, encouraging them to strive for personal and professional growth."

As reported by a trainer at one of the centres

- ❑ 95% of the 373 respondents reported a positive onboarding experience at the training center. This high percentage highlights the effectiveness and organisation of the initial interactions with the programme, showcasing the center's ability to facilitate a seamless introduction for participants.

- ❑ The success of the onboarding process is significantly attributed to the dedicated field mobilisers present at each center. These mobilisers play a pivotal role in coordinating information and ensuring clear communication with participants. By engaging with local communities and collaborating with stakeholders such as PRI members, they identify eligible youth candidates who can benefit from the training. Their efforts help ensure the programme reaches those who need it most.

- ❑ Through active collaboration with local stakeholders, mobilisers tailor training programs to meet the specific needs and preferences of the community. This approach enhances the relevance of the training and increases its appeal, encouraging greater participant engagement and benefit from the programme.

- ❑ Survey results indicate strong positive sentiment among participants regarding their training experience. Over 80% of respondents rated various training components—including content, delivery methods, and resources—with high satisfaction levels of 4 or 5 out of 5. This suggests that the training is well-received and meets or exceeds the expectations of most participants.

- ❑ Regarding the overall training experience, 73% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the program's conduct and perceived outcomes. Meanwhile, 24% held a neutral opinion, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, suggesting potential areas for improvement or variations in expectations and experiences that could be addressed to enhance the programme further.

- ❑ The high satisfaction rates among participants point to the successful implementation of the training programs. The positive feedback indicates that the training effectively equips individuals with valuable skills or knowledge, resonating well with participants and contributing positively to their personal and professional development.

Impact Findings: Overall Feedback on the trainings (Location-wise breakup)

Below is a brief snapshot summary of the overall feedback from the respondents on various parameters of the training from each of the centre location:

Table 4 : Respondents' ratings on various components of the trainings based on center (n=373)

a. Chennai (n=71)

Parameters	5-point scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Training Pedagogy	0%	0%	10%	44%	46%
Quality of trainers	0%	0%	8%	45%	46%
Training Content & Material	0%	1%	7%	45%	46%
Time Allocated for training	0%	1%	6%	45%	48%
Training Relevance	0%	0%	7%	55%	38%

b. Coimbatore (n=33)

Parameters	5-point scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Training Pedagogy	0%	0%	18%	67%	15%
Quality of trainers	0%	3%	30%	27%	39%
Training Content & Material	0%	0%	21%	39%	39%
Time Allocated for training	0%	6%	15%	36%	42%
Training Relevance	0%	6%	15%	30%	48%

c. Darrang (n=75)

Parameters	5-point scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Training Pedagogy	0%	1%	17%	43%	39%
Quality of trainers	0%	3%	15%	33%	49%
Training Content & Material	0%	1%	12%	37%	49%
Time Allocated for training	0%	3%	12%	48%	37%
Training Relevance	0%	1%	11%	44%	44%

d. Bhadradri Kottagudam (n=68)

Parameters	5-point scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Training Pedagogy	0%	1%	4%	19%	75%
Quality of trainers	0%	1%	1%	19%	78%
Training Content & Material	0%	1%	3%	22%	74%
Time Allocated for training	0%	0%	7%	21%	72%
Training Relevance	0%	0%	4%	22%	74%

e. Prakasam (n=49)

Parameters	5-point scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Training Pedagogy	0%	0%	8%	12%	80%
Quality of trainers	0%	0%	6%	18%	76%
Training Content & Material	0%	0%	4%	14%	82%
Time Allocated for training	0%	0%	4%	22%	73%
Training Relevance	0%	0%	6%	20%	73%

f. Hooghly (n=77)

Parameters	5-point scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Training Pedagogy	0%	3%	25%	56%	17%
Quality of trainers	0%	4%	21%	49%	26%
Training Content & Material	1%	3%	23%	53%	19%
Time Allocated for training	1%	5%	31%	47%	16%
Training Relevance	0%	4%	18%	57%	21%

IRECS Analysis

Parameter	Assessment from Study
Inclusiveness	❑ The programme includes **66% female participants in the case group, which indicates a focus on increasing women's participation.** This effort helps address gender disparities in education and employment, supporting women's economic participation. ❑ **Over half of the participants are from Scheduled Castes (SC) / Scheduled Tribes (ST) and others, in the case group**. This indicates an intention to reach socially disadvantaged communities and promote equity. ❑ **With 99% of participants having ration cards, the programme targets economically disadvantaged youth.** This focus helps address financial barriers to accessing education and employment opportunities. ❑ **Approximately 70% of participants have completed only up to secondary education,** highlighting the programme's focus on individuals who have limited access to formal higher education and face challenges in the job market. Field mobilisers are successful in engaging diverse groups, with data showing that 90% of participants were identified through community outreach efforts, ensuring wide representation across different demographics.
Relevance	❑ The programme boasts an **87% placement rate in roles directly linked to the training provided,** underscoring its alignment with current industry demands and labor market needs. A substantial number of participants (approx. 41%) reported an **improvement in communication skills, along with one third of the respondent's reporting improvement in problem solving ability as well.** These skills are essential across job roles , indicating the programme's broad relevance. ❑ During the initial trial period, **most of participants decide to continue with the programme,** suggesting that the course content is relevant to their personal and professional aspirations. The programme collects feedback from the participants, **with 80% reporting that the training components meet or exceed their expectations,** ensuring continuous relevance and improvement.
Effectiveness	❑ **Employment rates increased from 21% to 86% post-training**, indicating a significant improvement in job readiness and placement ❑ With a **98% certification rate**, almost all participants complete the training, demonstrating the programme's ability to effectively support learners through to successful completion. Post-training, **participants experience a 50% average increase in income**, illustrating significant economic advancement resulting from the programme. **Average income increased from Rs. 5,922/- to Rs. 12,053/-**, reflecting enhanced economic prospects for participants. ❑ **Approximately 87% of participants secure employment in jobs directly related to their training**, showcasing the programme's effectiveness in enhancing job readiness and employability. Surveys show that approximately half (47%) **of participants reported an increase in confidence and self respect**, leading to improved workplace performance and career prospects. Post-training, **60% of participants reported using additional income for education and healthcare**, aligning personal economic gains with broader community developmental goals.
Convergence	❑ The programme's collaborative model involves local stakeholders and field mobilisers, ensuring a well-coordinated approach to candidate selection and addressing community needs. The programme further aligns with the **Government of India's Skill India Mission and the course content is in line with the respective Skill Sector Councils of NSDC.**
Sustainability	❑ **All the participants who were certified and placed at the time of training remain employed**, demonstrating the programme's role in sustaining long-term livelihoods and financial stability. ❑ There is over **50% reduction in households reliant on a single income source**, indicating increased family engagement in economic activities and improved financial resilience. With an increase in household income, **participants are able to invest more in education and health, contributing to sustained improvements in economic and social well-being.**

Key Recommendations

Inclusion of Advanced Courses and Digital Literacy/ Tech skills	There is a demand for more advanced courses (such as coding, AI, machine learning) and computer knowledge among trainees. Incorporating advanced training modules, particularly in computer skills like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint would address the needs of trainees who come with 'little to no' computer literacy. The programme can also consider including aspects around data analysis, digital marketing etc. as a part of the existing curriculum along with the incorporating elements to encourage entrepreneurial thinking and innovation which can help these candidates to either start their own ventures or contribute innovatively to their roles These enhancements would not only improve their employability but also prepare them for varied opportunities in larger companies where such skills are essential. The programme team should keep an eye on the growing sectors such as healthcare, e-commerce, cybersecurity, and logistics, and can align the trainings to prepare participants for opportunities in these areas in future.
Extension of Course Duration	Several trainees from the electrical course, have reported during the discussion that the current duration of 3 months is perceived as insufficient for mastering complex skills, especially when starting from the basics. Extending the course duration or building in more on the job training components would provide more comprehensive understanding and better preparation for the job market. This would align the training more closely with industry standards, such as the ITI's one-year course, and potentially improve employment outcomes by making trainees more competitive
Industry Collaboration and Partnerships	While the programme courses are in line with relevant National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), the team can explore working closely with industry leaders to ensure that the training remains aligned with current market demands. Further, for internships, placements, and real-world projects, ITC can consider establishing partnerships with industries/ companies to give participants practical exposure.
Alumni Network and Community Building	ITC can consider establishing an alumni network to foster an ongoing community among past training participants. This network can provide continued support, enable knowledge sharing, and create opportunities for networking. Alumni can offer mentorship to current participants, share job opportunities, and contribute to programme me development through feedback based on their career experiences.

PWCALLP

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6. Our work was limited to the specific samples/ procedures described in this report and were based only on the information and analysis of the data obtained through interviews of beneficiaries supported under the programme, selected as sample respondents. Accordingly, changes in circumstances/ samples/ procedures or information available after the review could affect the findings outlined in this report.

7. We assume no responsibility for any user of the report, other than ITC. Any person who chooses to rely on the report shall do so at their own risk.

8. Our observations represent our understanding and interpretation of the facts based on reporting of beneficiaries and stakeholders. The recommendations provided may not be exhaustive from the perspective of bringing about improvements in the programme and additional steps/efforts may be required on the part of the management to address the same.

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Assumptions pertaining to this report:

❑ The report prepared by the PW is based upon the (a) information/ documents provided by ITC and its implementing partners and (b) data collected during the field visit to the project location by the PW team. PW performed and prepared the Information at the client's direction and exclusively for the client's sole benefit and use pursuant to its client agreement. Our report is based on the completeness and accuracy of the above-stated facts and assumptions, which if not entirely complete or accurate, should be communicated to us immediately, as the inaccuracy or incompleteness could have a material impact on our conclusions.

❑ PW's work was limited to the samples/specific procedures described in this report and were based only on the information and analysis of the data obtained through interviews of beneficiaries supported under the programme, selected as respondents. Accordingly, changes in circumstances/samples/ procedures or information available could affect the findings outlined in this report.

❑ Our understanding of the programmes was limited to our discussion with the ITC team and its NGO partners as no specific project related documents (MoU/ Programme Monitoring Reports etc.) apart from the beneficiaries list and generic thematic documents was shared with PW team.

PWCALLP

Thank you