IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

ITC MSK Skilling and Support to Education Programme

March 2025

SoStakes
Driving Social Value

What gets measured, gets valued

Table of Contents

SKILLING PROGRAMME

1. Background

With over 65% of its population under 35, India has a unique opportunity but faces a challenge in harnessing its demographic dividend. The unemployment rate for Indian youth aged 15–29 was reported at 10.2% for 2023-24. In the Indian context, academic attainment alone is not a reliable indicator of employability. While 23% of graduates contribute to the workforce, only half of them are considered employable due to a persistent skill mismatch.

ITC Limited has adopted a Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach, integrating social, environmental, and economic sustainability in its operations. Through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, Mission Sunehra Kal (MSK), ITC is committed to enhancing employability and enabling sustainable livelihoods. In partnership with Pratham Education Foundation (Pratham), ITC's skilling projects aim to bridge the skill gap by equipping youth with industry-relevant skills and practical experience.

ITC – Mission Sunehra Kal – Skilling India Initiative

In FY 22-23, under the Skilling India Initiative, ITC collaborated with Pratham for skilling in Malur, Kolar, Karnataka **(Project code-78)**. The programme aims to bridge the skill gap by equipping young individuals with practical knowledge and hands-on experience, enabling them to secure sustainable livelihoods. The skilling programme offered training in the Electrical and Multifunctional Office Assistant (MOA) course to the youth.

The electrical course was delivered to 6 batches of students, with 45-50 training days for each batch. The course covered electrical tools, circuits, wiring, and electrical safety. The course had 53 hours of theory and 347 hours of practical sessions. The MOA course was delivered to 8 batches of students, with 65 training days for each batch. The course covered topics such as computer proficiency and the MS Office suite. The course had 80 hours of theory and 400 hours of practical sessions.

Additionally, both courses had common topics and sessions, such as mock interviews and communication skills. Overall, 249 beneficiaries enrolled and completed the course. 133 joined jobs after completing the training (FY22-23).

2.Skilling programme at Malur - Overview (FY 22-23)

These highlights cover enrollment, gender distribution, and employment outcomes, with a breakdown across two distinct trades — the Electrical and Multifunctional Office Assistant (MOA) courses.

249 students trained in Electrical & MOA course
M = 98, 39%
F = 151, 61%

133 youth employed post-training As of FY 22-23
M= 71, 53%
F= 62, 47%

53% Overall success rate

Electrical course

96 Youth completed training
M = 60, 62%
F = 36, 38%

69 employed post-training.
M= 51, 74%
F= 18, 26%

72% Success rate

Higher male participation in Electrical course

MOA course

153 Youth completed training
M= 49, 32%
F= 104, 68%

64 employed post-training.
M= 20, 31%
F = 44, 69%

42%* Success rate

Higher female participation in MOA course

* The placement for the MOA course is low and could be attributed to a large female participation in the course, who did not take up jobs due to distance/travel constraints. Also, large number of female candidates preferred to pursue higher education.

3.Approach and Methodology

3.1. Objective:

The Impact Assessment aims to:

- Evaluate whether the project achieved its intended goals,
- Identify necessary course corrections to optimise outcomes,
- List out the learnings to support the scaling up of the programme.

3.1.1. Scope: This Impact Assessment study focuses in Malur Taluk of Kolar district in Karnataka.

3.1.1. Research design:

We have adopted a quasi-experimental design, ensuring a rigorous assessment of the impact of the interventions. Control group participants were selected from the same Taluk, maintaining similar socio-economic characteristics, except that they had not received any specific skills training in the past. We have conducted primary research in the field, collecting data from beneficiaries, control group, and key stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive evaluation.

3.1.3. Data collection and sampling:

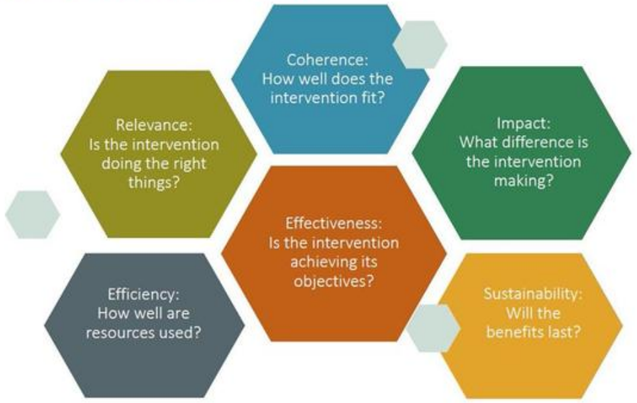
At the inception phase, we conducted a stakeholder analysis to identify key groups involved in the project. These included direct beneficiaries and other key stakeholders such as the implementing partner, the training centre head, and companies that hired the trained youth. The target sample size of 160 beneficiaries was selected ensuring 95% confidence level with 5% margin of error. The target for control group was planned to include 100 beneficiaries from Malur.

For data collection, we adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitative data was gathered through a structured questionnaire survey (QS) from 129 beneficiaries and 100 control group participants.

The survey included close-ended questions and was conducted through face-to-face and telephonic interviews. Qualitative data was obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders. Additionally, we conducted field visits to training centers in Malur, Kolar, to assess their infrastructure and facilities.

We adopted a purposive sampling approach for data collection, selecting respondents who were engaged with the programme and reachable via phone or in person within the data collection timeframe. During data collection, we faced challenges such as unanswered calls, changed contact numbers, and beneficiaries not available due to migration for work. We could survey 129 beneficiaries against a target of 160 beneficiaries - 13 through in-person interviews and 116 via telephone, along with 100 control group participants (64 in person, 36 telephonically). As a result, the margin of error increased marginally, leading to slightly higher uncertainty in the estimates compared to our initial plan.

The research design aligns with the OECD DAC evaluation criteria, recognised as one of the gold standards in programme evaluation. This framework recommends assessing a programme across six key dimensions, as illustrated in the accompanying depiction. For the projects under evaluation we have used 4 dimensions - Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Impact



3.1. 4. Data collected:

Table-1

Quantitative data		
Respondent group	Sample size	Method
Beneficiaries-Intervention	129	Survey
Control	100	Survey
Qualitative data		
Respondent group	Sample size	Method
Beneficiaries-Intervention	11	Focused Group Discussions (FGD)
Control	11	FGD
Beneficiaries-Intervention	5	In Depth Interviews (IDI)
Pratham staff	3	IDI
Employers	5	IDI
Beneficiaries-Intervention	4	Case stories

3.1.5. Challenges faced during the study (IA):

- As the study is being conducted after 2 years of the intervention/programme, some respondents had difficulty recalling specific details about the training and the centre. This may have affected the accuracy and completeness of their responses.

- Migration, job transitions, and changes in contact information posed challenges in tracking the original beneficiaries, potentially leading to sample attrition and non-response bias.

- The trainers from the FY 22-23 intervention are no longer part of the Pratham Centre, which posed challenges in collecting data (through in-depth interviews) on the training pertaining to FY 22-23.

3.1.6. Limitations of the study:

- The assessment relied heavily on self-reported data, particularly concerning income, employment status, and skill application. This raises the risk of social desirability bias, where participants may have overstated positive outcomes to meet the perceived expectations of the evaluators or funding agency.

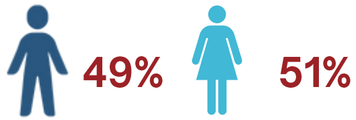
- There is a possibility that individuals who are more motivated, educated, or resourceful have not participated in this survey. Respondents to the survey were beneficiaries/ students readily available at Malur, Kolar. This could lead to a selection bias and affect the findings.

FINDINGS

4. Findings from survey

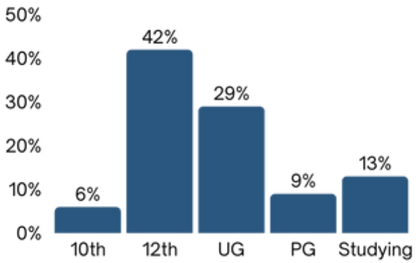
Sample size- N = 129

Gender

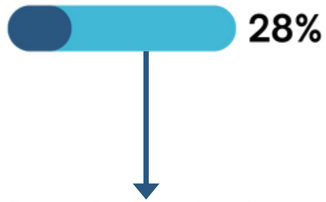


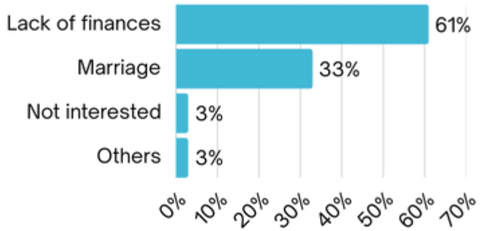
Age group

Education

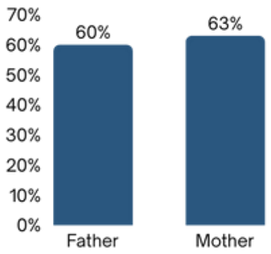


School dropouts





Parents with no formal education



4.1. Relevance

91%

The students were unemployed before the training and 48% had studied upto 12th grade.

28%

- **36 (28%) beneficiaries out of 129 discontinued their eduction.**
- **61% (22 out of 36) mentioned key reason for discontinuation is financial constraints.**

Intervention group **94%**

The students/ family own BPL cards, it shows the majority of them are from marginalised household.

> *We come from lower middle-class families where our parents work as operators, supervisors, or security personnel in the industrial area near Malur.*
>
> *-Manjunath (MOA course student- from FGD)*

The sample data collected has a gender distribution which is nearly equal, with 49% male and 51% female students. A significant portion (74%) falls within the 18-25 age group, and 91% of students were unemployed. Notably, over 60% of students are first-generation school-educated, as their parents lack formal education. The majority of the beneficiaries studied up to the 10th or 12th standard. Financial constraints remain a significant barrier, with 28% (36 out of 129) of students discontinued education, with 61% (22 out of 36) primarily due to financial difficulties. Additionally, 94% of students belong to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, and 85 (91%) were unemployed prior to joining the programme, highlighting that they belong to a marginalised background and need livelihood support.

4.2. Effectiveness

The employment status and retention data indicate significant variations between courses and across genders, highlighting both successes and areas for improvement. Of the 129 surveyed candidates, 43% (56) are employed, while 57% (73) are not working (All 57% of participants had been offered jobs after completing the training. However, none took up the offers for reasons such as the desire to pursue higher education, travel constraints, and unsuitable work timings - night shifts, etc. Out of the 73 not working category, 41 of them are pursuing higher education. Out of 41 pursuing higher studies, 40 mentioned that their confidence has increased to a great extent. During our In-Depth Interview (IDI), the respondent (Nishantini), studying commerce, mentioned that her confidence has increased after attending this training, and this motivated her to pursue higher studies)

The job retention rate for males is 44%, higher than females at 32%. Among those not currently working, 32% are pursuing higher education, and 25% reported not doing anything. Out of the 41 beneficiaries pursuing higher studies, 56% are males and 44% are females.

A significant 94% expressed satisfaction with the training, and 92% indicated they would recommend the programme to others. Students particularly valued hands-on technical sessions and interview preparation activities, with 94% finding mock interviews helpful, emphasizing the importance of technical and soft skill development.

Overall programme Coverage

249 students trained in Electrical & MOA course — M = 98, 39% F = 151, 61%

133 youth employed post-training — M= 71, 53% F= 62, 47%

53% Overall success rate

The total number of enrolled students is 249, out of which 133 are working post-training.

From surveyed sample (N=129)

43% Are working after 2 years ; Job retention is higher in males than females. 32% of those not working are pursuing higher studies.

94% Students expressed satisfaction with the training

92% Mentioned that they would recommend the programme to others

44% Males (31 out of 71) are continuing their jobs

32% Females (20 out of 62) are continuing their jobs

> *Boys easily find jobs in heavy machinery companies, but similar opportunities are rare for girls. Many of us face challenges like night shifts, lack of transport, and long-distance travel, making stable employment difficult.*
>
> *-Mala HV (MOA Course student- from FGD*

4.3. Efficiency

Feedback on mobilisation/ enrollment:

Mobilisation efforts were effective, with 60% of beneficiaries learnt about the ITC skilling programme through home visits and 17% through alumni referrals. The main motivations for joining were aspiration for better job prospect (44%) and higher income (34%). Before joining the course, 113 (51%) received information about the available courses, and 63 (29%) received information about the course duration. However, only 40 participants (18%) were informed about job prospects, and just 5 (2%) had received information on expected salary levels. The admission process was smooth for 128 (99%) participants. However, pre-enrolment apprehension was common - 72 (56%) found it difficult to select the right course, and 46 (36%) were concerned about balancing training with household responsibilities. These concerns were addressed through discussions with trainers, reported by 111 participants (81%)

Feedback on trainers/training methods:

Participants rated the trainers very highly across all key parameters, reflecting high satisfaction with the training experience. 128 out of 129 (99%) rated the communication skills of the trainers as very good. Trainers were recognised for their strong understanding of the curriculum and timely course completion, with both aspects receiving very good ratings from 108 participants (84%). In terms of teaching approach, 109 (84%) participants rated trainer engagement as very good, while 115 (89%) felt the trainers excelled in using activity-based methods.

Similarly, all 129 participants rated the condition of the training centre. The seating arrangements (benches) were rated as very good by 104 participants (81%), and hands on training material was also rated good by 103 participants (80%). Ventilation was rated very good by 97 participants (75%), while space and crowd management received very good ratings from 112 participants (87%), indicating that the physical setup was both comfortable and efficiently managed.

Feedback on mobilisation /enrollment

60% Students learned about the ITC skilling programme through community mobilisers

78 % Participants motivation to join the course was aspiration for better job prospects and higher income

During the onboarding process

- 51% received information about the available courses
- 29% received information about course duration
- 18% were informed about job prospects
- 2% received information on expected salary
- 56% found it difficult to choose the right course

81% Students took help from the trainers to address the apprehensions

Feedback on trainers/training methods

~80% Rated the seating arrangements, hands-on training materials, overall space and physical setup as comfortable and efficiently managed.

84% Rated the teaching approach, trainer engagement as very good.

Feedback on post-training follow-up:

Post-training peer engagement was observed among 56 participants (43%), indicating moderate alumni connectivity. Among them, WhatsApp groups were the primary mode of interaction for 83% of participants (48 out of 56), followed by toll-free numbers used by 7 participants (12%). No formal engagement platforms were reported, such as Zoom calls, Alumni Events, or Webinars.

A large majority of participants, 105 (81%) out of 129, reported being contacted by someone from the Pratham training centre after completing their training, demonstrating strong post-training follow-up practices.

However, participants raised a few concerns during the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). They noted that the number of laptops was insufficient, with only 8 available for a group of over 20 students. Additionally, some participants felt the training duration was too short and requested an increase in the number of training days to enhance their learning experience.

Feedback on post-training follow-up

43% — **56 were supported with alumni groups**

83% **out of 56** — **Peer engagement was largely informal - No formal engagement through zoom calls or Alumni Events , alumni primarily connected through WhatsApp**

105 participants were contacted by Pratham team post training in varied frequency such as once a month (30%)/once in 3 months (30%)/once in 6 month (25%)

Feedback on placement support

94% **Found mock interviews were helpful**

- 91% found discussion with peers/seniors most useful
- 90% found group discussions useful
- 87% mentioned that counselling sessions were highly beneficial

These findings indicate that the program's placement preparation strategy was comprehensive and well-executed, equipping participants with the confidence and skills to successfully face job interviews and selection processes.

4.4. Impact

4.4.1. Before and after income levels:

Prior to the training, the vast majority, 125 participants (96%), had no source of income, indicating limited access to employment opportunities. The most common income ranges after training were ₹14,001–20,000 (19 participants, 15%), ₹20,001 -₹28,000 (12 participants, 9%), and ₹28,001–30,000 (7 participants, 5%). These figures suggest that the training programme helped improve employability and increase earning potential for a significant proportion of participants.

4.4.2. Contribution to Household Income/ expenses:

Out of 129 participants, 56 (43%) could contribute to their family income and 73 (57%) said they could not contribute to their families' post-training. Of the 73 individuals who reported they could not contribute financially, 5 are currently employed, while the rest are pursuing higher education, unemployed and looking for jobs.

4.4.3. Ability to save money before and after training:

There was a positive shift in participants' ability to save money after completing the programme. Out of 129, only 4 (3%) were able to save before the training; this increased to 27 (21%) post-training. After completing the programme, not only did more participants begin saving, but the amount saved also increased significantly.

56 students who are still working and started contributing to family income, from 129 sample

18* (14%) Earning less than ₹14,000

38* (29%) Earning more than ₹14,000

₹14,001 - ₹20,000 = 15%
₹20,001 - ₹28,000 = 9%
₹28,001 - ₹30,000 = 5%

No contribution to family income has reduced

Before 73%

After 55%

Contribution to household expenses after 2 years

Before training (27%) → After training (45%)

Monthly savings

Indicating enhanced financial literacy and behaviour

Before training (3%) → After training (21%)

Before the programme, only 4 individuals reported savings ranging up to ₹15,000. Post-training, 27 participants (21% out of 129) reported saving, with 7 (26%) saving ₹5,000 per month, and 4 (15%) each saving ₹10,000. This reflects a notable improvement in financial capacity and saving behaviour among participants.

Insurance coverage improved slightly after the programme. Before the training, only 1 out of 129 participants (1%) had any form of insurance. After completing the programme, this number increased to 10 participants (8%). Most of them purchased life insurance (8 participants, 67%), while 2 (17%) took health insurance for themselves and 1 (8%) for a parent. This shows a small but positive shift in financial awareness and planning.

4.4.4. Changes in decision making:

Out of 129 participants, 87 (67%) said they could make independent decisions about their mobility, and 82 (64%) reported having autonomy over how they use their own money. A large majority—109 participants (84%)- felt confident speaking up during family decision-making.

4.4.5. Other Changes

Participants reported several positive impacts from the training programme beyond employment. Out of 129 participants, 55 (31%) said their confidence had increased, (11%) experienced improved respect in society, and 12 (7%) felt more respected among friends. However, 41 participants (23%) felt the training had no additional impact on their lives, highlighting a need to explore deeper engagement or more personalised support for all participants.

Savings
> ₹5,000 (7 out of 129)
> ₹10,000 (4 out of 129)
This reflects a notable improvement in financial capacity and saving behaviour among participants

Purchase of insurance

Before training (1%) → **After training (8%)**

Improved personal outcomes

- **Increased Self-Confidence 31%**
- **Respect in society 18%**

Testimonial

We have consistently hired candidates trained at the Pratham Centre, and we're impressed by their strong technical and soft skills. They come job-ready, with a solid grasp of basic computer knowledge and the adaptability needed in today's workplace. These trainees integrate smoothly into our teams and perform their responsibilities efficiently.

-Raju, HR from Tata Electronics

5. Case stories

Nagesh

Background

Nagesh, a 24-year-old from Malur, Karnataka, comes from a lower-middle-class family where his father works as a daily wage labourer. The family's total monthly income is ₹30,000. He came to know about Pratham's vocational training programme through mobilisation efforts— home visit conducted by Pratham staff. Encouraged by the opportunity to gain more practical experience, he decided to enrol in the Electrical Course.

Course

Nagesh enjoyed the training programme as 70% of the training was practical sessions. He reported no difficulties during training and appreciated the supportive environment and adequate facilities available at the centre.

After completing the course at Pratham, Nagesh got his first job through their placement support. Wanting to improve his technical skills, he completed an ITI course. With both the practical training from Pratham and the ITI certification, he was able to get a job in the electrical field. He now works as a Final Inspection Officer at Klassic Wheels Pvt. Ltd in Malur, earning ₹15,000 per month

Future

Nagesh credits Pratham's training for giving him exposure to the job market and enhancing both his confidence and technical abilities. Looking ahead, he plans to start his own business in the electrical sector, leveraging the skills, knowledge, and experience he has accumulated.

His journey highlights the transformative potential of vocational training and skill development in creating employment opportunities and empowering youth from economically challenged backgrounds.

> ***"Pratham's training not only gave me the confidence to enter the workforce but also inspired me to dream bigger. My next goal is to start my own business in the electrical field."***

Nishanthini S.R.

Background

Nishanthini S.R., a 20-year-old B.Com student at a government arts college in Kolar, had always aspired to build a strong foundation for her future. Coming from a modest background, she relied on the financial support of her mother and brother, who together earned around ₹30,000 per month. Her first work experience came as a temporary assistant at the post office, but the job was short-lived as it clashed with her college schedule. She needed a more structured opportunity that would complement her studies while equipping her with essential skills. It was through her friends that she learned about the Pratham Training Centre, a place that would soon transform her perspective on employment and personal growth.

Pratham course

Eager to explore new avenues, Nishanthini enrolled in the Multifunctional Office Assistant (MoA) course at Pratham in 2022–2023. Over the three-month training, she gained valuable insights into the industry and, for the first time, was introduced to computers and their applications. This experience not only expanded her technical knowledge but also boosted her confidence. Among her batch of 28 students, she found a supportive learning environment where challenges were minimal. She deeply appreciated the structured training and career guidance provided by the Pratham team, which helped her understand the job market better.

Future

Her journey highlights the power of skill development in empowering young individuals. With newfound confidence and knowledge, Nishanthini is now better equipped to pursue job opportunities that align with her education and career aspirations.

6. Key insights

6.1. Key insights:

The intervention reached 249 participants, with higher women participation. (61% women). Initial job placement was notably higher for the Electrical Course (72%); MOA course (42%).
Overall employment outcome was at 53%.
Gender based employment outcome (employed /trained ratio) M : 72% ; F : 41 %)

After two years, 43% (56 /129), was the employment rate as compared to 53%(133/249) at the beginning. Male retention remained stronger, with 44% of placed men still employed as compared to 32% of placed women, highlighting gender gaps in both placement and long-term employment sustainability.

Impact: Before and after training

The training programme led to significant improvements in participants' economic status and personal development:

- **Income Generation: Prior to training, 96% of participants had no income. Post-training, 29% earning more than ₹14,000.**
- **Household Contributions:**
  - **The proportion of participants contributing to their family increased, with 45% contributing to household income.**
  - **27% supported agricultural activities by purchasing livestock or leasing land.**
  - **5% contributed to the education of siblings.**
  - **The percentage of participants not contributing to family expenses dropped from 73% to 55%.**
- **Savings and Financial Behaviour:**
  - **The ability to save improved from just 3% pre-training to 21% post-training.**
  - **21 participants(16%) started using savings accounts, indicating enhanced financial literacy and behaviour.**
- **Personal and Social Development:**
  - **The most frequently cited personal outcome was increased self-confidence (31%), followed by improved income levels (17%) and greater respect in society and among peers (18%).**

7. Recommendations

a. Strengthen the Pre-Enrolment Process:
Data from the intervention and sample groups indicate that a significant number of students do not take up employment after completing the course. Notably, 18% (46 out of 249) cited reasons such as "Not interested in working / family issues," and in the follow-up sample, 22% (32 out of 129) were still not engaged in any activity two years later. This highlights the need for a more robust pre-enrolment process. Conducting interviews to better understand applicants' long-term goals and career interests can help ensure that only genuinely motivated candidates are enrolled. This targeted approach is likely to improve placement rates and overall programme effectiveness.

b. Improve Gender Responsiveness:
Although there is strong female participation in the Multifunctional Office Assistance course, only 37% (44 out of 120) of women beneficiaries secured employment. Insights from participant interactions suggest that barriers such as inconvenient work timings, night shifts, and lack of transport options affect women's ability to work. To address this, the programme should identify job roles more suitable for women and engage with employers to explore more inclusive workplace policies—such as flexible shifts and provision of safe transport.

c. Enhance Course Structure and Industry Exposure:
Feedback from beneficiaries indicates that the current course duration is insufficient. Extending the duration or offering optional advanced modules can enhance learning and practical skill development. Additionally, incorporating more industry visits, apprenticeships, or internships into the curriculum would provide students with better exposure to real work environments and improve their job readiness.

d. Improve the structure and content of the reports to the donor (quarterly/annual) with clear indicators to ensure better communication of programme outcomes and progress.

SUPPORT TO EDUCATION PROGRAMME

1. Background

1.1. Background

The post-pandemic period has brought long-standing challenges in India's foundational education system to the forefront, particularly in rural areas. According to the ASER 2022 report, basic reading skills among children have regressed to pre-2012 levels, underscoring the severe learning losses caused by prolonged school closures and unequal access to digital resources. This is especially alarming considering that 68.4% of India's population lives in rural areas.

Despite various government interventions, millions of children in rural India still struggle to access quality education, deepening the learning gap between urban and rural communities. The ongoing Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) crisis reflects this disparity.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a transformative shift in India's approach to education, placing strong emphasis on early childhood education as the cornerstone of lifelong learning. Acknowledging that 85% of brain development occurs before age six, the NEP recognises the crucial role of Early Childhood Care and Education.

However, access to quality ECCE remains limited, especially for children from disadvantaged communities. The NEP advocates for strengthening the role of Anganwadi centres, not only as providers of nutrition and basic care but as spaces for early learning through play, activity-based, and inquiry-driven methods. It highlights the urgent need to build strong literacy and numeracy skills in early primary grades, laying the foundation for all future learning. Therefore, it advocates that Anganwadis must evolve from being nutrition-centric centers to becoming vibrant learning hubs for young children.

To help bridge these learning gaps, ITC Ltd., under its Mission Sunehra Kal initiative, has partnered with Pratham, to promote foundational literacy and quality education in rural and underserved communities. By focusing on both Anganwadis and schools, this programme aims to ensure that every child—regardless of background—has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. The programme covered 4,412 students in 51 villages in Nanjangud.(Project code 83)

Children in Anganwadi Kempisiddanahundi

2.About the project

2.1. Background

Pratham has worked to improve the educational outcomes of students in government schools and Anganwadis through its child-centric pedagogy, capacity building of Anganwadi teachers and involvement of the community in children's educational journey. For the Academic Year 22-23, the Pratham programme focused on four key areas in Nanjangud.

1. **Early childhood education (ages 3–6)** "Anganwadi me Dhoom" covering 90 Anganwadis
   - Oriented anganwadi teachers towards Early Childhood Care and Education,
   - Distributed learning kits /instructional videos to anganwadis.
   - Formed mother's group, distributing engagement kits (Picture cards and workbooks).
2. **Balvachan programme (grades 1-2)**
   - Pratham conducted sessions (2 hours per day) on early literacy and numeracy through interactive activities to help build foundational skills in Kannada and Math.
   - They worked closely with mother's groups in various localities to support children's learnings.
3. **Read India (grades 3-5)**
   - This intervention was done in a 44 day camp mode broken up in short bursts (16 +14+14 days) throughout the academic year. They used TaRL methodology, i.e., grouping and engaging with the students according to their learning level (not grade level) and guiding them through special attention to strengthen their Kannada and Math levels.
4. **Catch up Camp Remedial support for older students Upper Primary (grades 5-8):**
   - 40-day catch-up camp cementing /rebuilding foundational learning in Kannada and Math.

Total Reach 4412 children

Nanjangud Block (51 villages), Mysore District, Karnataka

1. **Anganwadi** programme - **1218 children** in 90 anganwadis.
2. **Balvachan** programme covering **723 children** (Std 1-2) in 30 schools.
3. **Read India** programme covering **1322 children** (Std 3-5) in 36 schools.
4. **Upper Primary** programme – **1,149 children** (Std 6-8) in 40 schools.

3.Approach & Methodology

3.1. Objective:

The IA study has been undertaken to meet the following objectives:

- To assess the contribution of Pratham support towards improving learning in Anganwadis & schools in Nanjangud district.
- To provide critical insights and learnings that can support future programme design and implementations.

3.2. Study Design/sampling strategy:

We adopted a mixed-method data collection of qualitative and quantitative data to measure the programme's impact. We used the modified Cochran formula to derive the sample size, which is statistically relevant at a 95% confidence level, with a 5% margin of error. The proportionate stratified sampling methodology was used to collect data from each stratum for quantitative data.

3.2.1. Sample size and plan

The target sample size for the intervention group survey was 354 out of 4,412 children from the programme population (refer to the table in 3.2.2). In the field, we collected data from 373 (259 Questionnaire survey + 9 FGDs with 114 Anganwadi children) children (refer to the table in 3.3). For the control group, our target was 150 children and we collected data from 110 children in schools.

In Anganwadi: We collected qualitative data from Anganwadi teachers and conducted FGD with mothers' groups and children from 8 intervention Anganwadi centres and 5 control group Anganwadi centres.

In Schools: We conducted qualitative interviews and FGDs with students and teachers in the 5 intervention schools. At the beginning of the study, it was decided that for reporting the learning outcomes we would rely on the Baseline/ Endline data collected by Pratham.
An ASER assessment was used to assess the learning levels of the children in 2 control schools. This was used to compare with the baseline data of the interventions schools.

3.2.2. Target sample size

Table-1

Sl No	programme Name	Children Coverage	%	Intervention Sample Size = 354 children	Control Sample Size = 150 children
1	Anganwadi/ Balwadi	1,218	28%	99	42 (5)
2	Balvachan	723	16%	60	24
3	Read India	1,322	30%	105	45 (2)
4	Upper Primary	1,149	26%	90	39
Total		**4,412**	**100%**	**354**	**150**

Data collected from 8 Anganwadis

1. Horalavadi -1
2. Hallididdi-4
3. Kempisiddanahundi-3,
4. Kathwadipura
5. Bokkahalli-1
6. Hadinaru
7. Kallahalli
8. Immavu Hundi - 1

Data collected from 5 Intervention Schools

1. Mudalli
2. Horalvadi
3. Hallididdi
4. Kempisiddanahundi
5. Kathwadipura

Assessments done in 2 Control schools

1. Tharadale
2. Mallahalli

3.3. Data collected

Table-2

Quantitative Data			
Respondent Group	**No of Schools/ Anganwadis**	**No of sample data collected**	**Method**
School students - Intervention	5	(61+108+90) **259**	Survey
School students (control)	2	110	ASER test
Qualitative Data			
Pratham Staff			
Field Data Manager		1	IDI
ECCE State Coordinator		1	IDI
Master Trainer		2	IDIs
Anganwadi			
Anganwadi Teachers (Intervention Anganwadis)	8	8	IDIs
Anganwadi Teachers (control)	3	3	IDIs
Mothers' Group	8	45	8 FGD
Anganwadi Children-Intervention	8	114	8 FGD
Assistant Child Development Project Officer		1	IDIs
School			
Teachers (Intervention schools)	5	9	IDIs
Teachers (control schools)	1	1	IDIs
Block Education Officer, Nanjangud		1	IDIs
Teachers (control schools)	1	4	1 FGD
Children (Intervention)	5	50	5 FGD
Children in Control schools.	2	35	2 FGD

3.4. Challenges faced during the IA

- Recall bias: Since the study is being conducted two years after the programme implementation period, the recollection of students on teaching methods for FY 22-23 was poor. They shared what is currently being done. Anganwadi teachers also could not recollect activities undertaken 2 years ago.
- The Balvachan teachers from the FY 22-23 intervention are no longer part of the Pratham programme. This posed challenges in collecting data (through in-depth interviews) on the classes pertaining to FY 22-23.

Limitations of the study:

- The assessment relied on qualitative data from students, teachers and mothers. This raises the risk of social desirability bias, where participants may have overstated positive outcomes to meet the perceived expectations of the evaluators.

FINDINGS

4. Findings- Anganwadi

4.1. Relevance

Prior to 2020, pre-school education was part of Anganwadi, but it was informal, basic, and largely aimed at keeping children engaged rather than systematically preparing them for school. The primary focus was on nutrition, health, and growth monitoring. The anganwadi teachers were not equipped and trained in early childhood pedagogy. NEP 2020 has highlighted that a supportive learning environment and involvement of primary caregivers are crucial in laying the foundation of learning for 3-6-year-olds.

Anganwadi teachers shared that parents are mostly daily wage workers or work in nearby private factories, and the mothers are, primarily, housewives and not involved in any economic activity. Most of them are not educated and come from marginalised backgrounds. Further, each village has a primary school for grades 1-8, but no play schools exist. Therefore, the collaboration with the anganwadis to create learning spaces and involving the mothers group in children's learning makes this intervention relevant.

Observation

No play schools exist in Nanjungud rural areas. Anganwadis are crucial as they serve as the primary access point for early childhood care in rural and marginalised communities. The Anganwadi centres support foundational learning for the children age group 3-6yrs

Children are made to do simple activities around the 5 developmental domains

- **Physical:** activities around motor nerve coordination
- **Cognitive:** activities around reasoning - the why and what of new things
- **Socio Emotional:** interaction with peers/ elders
- **Language:** introducing alphabets, new words to improve their communication and speaking skills
- **Math:** Introducing them to the number system

4.2. Effectiveness

4.2.1. Pratham's orientation of the Anganwadi teachers was very helpful

They oriented the Anganwadi teachers towards child development milestones and interactive teaching methods suited for preschoolers. 100% of the Anganwadi Teachers we interviewed (8/8) shared that the learning materials and workbooks given are age appropriate and keep the children engaged. Teachers said that they received instructional activity videos thrice a week which guided them to conduct activities covering the five domains skills. These activities include sequencing, matching colour and playing with peers

4.2.2. Mothers group formation enhanced their engagement

- 100% (45) mothers confirmed that they are more involved in their child's education. Pratham gives them home kits which include educational toys, work book and colour pencils. Pratham sends out instructional videos every week. These videos help the mother to understand the childs task for the week and they make sure that the child completes the activity.
- Mothers shared that they benefited from **peer interaction and discussion** groups, also connect with other mothers and discuss their children's activities.

Ensuring children are guided with meaningful learning experience -Pratham built capacity of the anganwadi workers

> *Earlier I had no idea about the importance of early childhood care and education. Pratham's training & activity videos help me to conduct activities and keep the children busy. These videos focus on development across all domains- Language, cognitive, math, physical and socio-emotional.*

4.3. Efficiency

4.3.1. Regular monthly visits were made by the Pratham team:

Pratham staff observed sessions and provided on the-spot guidance and feedback.

- 100% of the Anganwadi Teachers (8) interviewed were satisfied with Pratham's support, and they shared that the Pratham teacher visited at least once a month. The Anganwadi teachers conducted the activities with the children in their respective Anganwadi and shared the videos in the common WhatsApp group created by Pratham. Pratham teachers provided constructive feedback and inputs on these videos and guided them during their monthly visits to Anganwadis.
- Similarly, 100% of the mothers (45) shared that Pratham teachers mentored and helped them understand the importance of engaging with children.

4.3.2. Interactive teaching methods were used

100% of the Anganwadi Teachers (8) interviewed shared that they were unaware of the importance of conducting domain-specific activities with children before Pratham's intervention. They engage the children with role play and story telling. They found the Pratham teachers approachable and knowledgeable.

4.3.3. A child friendly & engaging learning space created in the Anganwadis:

- 100% of the children (114) said they enjoyed visiting Anganwadi. From interaction with children and Anganwadi Sevikas it was understood that they learnt about alphabets and numbers using charts & games, and also learned poems.
- If given a choice to either stay at home or come to Anganwadi, 76% of children (87) shared that they would prefer to visit the Anganwadi.

4.4. Impact:

Supporting the enhanced role of Anganwadi worker as a educator along with care giving.

Earlier Anganwadi teacher took care of the health and nutrition of the children.

100% of the interviewed Anganwadi teachers (8/8) shared that the orientation training by Pratham teachers has helped to structure their teaching framework.

School Readiness Achieved

1,218 children in 90 Anganwadis better equipped with pre-school learning.

Holistic Child Development

- Nurturing and providing developmental inputs in the formative years (age 3-6) will hold children in good stead for future formal learning in schools.
- Greater parental involvement leads to better all round development of the child.

Increased involvement of mothers in their children's education:
100% of the interviewed mothers feel confident to teach their children. They understand that it is important that they are part of the child's learning journey.

5. Findings-Schools - Balvachan, Read India, Upper Primary

A questionnaire survey was conducted in 5 schools to capture students' responses to Pratham's interventions. 259 students from grades 1- 8 (Balvachan, Read India & upper Primary) participated in the survey.

5.1. Relevance

5.1.1. Demographic profile of the sample: (n=259)

The sample collected had a balanced representation of girls (59%) and boys (41%) and was designed to represent the intervention population. The sample had a representation of 23% from grades 1-2; 42% from grades 3-5, and 35 % from grades 6-8.

Fathers were daily wage workers (61%), working in nearby factories (20%), farmers (14%) and only 1% were unemployed. 66% of the mothers were not working, 17% were working in nearby factories, and the balance were wage workers.

2 control schools with similar demographic profiles were selected to assess students' learning levels in Kannada and Math. The assessment was done for 110 students across grades 1-8. We have analysed the control baseline data with the endline data of the intervention group collected by Pratham.

The inferences are noted below::

Language:

- 34% of intervention group students from Balvachan have moved to story level (baseline 3%), which is the highest level. In control group still 80% students were at letter level and nil at Story level
- 53% of intervention group students from Grade 3-5 have moved to story level (baseline 0%), as compared to only 6% in control group
- In Upper Primary, during the pen and paper test, only 5% of the control students could answer grammar questions correctly, in contrast to 84% in the intervention group. Similarly, only 13% of the control students could answer the reading comprehension questions, compared to 98% in intervention schools.

Maths:

- 77% of intervention group students from Balvachan have moved to 2 digit identification (51-99), compared to baseline at 34% and control group at 68%.
- 69% of intervention group students from Grade 3-5 have moved to division level (baseline 2%)
- In Upper Primary, in the Math pen and paper test, 96% of intervention group students could solve 3-digit multiplication (baseline 53%), control at 59% only. 89% of intervention group students could solve 2-digit division (baseline 38%), control at 26%.

The assessment data from control schools reveal overall poor learning levels, thereby reinforcing the need for the intervention in these areas as well.

The demographic profile indicates that the parents cannot afford quality private education and rely on government schools for their children's education

2 control schools (110 children) with similar demographic profiles were selected to assess students' learning levels in Kannada and Math. A quick comparison reflects poor learning levels in Kannada and Math. This finding which supports the need for intervention.

5.2. Effectiveness & Efficency

5.2.1. Balvachan

In Academic Year 22-23, the Balvachan programme had 2-hour classes from July 2022 to March 2023 in 30 schools run by 30 volunteers.

In Pratham's assessment approach, the learning level is measured by the activities the child can do and cannot do. For example, if a child is at Para level, it suggests that they can read letters, simple words and a few sentences. Similarly for math when they are at the division level, it is considered to be at a higher level (refer Read India) and means that they can do addition and multiplication. Data for intervention group students was taken from Pratham's Baseline and Endline surveys for each programme: the following tables reflect the baseline/ endline results:

Balvachan
N=723 No. of schools= 30

Table 3: Balvachan - Language learning level

Grades (1-2)	Beginner	Letter	Word	Para	Story
Baseline	24%	37%	26%	9%	3%
Endline	1%	10%	26%	29%	34%

At Endline, **63%** were at "Para" and "Story" as compared to 12% during baseline.

Table 4: Balvachan- Math Learning level

	Beginner	0-9	10-50	51-99
Baseline	8%	31%	27%	34%
Endline	0%	3%	20%	77%

At Endline, **77%** can identify two digit numbers 51-99 compared to only 34% at the baseline.

5.2.2. Read India

Read India N= 1,322
No. of school= 36

Table 5: Read India- Language Learning Levels

Grades (3-5)	Beginner	Letter	Word	Para	Story
Baseline	15%	37%	48%	0%	0%
Endline	0%	3%	18%	27%	53%

80% students can read a para and story as compared to none during the baseline.

Table 6: Read India Math Learning Levels

Grades (3-5)	Beginner	1 Digit	2 Digit	Subtraction	Division
Baseline	1%	12%	55%	30%	2%
Endline	0%	0%	2%	28%	69%

69% students can do division at endline as compared to only 2% during baseline.

Read India

Emphasis is placed on basic literacy and numeracy, which are essential for future learning.

- Read India camps were conducted in camp mode for 44 days. They followed teaching in short bursts 16+14+14. Short Bursts - support quick focused learning with recap and refresher sessions built in to reinforce concepts.
- Pratham's Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) strategy is effective as they group the children as per their learning level and the focus is on child .This empowers children and builds their confidence as they experience success early and often.

100% of the school teachers interviewed (9) are aware of the Pratham methodology (TaRL). Teachers shared that Pratham teachers' way of creating groups per learning levels and giving special attention to every child has helped.

5.2.3. Upper Primary

N=1149
No. of school= 40

Table 7: Upper Primary - Language learning level

Grades (6-8)	Writing	Grammar	Vocabulary	Indirect Fact Retrieval	Direct Fact Retrieval
Baseline	11%	15%	15%	1%	58%
Endline	74%	84%	93%	73%	98%

Significant Improvement has happened in grammar, vocabulary and reasoning

100% of students (50) agreed that the Pratham classes are different and better than the regular school classes due to the interactive teaching methods like role playing, mind games, story telling and games.

-FGD with students

Highlights of survey :

- Involvement of parents: 41% (106) students shared that their parents visited school and attended parent teacher meetings.
- 100% of the teachers interviewed (9/9) have observed improvement in students attention and participation in classes.
- 55% of the teachers interviewed (5/9) shared that they have noticed improvement in enrolment and the attendance.

Table 8: Upper Primary Math Learning level

Grade (6-8)	Addition	Subtraction	2 digit Multiplication	3 digit Multiplication	2 digit Division	3 digit Division	WP Addition	WP Subtraction	WP Multiplication	WP Division
Baseline	78%	38%	62%	53%	38%	33%	53%	14%	22%	14%
Endline	99%	98%	97%	96%	89%	82%	91%	84%	83%	72%

55% (142) students enjoyed activities done in language classes. Mind map, letter reading, learning through crafts, story reading through charts and innovative worksheets

The endline reflects significant improvement in word problems- Subtraction, multiplication, division

Prathams teaching pedagogy was appreciated

The teachers shared that Pratham's interactive methodology and learning materials, like picture cards and charts for language classes and method of simplifying Math through games was helpful.

5.3 Impact - Learning outcomes

Balvachan

455 of 723 (63%) students in grade 1-2 are at the "**Para**" and "**Story** " language level.*

556 of 723 students (Grade 1-2) could identify 2 digit nos (55-99)*

Before: 89% (54/61) respondents **weak in language**

After: 100% respondents witnessed improvement after attending Pratham classes.

Before: 92% (56/61) were weak in Math.

After: 100% of respondents witnessed improvement post Pratham classes

Read India

1057 of 1322 students were at the "Para" and "story" in Language.*

99% (107/108) respondents could read a simple paragraph after RI camp, as opposed to only 6% (6/108) before the camp.*

Before RI Camp: 33% (36/108) respondents could do **simple word problems.**

After RI camp: 100% (108) could solve the problems.

Upper Primary

827 out of 1149 students could solve division word problems.*

838 students could answer the comprehension questions.*

Before: 19% (17/90) could read and comprehend a para.

After: 100% (90) respondents could read and comprehend a para .

Before: 61% (55/90) could solve a 3-digit subtraction.

After: 100% (90) respondents could solve it post attending the classes.

***Learning outcomes data from Pratham assessment**

6. Case stories

Name: Nakshat Patnayak
Age: 5 years
Anganwadi: Immavu Hundi Anganwadi 1

Nakshat's family migrated from Odisha to Nanajangud, Mysore, 5-6 years ago. Since last year, they have been living in Immavu Hundi village. The father works in the nearby factory, and the mother is a housewife. They don't have a formal schooling experience. Neither of them are fluent in Kannada. Nakshat is their only child. They were concerned about Nakshat's schooling, as Kannada is mandatory in grade 1.

They wanted Nakshat to learn Kannada, but could not afford private tuition. Nakshat's mother enrolled him in the Anganwadi. He visits the Anganwadi regularly. His mother shared that Anganwadi teacher has helped him learn Kannada. Now, because of Anagnwadi's teacher's support, he can identify the Kannada letters and follow instructions in Kannada as well. She shared that the workbook shared by Pratham is interesting, and every evening, she spends time with her son revising the workbook.

> *My son is 5 years old; he has been going to anganwadi for the last two years. I feel confident about enrolling him in school. He is confident and knows how to identify letters and numbers. He knows several poems as well.*
>
> *-Mother of a 5-year-old Immavu Hundi*

Name: Akshara
Age: 10 years
School: GHPS, Mudalli , 4th Grade

Akshara's father works in a factory, and her mother is a homemaker. She has been attending this school since Grade 1. The support from Pratham's classes played a key role in boosting her confidence. Initially, Akshara struggled with multiplication problems. Instead of relying on rote memorisation of tables, the Pratham instructor focused on helping students understand the underlying concept of multiplication. With consistent practice, Akshara has become more confident in solving multiplication and division word problems.

> *"The pratham teacher's interactive teaching methods have helped me understand the concepts better"*

7. Recommendations

7.1. Recommendations:

I). Track transition from anganwadi to admission to formal education.
Tracking thw number of students who have made successful transition from anganwadis to formal schools will help to understand the progress made under the project. Further, how many would choose government schools for primary education over private alternatives would help to understand the trust and confidence built among parents to send their children to government schools.

II). Sustainability through teacher engagement
To ensure the long-term effectiveness of the pedagogy, it is essential to engage government school teachers. Regular capacity-building, collaborative teaching practices, and mentoring can support wider adoption and consistent application of the approach for all learners.

III). Coordinate with school teachers to avoid disruption of regular classes:
Some government school teachers have expressed concern that the presence of Pratham instructors during school hours affects their ability to complete the prescribed syllabus on time.

iv) Deeper engagement with a focus on monitoring teaching practices at anganwadi/ streghten the teaching learning material.
The Pratham team could strengthen its teacher monitoring/ feedback process and keep a record of the activity. The Anganwadi teachers can be provided a structured 52-week teacher's guide. (Best practices followed by UP Govt and Central Square Foundation)

v) Improve the structure and content of the reports to the donor (quaterly/annual) with clear indicators to ensure better communication of programme outcomes and progress.

7.2. Takeaway:

An independent study would help to evaluate the cumulative impact of Pratham's teaching interventions over the past 5 to 8 years in the same schools. This will help determine whether short-term teaching camps contribute to sustained learning gains. It's also important to recognise that remedial learning serves a distinct purpose and cannot be substituted with regular syllabus-based instruction."

What gets measured, gets valued