



Impact Assessment Report

Pratham's Education Projects Funded by Kotak Securities Limited in
FY 2021-22

April 2024

Prepared by Samhita Social Ventures



For Kotak Securities Limited



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Informed consent: The interviews were done after the respondents gave their consent. Even after the interviews were completed, their permission was sought to proceed with their responses.

Confidentiality: The information provided by participants has been kept private. At no point were their data or identities disclosed. The research findings have been quoted in a way that does not expose the respondents' identities.

Comfort: The interviews were performed following the respondents' preferences. In addition, the interview time was chosen in consultation with them. At each level, respondents' convenience and comfort were considered.

Right to reject or withdraw: Respondents were guaranteed safety and allowed to refuse to answer questions or withdraw during.

Contents

Second Chance

Chapter 1.	Introduction	9
1.1	About the programme	9
Chapter 2.	Approach and Methodology	10
2.1	Research Objectives	10
2.2	Methodology.....	10
2.3	Sampling.....	10
2.4	Analysis Framework	11
Chapter 3.	Analysis and Findings	13
3.1	Profile of the respondents	13
3.1.1	Occupation of the respondents	13
3.1.2	Family occupations	13
3.2	Relevance Indicator	15
3.2.1	Mobilisation	15
3.3	Coherence Indicators	16
3.3.1	Registration	16
3.3.2	Appearance for Board Examination.....	16
3.4	Efficiency Indicators	18
3.4.1	Classroom experience.....	18
3.4.2	Attendance.....	20
3.5	Effectiveness Indicators	21
3.5.1	Academic performance.....	21
3.5.2	Perception of knowledge	22
3.6	Impact Indicators	23
3.6.1	Impact on income	23

3.6.2	Impact on savings	23
3.6.3	Impact on capacity to bear expenses	24
3.7	Sustainability Indicators.....	25
3.7.1	Soft Skills	25
Chapter 4.	Recommendations	26
4.1	Support for post 10 th opportunities.....	26
4.2	Involving families and communities for vocational progress	26
Hamara Gaon		
Chapter 1.	Introduction	29
1.1	About the programme	29
Chapter 2.	Approach and Methodology	30
2.1	Research Objectives.....	30
2.2	Methodology.....	30
2.3	Sampling.....	30
2.4	Analysis Framework	31
Chapter 3.	Analysis and Findings	33
3.1	Relevance Indicator	33
3.1.1	Programme Design.....	33
3.2	Coherence Indicator.....	34
3.2.1	COVID Response.....	34
3.3	Efficiency Indicators	35
3.3.1	Mobilisation	35
3.4	Community-level engagement	35
3.5	Learning mechanisms	36
3.6	Effectiveness Indicators	38
3.6.1	Learning levels	38
3.7	Impact Indicators	40
3.7.1	Increased student engagement in schools	40

3.7.2	Increased engagement of mothers.....	40
3.8	Sustainability Indicators.....	41
3.8.1	Performance in school.....	41
Chapter 4.	Recommendations.....	42
4.1	Reverting to a continuous 30-day learning camp.....	42
4.2	Formalising the involvement of volunteers.....	42

Table of figures

1.1 Graphs

Graph 1:	Occupations of the respondents prior to and after SC.....	13
Graph 2: Respondents' fathers' occupations	Graph 3: Respondents' mothers' occupations	14
Graph 4:	Source of learning about Second Chance reported by respondents.....	15
Graph 6:	Difficulties in registering for Second Chance.....	16
Graph 5:	Method of registering for SC.....	16
Graph 7:	Mode of attending SC classes.....	18
Graph 8:	Respondents' level of comfort in understanding what was being taught in class ...	19
Graph 9:	Respondents' level of satisfaction with the quality of SC faculty.....	19
Graph 13:	Respondents' response to whether they cleared the Board examinations.....	21
Graph 14:	Results of the respondents who cleared their Grade 10 certification exam.....	21
Graph 15:	Respondents' perception of English knowledge before & after SC.....	22
Graph 10:	Respondents' monthly income.....	23
Graph 11:	Respondents savings trend.....	24
Graph 12:	Difficulty in meeting daily expenses reported by respondents.....	24
Graph 16:	Benefits of SC reported by primary stakeholders.....	25
Graph 17:	Recommendations for SC by survey respondents.....	26

1.2 Tables

Table 1: Reasons for not attending Second Chance classes regularly.....20

Table 2: Reasons for not attending online classes regularly20

Second Chance Project

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 About the programme

Pratham Education Foundation, a prominent non-governmental organization in India, initiated the Second Chance (SC) program in 2011. This program specifically targets women and girls aged 16 and above who had previously dropped out of school before completing their Class 10th. The primary objective of the SC program is to provide a pathway for these learners to re-enter education and obtain their Secondary School Examination certificate.

Here are the key components of the SC program:

1. **Identification and Encouragement:** Pratham identifies potential participants who meet the criteria and encourages them to return to education. The focus is on preparing them to appear for the Secondary School Examination, which holds significant value for their educational and employment prospects.
2. **Intensive Engagement:** The SC program spans one year and involves two main courses:
 - Foundation Course: This course helps students cover fundamental concepts and brings them up to the level of learning expected at the 10th-grade standard.
 - Main Course: The main course focuses on the Grade 10 syllabus and prepares students for the board examination.
3. **End-to-End Support:** Pratham takes full responsibility for assisting students in appearing for the certification or board exam. This includes:
 - Registering them as independent candidates
 - Arranging transportation to and from exam centres
 - Collecting and distributing their certificates upon successful completion
4. **Vocational Counselling:** The program also includes vocational counselling. Students explore post-Grade 10 education and career options. Professionals are invited to discuss various pathways to popular professions.

Kotak Securities Limited, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practice, has been supporting Pratham's education initiatives. In the 2021-22 period, their support enabled the engagement of 227 women and girls across Hyderabad (Uppal) and Jaipur in the SC program. The impact assessment conducted in February 2024 provides detailed findings on the programme's activities and outcomes, as presented in this report.

Overall, the SC program aims to empower women and girls by providing them with a second chance at education and enhancing their employability prospects.

Chapter 2. Approach and Methodology

This assessment of the KSL's Second Chance project was undertaken to assess the intervention's impact on students enrolled in FY 2021-22 only.

2.1 Research Objectives

The key objectives of this research study include:

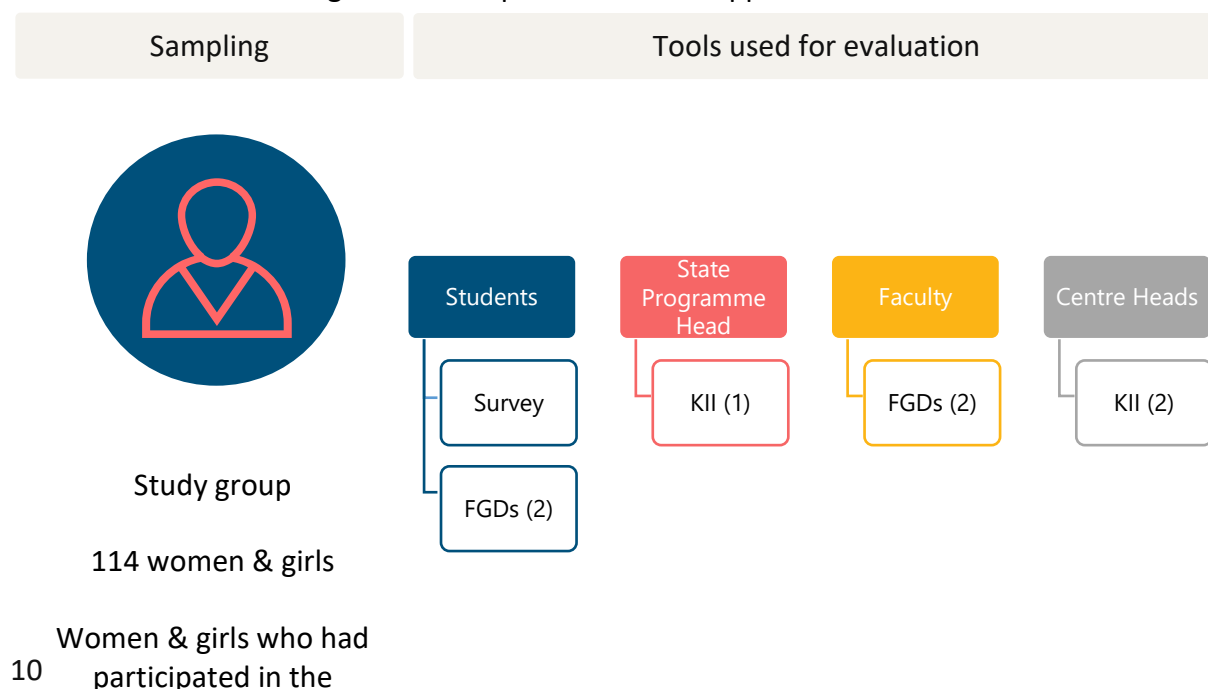
- i. Comprehensively assessing the impact of the project through the OECD-DAC framework that considers the **relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact** of any development initiative to establish its social outcomes and improvements in the lives of the primary stakeholders.
- ii. Ascertaining the sustainability of the project's processes and outcomes.

2.2 Methodology

The study adopted a mixed methodology approach to collecting primary data using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data was collected through telephonic surveys with the primary stakeholders of the project while qualitative data was collected through field visits to sampled locations in Jaipur and Hyderabad. Details of the data collection methods adopted for this impact assessment study are represented in the next section.

2.3 Sampling

A mix of randomised and purposive sampling was carried out to ensure adequate representation from all cohorts mobilised in various districts for the assessment period. Contact data of all programme participants was requested from the implementation partners and a random sampling exercise was carried out to draw a final sample of 114 women and girls for the impact assessment survey. The quantitative data collection was conducted in a remote manner following all the best practices of this approach.



2.4 Analysis Framework

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. The goal of the organization is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity, and well-being for all. Together with governments, policymakers, and citizens, the organisation works on establishing evidence-based international standards and finding solutions to a range of social, economic, and environmental challenges¹.

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) has defined six evaluation criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability - for measuring the impact of a given programme. These criteria provide a normative framework used to determine the merit of an intervention. They serve as the basis upon which evaluative analyses are made.



Figure 1: OECD framework with criteria

The definition, according to OECD, of the six criteria is described below²:

- **Relevance** - The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.
- **Coherence** - The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector, or institution.

¹ [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#)

² [Evaluation Criteria](#)

- **Efficiency** - The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.
- **Effectiveness** - The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.
- **Impact** - The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level effects.
- **Sustainability** - The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue.

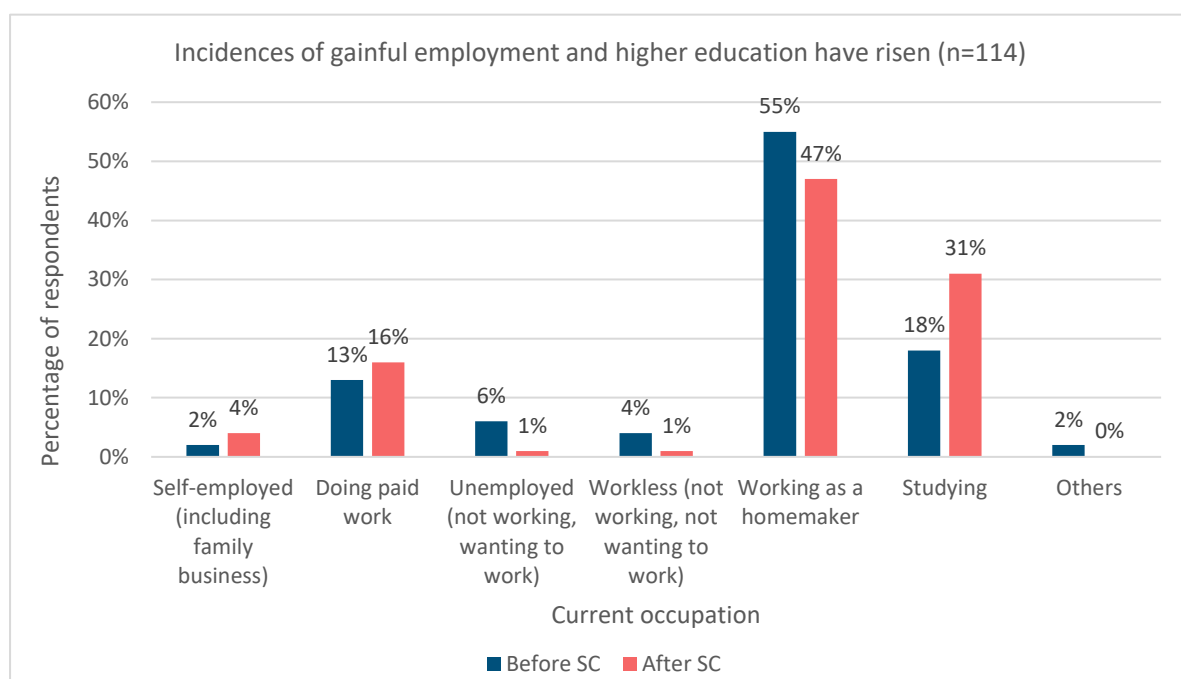
The findings of the study have been presented in the OECD format to assess the impact created by the programme.

Chapter 3. Analysis and Findings

3.1 Profile of the respondents

3.1.1 Occupation of the respondents

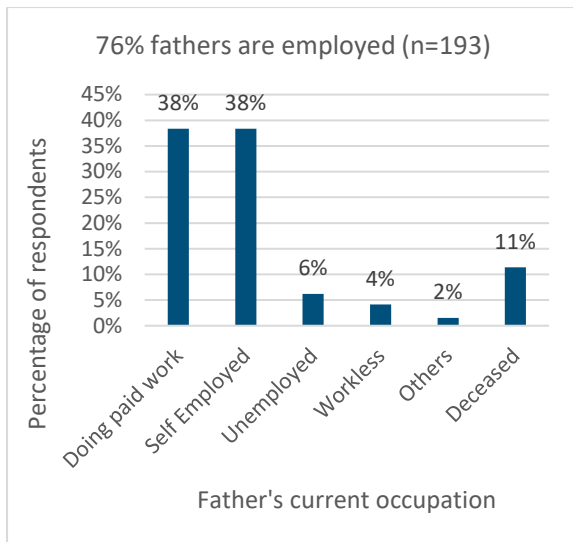
The current occupation of the respondents presents a positive trend overall, with an increase seen in the incidence of paid work and a large portion of the respondents reporting being engaged in studying. The latter especially is indicative of the positive effect of the project since the primary stakeholders were drop outs before joining SC but have chosen and been able to continue education beyond Grade 10, presumably through the project's success in impressing upon them and their families the importance of education. Only 1% each reported being unemployed and workless. The biggest group, however, remains being engaged in housework and needs to be targeted to ensure the impact of the project is realised by them. This has been taken up in the relevant sections of the report.



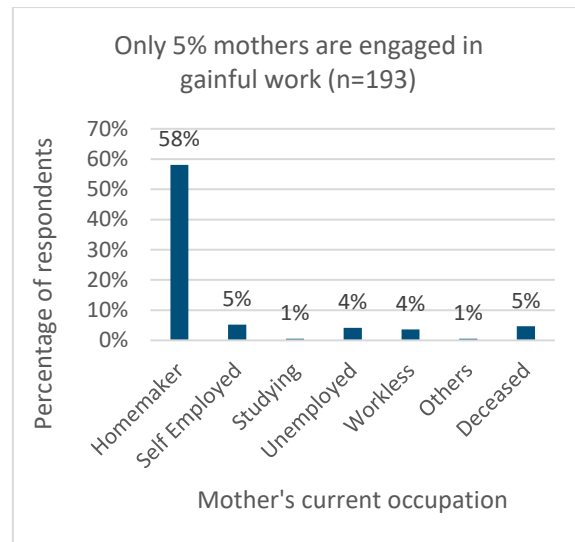
Graph 1: Occupations of the respondents prior to and after SC

3.1.2 Family occupations

The survey also collected data on the occupations of the parents of the primary stakeholders so as to create a picture of the family's income, educational background, etc. This data is presented in the graphs below:



Graph 2: Respondents' fathers' occupations



Graph 3: Respondents' mothers' occupations

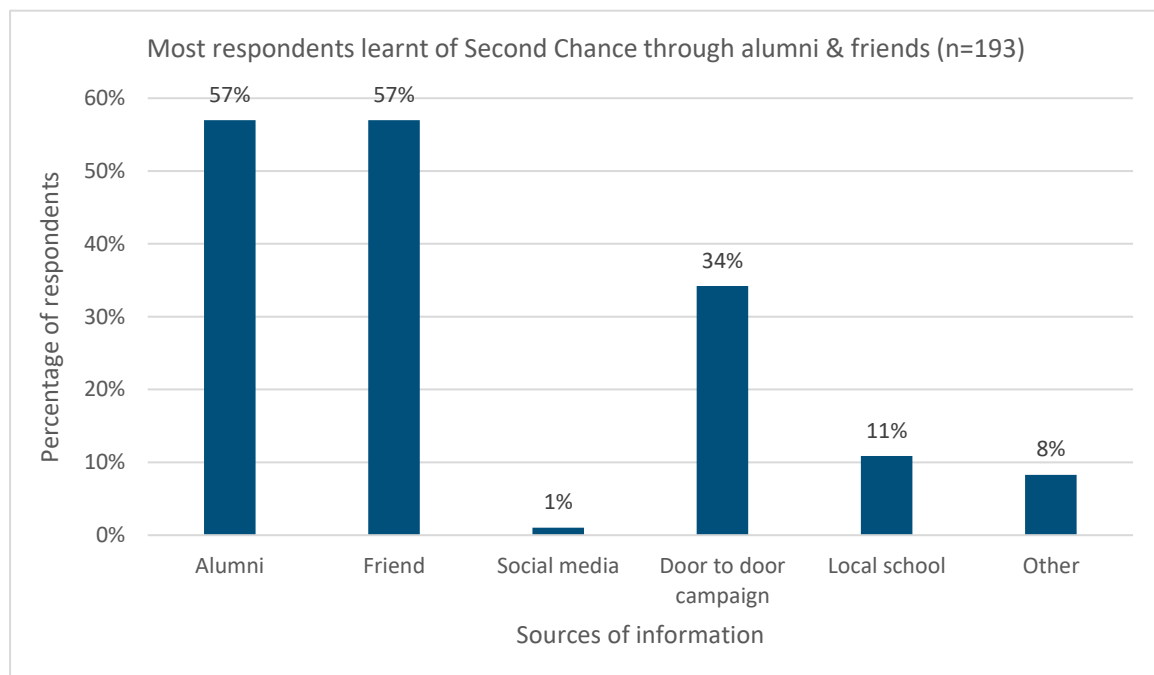
The graphs present a stark image of the norms of labour force participation amongst parents of different genders. While a great majority of the fathers are engaged in gainful work, only 5% of the mothers are. Further, no mothers are engaged in paid work that does not arise out of self-employment, highlighting the barrier to access for women to jobs that may require them to go outside the house. These trends can be seen as having a bearing on the incidence of dropping out in the young girls of these families and, if not for Second Chance's intervention, could be seen to perpetuate these practices intergenerationally.

3.2 Relevance Indicator

3.2.1 Mobilisation

In order to mobilise the relevant primary stakeholders of the project to engage with the Second Chance classes, it was stated by the on-ground personnel that they began the process in March of every year. For the cohort being assessed, this coincided with the beginning of the COVID-19-induced lockdowns in the country. So while earlier the ground teams of Second Chance began mobilisation by going door to door in their respective catchment areas to identify and motivate women and girls who had dropped out of school to attend the classes, now they had to pivot to telephonic outreach.

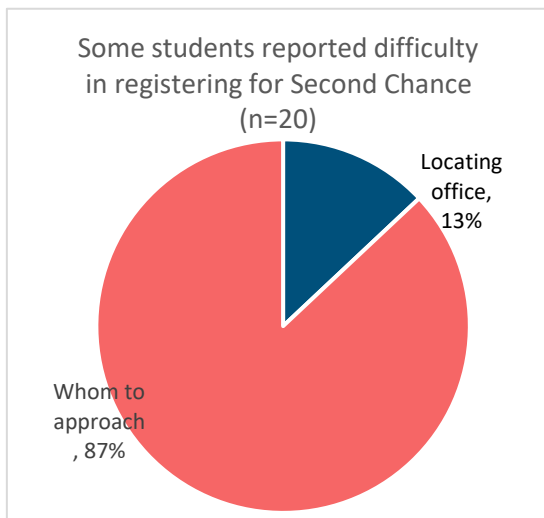
The sources of learning about the programme, as reported by the respondents of the survey, are represented in the graph below:



Graph 4: Source of learning about Second Chance reported by respondents

Most respondents report having learnt about the programme through friends or alumni, these may have overlapped. 34% still report learning about it through the door-to-door campaigns, suggesting that these continued when the lockdown was first lifted. The same was corroborated by the project staff the Samhita team spoke with. In general, it was found that the physical campaigning was necessary for the mobilisation of the target cohort since it helped the project team understand the individual barriers being faced by the potential students and address them accordingly. It also allowed them to provide basic counselling to the families and nudge them towards trying out the classes so as to further motivate them to

become a part of the programme. Given that the project participants were drop outs, this step was crucial in ensuring successful participation in the project.

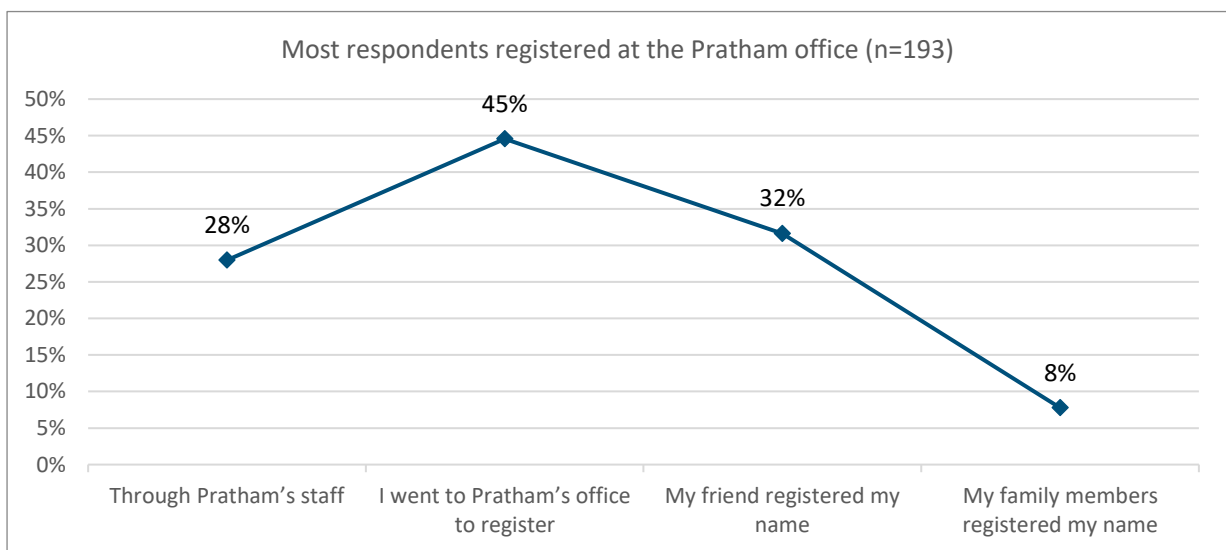


Some respondent students did report difficulties in registering for the class, as seen in the pie chart here. However, it is possible that this arose due to the change in protocol brought about by the lockdowns and the lack of face-to-face interaction between the project staff and students before the classes began.

Graph 5: Difficulties in registering for Second Chance

3.3 Coherence Indicators

3.3.1 Registration



Graph 6: Method of registering for SC

Registration for classes typically takes place at the centre during the initial week, termed Zero Week, of the programme, as reported by the Pratham staff. This is corroborated by the data collected from respondents through the telephonic survey, presented in the graph below.

3.3.2 Appearance for Board Examination

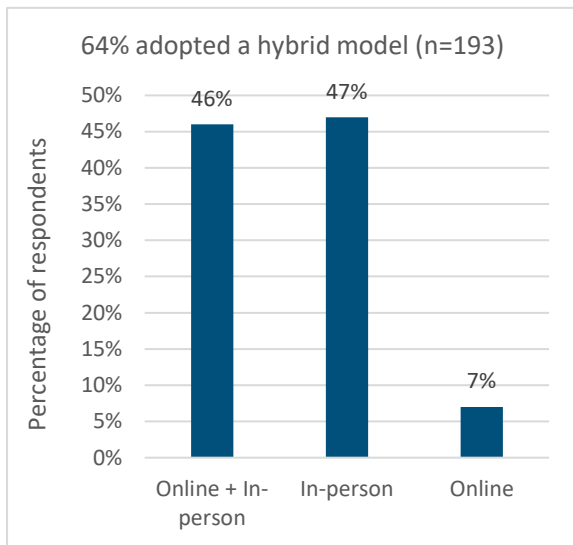
97% of the surveyed attendees reported appearing for the board exams as part of their engagement with the Second Chance project. Of the 3 respondents who did not appear, their

reasons for this were reported to be a lack of transport (1) and the clashing of the examination with their work or household chores (2).

The project team reported that they provided transportation to and from the Pratham centre to the board examination centre for all students. This was seen as very helpful in ensuring that the students could appear for the exams as the centres tend to be at a distance and families were more likely to send their girls out when in the care of a known person.

3.4 Efficiency Indicators

3.4.1 Classroom experience



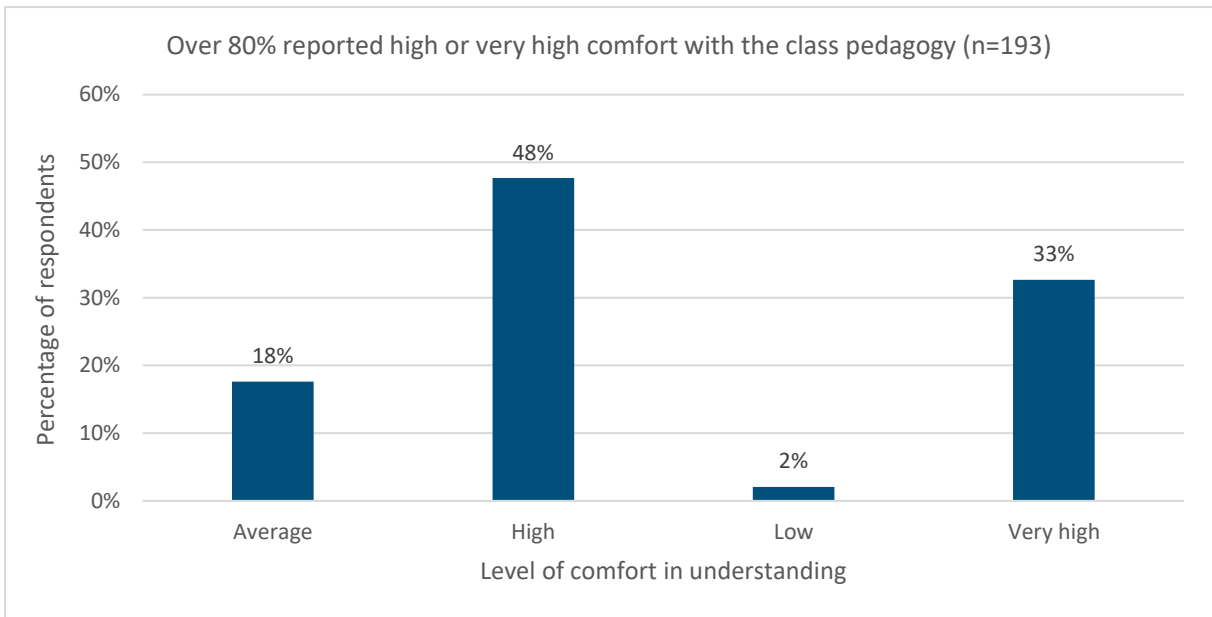
Graph 7: Mode of attending SC classes

Most students reported attending in-person classes, as evidenced by the graph here. As reported by the ground staff, online classes were introduced for the first time in SC in 2020 due to the advent of the lockdowns in 2020-22 and continued during the present project period for the cohort assessed. As we can see, a significant percentage attended hybrid classes. The staff reported quick and large-scale uptake of mobile phones for the purpose of remote classes. Difficulties associated with the digital divide in India did arise – 6% of those who said they attended online classes said they could not access them regularly. However, the Pratham team supplemented regular classes

with making the faculty available on call for students who missed online classes, extra or remedial classes being arranged later at night or during weekends, and revisions once in-person classes were permitted again. This ensured that students without or with limited access did not have to discontinue their engagement with the programme. The team reported a general dropout rate of around 10% from the project each year and this was not reported to be any higher in the assessment period.

Despite the best efforts of the Pratham team, on being asked which mode of learning or classes they preferred, 94% of the respondents expressed inclination towards having the entire course being conducted in person. This may be indicative of the unequal access to technology in rural and peri-urban areas, specifically for girls and women, who are often not mobile-owners. It is also a finding that the Pratham team may keep in mind while deciding to opt for hybrid classes in the future, as was reported to the Samhita team.

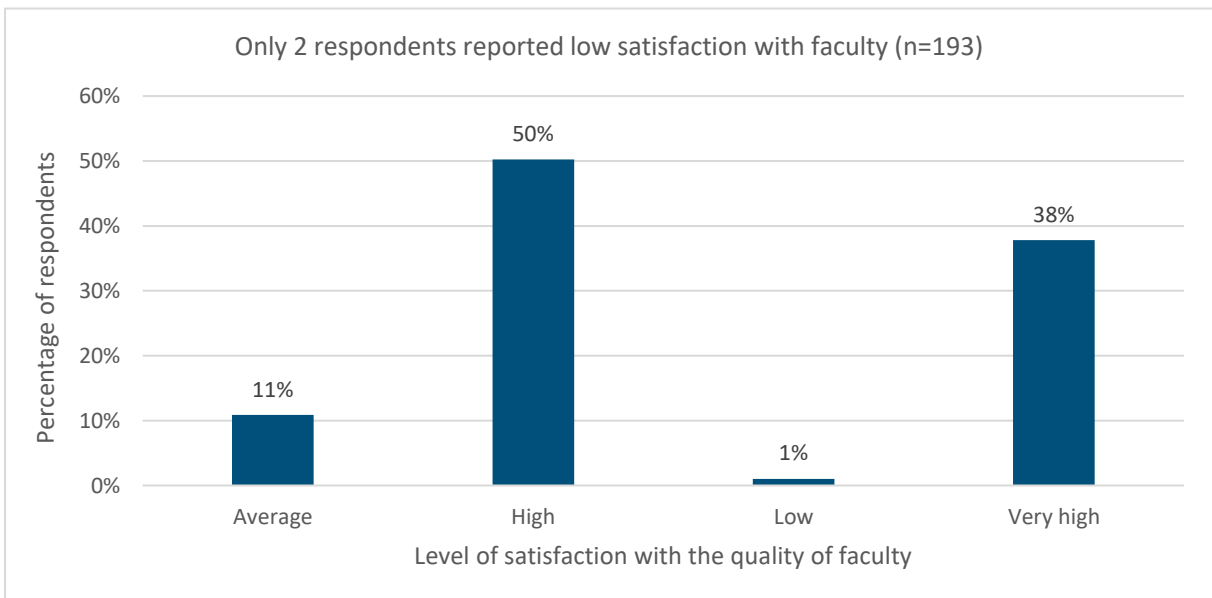
All respondents reported the medium of instruction of the classes to be the vernacular of their respective districts – Telugu in Hyderabad, Hindi in Patna & Jaipur. The comfort of the respondents in understanding what was being taught in the class is presented in the graph below:



Graph 8: Respondents' level of comfort in understanding what was being taught in class

Additionally, 41% respondents reported being very highly satisfied with the curriculum taught in the SC classes while 46% reported being highly satisfied. More than 90% agreed or strongly agreed that the curriculum taught at the SC classes was helpful for passing the Secondary Board Examinations they attempted at the end of the academic year.

Satisfaction with the quality of teachers reported by the respondents is presented in the graph below:



Graph 9: Respondents' level of satisfaction with the quality of SC faculty

3.4.2 Attendance

Over 93% of the respondents reported attending the Second Chance classes regularly. For the remaining 7%, the stated reasons for not attending are tabulated below.

Reason to not attend	Percentage of respondents (n=13)
Parent had the mobile phone	8%
Non availability of a smart phone	15%
Housework	23%
Family member unwell	31%
Married while studying	8%
Small child at home	8%
No reason stated	8%

Table 1: Reasons for not attending Second Chance classes regularly

Further, about 3% of respondents did not attend any virtual classes while 16% attended them but not regularly. Reasons for irregular attendance by the latter is tabulated below:

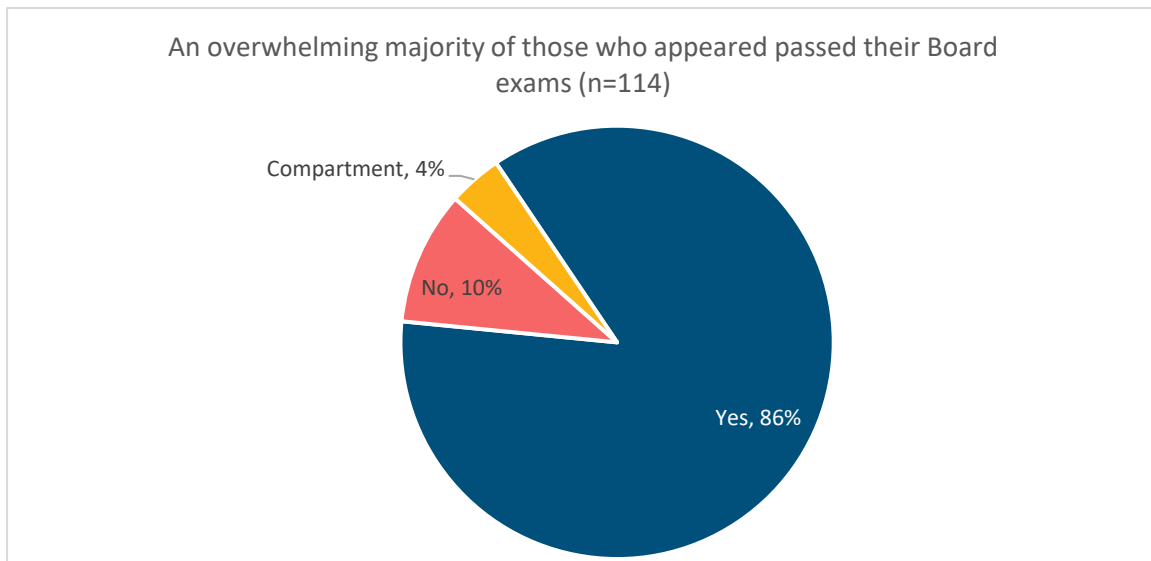
Reason to not attend	Percentage of respondents (n=31)
I did not have a good network	3%
I did not have access to smart phone with video call option	29%
I did not have access to laptop with a video call option	35%
Others	32%

Table 2: Reasons for not attending online classes regularly

3.5 Effectiveness Indicators

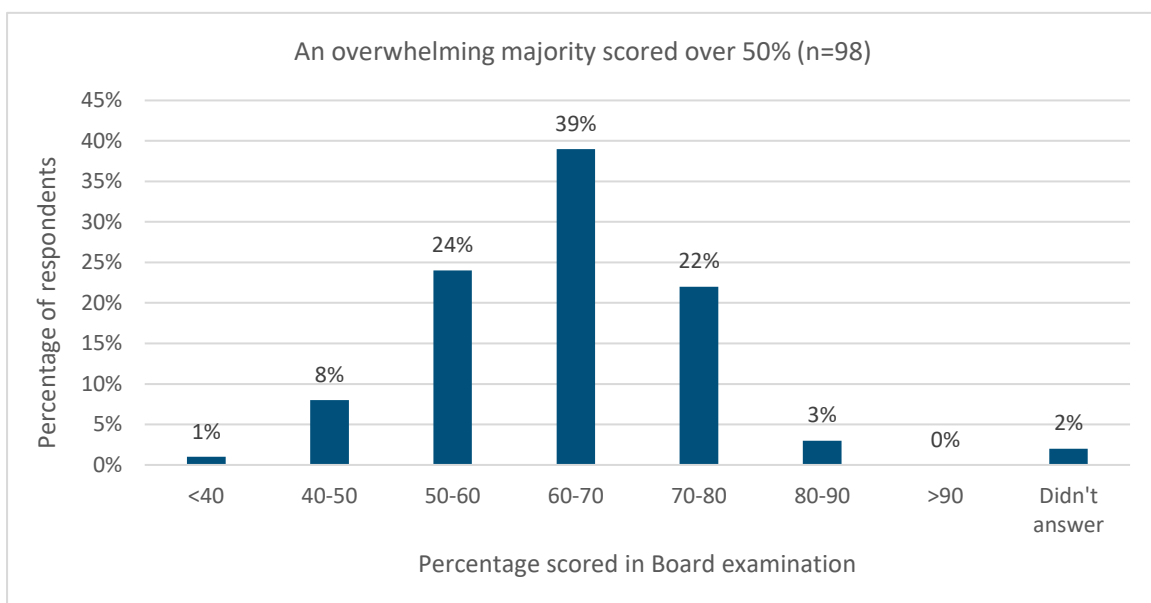
3.5.1 Academic performance

Of the respondents surveyed, more than 97% appeared for the Secondary School Examination, up from 90% last year. Of these, 86% passed in the first attempt, while 4% had gotten compartments in a subject and were planning to reappear for the same. This is a highly positive impact with direct causal correlation with the SC project and evidences the effectiveness of the project in achieving its primary objective.



Graph 10: Respondents' response to whether they cleared the Board examinations

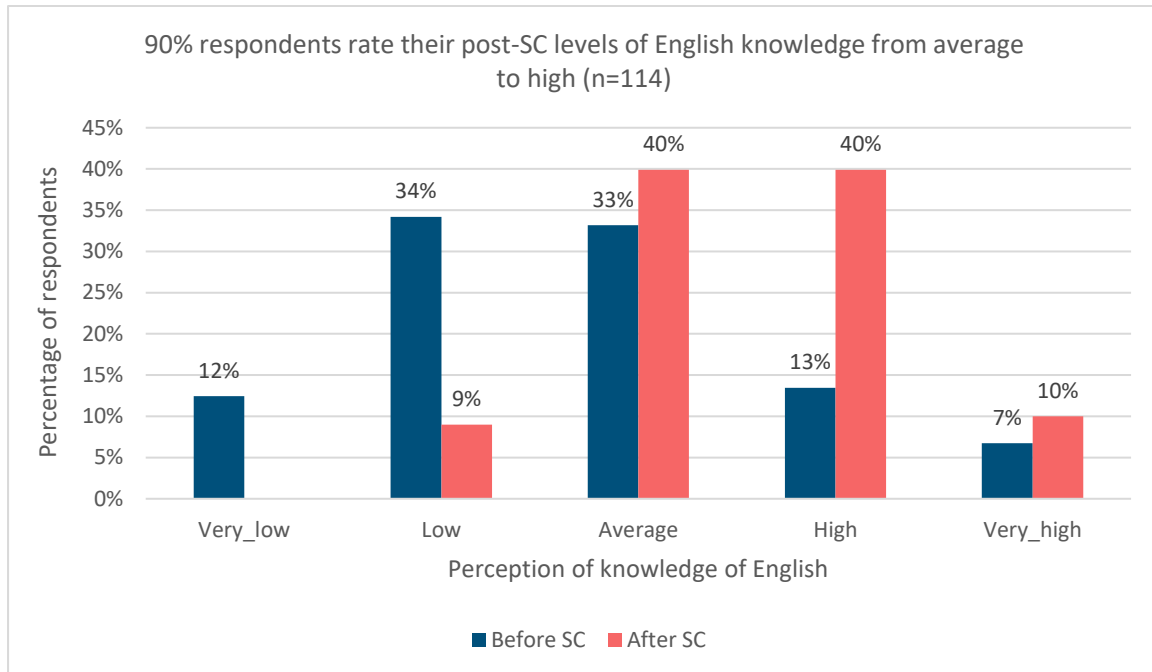
Performance was generally quite good for the students who've cleared the examination, with 53% scoring over between 50%-70%, 22% scoring between 70%-80% and 3% scoring over 80% as well. Only about 9% scored less than 50%.



Graph 11: Results of the respondents who cleared their Grade 10 certification exam

3.5.2 Perception of knowledge

Another indicator tracked by the survey was the respondents' perception of their knowledge levels. We see an upward trend in this in all subjects tracked. Data for English is provided in the graph below.



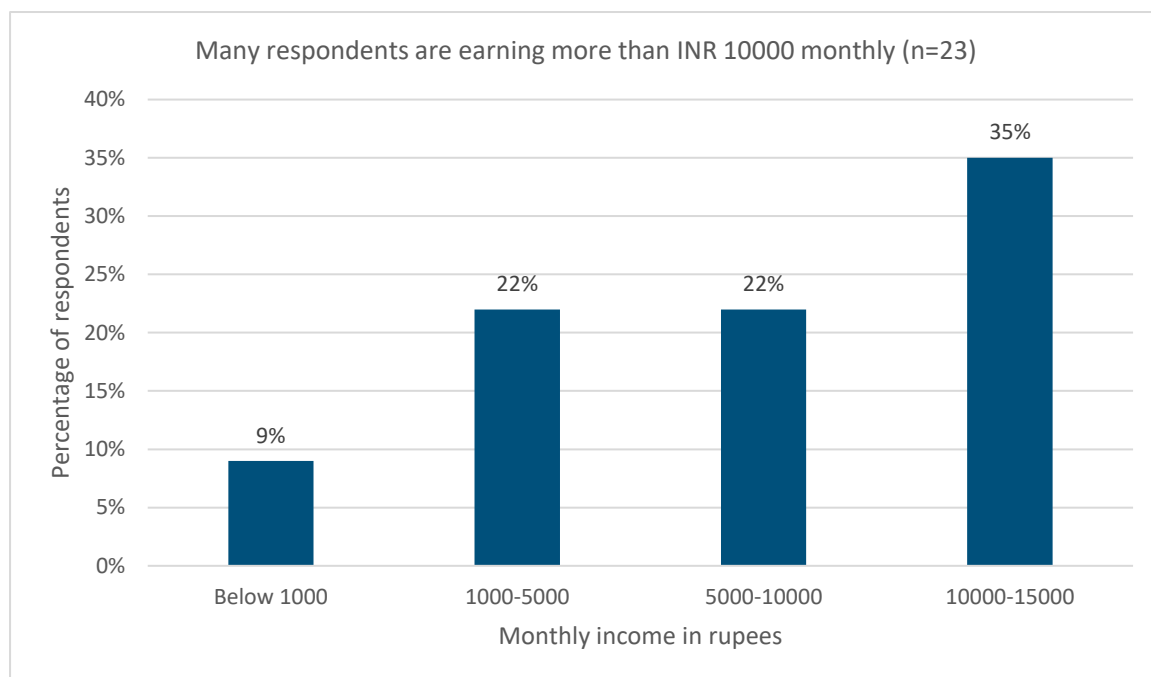
Graph 12: Respondents' perception of English knowledge before & after SC

For both Maths and Science, over 80% of the respondents reported that their knowledge of the subjects improved post attending SC classes. The remaining 20% stated that their knowledge of the subjects remained the same after classes. As noted by students as well as faculty during qualitative data collection, it was common amongst the project participants to consider themselves incapable of studying well enough to clear Grade 10 boards before joining SC while afterwards they can be said to have become evidently more confident in their academic abilities.

3.6 Impact Indicators

3.6.1 Impact on income

Only 20% of the respondents are engaged in employment. 31% are studying while 47% reported being homemakers at the time of the survey. The graph below summarises the present monthly income reported by the respondents that were engaged in gainful work at the time of the survey:

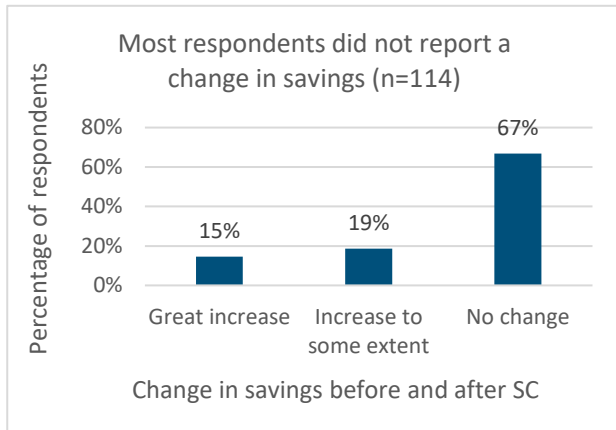


Graph 13: Respondents' monthly income

The largest groups are found to be in the 10000-15000, which is much higher than the average income for women in the peri-urban communities of the cities surveyed. These were the categories in which the respondents reported to be in terms of employment. While we do not have income data from before the respondents joined SC, the rate of labour force participation has not gone up for the assessed cohort. It was found that in many cases despite having cleared the examinations, many women faced barriers from their families in terms of engaging in employment outside their households. This can be seen as a barrier to the programme's intended impact as well and may be taken up as an issue to address by means of sensitisation and awareness drives within the target communities.

3.6.2 Impact on savings

When asked about the state of their savings before and after participating in SC, a majority of respondents did not note a change. There can be many reasons for this. For one, more than 50% of the respondents continue to not be engaged in gainful employment. This is not necessarily a negative trend as roughly half of those women are continuing their education further but does mean that they do not have access to funds for saving.

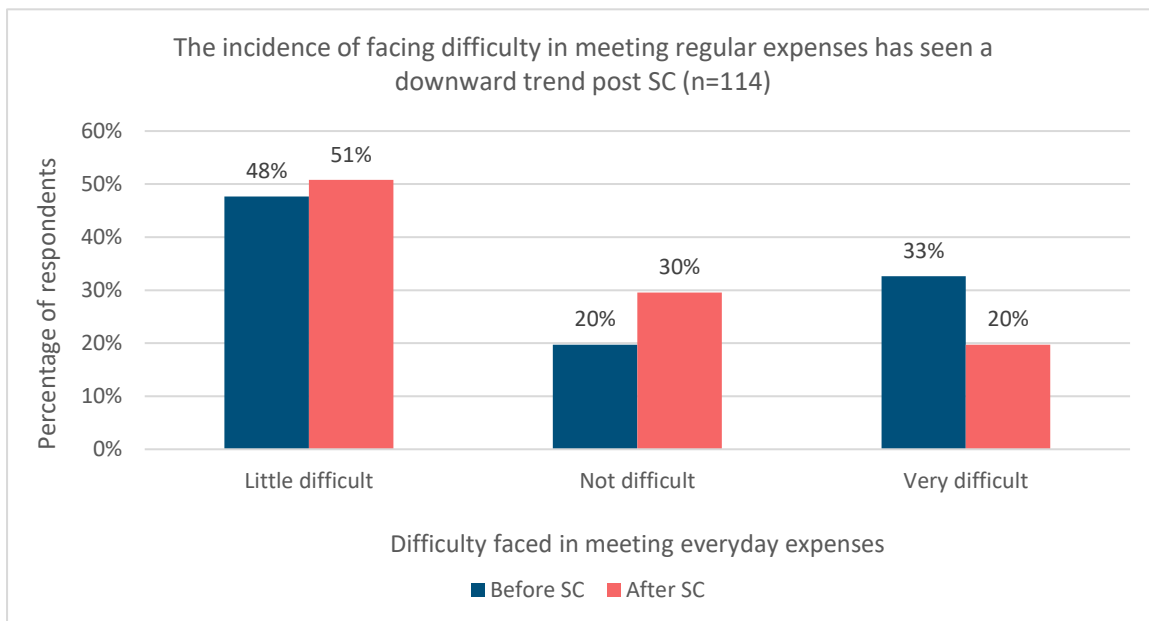


Graph 14: Respondents savings trend

Secondly, the unforeseen effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, as noted before, have caused many persons across the globe to become unemployed or suffer loss of income and the same may be said of the assessed cohort. Lastly, the project does not necessarily focus on financial literacy, which is found to be low in low-income households, specifically amongst women and can be said to contribute to a lack of habitual saving.

3.6.3 Impact on capacity to bear expenses

Respondents of the telephonic survey were asked how difficult they found meeting their or their families' regular expenses, before and after engaging with SC. As can be seen from the graph below, the percentage that found it very difficult has fallen from 33% to 20%, while the percentage of those who do not find it difficult has risen from 20% to 30%. These positive trends can be taken as markers of good impact of the SC project.

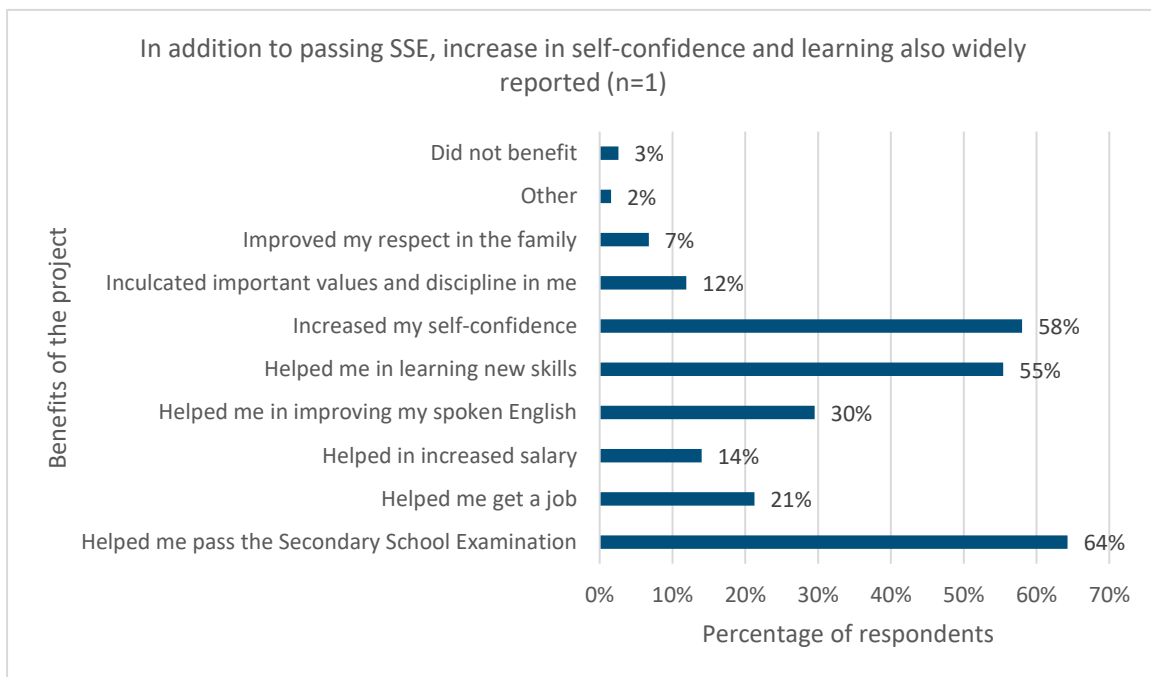


Graph 15: Difficulty in meeting daily expenses reported by respondents

3.7 Sustainability Indicators

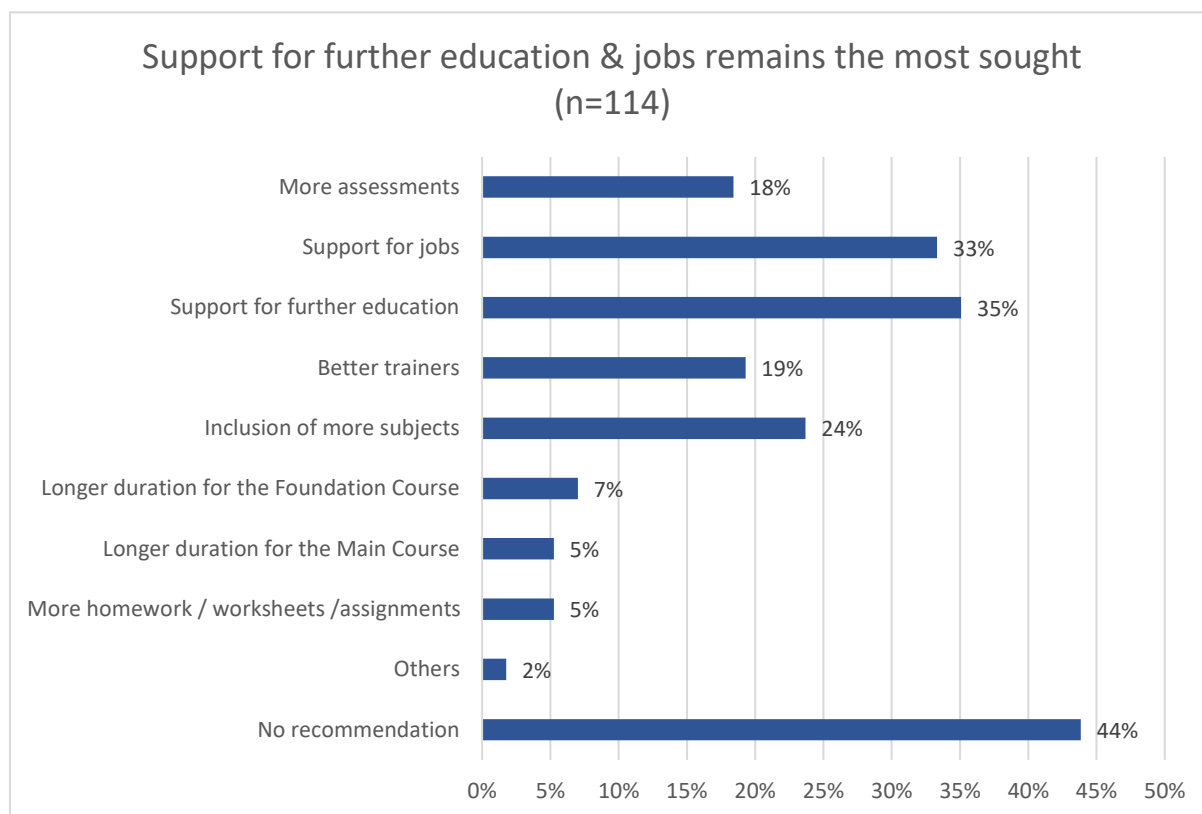
3.7.1 Soft Skills

The project also had a positive impact on the participants' soft skills. The following graph collates the responses of the survey participants when directly asked about the benefits of the SC project. As can be seen, 58% reported an increase in confidence, 55% reported learning new skills, while 30% said it helped them improve their spoken English. These skills are widely considered important to gain employment and are bound to hold the project participants in good stead for the purpose if they seek jobs.



Graph 16: Benefits of SC reported by primary stakeholders

Chapter 4. Recommendations



Graph 17: Recommendations for SC by survey respondents

4.1 Support for post 10th opportunities

As seen in the graph above, over a third of the respondents believe the project could improve by providing support for further education. Many of the respondents directly mentioned an interest in taking up further studies but were unable to do so due to varied reasons such as lack of information on how to go about it, lack of flexible class options such as those provided by SC or lack of financial wherewithal to support further studies. While the SC project might be limited in its scope to assisting women and girls graduate Grade 10, a module on providing information and access to opportunities for pursuing further education may be included in the programme to allow those interested to be able to continue education. Some alumni who are presently studying mentioned receiving informal support from SC staff for their educational pursuits but formalising this through a comprehensive module would be more efficient and effective. Further, a sensitisation and awareness session for the families of the students can ensure that they receive the familial support required for continuing education for those interested.

4.2 Involving families and communities for vocational progress

The other most common recommendation from project participants was support for jobs. While it is understandable that the Pratham team cannot take this up within the scope of its

programmes, a deepening of the existing *Dasvi Ke Baad Kya* module may be considered. While the project team mentioned that this module is held for all students, with students being encouraged to make mind maps of their aspirational professions, the prerogative of gathering information on these pathways is presently on the students themselves. The project team also reported that professionals from fields that are widely reported by students as being of interest are invited to discuss the academic pathways of entering the profession. However, few students remembered these activities or seemed to have benefitted from it. It is recommended that a more individual and information-oriented module be created for the *Dasvi Ke Baad Kya* aspect of the SC project. This may involve creation of groups among the class of students aspiring to similar professions and the project staff assisting them in identifying pathways to enter the profession. Resources such as education and vocation camps can be recommended to the students. They may also be connected to organisations that assist students in continuing education beyond Grade 10 or accessing vocational / professional training.

More importantly, as seen in the employment section above, less than a quarter of the alumni group who responded to the survey were gainfully employed. Most reported a lack of support from their families to engage in employment that involved stepping outside of their homes. This is a major roadblock for the project to achieve its intended impact of facilitating livelihood and agency for women in the communities it works with. It is imperative that the families and communities of the SC students be involved in a deeper fashion to sensitise them about the importance of women's participation in the labour workforce and try to address the issues they may have in supporting the women from their homes for the same. To this end, a formal awareness session and even case-based counselling should be considered to be a formal part of the project.

Hamara Gaon Project

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 About the programme

The **Hamara Gaon (HG)** project, launched by Pratham Education Foundation in 2018, aims to address the gap in foundational learning levels among school students in the country. It operates in communities across India, with a focus on encouraging village communities to take ownership of their children's engagement with school education.

The key features of the project are as follows:

1. **Age-Wise Clubs of Children:** The project enters a community and creates age-wise clubs of children within schools. These clubs serve as sites for volunteer-led group learning. Pratham staff actively lead these clubs for a period of three years.
2. **Three Student Groups:** The project organizes students into three groups based on their grade levels:
 - Group 1: Students from Classes I and II
 - Group 2: Students from Classes III to V
 - Group 3: Students from Classes VI to VIII
3. **Tailored Engagement Methods:** Each group receives different engagement methods to cater to their specific needs. This approach recognizes that children at different ages require varied approaches to learning.
4. **Youth and Mother Volunteers:** The program also involves youth and mother volunteers. These volunteers are trained to ensure that the groups meet regularly and act as facilitators through whom the children receive the intended benefits under the project.

While the initial plan was for a three-year program, the HG project was extended due to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to a duration of five years, ending in 2022.

The Hamara Gaon program exemplifies Pratham's commitment to improving educational outcomes and empowering communities. By fostering active learning environments and involving volunteers, it contributes to bridging the learning gap among students in India.

Kotak Securities Limited has been supporting Pratham's education initiatives as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practice. . In the 2021-22 period, their support enabled the engagement of 22064 children across Nashik, Hyderabad, Vishakhapatnam, Nagpur, Pimpri and Jaipur in the HG project. This impact assessment conducted in February 2024 provides detailed findings on the programme's activities and outcomes, as presented in this report.

Chapter 2. Approach and Methodology

This assessment of the KSL's Hamara Gaon project was undertaken to assess the intervention's impact on students enrolled in FY 2021-22 only.

2.1 Research Objectives

The key objectives of this research study include:

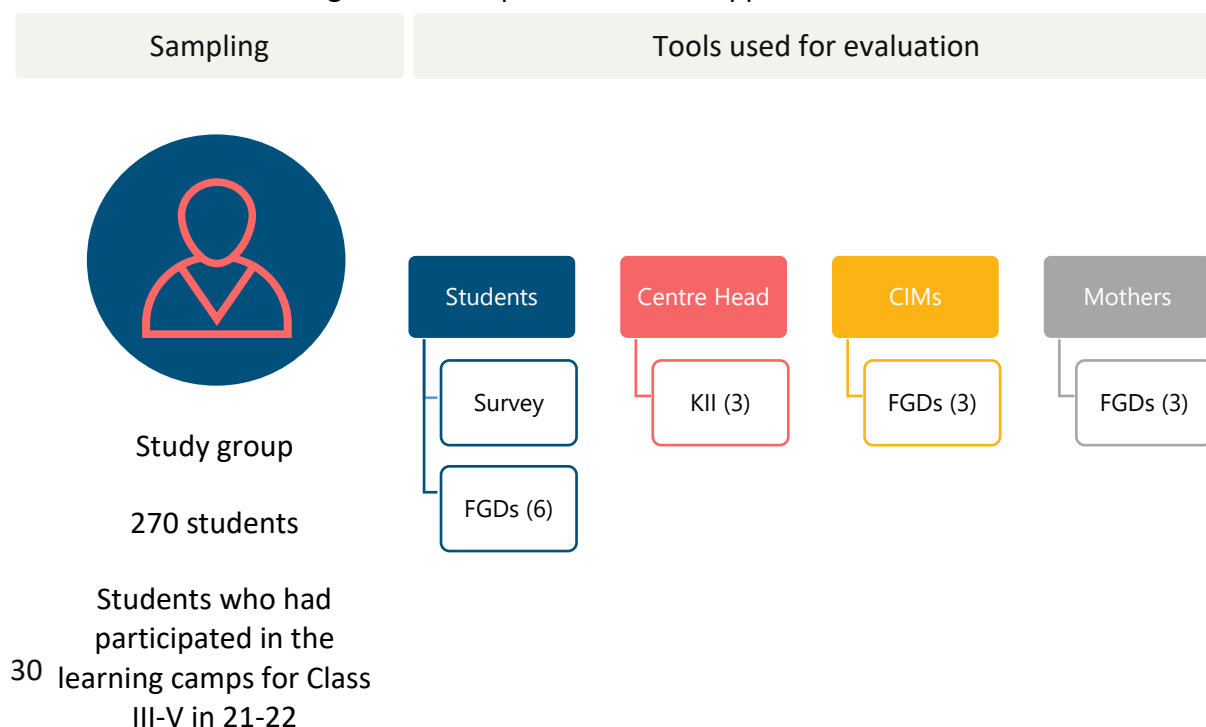
- i. Comprehensively assessing the impact of the project through the OECD-DAC framework that considers the **relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact** of any development initiative to establish its social outcomes and improvements in the lives of the primary stakeholders.
- ii. Ascertaining the sustainability of the project's processes and outcomes.

2.2 Methodology

The study adopted a mixed methodology approach to collecting primary data using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data was collected through telephonic surveys with the primary stakeholders of the project while qualitative data was collected through field visits to sampled locations in Jaipur and Hyderabad. Details of the data collection methods adopted for this impact assessment study are represented in the next section.

2.3 Sampling

A mix of randomised and purposive sampling was carried out to ensure adequate representation from all cohorts mobilised in various districts for the assessment period. Contact data of all programme participants was requested from the implementation partners and a random sampling exercise was carried out to draw a final sample of 114 women and girls for the impact assessment survey. The quantitative data collection was conducted in a remote manner following all the best practices of this approach.



2.4 Analysis Framework

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. The goal of the organization is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity, and well-being for all. Together with governments, policymakers, and citizens, the organisation works on establishing evidence-based international standards and finding solutions to a range of social, economic, and environmental challenges³.

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) has defined six evaluation criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability - for measuring the impact of a given programme. These criteria provide a normative framework used to determine the merit of an intervention. They serve as the basis upon which evaluative analyses are made.



Figure 2: OECD framework with criteria

The definition, according to OECD, of the six criteria is described below⁴:

- **Relevance** - The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.
- **Coherence** - The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector, or institution.

³ [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#)

⁴ [Evaluation Criteria](#)

- **Efficiency** - The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.
- **Effectiveness** - The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.
- **Impact** - The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level effects.
- **Sustainability** - The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue.

The findings of the study have been presented in the OECD format to assess the impact created by the programme.

Chapter 3. Analysis and Findings

3.1 Relevance Indicator

3.1.1 Programme Design

The programme was designed on the basis of the results of many rounds of the annual Annual State of Education Report (ASER). India. It aims to understand whether children in rural areas are enrolled in school and whether they are learning. ASER provides reliable estimates of children's schooling and learning levels, making it the largest citizen-led survey in India⁵. The report has significantly shifted discussions on education from inputs to outcomes, emphasizing the importance of learning⁶. For many years, Indian students, specifically those studying in government schools, from low-income families, or first-generation learners, have been evaluated to score much lower scores on basic reading and arithmetic tests than is appropriate for their age. Further, there have been other reports on students in higher classes being promoted due to the government's no detention policy but not achieving learning outcomes expected of children their age. It has been observed that when a child is unable to master the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy, they would be progressively unable to cope with the increasing levels of knowledge and learning required of higher classes.

It is to solve this issue that Pratham designed the Hamara Gaon project. The project addressed this crucial issue with a wide-ranging impact, often lingering into the lives of children till they reach the age of employment, and hampering their ability to engage in gainful livelihoods. By focusing on foundational literacy and numeracy for children upto Class 8, the project ensures that children are not left behind simply because they have surpassed the age traditionally associated with the learning of these skills.

⁵ <https://asercentre.org/>

⁶ <https://www.pratham.org/programs/education/asere/>

3.2 Coherence Indicator

3.2.1 COVID Response

The HG project rapidly evolved to fit its implementation model into the framework of possibilities during the COVID pandemic era, shifting its physical implementation model to a digital one and ensuring maximum coverage across the digital divide. Pratham effectively adapted the project to ensure continuity of project activities and mitigate learning loss for the participating children. They leveraged their community-level resources and network to successfully pivot the program. The goal was to continue project activities despite challenges posed by the pandemic. This adaptation aimed to minimize disruptions in learning for the children enrolled in the program.

They further digitised the curriculum and learning material. These digital resources were sent to volunteers and parents who had access to cellphones at home. Clear instructions accompanied the material to guide its effective use. For those without phone access, alternative solutions were provided, such as guidance on safely procuring material from neighbours with phones, direct provision of material in accessible community spaces or use of boards by volunteers to write questions, worksheets, information, and other relevant content which were then placed in areas surrounded by houses with target children.

As safety conditions improved, Pratham organized mohalla camps in small groups. Strict safety precautions were followed during these gatherings. These camps replaced the learning camps previously held for Classes III-V. The transition ensured minimal disruption in learning and also served as an opportunity to educate children about COVID safety measures.

Pratham's multi-pronged approach allowed it to adapt swiftly, ensuring that children continued learning despite challenging circumstances.

3.3 Efficiency Indicators

3.3.1 Mobilisation

The HG project, initiated by the Pratham Education Foundation, heavily relied on local youth who demonstrated initiative, potential, and patience. These youth, often students in Classes 8th and above, were identified by community-level staff such as the Community Resource Leader (CRL) or the Community Instructor Mobiliser (CIM). Together with volunteers, they conducted a door-to-door mobilization campaign to enlist younger school-going children from Classes I to VIII. In some states, government schools served as the initial point of contact, allowing direct engagement with students through school administration.

Crucially, mothers of children in Classes I to V were also actively engaged. This approach was based on several factors. Mothers play a vital role in their child's education, and their active participation was essential. By engaging them, the project strengthens the first touchpoint to knowledge and education that a child experiences at the early childhood level, which is a crucial time for inculcation foundational concepts. By leveraging the time spent together by mother and child, learning at home could be fostered effectively. For this purpose, mothers were equipped to support their children's education. Initially, mothers participated alongside their children in the program. Later, they were engaged separately. These efforts attest to the positive impact the project had on the mothers involved.

3.4 Community-level engagement

HG program also effectively engaged local youth and mothers. One of the ways they did this was through local staff selection. Pratham ensured that resource leaders and mobilizers working on the project hailed from the same localities or communities where they operated. This strategic decision fostered a good rapport between the staff and the community, enabling them to engage youth more deeply in the selected villages. The staff members we interacted with during our study had backgrounds in the education sector, having previously taught students in schools or participated in education-centric development programs before joining the HG project.

As mentioned earlier, Pratham also leveraged connections through government school administrations within the communities of interest. By doing so, they built regard and trust for the project within families of the children. These established connections facilitated smoother implementation and community acceptance.

Furthermore, the involvement of both youth and mothers was pivotal. Youth were identified based on their interest in the project, initiative, and potential. Their educational levels were considered, but they were not barriers to becoming essential contributors to the project. Reading and writing skills were crucial, given the program's focus, but previous education did not hinder their participation.

Mothers also played a critical role as household-level stakeholders, as elaborated in the previous section. They effectively disseminated lessons, monitored progress, and reported any gaps. The selection criteria included their interest, initiative, and patience while educating others. Incentives, such as learning materials (e.g., digital training, first aid training), were provided to engage both youth and mothers. The Pratham team also considered additional incentives, such as skill training, during the assessment.

In summary, the engagement of local youth and mothers as active participants in the HG project has been instrumental in its successful execution.

3.5 Learning mechanisms

HG also had a comprehensive and thoughtfully custom-created approach tailored to address the diverse learning needs and abilities of the different aged children it engages. The program divides students into three distinct groups based on their grade levels:

- Class I-II
 - Mothers are the chief facilitators of learning here and play a significant role in engaging with this group.
 - Mothers are organized into small groups based on their neighborhoods.
 - Home-based learning occurs through materials disseminated via phones (such as Idea Cards) or suggestions using household items.
 - Concepts like numbers, letters, shapes, and colors are imparted.
 - Children’s foundational knowledge, cognitive abilities, socio-emotional skills, and motor skills are evaluated during School Readiness Melas (SRMs).
 - Report cards are provided to mothers to address any gaps identified.
- Class III-V
 - Learning camps, lasting a total of 30 days, operated wither in the community or at schools, focus on foundational literacy and numeracy.
 - Game and activity-based pedagogy ensures students achieve foundational literacy.
 - The camps are divided into 3 segments of 10 days each, with a gap of 10 days in between each segment. This allows for a more sustained engagement with more long-lasting impact.
 - Pre- and post-camp assessments help track progress.
- Class VI-VIII:
 - Study groups are formed within communities, led by volunteers and monitored by Community Instructor Mobilisers (CIMs).

- CIMs visit these groups to ensure students understand the disseminated material.
- Initially, physical materials were provided, but post-COVID, digital materials are distributed by volunteers.
- Some students in this age group also receive tablets for accessing digital learning content.

All student groups are encouraged to meet beyond Pratham activities. It is believed that group learning enhances engagement with material shared by the HG team. Students actively participate and have reported enjoying the game-based learning style.

Hamara Gaon's holistic approach ensures effective learning experiences for students across different age groups.

3.6 Effectiveness Indicators

3.6.1 Learning levels

Students who had been in Classes 3-5 during the programme period up till 2021 were assessed through a modified assessment tool based on the publicly available ASER tool. Tools were translated in local languages for each location to facilitate easier understanding and remove any language barriers to reflect accurate learning levels. The following graphs presents the findings from the assessment.

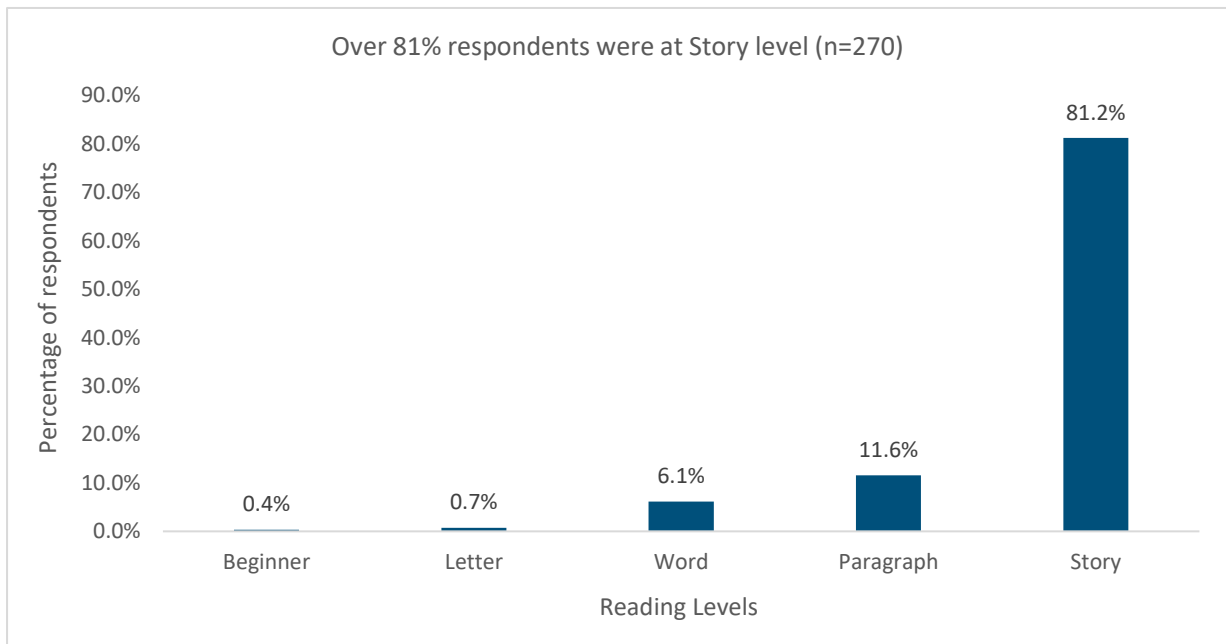


Figure 3: Reading levels of surveyed students

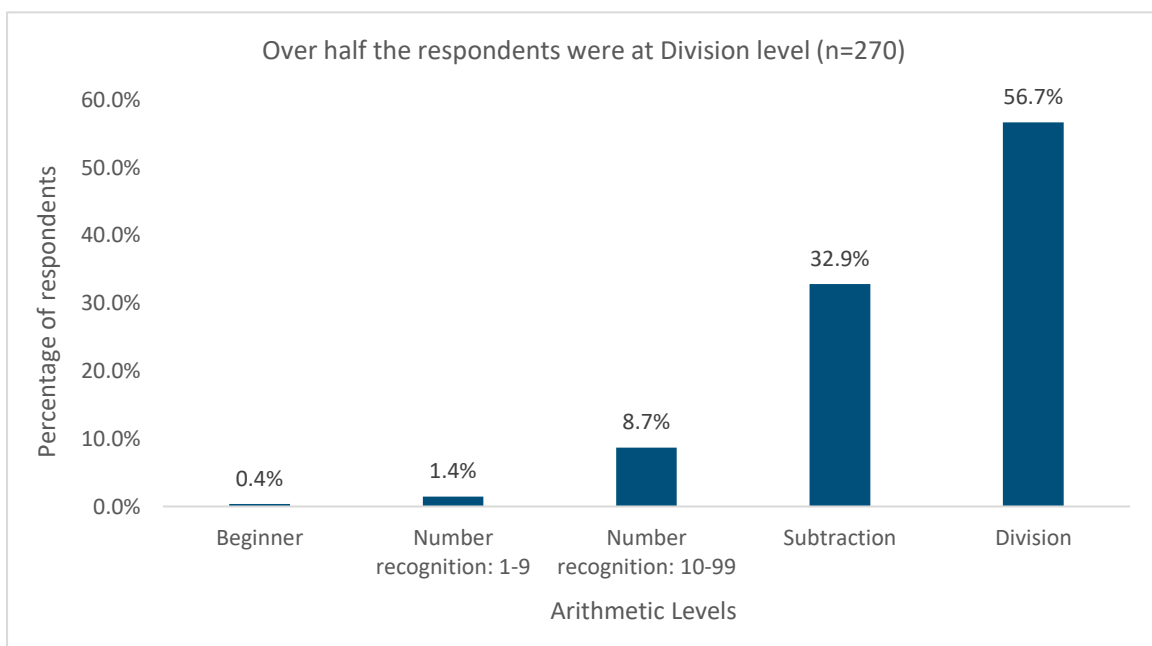


Figure 4: Numeracy levels of surveyed students

The Hamara Gaon (HG) program has led to a remarkable improvement in students' learning levels. When comparing the initial national ASER test results with the outcomes achieved by children who participated in the program, we see significant improvements. At the time of the beginning of the programme, slightly over 50% of Grade 5 students in rural India could read simple text at a Grade 2 level. Additionally, only about 28% of students had reached subtraction levels in arithmetic. However, after participating in the Hamara Gaon program over 81% of the children could read stories effectively while more than 89% of the students achieved or surpassed subtraction level proficiency in arithmetic.

These results underscore the effectiveness and impact of the Hamara Gaon project. Moving forward, the program should continue evolving to ensure students can progress adequately to higher levels. The dedication of the ground team and the commitment of the community have significantly contributed to this positive transformation.

3.7 Impact Indicators

3.7.1 Increased student engagement in schools

All students surveyed believed that it was important to go to school. In the qualitative interactions with students as well, they reported that they enjoyed going to school and have further become more involved in classrooms through asking questions and taking part in activities. Students mentioned that they feel more confident in their subjects after becoming better at them and understanding them better after the community classes organised by Pratham as part of the project.

3.7.2 Increased engagement of mothers

The HG project has led to a remarkable improvement in students' learning levels. When comparing the initial national ASER test results with the outcomes achieved by children who participated in the program, we see significant improvements:

Initially, mothers were hesitant and shy, reluctant to step out of their homes to engage in the groups created for them. However, once they began attending the School Readiness Melas (SRMs), their participation became central to the project. In fact, their involvement has become so significant that the organization is now considering connecting them with Nipun Bharat, the Indian government's foundational literacy program.

The mothers are involved in the HG ecosystem largely through leading study groups. They take charge of study groups for students in Classes I and II. They ensure that learning materials sent via WhatsApp are properly conveyed to and understood by their children. At home, they actively conduct learning activities, including counting, colour identification, and learning animal and vegetable names.

The programme has also led to an increased engagement with schools for the mothers as well, extending beyond the home. Prior to the programme, mothers would rarely be involved in their wards' education and almost never visited schools unless specifically requested by authorities. Many now actively visit schools during parent-teacher meetings and report card presentations. They keenly monitor their children's performance at school and effectively communicate with teachers about classroom behaviour and learning progress.

Remarkably, some mothers have transitioned to becoming CIMs within the HG project through the support they received during their engagement with the project. These positive outcomes demonstrate the program's effectiveness in empowering mothers and fostering their active participation.

The Hamara Gaon project not only impacts students but also uplifts and empowers the mothers involved.

3.8 Sustainability Indicators

3.8.1 Performance in school

As part of the survey, we asked students which subjects they faced difficulties in. Their responses are presented in the figure below. As can be seen, English and Mathematics, both of which are the chief focus of the HG project, continue to be subjects that are most reported as difficult by students. This is indicative of a there being limited spillover of the effects of the learning camps for the students at school or with regards to school subjects and examinations. This further highlights the need for the programme to strengthen the alignment of the community classes with the subjects taught at school to help the students attain transferable learning skills and achieve better outcomes at school, which have a longer impact on their knowledge and livelihoods trajectory.

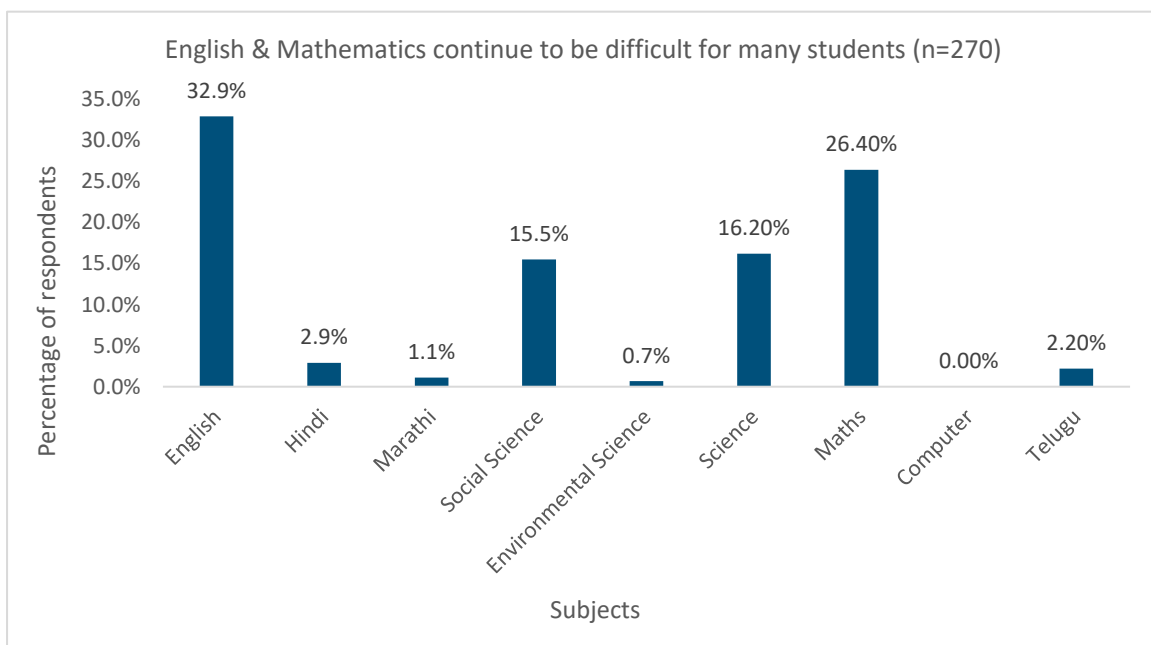


Figure 5: Subjects found difficult in school by respondents

Chapter 4. Recommendations

4.1 Reverting to a continuous 30-day learning camp

The learning camps have been divided into 3 periods of 10 days each in order to increase retention. However, volunteers and CIMs mentioned that this has not necessarily led to increased retention and in fact, leads to them having to spend more time at the beginning of each session to help students recollect what they had learned previously. Further, it increases the amount of logistical work undertaken by them. They have expressed a preference for a continuous 30-day camp, which may be considered by the Pratham central team.

4.2 Formalising the involvement of volunteers

Volunteers are a crucial part of the Pratham HG programme and carry out many important tasks within the project such as mobilisation and conducting mohalla classes and all sessions with children in the community post the SRM and learning camps. Given how much of the project work is dispensed with their support, a better incentivisation structure needs to be created for them. Presently they are offered some classes on English speaking and computers but these are at a very basic level. A certification course may be considered for them that helps them in gaining further employment or staying longer within the project in a sustainable fashion.