

REPORT

**MULTIPLIER
IMPACT
STUDY**

**OF I-SAKSHAM'S TWO-YEAR EDU-
LEADER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

Bihar, India

June 2023

PREPARED BY

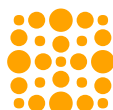
POPULI LLP

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I SAKSHAM
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Abbreviations

ASER: Annual Status of Education Report

FLFP: Female Labour Force Participation

HM: Headmaster

IGNOU: Indira Gandhi National Open University

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

NFHS-5: National Family and Health Survey, 2019-21

OBC: Other Backward Classes

SC: Scheduled Caste

ST: Scheduled Tribe



I. Executive Summary

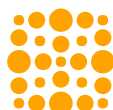
This report provides an overview of the impact that i-Saksham's two-year Edu-leader fellowship program in Bihar has had on the Edu-leaders, their parents, their peers, and the beneficiary children who received foundational learning support from Edu-leaders.

i-Saksham operates in rural Bihar, where 89% of Bihar's population resides, of which 48% are females. These females struggle with patriarchal social norms and mindsets which prevent them from accessing opportunities and reimagining their futures. The World Development Report, 2012 by the World Bank recognized expanding women's voice and agency (their ability to decide and make a choice) as key to improving the lives of women as well as the entire world.

i-Saksham's two-year Edu-leader program focuses on building voice and choice for every woman. Through the enhancement of the Personal, Educational and Community leadership of young women in rural Bihar, i-Saksham aims to create a cadre of women who will act as grassroots leaders in their communities. Sixty-two Edu-leaders across four districts in Bihar (Gaya, Munger, Jamui, Muzaffarpur) were part of the 2020 Cohort. A sample of 14 Edu-leaders was selected for this study. Twenty-two family members and 12 peers of these Edu-leaders were also interviewed. One-on-one qualitative interactions with these stakeholders coupled with Edu-leader aspirations and student learning outcomes data were used for capturing the multiplier effect of this program. The study was conducted in March 2023, almost six months after the completion of the fellowship.

Key findings of the Multiplier Impact Study:

1. Edu-leaders report having gained a strong sense of self-efficacy, and a desire to do well. 100% of Edu-leaders interviewed said they can achieve whatever goals they set for themselves. Edu-Leaders also mentioned that their daily routines have improved, and they are in better control of their days.
2. Edu-leaders' family members reported that Edu-leaders are now more capable of making good decisions. 12 out of 13 family members interviewed (parents/in-laws and spouses) said that they would include the Edu-Leaders in big financial decisions in the household. Stipends received by Edu-leaders during the i-Saksham fellowship contributed to the increased trust they receive from family members.
3. Edu-leaders have also experienced an improvement in their personal and family income. However, this economic freedom is lesser in peers than in Edu-Leaders. 23% of peers cannot spend money freely compared to 100% of Edu-leaders who can spend small amounts freely. Peers have also mentioned that they would like employment support from i-Saksham.
4. Family members now have increased trust and confidence in Edu-leaders. This has led to an increased mobility of Edu-leaders compared to pre-fellowship. Peers have also experienced the spill-over effects of the same. Edu-leader's presence and movement within the community have allowed other parents in the community to feel comfortable with their daughters/ in-laws travelling alone to nearby locations.



5. Edu-leaders now have more control over whom they can marry but are not thinking of marrying right away. Family members of unmarried Edu-leaders also would like them to finish their studies or get a job before they get married. However, they are unsure of how they would go about supporting the Edu-leaders in their aspirations.
6. All family members mentioned that they receive increased respect in the village since the Edu-leader joined the fellowship. Family members have shared their experience with the fellowship with their neighbours and 100% of family members said they would recommend i-Saksham to other parents.
7. A small percentage of Edu-leaders, peers, and family members still believe in gender roles which may in the long run affect the support Edu-leaders receive for their aspirations. Roles like cooking, cleaning, and taking care of other family members are seen as female tasks, and earning money is seen as a male task.
8. 100% of the Edu-Leaders interviewed mentioned that they feel part of a larger network of Edu-leaders and have met other Edu-leaders in the last 2-4 months. However, Edu-leaders mentioned that they need more support in post i-Saksham careers and creating change in the village community.
9. Peers and family members have low awareness of i-Saksham as a program. Peers, however, do feel inspired by watching the Edu-leaders in the community. They mentioned that their aspirations for themselves have changed. They too would like to become teachers, join i-Saksham.
10. Among beneficiary children, despite the pandemic, there has been learning improvement in children in all three subjects. Participants mentioned how the fellowship has created a feeling of enjoyment in education for children in their villages.

Recommendations:

1. *Awareness building of the program among peers and family members:* They believe that i-Saksham is an organization that provides education to children. Their understanding of the complete i-Saksham program is limited though they have seen changes in the Edu-leaders. Increased buddy visits to Edu-leader households might help in bridging this gap.
2. *Capacity-building of parents to support Edu-leaders:* Parents want the Edu-leaders to earn money, get a job, and study, but they have no clear understanding of how they will support the Edu-leader in achieving the same. Parents can receive visits, and awareness sessions from the i-Saksham team regularly to keep them updated on the program and opportunities for the Edu-Leaders.
3. *Structured time between Edu-leaders and peers:* Edu-leaders should be encouraged to spend more structured time with their peers to understand more deeply the challenges faced by them and problem-solve together. This will allow the benefits of the program to reach a wider audience and allow alumni Edu-leaders to work more closely on these issues.



4. *Training of teachers for the sustainability of learning outcomes:* The team should work on the relationship building and training of teachers in the schools where Edu-Leaders work.
5. *Gender sensitization among family members and peers:* For long-term support of Edu-leaders, family members and peers can receive more direct intervention from the i-Saksham team in the form of gender-sensitization camps.
6. *Community-level leadership of Edu-leaders should be made a focus:* Though there is awareness among Edu-Leaders about community issues they are not sure how to address them. This can be done through increased community-level challenges addressed during the fellowship and community interaction with community leaders.
7. *Career awareness for peers:* i-Saksham team can also plan some exposure and career awareness activities for the peers to broaden their horizons to the work they can do in the community and beyond. This would lead to multiplied effects in the community and opportunities for all women to succeed.
8. *Increased investment in M&E systems for accurate and reliable data collection:* As the organization scales, there will need to be a greater focus for the team to take on a baseline exercise for every upcoming cohort. This will help establish the effect of the program more clearly. Along with this, a database of the beneficiaries of the program must be created.

The multiplier effect of the i-Saksham two-year Edu-leader program was seen across all three stakeholders- peers, children, and parents. The current program delivery does a good job of building personal and educational leadership among Edu-leaders. However, more must be done to strengthen the community leadership and the community ties that Edu-leaders have. Working closely with parents and peers would help ensure that the program creates changes in the community that impact *all* women and that are lasting for generations to come.



II. Introduction

1.1 Background

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) was conducted in 2019-21 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. Among other parameters, it assessed women's empowerment across the states of India. The data for women empowerment from the NFHS-5 highlighted the need for more interventions to support the development of women. The median age at first marriage is 17.4 years among women aged 20-49, 17.7 years among women aged 25-29, and 17.0 years among women aged 25-49 years. The proportion of women who have started childbearing rises sharply from 6 per cent among aged 17 years to 17 per cent among women aged 18 years and to 37 per cent among women aged 19 years. Young women who had no schooling are more than three times (25%) as likely to have begun childbearing as young women with 12 or more years of schooling (8%).¹

The Survey had several positive findings for backward states like Bihar including an improvement in the sex ratio to 1090. 55.8 % of women in the age group of 15-49 did family planning compared to 24.1%, and a reduction in fertility rate to 3 compared to 3.4 in the last survey. The improvement in Bihar is critical for the overall growth and development of the country since, as per Census 2011, Bihar is the third most populous state of India with a total population of 104,099,452 of which nearly 89 per cent resides in rural Bihar. Almost 58 per cent of the population is below 25 years of age, which is the highest in India. The Survey, however also finds that the state lags on a number of gender equality indicators. A majority of women belong to marginalized groups; SCs, STs and OBCs. Access to resources and services remains limited for these women. The state is also among the country's worst-performing seven states at generating employment for women. It has the lowest female labour force participation (FLFP) in urban (6.4 per cent) and rural areas (3.9 per cent) while the figures for all-India stood at 20.4 per cent and 24.6 per cent for urban and rural respectively. Women are mostly engaged in low-paying and low-productive work.² The National Sample Survey's 68th round reveals that nearly 80% of women above the age of 15 in Bihar were engaged in domestic duties in 2011-12. Yet a majority, about 68%, who were required to spend most of their time on domestic duties said they did so because 'no other member was available' to carry out these duties.³ The state also experiences one of the highest incidences of early marriage and domestic violence at 43%. These patriarchal social norms and mindsets prevent young women from Bihar from reimagining their futures. The young women who wish to rise above these challenges face the problems of lack of voice, opportunities and means to accomplish the same.

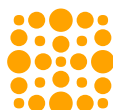
The World Development Report, 2012 by the World Bank recognized expanding women's voice and agency-their ability to decide and make a choice- as key to improving the lives of women as well as the entire world.⁴ The report further argues that increasing women's voice and agency are valuable ends in themselves with instrumental, and practical value too. Their amplification can yield positive returns both for themselves and their communities while limiting their choices of the kind of jobs they want to do, the education they seek, their mobility, etc. can cause huge damages to the

¹ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, 2019-21, NFHS-5

² A.N.Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna and Oxfam, India, 2030, Mapping Inequality in Bihar

³ Centre for Catalyzing Change, Women's Economic Empowerment in Bihar

⁴ World Bank, 2012, World Development Report



fabric of the society and the economy. The report identifies endowments (health, education, assets), socio-economic status, social norms, and legal policies as significant determinants and drivers of women's voice and agency, with education as a special significance. Better-educated women are better able to make and implement decisions even where gender norms are restrictive. Further, economically active women have more say in household decision-making and can delay their age at marriage and the birth of the first child — effects that can spill over to the extended family and to the next generation: sisters of women who have worked longer marry later, children of women who work spend more time in school, and villages with women leaders see fewer cases of female infanticide.⁵ It is also noticed that women's individual and collective action, whether in formal politics, civic society or the economy, provide opportunities for women to voice their needs and demands. Women often organise around their practical interests, particularly in the case of social and economic mobilisation.⁶ Creating networks of women leaders in communities allows them to continually advocate for women's rights, education and community growth.

1.2 The i-Saksham program

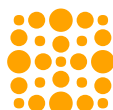
i-Saksham's vision is 'Voice and Choice For Every Woman'. i-Saksham believes that enhancing the leadership of local young women to solve grassroots issues will enhance their sense of agency, drive transformative change in their personal life and create a nurturing ecosystem for other women to realize their potential. Towards this end, i-Saksham runs a two-year 'Edu-leader' fellowship program to develop local young women as 'Leaders of Change' through education across three integrated leadership tracks where she gains a sense of self-determination (Personal Leadership), develops learning foundation and life skills in ~30 children by bridging gaps in the public school of her village (Educational Leadership), and inspires other young women to pursue their socio-economic aspirations (Community Leadership). In the long term, Edu-leaders network to continue to influence their marginalized communities through direct and collective action.

Over 2 years of the fellowship program, Edu-leaders receive 400 hours of training. The curriculum snapshot is attached in Appendix A. The training is delivered through induction at the start of the fellowship, weekly training and monthly buddy calls. Buddies are peer mentors that coach Edu-leaders on their aspirations and leadership skills. Along with this, the buddies also conduct onsite classroom visits to support the Edu-Leaders. Edu-leaders are also grouped into fortnightly learning circles to strengthen their academic competencies, with the aid of digital technology. They leverage learning platforms like Khan Academy, and Duolingo.

Through the fellowship program, Edu-leaders are trained and placed with under-staffed government schools, where they work under the guidance of the school Headmaster(HM). Such on-the-job fellowship covers training to improve their teaching skills (basic pedagogical tools, solutions to learning difficulties), community mobilization skills (communication with parents, teachers and management of govt school, gram panchayat), awareness of legal milieu (education policies, entitlements and government schemes) and most importantly self-development. Edu-Leaders adopt child-centric pedagogy to build students' Foundational Literacy and Numeracy. Annual Status of

⁵ Center for Universal Education at Brookings, Unlocking young women's economic potential through digital mentoring in India

⁶ ODI.org, Women's Voice in Leadership and Decision making, Pilar Domingo et al., 2015



Education Report (ASER)⁷ assessments are conducted with the children at the start and end of every intervention year. Upon completion of the 2-year fellowship, each graduating Edu-leader managing Grade 1 and Grade 2 hands over a cohort of children to her successive Edu-leader who would teach them Grade 3 and 4 and those teaching Grade 3 and 4 ensure that children enrol and transition to upper grades. Thus, intervention with children in i-Saksham is for 4 years.

Edu-leaders conduct monthly meetings with parents of students to sensitize them about children's progress, build their capacities to support home-learning, and generate self-belief in them that their participation can positively impact children. They organize 2-3 learning fairs every year to demonstrate change in the learning levels and life skills of children. Edu-Leaders also engage with peers in the community to share the learnings from the fellowship program and provide them with life skills. Edu-leaders interact quarterly with Panchayati Raj Institutions, School Management Committees, and Women Self-Help Groups and share their experiences.

The two-year fellowship programme thus helps in developing three integrated leadership tracks:

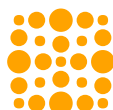
a. Personal Leadership: The fellowship helps them to grow a positive sense of self and the changes they are capable of bringing. They learn to build positive relationships with the stakeholders within and outside their families enabling them to negotiate better terms for themselves and their cause.

b. Educational Leadership: The fellowship allows them to develop a learning foundation and life skills for ~30 children from the most learning-deprived backgrounds for 2 years. The process develops them as role models for the children and the parents through regular engagement.

c. Community Leadership: By educating children and eliciting parents' participation, the fellowship enables the young women to showcase their leadership skills to a wider community of peers, and village institutions. It shifts the community's perception of women's potential and creates an enabling environment for other women to enter public life.

i-Saksham helps Edu-leaders identify their true calling through reflection exercises, regular goal-setting, and coaching conversations to help them understand their strengths, and figure out their passion. Mentoring & coaching support are provided during and after the fellowship (as part of the alumni engagement strategy) to help Edu-leaders pursue higher education in the area of their interest, evolve as social agents of change, pursue micro-entrepreneurship/local livelihoods and other professional aspirations, and gain leadership positions in community institutions. High achievers from several walks of life, coming esp. from a similar socio-economic milieu, are invited to interact with Edu-leaders and share mutual inspiration. Edu-leaders with common aspirations and learning needs are grouped to learn together and provide support. Various avenues to support Edu-leaders to pursue their academic/professional aspirations include establishing linkages with student credit cards/other govt. scholarship schemes, crowdfunding, and an internal scholarship fund set up by i-Saksham. i-Saksham adopts 'Partnerships' as a key strategic element to accelerate Edu-leader's growth across different pathways. Civil society organizations and international foundations are invited to support them and also engage them as 'development professionals' to deepen the impact in marginalized communities.

⁷ Annual Status of Education Report is a nationwide household survey that captures the status of children's enrolment and learning outcomes in rural India every year.



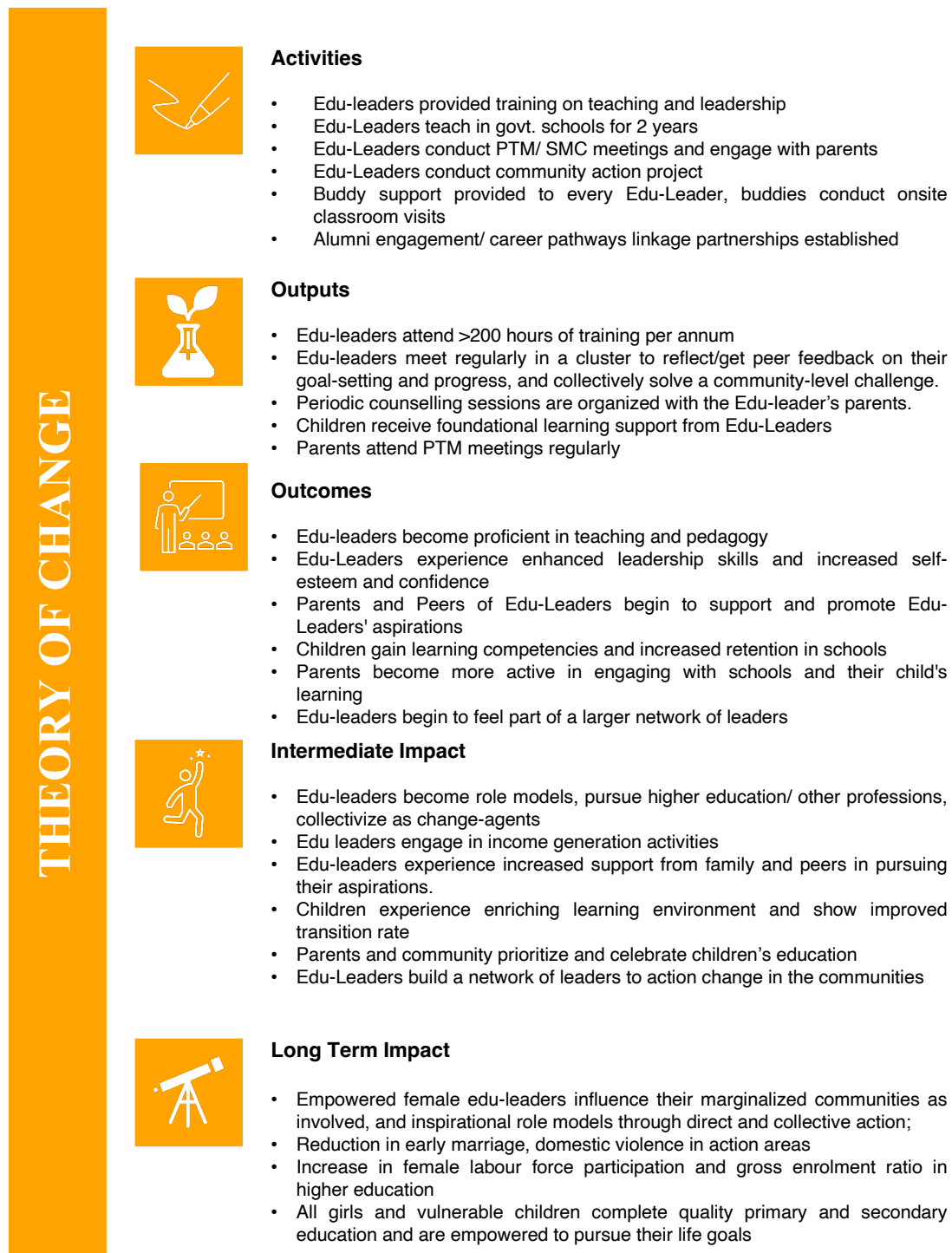
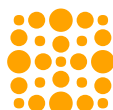


Fig. 1. Theory of Change of the i-Saksham Edu-Leaders' program



i-Saksham's Theory of Change is based on creating a cadre of local young women as grassroots leaders who:

- a. Build their competence, experience personal transformation, and achieve a sense of autonomy
- b. Bridge the gap in the delivery of public service, education in this case, and help unlock the leadership potential of others (children, peers, and parents)
- c. Bring wide-scale transformation in marginalized communities by, becoming competent role models, and shifting norms by collectively leading an active social and public life.

Over time, the changes experienced and brought about by Edu-leaders affect the various demographic and socio-economic indicators of the community including gross enrolment ratio in Higher Education, labour force participation, reduction in early marriage, domestic violence, etc.

The i-Saksham program has been running since 2017. Since then, i-Saksham has grown from 15 leaders in 2 blocks to a cadre of 350+ and directly impacting 10,000+ girls and children. i-Saksham is currently building foundations for scale to ensure 10,000 women leaders by 2030 across Bihar and impact at least 1 million girls and women. The program is currently run in five districts of Bihar - Gaya, Jamui, Munger, Begusarai, and Muzaffarpur. As i-Saksham scales, there is a need to understand the impact the fellowship is having on Edu-leaders, the children, and the rest of the stakeholders in the community.

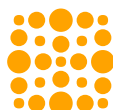
III. Study

Past Studies

i-Saksham commissioned two impact studies in 2021 to measure the impact of its two-year Edu-Leader program.

The first study was conducted in November 2021 for i-Saksham's Batch 4 (2019-21) of Edu-Leaders. This study captured the perspectives of multiple stakeholders involved in the Edu-leaders program to generate an in-depth and more holistic understanding of the program. The report also presented the results from the assessment conducted by i-Saksham to capture the outputs and outcomes from the two-year Edu-leader program. Findings from this study suggested that the program built the cognitive, social and affective skills of the Edu-leaders for them to be able to drive change in the local education ecosystem. The study highlighted that the Edu-leaders had shown the potential to develop themselves, and their identity as individuals and become key change agents in children's learning, and in their local community. Findings also showed a positive trend in the learning levels of children measured based on ASER assessment parameters. In addition, there was an improvement in the attendance of the children and an upward shift in the personal skills of the children. The community members acknowledged the efforts made by these Edu-leaders and the findings reported an increased awareness and interest of the community in the children's education.

This study suggested that a network of young women supporting the improvement in the situation of local education and driving gender change in the community seemed important to establish a foundation of grassroots-driven system change. It was also suggested that another potential way to enhance the sustainability of the program is to embed the innovative curriculum and tools and methods



into the school systems which the teachers will be able to conduct with initial support from the Edu-leaders.

The second study was a rapid study of the impact of the Edu-leaders' program run from 2017-21 in Bihar. The study documented the impact of the fellowship program as articulated by its key stakeholders. The study data was collected through qualitative interviews with Edu-leaders, teachers, parents of Edu-leaders and parents of children. Interviews were conducted with i-Saksham staff as well. The study highlighted the following findings:

1. **Personal Leadership:** Edu-leaders had developed self-confidence and had plans to pursue their aspirations. Due to the program, they had better communication skills, greater mobility, and financial independence. Recognition in the community and communication with parents had also improved. However, the study highlighted that girls' still faced constraints due to social norms and attitudes of the community that limited their ability to pursue their aspirations. Edu-leaders still must manage multiple responsibilities and have limited control over life decisions.
2. **Educational Leadership:** In this area, the study found that the program had resulted in improved student engagement and attendance. The Edu-leaders had managed to introduce activity-based pedagogy and engage the parents of the children. However, the Edu-Leaders struggled with engaging school-level stakeholders like teachers and headmasters. The study also mentioned that Edu-leaders found engaging parents very time-consuming.
3. **Community Leadership:** Positive shifts in the community concerning education are also seen. However, community-level engagement was limited primarily to education. Edu-leaders had begun to act as community influencers/role models for girls and children.

The study noted that increasing focus on community leadership and establishing Edu-leader collectives would enhance the work of the organization. They also mentioned that Buddy coaching and focusing on developing Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) processes would improve the operational performance of the organization.

These two studies focused largely on the impact of the program on Edu-leaders and the operational aspects of the delivery of the program that leads to said impact. i-Saksham wanted to understand the multiplier impact of the two-year Edu-Leaders program on other stakeholders in the community-family and peers of Edu-leaders and the beneficiary children.

Study design

This study aimed to determine the multiplier impact that i-Saksham's two-year Edu-Leader fellowship has had on the community at large.

The core evaluation questions for the study:

- A. What has been the multiplier impact of the Edu-Leaders' program on family, peers, children, and the Edu-Leaders themselves?
- B. What parts of the Edu-Leaders' leadership have been sustained after the completion of the program?
- C. What can amplify the impact created by the i-Saksham program?



In 2020, the fellowship program was run with a cohort of 62 Edu-Leaders across the four districts- Gaya, Munger, Jamui and Muzaffarpur. This cohort graduated in the year 2022. The 2020 cohort was the latest cohort to undergo the i-Saksham program. The study was conducted in the month of March 2023. By then, the Edu-Leaders had graduated for six months from the fellowship. This enabled the study to measure the immediate impact the fellowship had on the stakeholders. However, it must be noted that the cohort faced unique challenges due to the pandemic and respective lockdowns. For the first year, Edu-Leaders would connect over video conferencing to receive training. The children were taught in a location in the village with social distancing norms or taught on the phone through calling. This made the fellowship for this cohort unique. However, the core elements of the fellowship delivery remained unchanged and hence the effect on this cohort can be used to derive learnings for the program.

Methodology:

A mixed-method approach was used for data collection. The Populi team conducted qualitative one-on-one interactions with the following stakeholders to inform the impact.

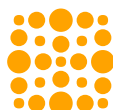
Stakeholders	No. of interviews
1. Edu-Leaders of the 2020 cohort	14
2. Family (<i>mother/in-law, father/in-law or husband and an elder sibling where available</i>)	22
3. Peers*	13

**Peers are defined as other females in the same village as the Edu-Leader and between the age of 18-35 years.*

Along with this, data from the i-Saksham team was used to inform the changes seen in the aspirations of girls and the learning outcomes of children. The i-Saksham team uses a self-reported aspirations survey to capture the changes in aspirations of the Edu-Leaders before and after the fellowship. They also use ASER assessments to capture the learning developments made by the beneficiary children in the schools where the Edu-Leaders teach. The data generated for the sampled Edu-leaders and their student beneficiaries were used for capturing the multiplier impact of the study.

The qualitative data captured by the Populi team was combined with the quantitative data captured by the i-Saksham team. This allowed us to create a holistic picture of the impact of the fellowship.

During the qualitative field data collection, the availability of family members and peers was a challenge. The surveyors reached out to Edu-Leaders a day before ensuring the availability of participants. However, a couple of participants were out for work and could not be contacted. Another challenge faced was in the identification of peers. Edu-leaders were asked about their friends and neighbours of similar age in the community. In some cases, a peer list with each Edu-Leader mapped to 2-3 peers was provided by i-Saksham. One peer per Edu-leader was randomly selected from the list. However, in many villages, of the peer list provided only one peer was available. In that case, the available peer was interviewed for the study.



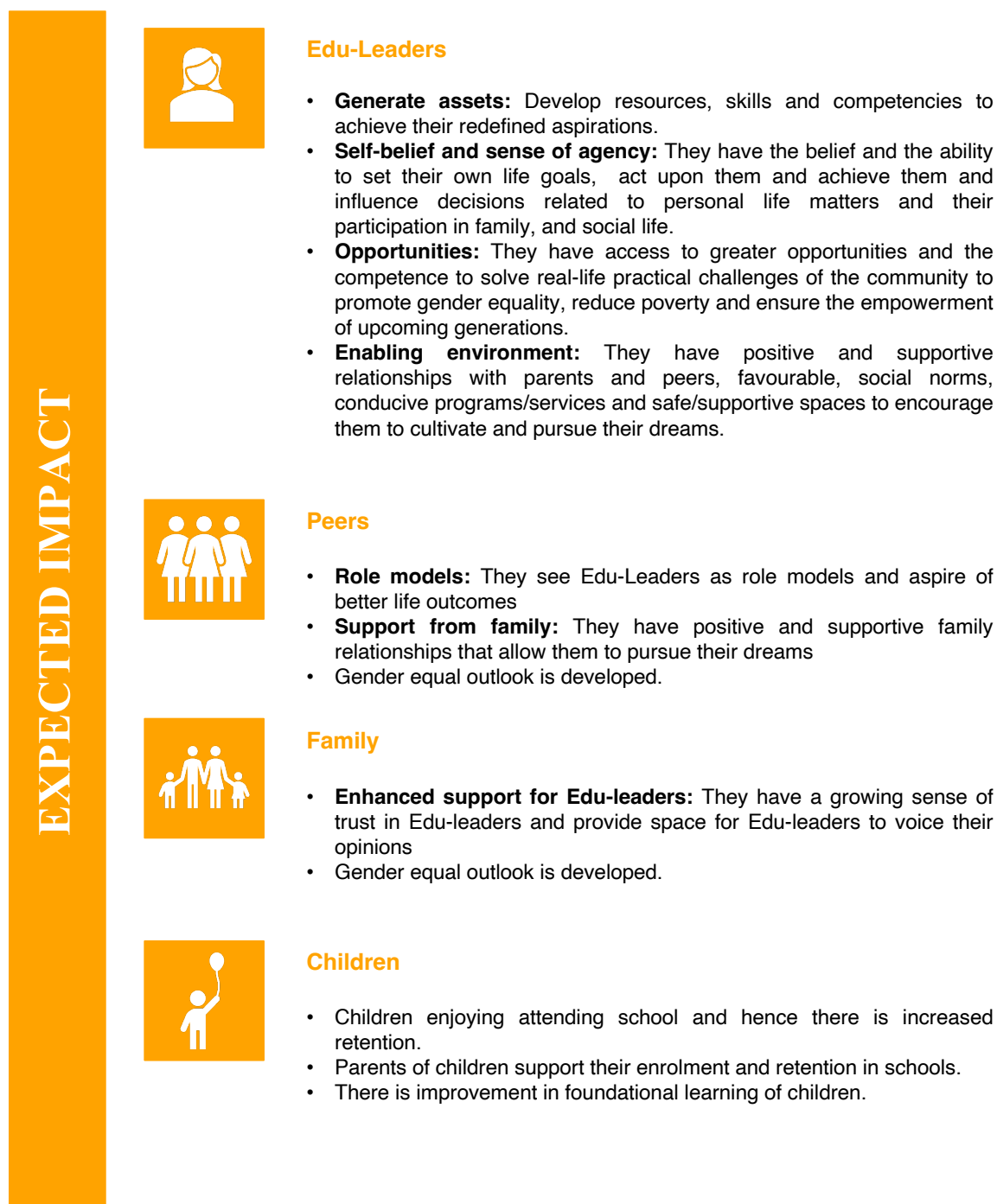
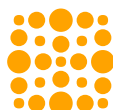


Fig. 2. Key Observations of the Impact Study

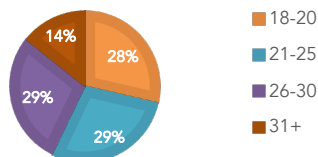


IV. Stakeholder profile

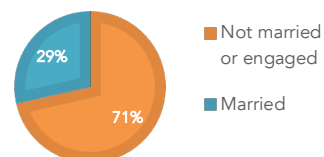
The qualitative interactions were conducted with the following demographic of participants: 14 Edu-Leaders were selected from all four geographies and a spread of age groups to ensure representation. The sampling was purposive to ensure good coverage.

District	# of Edu- leaders
Gaya	3
Jamui	3
Muzaffarpur	2
Munger	6
Total	14

AGE OF EDU-LEADERS (IN YRS- AS OF MAR '23) (N=14)

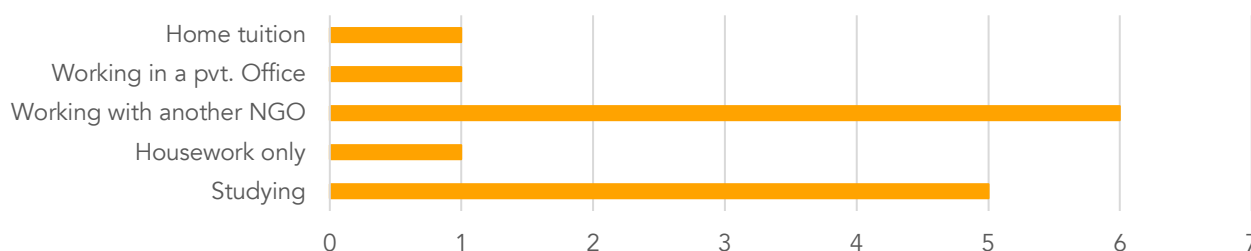


MARITAL STATUS OF EDU-LEADERS (AS OF MAR '23) (N=14)



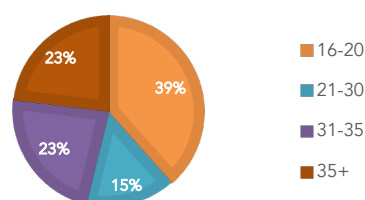
Of these Edu-Leaders, three were 10th pass, seven were 12th pass, three had finished Bachelor's and one had completed their Master's as well. All these Edu-Leaders, except one was either working or studying at the time of the study.

of Edu-leaders by Work Status (N=14)

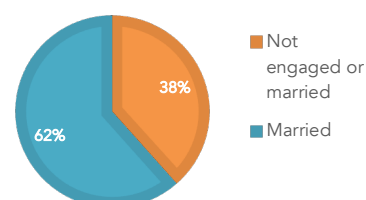


The peers were other females in the same village as that of the Edu-Leader and between the age of 18-35 years. However, in some cases, the peers found at the time of the study were older, with 2 peers above the age of 35.

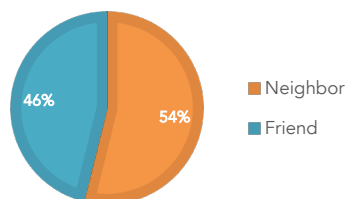
AGE OF PEERS (IN YRS.- AS OF MAR '23) (N=13)



MARITAL STATUS-PEERS (IN YRS. AS OF MAR' 23) (N=13)

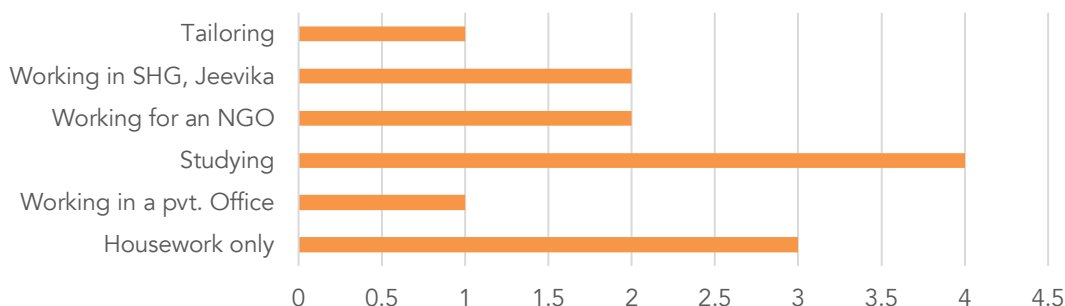


RELATION OF PEER WITH EDU-LEADER (N=13)



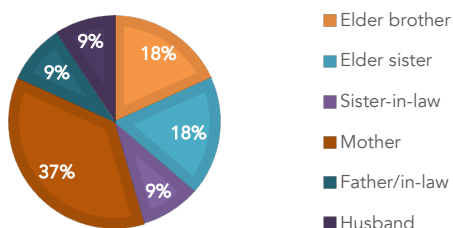
Of the peers interviewed, 4 has studied less than 10th grade, 2 had cleared 10th grade, 5 were 12th pass, 1 each had completed Bachelors and Masters. Of these peers, four are currently pursuing further education. The work status of the peers can be seen below. Most were either studying or involved in housework or business from home. A couple of them had jobs. Edu-leaders and peers were of similar age groups, however, most of the Edu-leaders (71%) were unmarried compared to peers who were married(58%).

of peers by work type (N=13)

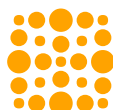
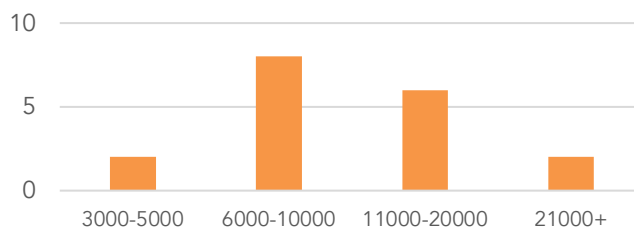


For all Edu-Leaders, except 1, either a family member or a sibling or both were surveyed. The family income ranged from INR 3000/month to INR 20000+/month.

FAMILY MEMBERS RELATION WITH EDU-LEADER (N=22)



of Edu-leaders by Monthly Family Income (in INR- as of Mar '23) (N=14)



V. Findings:

1. Impact on Edu-Leaders:

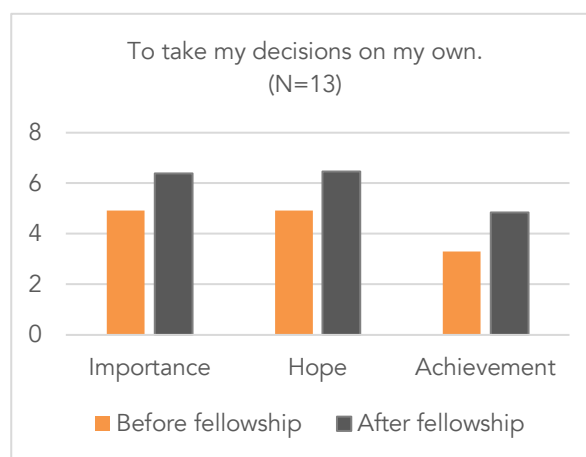
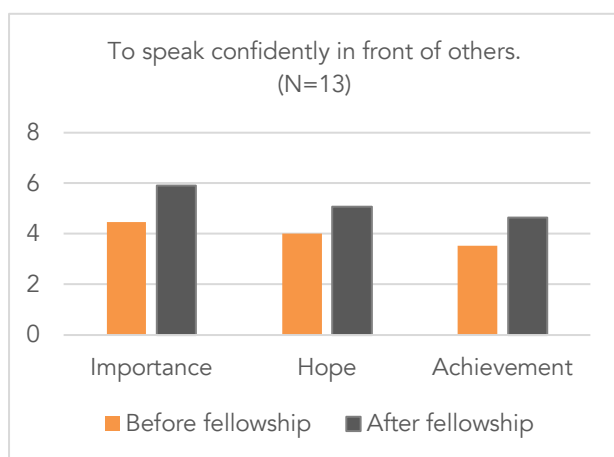
a. Generating Assets:

As part of the fellowship program, Edu-Leaders are expected to develop resources, skills, and competencies to achieve their redefined aspirations.

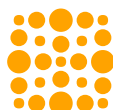
Edu-Leaders want to be physically, emotionally, and economically accomplished.

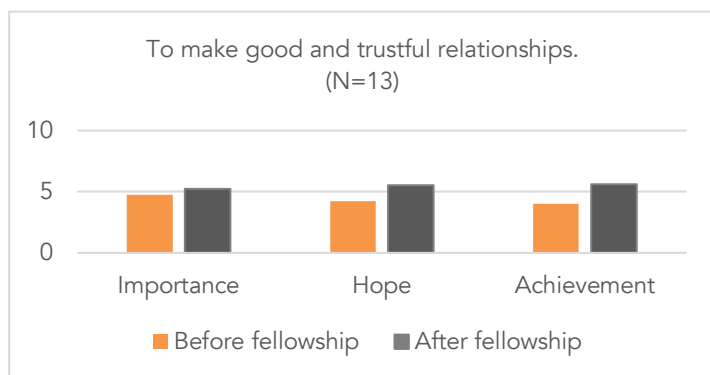
At the start and the end of the fellowship, Edu-leaders fill out an aspiration survey which captures the importance they place, the hope they have and the achievements they've had on multiple parameters of personal development. The scale of the aspiration survey ranges from 1 to 7 where 1 denotes "No importance/ no hope/ no achievement" and 7 stands for "High importance/ high hope/ high achievement."

Over the two years of the fellowship, Edu-Leaders have reported an increase in their confidence in speaking with others and putting across their opinions. They also reported an increase in their decision-making skills.

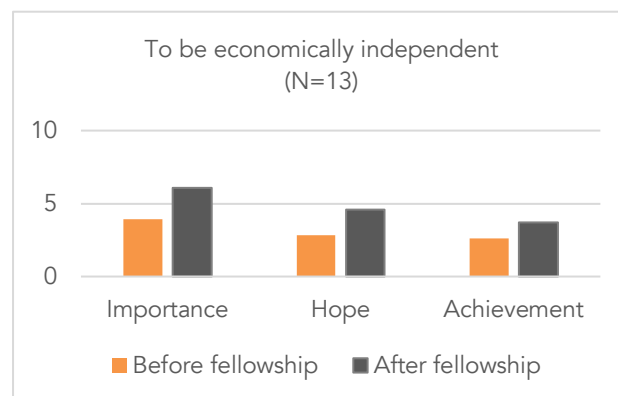
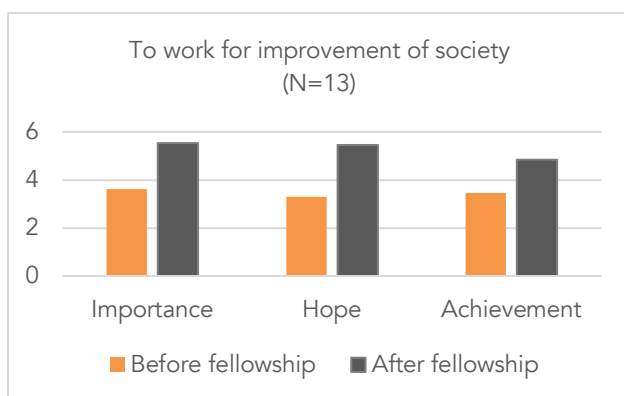


The Edu-Leaders not only reported an increased hope in making trustful relationships but also noted achievement in this area over the two years.





Through the two years of the fellowship, Edu-Leaders also developed a hope to work for the betterment of society and wanting to become economically independent. This may have led many Edu-leader to join NGOs and continue their studies.



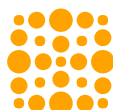
All Edu-leaders interviewed during the survey said they want to study further.

Three said they want to do B.Ed., others said they want to finish graduation or post-graduation and three also said they want to do a PhD. The overall development of aspirations to better themselves is high among Edu-Leaders. They want to lead meaningful lives and do well in life; physically, emotionally, and economically. This increased aspiration provides the solid foundation needed for them to achieve their dreams in life and inspire others.

Edu-Leaders have improved routines now.

Many family members and Edu-Leaders mentioned that the Edu-Leaders have now developed a more active lifestyle with a proper routine compared to pre-fellowship. Siblings and parents note that Edu-Leaders are more focused now, have developed better habits and follow a schedule.

“It (routine) was not so timely; the days were totally lazy- there was no fixed time of eating food or anything. Now everything is on time, it’s fixed now that this work must be finished in that particular time.”, says a fellow from Munger.



These habits developed as a result of the fellowship are seen to have an impact on the overall well-being of the Edu-Leaders allowing them to aim for higher aspirations.

Edu-leaders feel part of a larger community of Edu-Leaders.

100% Of Edu-leaders surveyed said that they feel part of a network.

100% Of Edu-leaders surveyed said that they had met other Edu-Leaders in the last 2-4 months

They said they keep meeting through ongoing cluster meetings or the Edu-Leader network Wayam that has been set up. They meet to support each other with jobs or even personal matters. Some Edu-leaders have become close friends over the years and continue meeting each other in a personal capacity.

b. Self-belief and sense of agency:

Due to the fellowship, Edu-leaders are expected to develop self-efficacy and the ability to set their own life goals, act upon them and achieve them. It also results in them influencing decisions related to personal life matters and their participation in family, social life.

Edu-Leaders report a strong sense of Self-Efficacy.

The survey showed that Edu-Leaders have developed a strong sense of self-efficacy.

100% Of Edu-leaders interviewed said that they can achieve whatever goals they set up for themselves.



One Edu-Leader from Munger says, “The thing that I like about the fellowship was- Before I couldn’t understand and solve my problem and think, “Who am I?” but after joining fellowship they made me understand that I am worth it. I can do anything. Before I used to think that I am educated but I am a housewife, so it ends here for me. But as soon as I got to i-Saksham I understood that I also have the potential to do something. For that, I need a platform and I got a platform. So, from there I understood I can do something.”

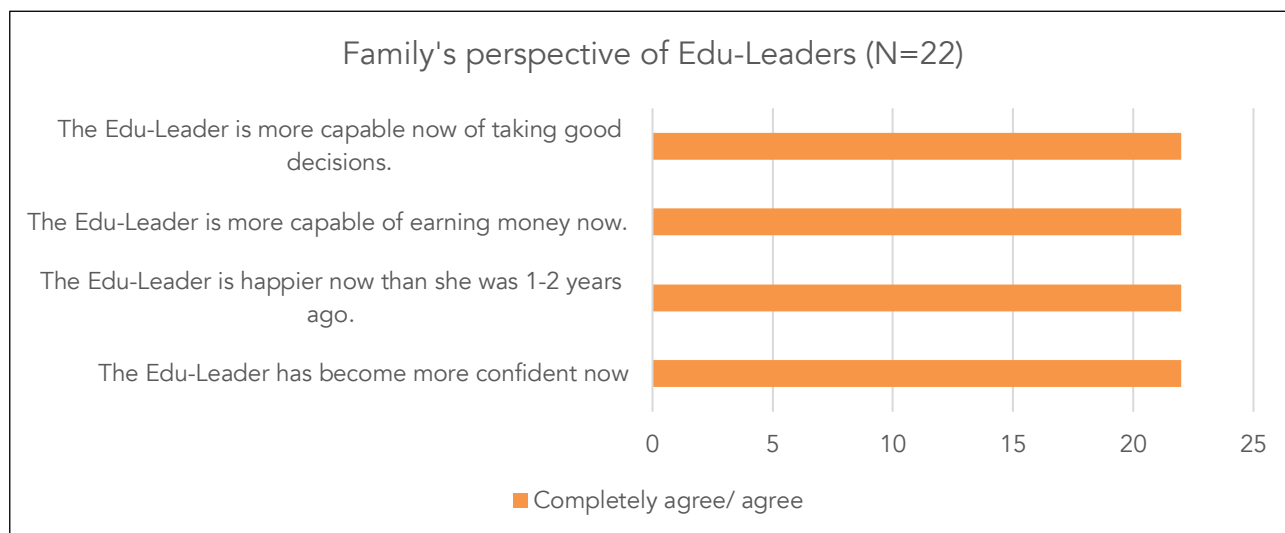


Edu-leaders and their families believe they are more capable now.

Family members have mentioned that the fellowship has had an acute impact on the Edu-Leader's leadership skills.



One Edu-Leader's sibling mentioned: "She has become happier after she joined here. She was not able to know the outside world before. But now she can know the outside world- kinds of people, how they are, how should people conduct themselves. So she is happier than before. Before, she was not able to speak her mind or heart to the family but now she can place her words, and talk freely by keeping aside everything else. "

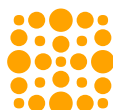


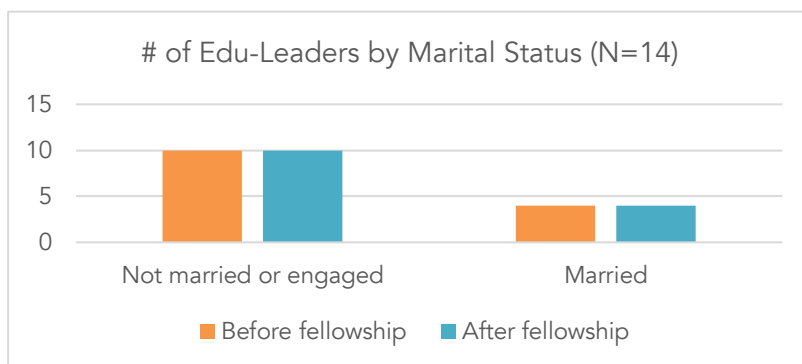
Edu-Leaders themselves have mentioned that there have been deep changes in the way they view themselves.

- 11 of 14 Edu-leaders mentioned an increase in self-confidence after the fellowship
- 10 of 14 Edu-leaders mentioned an increase in mobility after the fellowship.

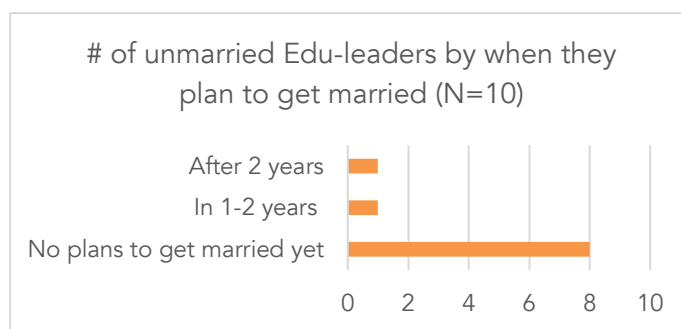
Edu-leaders feel they have more control over who they marry allowing them more opportunity to choose their partners.

The marital Status of all Edu-Leaders has not changed since the fellowship.



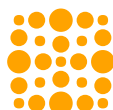


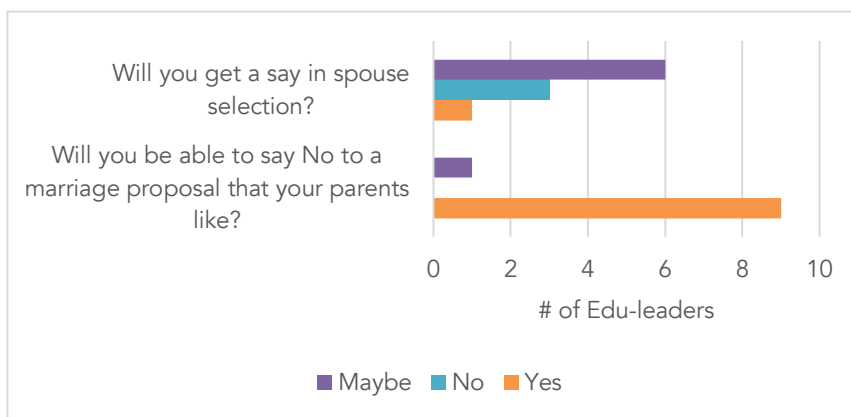
10 Edu-leaders between the ages of 18-28 are unmarried. When asked when they plan to get married, most said they do not have any immediate plans for the same.



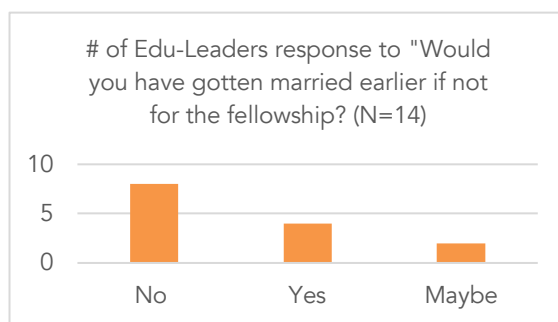
“When my sister got married, she was just shown the photo of the groom and wasn’t asked if she wants to marry him or not but now when they are looking for me, I told them I want to study now and don’t wish to marry, I put my opinion frankly to them and they accepted it. They showed me 2-3 boys to marry and I told them I didn’t like them so they accepted my decision.” – says an Edu-leader from Munger

Most Edu-Leaders feel that they may not have control over when their parents start looking for a spouse for them but they will have a say and be able to say ‘No’ to a groom they do not like.





8 of 14 Edu-leaders said that they would not have gotten married even if they did not participate in the fellowship, 4 said they would have been married and 2 were unsure.

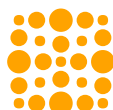


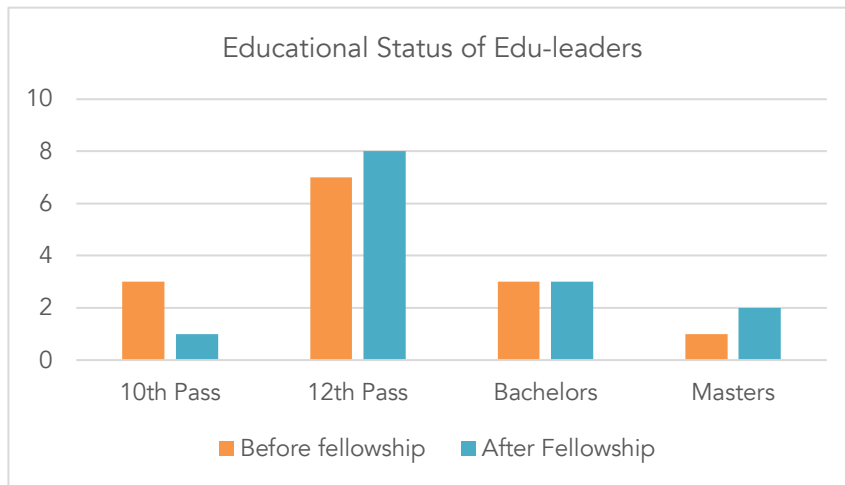
c. Opportunities:

The Fellowship aims to provide Edu-leaders with access to greater opportunities and the competence to solve real-life practical challenges of the community to promote gender equality, reduce poverty and ensure the empowerment of upcoming generations.

Increased educational qualifications post-fellowship for Edu-Leaders.

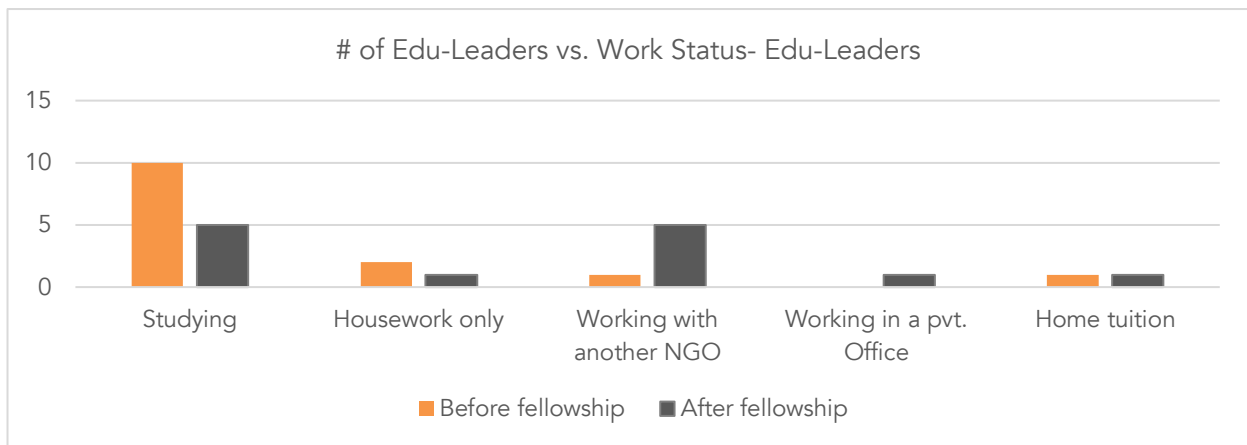
All Edu-leaders except two interviewed had completed their bachelor's and master's or were still pursuing the same at the time of the interview. 8 Edu-leaders who have finished 12th grade are currently pursuing bachelor's and one is pursuing CTET.





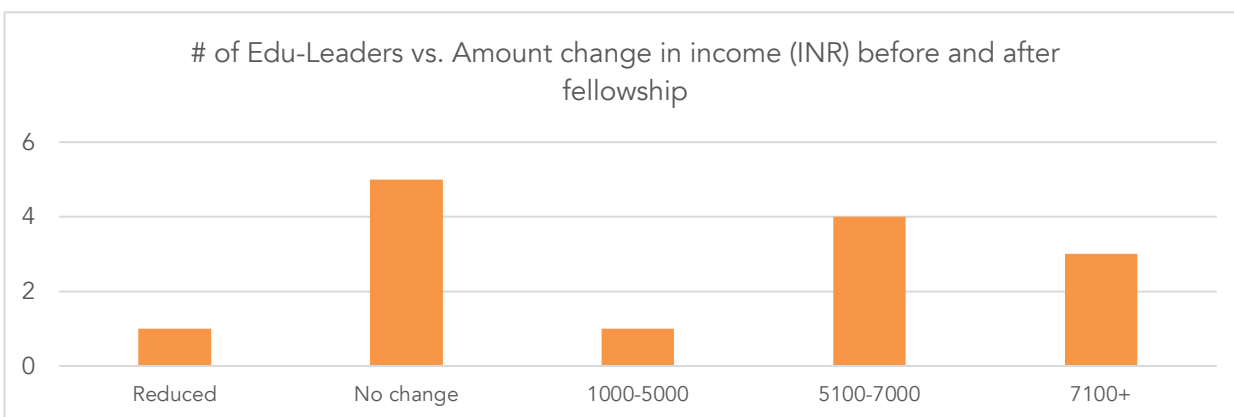
Employment and income improvement for Edu-leaders after the fellowship.

After the fellowship, except for the 2 Edu-Leaders interviewed, all other Edu-Leaders are involved in some income-generating activity or studying compared to pre-fellowship numbers. Two Edu-Leaders mentioned that they would have liked more career support after the Fellowship as well.



The fellowship has left a marked growth in the income of the Edu-Leaders who were previously working. The Edu-Leaders with no change in income are those that are currently studying.





Four of the Edu-leaders who are earning have mentioned that they save some money for emergencies or further education. Most of those that earn said that they are not able to save as most of it gets used up.

Stipend paved the way to a seat at the table for financial decision-making in the family.

During the fellowship, all Edu-Leaders received a nominal stipend. Through the survey, it was noticed that this stipend has paved the way for Edu-Leaders to achieve greater financial independence.

"Due to this I got to know how you spend money and how you earn money and what you have to do for that- so we got to understand the value of money." – says an Edu-Leader from Jamui.

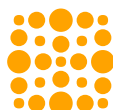
All Edu-Leaders mentioned that they were free to decide how they spent their stipend money.

Most spent it on travelling for i-Saksham work, contributing to household expenses and for their educational expenses. 9 of the 14 Edu-Leaders surveyed mentioned that they used the stipend for their educational expenses like paying for courses, filling out forms, etc. Some also used it to support their sibling's education.

An Edu-Leader from Munger mentioned, "Everyone says that they are proud that I can manage with my own money. Sometimes my father also asks for my help."

Concerning the Edu-leader's present income, parents of Edu-Leaders surveyed have mentioned that though they are involved in deciding how the money their daughter currently earns is spent, they value her decision in household matters.

One parent says, "She is earning money and she helps us when we need anything thus, we should take her opinion too."



It is clear that the stipend has helped the Edu-Leaders gain financial independence and a seat at the table in family decisions.

Edu-leaders understand the problems of peers, but need more support in solving them:

When asked about the problems other females face in the community Edu-leaders mentioned the following:

1. Many women are illiterate and struggle with getting good employment opportunities.
2. Married women struggle with getting support to do paid work outside the house. A lot of them do not step out of the house at all.
3. Females get married at an early age though the age of marriage has gone up over the last 5-6 years.
4. Females are not given the opportunity or the freedom to travel alone outside the village. In many cases, transportation is also not available.

Edu-leaders have developed an understanding of the challenges women in the community face. Many Edu-leaders said they would need support in bringing about change in their peers' situations. Many also mentioned that they can speak to the women and their families to help them bring about the change but did not know what they could do beyond that.

All Edu-leaders except one mentioned that they can bring about change in the situation of their peers.

d. Enabling environment:

To enable Edu-leaders to succeed, positive and supportive relationships with parents and peers, favourable social norms, conducive programs/services, and safe/supportive spaces are key. The surveys explored if this environment is being established during the fellowship.

Increased trust and confidence in Edu-Leaders from Family members.

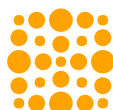
All parents of Edu-leaders surveyed are open to send their daughters out of village for work/ studies.

All the parents/husbands spoken to said that the fellowship with i-Saksham had had a direct impact on them. They would now feel more comfortable letting their daughter travel alone. They mentioned that they now have increased trust and confidence in her.

Some parents also mentioned that they ask other parents to also send their daughter to i-Saksham having seen what i-Saksham has done for their daughter/wife This contrasts with many parents saying that they hesitated to send their daughter out before.

Family members will include Edu-Leaders in major financial decisions.

Family members value the Edu-leader's opinion when it comes to major household financial decisions but all mothers spoken to said they decide how their daughters' money is to be spent. "*She is earning money and she helps us when we need anything thus, we should take her opinion too.*" One husband said that he decides, remaining cases the Edu-leader herself decides how the money is to be spent.



12 out of 13 family members (parents/in-laws and spouses) said that they would include the Edu-Leaders in big financial decisions. Only 1 mother said she would not as her daughter is still young (18 years old).

Of the 8 siblings interviewed, all except 1 elder brother mentioned that his sister's opinion should be taken in a major financial decision in the house. The brother said that as his sister will eventually belong to someone else ("paraya dhan") after marriage she does not need to contribute to financial decision-making in the house.

Parents want their daughter to finish their education/ get a job before getting married.

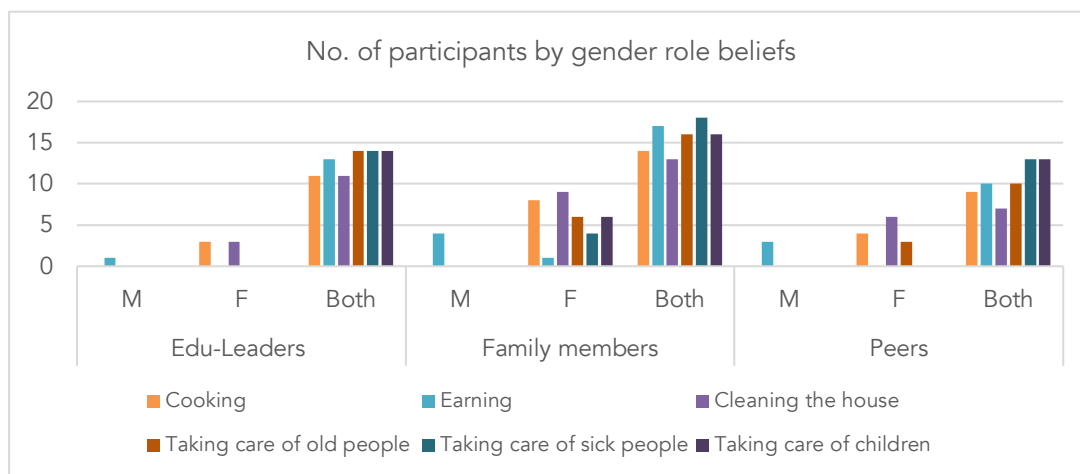
All parents with unmarried daughters have no hurry in getting their daughters married. However, they feel that they will still do the spouse selection for their daughter but her opinion will be considered. Most parents said that only once she finishes her studies / gets a job will we plan to get her married.

Parents have aspirations for Edu-Leaders but are unclear on how to support them.

When asked about their aspirations for Edu-Leaders, family members have mentioned that they would like the Edu-Leader to study or do a job. However, they do not have an opinion on what exactly she should be doing. When asked how they plan to support the Edu-Leaders, family members said that they will support her as much as required but do not have any plans as such for supporting the Edu-Leader.

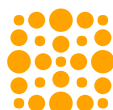
Some gender roles are still seen as valid by all, more so by family members and peers.

Some family members still see roles like cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the family as female household roles and earning as a male role in the household. A very small number of peers and Edu-leaders also believe in these roles.



M=Male F=Female

These patriarchal gender roles burden the Edu-Leaders with increased unpaid work along with pursuing their studies and career directly affecting the opportunities they choose and not choose. The i-Saksham program can do more to create an enabling environment within the home of the Edu-leaders



2. Impact on peers:

The Edu-Leaders fellowship program aims to create aspiration and hope among other young women (peers) in the community by providing them with role models in the form of Edu-leaders. The work done by the Edu-leaders in the community showcases for parents of peers what is possible and creates an environment where all women can thrive. Access and opportunities as experienced by peers are also captured as part of the expected impact the program may have on peers.

Peers are aware of the fellowship and would like to join the i-Saksham fellowship.

When asked what they knew about the fellowship, all peers mentioned that it was linked with teaching children. Peers did not know about or speak about the leadership aspect of the fellowship.

12 of 13

Peers mentioned that the fellowship had an impact on them.

9 of 13

Peers say that their dreams did change over the last 2-3 years of the fellowship and they believe that they will be able to achieve their dreams.

11 of 13

peers mentioned that they would like to join the fellowship, 1 was unsure and 1 said no.

The peers mentioned that they too felt now that they could do a job and earn like the Edu-Leaders.

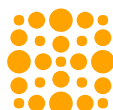
Edu-leaders have begun to become change-makers for other women but need more support.

Edu-Leaders mentioned the following impact they had on women:

1. Women have become more inspired by watching the Edu-Leaders and have taken on jobs or are pursuing further studies. Three Edu-Leaders mentioned that seeing them the girls in the village are motivated to complete the 10th Standard.
2. Some Edu-leaders helped their peers speak with their families to allow them to pursue their aspirations.
3. Peers have mentioned that seeing the Edu-Leaders moving around the village has allowed them to negotiate their mobility. Parents have begun to feel comfortable sending them outside the village. Six Edu-Leaders of the ones interviewed said they feel like a role model to other women.

“I met girls who wanted to study so I talked to their parents and convinced them. There was a married woman, I spoke to her husband and convinced him, and he said that he will register her in the fellowship.”- says a fellow from Munger.

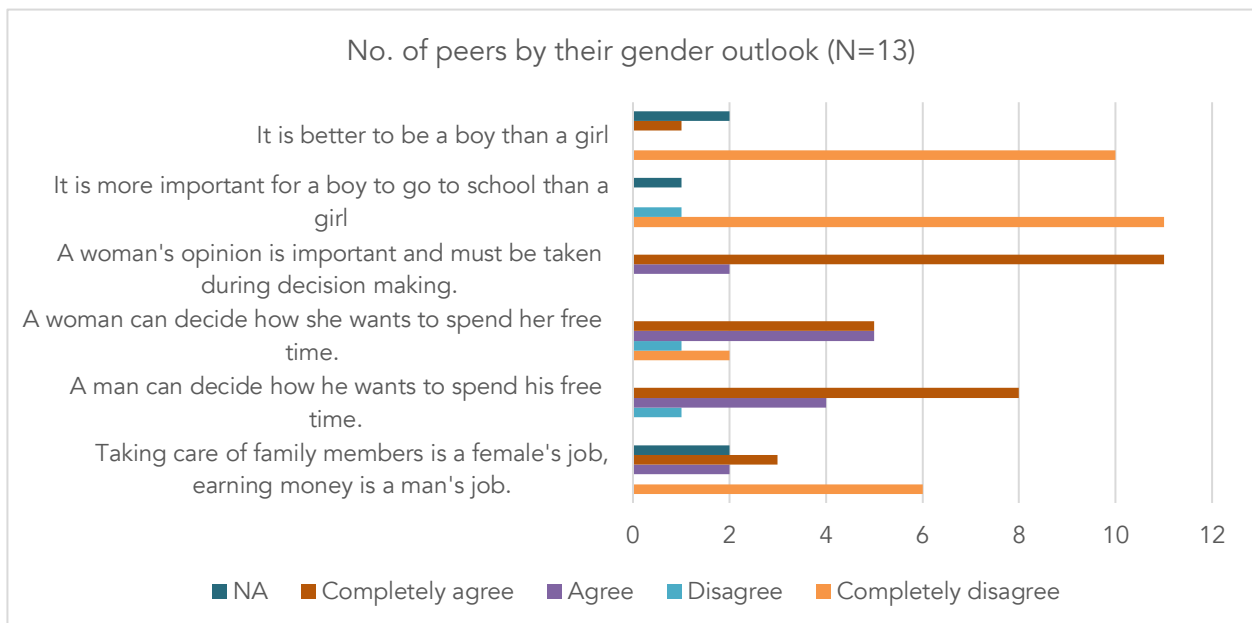
“I talk to her and feel that I should also progress like her. It is better to do something than sitting back at home.” – says a peer of an Edu-leader from Munger





Some Peers still believe in gender roles.

Peers gave the following responses when asked about their gender outlook.



Gender roles like taking care of the family are still seen by some as tasks for females and earning as a male task. Some peers still believe that it is better to be a boy than a girl.



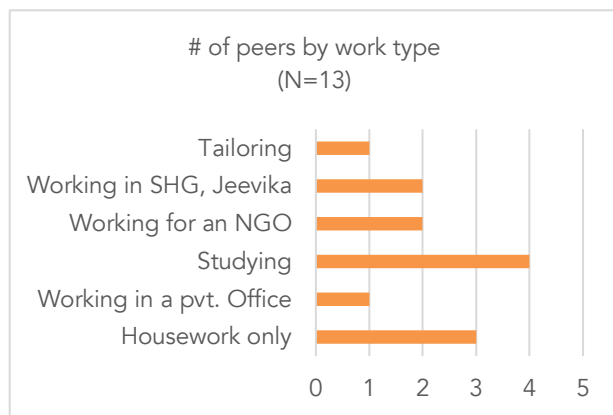
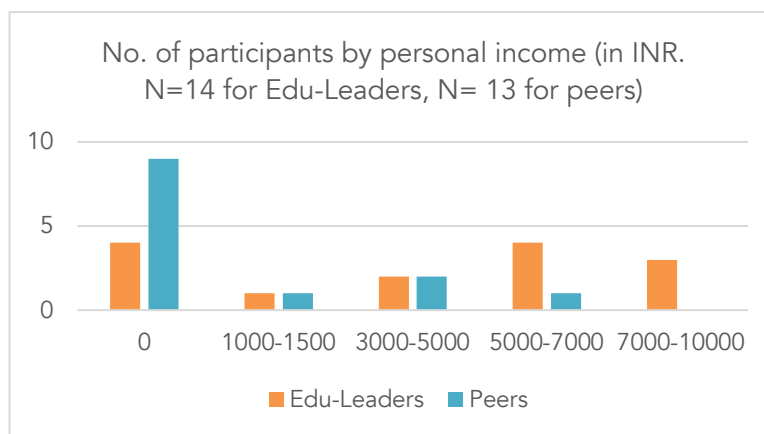
Peers have increased parental support since the i-Saksham fellowship in the village.

9 out of 13 Peers feel they can reach their goals, 2 are unsure and 1 feels she will not be able to reach her goals.

Five peers mentioned that due to the Edu-Leader's work in the village, the support from their parents has improved. Parents are now open to sending them outside the village and feel like they too can join i-Saksham or any relevant program. However, only four peers were able to articulate their dreams and a couple said that they would also want to teach like the Edu-leader.

Peers still struggle with financial independence in comparison with Edu-leaders.

Of the peers interviewed, 9 did not have any personal income and the remaining were earning some nominal amounts.



Economic freedom is lesser in peers than in Edu-Leaders. 23% cannot spend money freely compared to 100% of Edu-leaders who can spend small amounts freely.



Edu-Leaders and Peers both have trouble with the gender norms prevailing in marriage. However, both feel they can say no to a marriage proposal they do not wish to accept.

*N=10 for unmarried Edu-leaders, N= 4 for married Edu-leaders
N= 5 for unmarried Peers, N= 8 for married Peers*

*Who decides how many children to have?
(only married participants)*

	Peers	Edu-Leaders
Me	2	2
My husband and me	3	1
My in-Laws	3	0
My husband alone	0	1

*Will you get a say in spouse selection?
(only unmarried participants)*

	Peers	Edu-Leaders
Yes	2	1
No	2	3
Maybe	1	6

*Can you deny a proposal you do not want to accept?
(only unmarried participants)*

	Peers	Edu-Leaders
Yes	3	9
Maybe	2	1
No	0	0

*Right age to have the first child as per you.
(only unmarried participants)*

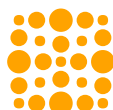
Age (yrs.)	Peers	Edu-Leaders
16-18	0	0
19-21	4	7
22-24	1	2
25-27	0	1

Both Peers and Edu-Leaders feel like they can say no to a marriage proposal but few feel that the spouse selection will be done by their families. Awareness of the right age for bearing the first child is seen among all participants.

Digital access is not an issue for peers.

9 peers say their family members do not have a problem with their phone usage and the remaining 4 are unsure of what their parents/husbands feel.

All 13 peers have access to a phone which they can use as much as they want.



3. Impact on family:

The i-Saksham program aims to create changes in the gender outlook of family members and hopes that they would influence other community members to better support the young women in their families.

Family members are aware of i-Saksham but do not completely understand what the fellowship entails.

When asked about what i-Saksham does, every single participant mentioned that i-Saksham provides education to kids and that they work for the upliftment of poor kids. Only one sibling mentioned that i-Saksham also works on the personal leadership of the Edu-Leader.

Family members exhibit greater trust towards their daughters.

All Family members were happy that the Edu-leader had been part of the fellowship and said that due to the fellowship they could see the Edu-Leader had become independent.

They could now trust the Edu-leader to travel around without any worries and their trust in her decisions had increased. Not many siblings were able to articulate changes seen in the families but one sibling mentioned how her father's outlook turned around once he got to know the work done by his daughter.

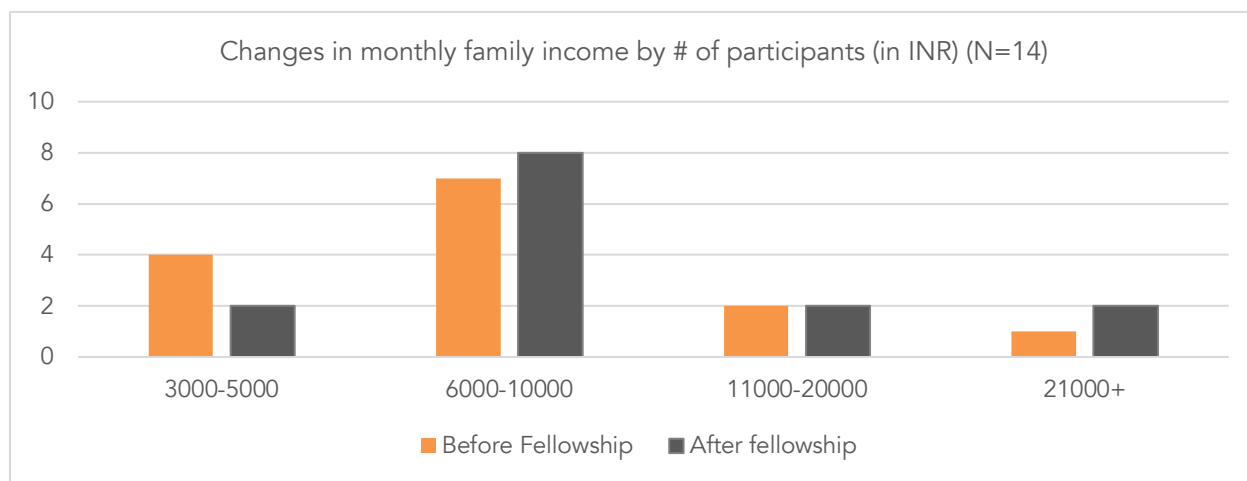
“My father had asked my sister to quit i- Saksham due to what the villagers used to say- Trust factor has increased in my parents. This is one change in them because they see my sister. In the beginning when she joined this, it was COVID time and she had to teach at home or in the temple. They told her not to go anywhere. Villagers used to pass a lot of comments against her. They used to tell my father. Throughout the day, she talks rubbish. Daughter is earning and feeding her father. All such things were told by the villagers. My father used to think about this at that time. He told my sister to quit i-Saksham. But when he saw her effort and obsession then this thing changed. When the fellowship of i-Saksham was about to complete towards the end, my father who used to tell her to leave i-Saksham, told her to work harder and continue at i-Saksham. This change has come. Now he turns a deaf ear to the people who used to tell him that your daughter is earning to feed you or she is earning for herself. He remains indifferent to such comments now.”- says a sibling from Munger.

Seven of nine Siblings mentioned that seeing their EL sisters affected them. Two were not able to articulate their answer. Siblings mentioned that there is increased curiosity about i-Saksham in their friends and neighbors, and many approached them to get their daughters recruited into the program.

There is an increase in overall family income after fellowship.

As Edu-Leaders take on paid work, there is an increase in overall income of the family.





Family members share their experience with i-Saksham among neighbors.

All family members except 1 had spoken to their neighbors about i-Saksham. They mentioned that the neighbors were curious about i-Saksham and would ask them how they could also enroll their daughters into the program or to get a job. Some parents also mentioned that they ask other parents to also send their daughter to i-Saksham having seen what i-Saksham has done for their own daughter/wife.

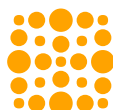
Family members experience increased respect from village members due to the fellowship.

There is an increased respect for EL and their family in the village.



"Her respect and prestige have increased a lot. When she goes out of the house, kids as well as their parents greet her saying, Pranam Didi or Pranam Madam." -says the sibling of an EL from Munger.

100% Of family members felt that the respect they receive in the village has increased due to the fellowship.



Family members do not believe that the fellowship altered their relationship with their daughter in any major way.

Though the family members acknowledge changes that the fellowship brought in the Edu-Leader they do not think this has had any large impact on their relationship with the Edu-Leader. Only a couple mentioned that there is a change in the way the Edu-Leader speaks to them.

Family members willing to support Edu-Leader's aspirations.

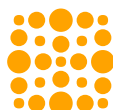
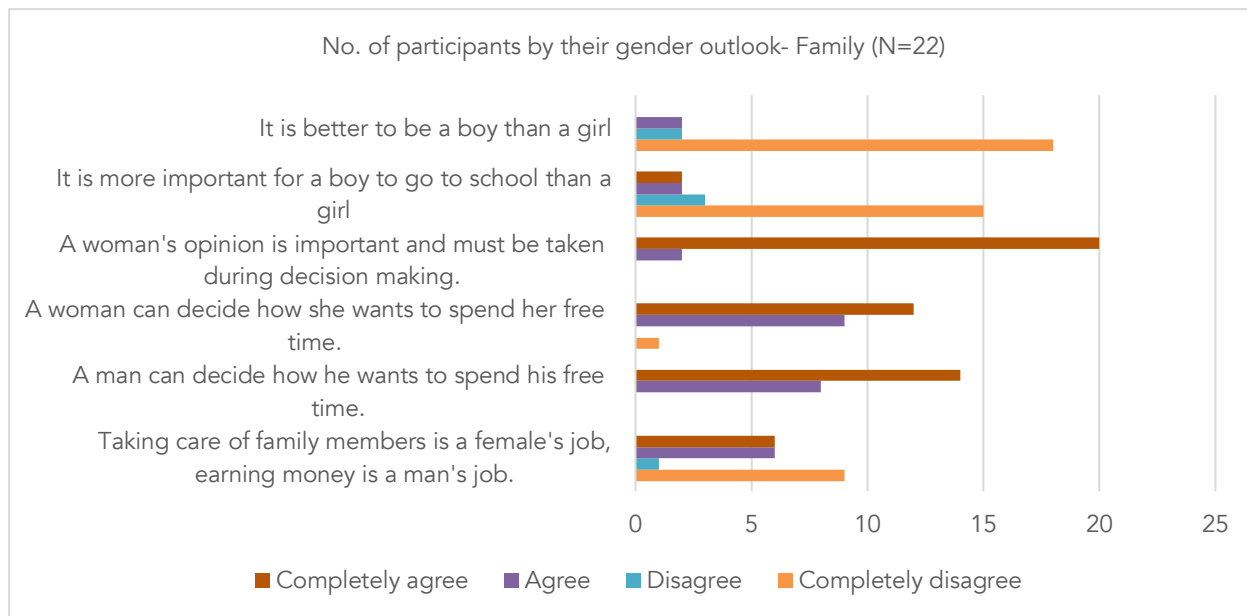
Most parents interviewed said that their dream for their daughters has changed since the last 2-3 years of their ward being in i-Saksham. Earlier these parents would either aim for their daughters to be married or just complete basic education. They now want their daughters to study more and get good jobs. The remaining said that they always wanted their daughters to study and get a job. When asked how they would support their daughter, the parents did not have a plan but were willing to offer complete support to their daughters.

“Earlier, we used to aim to get her married, but now it seems that instead of just studying, we (women) should go ahead and stand on our own feet. My mind set has changed.” – says a mother of an Edu-leader from Munger

“Earlier I would think a lot about what others would say, now I just want her to study more.” – says another mother of an Edu-leader from Munger

Some family members still have gender bias.

Some parents and siblings are still struggling with the gender roles, some family members still believe that taking care of the family is a woman's job and earning a man's job.



However, most have now developed a mindset that would help them offer support to the Edu-Leaders in the long run to their aspirations. Addressing the gender outlook within families will allow Edu-Leaders to pursue their aspirations and seize the available opportunities with ease.

4. Impact on Children:

Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) assessments are conducted by Edu-Leaders at the start and end of the fellowship. These assessments help measure the learning growth of the children taught by the Edu-Leaders. The baseline assessment was conducted from Nov '20 to Apr '21 and the endline was conducted between Feb '22 to Nov '22. The assessment results showcased below are for the 14 Edu-leaders part of this study. Results of the entire cohort can be found in Appendix C.

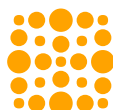
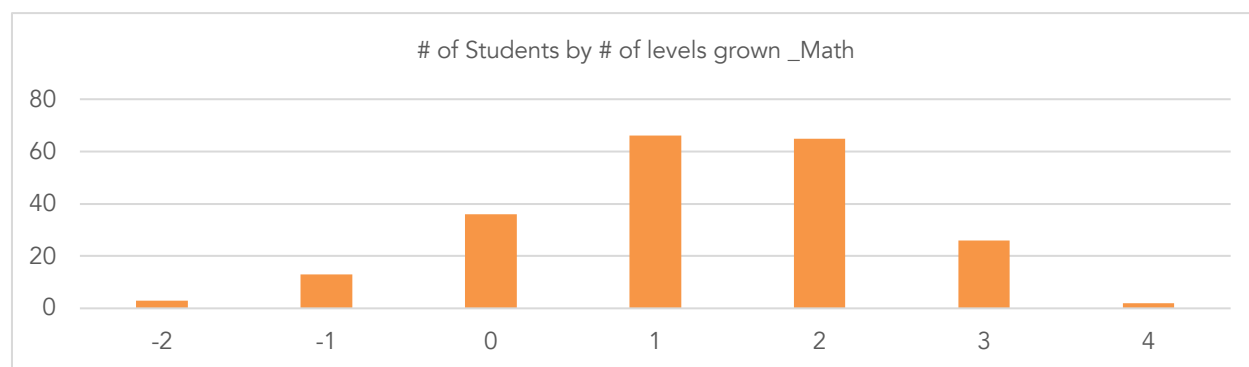
It must be noted that the delivery of content was affected due to the lockdowns and had an impact on the outcomes of these children. During the start of COVID, teaching plans were reworked so Edu-Leaders could reach students over the phone. Parents of children were sceptical about distant learning but agreed to support Edu-Leaders. Edu-leaders also spent time engaging parents. The i-Saksham team started Project "Kar ke Seekho" during COVID in partnership with Education Above All. This promoted activity-based learning among children through easy-to-do activities that stimulated 21st-century skills. Despite challenges due to COVID, the Edu-leaders continued to support young children in their community to ensure minimum learning loss in this difficult time.

The ASER levels for each subject are described in Appendix B.

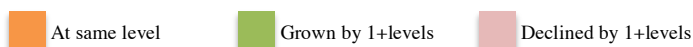
No. of students in both BL and EL

Maths	211
Hindi	210
English	210

Maths- Level- wise growth

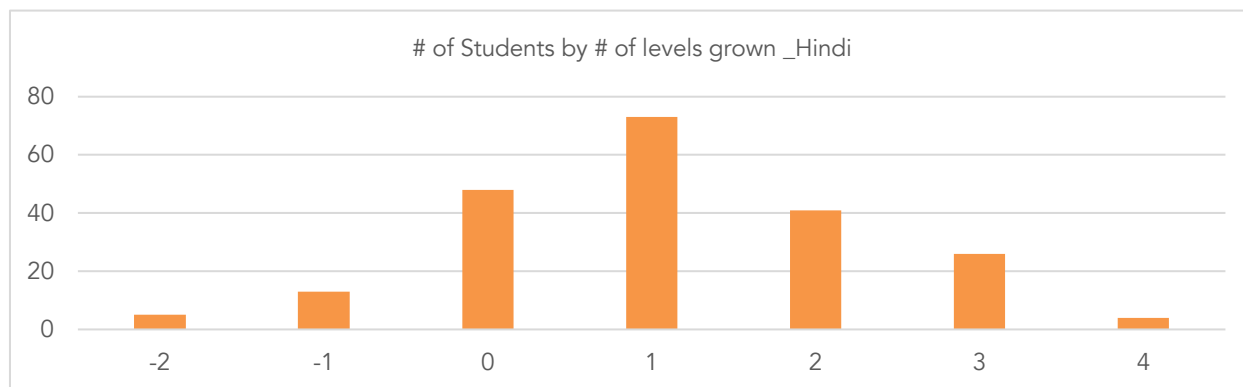


BL / EL->	Beginner	1-9	11-99	Subtraction	Division
Beginner	1%	4%	6%	3%	1%
1-9	1%	3%	14%	12%	9%
11-99	0	4%	9%	10%	12%
Subtraction	0	1%	0%	1%	3%
Division	0	0%	0%	0%	2%

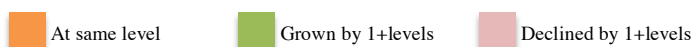


In Mathematics, 75% students tested have shown a growth of 1+levels with most growing 1 to 2 levels. 17% students have not shown a movement in their levels since Baseline.

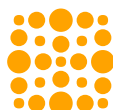
Hindi- Level- wise growth



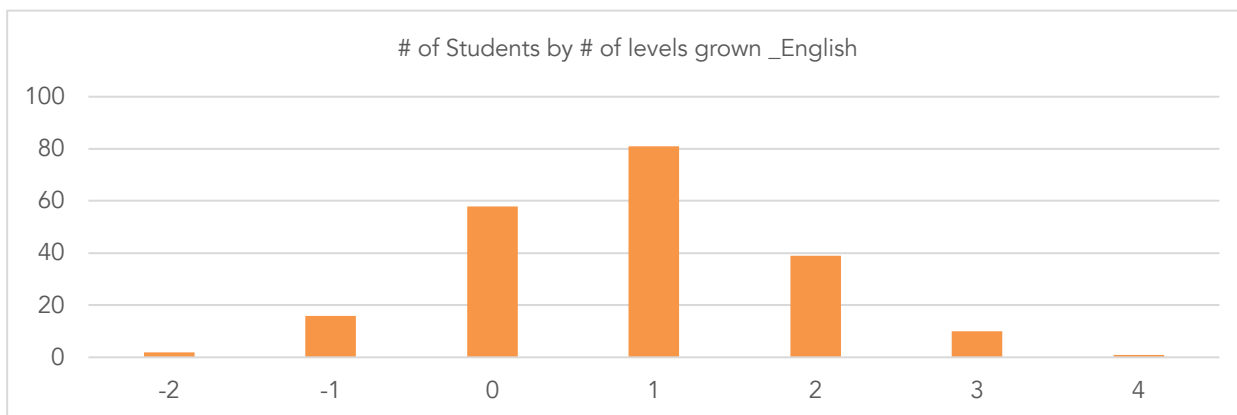
Row Labels	Beginner	Alphabet	Word	Paragraph	Story
Beginner	4%	11%	10%	3%	2%
Alphabet	2%	9%	17%	5%	9%
Word	1%	3%	4%	3%	5%
Paragraph	0%	0%	0%	1%	4%
Story	0%	0%	0%	1%	4%



In Hindi as well, 69% students tested have shown a growth of 1+levels with most growing 1 to 2 levels. 23% students have not shown a movement in their levels since Baseline.



English- Level- wise growth



Row Labels	Beginner	Alphabet	Word	Paragraph	Story
Beginner	6%	16%	10%	3%	0%
Alphabet	3%	16%	19%	8%	1%
Word	1%	4%	3%	4%	1%
Paragraph	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Story	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

At same level
 Grown by 1+levels
 Declined by 1+levels

In English, 62% students tested have shown a growth of 1+levels with most growing 1 to 2 levels. 28% students have not shown a movement in their levels since Baseline.

Overall students have performed better in Mathematics followed by Hindi and English. It must be noted that this growth is seen during the pandemic times when Edu-Leaders struggled with educating children despite of pandemic-induced lockdowns.

Along with growth in student learning performance, it was found that children have started to enjoy attending school. 8/13 peers surveyed mentioned that the children feel more motivated now to attend school. 4 Edu-Leaders mentioned that the children have started to develop better manners and habits and now focus on cleanliness as well.

“People are sending their kids to study. Cleanliness is followed. Awareness has dawned on everyone. People are letting their daughters study.”-says a peer of an Edu-leader from Munger.



“Yes, I have seen many changes in the village as well, now the kids have become more motivated, and they have come to get educated. .”-says a peer of an Edu-leader from Jamui.



VI. Feedback on Fellowship from participants:

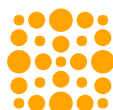
100% Of family members said they would recommend i-Saksham to other families.

1. Edu-leaders loved i-Saksham for the culture of support and open spaces it created for them. They felt heard at i-Saksham and liked how it made them develop themselves as humans.

“Liked the affinity of people there. I used to get a family feeling there. I didn't feel like I'm in a fellowship it felt like I am in my own home and she (the buddy) is my sister and she is telling me all the things. We used to do buddy talk and they used to tell us that if there is any challenge that you are experiencing for example if something is happening in the class she used to ask us to tell the challenge and ask us to come up with a solution to the same. All the changes that we have experienced in ourselves and how we can face challenges are all given by i-Saksham. We can now resolve all the challenges by ourselves we have built up that much confidence.”- says a fellow from Gaya.

“People used to listen to what I want to say at i-Saksham. Most of the places there is no one who will listen to you, but there whatever I wanted to say they used to hear that out first and then give me support also.” Says an Edu-Leader from Jamui.

2. Edu-Leaders have mentioned that training and sessions conducted during the fellowship were the most effective component of the fellowship. A couple of Edu-Leaders have mentioned that teaching children also created positive changes in them.



“The biggest point in fellowship was our feelings and our emotions were considered and there was no pressure. It’s was never that if we are not able to do something we would be questioned why we are not able to do it, instead we were told what we would be able to achieve if we do it. They use the strategy of making you solve your challenges on your own. So it was all about the trust that they(i-Saksham) think that we will be able to do it and it is only due to this trust we have reached here so far. Now we also go to different villages which are very far, around 30 kilometres or something and we feel like it's our own village only. Earlier if we would have been there we would not be able to go we would have been afraid of the same but now we are not.”- says a fellow from Jamui

3. i-Saksham should also help with teacher and parent connect
Some fellows have mentioned that they did their part to get teachers and parents involved but i-Saksham can create more touch-points between the teacher and the organization maybe by doing meetings with them. This would help the fellows. They also feel i-Saksham should work directly with parents to make them more aware about education.
4. The fellowship duration should increase beyond two years and fellowship stipend should also be increased. A couple of Edu-Leaders felt that the duration was less for changes to come in students and themselves and feel that the duration should be increased. They also mentioned that the stipend was not enough and should be increased.
5. i-Saksham should increase awareness of work in the community.
One Edu-Leader mentioned that i-Saksham should organize events in the community so that everyone knows what i-Saksham is, what work they do and provide support for the same.
6. i-Saksham should help everyone with post-fellowship career options.
Though many Edu-Leaders are currently placed and doing paid work, a couple of them mentioned that i-Saksham should support them better with what to do after the fellowship is over. A couple of parents also mentioned the same.
7. Vocational training, opportunities for the Edu-Leaders and other girls
A couple of Edu-Leaders mentioned that they would have liked i-Saksham to give them some technical skills training as well. A couple of siblings, peers, and Edu-Leaders mentioned that i-Saksham should do more for other girls in the village by providing them with more opportunities, vocational training, and financial aid for their studies.

VII. Conclusion and Recommendations:

The i-Saksham fellowship has created many changes in the lives of Edu-Leaders, their families, peers, and children in the community. For Edu-Leaders, the fellowship has been able to create valuable assets in terms of a network of supportive peers whom they can draw inspiration and support from. The fellowship has ensured all Edu-Leaders have increased aspirations. The desire to study, earn and grow as individuals is seen in all of them. Edu-leaders have noted how the fellowship has helped them build self-confidence, the ability to voice their opinions, increased mobility, and meaningful relationships.



There is a strong sense of agency and self-belief built through the fellowship that will enable Edu-leaders to achieve their goals. All Edu-leaders feel they can achieve whatever goals they set for themselves. Family members have noted how their daughters/ in-laws are more capable now of making good decisions. They feel they can trust them more now. Edu-leaders also feel that they are more in control of whom they will marry now as they can voice their opinions and reject a marriage proposal they do not want.

Financial independence has been one of the most crucial outcomes of the fellowship. The stipend provided during the fellowship paved the way for Edu-leaders to learn about financial management. The opportunities provided during the fellowship have allowed Edu-leaders to access employment and increased incomes. Edu-leaders also feel that they now have the competencies and the willingness to listen to the problems of their peers but are unsure how to solve them. The Fellowship can focus on building community leadership among Edu-leaders so they can become more active changemakers in their villages.

EDU-LEADERS



IMPACT

- Have a strong sense of self-efficacy, improved routines and increased desire to do well.
- Have more control now over who they can marry, not thinking of marriage right away
- More capable now of taking good decisions.
- More financially independent
- Have experienced income improvement
- Increased mobility



CAN DO BETTER

- Support in post i-Saksham careers
- Support in solving problems in the community
- Still believe in some gender roles

RECOMMENDATIONS

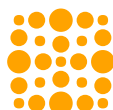
The i-Saksham team should continue the following activities/ approaches:

- Focus on building a strong Edu-Leader Alumni community
- Using tools of self-reflection in trainings and sessions
- Showing trust and enabling empowerment of Edu-leaders
- Buddy support
- Allowing Edu-leaders to engage and work with children

The i-Saksham team should focus on:

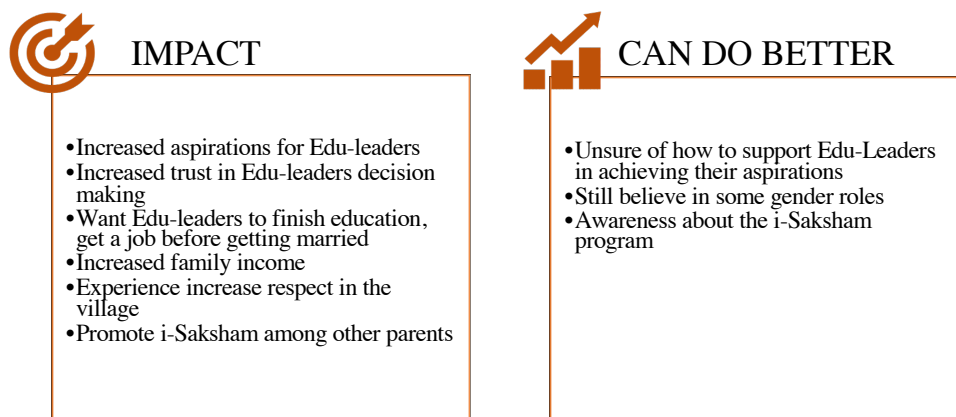
- Providing more career support to all Edu-leaders post i-Saksham
- Increase the focus on community level problem solving
- Encourage Edu-leaders to spend more time with peers
- Conduct more gender sensitization with a focus on how to balance gender roles and aspirations

Fig. 3. Impact on Edu-leaders and Recommendations



The environment around Edu-leaders has also evolved over the course of the fellowship. Edu-leaders now have families that have increased trust and confidence in them. They are also involved in financial decision-making within the family. Family members of unmarried Edu-leaders have all said that they would want their ward to get a job and/or finish their education before getting married. Though family members have increased aspirations for their daughters, they are unsure how to support them in achieving these aspirations.

FAMILY MEMBERS



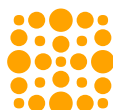
RECOMMENDATIONS

The i-Saksham team should focus on building awareness about the program among family members of Edu-leaders and orient them on how they can support them in achieving their aspirations. Gender sensitization sessions and regular buddy visits to family can help in building gender neutral outlook of family members.

Fig. 4. Impact on Family Members and Recommendations

This maybe because family members overall, are not completely aware of everything the fellowship entails. They see the fellowship as a means for children to get educated in their village. Many are unaware of the leadership focus of the fellowship. The i-Saksham program must increase and enhance the touchpoints with family members. This will play a crucial role in creating an environment where Edu-leaders can thrive in the long run. Through these touchpoints, the team should also focus on the gender sensitization of family members. It was noticed that gender bias still exists among family members, where many still see traditional gender roles as valid. To create a lasting change in the community, the i-Saksham team will have to focus on addressing these gaps.

Due to the presence of Edu-leaders in the community, peers are experiencing increased support from family members. However, peers are lagging compared to Edu-leaders in terms of economic freedom. Though they have increased aspirations now, they would need more support from i-Saksham when it comes to accessing employment and gaining financial independence. The permeability of advancements as seen in Edu-leaders and their families to peers will only be achieved by more community-level interventions done by the i-Saksham fellowship.



PEERS



IMPACT

- Changed aspirations for self
- Wish to join i-Saksham as well.
- Parental support has improved
- Feel they can say no to a spouse they do not want.
- Increased mobility.
- Digital access not an issue.
- i-Saksham among other parents



CAN DO BETTER

- Peer identification at the start of the program
- Financial independence and job access still an issue
- Still believe in gender roles
- Awareness is low about the i-Saksham program

RECOMMENDATIONS

The i-Saksham team should focus on building awareness about the program among peers of Edu-leaders. Edu-leaders should be encouraged to spend more time with peers in a structured manner to create larger change in the situation of the peers. Career awareness sessions with peers can be used as a way to attract them to the fellowship and allow them to pursue opportunities independently as well. Creating a peer list and capturing basic information about peers as a baseline to the start of the program will ease in providing support to the peers.

Fig. 5. Impact on Peers and Recommendations

CHILDREN



IMPACT

- Most learning gains in Mathematics, followed by Hindi and then English
- Improved motivation to attend school
- Connect built with Edu-leader
- Improved manners and cleanliness



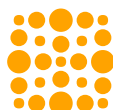
CAN DO BETTER

- Ensuring sustainability of results, increased outcomes and motivation after Grade 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

The i-Saksham team should work closely with teachers and Headmasters to ensure the activity-based teaching style is adopted in the long-run in these schools.

Fig. 6. Impact on Children and Recommendations



Among beneficiary children, despite the pandemic, there has been learning improvement in all three subjects. Participants mentioned how the fellowship has created a feeling of enjoyment in education for children in their villages.

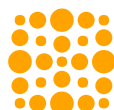
The i-Saksham fellowship is at a crucial stage where scale will be a priority over the coming years. The program content for the fellowship has created an impact on the leadership and personal development of the girls and the learning development of children. As i-Saksham scales, there will be a great need for them to continue creating and measuring this impact. The following are some recommendations based on the current study.

- 1. Awareness building of the program:** The i-Saksham fellowship program should do more to connect with family members and peers. Awareness and understanding of the program were limited among these groups. They believe that i-Saksham is an organization that provides education to children. Their understanding of the complete i-Saksham program is limited though they have seen changes in the Edu-leaders. Increased buddy visits to Edu-leader households might help in bridging this gap.
- 2. Capacity-building of parents to support Edu-leaders:** Parents play a major role in supporting the Edu-Leader on their journey to their aspirations. Parents want the Edu-leaders to earn money, get a job, and study, but they have no clear understanding of how they will support the Edu-leader in achieving the same. Parents can receive visits, and awareness sessions from the i-Saksham team regularly to keep them updated on the program and opportunities for the Edu-Leaders.
- 3. Structured time between Edu-leaders and peers:** Edu-leaders should be encouraged to spend more structured time with their peers to understand more deeply the challenges faced by them and problem-solve together. This will allow the benefits of the program to reach a wider audience and allow alumni Edu-leaders to work more closely on these issues.
- 4. Training of teachers:** The team should work on the relationship building and training of teachers in the schools where Edu-Leaders work. For long-term sustainability of the impact on student outcomes, along with effective transition between one Edu-leader and the next, training of teachers would impact the student outcomes in the long run.
- 5. Gender sensitization among family members and peers:** For long-term support of Edu-leaders impacting the gender mindset of these key stakeholders will be essential. To do the same, family members and peers can receive more direct intervention from the i-Saksham team in the form of camps. There can also be day-long outings designed for Edu-leaders and their family members where Edu-leaders can present the work they have done and sessions around gender, aspirations could be planned.
- 6. Community-level leadership should be made a focus:** Edu-leaders need more support in effecting community-level change. Though there is awareness among Edu-Leaders about community issues they are not sure how to address them. The i-Saksham fellowship can do more to support Edu-leaders in community-level problem-solving. This can be done through an increase in community-



level challenges addressed during the fellowship, and increased community interaction with community leaders.

- 7. Career awareness for peers:** i-Saksham team can also plan some exposure and career awareness activities for the peers to open their horizons to the work they can do in the community and beyond. This would lead to multiplied effects in the community and opportunities for all women to succeed.
- 8. Increased investment in M&E systems for accurate and reliable data collection:** As the organization scales, there will need to be a greater focus for the team to take on a baseline exercise for every upcoming cohort. This will help establish the effect of the program more clearly. Along with this, a database of the beneficiaries of the program must be created. More time must be spent on clearly defining the impact expected for each beneficiary. This would allow the team to conduct more robust data collection studies in the future. Digitizing the data collection as much as possible will also ensure efficient impact measurement.



VIII. Appendix

A. i-Saksham curriculum snapshot

The curriculum is illustrated below:

Year 1

Outcomes	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Enhanced understanding of self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-maps • Aspiration survey • Socio-emotional intelligence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gratitude • Identity • Enrolment in IGNOU for higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Agency • Identify peer-influence group • Start life-skills project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching • Non-violent communication • Story-telling
Ability to create an inclusive learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision • Norms setting • Print-rich 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child-behaviour • Values of excellence, trust, co-operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student portfolio • Gender norms in classrooms • Student leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drama • Student leadership
Learn basic pedagogy skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story-telling • Wholesome word • CRA&LP method • Phonics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education history • Bloom's taxonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy of education
Work with parents and community institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions with Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported PTMs • Understanding power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent PTMs • Baal-Utsav 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding social change

Year 2

Outcomes	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Plan for their aspirations and take steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-plans • Goal setting • SMART goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to alumni role models • Different career options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping with relevant partners • Pathways finalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction into different pathways



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Root cause analysis 			
Develop an understanding of Indian Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Education Policy • Social change and Gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access & entitlements • Different challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of collective and social movements • Key levers 	
Become sensitive to innovations and sociological factors that constrain learning and gender roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and Philosophy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech-enabled models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy of education
Can build alliances with influencers and work towards the common purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panchayat • Participatory research • Stakeholder matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building networks • Various development programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solve 1 challenge through crowdsourcing

B. Annual Status of Education (ASER) assessments levels

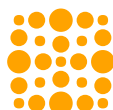
These have been adapted from the official ASER assessments.

Math:

Level number	What it means?
0	No mastery
1	Number recognition (1-9)
2	Number recognition (11-99)
3	Two-digit subtraction with borrowing
4	Three-digit by one-digit division

Hindi and English:

Level number	What it means?
0	No mastery
1	Alphabet
2	Word
3	Paragraph
4	Story



C. Aspirations and ASER results- Cohort 2020

The aspiration survey and ASER assessment results for the full cohort of 2020 can be found here: <https://rb.gy/gyt2u>

-----END OF REPORT-----

