Solving Problems using a Transformative Design Approach: The importance of process in driving educational goals

A CASE STUDY OF KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA, PANIPAT
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Abstract

‘Jalmana’ is a small Haryana village: about 1200 families, 46% female population, located in the heartland of Panipat; nothing special about it. Except that is has a Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), a residential school for girls. In January 2019, the entire school came together to establish a Science Lab from scratch and held an exhibition for the first time for the community to come, see and engage with them. Named after Kasturba Gandhi, KGBVs were part of central government’s scheme to bring Dalit and Tribal girls to the forefront by establishing residential schools from grade 6 to 8, specifically for them. Over time, these schools, which are already located in extreme remote areas, have been ignored and marginalized in the educational discourse. Just like others, KGBV – Jalmana also suffered from teachers having low expectations from girls, girls dropping out and getting pushed into early marriages and poor quality of education. The problem was both academic and socio–emotional. Teachers reported that the girls were extremely shy, did not voice their problems or speak in public. A transformative design process was tried in this context which put the school community at the center where they chose the core problem and solutions around that were facilitated. This case study is a narrative of such a journey where in a three month-cycle, the school travelled from having discussions and deliberations in ‘JanManch’ or public platform to coming up with 30 science models – all done by girls, who wouldn’t be comfortable saying their names in the beginning. In a message to their families, teachers and local government official, they proved that they can do wonders with the right support.

Keywords: Transformative design, KGBVs, marginalized girls, school community, bottom up approach
Introduction

India has a population of about 1.3 billion out of which 586 million are women according to 2011 census report of India (Census of India 2011 - Report of Post Enumeration Survey, 2011). This percentage is roughly about 45%. In 2017, the World economic Forum (WEF) ranked India at 108 out of 144 countries on the parameters of gender equality in health, education, economics, and politics (World Economic Forum, 2017). A huge chunk of female school going population also reports loss in education caused by gender discrimination, low socioeconomic status and above all the caste system. The caste system which is one of the oldest forms of social stratifications, came into existence in India about 1000 years before Christ and still holds the ground strong (“What is India’s Caste System?,” 1017). It divides the society into four orders of castes which over the course of time have become hereditary and denies majority of rights and opportunities to the lower caste orders. The ‘Dalits’ are born into a category even below the lowest caste. The Dalits are about 201 million in number who live in the poorest of conditions, denied access to education, jobs and basic living settings (Census of India 2011 - Report of Post Enumeration Survey, 2011). Data also points out that girls from these minority groups have the highest rates of exclusion with respect to schooling at 6.1 per cent compared to 3.6 per cent which is the national average (Subramanian, 2016).

A report by UNICEF in 2018 revealed that one in three of the world’s child brides live in India and of the country’s 223 million child brides, 102 million were married before turning 15 (2017 Annual Report for the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage, 2018). Access to formal education has been cited as the strongest deterrent to not just prevent child marriage but also ensure better health outcomes and overall quality of life. It was found that girls who live in rural areas or come from poorer households
are at greater risk, and a higher proportion of child brides are found among those with little or no education. In fact, girls with secondary schooling are approximately 70 percent less likely to marry as children than illiterate girls. Child marriage is associated with low levels of decision making in the family, increased vulnerability to violence and limited access to social and economic resources. Therefore, building girls’ capacity through formal education and livelihoods training, which enhances their ability to negotiate key life decisions such as when to marry is crucial for delaying early marriages (Gupta, Mukherjee, Singh, Pande, & Basu, 2008).

There is, as a result, a huge demand and need on the parts of researchers, policymakers, civil society organizations to direct considerable resources towards gender empowerment and better life outcomes for women especially the ones which belong to the lowest societal strata. Aligning to the same direction of thoughts, the central government in India started the Kasturba Gandhi Ballika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) started under its own banner in 2004 with a vision of providing access of quality education to the girls belonging to unprivileged section of the society predominantly in remote areas.

The government identified Educationally Backward Blocks or EBBs throughout the country as areas with literacy levels and male-female literacy gap both below national average. The school system is a residential system from grades 6 to 8 and provides 75% of seats for girls belonging to SC, ST, OBC or minority communities and priority for the remaining 25% is accorded to girls from families below poverty line (The Constitution of India - Article 341 and 342, 1950). The scheme is being implemented in 27 states/UTs and 3609 KGBVs by Government of India in 460 districts as on 30th June 2014 (NITI Aayog, 2015). The girls stay in this school for the three years and are provided free clothing, food and school material and
attend the nearby middle schools during the day. There is a full-time warden who stays with the girls with her group of cooks, guards and other help. Overall, the KGBV has a total of eight teachers to provide overall support to the girls’ overall development.

What the current state reveals is majority of teachers on contract with meagre salaries and non-existent teacher training programs for them. The schools run in isolation with extremely poor resources and there is a strong need of education related resources for the teachers. On part of students, since these are till grade 8, majority of girls get married after grade 8 instead of pursuing higher studies. There is no official documentation specifically around KGBVs but working with hundred schools in India revealed this trend. This also follows the UNICEF report on child brides and education in India. Although these schools began along with other special schooling systems in India meant for the upliftment of rural poor, the latest 2015 NITI Aayog report clearly mentions that the KGBVs and other systems are incomparable because the KGBVs get weak students right from the start and similarly, teachers with low competence(NITI Aayog, 2015). What comes across is how forgotten these systems are and how low the expectations are form the young girls who attend them and the teachers who teach them.

The UNICEF report also mentions clear recommendations around equitable education that enhances inclusion and is child centric(“South Asia regional study: Dalit girls most excluded from primary education in India,” 2015). Within the country, there are government documentation specifying socio-emotional skills as clear objectives of school education apart from content knowledge (Department of School Education and Literacy, India, 2014) and the New Education Policy, 2019. But what is still lacking are the programs that integrate developing Socio emotional skills (SE) in adolescent girls and adult women along with
school education and use it to empower them and give them tools to grow from challenges, who suffer from several layers of marginalization apart from gender. As a result, few programs in India have focused on improving SE skills as a key lever for impacting well-being, productivity and fostering development. Since SE skills are highly plastic, they can be developed across lifespan ranging from adolescence through adulthood (Almlund, Duckworth, Heckman, & Kautz, 2011; Duckworth & Yeager, 2015). This makes them applicable for not just the students but the teachers as well. As a result, any work that is centered around SE skills aims to reach a widespread community. Additionally, the outcomes manifest themselves through spillover effects which can be seen ranging from better reproductive health, lesser depression rates and substance abuse to better financial decisions, delay in marriages and nurturing of entrepreneurial capabilities.

The current intervention takes place in the village of Jalmana situated in Panipat, Haryana – in the north of India. This village of 1,200 families has one Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya or KGBV from grades 6 to 10th.
Risk and Protective Factors

A risk factor is a characteristic of a group of people that is associated with an increased likelihood of undesired outcomes. In our specific case, the community in concern are the teachers. Probable risk factors and leading undesired outcomes are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
<th>Undesired Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of professional teacher development trainings</td>
<td>Teachers are not aware of contemporary educational research and are less competent than many of their peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KGBVs existing in isolation</td>
<td>Teachers do not get to share their problems and experiences with other teachers hence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lack of government support
Both schools and teachers do not flourish and there is lack of motivation in doing school related work.

Lack of family support
Teachers lose the motivation and interest in doing better in their jobs as they feel they are not valued by their families.

Remote Location of KGBVs
Teachers find themselves unable to commute and connect to the outside world and hence seek help many times.

Compromised salary structure
This also results in lack of motivation for the teachers and the mindset to not question status quo.

A protective factor is a condition or characteristic that facilitates good or desired outcomes in people at risk. A list of protective factors along with the desired outcomes are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective Factor</th>
<th>Desired Outcomes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staying permanently in the school with the kids</td>
<td>The teachers get to connect with the students in a much better way than in many other schools and forge better relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Group in KGBVs</td>
<td>The support group consisting of cooks, helpers and guards form a collective of people who run the school together. As a</td>
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result, there is greater level of trust among them.

**Teacher support group in KGBVs**

Since the teachers stay and run the KGBVs together they spend considerable time together which could be used in a manner to improve teaching practices.

**Direct fund transfer in some cases**

In some states since the funds get transferred directly to the head teacher’s account, an aware teacher will know how to best use them and can exercise autonomy in that regard.

**Qualified Teachers**

The teachers come through an examination process which is why they are well qualified and value capacity building.

SwaTaleem’s work was focused on improving educational outcomes of these schools along with working on socio emotional skills with both teachers, girls students and government officials thereby creating a community of practice around problem solving at school level.
Overall Problems

This intervention aimed to work with the teachers of the KGBV system in order to address the educational shortcomings related to the KGBV system. In the need based survey, there are three levels of problems that can be seen:

- **Lack of need based in-service support:** 69% of the teachers reported that they had only ‘some in-service training in last 2 years.

- **Low expectations from girls:** Both from the system and the families it is observed that the expectations set for the girls either revolves around passing grades (system) or having a residential place to stay (families). Unfortunately, there is no reported data, but majority of girls get married at an early age after grade 8.

- **Lack of systemic acknowledgment and support system:** The schools mostly exist in isolation and students; teachers and officials don’t have a need-based support system in place.
Theoretical Perspectives

1. Socio emotional skills

Socio-emotional (SE) skills are personal capacities that are distinct from cognitive abilities, responsive to interventions, and associated with thriving, broadly defined. These are set of skills that act as useful vectors for promoting positive development across lifespan in people. Generally, they have been called soft skills, 21st century skills, non-cognitive skills and life skills and consists of skills like self-management, problem solving, goal setting, social relationships etc. Through developmentally and culturally appropriate classroom instruction and application of learning to everyday situations, SE skills build children to recognize and manage their emotions, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish positive goals, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations” (Greenberg, Weissberg, O’Brien, & Zins, 2003).

A common framework that provides a taxonomy around the SE skills is offered by the Collaborative on Advancement of Social and Emotional Learning and it works to improve the five core areas relating to behavior and actions namely Self-Regulation, Self-Awareness, Responsible Decision making, Self-management and Relationship management (Durlak, Celene, Roger, & Thomas, 2015).

Figure 2 A framework of socio emotional skills offered by CASEL
2. **Transformative design approach**

The principles of transformative design having been guiding sustainable development work in which they keep the interests and rights of the people at the center of the activities or intervention. The basic driving idea is – what do people gain out of the program? as opposed to flying in with an assumed set of problems and solutions. By using a bottom up approach in which the decisions flow from the stakeholders rather than the top management makes the approach more inclusive and empathetic throughout. A transformative framework that consists of incorporating intent to advocate for an improvement in human interests and society through addressing issues of power and social relationships becomes extremely vital in the process of doing sustainable change in education(Sweetman, Badiee, & Creswell, 2010).

3. **Capability theory**

According to the capability theory, the opportunity or potential to achieve is more important than the actual achievement or outcomes. Proposed by Amartya Sen, this theory puts light on the social context in determining what a person is actually able to achieve. Learnings from this perspective can be crucial to drive educational policy and designing those to serve matters of social justice. In this light, Education is itself seen to be a basic capability that enables the expansion of freedom and aspirations, setting and pursuing goals which are central tenets of a free life. This perspective also helps in using education to build resilience in the context of educational space in both teachers and especially girls as adolescence is also a phase of intense cognitive development(Ramanaik et al., 2018).
4. Gender theory

Gender Theory developed in 1970s and 80s largely looking at aspects of masculinity and femininity that have been created characterlike that shape the lives of men and women. This is generated as a result of a multilevel social system and is embedded in institutional practices and prevailing mindsets of society. Gender theory emphasizes how people are socialized into upholding existing gendered identities and associated inequalities. Since this theory has wide implications it has been expanded in many areas like gender in domestic realm, gender in market areas etc. Gender performance theory is particularly noteworthy in which it proposes that gender is learnt as opposed to be born with i.e. it is not biological in nature but is a result of nurturing. This becomes crucial in working in schools especially in sections of oppression where gender and social class interact intensely to produce extremely constrained outcomes for the girls (Ramaiaik et al., 2018).
Intervention

The proposed solution works with teachers around their socio emotional development and builds capacity in them to take these skills to their students in the school. Teachers in this case, are in connection to both the girl students as well as the government officials, parents and other members of the community therefore, they emerge as best placed for being the key members in this journey. The teachers in this set up are all females having at least the basic professional degree in teaching. Their age ranges from 26 to 40 years of age and majority of them are married. They belong to different geographies within India but it is very likely that a KGBV in the south of India will have a teacher from the same locality. Many of these teachers have young kids and they stay with them in the school premises. In certain cases, the girls staying in the KGBVs help them with taking care of the kids.

Guiding Principles

- Using a problem-solving approach, the model creates cross functional communities of teachers, government officials and girl students in these school who address and solve locally situated issues.

- This approach ensures problems related to them are prioritized, increases their participation in the solving process, makes them accountable to each other and ensures sustainability in the future.

SwaTaleem uses a human centred design and bottom up approach in its endeavours. This is highly inspired by the transformative paradigm which emerged in response to voices from marginalized communities that research and evaluation were not appropriately inclusive, and the results did not accurately represent them, nor did they lead to an improvement of their living
conditions (Mertens, Cram, & Chilisa, 2013). The overall intervention in KGBV Jalmana, worked with 90 girls and 4 teachers.

The entire school of Jalmana participated with 90 girls from grades 6 to 8, three female teachers and one warden in the process which was participatory and democratic.

**Data Collection**

Focus group discussions were conducted with the teachers of the school as well as the girl students that gave a clear idea of the strengths and challenges faced by the school community. Sessions were created based on the initial need assessments and discussed with the teachers as attached in the annexure I. During the sessions, detailed notes were taken as observations and reflections that gave an account of the fidelity of the session as well as thoughts on improvements and efficacy. This is part of annexure II. A total of 8 eight were designed for both teachers and students which spanned a time of 1.5–2 hours. These sessions were designed to inculcate the process of democracy, teamwork and public speaking as well as building science models.

**Demographics**

There were 90 girls in total who were part of the transformative design process from the age range of 12–14 years and all of them were unmarried. Out of them, the teachers informed that approximately 55% were from Backward classes, 40% were from Scheduled Caste and % were Muslims. 95% of the mothers were illiterate and the fathers worked as daily wage laborers or were factory workers. The literacy level of the fathers could not be determined by the teachers as they never visited the school, but mothers did. Majority of these families were large families with 6-7 children.
Transformative Design Process with the School

Here is the overview of the steps that were incorporated in the three-month long design process. Since the government official was not involved in school processes in the beginning, we started with teacher-student community and then onboarded the official in the process.

I. Need Assessment
- Done in form of surveys and focus group discussions to understand the context as well as the needs of the teacher – student community.
- Teachers reported, “No workshops but extremely high need around topics- school subjects, mentoring, reproductive health, teacher network and feedback.”
- Students reported that they liked coming to school but had no sports and few computer classes.
- There was also lack of involvement of the government officials in the area.

II. Design Iteration
- This was based on regular reflection documents created
- It was observed that everyone’s voices should be heard around the problems existed
- Outspoken girls could better engage other girls compared to external facilitators, hence in the long run they could be seen as leaders facilitating sessions.

III. Establishing JanManch
- ‘Jan’ means people/public and ‘Manch’ means platform in Hindi.
- This was held every Saturday where all the school’s girls could participate and share their views.
- They suggested the problems they would need to solve in the school and also participated in narrowing them down and choosing the last one.

IV. Design Iteration II
- As the sessions progressed, more girls were speaking out in the public.
- It was decided to eventually break out into smaller groups when there can be more girl leaders
- All problems were initially noted down and had time discussion around them

V. Problem Specification/ Setting Goals
- The problems which were raised by the students and teachers in Janmanch are divided in two three categories and are listed below:

  - **Infrastructure**: Boundary Wall, playground, garden, Science Lab, Library
  - **Academic**: Teacher Workshops, Student workshops on confidence, communication, expression, use of technology, self defense
  - **Extracurricular**: Trips to museums, parks, exhibition, Monthly newsletter, better nutrition

- To narrow down, SMART (Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timely) criteria for goal setting was used which favored the creation of a Science Laboratory.

VI. Design Iteration III
- To remain contextually relevant, activities and projects specified by National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) for class 6, 7 and 8 were chosen.
- Since the setting was low resource, centers like ‘Eklavya’ and ‘Toys form Trash’ were consulted to use everyday materials in experiments and models.
- The maintenance of the Science lab would have to be a joint responsibility of students for sustainability.
- Teachers required more help in the Science projects.

VII. Workshops with Teachers and Students
- To onboard the teachers, workshops were conducted with them around simple Science experiments and their influence in life.
- For students, workshops included simple age appropriate model demonstration and hands on activities.

VIII. Design Iteration IV

- It is important to devise a separate set of onboarding activities for teachers around the ‘chosen problem’ to help them lead initiatives for the school rather than ST.
- They were involved in setting workshop objectives and outcomes for student sessions.
- Involving the principal is crucial in bringing change in the school

**IX. Role Division and Group Work**

- Having a science laboratory was broken down in small steps.
- Students groups helped identify a place in school premises which can serve as a laboratory.
- Other students identified relevant experiments that could be conducted by them.
- Rest of the weeks were offered as helping them in the process by teachers and ST.

**X. Design Iteration V**

- Students as volunteers could be chosen as group heads to help organize the science exhibition
- If the principal is not in the school, constant updates form a crucial engagement component

**XI. Science Exhibition**

- 90 girls worked on 29 experiments which included simple air pump, showcasing Newton’s law, balloon bugle, fountain.
- The exhibition was open for the community members and local government official to see

**XII. Impact:** This platform resulted in the following:

- Onboarding of government official after she saw the science model creation and expressed interest in school matters.
- Teachers reported that girls who did not speak at all, were more comfortable speaking and presenting their work in the public.
- Teachers also showed ownership in the creating a solution together with the students.

**XIII. Design Iteration VI**
- Choose clear outcome-based goals instead of process based to induce strong goal engagement.
- It is crucial to onboard school leadership and teachers to solve problems.
- The session needs to be revised and customized on a weekly basis.
Transformative Design Process: A Case Study

**Problems discussed:**
- Infrastructure
- Academic
- Extracurricular

**SMART criteria for goal setting with contextual materials**

**Task**
- Students groups formed for role division
- Constant communication with principal is important

**Experiments**
- Simple air pump
- Newton’s law
- Balloon bugle
- Fountain

**Onboarding and Awareness**
- They were eventually involved in setting workshop objectives and outcomes for sessions.
Results

The culmination of a transformative design process led to the development of Science models from everyday materials in the KGBV of Jalmana. For the first time, girls engaged in STEM related projects and made something that they were interested in. At the same time, they were given an opportunity to exhibit their work not just in front of the government official but also their parents. This becomes an even more crucial point because these girls have been subjected to low expectations from every section of the society, including their parents. And for them to showcase their efforts in the field of Science to them, even though very basic, was a huge shift in mindsets for them as well as their mothers and fathers. Apart from gaining a respectable element in the parent–daughter interaction, this participation also signaled better engagement of the parents with the school and lays the foundation of building more on it.

Along with the parents this are key shifting points in strategy with the government as well. The government official was pleasantly surprised by the progress in STEM that the students and the teachers made, and this platform was wisely utilized by the teacher to bargain for more involvement on the official’s part. The school had initially mentioned the problem of not having a boundary wall. As a result, when the girls from the school decided to do gardening, they faced harassment by the village boys who would assemble there and tease them. Troubled by it, they stopped working in gardening and went back to the four walls of the classes. This was such a problem which was not in our scope of problem solving but could be easily addressed by the government. And the platform of science exhibition, was used by the teachers to discuss this problem with the official and get a commitment towards building it for the them. This not only signifies the change at an individual level but also is a critical point in transforming schools at a systemic level leveraging the existing resources to
create bigger and better futures for the schools. And this change was primarily driven by the school community.

At an individual level both girls and teachers reported higher levels of confidence, assertive communication and problem-solving skills. Neha from grade 8 shared “Bhaiya told us to go on the stage and we went there and we shared how we made it. I felt very confident when I shared it with everyone and I felt very happy.”

And similarly, Annu shared in her experience the feeling of creating something new and the promise of autonomy. “I liked the story making a lot because in the story we have created our own sentence. We have created that story by own. We have seated with our group and with the help of each other we have created this story. We have shared our story with everyone. In this story we have created many characters like magical chakki, 3 sisters, 2 brothers, One rich person and One Poor people. We felt very happy. We learn from this story that we should never steal anything.”

Mansi Rawal, a student of class 8 shared the sense of purpose that a platform like the Janmanch or public platform gives to people “When didi first came to our school, she shared about Janmanch. Where we can share anything related to us with didi bhaiya.”

Overall, the entire three-month cycle, a tangible product like the science models were attained but also changes in teachers and girls were seen that reflected building both individual and collective capacities.
Limitations

Since the government official was not fully on board initially, it could not be seen how her involvement would have changed things in the process and offered good insights into creating nonhierarchical platforms. Apart from this, in this pilot an evaluative framework was not employed which going forward could give critical insights into the way, the process brings about change. One such framework is the phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory or PVEST by Margarete Beale Spencer highlights how girls and boys respond to environmental and social stressors and how teachers’ responsibility becomes important in transforming the negative learning attitude of mid-adolescent economically disadvantaged KGBV students (Spencer, Dupree, & Hartmann, 1997).

Overall Results

- **Onboarding the government official** after she saw the science model creation and expressed interest in school issues.
- **Teachers** reported that girls who did not speak at all, were more **comfortable speaking and presenting their work in the public.**
- **Teachers** also showed **ownership** in the creating a solution together with the students.
- **For the first time, the community participated** to see and engage in the work done by students and teachers.

Implications

An intervention like this on science and socioemotional skills with the teachers showed better problem solving abilities in them along with motivation to show resilience in themselves in
their day to day lives. Behaviours like this lead to better classroom management behaviours, higher school level engagement and better teacher student relationship. Carrying out a participatory process requires constant customization and iteration based on community’s needs. Therefore, contextualization not only becomes a need but also a necessity.

It was realized that the researcher needs more preparation, involvement and decision making intended to incorporate multiple contributions from several stakeholders into a meaningful plan of action. Engagement of stakeholders symbolizes respect and trust in their knowledge and is able to produce slow but long-lasting effects embedded in the community in a deeper manner. This approach set for low resources settings could be used in various educational settings with appropriate variations according to the context. The important aspect to note here is not the product but the process of engaging individuals in a complex multi stakeholder set up of a school community which can be time consuming but long lasting.
Acknowledgement

SwaTaleem deeply acknowledges the teachers, warden and students of KGBV Jalmana, the government officials of Panipat and is grateful to Mantra for Change for its support in the journey.
References


Annexure I

KGBV Jalmana Session II

Time Duration: 120 Minutes     Date: 16/11/18
Facilitators: Mahima, Vaibhav and Vaishnavi

Objectives of the session
1. To discuss the various challenges of schools and form a consensus on one challenge to work upon
2. Give space for girl leaders to emerge during session
3. Have Fun

Materials required: Chart Papers (10), Sketch pens (40-50), wax crayons (4-5 packets), name tags, clip for name tags, balls (3)

Session Steps

A. Setting the Tone of the Day (15 minutes)
1. Welcome Everyone to ‘Janmanch’. Start with the secret sign they decided in the last session of Janmanch
   We can also start with small activities involving –
   - Thought of the day!
   - Samachar/News from last week - Getting updates from all the classes - Ask 2 girls to volunteer from each class and share the updates from last week –
     What they enjoyed most in last week?
     What they learnt in last week?
     Anything interesting that happened in the campus?
     Any challenges that they faced in last week
   - A small skit/poem/song can be presented

2. Please ensure that girls from all classes get this opportunity. Tell the girls that this is the practice we can start doing every time from the next Janmanch. By rule, we will ensure that girls from every class get the opportunity. Decide then and there, who will be the girls, volunteering for this for the next session.
3. Tell the objectives of today’s session and get them excited about the session
4. Revisit Community Agreements

B. Recap/Reflection (10 minutes)
Once students are in the zone, ask them to revisit last session and recall the activities that we did in our last session. This can be done through a fun game in the session. Fun Reflection Game
1. Make 3 circles in the ground, with equal division of girls, have 3 balls with you. One for each circle.
2. Tell the girls that we will play a fun reflection game, which will help us have fun and reflect on what we have learnt in the last session
3. One of the facilitator/volunteer should stand at the center of each circle and s/he will keep on clapping. Until the clapping happens, the girls has to pass the ball to the next person in
the circle. Note- To make it fun, you can add the element that faster the clapping, faster should be the speed of passing the ball.

4. As soon as the clapping stops, the girl holding on to the ball has to reflect on what did they learnt in the last session.

5. The volunteer/facilitator standing in the centre can vary the speed accordingly. Do this for 8-10 times. Making sure, that the same person doesn’t get the chance more than once

6. After this, just ask in the group, whether any girl, would like to add anything to the pointers mentioned till now. Take 3-4 more responses.

7. Once they have done that, ask all the participants to move back to the seating arena

C. Problem Solving (50 minutes)

1. Once everyone is seated, start with a ‘guided meditation’ to get the participants’ attention back to the session

Guided visualization process. Give the following instructions to the group—
- Sit comfortably. Close your eyes. And the eyes should stay closed till I tell you to open them
- Make no effort to control the breath; simply breathe naturally.
- Focus your attention on the breath and on how the body moves with each inhalation and exhalation.
- Imagine you are standing and moving out of this room. You get up and move out of the gate of this room.
- Now, once you are out of this room, you see a big door out in the air. It’s a big wooden door hanging in mid-air. And you hear a voice saying, ‘Come with me, I will take you into the wonderland’. You slowly, slowly goes near it, open the latch. Once you open it you suddenly enter into a forest.
- A beautiful forest, with different colour trees, plants, shrubs, herbs etc.
- You stand there and just observe the them. What trees do you see there?
- You see that the soil is wet and its fragrance is spreading around. Take a moment to smell the fragrance.
- Now as you move ahead, you different plants with a lot of flowers. What flowers do you see there?
- You go one by one to smell them. Please take a moment to smell first…… second ……… third flower.
- Now there is a voice which says - ‘Dear child, you have worked hard this week. You can pick any flower you like from here. Go ahead, dear child’
- You go ahead and pick one of your favourite flower. Which flower have you picked? How does it smell?
- Now you turn back, and start walking towards to the magic door to come back.
- Have a look once more to the magical forest before coming out.
- Now you open the door and slowly comes out in the hall of your school.
- You walk back in the room. Comes to your place and sit down.
- Now you are here, you focus on your breath. And slowly you open your eyes.

2. Give everyone a moment to settle in and ask how do they feel. Before we move on to next activity.

3. The session will focus on making a consensus on identifying the one problem on which the school will want to focus in upcoming time.

4. Tell the girls that during initial discussion with the students, some of the activities that emerged are –
- Functioning Library in the school
- Gardening in the school
- Functioning Ground in the school
- Functioning Science Lab in the School

5. Ask the group if they think that there is something else on the board which they haven’t discussed but should be there. Take their opinions and put the topics on the board if there is anything new. Make sure that the topics are not more than 6-8 in number.

6. Once the activities are in place, Tell the participants, that now we are going to work together to make a consensus on reaching to this activity. For doing that we are going to play a small game.

7. For each problem written on the board, write a number.

8. Ask the girls to look at the options given on the board. Think, in their head, without talking to anyone that what would be the problem they really feel is utmost important for them. Write the number on their hand and don’t show it to anybody.

9. Once they have done that, ask the facilitators/volunteers/teachers, to stand at different corners with a certain set of numbers. All the students who have written different numbers should reach out to different people. The objective of doing this activity is to ensure that the decision of the children are not getting influenced by their peers and it’s their own decision.

10. Once the grouping has been done based on their choices with respect to the problem. Ask the girls to sit in the respective groups. In the first discussion, the group size shouldn’t be more than 5-6 people in number.

11. Once the girls are seated in their respective groups, tell them that now they are going to make a case for the problem they deem important to them. And based on their case we are going to have a vote in the Janmanch. Tell them, it’s just like the elections, we have for gram panchayats, Legislative assembly or parliament. Except here, rather than choosing our representative, we are choosing a challenge to work on.

12. Now give them 15 minutes to build their case and write important pointers. Tell them, once their case is built, each team will get 5 minutes to present their case. And audience can ask 3 counter questions. Based on the presentation, the participants will chose an issue to work on.

13. For their discussion and noting down the points, give the participants, these prompts:
   - What is the need for the particular chosen issue?
   - How it will change the school?
   - How it will benefit everyone in the school?
   - Why this particular issue be chosen over other issues mentioned by the participants?
   - Once they have discussed the session in small groups, and noted their pointers, ask them to combine the groups, so that for every issue there is a single group only. If the group size is too big, (greater than 15), then ask them to split the group into two.
14. Tell them, that they can present in form of skits, presentation, dialogues etc.
15. Tell the girls that they can access charts, sketches, pencils to present, if they need any sort of material for their presentation
16. Invite each team for presentation one by one and carefully clock the presentation time
17. While facilitating their presentations, make sure that people listen to what the girls are saying. There is a tendency, that upcoming teams might be focusing on their presentation preparations. To avoid that, you can actually have the presentations submitted from all the groups and then proceed to presentations. You can use community agreements to keep session going smoothly.
18. Keep noting down the important points during the presentation and also keep a timer while girls are presenting their thoughts. You can ask the participants to keep on noting down any questions they have from the girls.
19. Once the girls’ have presented the thoughts, pick any 3 questions from the audience, which could be asked to the presenters. If no one is taking an initiative, you/teachers can actually ask the questions. The question could focus on:

- Their reasoning for choosing one problem over another, the feasibility of idea, making them think on pros and cons of idea. The suggestion is that once, all the 3 questions are posed to the group, the group gets time of 2-3 minutes to come up with the responses to the posed questions. And then they respond to them after that. Note: Please make sure to praise the presentations by clapping/silent claps etc.

- Follow the same procedure with other groups too.

- Once the presentation of all the groups are done, dissolve the groups and ask all the students to sit in their original seating arrangement

20. Now after hearing all of the presentations - Ask all the individuals to think about, which issue do they find really pertinent with respect to school at this moment. We are going to vote for that, Please ensure, that you shouldn’t think from a point of view of making your issue won over others, instead you need to vote for the issue that they think came out as one of the key issue.

21. Make a small ballot Box, in which girls can actually vote. Give them one chit each to vote. Ask them to fold their chit after writing the number of preference for the issue.

22. Get the voting done in secrecy without anyone looking at the responses.

23. While the counting takes place, ask any volunteer to do a small 5 minute activity.

24. Once the counting is done, declare results with some build up and making it fun for the participants. Going from the least to most votes might be a plausible way forward.

25. Once the topic is decided, get the participants excited with these prompts -
- Think how we should start this activity?
- What are the resources that will be needed to do this activity, including space (how much space, which space) & people?
- From where can we acquire these resources?
- How much timeline would it take to finish this activity?
- How will we ensure that this activity is done with responsibility?
26. Ask them to come up prepared with thoughts on these particular prompts in next Janmanch.
27. Also, ask them to make a plan of the same. Apart from this remaining the girl volunteers who will be presenting in next Janmanch

D. Wrapping Up (15 minutes)
1. With an inspiration song for girls/women. Either you can ask the girls to do that for you or you can actually do an inspirational song.

E. Feedback (+10 minutes)
1. Once the session is over, record feedback from random 5 participants in the session, involving at least one teacher. The feedback is quick and simple. Record the feedback and use it as pointers for reflection with the group too.
   - What was the session about today? Answer in one line
   - What part of the session you enjoyed most?
   - What part of the session, you didn’t understand well?
   - What would you want to change with the session that happened today, to make it better?

F. Post Session Reflection (30 minutes)
1. Sit in the small group with the teachers to discuss, how the session went! You also put your thoughts in the same
2. Discuss on the following prompts and document key pointers:
   - How do they feel after today’s session? (Note - Give them some emotions as an examples if you think that the group is not responding. For eg. - Satisfied, happy, anxious, energetic, tired etc.)
   - Were the objectives fulfilled for the session? Reflect on the objectives and discuss if they were fulfilled or not during the session?
   - What was the Aha moment during the session? Something that they noticed and went really well.
   - What could have been done better to make session more interesting keeping objectives intact
   - Based on today’s session, what could be the steps for next session? (Note: - One of the key element to focus on, is to come up with a well-developed plan in next session, divide responsibilities and make a timeline driven work, mechanism to identify girl leaders)

3. Tell the teachers, that they will send them the first draft of next week plan, T-4 days before the session. Think and finalise about, how can they give their feedback on the document and it could be worked upon before the next session. Put the mechanism in place before leaving.

4. Thank all the teachers and students for being part of the session.
Annexure II

KGBV Jalmana - Session 2 Reflection

Date: 16/11/2018
Time: 11:30 am - 2 pm
Facilitators: Mahima, Vaibhav and Vaishnavi

Reaching the school: It took us 2.5 hours to reach Jalmana via public transport from Ashoka University. We took Tata magic from Bahalgarh to Samalkha. From Samalkha, we took auto till Bapauli. From Bapauli, it was a 2 km walk to the school.

When we reached school at 11:15 am, the kids and teachers were having lunch. Generally the lunch is an hour long and the teachers stay in from school 8 am - 2:30 pm. After that for whole day warden stays with children.

Teachers Present- Rajni Ma’am, Neha Ma’am
No. of girls present - 89

a. Setting the tone of the Day

Content: This session was facilitated by Vaishnavi and Mahima. Vaibhav also facilitated in between to get the session on course when it was going wayward. We started our day with the secret sign of Janmanch (A rhythmic clap). Though we went on with the idea of starting with an ‘assembly format’ of having ‘thought of the day’ followed by news and some performance, but the teachers sitting there told that the girls do it every day so we decided to go with updates from the past two weeks. Two girls from each group volunteered for the same. In this particular setting, it required a lot of probing from the girls, to pick up on the threads. They talked about celebration of children’s day, celebrating the birthday of one of the teacher and going to home at Diwali. A lot of them went to their homes for Diwali too. At the end of the session, the group decided to make it a practice for the girls from each class.

Objectives of the session: The session focused on opening up the participants for the session. This was also supposed to identify the girls who were willing to take initiative and come forward. Though the girls were speaking up but it seemed that they were not used to come up and speaking impromptu. An icebreaker, just to loosen them up a little bit might have actually helped them to speak up.

Facilitation: For this particular session, it seemed that the facilitators were not on the same page, considering that they started off on different page with the prompts (Mahima starting off on different prompts than planned and Vaibhav stepping in to get it corrected) for girls to come up and speak in front of everyone. The teachers in this particular session were sitting on chairs in front of girls sitting on the ground. Their participation was more on observation and ‘support when needed level. The time taken to facilitate this session was almost 15-20 minutes and there was probing done at the facilitator’s level to get the girls to speak.

b. Recap/Reflection
Content: The idea of this session was to make reflection a fun activity. The activity was planned with 8-10 chances of opportunity for girls to reflect. Quite interestingly, the girls responded differently in the different circles. The girls remembered the action song, they remembered name tags, Janmanch (mentioned as a place to voice their opinions). Most of the reflection revolved around this.

Objective: There was a mixed response from 3 different groups in this particular case. The objective of the session was to reflect on the learnings from last session in a fun filled manner. In one of the group facilitated by Vaibhav, he feels that the objective was fulfilled - The girls had fun and they were able to cover almost all the parts of the session.

Facilitation: The facilitation of this activity happened in 3 small groups. The fact that the children were reflecting after 2 weeks, might have led to remember the things vaguely from last session. They were able to do it after a lot of probing, encouragement, giving cues. Vaibhav feels that once they got comfortable in the group that even making a mistake in the group is fine, they were finding it easy to speak out their mind and felt less shy. In facilitator's role, 'It required listening, reiterating/building on their points even if they were saying it out in a hush - hush voice. Time taken for the session was 15-20 minutes

(c) Problem Solving

Guided Visualization

Content: The content of the session was apt as per the objective. The girls responded on the content with a total silence. Some of the girls were opening their eyes in the beginning but later on they were silent and to the point. Although teachers were also present when we were facilitating the session but they were just observing the content mostly. When Mahima tried to ask the girls how were they feeling after the session, none of the girl responded. They also didn’t tell what all did they see when they were visualising things.

Objective: The objective of the session was to ensure that the girls get back in the zone after an energetic reflection activity. The objective seemed to be fulfilled in that regard.

Facilitation: The session was facilitated by Mahima. The girls seemed quite focussed on the narration done by her. At the beginning of the session, the teachers did ask girls to sit in a particular posture (straight back and with hands on knees), as soon as the girls started the session. Vaibhav felt that the probing could have been better after the session. Also, something to explore is whether is it a good idea to ask the participants during the instructions and allow them to respond or not? The dilemma is to make a choice between silence and as a check for understanding (whether the girls are getting it or not). In the next session, Vaibhav did ask about the details of girls visualization and the girls shared about the animals like tiger, lion and deer while they also shared the details of flowers like Sunflower, Rose etc. It took around 5-10 minutes to facilitate the session

Choosing a Challenge for their school
Content: One of the key elements of the session was for the girls to go through the process of making a decision for themselves on working on an issue. One of the key observation in the process was that though the in majority of the voting that took place, the girls ended up choosing the topic that they had initially voted for. There was always this spirit of competing throughout the session. It will might be interesting to figure out ways to try different ways to try moving them beyond this sense of competition and think of a way to look at the bigger picture for the school rather than just their own team. Also, when the groups were subdivided in the issues, the girls ended up being in their class groups (there were 3 groups formed for the challenge of forming a science lab). One girl mentioned canteen and somehow we thought that it would not be possible and we as a facilitator decided to discard it. It was a spontaneous decision but we do need to have our boundaries clear for our session.

During the session, while in the small groups, initially the girls required handholding in terms of the prompts. And in some groups, the girls required a lot of hand holding with respect to starting a discussion, while some groups were really smooth. There were few girls in each group who were driving the discussions. It might be helpful to mix the groups accordingly so that there is good diversity and a possibility of co-learning from each other. This is something that should be done sensitively ensuring that the representation of each group is not driven by few voices. The content can actually involve some prompts ensuring that all voices get captured from each group.

Another interesting observation by Vaishnavi is that the girls would get really active whenever she was around, possibly to seek her validation. One of the group who was building a case for having playgrounds also took help from the Didi who is an administrative staff there. She drew figures for girls present there. Vaibhav also could see some reluctance in girls to write things on charts (the reason might be their lack of confidence or a possibility of not being able to write, one will need to check that).

During the presentation of their cases, 2 groups presented. Both of these groups were helped by Mahima and Vaishnavi for their presentations. While one of the group narrated a song apart from their pointers on chart, the other group ensured that majority of the group got something in the presentation. This could actually be used in the group presentations to ensure presentation from everyone. While standing in the group to present their work few of the girls were actually feeling very shy, giggling or asking others to come forward. Also the way the groups were standing in tightly packed cluster while presenting and looked like that the girls did not want to show their face upfront.

After each presentation, when girls were asked to ask questions from the presenters, most of the questions were ‘like ‘why you chose this particular pointer in this issue’ or ‘How this particular point is relevant for this issue’. Finally the issue that was chosen is Building a science lab (41 votes), while other issues got 22 votes (Library), 12 votes (Gardening) and 12 votes (Playground).

Objective: The objective of the session was to narrow down to one issue which is collectively chosen. The session also wanted to give a flavour to girls to reach out to the consensus through a collective process. These objectives were primarily met. It’s an initiation of the problem solving session. Something to keep a check on is to tighten the small group discussions and get the voices of all the girls.
Facilitation: The large group facilitation was done by Vaibhav while Mahima and Vaishnavi were co-facilitating in the small groups. Mahima and Vaishnavi were focusing on one each group each, while Vaibhav was rotating in 3 groups of Science Labs and also the other groups. We could not do the voting through Ballot and just had to do a ‘closed eyes hand raise voting’ because of constraint of time. It almost took 70-80 minutes for the whole session and the girls were really enjoying while they were preparing for their presentations. It seemed a competition to them.

(d) Wrap Up

Content: We couldn’t end with a song from girls because of lack of time. But we did do our secret clap before ending

Objective: We told girls that we will start working on Science lab from next class and they seemed excited by the idea.

Facilitation: It was done in a very short time, 3-5 minutes considering the time shortage.

(e) Feedback from Teachers

What worked well
- The teachers told that there were few students who are in L0 (the group which requires maximum support academically) group were actually speaking up and few of them volunteered to speak up in Janmanch next time.
- They mentioned that the girls in the group which was building a case for playground never used to speak up but it was heart-warming to see them speak up and discuss.

What could have been better
- The teachers said that there could be more to do with improving communication skills of girls. It wasn’t a specific response to the session but in general response.
- Another teacher mentioned that they have science lab equipment and they can be explored next time.
- The teachers agreed to share the list of L0, L1 and L2 students before next session, so that we can keep an eye on students and give more support to girls who needs more help.

Next Steps
We decided to meet before with teachers to plan for next session once in between and also see the possibility of science lab in school
Annexure III Social Media Posts

The developments in the pilot were also shared with the outside world which received appreciation. These methods could further be sued to spread the message of usability of such processes elsewhere.
I am studying in class 8th. In the Janmanch session, my most favourite activity is Storytelling. In the storytelling session, Didi shared story with us and took a lot of pictures with us. I liked the statues making session. We also solved the puzzles (Riddle joke). For the science exhibition we have done experiment with Vaibhav Bhaiya. I tried making a Bottle spinner. The first time I tried making it, I made a mistake but when I made it again, I succeeded. I felt happy for this. Bhaiya taught us the process of making a bottle spinner. Bhaiya told us to go on the stage and we went there and we shared how we made it. I felt very confident when I shared it with everyone and I felt very happy. I like Bhaiya and Didi both but I like Kavya Didi most.

Thank you
Neha Verma
Class 8th, K.G.B.V Jalmana
I am a student of class 8th. I study in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya. In the Janmanch program, I liked the science lab session and creating science experiments. We have done an experiment and created lungs model with the help of waste material. We enjoyed a lot. One more thing which I liked in the Janmanch was statue activity, I have enjoyed this activity. Mahima Didi shared a lot of poem with us and we danced with her. One thing which I didn’t like in Janmanch was that we had not created a playground. Mahima Didi and Vaibhav Bhaiya have created a lot of chart and Mahima Didi have done a lot of activities with us.

Thank you
Neelakshi Rawal
Class 8th
K.G.B.V Jalmana
I am a student of class 8th. I study in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya. In the Janmanch program, I liked the science lab session and creating science experiments. We have done an experiment and created lungs model with the help of waste material. Mahima Didi taught us to make a fountain and we danced with Mahima Didi. We have heard a lot of stories from Mahima Didi and we enjoyed a lot. We have created a lot of charts. I liked the 'Walking Experiment' and 'Statue Activity'. In janmanch we have not build a playground and I felt sad for it.

Thank you

Harshita Panchal
Class 8th, K.G.B.V Jalmana