

Galli Galli Sim Sim Helps Children Get Ready for School, Ready for Life

The Need

More than 16 million children in India in the age group of 3 to 6 do not have access to early childhood education. While enrollment in primary school is almost universal, recent survey has concluded that almost 25 percent children aged six to eight cannot read letters or words and are unable to recognize numbers¹. In fact, there is a decline of almost 6%² from 2010 in the number of children in Class V who can read at Class II level. *Galli Galli Sim Sim* (GGSS) is addressing this need by providing innovative and engaging content in primary classrooms that is integrated into the prescribed curriculum, to make a meaningful difference in children's learning outcome.

The Primary School Program

Galli Galli Sim Sim (the Indian adaptation of the popular Sesame Street) is a multi-platform initiative that combines the power of television and educational outreach to help children in India prepare better for school and life. Sesame Workshop India engaged in a pilot project to test the educational impact of GGSS materials and teacher training in a classroom setting. This intervention reached out to 245 children in seven primary classrooms (Class 1) in Delhi's government schools, with materials developed as part of an integrated curriculum model. The materials, developed by educational experts at Sesame Workshop India, combined games such as the Story Pond³, flashcards, worksheets, story books and hands-on experiential materials.

The Curriculum and Content

The materials were developed as an integrated curriculum model, so as to make it a regular part of their everyday learning and teachers were given a curriculum document, explaining how they could integrate these materials in their day-to-day teaching. They were also trained on the materials.

The content itself was highly effective and robust, combining games such as the Story Pond, flashcards, worksheets, story books and hands-on experiential materials like tangram puzzles and number line.

Impact and Methodology

The impact of this initiative was measured through an experimental design featuring research at baseline and endline which compared children's learning outcomes across a control group⁴ with children from an experimental group (a group of children with access to our program) which is the gold standard for evaluation research. The study for the first-time in India used a battery of eight standardized tests for such a young population and all analysis took into account causality. Further, all impact is statistically significant and directly attributable to our program.

Impact and Methodology

The study shows different effects on subgroups by gender and age. Boys in the treatment group showed greater gains than the boys in the control group in two out of seven outcomes tested (print concepts and words in print).

¹Census 2011 & Early Childhood Education in India Report 2013

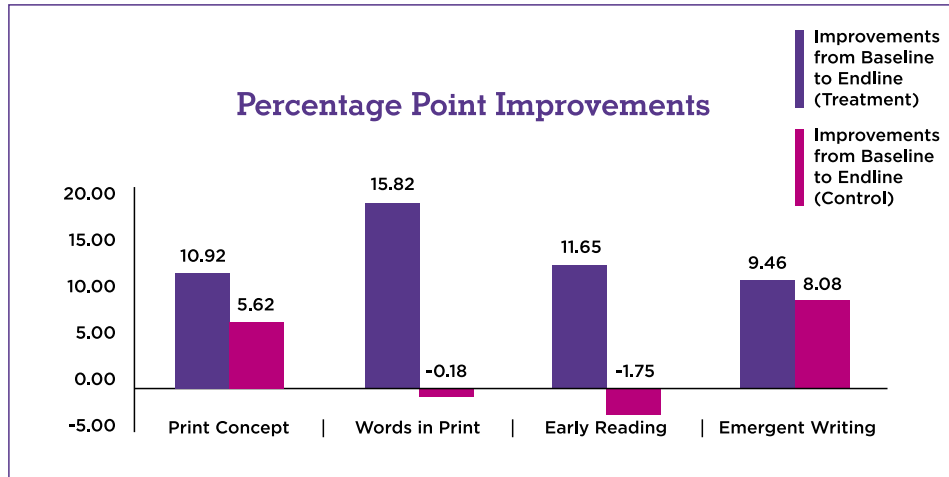
²Annual Status Of Education Report (Rural) 2014, January 2015

³The Story Pond Kit consists of a large vinyl floor mat featuring a pond and stepping-stones. The game is played by a child stepping on each stone in the pond and narrating a story featuring the object on the stone. Used in conjunction with the Story Pond flash cards to build continued stories, the story pond provides an interactive and kinesthetic platform to involve children in vocabulary building, visual discrimination skills, narrative skills and basic pre-literacy skills.

⁴A group of children with no access to our programme



Further, participants in the age group 5-7 years in the treatment group showed greater gains than their counterparts in the control group for recognising 'words in print' and 'early reading'. For the age group 7-8 years, participants in the treatment group demonstrated greater gains than participants in the control group in 'words in print', 'print concepts' and 'early reading' skills. Because the study tested a variety of secondary educational outcomes over and above the direct focus of the program using a battery of standardised tests – it is encouraging to see results and trends in the right direction for the primary outcomes of the program.



In summary, the study examined the impact of GGSS pilot intervention on literacy and language development outcomes of primary school children in MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi) schools. It was found that the intervention did have some positive impacts on particular outcomes on boys for participants in the age groups of 5-7 years and on other outcomes for participants in the age group 7-8 years. The intervention showed positive outcomes in 'print concepts' which shows a 17.9 percentage point improvement over the control group and for 'words in print' which shows 33 percentage point improvement in some sub-groups. Overall, the intervention showed positive and significant outcomes (at the 0.05 level) for the primary outcomes addressed by the study i.e. 'print concepts' and for 'words in print'. Interestingly, out of the seven outcomes studied four show a positive effect size of the intervention. Out of these, 'Words in Print' and 'Early Reading' show 0.55 standard deviation and 0.62 standard deviation improvements. These results, given the challenges faced in data-analysis and collection are trending towards the right direction.



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For more information, please contact:

Siddharth Pillai
 Research Associate
 Sesame Workshop Initiatives India Pvt. Limited
 siddharth.pillai@sesame.org
 +91-8800091792

