



GIRL RISING

ADOLESCENTS IN INDIA SHOW NEW ATTITUDES, RETHINK STEREOTYPES AFTER GENDER EQUITY AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

Girl Rising uses the power of storytelling to shift attitudes and change behaviors so that girls have the opportunity to thrive. In India, Girl Rising's robust media tools and curriculum are raising awareness and sparking action in the movement for gender equality and increasing a sense of empowerment for girls.

Despite the gains that India has made over the past 20 years, it remains a country with extreme gender inequality. It is one of the most challenging countries to be a girl or woman, ranking 127 out of 160 on the gender inequality index¹. This is a reflection of the gender-based discrimination that girls and women face throughout their lives. The evidence of it is pervasive and unsettling: relative to their male counterparts, girls in India endure disparities in secondary education and employment, are at a higher risk for violence, and experience a higher incidence of health problems.

Research shows that adolescence is a critical time period to reach young people. Between the ages of 10–19 years, boys and girls engage with and construct their understanding of what it means to be a boy or a girl² and solidify their gender attitudes. Girl Rising uses this opportunity to address gender discrimination and foster empowerment in young people.

THE PROGRAM

From 2017 to 2018, Girl Rising partnered with the Bharti Foundation to implement the Girl Rising Gender-Sensitization Program (GR Program) through the Satya Bharti School Program, the Foundation's flagship initiative, which provides free quality education for underprivileged children.

The GR Program is a 24-session curriculum centered around the highly acclaimed Girl Rising film. It challenges adolescents to identify and reflect on their gender-related experiences, understand the negative effects of existing gender norms and biases, build agency, and take action to promote gender parity in their own lives and communities. The evaluation conducted by The George Washington University revealed many positive findings, including how both boys and girls transformed their attitudes and perceptions toward gender equality and were more likely to speak up and act against gender inequalities.

Girl Rising's partnership with the Bharti Foundation reached over 46,100 adolescent boys and girls from grades 5 to 9, in 254 schools across the states of Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu. The evaluation was conducted in 20 of the schools in the states of Rajasthan and Punjab.

OUTCOME MEASURES

Before and after the completion of the GR Program, the following items were assessed using quantitative surveys administered on mobile tablets:

- Gender attitudes
- Perceptions of gender norms
- Beliefs that they have control over the outcome of events in their life (locus of control)

Vignettes on the topics of child marriage, marital violence, and girls' education were part of the survey. In-depth student interviews and teacher focus groups were also conducted to provide feedback and suggestions for the GR Program.

RESULTS

The GR Program demonstrated significant positive change for youth, including:

Boys and girls had more gender-equitable attitudes related to gender roles/privileges/restrictions, gender attributes, and gender violence, and they were better able to articulate examples of gender inequality and discrimination in their communities.

- The percentage of boys and girls who disagreed with parents supporting child marriage increased significantly from 70.9% to 79.3%.
- The percentage of boys and girls who disagreed with parents only sending their son to college increased significantly from 52.9% to 61.7%.
- The percentage of boys and girls who said they would tell their parents to file a police complaint if they heard of marital violence increased significantly from 53.3% to 73.4%.

Boys and girls were more likely to speak up and act against gender discrimination.

- After the GR Program, girls reported that they had more confidence and that they want to stand up against injustice rather than tolerate it, even though there might be undesirable outcomes.
- Boys said they wanted to help their sisters stay in school and began communicating openly about their thoughts on gender equity.
- Adolescents talked about the GR program with their family and friends.

Boys and girls had significantly greater internal locus of control, indicating their belief that their actions make a difference in the outcome of their own life. As a result, they will be more likely to engage in positive behaviors and relationships.

Feedback from boys and girls indicated that the GR Program encouraged them to communicate with peers, family, and community about issues girls face and to think differently about their futures.

- Approximately 90% of boys and girls reported that the GR Program helped them think about ways to talk to their family about issues girls face.
- Boys and girls stated that the GR Program helped them think about their future goals (91.7%), take action to address issues girls face in their community (87%), and want to help girls who do not have the same opportunities (84.7%).
- Boys and girls reported that one or more of their friends had talked to them about something they learned in the GR program (83.8%) and that the GR Program made them think differently about girls (82%).

Qualitative interviews with teachers revealed how they used the GR Program to make change.

- Teachers shared the GR curriculum with their students' families and encouraged it to be shared more widely.
- Teachers were able to successfully convince parents to keep their daughters in school.
- Teachers witnessed boys recognizing the importance of education for girls.

The findings from this evaluation will guide further implementation of the GR Program, including a more rigorous and robust full-scale evaluation (randomized cluster design or stronger experimental design) to measure impact and cost-effectiveness, and to scale the GR Program.

For more information or to access the full report, visit <https://girlrising.org/indiapilotevaluation>.

1 - Human Development Indices and Indicators(Rep.). (2018). Retrieved http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2018_human_development_statistical_update.pdf

2 - Blum, R. W., Mmari, K., & Moreau, C. (2017). It Begins at 10: How Gender Expectations Shape Early Adolescence Around the World. *Journal of Adolescent Health*,61 (4). doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2017.07.009.