



Report of the Rapid Assessment of
“Illam Thedi Kalvi”
Bridging the Learning Loss - Joyfully



State Planning Commission
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“Islam Thedi Kalvi”
Bridging the Learning Loss - Joyfully

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CHENNAI - 600 005**

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**STATE PLANNING COMMISSION,
"EZHILAGAM",
CHEPAUKKAM, CHENNAI-600 005.**

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Foreword

*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can
use to change the world* – Nelson Mandela

COVID-19 pandemic unleashed an unprecedented crisis, with the poor and most vulnerable affected the most. With almost two years of school closure, the children from depressed communities were doubly affected. They lacked resources to learn through alternate modes of education.

When the government led by Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru M. K. Stalin took over, the schools were already closed for over 16 months. The government took a series of interventions to revive the teaching and learning of students in Tamil Nadu, particularly of State Government schools. One such initiative is the launch of the Illam Thedi Kalvi scheme, to bridge the learning loss and bring the education of children back in track.

Using an Activity Based Learning approach and situated in the Children's neighbourhoods, Illam Thedi Kalvi has rightly played the role of bringing the children back to the formal learning process. Further, 2 lakh women are empowered as volunteers with skills to facilitate a learning environment.

According to this study, parents, Illam Thedi Kalvi volunteers, teachers and Headmasters of schools, were almost unanimous in their opinion about the positive impact of Illam Thedi Kalvi scheme on the learning experience of children.

This is one among the many important efforts by the Government and the School Education Department to strengthen learning outcomes in government schools towards creating a knowledge society in the lines of Dravidian Model of Development.

I assure that the State Planning Commission will continue in its endeavour to document the impact of such interventions and evaluate the flagship programmes of the State Government.


Vice Chairman,
State Planning Commission

Acknowledgement

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The sincere efforts of field enumerators who were involved in data collection and in meticulously documenting the voices of the respondents.

Executive Summary

The Illam Thedi Kalvi (Education at the Door Step) scheme launched by the School Education Department to address learning losses due to two year long school closures from 15th March 2020, during the Covid 19 lockdown has become a flagship initiative of the current government

Various studies and reports have highlighted that the sudden closure has exacerbated pre-existing educational disparities by reducing the opportunities for many of the most vulnerable children and youth who are dependent on government schools and colleges because of the digital divide as the students who are dependent on government schools over two - thirds have a smart phone at home, but did not have access either fully or partially to use it for their learning. Hence engaging the government school children with online classes could not be contemplated as it was organized by the private schools.

Taking a cue from the success of Arivoli Iyakkam and Micro learning initiatives by NGOs, the School Education Department has issued the GO (MS) No. 148 School Education (SSA2) Department dated 26. 10. 2021 - "Illam Thedi Kalvi" - with the objectives of providing learning in a non-school, closer to home, small cohort set up involving volunteers using a hamlet based outreach program and to reinforce the learning inputs provided at schools with daily learning atleast 1 to 1 ½ hours per day in their respective hamlets

ITK runs on a simple model. In the habitation, students are grouped into two cohorts – primary (classes 1 to 5) and upper primary (classes 6 to 8) – and taught a purpose-built curriculum of basic skills in their habitation itself.

The first Illam Thedi Kalvi Centre was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chief Minister M K Stalin on 27th Oct 2021 in a function held at Muthaliar kuppam near Marakanam and the the two lakh centre on July 8th 2022, in Aaranji village near Kilpennathur in Thiruvannamalai district.

The Study was commissioned on the request of the Chief Minister to prepare an assessment of the Illam Thedi Kalvi on the effectiveness and impact. Acting on the request, the SPC has shortlisted 362 schools using Stratified and cluster sampling method in Ariyalur, Cuddalore, Nagappattinam, Salem, Thiruvarur and Villupuram – The districts where interventions under the State Balanced Growth Fund is initiated

The rapid assessment used structured interview schedules to collect the perceptions of each of the stake holders covering 679 Volunteers, 724 Parents, 362 Teachers and 362 Head Masters.

During the time of lockdown when schools were closed, 3/4th of the children followed Kalvi Television for the continuity of learning. Twelve percent of the parents have said that they sent their children to private tuitions paying a monthly fees anywhere between Rs. 100 to Rs. 500 per child. A vast majority of the parents had the fear that the children are not learning at home and are losing interest in the education and shared they were unable to handle the children in home. Parents also feared that their children may fall victim to bad habits.

Illam Thedi Kalvi emerged as a volunteer led movement that attracted educated and committed individuals as the delivery mechanism. All the volunteers, barring two, are women among whom around 91 percent (90.6%) belong to the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Most Backward classes. Two third of the volunteers were aged between 21 to 30 years. Two third (63%) of the respondents did not have any previous work experience.

Two-third (62.7%) of the volunteers handling primary section and 89.2% of the volunteers handling upper primary section have completed at least Under Graduation. Apart from graduates, 45.9% of the volunteers handling Primary sections and 54.9% in Upper primary sections hold Bachelors degree (B. Ed) in Education.

The Two days training organised for the ITK Volunteers and the subsequent montly trainings played a vital role in capacitating the volunteers to deliver the objectives. All the volunteers unanimously acknowledged that the induction training handled in the beginning of the project was ample to understand the basic of the Illam Thedi Kalvi and was found to be useful as they went on to handle sessions in the ITK Centres.

Use of innovative teaching and learning materials in the ITK centres had a strong impact towards innovative teaching and learning materials and helped in developing critical and creative thinking, make learning easy and enjoyable, and increased motivation.

Anganwadi Centres (43.9%) and Community halls (43.4%) are the primary locations chosen by the school Head Masters to establish the ITK Centres during the lockdown. Nearly three fourth (74.8%) of the centres assessed are located in the outside the

school. Among this, Salem leads with 96.3% of centres followed by Tiruvarur with 88.5% of the centres. On the other hand Cuddalore and Villupuram had only 53.7% and 56.1% of the centres respectively.

Over 90% of the children attending ITK belong to socially disadvantaged groups such as SC, ST, BC and MBC. Almost all the parents – 717 out of 721 parents - who took part in the rapid assessment responded that after attending ITK, the children started to manifest interest in learning and parents have noticed that children started to do home work without being asked at home, share what happens in ITK centres, and read books that are not part of their text books. Parents acknowledge that their fear of loss of interest during the lockdown was nullified with the interest shown by the children.

The School teachers have asserted that the play way method employed in the ITK centres has reverted with attributing to the acceptance of play way and activity based method for the success of ITK. Teachers also acknowledge that the initiatives taken in the ITK centres complement the classroom teaching and have created interest towards learning, reviving the lost language and mathematical skills, thus strengthening the bridging of learning loss effectively. Overall 88% teachers have shared that a positive change in learning and classroom behaviour among the children was evident. The volunteers and parents acknowledge that students are learning values and good habits like dressing properly, being punctual, self initiative and also learnt to say 'Please', 'Sorry' and 'Thank you'

The scheme is particularly welcome among households since the parents are finding it difficult to monitor the children and ensure that they actually do some studying at home

There is no decrease in attendance in sixty eight (68.2%) of the ITK centres. Over a half (50.4%) of the ITK centres functioning in the community did not witness any change in the attendance while one fourth (24.4%) of the centres located in the community saw either an increase or decrease in attendance. Even among the centres that have witnessed a change, 2/3rd of them have witnessed increase in the student strength

Use of innovative teaching and learning materials in the ITK centres had a strong impact on creating interest for learning and learning outcomes. The innovative teaching and learning materials helped in developing critical and creative thinking,

make learning easy and enjoyable, and increased motivation. Since the volunteers have understood the impact that the teaching and learning materials are creating among the children in the centres, each of them have initiated and have created innovative models in their centres.

Opening up of avenues for non curricular reading, library activities, handicrafts, participation in competitions, exposure visits, etc added value in making ITK, a most sought after intervention with children. Parents, Teachers and Volunteers acknowledge that the ITK centres are safe and child friendly. Though the head masters too acknowledge the safe environment, the percentage is low as a sizeable percentage of them do not monitor the centres.

ITK has created new social spaces for interaction among the teachers, volunteers, local body and children. Stakeholders claimed the community participation has increased too.

All most all the volunteers, school teachers, parents wished that the Illam thedi kalvi scheme should continue. In case of the project coming to an end, many volunteers have said that they will continue without any salary, while some have said, they'll move to contributory mode.

In order to sustain the positive changes that have happened in the school, many volunteers have claimed that the headmaster and teachers are approaching local body representatives, SMC and the local CSOs for sustaining the initiative.

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Report of the Rapid Assessment of “*Illam Thedi Kalvi*”

Introduction

I was happy that I have enrolled my daughter in government school. The Illam Thedi Kalvi has changed my child to a different person now. They were taken to Exposure Trips to Book Fairs, participating in competitions, read books at home. My child who was otherwise very reserved is very active now. Actually now I'm encouraging my neighbours who were sending their children to convent schools (Private Schools) to enrol them in government schools

- A Parent from Cuddalore during the Focus group discussion

The Illam Thedi Kalvi (Education at the Door Step) scheme launched by the School Education Department to address learning losses due to two year long school closures during the Covid 19 lockdown has become a flagship initiative of the current government.

Background

Covid 19 in TamilNadu

On 15th March 2020, the Government of TamilNadu ordered the closure of Primary schools¹ in the state following the Covid19 Novel Corona Virus pandemic.

The Government of TamilNadu on 23th March 2020² issued a Government Order for complete lockdown from 6.00 pm on 24th March to 6.00 am of 1st April 2020 included the closure of all educational institutions in the state. The Closure continued with brief attempts to reopen but could not sustain due to Covid clusters identified in some schools.

Education during Covid 19 Pandemic

The announcement of lock down and school closure has led to complete disconnect from education for the vast majority of children in TamilNadu. The sudden closure left very little time for the institutions to prepare a strategy and transition to remote and digital learning. The crisis exacerbated pre-existing educational disparities by reducing the opportunities for many of the most vulnerable children and youth,

¹ https://cms.tn.gov.in/sites/default/files/press_release/pr150320_213.pdf

² https://stopcorona.tn.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/files/Tamil_Nadu_Detailed_Notification_COVID-19_23-3-2020.pdf

especially those dependent on government schools and colleges because of the digital divide.

Interruption of face to face (one-on-one) conventional teaching mode posed a great challenge for schools to shift to digital mode of teaching with technological tools. Neither the teachers nor the students had time to prepare themselves for the new online education system, which had to be adopted hastily.

Learning Loss

A study commissioned by Azim Premji University in January 2021 named “Loss of Learning during the Pandemic”³ points to the widespread phenomenon of ‘forgetting’ by students of what they learnt from the previous classes, leading to regression in their learning. This includes losing foundational abilities such as reading with understanding and performing addition and multiplication, which they had learnt earlier and become proficient in, and which are the basis of further learning.

The study further notes that the overall loss of learning – loss (regression or forgetting) of what children had learnt in the previous class as well as what they did not get an opportunity to learn in the present class – is going to lead to a cumulative loss over the years, impacting not only the academic performance of children in their school years but also their adult lives. To ensure that this does not happen, multiple strategies must be adopted.

The study adds that “The extent and nature of learning loss is serious enough to warrant action at all levels. Policy and processes to identify and address this loss are necessary as children return to schools. Supplemental support, whether in the form of bridge courses, extended hours, community-based engagements and appropriate curricular materials, will be needed to help children gain the foundational abilities when they return to school.”

National Achievement Survey 2021

One of the largest surveys in the world, the National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2021⁴ was conducted on 12. 11. 2021 across the country, to identify the learning gaps among the children in the grades III, V, VIII and X and to take remedial measures. In all, 3,40,000 students of 1,18,000 schools in 720 districts across the country were

³ <https://azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/field-studies-in-education/learning-loss-during-pandemic> (Page 5)

⁴ <https://nas.gov.in/report-card/2021>

assessed. The ministry of education in its statements has said that the objective of NAS 2021 is to evaluate children’s progress and learning competencies as an indicator of the efficiency of the education system, so as to take appropriate steps for remedial actions at different levels. It will help to unravel the gaps in learning and will support state/UT governments in developing long term, mid-term and short-term interventions to improve learning levels and orient on differential planning based on NAS 2021 data.

The survey was conducted among 1, 26, 253 students of Classes III, V, VIII and X from 22 districts in Tamil Nadu. Decoding the results for TamilNadu as illustrated in Table 1, in class III more than 63 percent of the students performed at the basic level or below basic level in languages. In Mathematics 60 percent fared basic or below basic and in Environmental Studies it is 58 percent. Overall more than half of the students in class III are in the category of basic and below. Similarly the number of children in the category of proficient and advanced learners decline as the class level goes up.

The percentage of students who are categorised as basic and below basic goes up in 5th standard and 8th standard. More than 70 percent, and in some cases, nearly 90 percent of the students in these classes are categorised as basic and below basic level learners.

Table 1 - Learning Level of Children as per NAS 2021⁵

Class	Level	Below Basic (%)	Basic (%)	Proficient (%)	Advanced (%)
Class III	Language	32	31	25	12
	Mathematics	26	34	28	12
	EVS	24	34	32	10
Class V	Language	27	41	27	6
	Mathematics	39	39	17	4
	EVS	40	33	23	4
Class VIII	Language	31	48	15	6
	Mathematics	53	55	8	2
	Science	50	36	11	3
	Social Science	51	41	6	2

Decimal figures are rounded up to whole numbers and hence may not add up to 100

⁵ Levels: Below basic – They have not achieved the required knowledge and skills to be considered minimally successful regarding the curricular demands. Basic – Demonstrate a minimum level of knowledge and skills related to the curricular demands. Proficient – Have acquired most of the learning outcomes and skills required by the curriculum. They can work independently with minimum supervision. Advanced – exceptional mastery of the learning content as prescribed by the curriculum and beyond. They are independent with high analytical, reflective and creative thinking.

Table 2 shows that the performance of the students is below the national average. In all the classes and except in class III where the gap is just one percent, TamilNadu has shown a small gap.

Table 2 - Class wise performance – Comparative Table - NAS 2021

Class	Subject	TamilNadu (%)	India (%)
Class V	<i>Language</i>	61	62
	<i>Mathematics</i>	56	57
	<i>EVS</i>	56	57
Class V	<i>Language</i>	50	55
	<i>Mathematics</i>	41	44
	<i>EVS</i>	45	48
Class VIII	<i>Language</i>	46	53
	<i>Mathematics</i>	30	36
	<i>Science</i>	34	39
	<i>Social Science</i>	34	39

Table 3 will help us to understand the fall in performance of students from earlier National Achievement Survey 2017. NAS 2021 was held after more than one year of school closure and learning gap due to Covid 19. There has been a significant fall of performance from NAS 2017 to NAS 2021. According to the report, while the majority of the states performed significantly below the overall national score, some states such as Kerala, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Punjab performed better than the national average.

Table 3 - TamilNadu Performance Comparative Table - NAS 2017 and NAS 2021

Class	Subject	NAS 2017	NAS 2021
Class V	<i>Language</i>	325	320
	<i>Mathematics</i>	314	304
	<i>EVS</i>	323	204
Class V	<i>Language</i>	321	298
	<i>Mathematics</i>	300	279
	<i>EVS</i>	300	277
Class VIII	<i>Language</i>	305	284
	<i>Mathematics</i>	251	237
	<i>Science</i>	256	232
	<i>Social Science</i>	252	237

* In Scaled scores out of 500

Though the fall of learning levels was attributed to Covid lockdown, the performance of students in NAS 2017 in itself is a cause of concern. The gap and the fall in

performance manifested in NAS2021⁶ called for an immediate intervention to address the learning loss.

Prioritising education recovery is crucial to avoid generational catastrophe. Children learning have suffered immensely and because education sector also provides health, nutrition and psychological services, the overall welfare of the children has declined substantially⁷.

Another similar study, a joint publication by UNESCO, UNICEF and World Bank "THE STATE OF THE GLOBAL EDUCATION CRISIS: A PATH TO RECOVERY⁸" also highlights the crisis that in many ways have exacerbated existing inequalities in education, which is why a focus on equity and learning recovery is paramount as children return to school.

Problems in engaging with digital mode.

As soon as the Government of TamilNadu announced a complete lockdown in March 2020, according to news reports appeared in the mainstream media, many private schools started delivering classes through online mode especially for the students of 10th and 12th standards in order to get them prepared for the board exams. The online classes were subsequently extended to other classes too. By mid April, majority of the unaided private schools have commenced online classes.

On the other hand, the government schools and the certain section of the government aided private schools as presented in Table 4, were unable to switch to online education due to the digital divide. The **Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2021**⁹ portrays the gradual increase of mobile and internet usage post Covid. The availability of smart phones in children's homes has almost doubled from 2018 to 2021, regardless of school type. For example, in 2018, 29.6% of children in government schools had at least one smart phone at home. This proportion increased to 56.4% in 2020 and grew further to 63.7% in 2021.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ https://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/Committee_site/Committee_File/ReportFile/16/144/328_2021_8_15.pdf (Para 2)

⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/publication/the-state-of-the-global-education-crisis-a-path-to-recovery>

⁹ https://img.asercentre.org/docs/aser2021finalreport_16.116.54pm1.pdf

Table 4 - Enrolled children with a smart phone available at home(ASER 2021).

School Type	ASER 2018 (in %)	ASER 2020 (in %)	ASER 2021 (in %)
Govt	29.6	56.4	63.7
Pvt	49.9	74.2	79.0
Govt & Pvt	36.5	61.8	67.6

Source : The Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2021

Expanding smart phone availability in the household does not automatically translate into children's access to a smart phone. Table 5 presents the status that the availability of a smartphone at home does not ensure access to children, across all grades, over two - thirds of all enrolled children have a smart phone at home, but just over a quarter of them have full access to it for their studies (27%), while close to half have partial access (47%) and the remaining quarter have no access at all (26.1%). This statistics of accessibility does not present the divide between the children in the government school and the private schools but as a whole. Considering the gap as presented in Table 4 wherein the access was considerably high among the children studying in private schools than the government schools, the access to children for learning will be limited too.

Table 5 - children who have a smart phone available at home (ASER 2021)

Standard	Percent of Children						
	At least one smart phone available at home	Of children who have a smart phone available at home, % children able to access it for their studies:				Total	Bought a new phone for children's education since the lockdown began
		Yes, at all times	Yes, sometimes	Not accessible	Total		
I – II	64.9	19.9	40.8	39.3	100	19.3	
III – V	66.6	23.7	47.2	29.0	100	24.6	
VI – VIII	66.6	27.6	50.2	22.2	100	30.0	
IX & Above	72.6	35.4	47.5	17.0	100	36.4	
All	67.6	27.0	47.0	26.1	100	28.0	

Source : The Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2021

There is also a clear pattern by grade, with more children in higher classes having access to a smart phone (35.4% of children from IX and above) as compared to children in lower grades (19.9% and 23.7%). For example, 39.3% children in Std I-II have no access to a smart phone despite having one at home, as opposed to 17% children in Std IX or higher.

Table 6 - Types of Challenges faced in attending online classes (ASER 2021)

School type	No smart phone	Phone not available for child to use	No one to help child at home	Network / connectivity issues	Electricity issues	Child not able to learn remotely	Child is too young so needs help	Child not interested	Other
Govt	34.7	20.4	9.4	27.1	12.8	20.3	8.3	10.0	1.9
Pvt	20.5	14.9	7.4	37.9	14.3	26.9	9.9	10.9	2.1
Govt & Pvt	31.1	19.0	8.9	29.8	13.2	22.0	8.7	10.2	1.9

Source : The Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2021

Table 6 shows that more than 50% of the children (No smart phone + Phone not available for child to use, from the above table) in the government schools have stated that either they don't have a smart phone or there is no phone available for the child to use for online classes.

This digital divide has made the School education department to depend on the Kalvi Television to take the lessons to the homes of children. The exclusive educational channel run by the State government - Kalvi TV - has garnered millions of new viewers also for its YouTube channel in a year. After schools were shut due to the pandemic, the State introduced video lessons on the channel for the academic year 2020-21.

Illam Thedi Kalvi as it is envisaged to bridge the learning loss tries to accommodate the issues raised by different studies thus leading to be an effective model for addressing the learning loss, especially of the disadvantaged sections that have access issues.

Bridging the Learning Gap – The TamilNadu Way

When the new government was sworn in under the leadership of Hon'ble M.K. Stalin as the Chief Minister in May 2021, the schools in Tamil Nadu were already under long closure for over 14 months.

By that time, concerned by the learning loss and to address the prospective school drop as an outcome of the lockdown induced school closure, some government school teachers and some civil society organizations initiated Micro Learning initiatives at the slum and village level following the Covid 19 physical distance protocols.

These micro learning centres are informal attempts, with similar age group children not beyond 10 or 15 coming together for an hour or so of class hours to keep the continuity of learning.

On 13th August 2021, Hon'ble Minister for Finance and Human Resources Management Mr. P. T. R. Palanivel Thiagarajan in his interim budget announced "A comprehensive plan for remedial education both within and outside the school hours and school premises will be launched to address learning losses"¹⁰. Following this budget

commitment, the Hon'ble Finance Minister on 18th August announced an amount of 200 crores to effectively address the learning loss and psychosocial issues faced by the children during the Pandemic COVID'19 under the name Illam Thedi Kalvi – Education at the doorstep.

"school teacher B. Nadhiya's terrace has been functioning as a "mini-school" where about 20 children in the neighbourhood come together to study for a couple of hours every day. Nadhiya lives in Thiruvallur district's Kannigaiper, where many of the children don't have access to online classes.

Ms. Nadhiya's micro-classroom is part of a pilot project of 45 "mini-schools" in Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Thoothukudi and Villupuram districts to help students of panchayat schools keep up with their lessons.

The mini-schools wanted to provide a solution. Keeping the safety of both teachers and students in mind, Asha for Education developed a set of guidelines for the neighbourhood learning centres. Initially, only 10 students were permitted at a time. After a few weeks, about 20 students were allowed. The importance of using masks, washing of hands and social distancing was taught. The venue for these micro-classrooms would usually be the teacher's house or terrace.

- <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/in-four-districts-of-tn-mini-schools-offer-some-key-lessons/article33028567.ece>

¹⁰ https://cms.tn.gov.in/sites/default/files/documents/budget_speech_RBE_e_2021_22.pdf

Arivoli Iyakkam¹¹, the Total Literacy Campaign in early 90's turning into a People's Movement for Literacy, took education to the small hamlets in the state; adult literacy was achieved to a great extent then. The success of the Arivoli Iyakkam relied on Voluntarism, dedication to the cause, commitment to the ideals of cooperation, participatory endeavour, and mobilisation of local resources, talents and goodwill.

Taking a cue from the success of Arivoli Iyakkam and Micro learning initiatives, The School Education Department has issued the GO (MS) No. 148 School Education (SSA2) Department dated 26. 10. 2021 - "Illam Thedi Kalvi" - To bridge the learning gaps / losses owing to lack of access to formal education during the lockdown period for the students studying from Classes 1 to 8 across the State.

Illam Thedi Kalvi - The Model

Illam Thedi Kalvi (Education at Doorstep) caters to around 3 million children in 2 lakh Illam Thedi Kalvi learning centres facilitated by 2 lakh trained volunteers across the state. Illam Thedi Kalvi is a project designed and launched with an aim to address the learning gap that arose among students due to closure of schools during the pandemic-imposed lockdowns

ITK runs on a simple model. In the habitation, students are grouped into two cohorts – primary (classes 1 to 5) and upper primary (classes 6 to 8) – and taught a purpose-built curriculum of basic skills in their habitation itself.

In Illam Thedi Kalvi , volunteers will take interactive sessions in a location close to the homes of children after schools hours from 5 pm to 7 pm on a regular basis.

Project Objectives¹²

- To provide learning in a non-school, closer to home, small cohort set up involving volunteers using a hamlet based outreach program. Head Masters and teachers will be handholding and providing oversight of the volunteers in their areas.
- To reinforce the learning inputs provided at schools using the "Illam Thedi Kalvi" programme.

¹¹http://14.139.60.153/bitstream/123456789/7734/1/Kamarajar%20District%20A%20People%27s%20Movement%20for%20Literacy_G2413.pdf

¹² G.O. (MS) No.148, School Education (SSA2) Department, dated 26.10.2021

- Provide students with access to daily learning atleast 1 to 1 ½ hours per day (between 5.00 P.M. to 7.00 P.M-subject to local conditions) in their respective hamlets over a period of at least 6 months

The first Illam Thedi Kalvi Centre was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chief Minister M K Stalin on 27th Oct 2021 in a function held at Muthaliar kuppam near Marakanam.

Getting the Centres ready as learning centres

For each of the centres, the following materials were given

- For Primary level
 - Big hanging black board
 - Handbook
 - Posters
 - Tamil
 - English
 - Charts
 - Tamil 2
 - Mathematics (2 copies)
- Upper Primary Level
 - Big hanging black board
 - Poster in English
 - Chart on Mathematics
- Every month a new set of Teaching and learning Materials (TLMs) are given to the centres
- Apart from these TLMs a circular was issued to the schools for extending the TLMs given to the schools to be used in the ITK Centres, that include
 - Self Learning Modules (SLM) Kit
 - English Language Kit
 - Science Kit
 - Supplementary books
 - Activity Based Learning (ABL) Cards
 - Story cards

Selection of the Volunteers

Illam Thedi Kalvi is a volunteer-driven programme. The volunteers are enrolled through an online platform¹³. Village level volunteers –those who had completed Higher Secondary and above – were encouraged to register themselves in the dedicated online portal.

In the directives and circulars from the Education Department on the initiation of Illam Thedi Kalvi, it has said that around three million children will be reached with the help of trained volunteers. These volunteers were selected through two level tests - an online aptitude test and a group discussion

After the selection, the volunteers underwent two days intensive skill development training on child friendly approaches along with training on preparing teaching and learning materials facilitated by a team of resource persons at the block / cluster level.

For Capacity Building and Monitoring, a team of 120 District Resource Persons had been identified at the state level for Primary and Upper Primary level with Lecturers of DIET, Block level resource teachers, Teachers and Members of Civil Society organization. The trained District Resource Persons were then divided and given responsibilities for the 12 districts to train 4236 cluster level Resource Persons in November 2021. These 4236 Cluster resource persons are listed to train around 85000 centre volunteers in the first phase. The trainings were held in the month of November 2021, December and January 2022. Following the completion of first phase training the centres started functioning from December 2021 in 12 districts. A similar pattern was followed for the second phase of implementation for the rest of the districts

Later Developments

Illam Thedi Kalvi was planned to have 1.8 lakh centres across TamilNadu. Owing to the overwhelming response and encouraged by its impact, it was extended to reach upto 2 lakh centres. On July 8th 2022, the Hon'ble CM inaugurated a centre, the two lakh centre - for Illam Thedi Kalvi (ITK) in Aaranji village near Kilpennathur in Thiruvannamalai district.

¹³ <https://illamthedikalvi.tnschools.gov.in/Welcome>

The project that was initially set to be implemented for a period of six months from December 2021 to May 2022 to impart educational skills among the children was later extended for six more months until November 2022. Hon'ble School Education Minister of TamilNadu announced on June 14 that the 'Illam Thedi Kalvi' initiative will be extended for another six months

The Primary level ITK centres are divided into two with children from 1st to 3rd standards covering the Ennum Eluthum project into one cohort and the 4th and 5th as the other Chief Minister. This State government's ambitious Ennum Ezhuthum Mission, which aims at addressing the learning gap caused by the COVID-19 pandemic among primary school students and ensuring foundational literacy and numeracy was launched by Honble Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on 13th June 2022.

Illam Thedi Kalvi – A Rapid Assessment

On 12th August 2022, during the review meeting in State Planning Commission the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu instructed the commission to prepare an assessment of the Illam Thedi Kalvi¹⁴ for its effectiveness and impact.

The study was designed to understand the impact of Illam Thedi Kalvi programme as an initiative to bridge the learning loss, apart from the perceived impact by the Head of the schools, the coordinating teachers, the volunteers and the parents of children who are attending the Illam Thedi Kalvi centres.

Key Research Issues

The following Key Research Issues were identified for the rapid assessment

1. Status of Children attending ITK during school closure.
2. Processes involved in identifying, appointment and training the volunteers
3. Processes involved in identifying and preparing the location for the conduct of centres in the locality
4. Perceived effectiveness of ITK in addressing the learning loss, its impact on regular classroom by the stakeholders
 - Perceived impact of ITK in languages and mathematics by the school teachers

¹⁴ https://cms.tn.gov.in/sites/default/files/press_release/pr120822_1392.pdf

5. Processes perceived by stakeholders to have helped in realization of the objectives of the project
6. Utilization of Teaching and Learning Materials as perceived by Volunteers and Teachers
7. Participation of Parents, School Management Committee, Panchayat raj members and CSOs in strengthening the ITK initiatives as perceived by Volunteers, Teachers and Headmaster

Method

Selection of Districts

The SPC has shortlisted the following districts for intervention under the State Balanced Growth Fund based on the social development and child development indicators

- Ariyalur
- Cuddalore
- Nagappattinam
- Salem
- Thiruvarur and
- Villupuram

The samples for this study are chosen from these six districts.

Stratified and cluster sampling is used for the study. Initially, the sample number of schools was decided in proportion to the number of primary and middle schools in each district. Then, the schools by management such as schools managed by Department of School Education, local bodies, and other welfare departments were listed and included as per such proportions. The schools are spread over different blocks in the districts. The ITK centres attached to each of the sample schools are also drawn randomly.

In each school, the following were interviewed

- Two Volunteers
 - In Primary Schools both the volunteers were chosen from the primary sections
 - In Upper Primary Schools – one volunteer from Primary and the next from Upper Primary were chosen
 - In Schools where there is only one centre, the existing volunteer was interviewed.
- Parents
 - In Primary Schools both the parents were chosen from the primary sections
 - In Upper Primary Schools – one parent from Primary and the next from Upper Primary were chosen
- Teacher In – charge
 - The teacher in charge, assigned by the Headmaster for monitoring and supporting the Illam thedi kalvi centres.
 - In single teacher schools or in schools where a separate teacher is not designated for ITK, the head master will respond to the assessment tool.
- The Head Master
 - The head master or the teacher nominated as Head Master incharge in the absence of a full time Headmaster.

Tools for Data Collection

A structured interview schedule was prepared for each of the stake holders – Volunteers, Parents, Teachers and Head Masters. Tools were prepared separately for each stakeholder with a view to collect their perspectives on the perceived impact of the project. The interview schedule was field tested with a pilot survey in 2 centres – one primary and one upper primary – in a Chennai school. Based on the perspectives shared by the respondents during this pilot survey, the questions were reframed and finalised.

A mobile based application Kobo Tool Box¹⁵ was used for the collection of data to make the data collection environment friendly by reducing the usage of paper. This also further reduced the time for data entry. The app also allows data collection even when the internet connection is not available and update when the enumerator comes into contact with internet connectivity. This was important as the enumerators were expected to collect data from remote areas too.

Apart from information collected through the structured interview schedule, focus group discussions were held with Parents, Volunteers, Teachers and Children in all these districts. After the completion of the data collection, an in-depth discussion was held with the field enumerators¹⁶ at the district level for consolidating their field observations.

Data Collection

The Data Collection was coordinated by Loyola College, Chennai. Forty Seven enumerators identified from concerned districts were trained on the research tool as well as on the online mobile application. Hands on experience were given by mock filling to all the enumerators. All the mock forms were deleted from the online platform ahead of the actual data collection. The data collection was done during 16th Sept 2022 to 30th Sept 2022 in the six districts – Ariyalur, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Salem, Tiruvarur and Villupuram. The following table provides the matrix of respondents to the rapid assessment.

Table 7 - Matrix of respondents to the rapid assessment

	Ariyalur	Cuddalore	Nagapattinam	Salem	Tiruvarur	Viluppuram	Total
No of Schools	29	71	26	118	39	79	362
Volunteers	57	136	45	215	78	148	679
Headmasters	29	71	26	118	39	79	362
Teachers	29	66	26	117	39	79	362
Parents	58	142	53	235	78	158	724
District Total	173	415	150	685	234	464	2127
*as per the data collected for the rapid assessment							

¹⁵ KoboToolbox is a free and open source suite of tools for field data collection for use in challenging environments especially for people working in humanitarian crises, as well as aid professionals and researchers working in developing countries. <https://www.kobotoolbox.org/>

¹⁶ Loyola College, Chennai was identified through a competitive bidding process for the field data collection for the rapid assessment

Descriptive Data Analysis

The analysis of the data collected through different sources is presented here in the form of tables and figures along with relevant correlations.

Social Profile of children attending ITK Centres

The community background of the children attending the ITK centres is illustrated in Table 8. Among the respondents, Forty one (40.9%) percent of the parents of the children attending the ITK centres hail from the most backward communities. With 60.1% children from Villupuram district topping the list with highest percentage of Most Backward Class, Salem stands second with 42.1% and Cuddalore with 40.1%.

Table 8 - Community Break up of children attending ITK Centres

	Total		Ariyalur		Cuddalore		Nagapattinam		Salem		Tiruvarur		Villupuram	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
ST	48	6.7	5	8.6	27	19.0	0	0	13	5.5	0	0	3	1.9
SC	187	25.9	15	25.9	32	22.5	16	30.2	41	17.4	39	52	44	27.8
BC	122	16.9	16	27.6	6	4.2	21	39.6	49	20.9	18	24	12	7.6
MBC	295	40.9	21	36.2	57	40.1	12	22.6	99	42.1	11	14.7	95	60.1
Others	69	9.6	1	1.7	20	14.1	4	7.5	33	14.0	7	9.3	4	2.5
Total	721	100	58	100	142	100	53	100	235	100	75	100	158	100

*as per the data collected for the rapid assessment

Next highest community that participates in the project is from the Scheduled Castes. With 25.9% of the students across the six districts are from this social category 52% of children in Tiruvarur and 30.2% children from its neighbouring Nagapattinam are from Scheduled Castes. In the scheduled Tribes category Cuddalore has the highest with 19 % children belonging to this category and Ariyalur has 8.6%. Except in Cuddalore and Salem that has 14% of the students from others category other districts has less than 10 percent of the children from others category.

Table 9 - Comparative Table of SC and ST Children in ITK and District Population*

	Ariyalur		Cuddalore		Nagapattinam		Salem		Tiruvarur		Villupuram	
	District	ITK	District	ITK	District	ITK	District	ITK	District	ITK	District	ITK
ST	1.4	8.6	0.4	19.0	0.4	0	3.4	5.5	0.3	0	0.7	1.9
SC	23.3	25.9	22.4	22.5	28	30.2	16.7	17.4	32.2	52	27.2	27.8
*District Population as per Census 2011												

The above Table 9 presents the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children in the district compared to the number of children in ITK Centres. Comparing to the total population, Ariyalur has total SC population of 23.3% and the students in ITK too correspond to the almost close with 25.9%. The same applies to other districts too. In Tiruvarur the percentage of SC population is 32% in the district while 52% children from the SC category get benefitted from the ITK Project.

In the Scheduled Tribes' population, Nagapattinam and Tiruvarur have zero representation among the interviewed population while Ariyalur and Cuddalore have very good representation in ITK compared to district population. In Salem and Villupuram there is a marginal difference on the upper side compared to the district level population.

Overall Illam Thedi Kalvi can thus be interpreted as an opportunity, better utilized by the children from the disadvantaged communities to bridge the learning gap. The less participation of 'others' category is a worrisome trend. This may also because of the reason that the children from the disadvantaged communities are the ones who are mostly dependent on government schools.

I. Status of Children attending ITK during school closure

The nearly two years long Covid lock down has not only kept the children outside the schools but also denied the learning opportunity. In this study as the researchers explored the status of children during the lockdown period, the following emerged.

Learning during the Lockdown

Table 10 - Learning during the lockdown

Learning during the lockdown	N	%
Online Class	189	26.2
Lessons / Activities through SMS / WhatsApp	258	35.8
Followed the lessons through Kalvi Television	540	74.9
Others	66	9.2
*More than one choice – will not add upto 100%		

According to Table 10, Kalvi Television is the most sought after option during the lockdown given the inadequate availability of digital devices as explained in Table 5. The next highest was SMS and WhatsApp based learning which again allows using of parents mobile phone and sharing among siblings.

Parents' Response about Virtual Learning

School education department has not officially conducted any online classes for classes upto 8. But some teachers, out of their own interest engaged with children through different forms that include online classes, WhatsApp or SMS based connectivity with children, micro classes etc. Of the 721 parents interviewed, 189 (26.2%) parents have said that their children participated in the online classes.

Table 11 – During the lockdown children participated in the online class

During the lockdown children participated in the online class	n	%
Fully	50	26.5
To an extent	64	33.9
Rarely	73	38.6
Did not attend	2	1.1
Total	189	100
*as per the data collected for the rapid assessment		

But even among the 189 children (26.2%) (Table 11) whom the parents claimed to have participated in the online classes, (73.5%) 139 children did not attend the online

classes fully. This effectively means that out of 721 parents interviewed only 50 children (7%) participated in the online classes.

Some government school teachers resorted to sending home work to children through WhatsApp or Short Message Service (SMS). According to Table 10, 35.8% of the parents claimed that the teachers sent those activities and home work to their wards through WhatsApp.

Table 12 - Children engaged by the school / teachers through WhatsApp or SMS

Children engaged with lessons and activities given by the school / teachers through WhatsApp or SMS	n	Percent
Fully	75	29.1
To an extent	89	34.5
Rarely	91	35.3
Did not participate	3	1.2
	258	100

According to Table 12, Two hundred and fifty eight parents have responded that their wards are exposed to learning through the SMS and WhatsApp messages sent by their teachers. Among the 258 children, only 75 (29.1%) children fully utilized this method for learning during the lockdown. This is 10 percent of the total parents responded. SMS and WhatsApp based learning wasn't recognized as an appropriate mode of learning for the children.

Learning during Covid and Kalvi Television

Understanding the Digital Divide and accessibility to digital devices of children in the government school, the Education department relied on Kalvi Television to deliver the lessons. According to Table 13, Seventy Five (74.9%) of the children followed this mode. Among the 540 children who followed the lessons through Kalvi TV, only 17.6% of the children followed it fully, while 57% of them rarely attended the televised classes. Considering the difficulty of retention of long monologue video classes for children, the impact will be very less, unless the children in parallel attempt to work on it as they watch. With the Covid restrictions and the availability of human and material resources to support the children at home, Kalvi TV hardly had any impact on children upto VIII standard.

Table 13 - Followed the lessons through Kalvi Television

Followed the lessons through Kalvi Television	n	%
Fully	95	17.6
To an extent	135	25.0
Rarely	308	57.0
Did not participate	2	0.4
	540	100

Since the above results have shown that children spent very less time on education and learning related activities, the natural question is, what else the children were engaged all these days of school shut down. This assessment briefly tried to explore the other roles children were engaged in the family during the lock down time. Eighty one (81.1%) percent of the parents acknowledged that their wards supported in the daily chores in the family. But it is important to note that only 15.2 % of them supported in the household chores fully (Table 14).

Table 14 - Support to the day to day activities at home

Support to the day to day activities at home	N	%
Fully	89	15.2
To an extent	133	22.7
Rarely	356	60.9
Did not participate	7	1.2
	585	100

On exploring if the children participated in any other activity other than supporting the day to day activities back at home, 56 parents (7.8%) acknowledge (Table 15) that their wards supported the family or their father in their job or business

Table 15 - Assisted the family /father in the Job / business

Assisted the family /father in the Job / business (other than household work)	n	%
Fully	5	8.9
To an extent	13	23.2
Rarely	38	67.9
	56	100

Apart from children assisting their family in the livelihood, according to Table 16 , some children went to job on their own to become child labourers. In one instance, a parent revealed they planned to get their girl child married but was stopped and the child continues to be in school.

Table 16 - Went to job to financially support the family

Went to job to financially support the family	Number of responses
Fully	0
To an extent	4
Rarely	5
Child Marriage	1
	10

Problems faced by parents during lockdown

Apart from learning loss, the closure of schools has also left the parents to face struggles due to various reasons. As per Table 17, eighty five percent (85.3%) of the parents had the fear that the children are not learning at home and are losing interest in the education. Twenty three (22.6%) percent of parents feared that their children may fall victim to bad habits.

Table 17 - Problems faced by parents during lockdown

Problems faced by parents during lockdown	n	%
Non availability of Noon Meals	37	5.1
Unable to handle children at home	465	64.5
Loss of interest towards learning	615	85.3
Fear of Children falling prey to bad habits	163	22.6
Fear of leaving children back at home while going to work	83	11.5
*More than one choice – will not add upto 100%		

During the in-depth interviews held at the school level, many parents shared that they were afraid to leave the children back at home during the lockdown days as the children tend to venture out and go to ponds and other places that could be dangerous. Some parents also shared that they had the fear that the children will lose interest in education. Children getting addicted to mobile phones in the guise of attending online classes or studying the learning materials sent by the teacher were highlighted by many parents in different instances during the in-depth interview.

As soon as the father returns home my son takes the phone from him and says he has notes to read sent by his teacher and classmates. But on a later date we came to know the school has not sent any notes but he was playing candy crush

– A parent from Villupuram

In order to address the long break in education of their wards, parents tried different methods during the lockdown. The Figure 1 shares that guidance by elders in the family ranks high with 57% of the parents. The next highest answer was from 21.5% parents who have claimed that they did not have any opportunity to support the

children in studies during lockdown. Both these categories are very uncertain, as there is no guarantee that learning can actually happen.

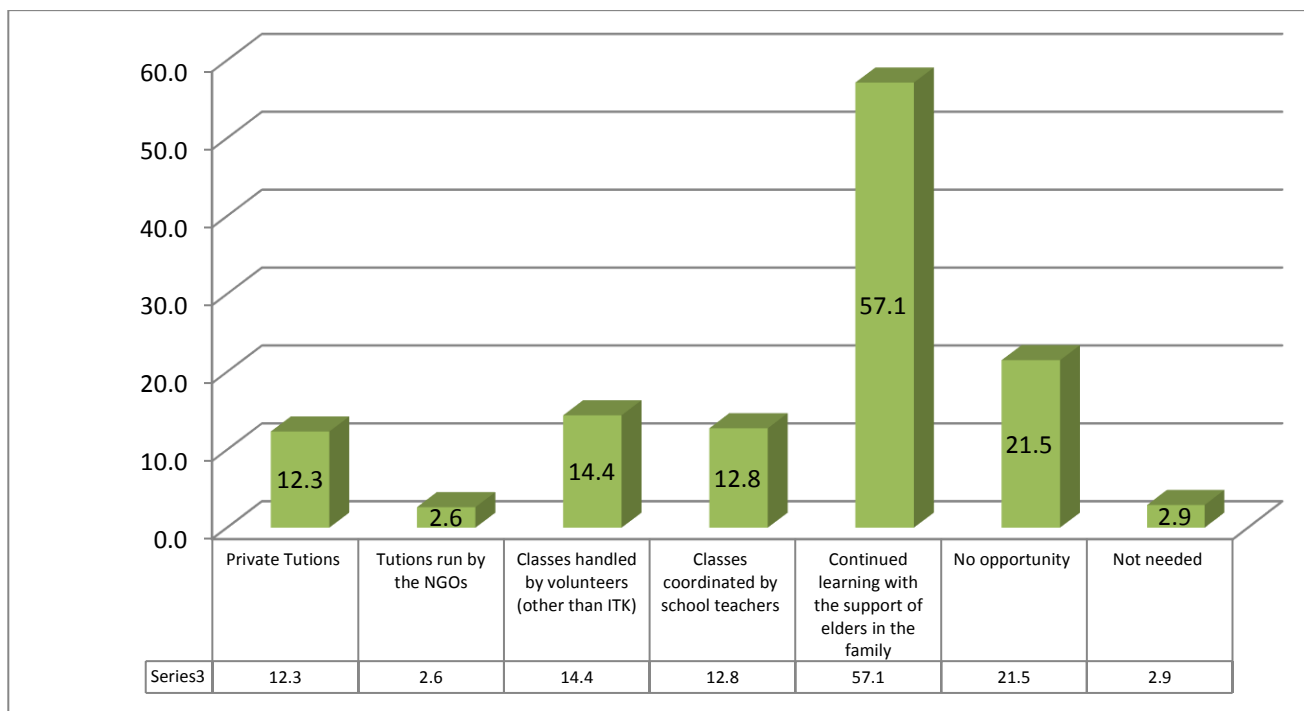


Figure 1 - Learning during Covid Lockdown – Parents’ Perception

Learning had been a challenge during school closures. As shared in Figure 1, different families tried to find means to bridge the gap within their reach. Twelve percent (12.3%) of the parents have said that they sent their children to private tuitions. The expenditure incurred on private tuitions varied anywhere between Rs. 100 to Rs. 500 per child.

Though we wanted our children too to go to tuition and study well, we were unable to send our children to tuition paying 200 rupees per month. But ITK has given an opportunity for our children to attend tuition like convent (private) school children.

- A Parent from Villupuram

The following table (Table 18) explains how different communities have faced the challenge. Among the Scheduled Tribes, 31.3% percent of the respondents had no opportunity to keep their children engaged in learning. Similarly, it was from the Scheduled Tribes families only 47.9% responded that they had a family member to support the children in education during the lock down. This is the lowest among the responses compared to other community groups. Among those who have sent their children to private tuitions, all the socially backward communities ie ST, SC, BC and MBC constituted 10% to 12%. Nineteen percent (18.8%) of the respondents from other communities had the affordability to sent their children to private tuitions.

Table 18 - Learning during Covid lockdown across different communities

	N	ST	SC	BC	MBC	Others
Private Tutions	89	10.4	12.3	10.7	11.9	18.8
Tutions run by the NGOs	19	4.2	3.2	4.1	1.4	2.9
Classes handled by volunteers (other than ITK)	104	6.3	16	18	14.9	7.2
Classes coordinated by school teachers	92	12.5	13.4	15.6	13.2	4.3
Continued learning with the support of elders in the family	412	47.9	59.4	64.8	54.9	53.6
No opportunity	155	31.3	20.9	15.6	23.4	18.8
Not needed	21	0	2.1	3.3	3.7	2.9
*Percent of Respondents from the particular community corresponding to each choice						

II. Processes involved in identifying, appointment and training the volunteers

Illam Thedi Kalvi – A volunteer led movement

Volunteers being the backbone for the realization of project, it is imperative to understand the profile of the volunteers.

Volunteers play a pivotal role in the delivery of the objectives of the project. The volunteers are supported by the block and cluster level mentors on a regular basis.

The rapid assessment explored whether the volunteers went through the different steps of the selection process.

Almost cent percent of the volunteers barring a very few, have stated they went through all the steps of the selection process and the training offered to the selected volunteers.

The voluntary effort was also manifested with the response that they have applied to the position voluntarily without any compulsion and have completed the online form by themselves. The assessment and in-depth discussions manifested that the rigorous selection process helped in identifying the right candidates in delivering the expected outcomes of the scheme.

Except for unavoidable reasons like marriage, better career etc, the turnover of volunteers is very less though the honorarium is not very lucrative. This was because of the strong enrolment process that included a stringent aptitude test and group discussion, which eliminated candidates who are not committed to the cause

- A district level official from Cuddalore

This also resulted in very low level of attrition among the volunteers. The district level

officials deputed for ITK recalled that rigorous selection process including the online aptitude test ensured that only the committed and candidates who understand the values of democratic learning are selected.

The Identification of Volunteers

The very first steps in the initiation of the ITK are the identification of local volunteers and place to convene the classes. The Head Masters and the other teachers in the school played a vital role in this process. The headmasters and teachers headed up to encourage their alumni (42.8%) and those already working closely with the school (37.3%) to apply for becoming the volunteer. (Table 19)

Table 19 - Role of Head Master in identifying the volunteers

S. No	Role of Head Master in identifying the volunteers	Targeted Group	n = 362	%
1	I initiated the process of identifying the volunteers among selected groups, for the ITK Centres	Alumnus	155	42.8
		Relatives and Neighbours	13	3.6
		Already working closely with school	135	37.3
		Others	7	1.9
2	Need did not arise to search for volunteers		12	3.3
3	I did not search		40	11
Total			362	100

The personalized interest shown by the teachers and headmasters of the school in identifying the volunteers also helped in creating a conducive environment for the volunteers in the ITK centres. In many schools, since the volunteers are past pupils of the same teacher or head master the relationship between them was smooth and facilitative.

"Both are our children (referring to the volunteers and students). The project supports and empowers both of them. I feel the project should continue"

- A Headmistress from Cuddalore

The Head Masters and teachers acknowledged that individuals with interest, commitment, skill and attitude came forward in good numbers.

Profile of the respondents – Volunteers

Gender of Volunteers

Women contribute a predominant role in the Illam thedi kalvi with almost cent percent of the sample. Except for two, one 35 year old male volunteer from the MBC category from Nagapattinam and a 34 year old male belonging to SC category from Villupuram, all the other respondents are women.

Social Group of Volunteers

The Table 20 shows that around 91% (90.6) of the respondents belong to the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Most Backward classes. ITK can also be seen as a project that has opened up avenue for the disadvantaged sections of the society to be part of the government's initiative and has successfully leveraged the power of community ownership.

Table 20 - Social Group of Volunteers

	Total		Ariyalur		Cuddalore		Nagapattinam		Salem		Tiruvarur		Villupuram	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
ST	35	5.2	2	3.5	20	14.7	0	0.0	11	5.1	2	2.5	0	0.0
SC	188	27.7	18	31.6	39	28.7	13	28.9	36	16.7	37	46.3	45	30.8
BC	135	19.9	15	26.3	17	12.5	15	33.3	47	21.9	26	32.5	15	10.3
MBC	257	37.8	22	38.6	47	34.6	15	33.3	83	38.6	8	10.0	82	56.2
Others	64	9.4	0	0.0	13	9.6	2	4.4	38	17.7	7	8.8	4	2.7
	679	100	57	100	136	100	45	100	215	100	80	100	146	100

The district level representation of different social groups manifest more than half of the (56.2%) of the ITK volunteers in Villupuram belong the Most backward class communities. Nearly half of the volunteers in Tiruvarur (46.3%) are from Scheduled castes.

Thirty Eight (37.8%) percent of the volunteers are from Most Backward Communities. The same is represented in all districts with volunteers from MBC as the highest population except in Tiruvarur where the highest population of volunteers (46.3%)

are from Scheduled caste and the next highest representation is from Backward Communities.

The next highest is Scheduled castes with 27.7% and Backward communities with 19.9 % on the third highest.

The community representation of the volunteers matches with the community participation of the children as presented in Table 8.

The Scheduled Tribes were not covered as volunteer respondent in the rapid assessment from Nagapattinam. This phenomenon is same with children too as there were no participation of scheduled tribes among the children (refer Table 9) at least among those who participated in the rapid assessment.

The following Table 21 compares the participation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes volunteers against their population composition as per census 2011. While in many districts the population and the participation of that community correlate each other, in Cuddalore the scheduled tribes population is 0.4% but 14.7% of the volunteers in the district are from ST Community. Among the Scheduled Caste community their population in the district is 32.2% while their representation as ITK volunteers is 46.3%.

Table 21 - District level SC, ST population and their participation as volunteers

District	Ariyalur		Cuddalore		Nagapattinam		Salem		Tiruvarur		Villupuram	
	District	ITK	District	ITK	District	ITK	District	ITK	District	ITK	District	ITK
ST	1.4	5.2	0.4	14.7	0.4	0	3.4	5.1	0.3	2.5	0.7	0
SC	23.3	27.7	22.4	28.7	28	28.9	16.7	16.7	32.2	46.3	27.2	30.8
*Population Percentage as per Census 2011												

Looking at the age composition and the social group of the respondents two third of the volunteers responded to the assessment constitute between 21 and 30 years of age. The youngest being two girls at the age of 17 from the same Magudanjaavadi block of Salem District. The Oldest is from Nannilam block of Tiruvarur who was 62 years.

One fourth (25%) of the volunteers between the age group of 21 to 30 belong to the Most Backward Classes, with Villupuram staying at top in the list with 40.5% of the volunteers in the age group of 21 to 30 are from the MBC category.

Table 22 – Age and Community Break up of Volunteers (in %)

Age Group	Social Category	Total	Ariyalur	Cuddalore	Nagappattinam	Salem	Tiruvarur	Villupuram
Below 20 (n 39)	ST	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0
	SC	1.6	3.5	2.2	2.2	0.5	2.6	1.4
	BC	1.5	1.8	0.0	4.4	0.0	5.1	2.0
	MBC	1.9	3.5	2.2	4.4	0.9	1.3	2.0
	Others	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	1.3	0.0
	Total	5.7	8.8	4.4	11.1	3.3	10.3	5.4
21 – 25 (n 227)	ST	1.6	3.5	2.9	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.7
	SC	8.4	10.5	11.0	4.4	6.0	15.4	6.1
	BC	7.2	7.0	2.9	13.3	7.4	16.7	4.1
	MBC	13.5	12.3	9.6	6.7	14.4	3.8	23.6
	Others	2.7	0.0	0.7	2.2	6.0	1.3	1.4
	Total	33.4	33.3	27.2	26.7	35.8	37.2	35.8
26 - 30 (n 207)	ST	2.4	0.0	8.1	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0
	SC	9.3	10.5	5.9	8.9	6.0	23.1	9.5
	BC	4.6	8.8	6.6	4.4	3.7	6.4	1.4
	MBC	11.5	12.3	10.3	13.3	11.2	2.6	16.9
	Others	2.8	0.0	2.2	0.0	6.5	1.3	0.7
	Total	30.5	31.6	33.1	26.7	29.8	33.3	28.4
31 – 40 (n 184)	ST	0.6	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0
	SC	8.1	7.0	8.8	13.3	4.2	5.1	13.5*
	BC	5.6	7.0	2.9	11.1	7.9	5.1	2.7
	MBC	9.9	8.8	11.0	8.9*	11.2	1.3	12.2
	Others	2.9	0.0	5.9	2.2	3.7	3.8	0.0
	Total	27.1	22.8	30.9	35.6	27.4	15.4	28.4
41 + (n 22)	ST	0.4	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7
	SC	0.3	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0
	BC	1.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	2.8	0.0	0.0
	MBC	1.0	1.8	1.5	0.0	0.9	1.3	0.7
	Others	0.4	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.7
	Total	3.2	3.5	4.4	0.0	3.7	3.8	2.0
Total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

* indicates One Male Candidate added to total

In the 21 to 30 age category 38.5% of the Volunteers in Tiruvarur belongs the SC category and Ariyalur has 21%.

Education Qualification of Volunteers

The following Table 23 and Table 24 explain the community wise representation of the volunteers in correlation with their education qualification and centre they handle in the selected districts. Over 54.5% of the volunteers have completed under graduation with 28.6% handling primary sections and 25.9% handling upper primary. Tiruvarur having 70.5% of the volunteers who have studied upto under graduation. Volunteers who have completed post graduation are 20.2% across six districts while it is higher in Nagappattinam with 42.2%. In total, 3 out of 4 volunteers (74.7%) of volunteers studied above under-graduation. Cuddalore has 83.1% and Nagappattinam has 82.2% of its volunteers studied above under-graduation.

I lived in the same community right since my birth. No one knows about me. But after joining the Illam Thedi Kalvi, I was looked up as teacher and now everyone respects me a call me as "Teacher Akka"

- A volunteer from Villupuram

Tamil Nadu's high gross enrolment ratio of 51% which is twice the national average with 50.5% male and 49.5% female¹⁷ is probably a key reason.

According to Table 23, the ITK has opened up avenues for the scheduled caste, backward and most backward communities to take up education leadership in their communities. During the FGD, volunteers have expressed that in the community in which they were just another individual with no identity before venturing into ITK, they have now gained a dignified recognition in their neighbourhood and the community addresses them as "Teacher Akka".

¹⁷ <https://aishe.gov.in/aishe/viewDocument.action?documentId=277> (Page 18)

Table 23 – Education and Community of Volunteers in Primary Section

Primary (in %)								
Educational Qualification	Social Category	Total (n)	Ariyalur	Cuddalore	Nagapattinam	Salem	Tiruvarur	Villupuram
12th Std (n 89)	ST	12	0.0	2.9	0.0	3.3	0.0	0.7
	SC	30	10.5	2.2	6.7	2.3	6.4	5.4
	BC	13	7.0	0.0	6.7	1.9	0.0	1.4
	MBC	26	8.8	1.5	2.2	5.1	0.0	4.7
	Others	8	0.0	1.5	0.0	2.8	0.0	0.0
	Total	89	26.3	8.1	15.6	15.3	6.4	12.2
Diploma (n 50)	ST	1	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SC	13	3.5	3.7	0.0	0.5	2.6	2.0
	BC	5	1.8	0.7	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.7
	MBC	16	1.8	1.5	2.2	1.9	1.3	4.7
	Others	15	0.0	0.7	0.0	6.0	0.0	0.7
	Total	50	7.0	7.4	2.2	8.4	6.4	8.1
Under Graduate (n 194)	ST	7	0.0	3.7	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.7
	SC	46	3.5	10.3	6.7	4.2	12.8	5.4
	BC	49	8.8	5.1	13.3	8.8	9.0	3.4
	MBC	77	7.0	13.2	2.2	11.6	3.8	17.6
	Others	15	0.0	2.9	0.0	2.3	3.8	2.0
	Total	194	19.3	35.3	22.2	27.4	29.5	29.1
Post Graduate (n 39)	ST	4	1.8	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SC	6	0.0	1.5	2.2	0.9	0.0	0.7
	BC	9	0.0	0.7	6.7	0.9	2.6	0.7
	MBC	17	7.0	1.5	4.4	2.3	0.0	2.7
	Others	3	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0
	Total	39	8.8	7.4	13.3	4.2	3.8	4.1
Primary Total		372	61.4	58.1	53.3	55.3	46.2	53.4

While Table 23 presents about the educational qualification and community of the volunteers handling primary sections, Table 24 presents the educational qualification and community of the volunteers handling upper primary sections. Thirty one (30.6%) percent of volunteers belonging the MBC category studied under-graduation and above.

Table 24 - Education and Community of Volunteers in Upper Primary Section

Upper Primary (in %)								
Educational Qualification	Social Category	Total (n)	Ariyalur	Cuddalore	Nagapattinam	Salem	Tiruvarur	Villupuram
12th Std (n 13)	ST	1	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SC	6	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.5	3.8	0.7
	BC	1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0
	MBC	1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0
	Others	4	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	1.3	0.0
	Total	13	1.8	0.7	0.0	1.9	7.7	0.7
Diploma (n 20)	ST	1	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SC	4	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	1.4
	BC	4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.6	0.7
	MBC	6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1
	Others	5	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0
	Total	20	1.8	0.7	0.0	2.8	3.8	6.1
Under graduate (n 176)	ST	4	0.0	0.7	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0
	SC	57	8.8	9.6	4.4	4.7	20.5	7.4
	BC	38	8.8	2.9	2.2	6.5	14.1	2.0
	MBC	68	7.0	10.3	8.9	12.6	3.8	10.8
	Others	9	0.0	2.2	2.2	1.4	2.6	0.0
	Total	176	24.6	25.7	17.8	26.5	41.0	20.3
Post Graduate (n 98)	ST	5	0.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SC	26	3.5	0.7	8.9	3.7	0.0	7.4
	BC	16	0.0	2.9	4.4	3.3	1.3	1.4
	MBC	46	7.0	6.6	13.3	5.1	0.0	10.8
	Others	5	0.0	0.7	2.2	1.4	0.0	0.0
	Total	98	10.5	14.7	28.9	13.5	1.3	19.6
Upper Primary Total		307	38.6	41.9	46.7	44.7	53.8	46.6
Table 23 and Table 24 together makes up 100%								

Thirty two percent (31.6%) of the volunteers from Cuddalore belonging to MBC category have studied UG and above. Thirty Three (33.3%) percent of the volunteers in Tiruvarur who have studied upto UG belong to SC category.

Volunteers with Teacher Education Qualification

Apart from having under graduation and post graduation in different disciplines, 52.4% of the respondents also hold either a diploma or a degree in teacher education. Among those who hold different teachers' education qualification, 45.9% of the volunteers handling Primary sections and 54.9% in Upper primary sections hold Bachelors degree (B. Ed) in Education.

Table 25 - Teacher Education Qualified Volunteers

	Education Degrees	n	%
Primary	B. Ed	79	45.9
	D. El. Ed	36	20.9
	D.T. Ed	57	33.1
	Total	172	100
Upper Primary	B. Ed	101	54.9
	D. El. Ed	12	6.5
	D.T. Ed	71	38.6
	Total	184	100

Post marriage migration, maternity, transport access, waiting for TRB appointment, TET Exam results are some of the reason attributed by the volunteers on why they have not joined a job after completing teachers' education qualification. Since in ITK, they are placed in schools and places close to their neighbourhood and with the children known to them, the volunteers opted to join. Also for the young girls who had been educated and were not allowed by their parents to go outside the community to work, ITK was a welcome opening.

Apart from providing a space for the young women and married women with a teaching job, Illam thedi kalvi also contributed to social justice by empowering the socially disadvantaged communities.

Previous Employment of the Volunteers

The following table (Table 26) describes previous employment status of the respondents. Twenty nine percent (28.9%) volunteers had teaching experience prior to taking up the volunteer position in ITK.

Table 26 - Previous Employment and their Community – Cross Tabulation

Previous Employment	Community	Total	Ariyalur	Cuddalore	Nagapattinam	Salem	Tiruvallur	Villupuram
Teaching (n 196)	ST	1.9	0.0	5.9	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0
	SC	7.2	8.8	13.2	6.7	4.7	2.6	7.4
	BC	7.4	0.0	5.9	13.3	12.1	9.0	2.0
	MBC	9.3	12.3	11.8	8.9	11.2	3.8	6.1
	Others	3.1	0.0	4.4	2.2	3.7	6.4	0.7
	Total	28.9	21.1	41.2	31.1	34.0	21.8	16.2
NGO (n 4)	ST	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SC	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7
	BC	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7
	MBC	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4
	Others	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7
Private (n 51)	ST	0.3	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SC	2.1	1.8	0.7	0.0	0.5	10.3	2.0
	BC	1.9	5.3	0.0	2.2	1.9	6.4	0.0
	MBC	2.7	0.0	5.1	2.2	2.8	0.0	2.7
	Others	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0
	Total	7.5	7.0	7.4	4.4	7.0	16.7	4.7
Not Applicable (n 428)	ST	2.9	3.5	7.4	0.0	2.8	0.0	1.4
	SC	18.3	21.1	14.7	22.2	11.6	34.6	20.3
	BC	10.5	21.1	6.6	17.8	7.9	17.9	7.4
	MBC	25.6	26.3	17.6	22.2	24.7	6.4	45.3
	Others	5.7	0.0	5.1	2.2	12.1	2.6	2.0
	Total	63.0	71.9	51.5	64.4	59.1	61.5	76.4
Grand Total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Two third (63%) of the respondents have not worked anywhere before but used this opportunity to use their teaching skills especially in the late Covid situation when many have lost jobs. Out of 428 respondents who have responded as they don't have any previous experience 174 of them are from the most backward communities, 124 are from scheduled castes and 71 are from the backward communities. So many educated women who remained unemployed despite having educated were offered an opportunity to gain work experience in a dignified manner in ITK and within the community.

Volunteer Training

Training played a vital role in capacitating the volunteers to deliver the objectives of the Illam Thedi Kalvi. With 63% of the volunteers without any work experience and around half of them without any teaching background, training plays a vital role in capacitating the volunteers. The two day long training for the state level master trainers comprising of Faculty from DIET, BRC, CRC and Civil Society Organizations were held in October and November 2021. This training for the master trainers was followed by district level trainings and then at the block resource centre level. The master trainers delivered the content in two day trainings across the state. The trainings were held separately for Primary and Upper Primary Volunteers.

Table 27 - Volunteer Training – Perspectives by Volunteers

Volunteer Training – Perspectives by Volunteers	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
The Two days training offered for the Volunteers was ample to understand the basic of the project/ scheme	667	98.2	12	1.8
The Two days training offered for the Volunteers was very helpful to handle the sessions in the ITK Centres	679	100	0.0	0.0
The training included handling children effectively was useful for me	679	100	0.0	0.0
The training for developing and using Teaching and Learning materials (TLMs) were useful for me to implement the same in the ITK Centres	679	100	0.0	0.0
The Cost effective TLMs were easy to be implemented in the ITK centres without much expenditure	614	90.4	65	9.6
The training on effectively interacting with the parents was useful to me to create rapport with them	679	100	0.0	0.0

All the volunteers unanimously acknowledged that the induction training handled in the beginning of the project was ample to understand the basic of the Illam Thedi Kalvi, and was found to be useful as they went on to handle sessions in the ITK Centres. The volunteers also vouched that the sessions were helpful in handling the session in ITK centres.

III. Processes involved in identifying and preparing the location for the conduct of centres in the locality

Identification and Preparing the Centres

The identification of location for the centres plays a vital role to ensure social inclusion and safety. In order to avoid children congregating in schools, the ITK centres were planned to be located in the neighbourhood.

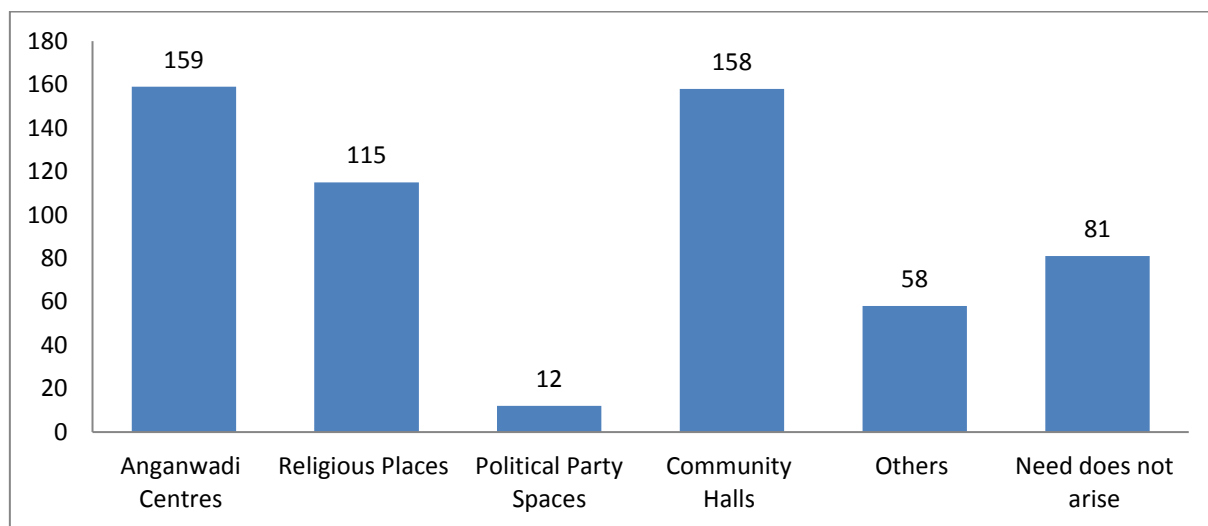


Figure 2 - Identification and Preparing the Centres – Head Master

The Figure 2 shows that the Anganwadi Centres (43.9%) and Community halls (43.4%) are the primary locations chosen by the school Head Masters as these places have space to hold the children. Due to the extensive coverage of ICDS programme in TamilNadu, Anganwadi centres exist in every village. The community centres constructed by the Panchayat for meetings and for SHGs do exist in good condition in many places. In places where these places are not available for use due to varied reasons, the next choices were places of worship (31.8%), predominantly temples as they existed in every neighbourhood.

The following Table 28, denotes the variations in different districts in identifying the place for the centres. In Ariyalur, 93.1% of the headmasters have responded that the need does not arise for the search of location for the centres. Whereas in Salem the same response was only from 11.9% respondents.

Table 28 - Places Prioritized in the community – District Wise (By Head Master)

	Total	Percent	Ariyalur	Cuddalore	Nagappattinam	Salem	Tiruvarur	Villupuram
	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Anganwadi Centres	159	43.9	3.4	45.1	38.5	42.4	53.8	57.0
Religious Places	115	31.8	0.0	28.2	30.8	43.2	30.8	30.4
Political Party Spaces	12	3.3	0.0	5.6	0.0	4.2	0.0	3.8
Community Halls	158	43.6	10.3	45.1	57.7	43.2	64.1	40.5
Others	58	16.0	0.0	19.7	11.5	24.6	5.1	12.7
Need does not arise	81	22.4	93.1	14.1	19.2	11.9	28.2	17.7

*More than one choice – will not add upto 100%

A child friendly environment is mandatory to reach the objectives of the project. In order to create an interest among children who may have lost interest in learning due to the long break, converting the identified places into a learning centre becomes important. The following Table 29 explains from the perspective of the Head Masters and Teachers whether it was difficult to create the identified place into an ITK learning centre.

Table 29 - Difficulty in preparing the identified place into a learning centre

Difficulty in preparing the identified place into a learning centre	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
Head Master	44	12.2	318	87.8
Teacher	45	12.4	311	85.9

Since majority of the places identified by the teachers and Head Masters were Anganwadi centres and community halls, more than 85% of them have asserted that it wasn't difficult to get the place ready for learning.

Support to Volunteers in Identifying the Location for ITK Centres

As per Table 30, Eighty four percent of the volunteers have acknowledged the role of school teachers in identifying the place for conduct of the centres. The table also lists the other stake holders who have supported them in identifying the place in the community for the conduct of ITK centres.

Table 30 - People who have supported in identifying the place of ITK Centre

People who have supported in identifying the place of ITK Centre	n	%
School Teachers	571	84
SMC	227	33
CSOs	30	4
Students	105	15
Others	14	2
No one	42	6
I did not search	1	0
*More than one choice – will not add upto 100%		

Next to School Teachers, the volunteers have acknowledged the role of School Management Committees in the search for the location.

The Table 31, further describes the district wise breakup of the support extended by the stake holders in identifying the centre.

Thirty three percent of the respondents have also acknowledged the role of School Management Committee members in identifying the place for the centre. The remaining 2% others include fellow volunteers, family members, local body representatives, BRC and CRC resource persons.

Table 31 - People supported Volunteers in identifying the place – District distribution

Stake Holders	Ariyalur		Cuddalore		Nagappattinam		Salem		Tiruvarur		Villupuram		Total
	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
School Teachers	39	68.4	127	93.4	44	97.8	192	89.3	33	42.3	136	91.9	571
SMC	27	47.4	35	25.7	11	24.4	67	31.2	23	29.5	64	43.2	227
CSOs	0	0.0	3	2.2	0	0.0	17	7.9	8	10.3	2	1.4	30
Students	22	38.6	17	12.5	7	15.6	42	19.5	1	1.3	16	10.8	105
I did not search	0	0.0	1	0.7	0	0.0	4	1.9	42	53.8	13	8.8	60
No one	16	28.1	3	2.2	1	2.2	13	6.0	5	6.4	4	2.7	42
Others	2	3.5	1	0.7	1	2.2	3	1.4	2	2.6	5	3.4	14
*More than one choice – will not add upto 100%													

In Nagapattinam, Cuddalore and Villupuram almost all the volunteers have acknowledged the school teachers' support. In Tiruvarur the support is perceived to be below 50%. In total, the Volunteers in Tiruvarur, where 88.5% of the centres

(according to Table 32) are based in the community, have failed to acknowledge any of the stakeholders above 42% and moreover, over 54% of the volunteers did not search a space for the centre. With 88.5% centres in community and 54% of volunteers claiming they did not search for a place for the ITK centres, it can be inferred that the centres are held in the houses of the volunteers hence they did not require any support and did not search.

Location of the Centre

As per the Project Objectives, the idea of Illam Thedi Kalvi is to reach out to the communities and neighbourhoods of the children, as the children were not expected to crowd in the schools during the Covid lockdown. The following Table 32 lists the location of the centre along with the district and section break up.

Table 32 - Location of the Centre

	Total		Ariyalur		Cuddalore		Nagapattinam		Salem		Tiruvarur		Villupuram	
	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%
Primary Section in School	103	15.2	11	19.3	37	27.2	6	13.3	7	3.3	4	5.1	38	25.7
Upper Primary Section in School	68	10.0	2	3.5	26	19.1	7	15.6	1	0.5	5	6.4	27	18.2
Primary Section in Community	269	39.6	24	42.1	42	30.9	18	40.0	112	52.1	32	41.0	41	27.7
Upper Primary Section in Community	239	35.2	20	35.1	31	22.8	14	31.1	95	44.2	37	47.4	42	28.4

Nearly three fourth (74.8%) of the centres assessed are located in the locality. Among this, Salem leads with 96.3% of centres followed by Tiruvarur with 88.5% of the centres. On the other hand Cuddalore and Villupuram had only 53.7% and 56.1% of the centres respectively. There is no data to substantiate reasons for the high numbers in Salem and low numbers in Cuddalore.

One important change that the scheme has brought about has to do with the creation of new social spaces for interaction. For example, a migrant volunteer said that after joining the scheme she has been able to forge new relationships in the community and the children and their parents have now become almost a family to her. Many report an improved sense of status and respect among the community members. The children too, by getting together in these centres, are able to forge new bonds and also learn from one another.

IV. Effectiveness of ITK in addressing the learning loss

Bridging the learning Gap.

The major and core objective of Illam Thedi Kalvi is to bridge the learning gap that resulted due to the long closure of schools due to Covid. The assessment sought responses from the four major stake holders – The Volunteers, The Parents, The Teachers and the Head Masters.

In Figure 3, almost all the parents – 717 out of 721 parents who took part in the rapid assessment responded that after attending ITK, the children started to manifest interest in learning. Over these months, parents have noticed that children started to do home work without being asked at home, share what happens in ITK centres, and read books that are not part of their text books. Parents acknowledge that their fear of loss of interest during the lockdown was nullified with the interest shown by the children.

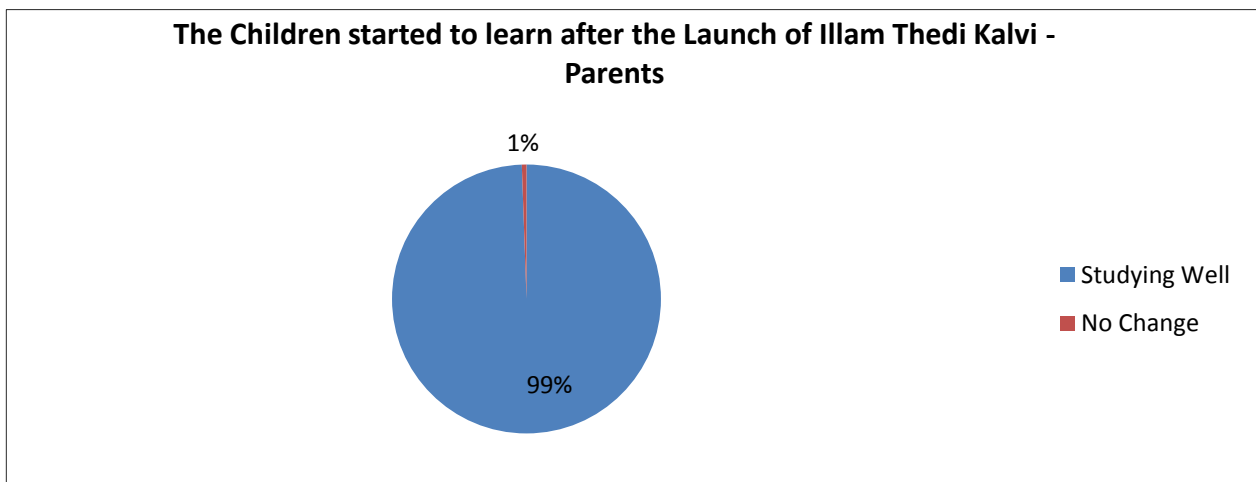


Figure 3 - The Children started to manifest learning - Parents

Along similar lines, the teachers have also asserted that the child friendly learning initiatives taken under the ITK project has helped in bridging the learning gap. The enthusiasm manifested by the children over these months is an outcome of attending the ITK centres.

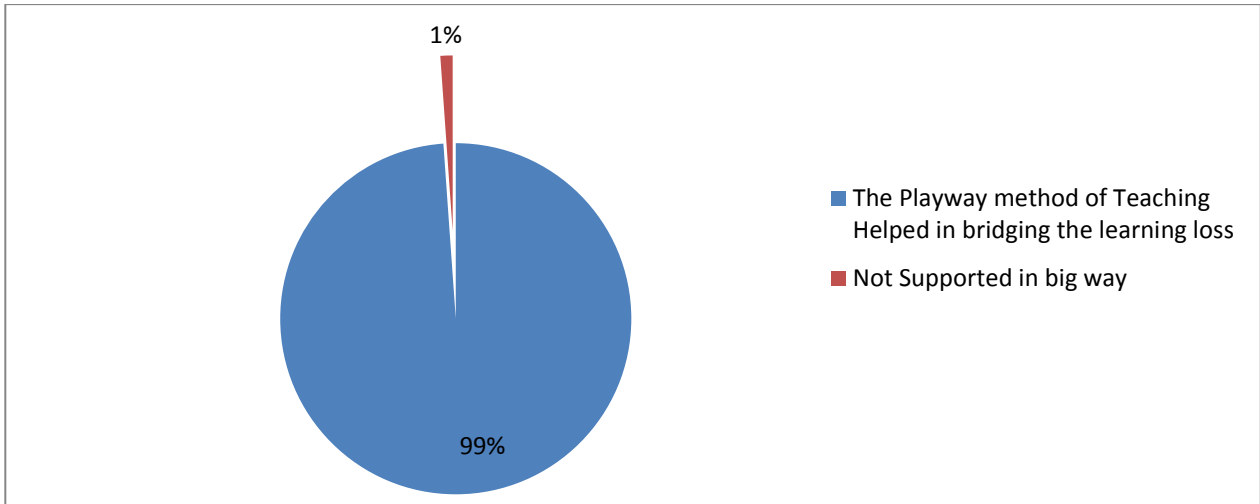


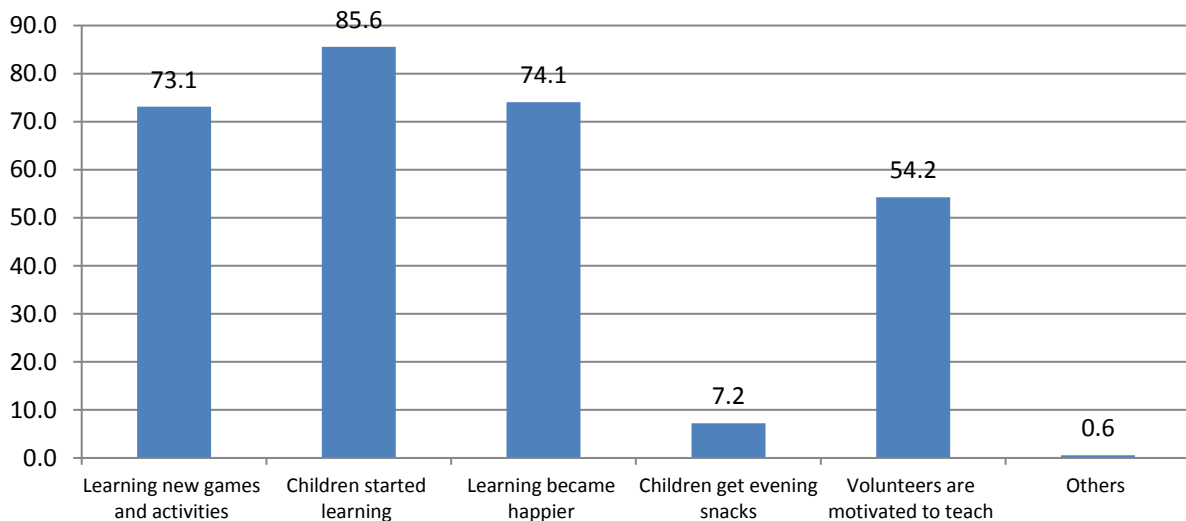
Figure 4 – Play way and Activity based learning in bridging the learning gap - Teachers

Almost all teachers (Figure 4) we spoke to asserted that the play way method employed in the ITK centres has reverted the interest in learning to a great extent. It is pertinent to note that acceptance of play way and activity based method was well established with the success of ITK.

Parents’ perception on ITK

Parents too acknowledge that the children like the ITK Centres very much. Figure 5 explains the perceptions of parents on the ITK Centres Eighty five (85.6%) percent of the parents have said their wards have started to learn better. Seventy Four (74.1%) percent claim that learning has become a happier activity for their children. Seventy Three (73.1%) of the parents were happy that their children learn through play way method and learn new games and activities.

Figure 5 -Parents - The most adorable element in ITK



Back home, most parents reported that the children study at home (85.6%) after coming back from the ITK centres which they have not seen before the Covid. According to Figure 6, Eight five percent (85.4%) of the parents were happy that the children come back home happily and share what was taught and what happened in the ITK centres.

Forty one percent of parents shared that their children read books other than school books and thirty seven percent said that the children read news papers which they have not seen. Parents also report enthusiasm among the children to narrate to them about what they had learnt in these centres after returning home. Continuous efforts by the state level officials to initiate different knowledge based interventions to attract the children have yielded positive results. The parents have also acknowledged that the usage of cell phones have considerably reduced among the children due to the increased habit of reading and learning.

The scheme is particularly welcome among households where the parents are finding it difficult to monitor the children and ensure that they actually do some studying at home. For example, when both parents are working and come home after six pm or when there is only a single parent who has to juggle between work and household chores, it becomes very difficult for them to keep tabs on what the children do after they return from school. To that extent the scheme seems to have come out as a very good option.

The improvement in the learning was also asserted in the findings of the RISE Working paper 22/112 - COVID-19 Learning Loss and Recovery: Panel Data Evidence from India¹⁸ that states "First, the absolute learning loss documented in December 2021 is substantially reduced in the February 2022 survey wave and further still in the April 2022 wave. By this point about two-thirds of the learning loss appears to be compensated in both math and Tamil. Second, the shift across the three survey waves in 2021/22 is a shift in intercepts rather than of gradient — that is, recovery was largely uniform regardless of age".

¹⁸ https://riseprogramme.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/COVID-19_Learning_Loss_Recovery_Panel_Data_Evidence_India.pdf (Page 8)

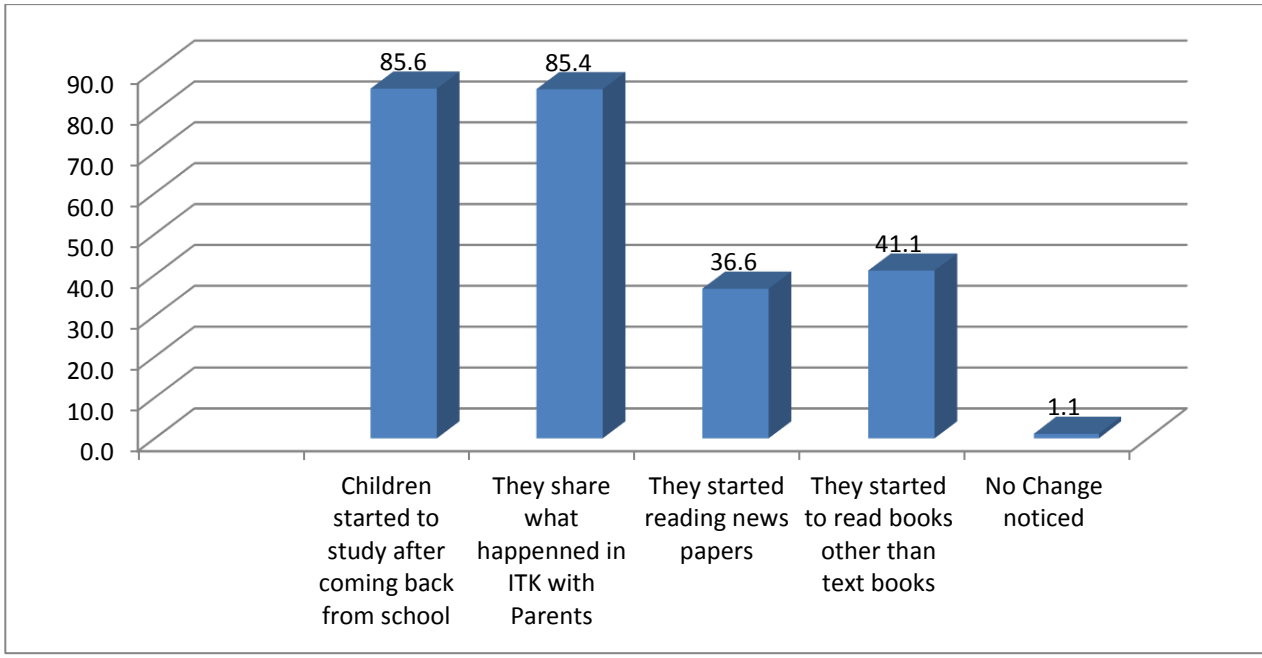


Figure 6 - The Changes Parents witness at home after ITK

ITK Complementing Classroom Teaching

As the ITK was designed to work along with ongoing regular classes, once the schools started after the lock down, the need to complement each other is very vital. Figure 7 shows that almost all the teachers who participated in the study acknowledged that the initiatives taken in the ITK centres complement the classroom teaching. They pointed to creating interest towards learning, reviving the lost language and mathematical skills, thus strengthening the bridging of learning loss effectively.

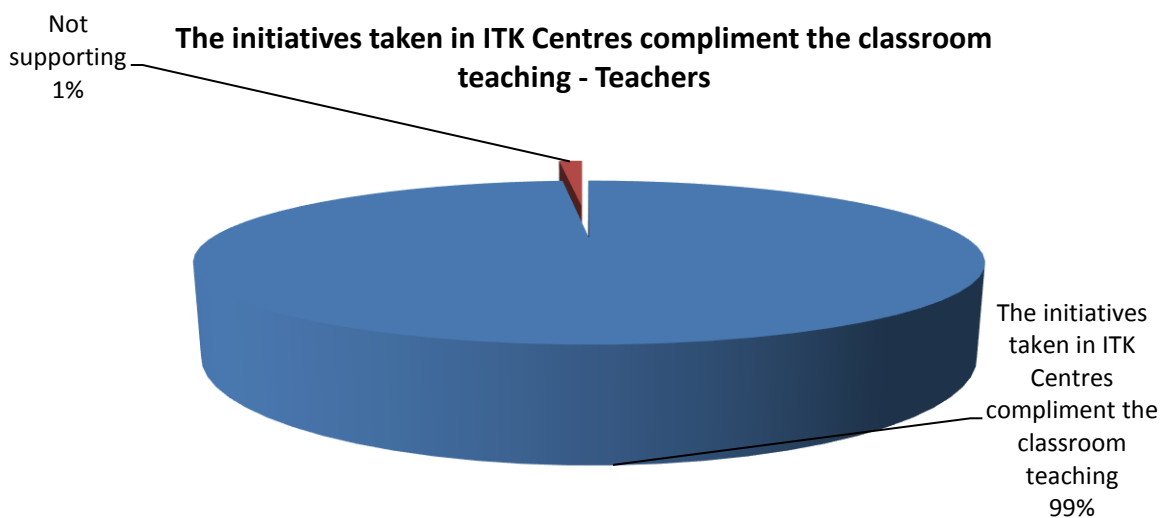


Figure 7 - Initiatives in ITK Centres compliment the classroom teaching - Teachers

According to Figure 8, Eighty Eight Percent (88%) of the teachers claim better interactions in the class as an outcome of the play way method implemented in the ITK Centres. The children have started to open up and interact with the volunteers more freely that resulted in children becoming active in the regular classes.

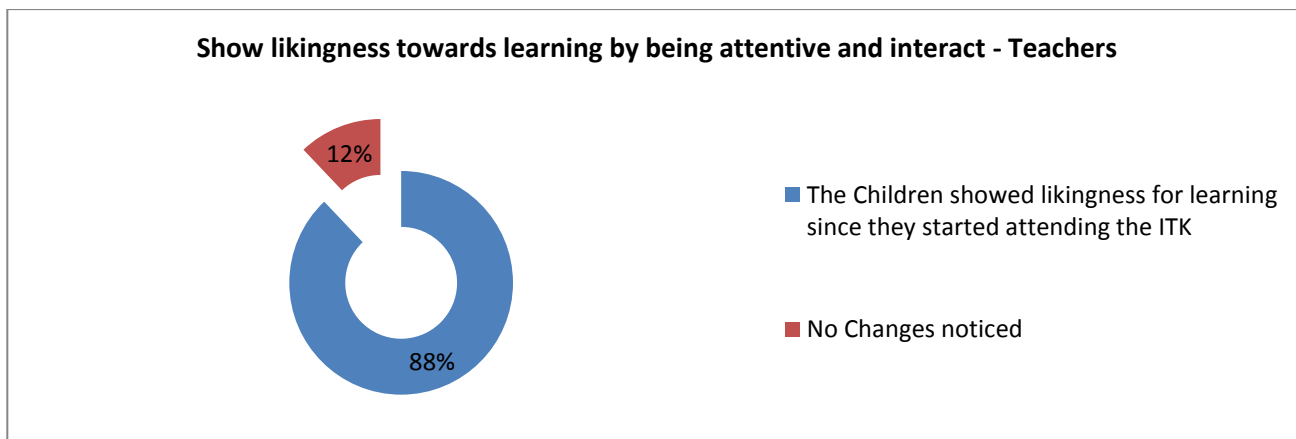


Figure 8 - Attentive and interact during the class hours - Teachers

There are however some difference in the responses among teachers between different districts. The following table (Table 33) further describes the Figure 8 by breaking it to district level responses.

Table 33 - Result of ITK in Class – Teachers’ Response by District wise

	Total		Ariyalur		Cuddalore		Nagappattinam		Salem		Tiruvarur		Villupuram	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Improvement is visible	313	87.9	26	89.7	52	78.8	20	76.9	106	90.6	39	100	70	88.6
No Changes noticed	43	12.1	3	10.3	14	21.2	6	23.1	11	9.4	0	0.0	9	11.4

The teachers from Tiruvarur completely acknowledge the change among the children while 90.6% of their counterparts in Salem too assert it. Acceptance is less in Nagapattinam and Cuddalore with 76.9% and 78.8% respectively. A little more than 10% of the teachers in Ariyalur and Villupuram too do not perceive any change in the classroom behaviour of the children.

Improvement in Language and Mathematics

The enhancement of learning languages and subjects is equally important in the bridging of learning loss along with creating interest among children

Apart from general improvement in the all round participation and initiative in the class by the children, the teachers claim that the mathematical skills of the children have also improved after they started attending the ITK Classes. As per our assessment 93% (Figure 9)

In maths, the children are able to undertake elementary operations and remember multiplication tables much better than before.

acknowledged that they have seen visible changes in the way they respond to classes in the regular school. Many teachers also add that they use the same play way and activity based method in the regular class too which ensures that the children continue to retain the learning interest created in the ITK centres.

- as expressed during an interaction with teachers

The children are able to undertake elementary operations and remember multiplication tables much better than before. Children during the FGD also added that learning mathematics has become fun with the playway method.

Mathematical Skills

■ The mathematical skills have improved - Teachers ■ No Changes noticed

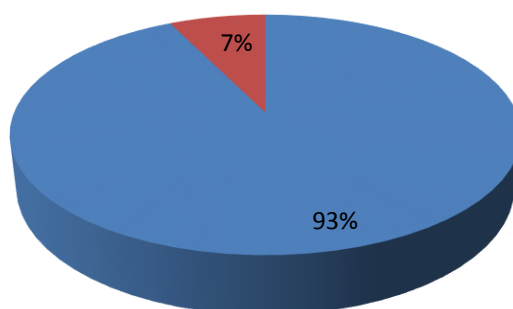


Figure 9 - Improvement in Mathematical Skills

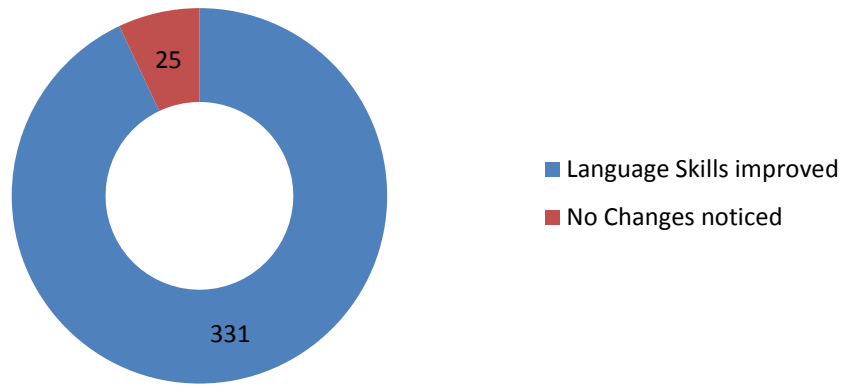


Figure 10 - Improvement in Language Skills

The language skills, both in Tamil and English too have improved considerably (Figure 10) as children participated in different initiatives to encourage reading and learning apart from the centre based learning. The different initiatives include Reading Marathon¹⁹ held in June 2022, Illam thedi kalvi stall in Book Fairs²⁰ being visited by children from different ITK centres and Thodu Vaanam²¹ – a newsletter to engage with the volunteers and students.

One parent from Nagappattinam was overwhelmed that her son participated in the dance programme held during the book fair and got a book as prize.

Ninety three percent of the teachers accept that there is considerable difference in the language skills while 25 of 356 teachers (7%) replied in negative. Both teachers and parents felt that they have definitely improved after the launch of the scheme.

The volunteers and teachers also added that the Phonetics training has added value to the language learning in ITK centres. A parent from Yercaud acknowledges that the English pronunciation of the child has improved along with reading and learning.

The teachers cited the ability of children to string together letters into words, and words into sentences to read them aloud and/or write them. According to them, there was a big setback on this during the pandemic. Both the teachers who are involved in Ennum Ezhuthum and the ITK volunteers felt that there are strong overlaps between the pedagogy of Ennum Ezhuthum and Illam Thedi Kalvi scheme. Therefore, there was a definite consensus that the volunteers can be used as support staff for the teachers when it comes to introducing Ennum Ezhuthum pedagogy, especially if there are plans to scale up to higher classes.

¹⁹ <https://www.dtnext.in/tamilnadu/2022/06/02/12-day-reading-marathon-for-students-launched>

²⁰ <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2022/feb/18/illam-thedi-kalvi-stall-star-attraction-at-chennai-book-fair-2420828.html>

²¹ https://illamthedikalvi.tnschools.gov.in/assets/THODU_VANAM_BOOK1.pdf

This outcome confirms the findings of the RISE Working paper 22/112 - COVID-19 Learning Loss and Recovery: Panel Data Evidence from India²² that states that the programs that seek to provide remedial instruction, by either extending the school day or providing after-school lessons (as here in ITK), is likely to be useful. The report further states continuing such remediation programs may be a very cost-effective tool for remedying the 'learning crisis' in developing countries, even beyond the period of post-pandemic recovery.

Increase in Attendance after Reopening of Schools

One of the major indicators of the success relies in the retention and increase of children in the centres. Thirty two percent (31.8%) of the ITK Centres, 2/3rd (66.2%) centres who have said that they have seen different in attendance have claimed to have increase in the children attending the centres as presented in Table 34 . The increase in attendance was attributed to the return of children from native places with the reopening of school and the play way method implemented in the centres that attracted other children too towards the ITK Centres to list a few.

Table 34 - Type of Change in Attendance after reopening of Schools

		Total		Ariyalur	Cuddalore	Nagappattinam	Salem	Tiruvarur	Villupuram
		n	%						
Increased (n 143)	Primary in Community	49	22.7	13	25	18.8	33	0	12.5
	Upper Primary in Community	59	27.3	26.1	25	25	34.1	0	20.3
	Primary in School	25	11.6	0	20.8	0	5.7	0	23.4
	Upper Primary in School	10	4.6	0	4.2	0	0	0	14.1
Decreased (n 73)	Primary in Community	33	15.3	39.1	8.3	18.8	12.5	100	10.9
	Upper Primary in Community	25	11.6	13	8.3	6.3	13.6	0	10.9
	Primary in School	8	3.7	8.7	4.2	12.5	0	0	4.7
	Upper Primary in School	7	3.2	0	4.2	18.8	1.1	0	3.1
		216	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sixty Eight (68.2%) of the volunteers have responded that there is no change in the attendance of children after the reopening of the schools (Table 35). Over a half (50.4%) of the ITK centres functioning in the community did not witness any change in the attendance while one fourth (24.4%) of the centres located in the community saw either an increase or decrease in attendance.

²² [https://riseprogramme.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/COVID-19 Learning Loss Recovery Panel Data Evidence India.pdf](https://riseprogramme.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/COVID-19_Learning_Loss_Recovery_Panel_Data_Evidence_India.pdf) (Page 14)

Table 35 - Change in Attendance after Reopening of Schools

Status	Type of Centre	Total	%	Ariyalur	Cuddalore	Nagapattinam	Salem	Tiruarur	Villupuram
Changed (n 216)	Primary in Community	82	12.1	21.1	6.6	13.3	18.6	1.3	10.1
	Upper Primary in Community	84	12.4	15.8	5.9	11.1	19.5	0.0	13.5
	Primary in School	33	4.9	3.5	4.4	4.4	2.3	0.0	12.2
	Upper Primary in School	17	2.5	0.0	1.5	6.7	0.5	0.0	7.4
Not Changed (n 463)	Primary in Community	187	27.5	21.1	24.3	26.7	33.5	39.7	17.6
	Upper Primary in Community	155	22.8	19.3	16.9	20.0	24.7	47.4	14.9
	Primary in School	70	10.3	15.8	22.8	8.9	0.9	5.1	13.5
	Upper Primary in School	51	7.5	3.5	17.6	8.9	0.0	6.4	10.8
Total		679	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Among those who have claimed to have witnessed change in attendance according to Table 35, one third of the volunteers (33.8%) acknowledged that there is a decrease in the attendance. The decrease was attributed to a multiple reasons. Some parents claimed that after the reopening of schools and colleges, many volunteers who were working elsewhere are holding the ITK classes after 5.30 and hence it gets late for the children to return home in the dark. Some parents expressed reservation in sending the young girls, especially those who have attained puberty, late in the evening.

In some places, non existence of street lights and distance between the centre and the house of the child in the village was also mentioned. Some volunteers have expressed that children become tired after coming from school. ITK also catered to Private school children in some places. Due to school closures and break in the learning, parents of children who are studying in private schools have encouraged their wards to join the ITK with the children from the neighbourhood. Once the schools have reopened they have discontinued as they have a different pattern of lessons. Few volunteers also listed that since Ennum Eluthum scheme divided the primary sections into 1st to 3rd, and 4th and 5th as two different sections, this resulted in fewer children in each section.

V. Processes that helped in realization of the objectives of the project

Teaching and Learning Materials

Use of innovative teaching and learning materials in the ITK centres had a strong impact on creating interest for learning and learning outcomes. The innovative teaching and learning materials helped in developing critical and creative thinking, make learning easy and enjoyable, and increased motivation.

The volunteers vouch that the 2 days training given to them during initiation included the creation of teaching and learning materials. As seen in Table 36, all the 679

I had been handling private tuitions before onset of Covid. Due to lockdown it was stopped and I joined ITK on the insistence of my students. The training given to the volunteers gave me a feeling that I have become a complete teacher. I'm planning to join teacher training now.

- A 23 year old graduate volunteer from Chennai during Pilot study

(100%) volunteers interviewed for this rapid assessment in unison expressed that the training on teaching and learning materials was very useful. Among the 679 who agreed that the training was useful 614 (90.4%) claimed that they were able to work with all the training materials as they were cost effective and does not require much finances.

Table 36 - Teaching and learning Material

	N	%
The training on Teaching and learning materials was very useful	679	100
The Teaching and learning materials taught during the training was cost effective and can be done without much expenses.	614	90.4
Not cost effective	65	9.6

The volunteers further said that the department also supplied stationery materials for preparing new TLMs that was adequate.

The training enabled the volunteers to understanding the importance of TLMs and the ways to effectively use TLMs in the ITK Centres. Since it was only a two days training, the support from the facilitating school teachers is very important to learn more. The Education Department has issued a circular to the teachers to share the teaching and learning materials available in the school with the ITK centres on a rotation basis. Table 37 explains the adequacy of the TLMs and its on-time supply.

Table 37 - Adequacy and On time Supply of TLMs

Volunteers	Yes		No	
	N	%	n	%
Adequate TLMs are provided to the centres	660	97.2	19	2.8
The TLMs reach the centres on time without delay	664	97.8	15	2.2

More than 97% of the volunteers have acknowledged that they got adequate TLMs for the ITK Centres. Those who have replied in negative shared about the foldable black board that gave way due to regular usage. The volunteers have requested a solid board in the place of foldable one. Similarly, except for the centres located in remote places, the TLMs reached the centres on time. In some places, where the centres are held in open places like places of worship, the TLMs were damaged.

Table 38 - Support by School Teachers for developing TLMs

	Yes		No		Need did not arise		Don't Know	
	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%
Supported the Volunteers in creating TLMs	243	68.3	113	31.7	-	-	-	-
Attempts made to document the TLMs created by Volunteers for future reference	163	45.8	24	6.7	131	36.8	38	10.7
Attempts made to document the activities created by Volunteers for future reference	139	39.0	17	4.8	159	44.7	41	11.5

While the volunteers have shared complete satisfaction over the adequacy and timely delivery of teaching and learning materials, the teachers mentoring the volunteers seems to be missing in one third (31.7%) of the centres according to Table 38. This is despite the fact that there is a clear guideline to the Headmaster and the teacher (through the SMC) to monitor and support the ITK. The lacunae in support further

The Responsibilities of the HMs

- Orienting the volunteers and engaging with them to plan the Illam Thedi Kalvi classes on a weekly basis.
- Ensuring TLMs are provided to the volunteers/centres from the schools.
- Interacting with students regularly regarding the functioning of the centres and address grievances, if any.
 - The GO (MS) No. 148 of the School Education (SSA2) Department dated 26. 10. 2021

manifested when enquired about attempts to document the teaching and learning materials and activities held in the centres. Less than half (45.8%) of the teachers agreed to have made attempts to document the TLMs while a little over one third (39%) attempted in the case of activities and games. On the other hand, 44.7% of the teachers did not see a need to document the activities and games conducted in the centres and 36.8% on documenting TLMs for future reference.

Since the volunteers have understood the impact that the teaching and learning materials are creating among the children in the centres, each of them have initiated and have created innovative models in their centres. Table 39 shows the number of TLMs developed by the volunteers on different subjects and themes over their stint in ITK as volunteer

Table 39 - No of TLMs Developed

Number of TLMs Created	up to 6		6 to 10		11 to 20		21 and above		Not done		Maximum number of TLMs created by an individual volunteer
	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	
Tamil	416	61.3	132	19.4	44	6.5	11	1.6	76	11.2	Highest being 65
English	430	63.3	104	15.3	41	6.0	15	2.2	89	13.1	Highest being 55
Maths	379	55.8	161	23.7	63	9.3	14	2.1	62	9.1	Highest being 55
Science	417	61.4	99	14.6	60	8.8	8	1.2	95	14.0	Highest 71
Others	234	34.5	80	11.8	51	7.5	9	1.3	305		Highest 50

An average of 55% volunteers has done up to 6 teaching and learning materials. Seventeen percent of the volunteers have done upto 10 teaching and learning materials in different themes. An average of 1.7% of the volunteers has done more than 21 TLMs. In each theme, there were individual volunteers who have done more than 50 (highest being 71 in Science) TLMs.

While creating new tools, 62% of the volunteers also responded that they shared this with their counterparts in the school as well as through WhatsApp and Telegram groups.

VI. Participation of Parents, School Management Committee, Panchayat raj members and CSOs in strengthening the ITK initiatives

Support by SMC, Local elected representatives and Civil society organizations

The GO (MS) No. 148 of the School Education (SSA2) Department dated 26. 10. 2021 lists out committees at State, District and Block level for planning, implementing and monitoring. At the school level, the order states that the School Management Committees are the implementing body. The responsibilities of the SMC and the

The Responsibilities of the School Management Committee:

- *Selection of volunteers (giving preference to local volunteers, qualified female volunteers, those with a passion for teaching and education etc.). This selection shall be done after multiple levels of vetting. This shall be done by SMCs in the villages / wards in consultation with the local community. This shall be done using the mobile application exclusively developed for this purpose - Illam Thedi Kalvi App.*
- *Assisting community mobilization and IEC activities.*
- *Identification of the space for Illam Thedi Kalvi centres near the hamlets and ensuring that the Illam Thedi Kalvi centres are safe, hygienic and accessible to the student.*
- *Facilitating the centre with all the required amenities such as water, electricity and ensuring the safety and hygiene of the centres.*
- *Mapping volunteers with children and in case of absence of volunteers ensuring that substitution is done.*
- *Ensuring the safety of children as well as volunteers.*
- *Organizing events / fests planned as part of the Illam Thedi Kalvi programme.*
- *Ensuring the latest SOP, on the prevention of COVID-19 spread, provided by both Union and State Governments*

Headmaster are listed out in the said GO.

With Parents, Teachers and Elected Local Body representatives from the panchayat as its members, the SMCs constitute a complete team of people responsible locally for the implementation of the ITK. The following table (Table 40) explains about the support received from teachers and the other stake holders. As seen in the previous tables, the volunteers have

acknowledged the support by the teachers in the day to day functioning of the ITK Centres. When it comes to going outside the school to get support, the collaborative effort is gradually decreasing. Table 40 shows that 99.3% volunteers have acknowledged that the teachers extend support. The support - though it cannot be

termed as collaborative effort - from the parents of children was also quite impressive with 96.3% volunteers acknowledging it.

SMC has the mandate to monitor and guide the functioning of ITK Centres. Compared to the overwhelming support from the school and parents, the support from SMC was 83.8%. In places where they have got the support from SMC, they have supported in enrolment and retention. They also supported whenever there were local issues. Those who said that there is no support from SMC claimed that the need to approach the SMC does not arise as the support from the school was enough. Hence the attempt to get the support of SMC is lower.

This collaborative effort further reduces to 57.3% on reaching out to civil society organizations that work in the community. Volunteers have claimed that either they were not aware of any civil society organizations in the community or they felt that there is no need to approach them.

Table 40 - Support for smooth functioning of ITK Centres

Volunteers	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
Teachers support the day to day functioning of ITK Centres	674	99.3	5	0.7
Civil Society organizations in the community support the day to day functioning of ITK Centres	389	57.3	290	42.7
SMC members support the day to day functioning and in the enrolment and retention children in ITK Centres	569	83.8	110	16.2
Parents of Children in the community support the day to day functioning of ITK Centres	654	96.3	25	3.7
Elected local body members in the community support the day to day functioning of ITK Centres	364	53.6	315	46.4

Elected local body members represent the government in the locality. They have the mandate at different levels for development of school in their constituency. The volunteers, 53.6% of them, who have acknowledged the collaborative role of the elected local body representatives, have said that they supported in identifying the place for the ITK Centres, getting them ready with electricity, water, sanitation facilities and other support. The elected local body members also supported in creating awareness about ITK in Gram Sabha meetings. For volunteers who have replied in negative said that the needs of the ITK centres are met by headmasters and hence the need to approach the PRI members did not arise. Some also claimed that the PRI members are not reachable as they live elsewhere.

In the training we were taught play way method. The parents since they are in the neighbourhood, they leave their regular chores and watch without disturbing the way we handle the sessions in play way method. They witness the children singing, drawing and participating in the activities. They share what they witnessed with fellow parents

- A 27 year old D T Ed completed Volunteer from Salem

Table 41 - Support to ITK – Headmasters Perspective

Head Masters	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Elected local body members in the community support the day to day functioning of ITK Centres	266	73.5	96	26.5
Civil Society organizations in the community support the day to day functioning of ITK Centres	205	56.6	157	43.4

The response from the headmasters on the support from elected local body members was a bit different from that of the volunteers. According to Table 41, Seventy Three (73.5%) percent of the head masters have acknowledged the support of Local Body members. The phenomenon could be due the relationship that existed even before the advent of ITK centres. Fifty Seven percent (56.6 %) of the headmasters acknowledge the support from civil society organizations for the smooth functioning of ITK. The response is similar among the volunteers too is 57.3% (Table 40).

VII. Processes for successful implementation

Child Friendliness and Child Protection at the centres

Child friendliness is a vital element in the ITK centres as that is set to address the interest of children to come to the centres after the long Covid break. Child Protection is another important factor as the children attend ITK centres in their neighbourhood and in houses of volunteers.

Child friendliness is measured in this assessment in terms of attempts by volunteers to make the centre child friendly and the Teaching and learning materials. The safety of the centre is measured by accessibility to toilets and in terms of protection from environmental hazards and emergencies.

Table 42 - Child Friendliness and Safety of the centres

Child Friendliness and Safety of the centres		Yes		No	
		n	%	n	%
The ITK centres are converted into child friendly places to enable a conducive environment for learning		674	99.3	5	0.7
Enough Teaching and learning and IEC materials are distributed by the department for display in the centres		660	97.2	19	2.8
The toilets for children are at the easily accessible distance		652	96.0	27	4.0
The centres are identified as safe places to face any environmental hazard and emergencies – Volunteer	Volunteers	672	99.0	7	1.0
	Teachers	331	91.4	31	8.6

The above table (Table 42) shows that more than 95% of the ITK centres are perceived by the volunteers as child friendly and safe.

During the in-depth interviews, children attending ITK centres located in the temples and houses of volunteers have claimed that they had to go to their homes or to the nearby public places for relieving themselves. Some of the ITK

Handling the children with care and concern was taught to us as core element in the training. That was very helpful to us in relating with our children in the centre without any power relationship of teacher student but as peers in learning.

– A 27 year old Volunteer from Villupuram

centres functioning from temple premises or volunteers' houses were not very far for many of the students, hence access was not a big issue. But it may be tough for children who come from neighbouring streets or hamlets. In a school, during a FGD, children expressed that the boys do not have access to toilet in school. Similarly, 99% of the volunteers have stated that the centres are safe from environmental hazards as well as emergencies, while only 91.4% of the Head Masters agree to that (Table 42). This is also because some of the centres have moved from public places to volunteers' residence, which the volunteers consider a safe place.

The children also feel comfortable with the volunteers and also tend to convey any issues that they may have in their households or families with the volunteers more frequently than with their school teachers. One volunteer reported one such incident. After observing a girl student's sudden change of mood, she found out that it had to do with a boy who apparently expressed interest in that girl. She was scared to tell her parents because they may stop her from continuing in school. She was also scared of telling her teachers because she would be then identified as the person who had informed on him.

The volunteer handled it well and ensured that the boy did not harass her and at the same time protected her identity. Given their lower age profile and the informal nature of interactions, the students are likely to feel a lot more comfortable sharing their feelings with them.

Table 43 - Child Protection in ITK Centres – Headmasters and Parents' Perspective

Respondents	Child Protection in ITK Centres	Yes		No	
		n	%	n	%
Parents	Children are happily attending the ITK Centres	720	99.9	1	0.1
	There is NO discrimination in ITK Centres	720	99.9	1	0.1
Head Masters	Monitoring the ITK Volunteers that they do not engage in Physical or Verbal punishments with the children	237	65.5	125	34.5
	For ensuring child protection we have a system for Do's and Don'ts in the Centres	213	58.8	149	41.2

Table 43 depicts the perspectives of Parents and Head Masters on Child Protection in the Centres. Parents have reposed their faith in the school and strongly believe that the children are happy and they are protected. Sending them to ITK centres ensures that the children are not only safe and monitored but also actually do some study and complete their homework. This is manifested in their answer with near per cent of the parents responding in affirmative. One parent, a father responded in negative claiming that since his ward was not regular to the centre he was unable to answer it. The same was also revealed in the in-depth discussions with the parents. In centres that are held in the schools, the infrastructure and ambience is the same and hence there is no complaint from the parents. Similarly, for the children who attend the ITK centres at the community, the ITK volunteer is from the same community and she is already known to the parents, hence the ambience is accustomed to them. When explored with the field enumerators if there is any complaint of discrimination, they also responded that the existing caste based neighbourhoods have ensured that the ITK centres are held within the community of a particular social group and children from other communities do not venture into other neighbourhoods. Hence there is no scope for discrimination. In some places, as teachers and volunteers claim, the children attend the ITK Centres in their own neighbourhood though the number of children in the particular centre is higher than proposed.

Children attending the centre address me as Akka (elder sister) that creates a strong bond. Since I know the parents of these children as I was from the same locality, the acceptance by them was natural and mutual. This sense of belonging helps me to connect with them effectively

– A 23 year old Volunteer from Villupuram

According to Table 43, more than one third (65.5%) of the Head Masters have responded that they neither monitor corporal punishments nor have a list of do's and don'ts in ITK Centres. Since 75 % of the centres are functioning in the neighbourhoods, and predominantly in the private domain of the residences of volunteers, the Head Masters feel that monitoring is not their mandate.

Children on asked about where do they complain if they have an issue, expressed that there is no complaint or grievance redressal mechanism in ITK. Manavar Manasu – the grievance redressal complaint box in schools set up a year back does not exist in many schools. The students claim that the boxes were kept only for a week or it is kept inside the Headmaster's room.

Role of Communication Channels

The Communication Channels helps in better coordination among the different stake holders. Exclusive mobile application was created and used for attendance and other updates. WhatsApp and Telegram Groups for two way communication along with Facebook and Instagram Page were also used for communication outside the group.

Table 44 - Communication Channel Levels for Volunteers

Communication Channels and types of groups	WhatsApp		Telegram	
	N	%	N	%
Cluster Level	531	78.2	250	36.8
Block Level	562	82.8	289	42.6
District Level	271	39.9	251	37.0
State Level	110	16.2	163	24.0
Not in any group	14	2.1	63	9.3
No Smart Phone	4	0.6	9	1.3

Communication through WhatsApp was grouped at different levels. According to Table 44, Eighty three (82.8%) of the volunteers responded that they are part of Block level group and 78.2% of the volunteers have also joined in cluster level groups.

The School Education Department has also utilized Telegram Group as WhatsApp has 256 members limit for groups, whereas the Telegram groups offer limitless participation in groups. Forty three percent (42.6%) of the volunteers are part of Telegram group at the Block level and 36.8% of the respondents were part of Cluster level Telegram Group. Though Telegram offers limitless members in groups, the patronage among the volunteers for the Telegram mobile app is very low and remains underutilized. A very small group of volunteers do not have smart phones and get updated from their school teachers.

Table 45 presents the type of communication that happens in the social media groups. In the WhatsApp Group interaction between the volunteers (58%), sharing and learning new teaching and learning materials (57.9%) and updating about the day to day activities of the centres (54.5%) takes the priority while 43% volunteers have said that they listen to the communication from the higher officials. The trend is almost the same in Telegram group too.

Table 45 - Type of Communication in the Social Media Groups

Type of Channels	WhatsApp		Telegram	
	N	%	N	%
Interaction between volunteers	394	58.0	132	19.4
New teaching and learning materials	393	57.9	319	47.0
Day to day activities	370	54.5	328	48.3
Communication from higher officials	292	43.0	253	37.3
Problem Solving	181	26.7	125	18.4
Others	0	0.0	0	0.0

Monitoring

Monitoring is vital for any scheme to deliver its objective. The school education department has set up state, district and block level committees for monitoring. The department also mandated the SMC and the Head Master with the responsibility of Implementing and Monitoring the scheme at the school level.

Table 46 - Monitoring of ITK

Volunteers	Yes		No	
	n	%	No	%
Headmaster and Teachers continuously monitor and support in increasing the attendance and activities in the centre	661	97.3	18	2.7
SMC members continuously monitor and offer suggestions when something goes wrong in the centre	437	64.4	242	35.6
BRC and Coordinators monitor and guide us	642	94.6	37	5.4
The monitoring does not find fault but helps in improving	585	86.2	94	13.8

Table 46 depicts the monitoring of the ITK centres. The volunteers (97.3 %) have acknowledged that school headmasters and teachers continuously monitor and support the ITK centres by ensuring regular attendance of children and bringing back the children who were not regular to the centres. The TLMs are also coordinated by the school headmasters and teachers. Ninety five (94.6%) percent of the volunteers have claimed that the Block Coordinators and District Coordinators continuously monitor and guide them. Sixty four (64.4%) percent of the volunteers have recorded that the SMC members visit the centres on intervals and offer support in getting the facilities, bringing the dropped out children back to classes and sometimes offer snacks to the children. The volunteers also noted that the monitoring visit by the Teachers, BRC, District Coordinators and SMC members were very helpful and does not hinder them in any way.

VIII. Opinion and Perception on Sustaining the ITK Scheme

Realization of ITK Objectives

Table 47 - Realized the objective of ITK – Headmasters’ Perspective

Head Masters		n	%
Do you think the objective of the ITK has been achieved and the ITK should continue	Not Achieved and no need to continue	14	3.9
	Achieved but the good scheme should continue	295	81.5
	Achieved and no need to continue	47	13.0
	Not Achieved	1	0.3
	Others	5	1.4

While consolidating the perspectives of the Head Masters, the assessment explored more on why they wish ITK should continue or not continue. According to Table 47, the headmasters have responded almost in the same line with the parents and teachers. Eighty one percent (81.5%) of them have acknowledged that the objectives of the ITK were met but the momentum created by the ITK should continue as it was a very good scheme. Thirteen percent of them have responded as achieved while 4.2 % said otherwise. Some teachers have responded that the ITK can be restricted till primary sections

But the difficulty is that the arrangement for addressing the learning gap of two years of loss of school year has come to be considered as tuition centre. As per the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, Section 28 that states “Prohibition of private tuition by teacher.—No teacher shall engage himself or herself in private tuition or private teaching activity” Though the teacher himself or herself were not in the ITK teaching activity, the soul of the act is that private tuitions eats into the time of children’s play time and the teachers should not push their teaching responsibility to tuition centres. Hence the state, which runs the schools, cannot run the tuition centres too. But the need for some supplementary activity beyond school level learning was highlighted from the discussion with the parents. With a vast majority of the parents being illiterate or not in a position to support their children in the present education model, they feel the need for support after school hours. ITK perfectly fits to the requirement offering play way method of learning, a perfect blend for evening play time combining with learning. Opening up of avenues for non curricular reading, library activities, handicrafts, participation in competitions, exposure visits, etc added value in making ITK, a most sought after intervention with children.

Continuing ITK

The Illam Thedi Kalvi scheme which was launched as a six months project in November 2021 was extended for 6 more months. The rapid assessment tried enquire from the respondents and their perception to continue the initiatives taken after the closure of ITK. This is presented in Table 48.

An equal number of volunteers have replied in the affirmative and negative. Many have said that they will continue without any salary, while some have said, they'll move to contributory mode. For the question whether the school – Head Master or Teachers – has taken any initiative one third (37.3%) of them have responded that the Headmaster and teachers are approaching local body representatives, SMC and the local CSOs for sustaining the initiative. The same is strongly seconded by the 71.9% teachers who have said that they will not allow the positive changes that has happened in the school to fade away and will make attempts to sustain it.

If in case the government decides to drop the scheme, it will be a huge setback for our children and their educational future

- A Parent during the Focussed Group Discussion

Table 48 - Initiatives by Teachers and Volunteers to Sustain ITK

	Yes		No		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Volunteers - Any initiatives taken by the volunteer to continue the ITK centre after its completion	330	48.6	339	49.9	10	1.5
Volunteers - Any initiatives taken by the school management to continue the ITK centre after its completion	253	37.3	426	62.7	0	0
Volunteers - Any initiatives taken by the local CSOs to continue the ITK centre after its completion	36	5.3	643	94.7	0	0
Teachers - Any initiatives taken at the school level to sustain the momentum created by ITK	256	71.9	100	28.1	-	-

Since there has been an overwhelming response to the ITK across the stake holders and end of the scheduled project is nearing, it is quite normal to consider whether the project aimed at bridging the learning gap created by the Covid19 school closures. Volunteers and Parents have categorically stated that the project should continue. Table 49 presents the response of the different stake holders on the continuing of the ITK intervention. All most all the volunteers, except 1.5%, shared that the Illam thedi kalvi scheme should continue. The same was echoed by 89.3% of the school teachers.

I cannot afford to send my child to private tuition. With Illam thedi kalvi our children are also going to tuition and we are happy that they have started studying. This should not be stopped. This should continue as the school continues.

- a parent from Cuddalore district

Table 49 Perspectives of Stakeholders on continuing the ITK

Do you wish that the ITK Scheme should be continued	Yes		No	
	n	%	No	%
Volunteers	669	98.5	10	1.5
Parents	711	98.6	10	1.4
Teachers	318	89.3	38	10.7

On the question of how long, a majority said it should continue for a longer period. An equal number said that it should continue at least till the end of the academic year. Few others have said that it will be great if continues until their wards complete their elementary classes.

The teachers too have responded positively. According to them, both the school students and the volunteers both are like their children. Some volunteers are alumni of the school or the teachers. So extending the ITK will be a welcome move as both their children and the volunteers will benefit greatly out it.

Qualitative Inputs from FGDs

- The teachers in Primary school welcome the ITK programme and consider it to complement their classroom teaching. In Upper Primary sections, the teachers however look at the programme as intrusion.
- Teachers have shared that they are not being consulted on the initiatives in ITK and some also felt that the importance for the regular classes are getting sidelined.
- In some places the daughter or relatives of Local Body members are recruited as Volunteers. The teachers were not able to monitor them because of the influence these volunteers wield.
- Volunteers felt that conducting the regular ITK sessions are okay. But attending the meetings during the day time is difficult as many of the volunteers are home makers and the others are either working or studying during the day.
- There were several instances of volunteers working overtime, At times the children reach the centre well ahead of time. Over the weekends, at times the children insist on working with them. Often, they are also asked to help them out with homework or prepare for any upcoming exams/tests in school.
- There is a discrepancy between what parents want from the scheme and the way the scheme is designed.
 - For almost all parents the idea is that ITK scheme is meant to help students perform better in school.
 - As volunteers therefore, they are subject to two imperatives; one, as the scheme envisages them to improve the competencies of schoolchildren; and two, to communicate to the parents that their work actually helps students do better in school. As a result, they often help students carry out school homework during these sessions.
 - ITK centres have therefore emerged as after-school care Centres for young children apart from being a place for overcoming learning losses.
- By and large there is satisfaction about the quality of training being provided for the volunteers. A few volunteers said that the intake of students have increased since they started. They narrated instances of children from the neighbourhood joining after feedback from parents whose children had enrolled earlier.

- In Cuddalore, the enumerators shared that the enthusiasm around ITK has encouraged many parents to enrol the children into government school leaving the private schools.
- The parents shared that they felt discrimination in private schools, but with ITK, some of them claimed to have enrolled in government schools and were happy for it.
- Parents claim that they visit the ITK centre on regular intervals and have also claimed that they were able to witness that their children have gained confidence. Their worries that the children will get into bad company and will venture too close to the lakes and water bodies are now taken care.
- Some volunteers also felt that providing some nutritious snacks during the ITK will help children, since many of them directly come to centres without any evening snacks at home.
- One important change that the scheme has brought about has to do with the creation of new social spaces for interaction. For example, a migrant volunteer said that after joining the scheme she has been able to forge new relationships in the community and the children and their parents have now become almost a family to her. Many report an improved sense of status and respect among the community members.
 - Headmasters also shared that the community participation has increased with the ITK.
 - Parents also take up issues like street light with the local body in order to provide safe commuting of children in the evening after the ITK.
- There have been dropouts of both volunteers and students. The former has been compensated by new rounds of recruitment of volunteers.
 - In case of the latter, an important reason seems to be a perception among parents that the children are not being trained in these centres to get better marks unlike in private tuitions. So some have shifted to private tuitions. But this is being reversed now with volunteers sparing some time, one hour for ITK and one hour for helping the students undertake homework as well.

- This perception can also be changed if the school examination system can be aligned with the pedagogical strengths of the Ennum Ezhuthum scheme.
- In some centres, volunteers allow the higher class children to attend the centre, as they were in ITK centre in the beginning and were promoted to 9th during the beginning of the new academic year.
- Some exclusions were reported when the sessions were being held either in the household premises of the volunteers, or in spaces which are not completely neutral. In one instance, the enrolment actually increased when there was a shift to a neutral place like the community Centre building.
 - At times, the common premises are slightly far and returning from the centres after 7 pm are seen as unsafe by some parents.
 - To overcome this volunteers walk an extra mile to personally reach the children back home or communicate through parents WhatsApp group on children reaching home.
- A troubling observation but not pertaining to ITK is that often students are able to read and write words in English and in Tamil but are not aware of what the words actually mean. This maybe an outcome of emphasis on rote-based learning which can potentially be addressed by changing the nature of questions being asked in tests.
- The volunteers and parents acknowledge that students are learning values and good habits like dressing properly, being punctual, self initiative and also learnt to say 'Please', 'Sorry' and 'Thank you'
- Volunteers claim that they are engaged by the school in different ways apart from the ITK sessions like filling up the existing vacancy. Till now on days when teachers take leave or when they go on official duty, and sometimes for administrative roles. Sometimes they perform these roles without any compensation.

Requests from Volunteers:

- The department should explore the possibility of increasing the monthly honorarium to Rs 2000 per month and also ensure timely payment.
- There is an expectation that this experience will help them in getting formal positions.
 - Some additional marks can be given to them when recruitment is being done through TRB or TNPSC
 - A certificate of work experience will be beneficial for them when they seek jobs.
- Many said that it will be nice if the students are given separate notebooks for the work being undertaken under ITK.
- Cloth boards have all given away and they requested for small green boards to be used.
- Children should be exposed to Smart Classroom and Computers during the ITK centres, requested the parents. Crayons and other material for activities can be increased.
- Conducting learning sessions in Veranda or terrace in the houses of the volunteers during the rainy season is difficult as the space in the volunteers' houses is not enough to accommodate all the children.
 - Some suggested that the Anganwadis can be a good alternative as the Anganwadis will close by 4.00 pm.
- Ennum Ezhuthum material can be given to ITK volunteers as well as they are helping out the students on this.
- Some felt that they can also be permitted to conduct tests so that the parents get to know how their children are doing. This essentially comes because of complaint from parents that they are not aware of the extent of learning going on in the ITK centres.
- In terms of monitoring ITK scheme, Teachers and Headmasters have shared their reservation on monitoring the neighbourhood based centres as they are far from the school. Some felt that the number of district level monitors can be increased.

Major Findings

I. Centres and Volunteers

- a. Six Hundred and Seventy Nine (679) Volunteers from 362 schools participated in the survey (excluding the participants in Focus Group Discussions) of which 372 are Primary level centres and 307 are Upper Primary Levels
- b. Almost all, 677 of the total 679 volunteers are women and 2 are men.
 - i. Respondents between 21 and 30 years of age constitute two third (63.9%) of the entire work force.
- c. Two - third ie 62.7% of the volunteers handling primary section and 89.2% of the volunteers handling upper primary section have completed at least under graduation degree.
- d. Fifty two percent (52.4%) of the respondents also hold either teacher education diploma or degree. Among those who hold different teachers' education qualification 45.9% of the volunteers handling Primary sections and 54.9% in Upper primary sections hold Bachelors degree (B. Ed) in Education.
- e. Thirty Eight (37.8%) percent of the volunteers are from Most Backward Communities. The same is represented in all districts with volunteers from MBC as the highest population except in Tiruvarur where the highest population of volunteers (46.3%) are from Scheduled caste and the next highest representation is from Backward Communities.
- f. Two third (63%) of the volunteers have not worked anywhere before but used this opportunity to put their skills to test of taking a vocation especially in the late Covid situation.
 - i. Out of 428 respondents who have responded as they don't have any previous work experience, 174 of them are from the most backward communities, 124 are from scheduled castes and 71 are from the backward communities.
- g. Almost Cent percent (99.9%) of the volunteers registered for ITK understanding the project and underwent the Aptitude test held for the selection.
- h. The headmasters encouraged their alumni (42.8%) and those already working closely with the school (37.3%) to apply for volunteering.

- i. In tune with objective of reaching out to the children in their neighbourhood, nearly three fourth (74.8%) of the centres assessed are located in the community. Among this, Salem leads with 96.3% of centres are located in the community, Tiruvarur with 88.5% of the centres in community. On the other hand Cuddalore stands with lower community based centres with 53.7% centres and Villupuram with 56.1 % of the centres.
- j. Ninety Five percent (95%) of the ITK centres are perceived by the volunteers as child friendly and safe. Similarly, 99% of the volunteers have stated that the centres are safe from environmental hazards as well as emergencies.
- k. Eighty four percent of the volunteers have acknowledged the role of school teachers in identifying the place for the conduct of the centres. Thirty three percent School Management Committee members too supported the volunteers and teachers.
- l. Anganwadi Centres (43.9%) and Community halls (43.4%) had been the primary target of the school Head Masters while searching for community spaces for holding ITK Classes.

II. Students Attendance

- a. Sixty Eight (68.2%) of the volunteers have responded that there is no change in the attendance of the children after the reopening of the schools after the long closure.
 - i. Over a half (50.4%) of the ITK centres functioning in the community did not witness any change in the attendance while one fourth (24.4%) of the centres located in the community saw either an increase or decrease in the attendance.
- b. Two third of respondents (66.2%) who have witnessed change in attendance, recorded that the changes are positive in nature with increase in the children attending the centres.
 - i. The increase in attendance was attributed to the return of children from native places on the reopening of school and the play way method implemented in the centres that attracted other children too towards the ITK Centres.
- c. Eleven percent (10.8%) of the volunteers acknowledged that there is a decrease in the attendance.

- i. The decrease was attributed to tiredness of children after coming from school, homework, private school children have left as they have a different pattern of lessons.
- ii. Few volunteers also listed that since Ennum Eluthum scheme divided the primary sections into 1st to 3rd and 4th and 5th as two different sections thus resulting in fewer children in each section.

III. Volunteer Training and its usefulness

- a. Ninety eight percent (98.2%) of the respondents have claimed that the training had been helpful for them to understand the objectives and implementation of the scheme.
 - i. Rest 1.8% have felt that the days weren't enough and some have claimed senior teachers should have been engaged to handle the sessions.
- b. All the volunteers acknowledged that the two-day training offered for the Volunteers was very helpful to handle the sessions in the ITK Centres.
- c. All the volunteers vouched that the training was useful for handling children effectively and effectively interacting and creating rapport with their parents.
- d. All the 679 (100%) volunteers interviewed expressed that the training on teaching and learning materials was very useful. Among the 679 who agreed that the training was useful, 614 (90.4%) of them have claimed that they were able to try doing all the TLMs as they were cheaper.

IV. Views of Volunteers on ITK

- a. Eighty four percent of the volunteers have acknowledged the role of school teachers in identifying the place for the conduct of the centres. Thirty three percent of the respondents have shared School Management Committee (SMC) members too supported the volunteers and teachers in identifying the place for the centre.
- b. Ninety Five percent (95%) of the ITK centres are perceived by the volunteers as child friendly and safe. Similarly, 99% of the volunteers have stated that the centres are safe from environmental hazards as well as emergencies
- c. All volunteers expressed that the training on teaching and learning materials was very useful. In fact 90.4% of them claimed that they were

able to work with all the training materials as they were cost effective and do not require much finances.

- d. More than 97% of the volunteers have acknowledged that they have got adequate TLMs for the ITK Centres.
- e. An average of 55% volunteers has created up to 6 teaching and learning materials. Seventeen percent of the volunteers have done upto 10 teaching and learning materials in different themes. An average of 1.7% of the volunteers has developed more than 21 TLMs. In each theme, there were individual volunteers who have done more than 50 (highest being 71 in Science) TLMs.
- f. Almost cent percent (99.3%) of the volunteers have acknowledged that the teachers extended support. And 96.3% volunteers acknowledged the support from the parents of children, 83.8% said the SMC members supported the ITK interventions by volunteers.
- g. Fifty Four percent (53.6%) volunteers acknowledged the support of elected local body representatives in identifying the place for the ITK Centres, getting them ready with electricity, water, sanitation facilities and other support.
- h. Eight Five percent of the volunteers have shared that adding the ITK Volunteers as Educationist in SMCs is a great acknowledgement. Almost same number of the volunteers have shared that it was motivating.
 - i. A miniscule population (less than 3%) also shared that it will be an additional task or the headmaster will give more work.

V. Views of Parents on ITK

- a. Seven Hundred and Twenty One Parents participated in the rapid assessment excluding those who participated in the focus group discussions.
 - i. Mothers constituted 85.6%, Fathers 14% and 0.4 % are guardians
 - ii. Among the districts, Thiruvarur had highest percentage (93.3%) of participation from mothers and Ariyalur had highest participation (37.9%) among fathers.
- b. Almost all the parents – 717 out of 721 parents who took part in the rapid assessment responded in assertive that ITK helped in creating interest and bridging the learning loss.

- c. Eighty five (85.6%) percent of the parents have said their wards have started to learn better. Seventy Four (74.1%) percent claim that learning has become a happier activity for their children. Seventy Three (73.1%) of the parents were happy that their children learn the play way and learn new games and activities.
- d. The parents shared that the children study at home (85.6%) after coming back from the ITK centres which they have not seen before the Covid.
- e. Eight five percent (85.4%) of the parents were happy that the children come back home happily and share what happened in the ITK centres with lot of smiles.
- f. Forty one percent parents shared that their children read books other than school books and
 - i. Thirty seven percent read news papers which they have not seen before attending the ITK centres
- g. There is no complaint or grievance redressal mechanism in ITK.
 - i. Manavar Manasu – the grievance redressal complaint box in schools set up a year back does not exist in many schools.
 - ii. The students claim that the boxes were kept only for a week or it is kept inside the Headmaster’s room.

VI. Views of Teachers on ITK

- a. Three hundred and Fifty Six teachers from 6 districts were interviewed for the rapid assessment.
- b. Ninety Nine (98.9%) teachers assert that the play way method employed in the ITK centres has rekindled the interest to learning among children.
- c. Almost all the teachers (99%) have acknowledged that the initiatives taken in the ITK centres compliment the regular classroom.
- d. Eighty Eight percent of the teachers claim that as an outcome of the play way method implemented in the ITK Centres. The children have started to open up and interact with the volunteers more freely this helped children to become more active in the regular classes.
- e. Ninety three percent teachers acknowledged that they have seen visible changes as they handle mathematics in the regular classes after the advent of ITK. Similarly, ninety three percent of the teachers accept that there is considerable improvement in the language skills.

- f. Less than half (45.8%) of the teachers have made attempts to document the TLMs used by Volunteers while it's little over one third (39%) for the activities and games. On the other hand, 44.7% of the teachers did not see the need to document the activities and games conducted in the centres for future reference.
- g. Ninety Seven (97%) percent of the teachers have shared that inducting the ITK Volunteers as Educationists in the SMC will help in sustaining the community interaction enabled by the ITK Volunteers in the betterment of the school and learning of children.
- h. Ninety Seven percent (97.3 %) volunteers have acknowledged that school headmasters and teachers continuously monitor and support the ITK centres by ensuring regular attendance of children and bringing back the children who were not regular to the centres.
 - i. Ninety five (94.6%) percent of the volunteers have claimed that the Block Coordinators and District Coordinators continuously monitor and guide them.
 - ii. Sixty four (64.4%) percent of the volunteers have recorded that the SMC members visit the centres periodically and sometimes offer snacks to the children. They also offer support in getting the facilities for the centre and bringing the drop out children back to classes.
- i. Eighty Three percent (82.8%) of the volunteers are part of block level WhatsApp group and 42.6% in Telegram²³.
 - i. In the WhatsApp Group interaction between the volunteers (58%), sharing and learning new teaching and learning materials (57.9%) and updating about the day to day activities of the centres (54.5%) takes the priority while 43% volunteers have said that they listen to the communication from the higher officials. The trend is almost the same in Telegram group too.

VII. Views of Headmasters on ITK

- a. The headmasters encouraged their alumni (42.8%) and those already working closely with the school (37.3%) to apply for volunteering.

²³ Telegram Mobile Application allows countless members to be added in a group, while WhatsApp restricts to 256 members in one group.

- b. Ninety three percent (93.4%) of Head Masters have acknowledged that on the information about of recruitment of volunteers for ITK appeared in newspapers, television and social media, individuals with interest, commitment, skill and attitude came forward in good numbers.
- c. Anganwadi Centres (43.9%) and Community halls (43.4%) had been the primary target of the school Head Masters while searching for community spaces for holding ITK Classes.
- d. Since majority of the places identified by Head Masters were Anganwadi centres and community halls, more than 85% of them have asserted that it wasn't difficult to get the place ready for learning.
- e. Ninety one percent (91.4%) of the Head Masters have stated that the centres are safe from environmental hazards as well as emergencies.
- f. More than one third of the Head Masters have responded that they neither monitor corporal punishments (34.5%) nor have a list of do's and don'ts in ITK Centres (41.2%).
- g. Seventy Three (73.5%) percent of the head masters acknowledged the support of Local Body members in getting the ITK centres located in community places and in getting them ready with electricity, water and sanitation facilities.

VIII. Combined views on usefulness and need to continue ITK

- a. All most all the respondents, (except 1.5%) stated that the Illam thedi kalvi scheme should continue. The same was echoed by 89.3% of the school teachers.
 - i. A majority of the parents said it should continue like school, endlessly as tuition centre.
 - ii. An equal number have said it should continue at least till the end of the academic year.
 - iii. Few others have said that it will be great if it continues until their wards complete their elementary classes.
 - iv. Eighty one percent (81.5%) of the head masters have acknowledged that the objectives of the ITK were met but the momentum created by the ITK should continue as it was a very good scheme.

Conclusion

Illam Thedi Kalvi, a bridging activity to address the learning loss has emerged as an effective intervention not only to bridge the loss but also in creating a culture of joyful reading and learning among the children. In tune with the Building Back Better²⁴ - the BBB concept, the ITK was creating a community – empowering 2 lakh plus volunteers, engaging parents and local communities and enabling children – with knowledge based interventions. The need for converting this convergence into a social movement with the participation of the local community will yield results in the longer run. The momentum that the ITK has created in less than a year is tremendous and the voices of Parents, Teachers, Headmasters and Volunteers that the ITK should continue cannot be neglected. True to the Social Justice model of development, ITK should continue in an improvised model from being a building back model to empowering model, thus creating socially aware and educationally competent generation of students.

²⁴ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/building-back-better-crisis-what-will-it-take-poorest-countries>

Abbreviations Used

ITK	Illam Thedi Kalvi (Education at Doorstep)
SMC	School Management Committee
BBB	Build Back Better
TLM	Teaching and Learning Material
TET	Teacher Eligibility Test
NAS	National Achievement Survey
EVS	Environmental Studies
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abiyan (Now Samagra Shiksha)
SLM	Self Learning Modules
ABL	Activity Based Learning
DIET	District Institute for Education and Training
CSO	Civil Society Organization
SPC	State Planning Commission
SC	Scheduled Castes
ST	Scheduled Tribes
BC	Backward Communities
MBC	Most Backward Communities
SMS	Short Message Service
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
TRB	Teacher Recruitment Board
BRC	Block Resource Centre
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services