

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL) FINAL REPORT:

***Implementation of the Toolkit Nurturing
the Spiritual Development of Children in
the Early Years in India***

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ACRONYMS

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GC-DWC	Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child
IDI	In-Depth Interview
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents Monitoring, Evaluation and Learnings (MEL) findings from the implementation of the Toolkit Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years: A Contribution to the Protection of Children from Violence and for the Promotion of Their Holistic Well-Being in India by Shanti Ashram. The MEL framework addressed 5 learning questions through structured questionnaires, observation rubrics, in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with key stakeholders, including program facilitators, organization staff, educators and parents/caregivers. The findings from the MEL process will inform refinements to the design and implementation of the toolkit in India.

The toolkit was implemented in nine (9) Bala Shanti Kendras in Coimbatore, India catering to a total of 178 children from 171 families. Seven (7) individual activities were introduced by educators into the classroom, following which they were available for children to engage with independently. This is in keeping with the Shanti Ashram philosophy of allowing children the freedom and autonomy to decide activity engagement. Baseline and endline data was also collected from parents with 171 parents participating in the baseline and 142 responding to the endline. This discrepancy of respondent size is because participation in the endline required that respondents participated in the baseline and had attended at least one session.

Table 1: Summary of Key Findings by Learning Question

	Learning Question	Key Findings
Trainers/Educators		
1	To what extent do trainers and educators have the knowledge, support and motivation to effectively deliver the training for educators, the sessions for parents/caregivers or the implementation in the classroom? (sub-question: What are their attitudes towards the guide/s and training materials?)	Educators felt confident in effectively implementing the toolkit in the classroom. This was enabled by the weekly meetings conducted within the team to discuss implementation, adaptation strategies, and on-ground challenges. Through these peer learning conversations, implementation was strengthened and confidence was built. One significant challenge, however, was the lack of translated toolkit materials. This did negatively impact the extent to which educators could engage with the toolkit independently, without being dependent on collective conversations and trainings.
Educators		
2	How do educators understand and define spirituality? How and if this understanding changes as a result of participation in the toolkit?	Educators' understanding of spirituality expanded beyond faith and prayer, as evidenced by the inclusion of health & hygiene and helpfulness in the endline responses. At a personal level, faith

		and prayer remained the most common ways in which educators nurture their own spirituality. However, understandings of faith have also expanded to include meditation. A significant number of respondents also spoke of self-care as a way of nurturing spirituality, a theme that did not emerge during the baseline and is noteworthy given the cultural context of the respondents traditionally not prioritising time for self.
3	To what extent do educators perceive changes in their teaching practices as a result of their participation in the toolkit?	Educators perceived more nuanced changes to their teaching practices, such as playing with the child at their level, allowing children more independence, and becoming more patient, going past more foundational changes of recognising the importance of non-violence or spirituality, for example. This is likely because the more foundational aspects of the toolkit were already present in teachers' practices before toolkit implementation, since they are a key part of the Shanti Ashram model.
Classroom Implementation		
4	To what extent are educators implementing toolkit conditions, daily routines and activities as intended? What factors may explain challenges and successes in their implementation?	The pilot implementation focused on seven (7) activities from the toolkit. Educators are implementing toolkit conditions and activities to a great extent, contextualising the activities as necessary to ensure optimal implementation. The key factor contributing to the success of this implementation is the value alignment between the toolkit's approach and Shanti Ashram's culture at the Bala Shanti Kendras - putting children first, encouraging independence and free choice, and creating non-violent, safe spaces for growth. The key challenges were logistical and largely involved resource constraints - limited spaces, underestimated usage of resources, etc.
Parents/caregivers		
5	To what extent do parents change their parenting/caregiving practices as a result of their participation in the toolkit?	Parents and caregivers significantly changed their behaviours and opinions towards child development following their participation in the toolkit. This was evident in every aspect of their responses - positive relationships, respectful

	environments, empowering experiences, and parenting beliefs.
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It is important to note that changes in educators' teaching was not as profound as the impact of the toolkit activities on the children. This is perhaps explained by the substantial alignment of the toolkit to Shanti Ashram's existing teaching practices. Since educators were already well acquainted with the ethos espoused by the toolkit, the changes to their teaching practices were minimal. However, some changes were reported through implementation, largely with regard to more nuanced behaviour. Educators reported playing with the child at their level, giving them more independence, and becoming more patient. Thus, the toolkit seemed to strengthen pre-existing teaching practices at Shanti Ashram.

With regard to classroom implementation of the toolkit, educators had high adherence, contextualising the activities as necessary to ensure relevance. This adherence was driven by the high value alignment between the toolkit's approach and Shanti Ashram's culture at the Bala Shanti Kendras – putting children first, encouraging independence and free choice, and creating non-violence spaces for growth. Challenges were largely logistical and pertaining to resource constraints, including limited space and under-estimating resource usage. Educators were able to overcome these limitations to implement activities and their impact was clearly observed. Children showed more respect for each other and the materials, curiosity of the world around them extended beyond the classroom as well, and educators reported increased maturity in interpersonal interactions.

Recommendations:

Some key recommendations emerged from Shanti Ashram's experience with the pilot implementation of the toolkit activities:

- Translate the toolkit into Tamil for increased usability and ease of reference
- Discuss activities before classroom implementation to allow educators to pre-emptively address potential challenges with implementation and adaptation
- Involve both fathers and mothers in the parent/caregiver sessions, planning these sessions to maximise participation
- Contextualise and ensure age-appropriateness of the Diversity Cards, specifically by incorporating more familiar pictures, making the cards larger and training educators in content they may not be familiar with
- Ensure consistency of translation and formatting to simplify the MEL process, particularly when translation is involved
- Ensure relevance of MEL tools to the implementation partner's pedagogy, minimising collection of data that is potentially irrelevant
- Commit to implementation over an extended period of time (beyond one year) to observe longer-term impact of the toolkit

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual development is a critical component of holistic development, but often overlooked in early childhood frameworks. Recognizing this gap, the International Consortium on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Prevention of Violence developed the Toolkit “Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years: A Contribution to the Protection of Children from Violence and for the Promotion of Their Holistic Well-Being” (hereinafter referred to as the “toolkit”). The toolkit helps equip faith actors to engage actively in the protection of children from violence in early childhood and the promotion of children’s holistic well-being by supporting parents, caregivers, educators and communities to nurture children’s spiritual development and take an active role in addressing violence in early childhood.

As the toolkit is being rolled out for the first time in Brazil, Mexico, India, and Pakistan, the Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child (GC-DWC) has led the development of a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework. This framework proposes learning questions and indicators needed to assess what is and is not working in terms of toolkit implementation, as well as other data required to understand key elements of the toolkit’s theory of change. The MEL framework aims to provide operational insights and refine the toolkit, ultimately paving the way for a future impact evaluation. Utilizing both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the MEL framework evaluates and reports on the extent to which the toolkit achieves its objectives. By incorporating principles of implementation research, it also offers an in-depth understanding of how and why the toolkit interventions succeed or fail in real-world settings, facilitating improved implementation.

This report presents the results for the MEL process in India, implemented by Shanti Ashram.

TOOLKIT IMPLEMENTATION IN INDIA

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Shanti Ashram integrated the toolkit into its Bala Shanti program. Bala Shanti Kendra is an early childhood development program for the age group 3 to 5 implemented in nine villages, by nine different educators. These villages are all situated in and around Coimbatore, a city in Tamil Nadu, a state in southern India.

Shanti Ashram adopted a cascade approach to the implementation of the toolkit. First, Arigatou International trained a group of 3 permanent staff from Shanti Ashram to play the role of trainers. These three (3) trainers, in turn, trained all nine (9) educators from the Bala Shanti Kendras, who implemented the toolkit in their respective classrooms. Following the initial training, educators met every Saturday during weekly review meetings to exchange experiences and reflect on their practice. In addition to the classroom implementation of the toolkit, the three permanent staff along with one volunteer trainer also implemented four toolkit sessions with Bala Shanti parents and caregivers in each of the Kendras. The four sessions were spread throughout one school term between January and April 2024. The module, sessions and activities covered in each meeting are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Sessions with Bala Shanti Parent/Caregivers

Session	Module	Session	Activity(ies)
1	Module 1: Importance Of Children's Spiritual Development for The Protection Of Children From Violence And For The Promotion Of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 1: Child Dignity and Child Rights	Activity 2: Discovering And Exploring Child Rights
2	Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing the Spiritual Development Of Children in The Early Years	Session 7: Nurturing Positive Relationships Between Caregivers and Children.	Activity 1: Why Are Play and One-On-One Time So Important?
3	Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing the Spiritual Development Of Children in The Early Years	Session 8: Safe Environments	Activity 2: It Takes A Village To Raise A Child — The Role Of Religious And Spiritual Communities In Fostering Spiritual Development In Children
4	Module 3: Conditions for Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years	Session 9: Empowering Experiences	Activity 2: Protecting and Connecting with Mother Earth

TARGET GEOGRAPHIES AND BENEFICIARIES

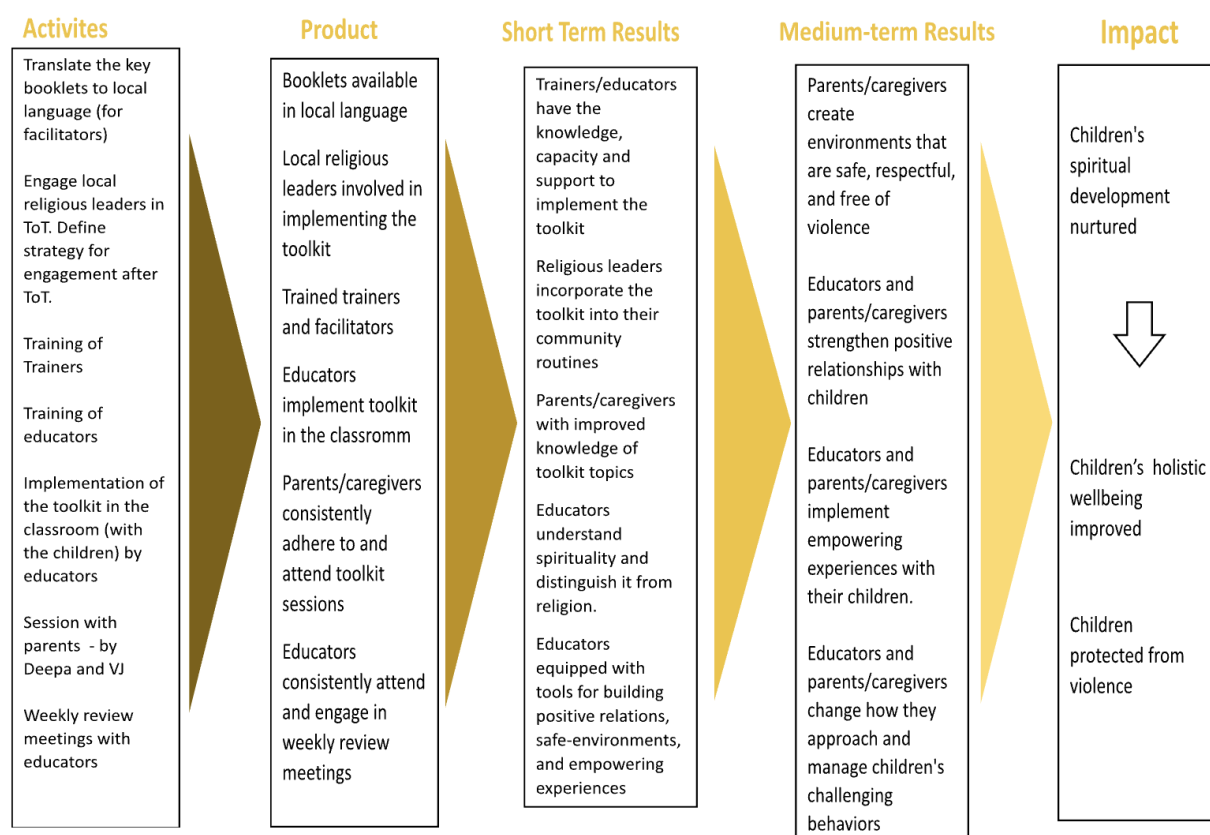
The implementation of the toolkit took place in nine Bala Shanti Kendras, located in nine different villages in and around Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, in southern India. The Bala Shanti program specifically targets rural marginalized children. Each Kendra has one trained educator. Approximately 20-25 children between the ages 3 and 5 years and their respective families received the toolkit in each village, totalling to 178 children spread across 171 families.

The toolkit benefitted 178 children spread across 171 families in and around Coimbatore in southern India.

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The ultimate aim of the toolkit is to nurture children's spiritual development for the protection of children from violence and for the promotion of their holistic well-being. Figure 1 outlines the toolkit's Logical Framework (contextualized to Shanti Ashram implementation), which highlights key activities, outputs and outcomes that will lead to this impact.


Logic Model: Shanti Ashram, India







METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The MEL framework was implemented between August 2023 and August 2024 using a mixed-methods approach that integrated qualitative and quantitative data generated through fieldwork. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires, observation rubrics, and IDIs with a variety of stakeholders, including parents/caregivers, educators, facilitators, and organization staff. A mixed methods approach and, in particular, the use of qualitative mechanisms sought to delve into the “how” and “why” of the toolkit's effectiveness and to gather an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perceptions of key stakeholders with the aim of adapting the design and implementation for maximum impact. Table 2 summarizes data collection methods and target stakeholder group.

Collection Method	Description	
	Registration and attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration: Collected basic information from beneficiaries (parents/caregivers/ educators) at the time of registration (e.g., name, gender and date of birth). Attendance: Recorded and tracked all the sessions that each beneficiary (parent/caregiver/ educator) attended and how many sessions they completed.

	<p>Parent/Caregiver questionnaire (pre and post)</p> <p>Educator questionnaire (pre and post)</p>	<p>Parents and caregivers responded to questionnaires administered face-to-face by Bala Shanti Kendra teachers. These questionnaires were administered physically and the data was then digitised manually. Questionnaires were administered before the start of learning sessions with parents and after the sessions were completed.</p> <p>Educators responded to paper-based self-reported questionnaires before they received training and then again at the end of the school year.</p> <p>Questionnaires assessed factors such as: knowledge on topics addressed by the toolkit; beliefs and attitudes around teaching or parenting practices. The post questionnaires also assessed level of satisfaction with different components of the toolkit.</p>
	<p>Classroom Observation Rubric</p>	<p>Structured classroom observation that assessed the extent to which the educators implement the toolkit conditions (around environment, relationships and experiences), the extent to which children engage and participate and if the toolkit activities are implemented as intended. Each educator was observed three times following the training to observe impact of implementation</p>
	<p>Educator's Diary</p>	<p>Structured diary that aimed to promote the educators' reflection on the implementation of the toolkit conditions, activities and daily routines (what worked, what didn't, difficulties, aspects to improve, etc.). The diary served as an input to inform the conversations during the weekly review meetings.</p>
	<p>In-depth Interviews (IDIs) with educators</p>	<p>In-depth interviews with educators at the beginning and at the end of the toolkit implementation to further understand: changes in self-reported teaching practices, understanding and practice of the concept of spirituality, experience implementing the toolkit activities in the classroom.</p>

ANALYTICAL APPROACHES

The primary data included both quantitative and qualitative components, ensuring cross-validation between each type was possible when drawing conclusions and developing recommendations. Quantitative data generated through structured questionnaires were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis in Microsoft Excel to identify explicit and implicit patterns in respondents' answers to the evaluation questions.

Qualitative data generated during FGDs and IDIs were captured in a structured format and recorded after consent was obtained from respondents. The audio files were transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were analyzed using an applied thematic analysis approach using Microsoft Excel. As part of the coding process, we coded the data excerpts using the codebook generated with inductive themes. Once all transcripts were coded, code applications were counted across transcripts to generate relative

relevance/prominence of each topic and used this relevance to highlight the main findings related to the research question. The use of verbatim quotes in this report aims to increase the validity of findings by directly connecting the study team’s interpretation with what participants actually said.

SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZES

A census approach was adopted, ensuring data collection from the entire population of educators and parents/caregivers rather than relying on sampling methods. Given the small-scale implementation of the pilot, data was collected from all parents and educators at all nine (9) Bala Shanti Kendras. The discrepancy between sample size of parents/caregivers is explained by the prerequisites placed on endline participation – that respondent should have answered the baseline and participated in at least one (1) parent session.

Table 2: Sample Sizes by Data Collection Method

COLLECTION METHOD	RESPONDENTS	SAMPLE SIZE
IDIs	Educators	9
Structured Questionnaires	Trainers ¹	Baseline: 21 Endline: 8
	Parent/caregivers	Baseline: 171 Endline: 142
	Educators	9
Classroom Observation	Classrooms	9
Facilitator Diaries	Educators	9

PARTICIPANTS REACHED

Educators demographic profile

Nine (9) educators engaged with the program, of which 100% were women with an average age of 40.4 years. All educators have taught at Bala Shanti Kendras for the entirety of their careers, with experience spanning from 16 months to 13 years. Therefore, all teacher training that they have received has also been in-service training from Shanti Ashram. Apart from this, 33% of educators had completed secondary schooling education, 55% had completed a vocational or technical course following school, and 11% had

¹ The Training of Trainers was attended by 4 trainers from Shanti Ashram as well as participants from Shanti Ashram’s partner organisations in and around Coimbatore. These partner organisations were not part of the implementation or MEL process of the toolkit.

an undergraduate college degree. Each educator teaches an average of 19.8 children, of which an average of 10.7 are girls and 9.1 are boys.

Parent/caregivers demographic profile

In November 2023, baseline data collection was conducted with 171 parents from Shanti Ashram's Bala Shanti Kendras.. These respondents mapped to 178 students of the Bala Shanti Kendras, with some parents having two children enrolled in the centres. A vast majority of respondents were women (88%), with 77% (133 respondents) between the ages of 23 and 33 years. Most respondents (83%) were the mothers of children at the Bala Shanti Kendras, with fathers accounting for 12% of respondents. A further 9% said they were aunts/uncles of children of ages 0 to 8 living at home, suggesting the presence of joint families .

About 38% of respondents had completed an undergraduate degree, and 28% had completed higher secondary (Grade 12) education. A further 20% had completed secondary education (Grade 10), while 9% had completed primary (Grade 5) education. However, about 66% of total respondents were currently not working for pay. This can perhaps be correlated to the gender division of respondents, with a majority being female (mothers).

All respondents identified with one of the three most common religions in India – Hinduism (64%), Islam (25%) and Christianity (12%). Most respondents also reported to be actively practicing the religion, with only a small minority (<5%) saying they never visit a place of worship.

Parent/caregivers Attendance

The average attendance rate of parents across all four sessions conducted in each Bala Shanti Kendra was 68.9%. Attendance has been calculated as representation per student - with there being a total of 171 students across the Kendras. This means that, in some cases, different family members have attended different sessions, spanning both parents as well as close relatives. This reflects the collectivist nature of familial relationships in India, with aunts and uncles often stepping in as parental figures should the need arise. Therefore, this data must be read as - 68.9% of the time, students had an adult representing them attending the parent sessions.

The average attendance rate of parents across all four sessions conducted in each Bala Shanti Kendra was 68.9%.

For purposes of attendance calculation, the primary respondent is the parent who has completed the baseline questionnaire. The non-primary respondent is any session participant who represents the child but has not completed the baseline questionnaire, including but not limited to the other parent or a grandparent. It is noted that the primary respondent was the session participant in a vast majority of cases, possibly due to the repeated reiteration of the importance of this by the educators and Shanti Ashram staff. While decentralised sessions (conducted across locations instead of at the Shanti Ashram

office) ensured accessibility for parents, there was a trend of declining attendance as the sessions progressed. This could be due to competing commitments or, the inability to commit consistent stretches of time at the cost of employment and/or caregiving responsibilities.

Table 3: Attendance Rates by Session

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Ave. Attendance
Total attendance (primary + non-primary respondent)*	78.3%	79.5%	67.8%	49.1%	68.7%
Attended by primary respondent	69.0%	66.1%	61.4%	40.9%	59.3%
Attended by non-primary respondent	9.4%	13.5%	6.4%	8.1%	9.3%

** Minor discrepancies in totalling due to rounding errors*

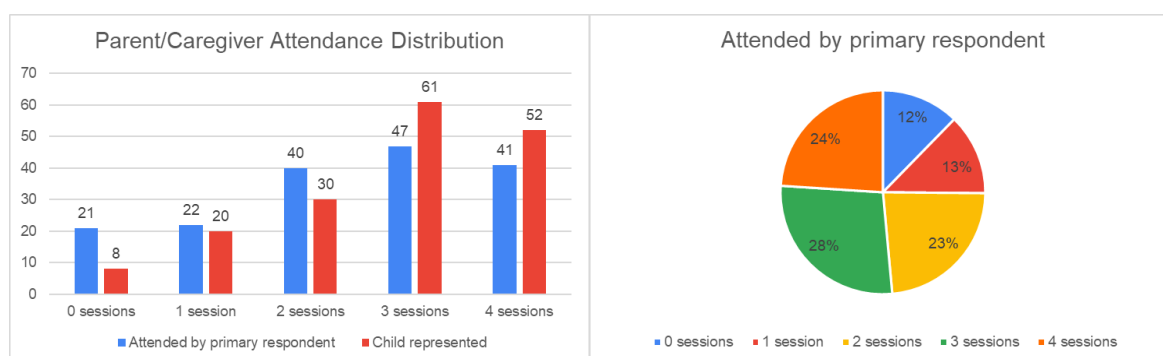
When analysed at the location level, there is significant discrepancy between centres. Some centres have a consistently high average attendance, with B.K Pudur, Kasthuri Garden and Parvathi Puram averaging above 80%. On the other hand, Adhishakthi nagar and Arivoli Nagar have averages of 50% or below, with the fourth session at Arivoli Nagar seeing no participation. This drop in attendance coincides with the sessions hosted at Shanti Ashram headquarters instead of at the centres. The distance and logistical challenges of spending the time at the headquarters directly impacted attendance. Ways to mitigate this impact need to be explored before undertaking the next phase of toolkit implementation.

Table 4: Attendance Rates by Session and Location

Centre	Children Enrolled	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Ave. Attendance
Adhishakthi Nagar	19	68%	58%	53%	21%	50%
Arivoli Nagar	15	80%	53%	53%	0%	47%
B.K.Pudur	24	88%	96%	75%	63%	80%

Gandhi Nagar	19	79%	89%	79%	47%	74%
Kasthuri Garden	11	91%	91%	73%	82%	84%
Parvathi Puram	24	88%	96%	79%	63%	81%
Pillayar Puram	14	79%	64%	79%	71%	73%
Sentamil Nagar	23	87%	91%	65%	52%	74%
Suguna Puram	22	55%	64%	55%	45%	55%

The largest set of primary respondents attended three sessions (28%, 47 respondents) while 24% have attended all four sessions and 23% have attended two sessions. This suggests that parental involvement is relatively high and parents are invested in holistic child development. However, read together with the overall declining attendance rates, it is important to reconsider the optimal number and duration of sessions.



FINDINGS

QUESTION 1: TRAINERS' AND EDUCATOR' KNOWLEDGE AND MOTIVATION

To what extent do trainers and educators have the knowledge, support and motivation to effectively deliver the training for educators, the sessions for parents/caregivers or the implementation in the classroom? (sub-question: What are their attitudes towards the guide/s and training materials?)

Educators felt confident in effectively implementing the toolkit in the classroom. This was enabled by the weekly meetings conducted within the team to discuss implementation, adaptation strategies, and on-ground challenges. Through these peer learning conversations, implementation was strengthened and confidence was built. One significant challenge, however, was the lack of translated toolkit materials. This did negatively impact the extent to which educators could engage with the toolkit independently, without being dependent on collective conversations and trainings.

With regard to beliefs, a comparison of pre- and post-test data from the training of trainers suggests mixed results. While there was a marked increase in the percentage of people agreeing that spirituality is connected to children's identity formation (46%), a greater number of respondents (26% increase) also seemed to agree that spiritual development is the same as religious practice. These results are, however, impacted by the limitations of the pre- and post-test data collection itself, affecting the ability to directly compare the results.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Training of Trainers

The training of trainers was conducted on August 21st to 25th, 2023, with 21 external participants and 3 Facilitators from Shanti Ashram. These participants represented various educational institutions from across Coimbatore and beyond, spanning schools, colleges as well as religious institutions. The goal was to introduce the Toolkit to them, allowing them to begin using its principles in their classrooms, even as Shanti Ashram led the pilot phase of implementation. Along with external participants, three (3) facilitators from Shanti Ashram also participated in this event, taking forward these learnings to the nine educators who implemented the Toolkit in classrooms.

The analysis of the pre- and post-test data is limited by the discrepancy in sample sizes, with 21 participants completing the pre-test and only 8 completing the post-test. Additionally, the anonymity of the tests prevents pairing individual responses, restricting the ability to measure changes at the individual level.

The concept of 'nurturing children's spiritual development was new to 62% of participants at the pre-test. 62% had also not undergone any prior training on working with families. Understandings of the term included "a child understanding themselves and others through spiritual (sic)" and "something

meaningful,” reflecting poor baseline knowledge of spiritual development. However, 47% of pre-test respondents recognised that spirituality is often understood only within a religious framework.

A comparison of pre- and post-test data pertaining to beliefs reflects a mixed bag of results. The percentage of respondents agreeing that spiritual development is the same as practising a religion increased by 26%, suggesting poor internalisation of one of the core learning objectives of the training. However, there was a 45% increase in agreement that spirituality is connected to identity formation in children. Similarly, there was a 37% increase in agreement that children’s spiritual development requires a non-violent environment to be nurtured. While these results are promising, it must be reiterated that the number of respondents for the pre- and post-test were significantly different, therefore affecting the accuracy of direct comparison.

Table 5: Comparison of beliefs from Training of Trainers (% , Baseline vs Endline)

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Not sure	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Spiritual development is the same as practising a religion	19	12.5	28.6	25	19	12.5	23.8	50	4.8	0	4.8	0
Children's spirituality is connected to the formation of identity and sense of belonging	9.5	0	4.8	0	33.3	0	47.6	50	4.8	50	0	0
The spiritual development of children is included in the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child	4.8	0	9.5	0	14.3	0	38.1	62.5	28.6	37.5	4.8	0
Children exposed to violence are more likely to be victims and perpetrators of violence later in life	4.8	12.5	9.5	0	19	0	28.6	75	14.3	12.5	23.8	0

Shouting is a form of violence	4.8	0	4.8	0	33.3	25	19	50	28.6	25	9.5	0
Children's spiritual development requires a non-violent environment for it to be nurtured	9.5	0	4.8	0	19	0	38.1	75	28.6	25	0	0
I need to nurture my own spirituality in order to support children to develop spiritually	14.3	0	0	0	14.3	12.5	47.6	37.5	23.8	50	0	0

Training of Educators

Following the Training of Trainers, a total of nine (9) educators were trained between October 19 and 21, 2023. Nine (9) sessions were conducted, spanning one activity each. These activities were mapped against the ten (10) modules of the toolkit. Given that educators had high exposure to child rights as part of the Shanti Ashram curriculum, this module was not included. Specific activities were chosen according to the implementation convenience of the facilitators. Refer Annexure A for detailed session mapping. These sessions were led by a team of four trainers - Deepa, Vijay, Pavithra, and Kalyani and assisted by Tamilvani. Participants collectively discussed implementation plans, potential challenges, and possible mitigations. Four activities from Booklet III: Activities for Children were also chosen for piloting in the Bala Shanti Kendras, and resource materials to ensure the successful implementation of the pilot were shared.

Following these sessions, there were ten (10) follow-up sessions conducted regularly to ensure added capacity building. These were conducted through a hybrid model - both online and offline. Refer Annex B for detailed session mapping.

Educators' Evaluation of the Toolkit

At the end of the pilot implementation, all nine educators answered an endline questionnaire including questions recording their experience with the toolkit. These questions sought to understand satisfaction, toolkit usefulness in their classrooms as well as cultural relevance of the activities and methodologies to their local context.

The educators' endline results reflect an overwhelmingly positive response to the toolkit.

Satisfaction:

100% of respondents said they were very satisfied with the toolkit and the training they received for it. 78% said they were very satisfied with the total number of training sessions, while the remaining 22% said they were satisfied.

Usefulness:

100% of all the respondents said the toolkit was very useful in enhancing their teaching practices and in improving their practices to nurture their children's spirituality.

"In one of the sessions, I learnt that spaces may or may not nurture spirituality and may or may not be safe. This is something I had never considered before. For instance, we often visit a place of worship and consider them spiritual, but we rarely think about whether they are safe or unsafe. This activity made us reflect on the safety of the spaces we take our children."

- Educator in Endline IDI

Cultural relevance:

All 100% also believed that the toolkit fully respected and integrated the values and customs of their community. They did, however, request for a translated version of the material to be made available. Having access to material in Tamil would help refer back to it in times of need, instead of being dependent on trainings and oral clarifications.

In their endline IDIs, educators also recognised and applauded the flexibility to adapt the toolkit to address their specific circumstances. For instance, while one educator asked for parents to recycle a plastic box to use for the seed planting, another used the broken remnants of mud piggybanks to grow the plants.

QUESTION 2: EDUCATORS' VIEWS OF SPIRITUALITY

How do educators understand and define spirituality? How and if this understanding changes as a result of participation in the toolkit?

Educators' understanding and definition of spirituality has undergone a significant shift over the course of the toolkit implementation. This was evidenced by the changes in the educators' IDIs between the baseline and the endline data collection.

In order to better comprehend educators' understanding of spirituality, the baseline and endline IDIs asked educators to share their definitions of spirituality. Educators then ranked these definitions in order of importance, following which each definition was assigned weights. The average weight of each definition (or "theme", as they were called) was then used to rank these definitions. The highest rank, therefore, reflects the theme that was marked most important by the most number of respondents.

This analysis revealed that their understanding of spirituality had expanded beyond faith and prayer, as evidenced by the inclusion of health & hygiene and helpfulness in their responses. At a personal level, faith and prayer remain the most common ways in which educators nurture their own spirituality. However, understandings of faith have also expanded to include meditation. A significant number of respondents also spoke of self-care as a way of nurturing spirituality, a theme that did not emerge during the baseline and is noteworthy given the cultural context of the respondents traditionally not prioritising time for self.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Educator IDIs

Table 6 lists the ranked themes at the baseline and endline, reflecting that the understandings of spirituality changed significantly between baseline and endline.

Table 6: Understanding of Spirituality by Educators [Baseline vs Endline]

Primary Ranks	Baseline	Endline
1	Work and Effort	Love
2	Love	Way of Life
3	Peace	Nature & Animals
4	Moral guidance	Helpfulness
5	Faith	Health & Hygiene
6	Prayer	

As seen in Table 6, Work and Effort emerged as the top theme in the baseline IDIs. Educators believed that having set habits and routines, and following them with dedication was an important aspect of their spirituality. This theme, however, did not receive mention in the endline conversations.

Love was the second theme at the baseline, with respondents saying treating everyone with love and affection was an important dimension of spirituality. Expressions of love and care went past families and students to all people and animals. This theme increased in importance at the endline, becoming the most important definition of spirituality. The understanding of what constitutes love has also changed, with respondents limiting their understanding to love and affection for family, students and all living things in the baseline but expanding it to communication and helpfulness in the endline. One respondent also specifically said that loving others helped them discover their own spirituality.

“Only when we embody qualities such as love, helpfulness and sympathy, we are being spiritual. Holding these qualities is akin to prayer. When we love others, problems won’t arise.” - Respondent in Endline IDI

The third theme at the baseline was peace, spanning both inner peace as well as teaching students to cooperate with each other. The fourth baseline theme was moral guidance, described as helping children learn right from wrong, to be good to one another, and act in ways that respect each other. The fifth and sixth themes at the baseline were faith and prayer. Faith was understood as belief in a higher power acting as a motivator to do the work they do, while prayer was the act of performing that faith regularly. Prayer was seen as connecting an individual to their religion as well as other religions, and becoming a shared activity that united children. None of the themes emerged in the endline IDIs.

Instead, the second most important definition of spirituality in the endline was as a ‘way of life,’ seeing it as being a fundamental characteristic of their existence. While one respondent drew connections between this and the spirituality innate in children, another connected it with the impetus to set a good example to their child.

The third theme that emerged was ‘nature and animals,’ spanning spending time in nature or with plants/animals. Some educators used the language of peace to describe this experience while others associated it with stress management and overcoming fear.

“I did not like any animals earlier. If a dog went by, I was scared that it would come near me and bite me. We had a bird feeding activity, where we had to provide food for the birds. Only hens came as they were grazing nearby. We fed them or dogs. If we gave it food today, it came to school the next day. If we went out for something, it started to follow us. Now I understand that they are also like humans. If we love someone, they will love us back.” - Respondent in Endline IDI

The final two themes that emerged in the endline analysis were helpfulness and health and hygiene. Respondents associated spirituality with a willingness to help others, and spanned the desire to help,

actually helping as well as pointing people in the direction of more relevant assistance. Health and hygiene ranged from ensuring cleanliness to investing time for health-seeking behaviour and exercising to manage stress.

While educators no longer use faith and prayer as a means to define spirituality, religion, faith and prayer remain the primary way for them to nurture their own spirituality, both at the baseline and endline. However, the percentage of this response decreased slightly from 26% at the baseline to 22% at the endline. It is critical to note that meditation was included as an activity in this category in the endline, and this was not the case during the baseline.

Table 7: Strategies to Nurture Educators' Spirituality [Baseline vs Endline]

Primary Ranks	Baseline	Endline
1	Participating in their faith	Faith, Religion, Prayer & Meditation
2	Respecting others	Self-care & Self-improvement
3	Interacting with nature & environment	Patience & Anger Management
4	Patience & Anger Management	Interactions with Others
5	Helping others	

Patience and anger management was a theme that emerged both at the baseline and the endline. In the baseline, educators spoke of controlling negativity (anger, fear, irritation, worry) in order to foster a more positive attitude towards their students and become better teachers. This theme continued in the endline, with educators speaking of controlling their anger more and becoming better teachers.

"I used to be loud and my daughter would ask, 'If you are telling me not to shout, why are you shouting?' If she does something, I would react in anger, saying 'What have you done?' I have noticed similar expressions from her at times. This made me realise that children are reflecting our behaviour, so I need to be careful about what I say and do. When we do something wrong then they also tend to be wrong. I am also practicing speaking calmly to children. I believe it is important to be gentle not just with children, but towards parents and others as well." - Respondent in Endline ID1

Self-care was a recurrent new theme in the endline, with respondents recognising the need to invest time and effort in themselves as a way of nurturing their spirituality. This included eating on time, exercise, returning to formal education, and taking some dedicated 'me' time.

While 'helping others' and 'interacting with others' are seemingly similar themes, the former only referred to caring for others, being of assistance to others, and so on, while the latter focused on collaboration,

teamwork and sharing. Respondents spoke about splitting family responsibilities, communicating openly about challenges, etc. as examples of interaction.

“After work, I need to walk for about 2 kms from the bus stop to home. During my walk, I have time to think and often meet parents of former students. These are some new practices I have adopted for myself. It is a time for me...I will think only about myself as I walk on the road. I really like it.” - Respondent in Endline about self-care

“Within the family we openly communicate about all our challenges, financial or otherwise. For no reason should people within the house fight about how much we have so we share everything with everyone. Our money is a collective pot – nothing is any one individual’s. Everything is open, nothing is secretive.” - Respondent in Endline about interacting with others

QUESTION 3: EDUCATORS' TEACHING PRACTICES

To what extent do educators perceive changes in their teaching practices as a result of their participation in the toolkit?

Educators do perceive some changes in their teaching as a result of the toolkit. These changes are, however, not as profound as the impact of the toolkit activities. This is perhaps because the toolkit was substantially in alignment with Shanti Ashram's existing methodologies and pedagogies. Therefore, educators were well acquainted with most principles and adopted them regularly in their teaching practices even prior to the toolkit.

However, some changes were reported through the course of the pilot implementation. These were often more nuanced behaviours - playing with the child at their level, allowing more independence, and becoming more patient. Thus, it seems that the toolkit allowed educators to strengthen pre-existing teacher practices, build more consistent habits, and/or commit to personal development that then influenced teaching practices.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Educator questionnaire

To examine changes in teaching practices as a result of participating in the Toolkit, scales focusing on different types of practices of interest were included in the questionnaires administered at baseline and endline. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the frequency of specific teaching practices, ranging from "0 = Never" to "5 = All the time (Every day)."

Scale analysis reflects improvements in several key areas of teaching. The scales for Teaching Practices, Positive Relationships, and Empowering Experiences showed increases at the endline, indicating that educators, after completing the program, reported a greater likelihood of implementing practices that foster student-centered and inclusive teaching approaches, positive relationships, a respectful environment, and constructive responses to their children's challenging behaviors. The magnitude of the changes varies across scales, and the high baseline values suggest a possible ceiling effect that may have limited further increases in several of the evaluated areas. Amongst the scales, the most improvement was in teaching practice. The decrease in safe and respectful environments (refer Annex C for breakdown of data) is perhaps at least partially explained by educators learning to articulate the Shanti Ashram method. In the context of learning environments, this specifically addresses one question in the survey - I have easy-to-read/picture posters on the wall that relate to classroom rules/agreements that the children can understand. The Shanti Ashram model recommends empty walls in classrooms, explaining why an increasing number of educators responded to that question with 'never', resulting in a drop in average scores. Given that this is a longstanding recommendation from Shanti Ashram, the baseline results reflect poor understanding of the question and/or educators' responding with what they thought the answer "ought" to be.

Table 8: Thematic Comparison of Educator Questionnaire [Baseline vs Endline]

Scale	Pre	Post	Diff
Teaching practices	4.53	4.83	0.3
Positive Relationships	4.86	4.86	0
Empowering experiences	4.78	4.85	0.07
Safe and Respectful Environments	4.85	4.52	-0.33

On most parameters, there was an increase in teachers reporting that they would adopt positive teaching practices more often - including letting students choose what they engage with, letting students complete tasks in their own way, and being flexible with planning. While the increase was only marginal (89% to 100% in most cases), it marks an improvement in teaching practices over the course of the toolkit.

Educator IDIs

In the IDIs, educators were asked to describe the strategies they adopted to nurture spirituality in the classroom. These descriptive narratives were then thematically analysed and their frequency was calculated. The lists presented in Table 9 represent the most commonly described strategies in the baseline and endline.

Table 9: Strategies to Nurture Spirituality in the Classroom [Baseline vs Endline]

Theme priority	Baseline	Endline
1	Prayer	Working with Nature
2	Promoting cleanliness	Respecting Others
3	Encouraging confidence & independence	Creative Expression
4	Encouraging good social interactions	Prayer & Meditation
5	Maintaining discipline & order	

In the baseline, teachers said that they nurture spirituality in the classroom by teaching children to respect all faiths through prayer (32%), promoting cleanliness (16%), encouraging confidence and independence (11%), encouraging good social interactions (11%), and maintaining discipline and order (11%). Respecting all faiths also extended to being curious about festivals and religious practices, primarily encouraged through interfaith prayer and multi-religious celebrations. Cleanliness was typically understood as personal hygiene and grooming as well as keeping surroundings clean. To encourage confidence and independence, children were allowed to choose the activities they wanted to engage in and were encouraged to speak up in multiple contexts. This often took the form of the teacher listing the tasks needed to be done and asking the children to decide the order in which they should be completed. Encouraging good social interactions involved educators reminding children to behave well and modelling this behaviour in their interactions with children and parents alike. Everyday reminders of classroom rules and communication on unacceptable behaviour were key to maintaining discipline and order.

"I tell my children that when their bodies are clean their minds will also be clean." - Respondent in Baseline IDI on promoting cleanliness

"I will be friendly with the parents. That could be because of my religion. I don't think of them as someone different. I have love for them too and that is why I think I am like that." - Respondent in Baseline IDI on encouraging good social interactions

The key shift between the baseline and endline was the change in the role of prayer - moving from the top theme in the baseline to 4th position in the endline. The endline IDIs gave rise to other key themes, suggesting more diverse understandings of spirituality. The most important strategy reported by educators at the endline was working with nature (21%), spanning bird feeding, animal feeding and observing nature. Respecting others also emerged as a major theme (21%), with educators describing teaching children about different religions and genders. The third theme, creative expression (21%), can be read as an extension of the theme of respecting others, with children being encouraged to express themselves creatively predominantly via the toolkit activities.

Though not directly described by the educators, the emergence of working with nature and creative expression as themes seem to be the direct impact of toolkit activities such as Bird Feeding and This is Me.

When asked what teaching methods they use to address challenging behaviour in the classroom, educators described a host of strategies. These strategies were listed and assigned weights based on frequency. The average weight then influenced the rank of the theme, as listed below in Table 10.

Table 10: Strategies to Address Challenging Behaviour [Baseline vs Endline]

Theme priority	Baseline	Endline
1	Conflict resolution conversation	Conflict resolution conversation
2	Distraction	Distraction
3	Setting behaviour expectation	Letting the child be
4	Understanding beyond behaviour	Parental involvement
5	Letting the child be	
6	Parental involvement	

Conversations around conflict resolution and distracting children were the top two strategies adopted to address challenging behaviour, both at the baseline and the endline. Educators said that, if they found two children fighting or arguing, they would have a conversation with each child to understand individual

perspectives and guide each child to see the other's point of view. If the challenging behaviour was individual (crying, for example), educators reported adopting distraction strategies such as giving them other toys to play with or engaging them in another activity.

"[When children quarrel about sharing a toy / doing the same activity, I] explain to them that they have to wait their turn and once the other child is done, they will get it, and then we distract them with something else. They don't need to sit waiting till then, but if they do something else, they will get distracted while they wait." - Respondent in Baseline IDI

The other key strategy that emerged during both the baseline and endline was letting the child sit by themselves, giving them space and time to calm down and return to the class. This was usually adopted when no other classroom intervention was successful. The final strategy described at both the baseline and endline, often as a last resort, was parental involvement. Parents are then encouraged to help correct the problematic behaviour at home as well, ensuring that the child gets consistent communication both at school and at home.

Two strategies that were described only in the baseline were setting behavioural expectations and understanding the cause of behaviour. Setting expectations was usually by listing the rules of the classroom or asking the child to recall how they are expected to act in certain situations. Understanding the cause of behaviour involved conversations with children and often traced behaviour back to issues at home, health concerns or the overwhelm of unfamiliar surroundings. Neither of these themes were referenced in the endline.

"If there is a difference between school and home, the child will get confused that the teacher and mother are saying different things." - Respondent at Baseline IDI

It is important to note that all themes that emerged in the endline were present in the baseline, reflecting that there have been no significant changes in the ways in which teachers address conflict or challenges in the classroom. This is perhaps a greater reflection of the efficacy of the Shanti Ashram process than of the toolkit impact itself, since all teachers have been teaching at the Ashram for many years and have benefited from training on conflict management.

When asked how the toolkit enhanced their teaching practices, educators' responses touched upon a few key themes:

- Personal growth: Many educators observed changes in their own behaviour. This included anger management, time management and patience. One respondent also spoke about improved public speaking skills, learning to make a presentation, manage an event, and handle unexpected situations that arise when doing so.
- Children Independence: Closely linked to personal growth, educators said they have grown in their willingness to let children explore independently, without rushing to intervene.

"I would only allow about 10 minutes before stepping in to help if the child is making mistakes. Now I remain calm and let them engage in activities in their own way, only intervening if they genuinely need support. Even if they spill water, I wait for them to ask for help with closing the bottle. Instead of immediately helping them, I now observe them more closely to understand their needs." - Respondent in Endline IDI

- Relatability: Educators report taking more effort to meet the child at their level, playing with them and explaining to them in ways they can understand.
- Flexibility & Innovation: This was largely associated with resource availability and teaching methodologies for the toolkit implementation. While educators were familiar with Shanti Ashram's regular activities, some of these activities needed innovative approaches to contextualise and implement as well as source the necessary materials given the socio-cultural background of the children. For example, one educator described using broken mud containers to grow plants, instead of asking parents to send containers from home.
- Understanding of spirituality: One educator mentioned that the broadened understanding of spirituality has influenced her teaching significantly.

"We had not known about spirituality. In my mind, spirituality meant prayer. Now, when we are aware that spirituality is in everything, I see a lot of changes in my teaching." - Respondent in Endline IDI

QUESTION 4: EDUCATORS' TOOLKIT ADOPTION

To what extent are educators implementing toolkit conditions, daily routines and activities as intended? What factors may explain challenges and successes in their implementation?

Educators are implementing toolkit activities to a great extent, contextualising the activities as necessary to ensure optimal implementation. Upon observation, the key factor contributing to the success of this implementation seemed to be the value alignment between the toolkit's approach and Shanti Ashram's culture at the Bala Shanti Kendras - putting children first, encouraging independence and free choice, and creating non-violent, safe spaces for growth. While this was the anchor behind the implementation's success, the key challenges were logistical and largely involved resource constraints - limited spaces, under-estimated usage of resources, etc. Despite this, the activities were well implemented, and their impact was observed by educators, facilitators and parents alike.

Shanti Ashram's pilot implementation focused largely on toolkit Activities for Children, with limited explicit focus on the three toolkit conditions (of empowering experience, safe environments, and positive relationships) and daily routines. While educators informed parents about the daily routines, their adoption and adherence was not monitored regularly. The three toolkit conditions are already integral elements of the Shanti Ashram approach, with educators consistently adopting them in their teaching practices. In a notable example, Shanti Ashram educators only use the respectful second person pronoun to address children, seeing language as a means of creating safe environments and positive relationships. This is an important departure from the cultural norm of using the informal second person pronoun to address children. Given this organisational context, the pilot implementation focused on toolkit Activities for Children specifically.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Toolkit Classroom implementation

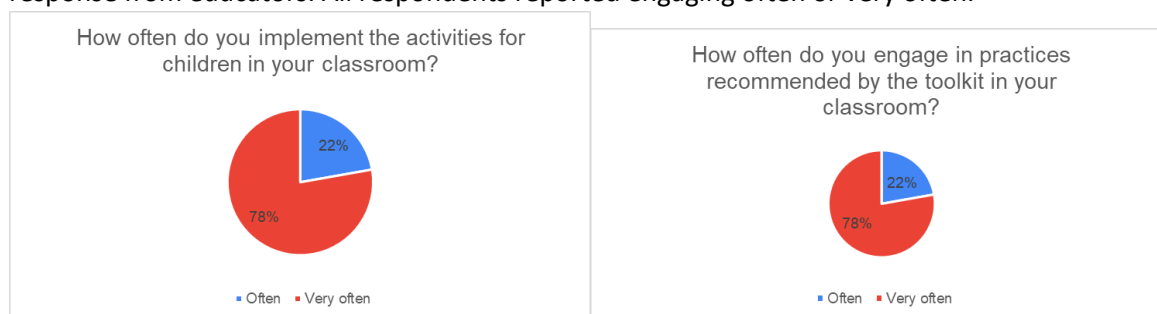
Seven (7) activities from the Activities for Children were implemented in the Bala Shanti Kendra classrooms across the period of implementation. This was undertaken in two phases. In the first phase in October 2024, four activities were selected by the educators to pilot - This is Me, Diversity Cards, Bird Feeder, and Meditation. Educators spent time contextualising these activities, ensuring relevance to both the larger Indian context as well as the specific local context of the classroom. A key example was changing meditation to a group activity in response to the limitations of physical space in the classrooms. Another key adaptation was the shift of focus from 'bird' feeding to 'animal' feeding. Since many Kendras were located in crowded semi-urban spaces, birds did not visit the feeder and so educators expanded the principle to include goats, cows, chicken and dogs. In March 2024, the second set of activities were introduced in the classrooms - Tree of Me, Seed Pot, and Free Drawing. While the process of piloting and adapting the activities was useful, some educators suggested that thorough discussion of the activities before implementation would have eased the process of adaptation.

In keeping with Shanti Ashram's pedagogy and Montessori principles, once introduced, all activity materials were made constantly available for the children. Children were therefore free to explore and

choose which activity they wanted to engage with, spanning both toolkit activities and regular Kendra activities. All materials were kept at eye-level for the children, enabling independent engagement. In response to the space constraints faced at most Kendras, activities like Free Drawing, Tree of Me and This is Me were combined in one physical space since they all involved colouring and needed the same material.

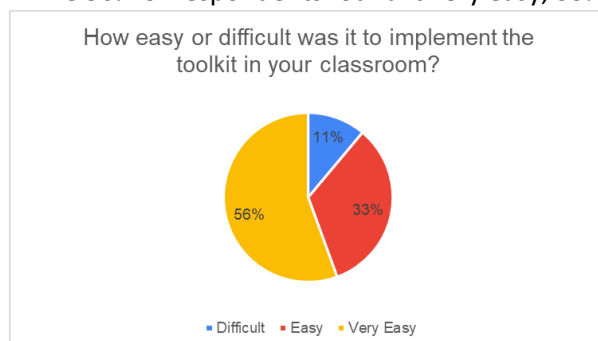
Educator Questionnaire

When asked how often they implement activities from the toolkit in their classroom and how often they engage in practices recommended by the toolkit in their classroom, there was an overwhelmingly positive response from educators. All respondents reported engaging often or very often.



Importantly, all 100% of the respondents said they witnessed positive changes in their children's behaviours and attitudes since participating in the program.

The greatest variance in response was recorded with regard to the question on implementation difficulty. While 56% of respondents found it very easy, 33% found it easy and 11% found it difficult.



Classroom observations

Three (3) facilitators observed each Kendra once (with two exceptions, owing to teacher absenteeism), resulting in a total of 25 instances of classroom observation. Each Kendra was observed for a duration of two (2) hours by the facilitator, and recorded in a classroom observation rubric for further analysis.

Classroom climate and experiences

Observers filled in observation rubrics that measured eighteen (18) items across three (3) themes - safe and respectful environment, positive relationships, and empowering experiences. The averages across all observations are presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Average Thematic Scores from Classroom Observations

Safe & Respectful Environments	
Teacher asks children whether or how they want to engage in an activity.	88%
Children choose how they play with materials/engage in an activity (i.e. decide on their own way of doing it)	95%
Teacher provides opportunities to generate and share ideas and opinions	85%
Teacher observes or listens to children before stepping in	80%
Teacher uses positive language with students	88%
Teacher treats all students respectfully	99%
Teacher has created a warm, child-friendly classroom.	96%
Positive Relationships	
Teacher responds to child's emotional needs	76%
Teacher promotes children's interest in each other's lives	76%
Teacher gives opportunities to share personal events and experiences	80%
Teacher explains children's actions, intentions and/or feelings to other children	81%
Teacher encourages peer active listening	87%
Teacher encourages prosocial behaviour among children (e.g. sharing, friendliness and affection)	96%
Empowering Experiences	
Teacher invites children to share about their religious or spiritual traditions and practices	73%
Teacher promotes children's connection with nature	68%
Teacher creates moments for meditation, interfaith prayer or silence	86%
Teacher creates moments for children to express gratitude	79%
Teacher invites children to share their personal experiences about themselves, their families, or communities	71%
Teacher creates moments and spaces for free play	92%

Educators fared highly in creating a safe and respectful environment, with all questions averaging at 90%. The highest was 99% of teachers treating students respectfully and 96% creating a warm, child-friendly environment, and the lowest was 85% teachers providing opportunities to share ideas and 80% observing or listening to children before stepping in.

As a category, enabling positive relationships scored lower, averaging 83%. While 96% of teachers encouraged pro-social behaviours among children, only 76% responded to students' emotional needs or promoted children's interest in each other's lives.

The category of empowering experiences fared the lowest, with an average score of 78%. While 92% of teachers created moments of free play for their children, only 68% were seen promoting children's connection with nature.

Toolkit Activities

All activities were observed during the classroom observations, though some were observed more than others. The Bird Feeder was the most observed activity (13 observations across centres) while meditation was the least observed (4 observations across centres). Table 12 details the number of observations per activity.

Table 12: Number of Observations per Activity

Name of Activity	No. of observations
This is Me	10
Diversity Cards	7
Bird Feeder	13
Meditation	4
Tree of Me	9
Seed Pot	9
Free Drawing	9

The most common adaptation to the activities was ensuring their accessibility at all times, allowing children to choose what they wanted to engage with. This was in keeping with Shanti Ashram's pedagogy, and was therefore adopted by all teachers. This included both material available within the classroom as well as seed pots and bird feeder which were typically placed outside the classroom but within the Kendra premises.

Other adaptations were largely in response to resource and space constraints in the classrooms. Drawing-based activities like Free Drawing and Tree of Me shared material and were placed together, while

meditation was made into a group activity given the crowded nature of the classrooms. The bird feeder activity was adapted into a “living things feeder” by all educators. This was because birds rarely visited the classrooms, given their presence in crowded semi-urban environments. Therefore, the scope of the activity was expanded to include hens, cows, goats and dogs.

Some activity-specific adaptations are as follows:

- Two observations mentioned that This is Me was set up independently in front of a mirror.
- Children were introduced to Diversity Cards and the cards were then placed on a shelf at their eye-level. Children were free to take the cards and have conversations between themselves. Three observations mentioned this independent engagement while one observed the teacher introducing the cards to the children.
- One observation described the children drawing and painting a tree themselves for Tree of Me instead of looking for it. This was because there was no tree near this classroom and the sun was too hot to let the children go look for one.

General Observations

The most significant successes highlighted by the observers were the constant availability of the activities so children could engage with them when they liked, and therefore, that children’s choice and expression were supported. Educators also observed that children were silent during meditation and parents observed an increase in children’s observation skills. Overall, observers witnessed children being more helpful, working together more effectively, and being more inquisitive.

“Respect for the children was evident [in the classroom]. Children showed care towards each other and the material in the classroom. They were mindful of their movements.” - Excerpt from a classroom observation

“After the session, parents came to pick up their children from school. They observed the children and were pleasantly surprised when the children enthusiastically talked about the sounds of the vehicles on their way back.” - Excerpt from a classroom observation

The challenges highlighted by the observers were split between resource limitations and implementation challenges. Resource limitations include inadequate space in the centres for discussion, distraction from outside noises, and unavailability of birds to feed. Implementation challenges included distraction from other children, some pictures in the Diversity Cards being too complex for children to understand, the birdfeeder being placed outside the children’s line of sight, and general classroom management amidst many activities. Specifically, Shanti Ashram’s ethos mandates that children can choose what they would like to engage with, spanning both toolkit activities and regular Montessori activities. This occasionally reduced participation in the toolkit activities. Also, in some contexts, classroom engagement was limited by educators’ exposure. This was particularly seen in the Diversity Cards activity, with educators not always familiar with the pictorial representations used in the cards. They reported having to turn to the internet in some cases to build their own understanding before teaching, and hence felt unequipped to delve into details or respond to follow up questions.

“Some pictures were too complex for a 4-year-old to have a conversation about and relate to. They may need to be changed and adapted to make it relevant to the children’s lives.” - Excerpt from a classroom observation

“The number of children for the toolkit activity was low due to many children participating in spontaneous Montessori activity. There is nothing wrong with that. Our Bala Shanti Kendra empowers children to decide what they want to do for themselves.” - Excerpt from classroom observation, edited for clarity

Educator IDIs

Expectations for the toolkit

When asked what their expectations of the toolkit was before the implementation began, many educators said they did not have expectations at the onset. Those that did have expectations reported that they were far exceeded. This was particularly reported in the case of children’s creativity, innovativeness, and engagement. Some educators also said they witnessed a greater increase in calmness, independence and maturity in children than anticipated.

“I was surprised to see their artwork and wondered where all this talent had been hiding. Although the children had done art before, the new activities seemed to unlock new levels of creativity, resulting in even more beautiful artwork.”

“It was more than I had expected. We were very happy to observe everyone’s expressions and their attitudes while implementing the toolkit. We felt that they showed remarkable maturity, as if they had grown up, behaving like adults.”

Useful concepts/practices introduced by the toolkit

The most commonly quoted useful and/or new concept was the contextualisation of activities to suit local environments. This was particularly true of the bird feeding activity, since most centres are located in areas with limited bird activity. Instead, the educators adopted the activity to involve feeding all living things and students instead fed goats, cows, chicken and dogs, depending on what visited the centre. This adaptation proved very effective. Another useful adaptation was with the plant growing activity, with many educators adopting different techniques to effectively implement it using available resources. While some used broken mud containers that used to be piggy banks, others asked children to bring discarded plastic from home.

Another useful concept was the recognition of safe spaces. Educators recognised that they must focus on the spiritual safety of a space, going past just the physical safety aspects.

“In one of the sessions, I learned that spaces may or may not nurture spirituality and may or may not be safe - something I had never considered before. For instance, we often visit a place of worship and

consider them spiritual, but we rarely think about whether they are safe or unsafe. This highlighted the importance of considering both the spiritual and safety aspects of these environments.”

Another popular concept was that of play, particularly in its role in the parents’ session. One educator specifically flagged the role of play in adult engagement, saying it made participants reminisce childhood memories and it was gratifying to educators to be a part of this joy.

Challenges in toolkit implementation

Some respondents flagged finding implementation challenging initially, though it became easier following contextualisation and discussion with peers. One of the major sources of difficulty was resource allocation - multiple activities needed paper and crayons, and so teachers needed to decide whether to create individual stations for each or combine activities. On a similar note, since they were mapped against multiple activities, centres consumed a large volume of paper and crayons got frequently sharpened, leading to a resource constraint. Once these introductory challenges were addressed, educators said implementation also became easy.

Challenges that could not be easily addressed largely pertained to resource and space availability. Meditation, originally an individual activity, could not be implemented as such since students would disturb each other and make noise. Hence, it was converted to a group activity. Similarly, the bird feeder activity was challenging until it expanded in scope to include all living beings. Finally, plants that were grown in the classroom would wilt over the weekend, resulting in logistical difficulties for that activity.

Educator Diaries

Successes

Educators noted in their diaries that the toolkit activities positively influenced children’s behavior both within and beyond the classroom – helping them express themselves better, observe more, extrapolate the values to other contexts, and take home these learnings. These successes span some core themes:

Nurturing value beyond the activity – A majority of the educators described the bird feeder activity as a success. This is despite the fact that birds do not visit most centres – either because they are too crowded or because they are scared of the children. However, the activity was contextualised to span other living beings as well, with children feeding lambs, cows, dogs and even ants through the activity. Over the observed period, children participated actively in feeding these animals. As one observation described, “When a cow walked into our school, we watered it in a bucket, and the children refilled the water [in the bucket] from their bottles after the cow drank from it.”

Strong observations – Many educators noticed students’ observations sharpening. In the “This is Me” activity, many students keenly observed their clothes, hairstyles and other features of their physical appearance, and reproduced it in their drawings. This observation strengthened as the children grew more comfortable with the activity. As one observation described, “This week, the children explored themselves, their body structure, organs, functions, and locations. Initially, they would just stand in front of the mirror and leave, but after the activity, they began to enjoy observing themselves. They noted the shape of their teeth, how their eyes open and close, and what their hair looks like.”

Behaviour beyond the classroom – Many educators noticed students' behaviour outside the classroom reflecting the same values as the activity. This was most evident in the bird/animal feeding activity, with children reminding each other not to chase the chicken away, plucking leaves to feed animals in school, and asking parents for more food to feed the dog. As some observations described, "Children asked their parents to bring more food for the dogs this week" and "Children picked leaves on their way to school to feed the lambs."

The joy of self expression – Many educators noted the success of activities including free drawing and This is Me. It allowed children to draw from their imaginations and many children exhibited joy and confidence because of this. As one observation mentioned, "a child drew a braid on the first day and two braids on the second day, showing their observation skills and creativity." In another instance, "During the 'This is Me' activity, the children drew the clothes they were wearing. The girls especially drew umbrellas and dresses. The boys also drew the same, saying their sisters had similar dresses."

"A measure of success this week was when a Hindu child took a diversity card about a Muslim child and learned about his religion." - Excerpt from an educator's diary

Challenges

While these were significant successes, there were some challenges recorded in the educator diaries. Overall, most challenges were logistical, and those that could be addressed were overcome with contextualization and educators' commitment. Some challenges of resource availability (not having enough paper for the drawing activities or running out of crayons too quickly) and space constraints (most classrooms were already full and this affected activities like meditation) also emerged. These have been communicated to Shanti Ashram as organisational feedback.

Meditation: The biggest challenge was making children stay quiet and focused when they meditate. Teachers found it difficult to do this as a small group activity as the other children would distract those meditating. Some therefore made this a whole group activity. Other teachers added it to prayer time to encourage focus. Teachers also used meditation aids like toys. This is reflected in comments like "Getting them to meditate was the main challenge. When five children were meditating, the noise from others disturbed them. I placed a mat and a toy for each child to meditate on." Infrastructurally, centres did not have a quiet place available to encourage meditation.

This is Me: While this activity did not witness too many challenges, educators highlighted the greatest one involved the quality of drawing. Children initially struggled but got more comfortable with time. When some took longer than others, this caused some implementation challenges. Finally, in one situation, children did not write their name and the educator needed to do so manually after the activity.

Bird Feeding: Educators consistently faced challenges in attracting birds since classrooms were usually based in crowded spaces. The activity was adapted to include feeding all living things, so students fed cows, dogs, goats and chickens. Some challenges that emerged was children being afraid of the animals initially, overseeing children and ensuring their safety when they approached the animals, and ensuring food/water was always available for the animals.

Seed Pot: This activity faced implementation challenges. Pots sometimes broke or fell, seeds did not germinate, or plants withered due to over or underwatering. It was also difficult to care for the plants on holidays, and the plants occupied significant space in an environment without too much to spare.

Diversity Cards: The cards were too small for the children and some of them handled the material very roughly. This needed to be managed. Teachers also spoke about the need to increase their understanding before implementing this, with some reading up about different religions in order to talk to children. Some others questioned the extent to which children truly understood the concept of diversity - "I found it challenging to explain the diversity cards to the kids. Do our children truly understand what we tell them about the different religions on the diversity cards? I have my doubts."

Implementation Challenges: In some cases, the children repeated the same activity multiple times and showed different levels of interest in various activities. Educators addressed this by restricting activities to once per day. Other implementation challenges included poor attendance on some days, and low energy/children being ill on others.

Resource Availability: Educators consistently had to manage with fewer resources than ideal - drawing supplies with colour pencils wearing out too soon, paper, etc. Pots also needed to be bought for the seed planting, and this posed a challenge for some. Overall, all centres reported having less space than ideal for implementation. The most common challenges are reflected in this comment - "The main challenge was the lack of drawing pads. Many activities involve drawing, but the school only has two drawing pads, so I used sheets underneath for drawing."

Student engagement

While educators report that student engagement was largely high, the only exceptions to this were with activities that were perhaps complex for their age. This was particularly true with diversity cards and meditation. On the other hand, activities like This is Me, Bird Feeder and Seed Pot received enthusiastic engagement. Children not only made these behaviours habits but also engaged in interesting conversations against this context. Below are descriptions of participant engagement per key activity:

Bird Feeder: Following the adaptation of this activity to span all living things, it was a very popular activity. Children brought snacks from home to feed the animals and birds, and consistently watched them eat. It soon became a part of their daily routine to refill the feeders and observe the animals and birds. This led to growing respect for natural environments as well as interesting conversations among the children. In one observation, educators noted that "[the students] observed and refilled the bird feeders with interest, learning that all living things are equal" and in another, noted that "the children discussed why chickens do not drink water while they eat and whether chickens have mothers."

This is Me: This was another activity that received enthusiastic responses. Some students were particularly interested in drawing themselves from the mirror, with children coming up to do this activity as soon as another put it down. However, in some situations, young children expressed hesitation to participate - "three-and-a-half year olds were not willing to do the This is Me activity." Shanti Ashram facilitators believe this could be because children are sometimes yet to develop grip at that age or were simply not interested in drawing. Another result of the activity was the interesting conversations it led to. One observation noted that "the children discussed whether boys should wear skirts while watching the girls" during this activity.

Diversity Cards: While children enjoyed the activity on average, some did not engage with this as they were too young. One observation noted that "as they had not started speaking properly, they were less involved and couldn't ask questions about the messages on the cards."

Seed Pots: This was another activity that students enjoyed. However, a logistical limitation was maintaining the plants over the holidays. The plants withered and "made the children sad." However, they were then replanted.

Meditation: This was perhaps the most challenging activity for the students. Some were easily distracted, and using a toy while meditating sometimes heightened this distraction. The space restrictions and lack of privacy also made this hard. As one educator observed, "All activities were done comfortably and enthusiastically, but children need to get used to not disturbing others during meditation."

"Children independently engaged in activities without needing constant guidance from the teacher." -
Excerpt from an educator's diary

Recommendations for improvements

All suggestions offered by educators sit at the intersection of logistical limitations and the desire to 'do more' with each activity. Balancing these two factors proves to be the challenge for educators. At its core, teachers asked for more resources to be available to them. Below are activity-wise recommendations for improvement:

Meditation: In contexts with a high student-teacher ratio and/or limited space, meditation should be conducted as a group activity. In the Bala Shanti Kendras, this space constraint was the largest challenge for this activity, with children finding it difficult to concentrate when others were playing and making noise. To overcome this, educators made it a whole group activity. Some also suggested playing calming music to help children focus. Educators also flagged the specific challenges of having children with disabilities in class. Without constant supervision, children start pinching or hitting each other.

Diversity Cards: Educators suggested the need to contextualize the diversity cards. As one educator noted, "[children have] never seen pictures like those of China or Africa, so it's better if the pictures are more familiar." Another key suggestion was to make the cards larger to allow for easy explanation to groups of children. One educator also suggested having support videos to help explain to children. However, this exercise did help students learn about other religions.

Free drawing, This is Me & Tree of Me: Educators asked for more time to be allocated to these activities, as young children sometimes found them difficult. From an implementation point of view, they also flagged the need to differentiate between the different drawing-based activities, as children tended to get confused. Some teachers addressed this by making specific activities available only on specific days of the week.

Bird Feeder: Teachers suggested creating environments that encouraged birds to visit such as making a nest.

Seed Pots: Some teachers suggested this activity be made a home activity as maintaining the plants over non-working days is difficult. On the other hand, other educators suggested growing this activity into a kitchen garden and/or growing vegetables that the children can then eat, to ensure that effort is not wasted.

QUESTION 5: CHANGES IN PARENTING PRACTICES

To what extent do parents change their parenting/caregiving practices as a result of their participation in the toolkit?

Parents and caregivers significantly changed their behaviours and opinions towards child development following their participation in the toolkit. This was evident in every aspect of their responses - positive relationships, respectful environments, empowering experiences, and parenting beliefs.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Parent/caregiver questionnaire

To examine changes in parenting practices as a result of participating in the Toolkit, scales focusing on different types of practices of interest were included in the questionnaires administered at baseline and endline. A total of 171 participants responded to the questionnaire at baseline, and a total of 142 participants responded at endline. The discrepancy between sample size of parents/caregivers is explained by the prerequisites placed on endline participation – that respondent should have answered the baseline and participated in at least one (1) parent session. To assess change over time in parenting practices, we compare the average scale results before and after participating in the program, as shown in Table 13. The item-level results for each scale are presented in Annex D.

The results of the scale analysis reflect improvements in several key areas of parenting practices. The scales for Positive Relationships, Respectful Environments, Empowering Experiences and Parenting Beliefs showed significant increases at endline, indicating that participants, after completing the program, reported a greater likelihood of implementing practices that foster positive relationships, a respectful parenting environment, and constructive responses to their children's challenging behaviors. The magnitude of changes varied across scales, and high baseline values (with the exception of parenting beliefs) suggest a potential ceiling effect that might have limited further increases in several areas assessed. The greatest difference was reported in parenting beliefs, while the least was in positive relationships. Given that most questions in the parenting beliefs section were related to understandings of violence in childhood development, it is a significant marker of impact in encouraging non-violence behaviour in the household as well.

Table 13: Thematic Comparison of Changes in Parenting Practices [Baseline vs Endline]

Scale	Pre	Post	Diff
Positive Relationships	3.59	3.9	0.31
Respectful Environments	3.31	3.75	0.44
Empowering experiences	3.51	3.87	0.36
Parenting beliefs	2.48	3.07	0.59

Please note that the respondents of the post-survey are a subset of the respondents of the pre-survey.

There were marked differences in response from parents and caregivers between the baseline and the endline. In some contexts, there was a 20% increase in positive responses, specifically with regard to questions such as:

- How likely are you to share stories from your childhood with your children?
- How likely are you to create religious or spiritual rituals with your children?
- How likely are you to listen and respect your children's opinion?
- How likely are you to support your children to express themselves freely, without judgment?
- How likely are you to create moments of free play?
- How likely are you to express gratitude daily with your children?

This increase was also reflected in parenting beliefs, with a >20% increase in the number of parents disagreeing that verbal punishment makes the child more obedient. There was also a >20% decrease in the number of parents who agreed that physical punishment, while not good, was sometimes inevitable.

Results pertaining to the 'Knowledge' scale were also promising. There was a 46% increase in the number of parents who agreed that spirituality can be nurtured in non-religious ways and a 43% increase in parents who agreed that "children are born with an innate spirituality." Some other questions that saw a >20% improvement between baseline and endline are:

- Shouting is not a form of violence (26% increase in disagreement)
- Play is one of the main tools for spiritual development of children in the early years. (20% increase in agreement)
- Connecting with peers within and outside of our immediate community can be a way of nurturing our spirituality. (21% increase in agreement)

In some cases, the high baseline values suggest a possible ceiling effect that may have limited further increases. In specific cases, shifts between baseline and endline were not positive, such as the 12% increase in disagreement to "children's spiritual development requires a non-violent environment to be nurtured" and a 12% increase in disagreement to "for adults to support children's spiritual development, they themselves must nurture their own spirituality." However, outside of these two specific cases, all results were neutral to positive.

These results, therefore, indicate that the parent engagements had significant impact, suggesting that deeper engagement could solidify this impact significantly.

The significant impact of the parent engagement is also bolstered by the parent/caregiver evaluation of the toolkit itself. 70% of all participants attended three (3) or more of the total four (4) sessions and 79% reported being very satisfied with the sessions. As a further indicator of satisfaction, over 90% of parents/caregivers said the sessions respected their values and customs, reiterating the successful contextualisation of the toolkit. This satisfaction extended beyond session participation, influencing parenting practices as well, with close to 70% of parents reporting that the sessions helped them nurture their child's spiritual development and 92% saying they found the tools easy to understand and implement. There was some discrepancy with regard to adoption, however, with less than 70% of parents

reporting they engaged in the recommended practices at home but 85% saying they implemented the Activities for Children at home. A possible explanation for this discrepancy is misunderstanding of the questions resulting in contradictory responses. For detailed item-wise data, refer Annex D.

99% of parents/caregivers who participated in the endline survey reported seeing a positive change in their child's behaviour after the toolkit sessions.

95% of parents/caregivers said they would recommend the sessions to others. In anecdotal evidence, Shanti Ashram trainers witnessed parents sharing positive feedback on Whatsapp groups, encouraging peers to participate in these sessions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the course of the pilot implementation, many significant recommendations were shared by the project team. These have been categorized here for ease of understanding.

Training Recommendations:

- **Translate toolkit material into local language:** To enable ease of reference and increased usability, all toolkit materials should be made available to educators in the local language, Tamil. While all MEL tools were translated, the toolkit itself is undergoing translation and hence, was not available to the educators during the pilot implementation.

Implementation Recommendations:

- **Discuss activities before classroom implementation:** Some educators suggested that thorough discussion of the activities before implementation would have eased the process of adaptation. This was especially true for bird feeders and the activities needing the same resources. This was partially overcome by each activity being introduced first by two (2) educators before being implemented by the entire team. However, the initial implementation phase of the project was challenging for most educators.
- **Conduct accessible parent sessions for both mothers and fathers:** Parent and caregiver sessions were limited by availability and willingness to participate. This is especially true given that most participants need to work for their daily pay. However, the parent sessions resulted in significant impact, both quantitatively and qualitatively, with participants enjoying the activities. Therefore, these sessions should be conducted for both fathers and mothers regularly in ways that encourage participation, preventing lapses in behaviour or attitude.

Activity-Specific Recommendations:

- **Contextualize and ensure age-appropriateness of Diversity Cards:** To maximize the effectiveness and engagement of diversity cards, it is essential to adapt them to suit the cultural and developmental needs of the children. We propose four specific recommendations stemming from educators' perceptions of the Diversity Cards not reflecting local children; not being suitable for group settings; being too complex for young children; and not feeling comfortable enough to discuss them.
 - Adapt the diversity cards to include images and examples that are more familiar and relatable to the children's local context
 - Redesign the cards to be larger, making them more visible and easier to use during group activities
 - Tailor the use of Diversity Cards to the developmental stages of children, with simpler, more interactive methods for younger children who may not yet be verbal or fully able to grasp abstract concepts
 - Include discussions in the educator training about different religions and cultures, to increase their knowledge and comfort to discuss these topics.
- **Ensure age-appropriateness of drawing-based activities like This is Me:** In some situations, younger children around three years old seemed less willing to participate in the activity. Facilitators explain this is likely because of under-developed grip, leading to them not enjoying drawing activities. This should be kept in mind when creating activities for younger children.

MEL Recommendations:

- **Ensure consistency and attention to detail, particularly when translating data:** The analysis process will benefit from attention to detail and standardization of formatting. For e.g., the translation of Likert scale questions adopted 'Agree - <Tamil translation>', 'Agree- <Tamil translation>', and 'Agree <Tamil translation>' alternatively, making numeric replacement at the time of analysis cumbersome.

Recommendations from Shanti Ashram:

- **Ensure the relevance of MEL tools with the implementation partner's pedagogy:** While this may not be possible in a multi-country pilot, some questions in the tools were not relevant to the Shanti Ashram model of functioning. MEL tools should ideally be created for the context of implementation. Should the project be extended to a Phase 1, perhaps there could be an element of contextualisation of content (beyond phrasing) for the tools as well.
- **Commit to longer-term implementation to observe deeper impact:** While the pilot implementation was scheduled only for a year, the project would have benefited from a longer-term commitment in order to better observe and enable impact. Given the context of Shanti Ashram's work, the project would have benefited from a 2-3 year timeline, allowing us to work with children throughout their time at Bala Shanti Kendra as well as their introduction to the organisation's Children's Parliament.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: Training of Educators Session Mapping

Module	Session Topic	Activity Topic
Module 1: Importance Of Children's Spiritual Development For The Protection Of Children From Violence And For The Promotion Of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 1: Early Childhood And The Holistic Development And Well-Being Of Children	Activity 3: Holding The Lives Of Children In Our Hands
Module 1: Importance Of Children's Spiritual Development For The Protection Of Children From Violence And For The Promotion Of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 2: Spiritual Development Of Children	Activity 1: Moving Beyond
Module 1: Importance Of Children's Spiritual Development For The Protection Of Children From Violence And For The Promotion Of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 3: Violence Against Children	Activity 2: Violence Against Children: Prevention And Protection
Module 2: Nurturing One's Own Spirituality	Session 4: My Understanding Of Spirituality	Activity 1: Exploring My Spirituality And Spiritual Well-Being
Module 2: Nurturing One's Own Spirituality	Session 5: My Spiritual Well-Being	Activity 2: Learning How To Handle Emotions In Parenting
Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing The Spiritual Development	Session 6: Nurturing Positive Relationships Between Caregivers And Children.	Activity 1: Why Are Play And One-On-One Time So Important
Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing The Spiritual Development	Session 7: Safe Environments	Activity 2: It Takes A Village To Raise A Child — The Role Of Religious And Spiritual Communities In Fostering Spiritual Development In Children

Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing The Spiritual Development	Session 8: Empowering Experiences	Activity 3: Nurturing A Playful Spirit
Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing The Spiritual Development	Session 9: Empowering Experiences	Activity 1: Introducing The Activities For Children

ANNEX B: FOLLOW-UP SESSIONS FOR TRAINING OF EDUCATORS

Module	Session Topic	Activity Topic	Scheduled Month
Module 1: Importance Of Children’s Spiritual Development For The Protection Of Children From Violence And For The Promotion Of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 1: Child Dignity and Child Rights	Activity 2: Discovering And Exploring Child Rights	January 2024
Module 1: Importance Of Children’s Spiritual Development For The Protection Of Children From Violence And For The Promotion Of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 2: Early Childhood And The Holistic Development And Well-Being Of Children	Activity 1: The Critical Importance Of The Early Years	May 2024
Module 1: Importance Of Children’s Spiritual Development For The Protection Of Children From Violence And For The Promotion Of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 3: Spiritual Development Of Children	Activity 2: Why Is Spiritual Development So Important?	May 2024
Module 1: Importance Of Children’s Spiritual Development For The Protection Of Children From Violence And For The Promotion Of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 4: Violence Against Children	Activity 3: Violence Affecting Children — Using Role Playing	May 2024
Module 2: Nurturing	Session 5: My	Activity 3: Interreligious	May 2024

One's Own Spirituality	Understanding Of Spirituality	Visits	
Module 2: Nurturing One's Own Spirituality	Session 6: My Spiritual Well-Being	Activity 3: Religion, Ethics And Well-Being	May 2024
Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing The Spiritual Development	Session 7: Nurturing Positive Relationships Between Caregivers And Children.	Activity 1: Why Are Play and One-on-One Time So Important	February 2024
Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing The Spiritual Development	Session 8: Safe Environments	Activity 3: Creating Safe Spaces For Children	May 2024
Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing The Spiritual Development	Session 9: Empowering Experiences	Activity 2: Protecting and Connecting with Mother Earth	March 2024
Module 3: Conditions For Nurturing The Spiritual Development	Session 10: Session 10:Empowering Experiences	Activity 2: Discovering The Spiritual Capacities	December 2023

ANNEX C: EDUCATOR QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM ANALYSIS

- Teaching practices

%	0= Never		1 = Once per term		2 = Occasionally (once per month)		3 = Sometimes (many times per month)		4 = Often (many times per week)		5 = All the time (everyday)	
	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E
I allow students to choose which activities or objects they would like to engage with.	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	89%	100%

I allow students to complete tasks in their own way.	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	89%	100%
I give students opportunities to take on roles/responsibilities/ownership in the classroom.	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%	89%	78%
I give students the opportunity to make suggestions about what they want to learn.	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	89%	100%
I allow student responses and opinions to influence the direction of my lessons.	0%	0%	11%	11%	0%	0%	0%	11%	11%	22%	78%	56%
I am flexible in my planning to allow room to embed my students' interests.	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	89%	100%
I model peaceful ways of solving conflict in the classroom, such as through communication and searching	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%	89%	78%

for solutions together.												
I encourage children to play with whatever they like, regardless of their gender.	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	89%	100%
I adapt activities according to their needs and capabilities.	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	22%	78%	78%

- Positive Relationships

%	0= Never		1 = Once per term		2 = Occasionally (once per month)		3 = Sometimes (many times per month)		4 = Often (many times per week)		5 = All the time (everyday)	
	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E
I interact in a positive and warm manner with children.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I use positive language and words with children.	0%	11%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	89%	89%
I am able to understand my students' emotional needs and	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%

respond appropriately.												
I encourage prosocial classroom behavior between children via sharing, kindness, and affection.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I effectively manage the tensions and difficulties presented in the classroom by encouraging children to solve their conflicts with one another peacefully.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	0%	22%	11%	67%	89%
I encourage children to listen to one another.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I educate children on how to approach others in a friendly way during greetings and interactions.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	0%	89%	100%

I use positive praise and reinforcement.	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	89%
I model being kind and showing gratitude to others.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%	0%	78%	100%

- Empowering experiences

%	0= Never		1 = Once per term		2 = Occasionally (once per month)		3 = Sometimes (many times per month)		4 = Often (many times per week)		5 = All the time (everyday)	
	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E
I create opportunities for children in my classroom to interact and relate to one another.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I encourage children to describe themselves, their families, and their communities in ways that make sense for each child in a creative way.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%	22%	67%	78%

I promote learning of diverse religious/spiritual and cultural practices and traditions.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I promote children's connection with nature, such as through nature walks, gardening or nature contemplation.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	33%	11%	67%	78%
I create moments and space for free play in the classroom.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	100%	89%
I create moments for meditation, interfaith prayer or silence to give children time with themselves.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I create moments for children to express gratitude to others in their	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	0%	11%	11%	78%	89%

life, including their family, peers and other community members.												
I make sure that children have time to dance and listen to music, if they want to.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%	22%	78%	78%
I read books to the class about diversity, ethics and morals.	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	0%	0%	11%	44%	11%	44%	78%

- Safe and Respectful Environments

%	0 = Never		1 = Once per term		2 = Occasionally (once per month)		3 = Sometimes (many times per month)		4 = Often (many times per week)		5 = All the time (everyday)	
	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E
I design the classroom so that all materials for the children are easy to reach or the right size for them.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I have easy-to-read/picture posters on the	11%	56%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%	0%	67%	44%

wall that relate to classroom rules/agreements that the children can understand.												
I use a calm but assertive approach to solving conflict peacefully in the classroom.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I maintain a daily classroom routine with the children.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
I support children to be who they are and to express themselves authentically without judgment.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	11%	89%	89%
I design the classroom based on the children's interests to help them develop a sense of belonging in the classroom.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%

ANNEX D: PARENT/CAREGIVER QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM ANALYSIS

- Satisfaction

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall, how satisfied are you with the sessions you participated in?	2%	0%	19%	79%
How satisfied are you with the facilitator(s) that delivered the sessions to your group?	2%	0%	10%	88%
How satisfied are you with the quality of the venue where the sessions took place?	0%	2%	13%	85%
How satisfied are you with the total number of sessions provided?	1%	1%	23%	75%
How satisfied are you with the duration of each session?	1%	6%	25%	68%

- Usefulness

	Not Useful	Slightly Useful	Moderately Useful	Very Useful
How useful did you find the sessions in helping you with your parenting needs?	1%	1%	27%	70%
How useful did you find the session in helping you nurture your	1%	2%	30%	68%

children's spiritual development?				
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- Adoption

	Rarely or Never	Occasionally	Often	Very Often
How often do you engage in practices recommended by the sessions at home?	1%	30%	44%	24%
How often do you implement the Activities for Children at home?	2%	13%	32%	54%

- Implementation

	Difficult	Easy	Very Easy
How easy was it to understand and implement the tools provided in the sessions at home?	8%	25%	66%

- Changes in child

	Yes	No
Have you noticed any positive changes in your child's behavior or attitudes since your participation in the sessions?	99%	1%

- Cultural Relevance

	Did not respect and integrate them	Somewhat respected and integrated them	Fully respected and integrated them

How well do you believe the sessions respected and integrated the values and customs of your community?	0%	7%	93%
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- Recommendation

	Definitely Not	Probably	Definitely
Based on your experience, would you recommend these sessions to other parents or caregivers in your community?	1%	4%	95%

- Positive Relationships

How likely are you to?	Extremely likely		Likely		Unlikely		Extremely unlikely	
	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E
encourage your children to share their feelings?	82%	94%	17%	6%	1%	0%	0%	0%
encourage your children to ask questions?	78%	95%	18%	4%	3%	1%	0%	1%
encourage your children to share about their day?	84%	96%	15%	4%	1%	0%	1%	0%
encourage your children to keep up with an activity when they find it challenging?	70%	93%	22%	6%	6%	1%	2%	0%

encourage your children to find solutions to situations they face?	59%	91%	31%	6%	7%	3%	3%	0%
participate in play with your children?	71%	87%	24%	12%	4%	1%	2%	0%
share with your children stories from your childhood?	55%	87%	28%	10%	12%	3%	5%	0%
share traditions from your religious or spiritual heritage with your children?	56%	87%	27%	10%	13%	3%	3%	0%
create religious or spiritual rituals with your children (e.g., a prayer together, express gratitude, connect with nature)?	69%	92%	23%	7%	6%	1%	2%	1%

- Respectful Environments

How likely are you to?	Extremely likely		Likely		Unlikely		Extremely unlikely	
	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E
listen and respect your children's opinions?	69%	89%	24%	11%	6%	1%	1%	0%
encourage your children to be who they want to be, without imposing conditions?	36%	66%	30%	27%	27%	6%	7%	0%
let your children make decisions, according to their age (e.g., about	64%	82%	19%	13%	14%	5%	3%	0%

what clothes to wear, places to go, food to eat, etc)								
support your children to express themselves freely, without judgment?	45%	80%	30%	16%	21%	4%	3%	0%
role model peaceful ways of solving conflict in the home?	57%	80%	30%	13%	12%	6%	1%	1%

- Empowering experiences

How likely are you to?	Extremely likely		Likely		Unlikely		Extremely unlikely	
	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E
integrate play in your children's daily activities and daily routines?	77%	98%	19%	2%	3%	0%	1%	0%
promote opportunities for your children to connect with nature, such as through nature walks and nature contemplation?	62%	86%	26%	14%	9%	0%	2%	0%
create moments and space for your children to experience free play?	65%	92%	25%	8%	7%	0%	2%	0%
encourage your children to explore the surrounding environments?	61%	88%	25%	12%	11%	0%	3%	0%

pause and let your children touch and observe nature when walking outside?	59%	89%	31%	8%	8%	2%	2%	0%
express gratitude daily with your children?	63%	85%	23%	15%	12%	1%	2%	0%
find a moment for meditation, prayer or a moment of silence with your children?	61%	82%	20%	15%	16%	2%	4%	1%
create moments in the home for children and parents to be together and talk?	76%	90%	18%	10%	5%	0%	1%	0%
engage your children in local community activities?	64%	79%	20%	19%	11%	2%	5%	0%

- Parenting beliefs

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	E
I believe that when a child receives a physical punishment, he/she will not repeat the unwanted behavior.	18%	39%	26%	42%	31%	12%	26%	6%
I believe that verbal punishment makes the child more obedient.	16%	35%	22%	42%	31%	18%	30%	5%
I believe that children are affected when	2%	1%	3%	2%	9%	4%	86%	93%

parents shout or argue in their presence.								
If you do not apply physical punishment to the child, he/she will grow spoiled.	19%	25%	27%	49%	27%	20%	27%	6%
Physical punishment of the child is not good, but is sometimes inevitable.	4%	11%	3%	23%	45%	51%	48%	14%

- Knowledge

	Agree		Disagree		Don't Know	
	B	E	B	E	B	E
Spirituality can be nurtured in non-religious ways.	53%	99%	15%	1%	32%	1%
Children's spirituality is connected to a sense of belonging	68%	96%	17%	2%	15%	2%
The spiritual development of children is included in the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child	21%	89%	3%	2%	76%	8%
Children exposed to violence are more likely to be victims and perpetrators of violence later in life.	65%	65%	19%	34%	17%	1%
Shouting is not a form of violence.	52%	37%	37%	63%	11%	0%
Children's spiritual development requires a non-violent environment to be nurtured	77%	77%	10%	22%	13%	1%
For adults to support children's spiritual development, they themselves must nurture their own spirituality.	89%	82%	5%	17%	6%	1%

Children's spiritual development is fostered by positive and nurturing relations with caregivers	91%	92%	5%	8%	4%	0%
Children's exposure to violence can alter the developing brain's structure and the way it works	78%	89%	8%	11%	15%	1%
Children are born with an innate spirituality	40%	83%	27%	9%	33%	8%
Connecting with peers within and outside of our immediate community can be a way of nurturing our spirituality.	73%	94%	16%	6%	10%	0%
Play is one of the main tools for spiritual development of children in the early years.	73%	93%	8%	7%	20%	0%
Positive parenting can positively influence children's brain development in the early years	93%	95%	2%	4%	5%	1%
The family has a central role in nurturing the spiritual development of children	95%	95%	1%	4%	4%	1%
Nurturing children's spiritual development early on benefits their holistic well-being for years to come.	91%	95%	3%	4%	5%	1%