

Gautam Gauri

# ASHA FELLOWSHIP

## Purdue Chapter

---



*We are painting the organization's logo!*

---

## Introduction

Asha For Education is a non-profit organization based in the United States. The term Asha" means "hope" in Sanskrit. Asha works for the education of the underprivileged. It's motto is to bring hope through education.

A fellowship program was offered by Asha for Education to Gautam Gauri, Co-founder of Diksha foundation to provide opportunity and support to implement and experiment with his innovative ideas that can improve the quality of primary education and social emotional development of children from the underprivileged backgrounds.

With his experience of Masters in Primary Education from University of Cambridge, hereafter, Gautam (the fellow) has a lot of innovative ideas that can improve the quality of education and holistic development of children. hence , as a fellow, Gautam was given this opportunity to implement and experiment (in education) with his innovative ideas at the grassroots level.

### Objective

This fellowship was created with an objective to create a culture of democratic value based education that utilizes modern tools like technology and social media. Gautam runs an organisation 'Diksha Foundation' which works for the holistic education of the underprivileged children. Many of the activities were carried out in collaboration with Diksha Foundation. The organization has a strong human resource expertise that are also used to provide and create opportunities for children and youth from underprivileged backgrounds in other organisations, low fee private schools and government schools. The fellowship's main objective was to involve and implement the ideas and innovations of Gautam Gauri in the state of Bihar. There are many interventions in Diksha which helps children to learn values and develop a self that is independent and has leadership potential.

## Initiatives

- Index for inclusion meeting in KHEL Patna
- Pants Session in KHEL Patna, KHEL Hilsa, Rainbow Foundation shelter home, New Residential Career Public School Madhubani (Low Fee Private School), Primary school, Adalatganj (Government School), Shikshayatan (Low fee private school)
- Ignite Workshop in Government schools
- 5th Space creating sessions in KHEL Patna and Hilsa, developed by Pravah
- Bal Sansad elections and meetings in KHEL Hilsa and Patna
- A session on 'Good Parenting' in Loyola High School
- Involving youth of 10 government colleges to raise awareness about health, hygiene and safety in slums/urban settlement through a project of Patna Municipal corporation and UNFPA
- Computer training program for women

## **Details of Initiatives taken by the fellow**

### **1. Index for inclusion meeting in KHEL Patna**

Index for Inclusion is a manual developed by Prof Tony Booth, University of Cambridge, the index manual helps in creating an inclusive environment in schools and learning spaces so that each child gets to participate in the learning process wholly. The Index helps the teachers in becoming aware of various dimensions of inclusion, deepening their perspective on educational issues and understanding that different children have different needs and addressing the learning difficulties that can be identified using the questions/indicators specified in the manual. It is about building supportive communities and fostering high achievement for all staff and students. The index is a resource to support the inclusive development of schools. It is a comprehensive document that can help everyone to find their own next steps in developing their setting.

The Fellow has initiated Index for Inclusion as a pilot project at KHEL Patna. Tuesday meetings have been scheduled for the Index for Inclusion. In the meetings, the fellow makes sure that everybody participates and gives their opinions. It has helped in broadening the perspective of the staff of Diksha. The fellow has adopted inclusive practices in the center and have noticed a lot of freedom of expression among the children.

### **2. PANTS SESSIONS**

Kids are not safe in schools, daycare, roads and also their own homes. Considering the safety of children in the current scenario, it is very important to educate our children about good touch and bad touch and also the steps a child can take for their safety. As an initiative to educate children about good and bad touch an educational programme is designed by NSPCC National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, UK. PANTS curriculum has been developed to support practitioners to deliver messages to pupils that help keep them safe from harm and abuse and it is being conducted by the Fellow and Diksha foundation's team in government and low fee private schools. The purpose of the sessions is to introduce them to the concept of good touch and bad touch. It is always good to introduce children to this knowledge as early as possible.

The Fellow and Diksha Team organized Pants sessions in different institutions -

1. Rainbow Homes
2. Shikshayatan school, Patna.
3. KHEL Patna
4. Be For Nation
5. KHEL Hilsa

6. Prathmik Vidhyalaya , Adalatganj slum
7. Residential Career Public School Madhubani

With the positive responses received from these children and organisations, the fellow has plans of implementing PANTS sessions in at least ten towns and villages of Bihar in the coming year.

### **Rainbow Homes**

Rainbow Foundation India is an organisation which aims to provide assistance to children who are in need of support. Rainbow foundation India runs shelter homes and open shelters. Through their homes, they provide education, shelter and other supports to children. “We



really liked your curriculum! It will be really helpful for our kids if you conduct similar sessions in our other homes”, Mrs. Sadan - co ordinator Rainbow Homes.



**Shikshayatan school, Patna.**

The fellow along with the Diksha Team conducted a session using PANTS curriculum in Shikshayatan school, Patna. The students were very enthusiastic, "they have never been exposed to such things before. We try to keep our children updated but we also have less knowledge about these" said Mrs. Menka.

Shikshayatan school is an initiative taken by Mrs. Menka Sinha. She volunteers at the school after her work hours. A self made woman, she has a passion for teaching. She has been running this school in an open area outside her beauty parlour since 1997.



## KHEL Patna

Pantosaurus, the friendly dinosaur, talking PANTS is a simple way to teach your child how to stay safe from sexual abuse.

The Fellow's team member took a session on PANTS curriculum at our KHEL Patna Center. Knowledge Hub for Education and Learning (KHEL) Program is our flagship after-school supplementary education program. It provides supplementary education and emotional development space for the children. 921 children have benefitted from our free supplementary education and computer training programme in the past five years across our three learning centres in Patna, Nalanda and Delhi.

Diksha works for the underprivileged children of the Jagdeo path area.

Understanding #Private

Appropriate and Inappropriate #Touch

Right to say #NO

And People they can #Trust



### **Be For Nation**

The Asha Fellow with Diksha Team conducted PANTS session in Be For Nation, an ngo that works in the area of education and health. "Children were thankful that such a session was organised. They were initially not aware of such things. We have seen some different energy in our kids today" said Rohit.

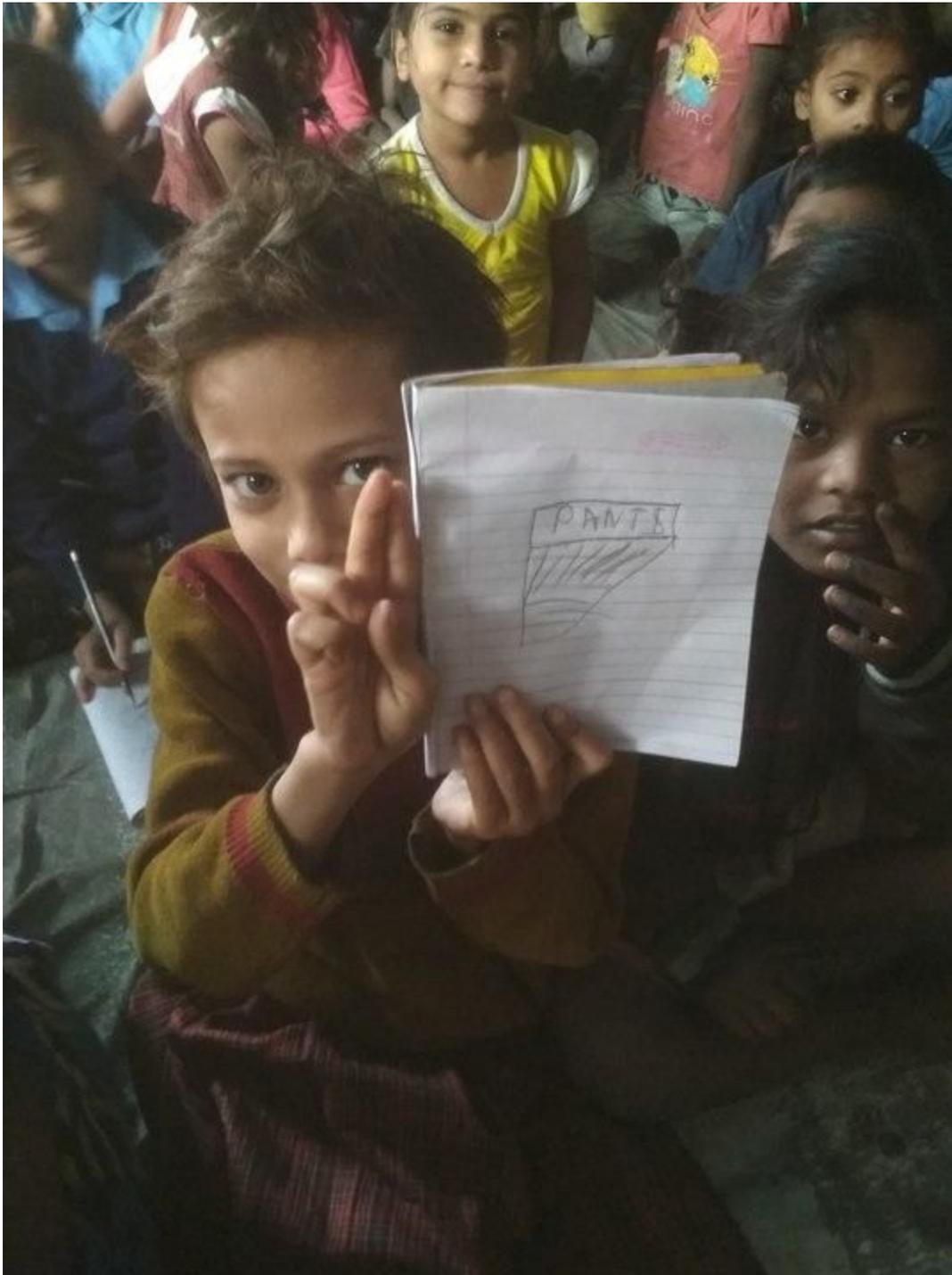


### **KHEL Hilsa**

The fellow's facilitator conducted a session on PANTS curriculum in Hilsa.

KHEL Hilsa is an after school learning center. We have created a space where children co-create an environment that supports freedom and democracy.

The PANTS curriculum we believe will help our kids in dealing with tough situations in their day to day life.



**PANTS session in Prathmik Vidhyalaya , Adalatganj slum**

Adalatganj is a community behind Planetarium. The population is above 2000 and has around 450-500 homes. There are two Anganwadi centers and one primary school in the community.

The purpose of the PANTS session, was to engage the students in discussions that will make them comfortable in talking and fighting back with abuse. Students were filled with enthusiasm and they also showed their dance and poetry performances after the session.



### **Residential Career Public School Madhubani**

New Residential Career Public School is a low fee private school in Sapta, a small village in Madhubani district. It was started in 2007 for the children from underprivileged background. The school runs classes from Pre- Nursery to 5th grade with 70-75 students. The school is a mix of students from diverse backgrounds. The teacher, Kiran Thakur, believes in inclusion, she said all our students are precious, we treat them alike.

The children here made sure that the facilitator checks their classworks - 'list of people you trust activity'. Anand, the facilitator said, the children were quite engaging during the session as well. She said, "I was quite happy when they came back running to me "didi you forgot to collect our answers!"

### 3. Ignite Workshop in Government schools



APJ ABDUL KALAM Ignite AWARD idea collection at CHANDRA MADHYA VIDYALAYA KURJI PATNA

Ignite helps in bringing creativity in government schools. Access to approximately 10000 marginalised children to innovative workshops and recognition of the selected students at a national level for through 'APJ Abdul Kalam Ignite Award' is what makes IGNITE an excellent learning experience for the students.

This year, we have implemented the IGNITE Idea campaign in Arwal, Arrah, Muzaffarpur, Nalanda, Patna, Saran and Vaishali districts in Bihar. We have targeted government and low-cost private schools in this campaign. We are seeking creative solutions to the problems caused due to limited access to resources like electricity, clean water and sanitation facilities.

Children up to 17 years of age /class 12 or equivalent have participated in the campaign.

Interacting with the students and collecting ideas in different schools was an excellent experience for the fellow. The children participated in the competition with full enthusiasm. Ignite gives us an opportunity to understand the ground reality, and it has also helped us we discover the potential that these young aspirants possessed.

Through this competition, rural students also get a chance to participate in such competitions and an opportunity to showcase their creative and innovative skills.

#### **4. 5th Space creating sessions in KHEL Patna and Hilsa, developed by Pravah**

5th Space - the fifth space is an innovative concept developed by Pravah and Commutiny The Youth Collective. It gives a space to adolescents to participate in self-development. The 5th space believes that self transformation is the first step towards creating change in our relationships and in society.

We believe in improvising the physical and experiential aspects of our learning spaces. The hallmark of our children at KHEL is their ability to express boldly how they view the world around them, this has been the most rewarding aspect of our work.

To create a 5th Space, the Fellow has initiated a module called M.L.M.F. which is designed by PRAVAH with 23 sessions in the module Hundred adolescents and youth are being prepared to create a 5th Space within Self and the Society.

#### **5. Bal Sansad elections and meetings in KHEL Hilsa and Patna**



Bal Sansad - The Fellow is a believers of democracy that is participative, self-regulated and open to dialogue. One such simulation of the same value is Bal Sansad or Children' Parliament. Elections take place annually and elected representatives hold offices that are accountable to the student community. Democracy understood and practiced at an early stage would help in development of active citizens.

Children's Parliament (Bal Sansad) promotes democratic and secular thinking and activities which form the base of holistic growth. The Fellow's aim is to develop life skills in children like planning, decision making and participation. The spirit of democracy shall strengthen when it is made stronger at the roots. This unique platform, "Bal Sansad" which is a miniature form of Sansad/Parliament at our learning Center is designed with the vision to inculcate democratic values in the "leaders of tomorrow".

Bal Sansad elections were conducted in high spirits at Khel Patna. Everybody including the teachers, students and volunteers of the learning center took part in the Voting process. There is a different kind of energy on voting days. Bal Sansad concept (children parliament) has become very popular among children at Diksha and is really liked and enjoyed by kids here.

## **6. A session on 'Good Parenting' in Loyola High School**



Gautam, the fellow was invited in a reputed school in Patna to give a Talk to parents of students of primary school (class -5) Loyola School Patna.

## Parenting Styles

	Supportive Parent is accepting and child-centered	Unsupportive Parent is rejecting and parent-centered
Demanding Parent expects much of child	<b>Authoritative Parenting</b> Relationship is reciprocal, responsive; high in bidirectional communication	<b>Authoritarian Parenting</b> Relationship is controlling, power-assertive; high in unidirectional communication
Undemanding Parent expects little of child	<b>Permissive Parenting</b> Relationship is indulgent; low in control attempts	<b>Rejecting-Neglecting Parenting</b> Relationship is rejecting or neglecting; uninvolved

He covered the topics like Parenting Styles, Child Sexual Abuse, and Holistic Education.

## **7. Involving youth of 10 government colleges to raise awareness about health, hygiene and safety in slums/urban settlement.**



To create better self development opportunities for the Youth in Bihar, the fellow's team Diksha has taken part in the government run project - Smart and Sensitive Patna. The project's aim was to develop leadership skills in the learners and encourage them to take community action initiatives.

The ASHA Fellow aims to prepare children and youth to understand their responsibility and pay their role for social issues. In the current scenario of Patna, health, hygiene and safety are common issues coming out as an obstacle between development. 50 youth of 10 colleges were oriented and given the opportunity of exposure to understand the issue through 10 slums and raise awareness and provide solutions of the issue. All the youth participated in a youth event and put out their viewpoint, feedbacks and questions in front of government and concerned authorities like Deputy mayor, additional municipal commissioner, UNFPA regional head, Magsaysay awardee Bezwada Wilson, who were present in the event.



## **8. Computer training program for women and girls**

Bridging the digital divide - To effectively break out of the poverty cycle, children and youth from underprivileged communities need access to and build comfort with new kinds of technologies. The Fellow is equipping children with technological tools so that they not only

learn how to access digital tools as consumers but they also become equal participants in creating technology through programming and other tools.

Digital literacy is transforming the lives of the beneficiaries in a significant way. It is an important part of the Fellow's educational interventions for the underprivileged communities - Holistic Education for children and Digital Literacy for women. Our Digital Literacy classes are benefitting hundreds of women and young girls every year.

The students are taught basics of computers and the internet. The participants learn the basic workings of computers, MS Word, Excel, Paint. They learn to surf the internet, e-mail, online banking and ticket bookings.

### **Plans for future:**

Gautam, the fellow is looking to expand to communities, schools, colleges and organizations who are working towards the cause of education especially targeting children and youth from underprivileged communities.

The Fellow wishes to create child-centric organizations where children must experience freedom and they should be able to voice their opinions.

The team has new plans to implement Jagrik The Samvidhan Live project in government schools of Bihar. Jagrik project will help children learn the civic values and about their rights and duties.

We are also planning to provide some sessions on gender discrimination in various colleges/institutions. The session will prepare youth to think critically about the issue and take actions on that.

The Fellow is planning to implement -

- Code club
- Makerspace
- Social Emotional Ethical Learning Curriculum

## Response to queries

**1. Regarding the impact tracking methods described in the original application, the report mainly talks about joy and interest and numbers in terms of sessions conducted and number of students reached out to. Was there any formal impact assessment done after these sessions/initiatives or if there is a plan to do so in future?**

As a part of the Fellowship I am trying to implement new ideas and test them for a scalable model. So far it has been informal feedback and detailed narrative reporting on most of the initiatives being tried out.

One can always do a formal impact assessment, but that means additional documentation. So it is easier to do that, if the initiative is a part of a bigger project and multiple people are involved. I have identified some of the ways in which Impact can be measured

- 1 No of children reached
- 2 No of Teachers reached
- 3 Case study of selected beneficiaries
- 4 Feedback from Teachers regarding their observations after the sessions- say whether any student shared something with the Teachers after the PANTS sessions
- 5 Project Report - As many of these initiatives get linked with larger projects, documentation has been done to show the work . Eg Smart City project report

**2. Is there any documentation/recordings of activities under Index of Inclusion initiative? Is there a way to measure this 'index'?**

Yes, we do have pictures of the meetings, presentations and other documents concerning Index For Inclusion. It is not easy to measure Index as Index for Inclusion works on the behavioral change of its participants.

At the Center, we have taken feedback from teachers regarding the Index for Inclusion. A report had also been prepared with the purpose of documenting it as a pilot initiative. The idea behind trying out the Index in a smaller setup is to develop a prototype on how it can be scaled further. We have identified some of the parameters on which the impact can be evaluated.

Impact Evaluation Questions (to be filled by Teachers and Other Stakeholders)

- Has the school/learning center become inclusive?
- Is the school accessible for specially-abled children?
- Have the institutional policies become inclusive?
- Does the institution include all of its stakeholders in different processes?

- Does the school prevent discrimination on caste, class, gender, religion or any other identity?
- Is the school culture inclusive, giving space to all children to participate equally in the learning process?

The Index module desires to make changes sustainable and long lasting.

The pointers that measure the Index are :-

In the context of the work already done, there are two parts of formal assessment, one in which the participants took action on inculcating inclusive practices at the center. The second part is the questionnaire that the participants self-reflect and responded to and then discussed in larger groups.

*The first part of Index is action oriented -*

- A ramp was immediately added at the learning center for the physically challenged. (Quote the question that led to this from the INDEX)
- A ppt was made on 'Special Education Need' (ppt attached) It was after this study that the staff identified that there were few children in the classroom with physical disabilities like hearing problem.
- While studying about the special needs of children, the theory of multiple intelligences came up. In a group task, the participants had to prepare a ppt on Multiple Intelligence theory. This helped us categorize our children according to their learning levels.
- Another study was done on 'third gender' and inclusion practices for the same. (attaching the ppt in the email.)

*In the second part of the assessment the participants self-reflect and respond to the questions given in the index manual.*

- A questionnaire was given to the participants, it included the following dimensions -
  - Creating Inclusive cultures
  - Producing inclusive policies
  - Evolving inclusive practices
- The participants were given a task by the fellow to think and write ups on "What is Respect to You"
 

From the previous task it emerged that there is a need to think upon "What is Disrespect" too, according to individual participants. The group developed a common understanding upon the concepts of Respect and Disrespect.

### **3. How many ideas were finally received for registering for the Ignite program?**

10,586 ideas

45 schools

**Status Update – April 2019 to October 2019**

<b>Project Name</b>	Asha Fellowship			
<b>Goal</b>	To create a culture of democratic values based education that utilizes modern technology tools.			
<b>Duration</b>	3 years			
<b>Serial No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Activities Conducted</b>	<b>Institutions</b>	<b>Outcomes &amp; Future Plans</b>
1	Index for Inclusion - The Index for Inclusion is a manual developed by Prof Tony Booth. The Index helps in schools practising inclusive values. I have been leading a project on the index for last one year.	Regular sessions on Index for Inclusion were conducted in Diksha Patna center. The Index activities have now been scaled up and are to be implemented in five schools. Three schools have already initiated the process.	Diksha, SR Vidyapeeth, Indian Public School, Govt Middle School(tentative), Supporting agency – US Embassy AEIF	Diksha center is a vibrant inclusive place. The Index activities would make the participatin schools inclusive.
2	Jagrik Civic Education Collectivization :A civic education initiative with CYC, Delhi and twelve organizations in Bihar. The objective is to teach students civic values and develop responsible citizens.	Jagrik Modules are being implemented with 3000 children in different disRICTS of Bihar	Diksha, 11 Bihar NGOs, CYC Delhi and UNICEF Bihar	Mass scale civic education programme expected to train children on constitution and United Nations sustainable development goals.
3	Child Rights Sessions using PANTS and other modules	Workshops using PANTS Module and Child rights modules have been conducted in five schools of Bihar. Child corner is being developed in these schools	Sainik School Nalanda, School of Creative Learning, Radiant International, DPS , Rajkiya Kanya Vidyalaya	Child rights remains a critical problem in Bihar, children and caregivers are expected to be trained to prevent incidents of child abuse.

4	Social Emotional Ethical Learning – A curriculum developed by Emory University and Dalai Lama Trust. The modules help children develop socio emotional intelligence and become responsible members of society.	This is at a pilot stage. Initial level talks have been held with interested stakeholders. At first level the modules would be implemented in Diksha centers.	KHEL Center	This work ties up with my goal of promoting holistic education. The curriculum is expected to help students develop morally and psychologically.
5	Government School Quality Education Programme	Liasoning with Education department officials to get approval formal approval for working in government schools	Education Department, Govt of Bihar , Government Schools	Holistic education programmes on themes of civic education, values education and core literacy. Index of Inclusion module is expected to be implemented in government schools
6	Code Club – A digital tinkering lab run by Raspberry Pi Foundation. Encouraging young people across the world to become digital makers.	At a pilot stage, resources need to be raised for conducting a pilot . An initial conversation done with a UN agency to pilot the project in Madarssa school. A detailed proposal and action plan needs to be created for this.	Government School, Low cost private schools	Digitally empowered students who are not mere consumers of technology. This activity will make students digital creators.