

मैं
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कर सकती हूँ

— I, A Woman, Can Achieve Anything —

Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon

An Entertainment Education Initiative

Season One

Evaluating changes
in Knowledge, Attitudes &
Practices in Reproductive Health
and Gender Issues



Population Foundation of India (PFI) launched an entertainment education initiative, *Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon* (I, a woman, can achieve anything), with a TV and radio serial as its fulcrum in March 2014. The drama series while challenging existing social and cultural norms around family planning, early marriage, domestic violence and sex selection, aimed at increasing knowledge and changing perception and attitudes of people on social determinants of health and family planning.

The first 52 episodes of the series (Season One) were aired on Doordarshan to capitalise on its massive reach and viewership. The show was telecast at 7 pm on weekends. A radio version¹ of the serial and an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) for audience engagement were also launched. On ground promotional activities were undertaken in five districts each in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar during the period.

Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, being the project states, were selected for the baseline and end line evaluations. Together, the two states account for nearly 15% of India's population and have high fertility rates and an unmet need for family planning. There is also urgent need to increase the age of marriage and first birth, and knowledge of and access to quality family planning services in these two states.

Study Design & Methodology

A baseline survey was carried out in February-March 2014 and the endline evaluation of Season One took place in February-March 2015. The aim was to assess the changes in Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) on family planning, child

¹ The serial was aired across 94 Primary Channels/Local Radio Stations, 24 FM Stations and 37 VividhBharati Stations, which together reach the remotest parts of the country. The 15-minute-long episodes were heard on AIR VividhBharati at 3 pm; on AIR FM Gold at 10.05 am; on AIR FM Rainbow at 6 pm and on the AIR Primary Channels at 12.05pm.

marriage, son preference, gender discrimination, domestic violence and sex selection.

For the end line evaluation, a listing of 30,000 households each in seven districts of Bihar and nine districts of Madhya Pradesh was done. A sample size of 3261 married men and women, and mothers-in-law who had been exposed to the series on TV and radio was taken. The end line also measured the reach and recall of the TV series among the target audience. The research design for the intervention is shown in Figure 1.

Sample size covered in baseline and end line surveys

	Men	Women	Mothers-in-law
Baseline	1220	1214	977
End line	1151	1258	852

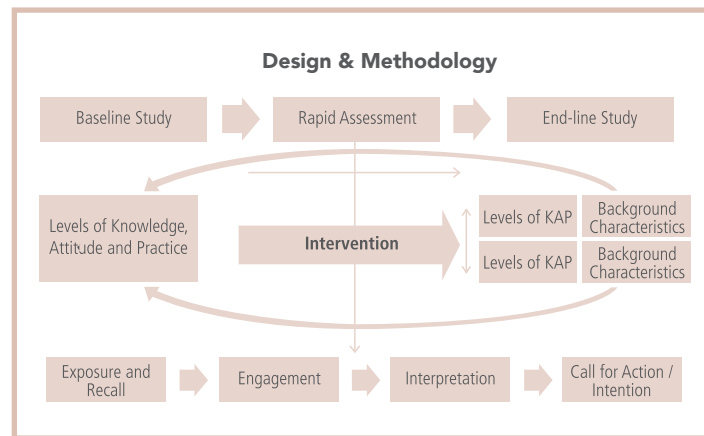


Figure 1

Reach

The study showed that 36% of TV owning households in the two states watched Season One: 42% in Bihar and 34% in Madhya Pradesh. The series also reached 72% households who owned radios.

Forty per cent of respondents who were in the 15-24 years age group (youth) had watched the show. Half the married women who watched the show were in the age group of 18-24 years. The average age of the women who watched the Series was 24 years.

Changes that took place

Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon was seen by the audience as a sincere portrayal of the reality, and not as an exaggerated over dramatic show. Embedding social messages in an entertaining way into the storyline was perceived to be its primary strength.

Social issues like child marriage, son preference, domestic violence, sex selection, alcoholism were taken up and resolved effectively in the series. This gave people the confidence to take action when faced with similar situations.

Other serials show child marriage but not how to stop it and why it should not be allowed...I like the approach of Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon.”

A respondent at a Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Bihar



An aunt from the Mathur family promotes the girls' football team

Increase in knowledge on adverse consequences of early marriage

The entertainment education initiative seeks to create awareness among the community about a woman's right to live her life on her own terms, which includes her decision on when she should get married. The direct identification and connect with the situations faced by the characters in the series and the relevance of these in their own lives was appreciated by all respondents.

The proportion of women who felt that early marriage led to a loss of opportunity for education increased significantly from 24% in the baseline survey to 39% in the end line survey.

Also, a significantly higher proportion of men, women and mothers-in-law after being exposed to the series agreed that early marriage posed a risk to the lives of the mother and child as shown in Figure 2.

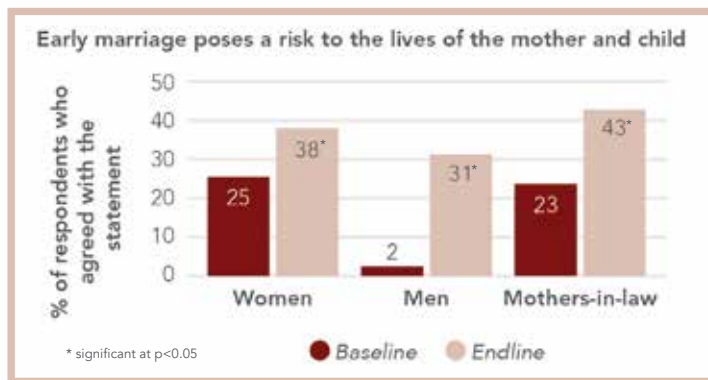


Figure 2

Increase in knowledge of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act and the Legal Age at Marriage

The level of awareness regarding the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act among respondents exposed to the series

increased across all target groups from baseline to end line

- for women from 73% to 83%
- for men from 78% to 85% and
- for mothers-in-law from 59% to 80%

The increase was especially significant among respondents who were illiterate as shown in Figure 3.

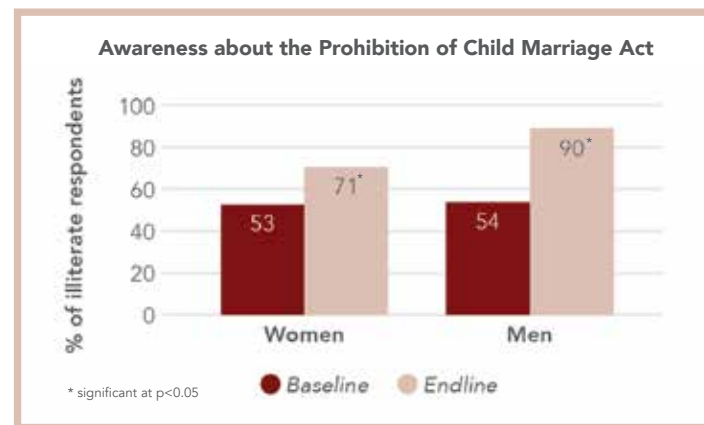


Figure 3

Positive shift towards the ideal age for a woman to have her first child

The proportion of women exposed to the series who think that the "ideal age for a woman to have her first child is 21-25 years" increased from the baseline figure of 38% to 46%.

The proportion of married women who thought that a 2-3 year gap between pregnancies was important increased from 57% during the baseline survey to 63% in the end line survey. There was also a significant decrease of 8 percentage points from 23% in the baseline to 15% in the end line survey among women

who now believed that a 1-2 year gap was enough. Among the mothers-in-law who watched or heard the show, the change in response rate was even more striking as shown in Figure 4.

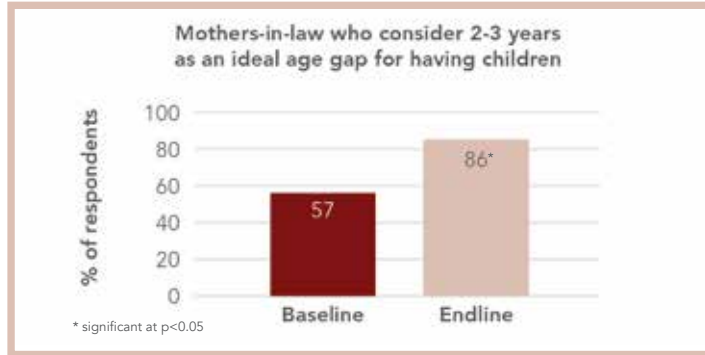


Figure 4

Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon is different. The greatness of a girl is shown, and that of her father, who is a teacher. He educates her very well...I think we should follow his footsteps.”




A female health worker during an in-depth interview, Bihar

Increase in awareness on the benefits of family planning

There was a perceptible increase in the proportion of men, women and mothers-in-law who thought that the next child would be healthier as a result of family planning as shown in Table 1.

Similarly, the proportion of women who felt that they had better control over finances due to family planning went up by 8 percentage points - from 31% in the baseline to 39% in the end line survey.

Table 1: The next child would be healthier as a result of family planning

	% of respondents who agreed with the statement		
	Baseline Survey	End line Survey	Change (% points)
Women 	31	38	7
Men 	63	71	8
Mothers-in-law 	31	39	8

Increase in awareness of family planning methods

Awareness of modern spacing methods among women also rose. The awareness of male sterilisation as a method increased sharply across all target groups over baseline to endline – in men from 77% to 92%, in women from 69% to 87%, and among mothers-in-law from 48% to 64% as shown in Table 2 (next page).

Similarly, more women - from 40% in the baseline to 44% in the end line survey - were now aware of modern methods such as IUDs. And more men - from 71% in the baseline to 75% in the end line survey - were aware of male condoms.

Increase in modern methods of contraceptive usage

The proportion of women not using any family planning method decreased from 61% in the baseline to 51% in the end line survey, while use of modern methods increased by 4 percentage points from 25% in the baseline to 29% in the end line survey.

Table 2: Awareness regarding male sterilisation




		% of respondents were aware of male sterilisation methods		
		Baseline Survey	End line Survey	Change (% points)
Women		69	87	18
Men		77	92	15
Mothers-in-law		48	64	16

Figure 5 shows that the programme has had a strong impact on perceptions regarding modern methods of contraception.

Positive shift in attitudes and perception towards family planning

There was an increase in the proportion of both men and women who were confident of accessing family planning services - by 12 percentage points among women (from 47% in the baseline to 59% in the end line) and four percentage points among men (from 73% in the baseline to 77% in the end line survey) as shown in Figure 6.

The end line survey also showed a 14 percentage points increase in the proportion of women (from 43% in the baseline to 57% in the end line) who realised that it was "important not to go on having children till a son was born", and a 8% increase among those who agreed that it was the right of a woman to decide when to have children.

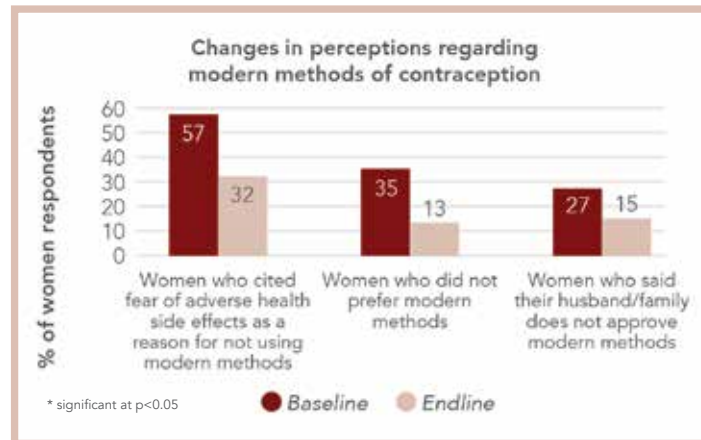


Figure 5

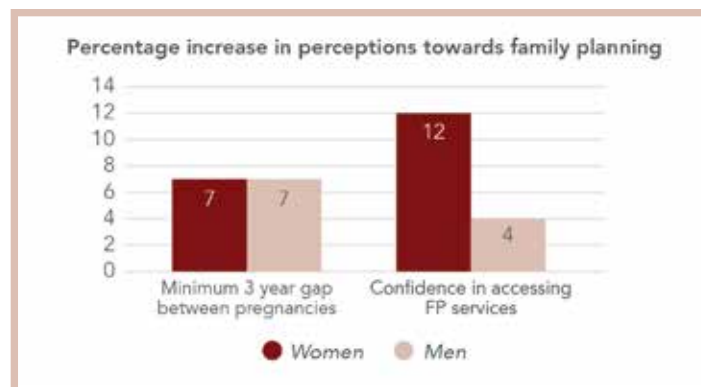


Figure 6

Awareness of law increased

The series had messages on the law on sex determination and the fact that it is a man who is responsible for the sex

of the child. Awareness among men, women and mothers-in-law about the law to prevent sex determination increased significantly as shown in Figure 7.

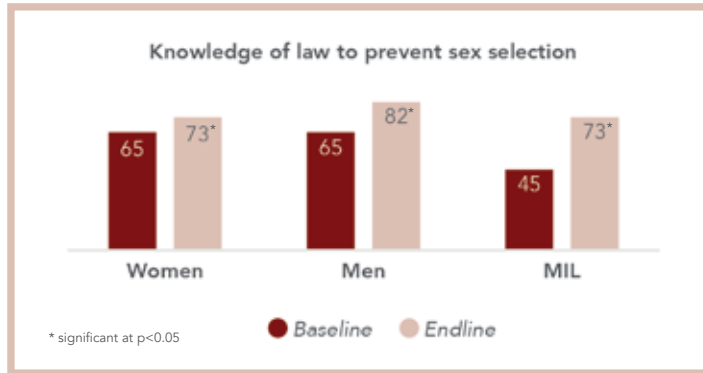


Figure 7

This change was more noticeable among men and mothers-in-law who regularly watched TV and listened to the radio broadcast than among women who did.

Positive shift in perception and attitudes towards women's empowerment

The edutainment intervention had aimed at increasing women's empowerment, informing women and society about their rights and their role in household decision making, and gender equality.

Women's attitude on gender discrimination and equality between men and women with regard to household responsibilities and who is having final say in the decision making improved for those who were exposed to the intervention. The respondents were able to relate with the main protagonist Dr. Sneha's inspiring role showcased in the serial and empathized with the characters and their trials and

I was disturbed by the story of Dr Sneha's sister, Seema, who was forced to abort her foetus of 6 months, and because of which she died. We should inform people about the risk and ask them not to do this for want of sons."

A woman during a Focus Group Discussion in Madhya Pradesh

tribulations. The serial has successfully promoted women's empowerment as a key agenda.

There was a significant impact on the attitudes of women towards gender equality and women's empowerment over the baseline as shown in Figure 8.

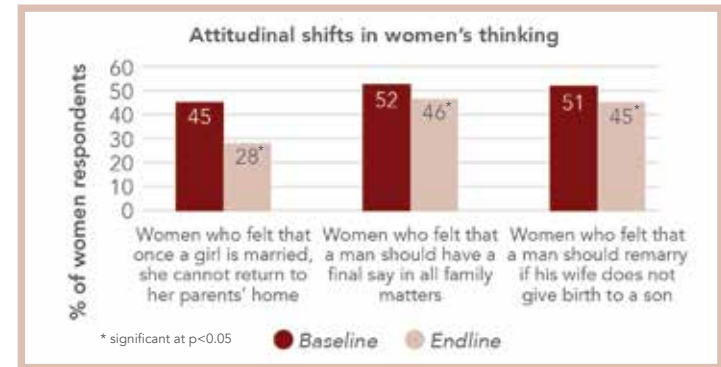


Figure 8

The response of a woman as to whether she has the right to decide if she wants to continue with her pregnancy increased by 13 percentage points - from 63% in the baseline to 76% in the endline survey. Moreover, the positive response of women increased with their exposure to the series as shown in

Figure 9. While the awareness of women exposed to the programme improved on negative consequences of an early motherhood, more women from the exposed group strongly agreed that it is the woman's right to decide how many children she should have.

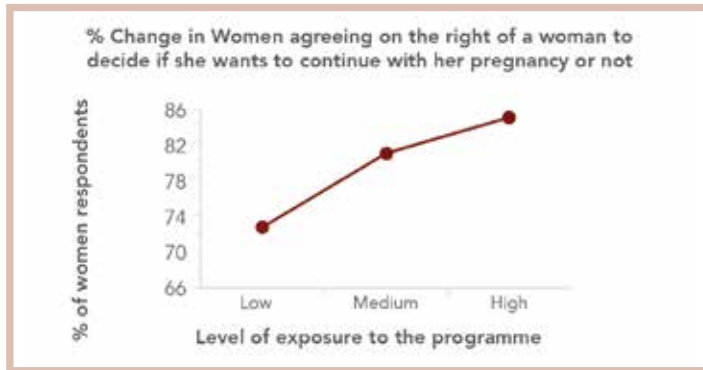


Figure 9

The attitude of women on their agency, particularly related to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) has improved among those who were exposed to the intervention. Women were able to identify with the SRH issues shown in the serial.

More men and women now believe that domestic violence is not acceptable

A positive shift in the attitude of men and women was observed when asked about domestic violence.

There was an even greater decrease (of 22 percentage points from 66% in the baseline to 44% in the endline survey)

among men who believed that women should be beaten on suspicion of unfaithfulness. The results related to women are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Attitudes towards domestic violence

A woman deserves to be beaten if	% of women respondents who agreed with the statement		
	Baseline Survey	End line Survey	Change (% points)
the husband suspects her of being unfaithful	71	40	31
she neglects the house and children	49	28	21
she argues with him	45	33	12
she refuses sex with her husband	14	6	8
she wants to delay her pregnancy	9	5	4



The cast of *Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon*



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