

**A Final
Report**

**A Quantitative Evaluation of Microsoft
"UNLIMITED POTENTIAL" Project**



for

**Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals (ISAP)
&
Microsoft India**

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List of Abbreviation

CMS:	Centre for Media Studies
CTC:	Community Technology Centre
CTLCL	Community Technology Learning Centre
DTP:	Desktop Publishing
ISAP:	Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
LAN:	Local Area Networking
MOU:	Memorandum of Understanding
MS:	Microsoft
MSCIT	Maharashtra State Computer Information and Technology
NGO:	Non-Government Organization
OBC:	Other Backward Class
SC:	Scheduled Caste
SHG:	Self Help Group
ST:	Scheduled Tribe
UP:	Unlimited Potential
VIIT:	Vidya Pratishthan Institute of Information Technology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Background

The Microsoft Unlimited Potential Project (in short, MS-UP project) aims at providing computer training to community members, especially rural women through its community based learning centres known as Community Technology Learning Centres (CTLCS). The MS-UP project in India is being implemented by different NGOs. In Maharashtra the project is being implemented by Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals (ISAP). Under the MS-UP project the CTLCS in the state became functional from January 2007.

II. The Study

At the behest of Microsoft India and ISAP, **CMS Social** undertook the Quantitative Evaluation of Microsoft Unlimited Potential Project in selected CTLCS in Maharashtra.

The Objective

The study broadly examined three core issues, namely, Availability, Accessibility and Affordability of the project. The evaluation also studied the service delivery process at CTLCS and the impact of the computer training on the lives of trainees (users). The study gathered feedback of trainees as well as views and opinions of non-trainees (non-users), CTLC staff and community / opinion leaders. Staff and functionaries under the MS UP Project were also interviewed. Based on the findings of the study and field observation, some measures and initiatives were suggested to make the project more far reaching in the future.

The Sample

In the state 17 CTLCS across three districts, namely, Baramati, Wardha and Usmanabad were visited for the evaluation study. The study collected quantitative data and qualitative information from four different respondent categories, namely, users, non-users, community / opinion leaders and CTLC staff. In each CTLC 10 users, 5 non-users, 2 community / opinion leaders and one CTLC staff were interviewed. The users were comprised of both current and past users. Users from diverse socio-economic profile got representation in the sample. Non-users of similar socio-economic profile, as that of users, were selected for the interview.

Research Tools

To collect information from various category of respondents, different set of research instruments were designed. Different set of survey schedules were used to collect relevant information from users and non-users/dropouts. Separate interview schedules were administered to community / opinion leaders, CTLC staff and project functionaries to elicit data and information.

Chapterization Plan

The present report is divided into six chapters. The first chapter discusses the background of the MS-UP Project, study objectives, methodology and coverage of the study. The second chapter summarizes the profile of the implementing agency, ISAP, in the backdrop of the project and discusses various dimensions of the implementation of the project. In the third chapter, socio-economic profile of the users and non-users has been analysed. In Chapter four, the report has brought out in detail the impact of learning at CTLC on users' life at individual, family and community level. The fifth chapter looked into users' extent of satisfaction with various aspects related to the project. The chapter also lists down various suggestions given by users, non-users, CTLC staff and project functionaries. The concluding chapter includes summing up and recommendations.

III. Major Findings

In the state women SHG members were the targeted group for the MS-UP project. The respondents' profile shows that over two-third of the users were married. More than 92 percent of the respondents from both the categories (users and non-users) are Hindu. The users comprised of different social groups with majority of them belonged to OBC category. The users consisted of both girl students and older women with majority (53 percent) belonging to 18-29 yrs age group while eight percent users were above 40 years of age. The educational profile of the users revealed that three-fourth of them completed either secondary or senior secondary grade. Nearly half of the users were housewife while 31 percent of them were student.

The occupational status of the earning family members of users shows that over two-fifth was in the service (government or private) while one-fourth was engaged in farming activities. Around 12 percent of them were shopkeepers while over 10 percent were engaged in embroidery / tailoring or making handicrafts. The above data suggest that among users the representation from households involved in farming is less as compared to households from service class. Among users, majority (52 percent) of the households had a monthly earning of more than Rs. 5, 000/- while 23 percent of the households had the monthly earning in the range of Rs. 3,000 -

Rs. 5,000. It seems that most of the users did not belong to BPL households with majority coming from families with modest income.

Majority (53 percent) of the users came to know about the MS-UP project from CTLC staff while 14 percent of them got to know about CTLC through peer contact. Regarding the computer courses offered at CTLCs users were relatively more aware that it is under MS-UP project as compared to their awareness about the implementing NGO.

Most of the CTLCs surveyed had three computers. In almost all the CTLCs Windows XP was used as the operating system and in a few more than one operating system was used. Out of 17 CTLCs, in seven centres Internet connection was available. In most of the centres the CTLC staff were involved for maintenance of the computers while in Wardha hardware mechanics from outside did the maintenance job. Problems relating to hardware and virus attacks were reported to be rare in most of the CTLCs. However, in half of the CTLCs software 'crashes' were reported once in a month.

In most of the CTLCs users paid Rs. 160 as course fee while in some CTLCs of Wardha district some users paid Rs. 50 only. Regarding the process of registration at CTLCs, the users did not face any difficulty in registering themselves in the CTLCs. In all the CTLCs surveyed, one integrated course was offered under the MS-UP project. The most important reason for taking the computer courses was to learn basics in computer. A combination of other factors like cheaper course fee and convenient location and timing of the centre also motivated them to join the course.

Most of the users showed their interest in learning Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint and on Web / Internet. The CMS team observed that most of the SHG members wanted to practice more on Excel and PowerPoint. All the users across districts mentioned that they took the help of instructors to work on while learning. Some of the instructors used their hand written notes to deliver lessons. Majority of users felt that in all the five topics their level of learning was very basic or a little more than basics. On users' preferences of learning other courses that are presently not offered under MS-UP, half of the users preferred learning Tally and 30 percent wanted to learn DTP while about 45 percent users wanted to pursue MSCIT.

Almost all the users mentioned that the training programme helped in learning basics in computer. For those who were in jobs, the training helped in improving their job performance. For more than one-fourth, it helped in the creation of self-employment opportunity.

Undertaking the training under MS-UP project, not only raised the self-confidence of the learners but also raised their social status. As shared by some women users, now they are consulted on important matters not only in the family but also among community as well as peer group.

On the location of CTLCs and course timing, most of the users expressed satisfaction as the CTLCs were located near to users' house and timing was flexible and convenient for the trainees. On the duration of training three-fourth of the users felt dissatisfied since the training duration of 45 days was too short to grasp five different topics. Instructors' behaviour towards trainees was reported to be satisfactory by all the users. On teaching-learning material, none of the users had received any printed material while some of them had received the handwritten notes prepared by the instructors for better understanding of the technical concepts. More than three-fifth of the users reported dissatisfaction on the electricity / power supply since outages was a major problem and in majority of the CTLCs there was no inverter for power backup. Regarding the availability of sufficient time for practice on computer, three-fourth of them expressed dissatisfaction since the time available for practical was not enough for them.

Regarding the basic infrastructure at CTLCs, nearly half of the users wanted more number of computers in the centre. Some of them suggested that there should be inverters for power backup. Regarding trainers, majority of the users felt that there should be more than one trainer at one centre so that individual attention on trainees could be more. Regarding the course offered at CTLCs, majority felt that more advanced course should be introduced as part of the training programme such as Tally, DTP and MSCIT.

Most of the community leader / opinion leader expressed the need of Internet connection in every centre since practical classes on Internet was impossible without an Internet connection. Some of them suggested that periodic training or refresher courses should be conducted to upgrade trainer's skill. Regarding the nature of course most of them felt the need of introducing advance courses such as Tally, DTP and MSCIT. One of the important suggestions given by CTLC staff was that course material in Marathi language should be provided to the trainees.

IV. Recommendations

Based on the views and opinion of different respondent groups and field teams observation, some measures and initiatives are recommended by CMS Social to make the MS-UP Project more effective and far reaching in Maharashtra.

Awareness programme: The implementing agency should organize more awareness campaign and meetings among the SHGs so that more SHG members from villages could join the training. Implementing agency could arrange a rekki visit to a nearby CTLC for women folk of the villages to remove the hesitation, if any from joining the CTLC to learn computer.

Facility at CTLC: As emerged from the findings of the study, each CTLC should have more than one trainer. It is recommended that implementing agency should recruit at least one female trainer at each CTLC to make it convenient for female learners. To address the problem of frequent power outages in the rural areas, there should be inverters in the centre as power backup measure.

Course duration: The computer course offered at the CTLCs are integrated in nature and the course covers five different topics. The course duration, which is 45 hours at present, should take into account the occupation and age of the users. Since majority of them are housewife and in their 30s and 40s the course duration should be increased from 45 hours to 60 hours.

Training of Trainers: It is suggested that trainers from the rural area should be given orientation / training sessions from time to time to update their computer skill and knowledge.

Introduction of specialized courses: Since women SHG members are the target group, tailored made courses should be offered that could cater to the need of the members. Specialized course such as Tally, DTP and designing need to be introduced in the CTLCs.

Monitoring and Feedback: Periodic interaction with users, may be once in six months or in a year, will help in assessing the functioning of the CTLCs. This will help in gauging the impact of the programme as well as getting feedback of the trainees to take midterm corrective measures and make the programme more far-reaching and effective. To begin with, trainees' feedback could be taken on a prescribed format at the end of the course.

Course material in local languages: Since most of the members are housewives and some of them join the course at an age of 40 years or more, course material should be provided to each and every trainee to aid them in the process of learning. For easier understanding of the technical concepts the course material should be in local languages (Marathi in this case).

Sustainability of the centre: CTLCs should explore other alternatives for generating additional income. CTLCs should try to bring some computer job work so that trainees could get more practical exposure and at the same time could fetch additional earnings for the centre.

Chapter – 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 About MS-UP

Microsoft through its project Unlimited Potential (UP) focuses its investments on community based centres, commonly known as Community Technology Centres (CTCs) or Community Technology Learning Centres (CTLCs), where IT skills training is provided to community members. As mentioned in Microsoft's UP mission, "A community technology centre is a free or low cost friendly place (in a community centre, school, housing facility or other convenient location) where people of all ages and abilities can come to learn about computers, use the internet, explore new careers, further their education, participate in community activities or develop technology skills."

The UP project focuses on improving lifelong learning for underserved young people and adults, particularly women by providing technology skills at these CTLCs, which in turn can be instrumental in creating social and economic opportunities that can change peoples' lives and transform communities. The programme provides technology training ranging from basic computer literacy skills to the usage of advanced business productivity applications. In India, the programme primarily focuses on women and rural communities. These CTLCs are run by different NGOs in different states. The UP project is expanding and more CTLCs in a number of states of India are expected to start in near future.

1.2 About the Study

Microsoft Unlimited Potential is currently using English and other Indian languages as a medium of instruction for trainees at CTLCs. The present evaluation study covered Maharashtra where the project is implemented through **Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals (ISAP)**.

To evaluate and gauge the impact of the project on the target population the study broadly examined three core issues, namely, 3As — Availability, Accessibility and Affordability — service delivery process and effectiveness of the project.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 To understand the service delivery process of the scheme in CTLCs on the following parametres:

- Infrastructure available and required — hardware and software —
- Human Resource — recruitment, training, technical and communication skills —

1.3.2 To study the reach and effectiveness of the project amongst the community on the following parametres:

- Awareness about the UP project among the community, particularly women and girls
- Accessibility and relevance of CTLC
- User's feedback about the CTLC

1.3.3 To come out with suggestions and recommendations for making UP project more far reaching

1.4 Study Approach

Following approach was adopted to meet the objectives of the evaluation of the MS-UP project in Maharashtra.

Objective 1: Understand the delivery process of the UP project at CTLC level.

Aspects like infrastructure and human resources available and the service delivery system at CTLC level were studied. The study team interacted with Project Coordinator, CTLC-in-charge regarding the utility of CTLC, services and facilities available at CTLCs under the project and its sustainability.

Objective 2: Study the 3As — Accessibility, Availability and Affordability — and relevance of the MS- UP project.

The perception and feedback about the scheme were gathered from the users. The users were those who had already completed their training or were taking the training at the time of field visit. Non-users / drop-outs were also interacted to measure awareness about the project as well as the extent of their willingness to join the training programme in future.

Based on the information gathered against parameters in above mentioned objectives, the study came out with suggestions and recommendations to improve the services and facilities available at CTLC, which in turn is expected to make far reaching impact on the users community.

1.5 Survey Location

The MS-UP project in Maharashtra is currently operational by ISAP. At the time of the study, total of 113 CTLCs across seven districts were operational in the state. Out of 113 CTLCs, fifteen percent (17 CTLCs) were selected for the study. Among the districts, three districts, namely, Baramati, Wardha and Usmanabad with maximum number of CTLCs were selected. The number of sample CTLCs covered in each district was proportionate to the total number of operational CTLCs. Thus, the study covered eight CTLCs in Baramati, six CTLCs in Wardha and three in Usmanabad. Within a district, CTLCs were selected randomly.

1.6 Samples Covered

The study collected quantitative data and qualitative information from four different respondent categories, namely, users, non-users, community / opinion leaders and CTLC staff. In each CTLC 10 users, 5 non-users, 2 community / opinion leaders and one CTLC staff were interviewed. The users were comprised of both current and past users. Users from diverse socio-economic profile got representation in the sample. Non-users of similar socio-economic profile, as that of users, were selected for the interview. In addition to this, one in-depth interview each was conducted with the project manager of the implementing agency, Vidya Pratishthan's Institute of Information Technology (VIIT) and Senior Project Officer of ISAP who were responsible for executing the MS-UP project. The number of respondents covered under each respondent category is given in the table below.

Table 1.1: Sample covered in the study (in number)

State	Name of districts	Number of CTLCs	Respondent Category			
			Users	Non-Users	Community/ opinion leaders	CTLC In charge/ Trainer
Maharashtra	Baramati	8	80	40	16	8
	Wardha	6	60	30	12	6
	Usmanabad	3	30	16	6	3
Total		17	170	86	34	17

1.7 Study Tool / Techniques

To collect information from various categories of respondents, different set of research instruments were designed and used. Evaluation toolkit developed by the University of Washington Centre for Internet Studies were referred to and adapted in the local context for preparation of research instruments for respondent groups.

Survey Schedule: Different set of survey schedules were used to collect relevant information from CTLC-users and non-users/dropouts.

Interview Schedule: Separate interview schedules were administered to community leaders / opinion leaders, CTLC In-charge, and NGO officials to elicit opinions and views regarding the functioning of the CTLC. Information on problems encountered during implementation and suggestions given by the respondent groups were also captured during the interview.

1.8 Field Work

The field work was conducted during 16 June to 2 July 2008 across three districts of Maharashtra. The field team comprised of researchers, senior field executives and field investigators. Prior to the initiation of the field work, an orientation session of the team was held at CMS Delhi office in the presence of the Project Coordinator.

Chapter – 2

ABOUT PROJECT

2.1 NGO Profile

Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals (ISAP) is the largest network of agriculture and allied sector professionals in India and developing countries. The organization was set up with the vision to instill economic stability and security in the livelihood patterns of small and marginal farmers and landless poor involved in agriculture and allied activities. The mission of the organization are to improve the livelihood pattern of small and marginal farmers by enhancing their access to appropriate and affordable technologies, market related information and linkages; sustainability of extension services and expert advice through capacity building exercises effectively bridging the rural-urban divide; to associate all professionals' involved in different aspects of agriculture and rural development through national and international networks and to promote financial sector inclusion for farmers and small and medium enterprises in agri-sector through access to market capital and risk management tools.

The objectives are: to coordinate, promote, develop and educate about technical services to all communities, organizations and individuals engaged in agriculture and rural development; to provide query redress services for queries received from communities, organizations, farmers and individuals dealing in agribusiness and other related technical activities; to provide market linkage activities to growers and producers and help create institutions which would strengthen marketing and value addition to primary produce; to provide training, course content, know-how and managerial inputs for setting up and management of agribusiness clinics, rural service centres, providing content aggregation and dissemination services; to provide all kind of recruitment services, training services, capacity building services, consultancy services and advisory services to all communities, organizations and individuals with regard to agribusiness, rural development and other related technical sectors and; to undertake advocacy campaigns and projects to promote financial inclusion amongst low income households especially in rural India.

ISAP has its head office in Delhi and regional offices in 11 states, namely, Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab and Rajasthan. ISAP has its outreach in almost all the states across the country.

The functional areas of ISAP include:

1. Agri-Extension Services
 - i) ICT Services in Agriculture
 - ii) Community Radio
 - iii) Query Redress services
 - iv) NGO Networking
2. Training and Entrepreneurship Development
3. Market Linkages
4. Project Planning and Development
5. Industry Support
6. Centre for Financial Inclusion

2.2 About CTLC

ISAP ventured into this CTLC programme to help fulfilling its objective of instilling economic security and stability among farming community, particularly small and marginal farmers by creating awareness on ICT application to help them taking advantage of the advancement in Information and Technology. With this objective, ISAP helped opening CTLCs with its partner organizations in rural remote areas of Maharashtra to take this programme to marginalized section of the society. As per the data from ISAP office, till July 2008, total 135 CTLCs are operational across seven districts of Maharashtra. All the CTLCs except two became operational in the beginning of 2007. According to the available data for 119 CTLCs given by ISAP, the total number of trainees stands at 10,856. Of the 16 relocated CTLCs the total number of trainees stands at 1,393.

2.3 Implementation of MS-UP

ISAP implemented the MS-UP programme in Maharashtra through its NGO partner in the state working at grassroot levels.

Selection of partner implementing agency was done on the following parametres :

- Agency should be legally registered
- It should have reasonable intervention in ICT and education and have enough technical resource pool to implement the project
- Prominent presence at grass -root level
- It should be a registered member of ISAP

The implementing agency in turn selected the NGOs / local SHGs, specialized in providing similar services to agricultural community, to run the CTLCs for imparting training programme. Specific guidelines were issued to the implementing NGO by ISAP to run these CTLCs. The guidelines *inter alia* stated that the implementing agency should conduct a baseline survey in the district to identify locations for establishment of CTLCs; target beneficiary should be from the marginalized section of the community in rural areas; reasonable fee (not more than Rs 150/-) or no fee should be charged from the participants and programme should target women members preferably from farming background.

The implementing agency signed a MOU with the CTLC owners containing detail provisions for imparting training at CTLCs. In the first phase the MOU was signed for a period of 15 months starting from January 2007 to March 2008. During the first phase women members from the SHGs were targeted. As per the provision of MOU, approximately 300 participants should be imparted training through one CTLC within a period of 15 months starting from January 2007. The implementing agency was responsible for the arrangement of logistics and providing the infrastructure to the CTLCs. The infrastructure included three multimedia PC's for one CTLC. The implementing agency was also responsible for identifying the trainers for training at CTLCs. The trainers were given a monthly remuneration for their service.

Role and Function of ISAP staff

The main role of ISAP staff was the selection of implementing agency and coordination with the implementing agency for implementation and monitoring of the project. In addition to this, responsibility of ISAP staff was to provide the MS-UP curriculum kit, course material and software to the implementing agency for the computer training programme.

Monitoring of the CTLC programme

Monitoring of the programme is undertaken by project coordinators of ISAP. ISAP has selected Vidya Pratishthan's Institute of Information Technology (VIIT) for coordination and monitoring of the programme throughout the state. The implementing agency provides progress report in prescribed format on quarterly basis or as and when required / asked by ISAP.

2.4 Infrastructure at CTLC

The successful implementation of this programme largely depends on the availability of proper infrastructure. The CMS field team visited the sampled CTLCs and gathered information on the infrastructures (both in type and in number), which are shown in the table below.

Table 2.1: Facilities / services available at CTLCs (in number)

Facilities / services	No. of centres reporting (N=17)
Computer Availability	
Three computers	14
Four computers	2
Five computers	1
Operating System	
Windows XP	16
Windows 2000	3
Windows 98	6
Hardware devices	
CD-ROM drive	17
DVD drive	9
Printer	10
Other Equipment	
Scanner	5
Digital camera	1
Copier	4
LAN / Server	
2003 server	2
2000 server	1
Internet Connection	
Dial Up (Phone line)	5
GPRS	2

Out of 17 CTLCs, all the CTLCs except three had three computers each. It should be noted here that as per the MOU the implementing agency (VIIT) should provide three computers to each CTLC. In almost all the CTLCs Windows XP was used as the operating system while some of the CTLCs were also using Windows 98 and Windows 2000 operating systems. On hardware devices, all the centres had CD-ROM drive while half of them had DVD drive. Printer was available in more than half of the CTLCs. Some of the centres had other equipments as well, such as scanner (5 centres) and copier (4 centres).

Internet connection was available in seven out of 17 CTLCs surveyed. In Wardha, none of the six CTLCs visited had Internet connectivity. In five centres there was dial-up (Phone line) Internet connection and in the remaining two centres the connection was available through GPRS. Local Area Network (LAN) facility was available in three centres; in two centres 2003 server was used while in one center 2000 server was used.

In more than half of the centres (10 out of 17), the CTLC staff were involved for maintenance of the computers in their respective centres while in seven centres, mostly in Wardha, hardware services were outsourced. The CTLCs in Wardha were opened and operational exclusively for the MS-UP programme and the centre staff was not trained to do the maintenance job. However, in Pune and Usmanabad training programme under UP were running from the private computer institutes who had the technical staff to look after the maintenance job.

Problems relating to hardware and virus attacks in the centre were reported to be rare in most of the CTLCs. However, in nearly half of the CTLCs software crashes were reported once in a month. As for the availability of qualified technicians and time taken to do computer maintenance, most of the CTLCs did not find any difficulties.

2.5 Awareness Building

To create awareness amongst the target population about the UP project opinion leaders and local partner NGOs were involved by the implementing agency. Partner NGOs gave advertisement in the local newspapers about the starting of CTLC and in few places they distributed leaflets, pamphlets and handbills. A few partner NGOs made visits to houses in the locality to inform them about the programme. Since most of the CTLCs were running from the private computer institutes, established before the UP project, the staffs of the computer institutes informed the target community through the trainees who were enrolled in their institutes.

Community / opinion leaders were also involved in the awareness creation. Opinion leaders discussed about the MS-UP programme in the SHG meetings (*Bachat gat* meeting). In some villages, panchayat representatives gave the information about the programme in the gram sabha meetings and community meetings. In a few villages, help of school teachers was taken for informing the students about the programme who in turn informed their mothers. However, efforts on awareness creation were not continuous and were not taken in an organised manner. In most of the places events on awareness creation was just before the starting of the CTLC and no continuous approach was followed to intensify the campaign.

Chapter – 3

RESPONDENT PROFILE

This chapter gives the socio-demographic profile of the respondents (both the users and non-users). The economic profile of the respondents that includes occupational profile, monthly income and standard of living is also presented. Other important issues discussed in this chapter are awareness about the project including source of awareness and the reasons of joining the computer course at CTLCs.

3.1 Respondent Profile

As a part of the evaluation, the field team visited 17 CTLCs in Maharashtra and interviewed 10 users and five non-users from each CTLC surveyed. Thus, a total of 170 users and 86 non-users were interviewed. The socio-demographic profile of the respondents is given in the table below.

Table 3.1: Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents

(in %)

Users (n=170)				Non-Users (n=86)			
Location				Location			
Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural	
8		92		8		92	
Marital status				Marital status			
Married		Unmarried	Divorce/widower	Married		Unmarried	Divorced
67		31	2	66		33	1
Religious composition				Religious composition			
Hindu	Muslim	Others*		Hindu	Muslim	Others#	
93	2	5		92	1	7	
Social group				Social group			
General	OBC	SC	ST	General	OBC	SC	
37	46	16	1	42	48	10	
Age group				Age group			
12-17 Yrs	18-29 Yrs	30-40	> 40	12-17 Yrs	18-29 Yrs	30-40	> 40
9	53	30	8	19	44	25	12

* Others include Sikh, Christian and Buddhist

Others include Buddhist and Jain

Over 92 percent of respondents among users and non-users belonged to rural area. The remaining eight percent belonged to the urban area with almost all of them from the district of

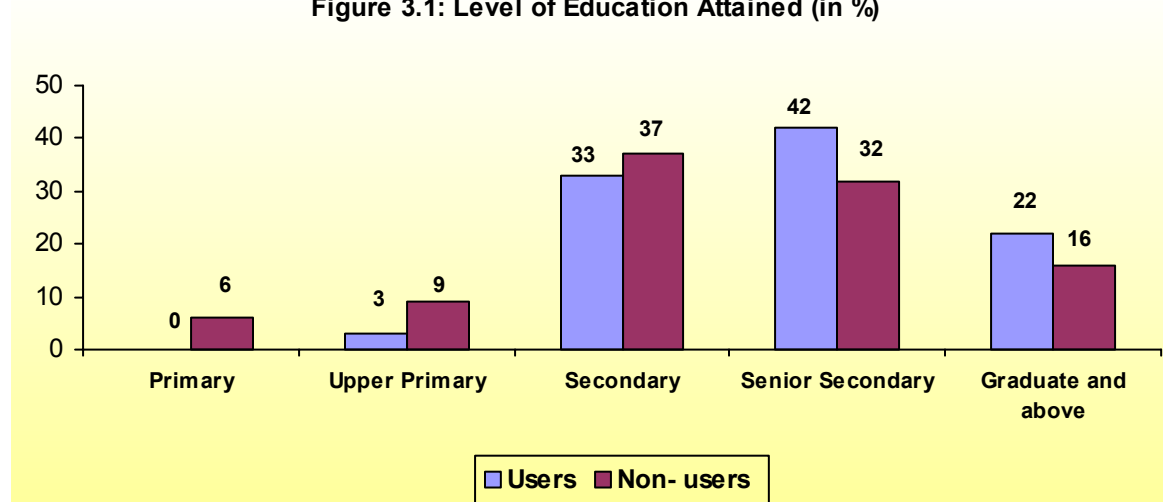
Pune. It is pertinent to mention here that the MS-UP programme in the state intended to empower the women members in rural segments through IT skills training. Over two-third of respondents among users as well as non-users were married. During the first phase of the programme women members from the SHGs were targeted. Hence most of the users surveyed were married.

Over 92 percent of the respondents from both the categories are Hindu. Some of the respondents (both users and non-users) in Wardha district are practicing Buddhism. Over all, majority of respondents among users (46 percent) as well as non-users (48 percent) belonged to the OBC category. However, in Pune and Usmanabad majority respondents were from General category. About 16 percent of users and 10 percent of non-users comprised of SCs. This indicates that participation in the MS UP project was from various social groups of the society.

The users interviewed were aged between 12 to 56 years with majority of them (53 percent) belonged to 18-29 yrs age group. Over 30 percent users were in 30-40 yrs age group and another eight percent were above 40 years of age, which suggests that a sizeable percentage of users who started learning computers belonged to a relatively older age group. Since the target group was women SHG members, some of the older women members of the SHG were the beneficiaries of the MS-UP programme. Though the programme in the state targeted the women SHG members, some of the users were girl students. Most of the girl students were the daughters of the SHG members. Among non-users majority (44 percent) belonged to 18-29 yrs age group.

3.2 Level of Education Attained

Figure 3.1: Level of Education Attained (in %)



The educational profile of the users revealed that three-fourth of them completed either secondary or senior secondary grade. Over three-fifth of the non-users reported completing senior secondary grade. About 22 percent of them completed graduation. It should be mentioned here that the minimum qualification for doing the course as prescribed by the implementing NGO is 8th grade. It can be assumed that majority of the users, who were SHG members, were well qualified. The educational standard of non-users were equally good with nearly 85 percent of them completed the secondary grade. This figure also means that areas in and around the CTLCs have substantial base of educated women population.

3.3 Level of Proficiency in Languages

Marathi is the native language of all the users. Apart from the native language almost all the users informed that they could speak, read and write in Hindi and English language. Regarding the level of reading proficiency in the English language, four-fifth of the users mentioned the level of proficiency either fair or good while more than 18 percent of them admitted having a poor level of proficiency in the language. It is pertinent to mention here that in Maharashtra both English and Marathi is used as the medium of instructions for teaching the computer courses. A curriculum kit designed by Microsoft has been provided to the implementing NGO (VIIT), which contains Instructor Manual, Student Manual, Student Practice Files, PowerPoint Slides, Quick Quiz Answer Key, Putting It All Together Answer Key, and Lesson Times. VIIT has developed a syllabus in English for CTLC training programme, and using the Instructor Manual has prepared notes in English language to help the instructors in teaching the trainees. However, interaction with trainees revealed that Marathi language is mainly used for explaining various subjects under the course while English language is used sparingly. For example, words like 'Mouse', 'Desktop' are used as it is during teaching but the meaning of these English words were explained before hand in Marathi language. The limited use of English language in teaching suggests that a trainee can learn the computer course with a basic knowledge of English language. It can be assumed that those having a poor proficiency of English language can also learn the computer course.

Among the non-users, over 22 percent mentioned poor proficiency in the English language while another 17 percent held that they could not read or write English language.

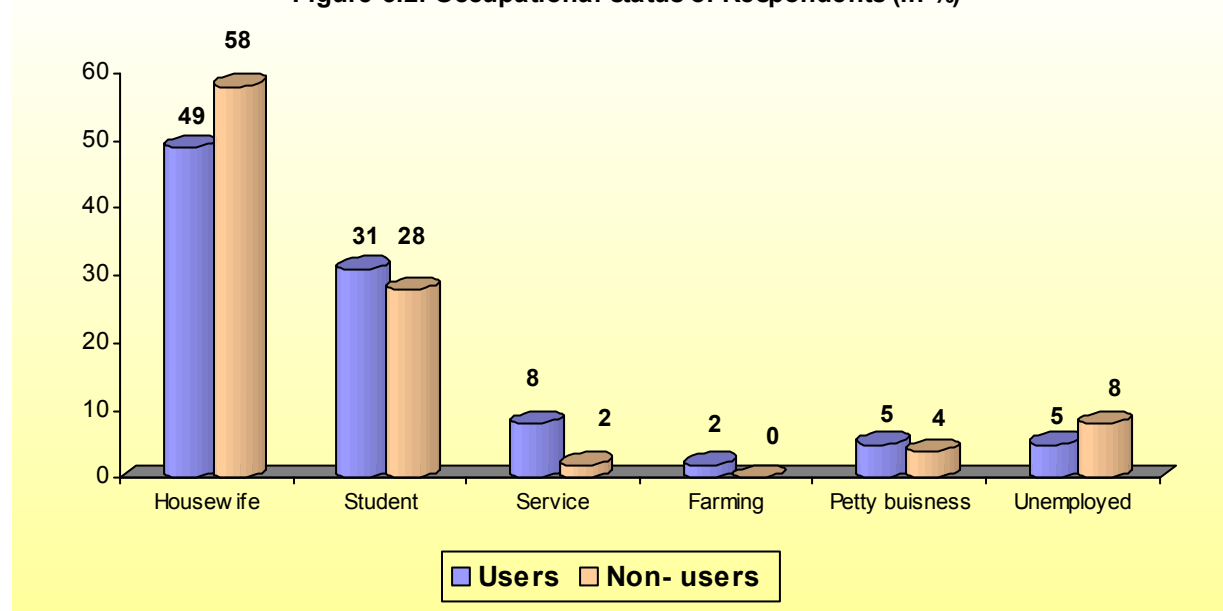
3.4 Respondents' Household Profile

Among the users and non-users the average household size stands at five. The education profile of the family members revealed that among users as well as non-users about six percent of the family members were illiterate. Majority (46 percent) of the users' family members

completed either secondary or senior secondary grade while another 17 percent had graduation degree or above. Among non-users' family members, majority (48 percent) completed either secondary or senior secondary grade and 15 percent had graduation degree or above. Over all, the educational background of users as well as non-users family members is good.

3.5 Occupational Status

Figure 3.2: Occupational status of Respondents (in %)

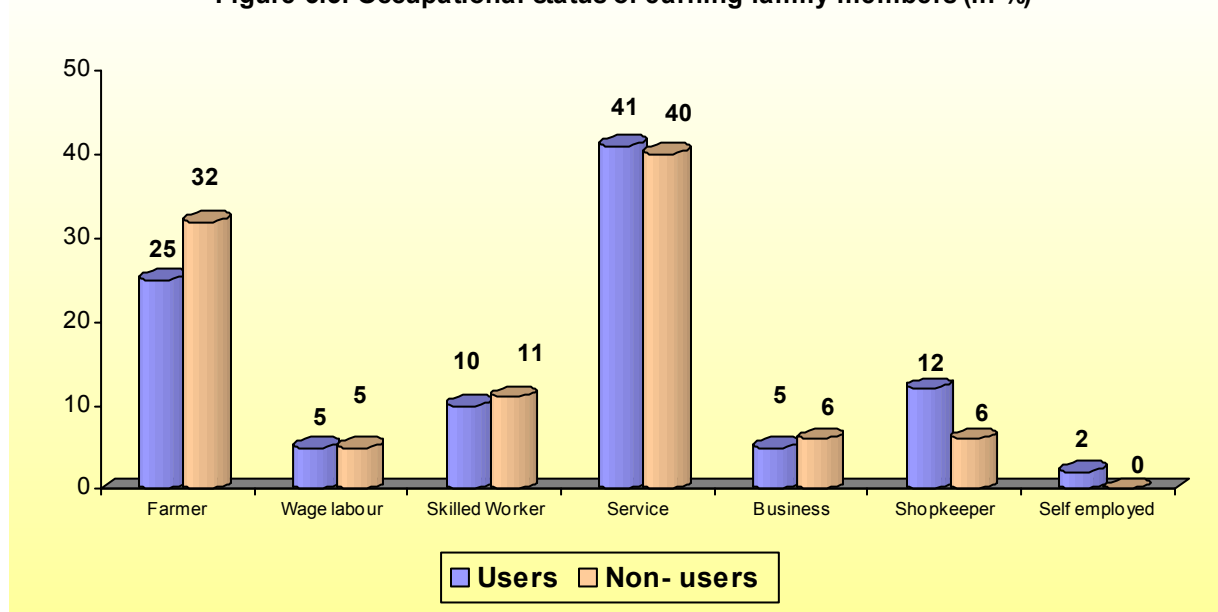


Nearly half of the users are housewife and 31 percent of them were student. District wise analysis of user's occupational status shows that in Usmanabad half of the users were students. Interaction of the field team with SHG members in Usmanabad revealed that most of the SHG members did not take active interest for the computer course and instead were sending their daughters to learn the course.

In the earlier section of this chapter it has been mentioned that women members of the SHG are the target group of the programme. The MOU signed between the implementing NGO (VIIT) and the owner of the CTLC mentions that approximately 300 participants would be trained through a CTLC centre within a period of 15 months. During the field visit to CTLCs it was found that girl students interested in joining the CTLC for the computer course were also admitted to reach the specified target. From the occupational status of users it can be inferred that a housewife is essentially a members of a SHG. Apart from doing household chores a housewife also involve in SHG activities. About eight percent of users were in service (either government or private) while two percent involved in farming activities. About five percent, mostly from Pune, were doing embroidery work or stitching mostly inside their house.

Among the non-users majority (58 percent) were housewife while 28 percent were student. Nearly four percent involved in embroidery or stitching work while two percent were in service. Among earning family members of users over two-fifth were either in the government service or private service while one-fourth were engaged in farming activities. Among districts, in Usmanabad majority (41 percent) were doing farming activities. A sizeable proportion (12 percent) of earning members were shopkeepers. They were mostly from Pune and had shops like small grocery store, small cosmetic shop and STD booth. Over 10 percent were engaged in embroidery / tailoring or making handicrafts, which indicates that the SHGs were involved in various income generating activities. A few earning members were also into the business like export in garment or into construction work. The occupational pattern among earning family members of non-users were mostly similar.

Figure 3.3: Occupational status of earning family members (in %)



3.6 Monthly Income and Living Standard

Majority (52 percent) of the users' households had a monthly earning of more than Rs. 5,000/ while 23 percent of the households had the monthly earning in the range of Rs. 3,000 - Rs. 5,000. In Pune as high as 70 percent households had a monthly earning of more than Rs.5, 000. Nearly one-fourth household had monthly income in the range of Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 3,000. Among the non-users', in 42 percent households the average monthly household income was more than Rs. 5,000/ while one-fourth households had the monthly earning in the range of Rs. 3,000 - Rs. 5,000.

Each of the respondent was asked to rate the living standard of her household in comparison to the living standard of other households in the community. Majority (51 percent) of the users rated their household at par with the average living standard of the community while 44 percent rated the living standard of their household as above the average. Nearly one-half of the non-users' mentioned the living standard of their household at par with the average living standard of the community. However, 13 percent non-users rated the living standard of their household as below the average.

From the above analysis it appeared that most of the users are from the families with good standard of living which is further corroborated by the fact that majority of the households had a monthly earning of more than Rs. 5,000 and majority felt that the living standard of their households is at par with the living standards of the other households in their community.

3.7 Awareness about the Project

The study findings revealed that almost all the users (97 percent) could recall the year when CTLC became operational and four-fifth of them could recall that the CTLC started functioning in their area in the year 2007. Over 13 percent users mentioned that CTLCs became operational in December 2006.

Among the non-users, 17 percent respondents could recall about the year of operation of CTLC and of these almost all informed that in the year 2007 the CTLCs became operational.

3.7.1 Registration at CTLC

The first step for admission into the computer course was the registration of participants at the individual centre. The MOU clearly stipulates that each CTLC has to cover 30 women for every six weeks within the 15 calendar months. The registrations of the participants were done batch wise. For the above purpose there were five batches. In a batch two participants used one computer during the learning. Though a maximum six participants could be registered in a batch, interaction with CTLC owner revealed that in some of the batches less than six participants were present.

The year of registration, as mentioned by the users, is shown in the table below.

Table 3.2: Year in which Users Registered at CTLC

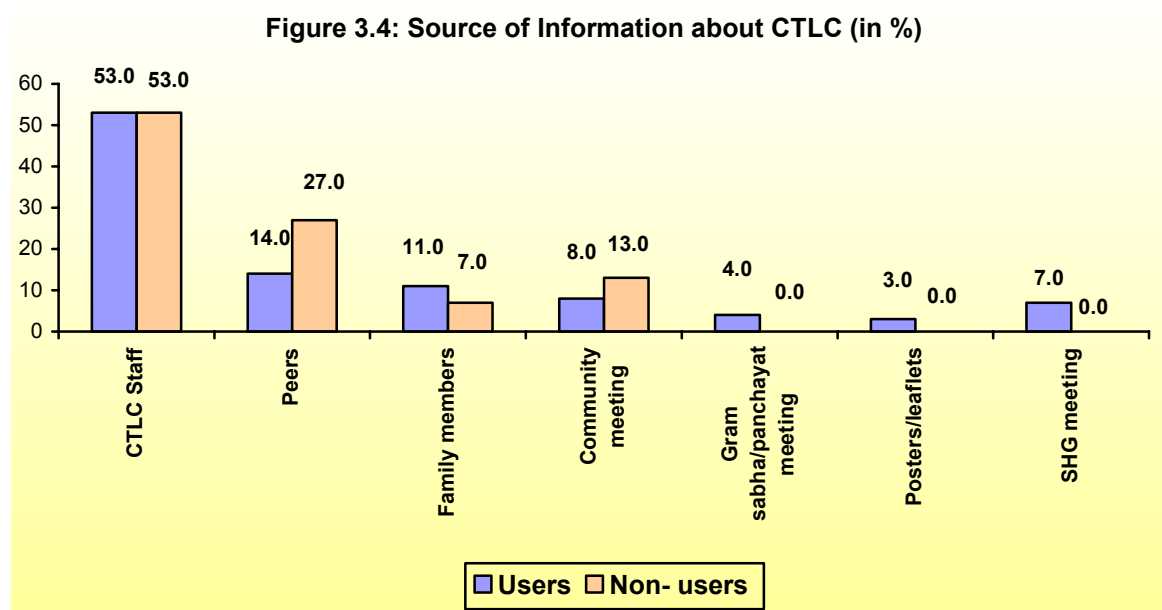
(in %)

Year	Users (N=170)
2006	1
2007	79
2008	20

Nearly four-fifth of users got themselves registered in the courses conducted in the year 2007. The year of registration suggests that all the participants who registered during 2007 have already completed their training. During the visit to CTLCs it was found that there was flexibility in the admission of participants. For example some participants were also given admission within one week or ten days after the commencement of teaching classes. Since the programme targeted the SHG members some flexibility was allowed so that apart from doing the SHG activities they could also join the computer courses in the centre.

3.7.2 Source of awareness about CTLC programme

Regarding the source of awareness about the CTLC programme the users and non-users mentioned various sources. The different sources of awareness are presented in the bar diagram below.



Majority (53 percent) of the users came to know about the MS-UP project from CTLC staff while 14 percent of them got to know about CTLC through peer contact. Over 11 percent of users, mostly students, mentioned family members as the sources of awareness, which means that SHG women members gave the information to their family members. A sizeable proportion of users got the information about MS-UP project during SHG meetings (7 percent), community meetings (8 percent) and Gram sabha meetings (4 percent) by fellow members.

Among the non-users, majority came to know about the programme from CTLC staff while more than one-fourth were aware about it through peer contact.

About 39 percent of the users were aware about the name of the NGOs / local SHGs running the CTLC in their area. Among districts, in Usmanabad, awareness about the NGOs running the centre was least (17 percent). Of the users who were aware about the NGOs, all of them in Pune mentioned VIIT while in Usmanabad all of them named Sai Bahudesia Sansthan (SBS).

On the other hand, 62 percent of the users were aware that the computer courses offered at CTLCs were under Microsoft's Unlimited Potential project (MS-UP). The district wise figure shows that almost all the users in Wardha were aware about UP project while in Usmanabad only 30 percent users had knowledge that computer courses taught at the centre were under UP project. Among non-users, two-fifth, all from Wardha, knew that the CTLCs were functioning under MS-UP project.

The MOU specifies a nominal fee of Rs. 150 for the course per participant of the programme along with a token registration fee of Rs. 10. Thus the total fee for the course is Rs. 160 per trainee.

The study finding revealed that in most of the CTLCs Rs. 160 were charged per trainee. However, some of the users in Wardha district paid Rs. 50 for the course since they belonged to very poor families and they could not afford paying more for the computer course. Regarding the process of registration at CTLCs, all the users held that they did not face any difficulty in registering themselves in the CTLCs.

3.8 About the Course Offered at CTLCs

In all the CTLCs covered for the study, one integrated course for the training programme was offered under the MS-UP project. The curriculum kit prepared by Microsoft mentions in detail the structure and contents of a computer course, which should be followed by the implementing agency for providing technical skills training. The courses in the UP curriculum are designed to meet the needs of people learning to use Microsoft Office applications in a community learning environment. The implementing agency (VIIT) had prepared the syllabus for the CTLC training programme. During interaction with trainees it was observed that the trainees had no knowledge about the specific name of the computer course. Instead they used to call it '160 rupiya vala course' (course of rupees 160).

A close look at the syllabus for the CTLC training programme reveals that the course of the training programme is the integration of five courses. They are Computer Fundamental, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Power Point and Web / Internet. As per the MOU each participant should get 45 hours of theory and practical lesson for the completion of the training programme. The study found that some of the trainees who joined the training late by

few days visited the CTLC for extra classes to complete the training programme. Majority of the CTLCs were running from the computer institutes, where the institute is much older than the CTLC programme and offered other courses. Some trainees from these institutes sometimes used the computers other than the ones installed under MS-UP project to sharpen their skills.

3.9 Reasons for Taking Admission at CTLC

On being enquired about the reasons for joining CTLC, the users mentioned more than one reason, which are presented in the table below.

Table 3.3: Reasons for taking the computer course at CTLCs (in %)

Reasons for taking the computer course	N=170
Learn basics in computer	66
Computer courses offered under MS-UP project are cheap	80
Better job prospects	31
Increase present income	5
Offers computer courses one can't find anywhere else in one's community	3
Staff and instructors are helpful and friendly	9
Become a trainer	15
People don't look down if one knows how to use a computer	3
Location and timings are convenient	75
Peer motivation / being in same SHG	4

For two-third of the users, the reason for joining the CTLC was to learn basics in computer. In addition to this, most of the users mentioned that the computer courses offered under MS-UP project were cheap (80 percent) and the location of centre and timings were convenient (75 percent). It should be noted that for the women members of SHG, who also engage in household chores, time factor is extremely crucial for taking the decision on joining the computer course. The study findings show that the location of centre close to user's house and flexible timings played a contributory role for most of the users in joining the training programme. For one third of the users better job prospects after learning computer skills was another reason for joining the computer course.

The above reasons mentioned for joining the course is very much suggestive of the fact that out of 86 non-users interviewed only three were dropouts. Two dropouts were from Wardha while one dropout was from Pune. All the three dropouts took admissions in the year 2007. None of them faced any difficulty in registering at the CTLC but they could not complete the training at the CTLC due to one reason or the other. One of the dropouts could not pursue the training as

she was preparing for her school examination while another dropped out because the timings of the CTLC did not suit her. One dropout could not continue the training as she faced difficulties in understanding the language.

3.10 Users Interest in Learning / Improving Computer Skills

Most of the users were interested in learning Microsoft Excel (92 percent), Microsoft PowerPoint (90 percent) and Web / Internet (95 percent). On the other hand interest to learn Computer Fundamental, which covered technical concepts and aspects of computer was relatively less with 70 percent of users reported their interest in the same. Interaction of the CMS study team with trainees and field observations revealed that most of the SHG members were interested to practice more on Excel and PowerPoint and sometimes even visited the centres for making slides which they could use for marketing the SHG products.

3.10.1 Non-users interest of joining CTLC

Sustainability of a programme largely depends on the interest of the community to participate in it. The study assessed non-users' interest in joining the CTLC in future and reasons for doing so. A significant proportion (89 percent) of non-users showed interest in joining the CTLCs in future. The reasons cited by them for joining are listed in the table below.

Table 3.4: Non-users' reasons of joining CTLC if given opportunity (in %)

Reasons	N=77
Nominal fee	57
Computer centre is closer to home	44
Peer motivation / being in same group	21
Learn basics in computer	16
To improve job prospect	1
Increase awareness within family	3

Majority of the non-users showed their interest to join the CTLC in future because the fee of the computer course offered under MS-UP project was low (57 percent). Moreover, forty-four percent of non-users showed their willingness to join the course offered under MS-UP project in future because the CTLC was located near to their home. Like the users, for majority of the non-users, nominal fee and easy access to centre were important factors for joining the course.

Chapter – 4

IMPACT OF LEARNING AT CTLC

This chapter looks in to the extent to which the users showed interest to learn computer and the application of their learning. The impact of the training programme at individual, family and community level has been discussed in the chapter.

4.1 Frequency and Reasons to Visit CTLCs

Nearly 95 percent of the users informed that during the training they visited the centre everyday while the rest of them visited the centre 3-5 days in a week. It should be noted here that to get 45 hours of theory and practical lesson a participant has to visit the centre everyday since the total duration of training was limited to 45 days.

Users views were taken on a set of statements to understand the extent of importance they gave to different reasons for which they learned the computer skills.

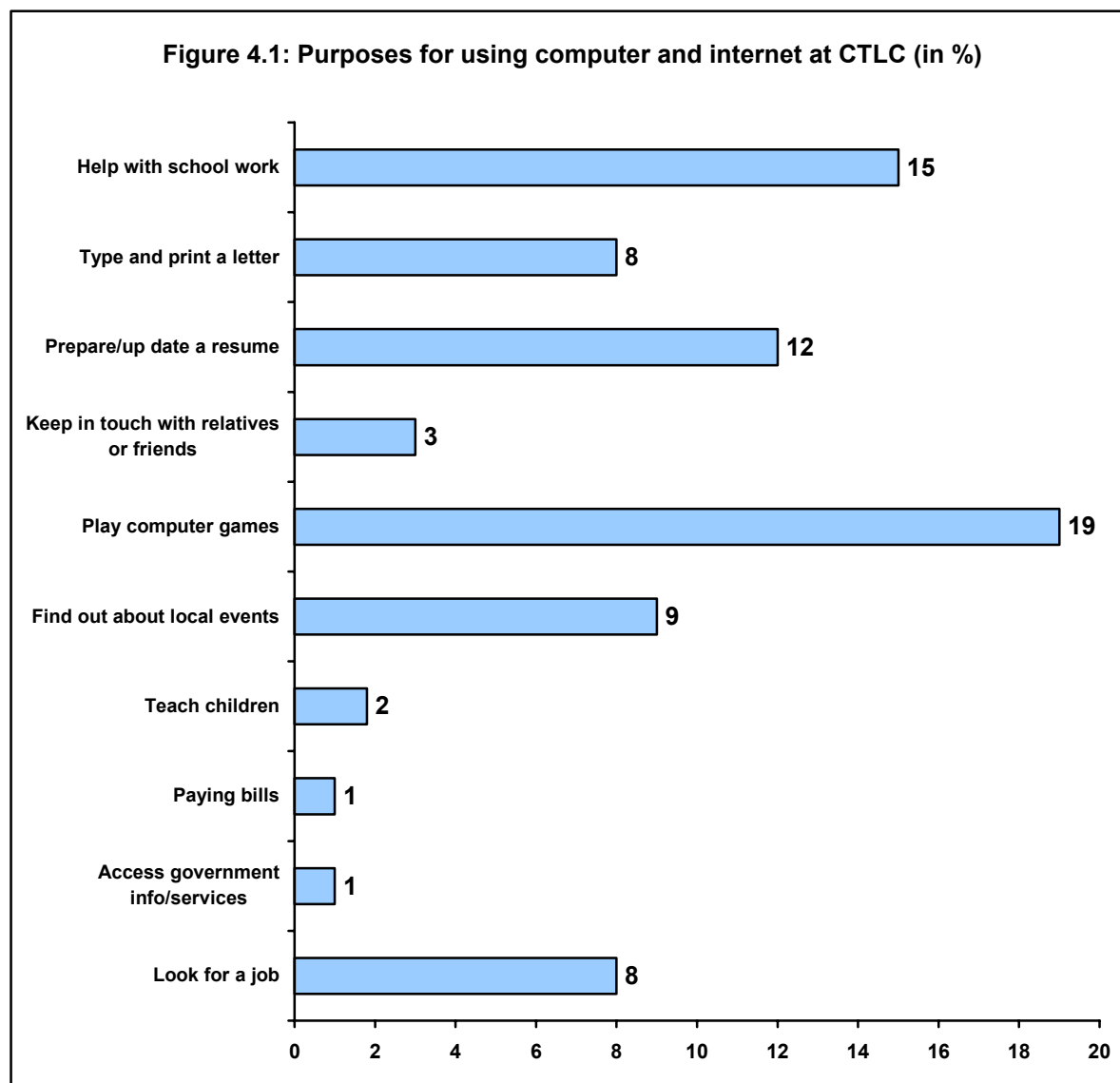
Table 4.1: Reasons of users to visit the CTLC and its extent of importance (in %)

Computer skills	Not Imp. at all	Not Imp.	Neither Imp. nor unimp.	Important	Very Imp.
<i>N=170</i>					
To learn to use the computers	0	0	0	51	49
To use the computers	0	0	0	54	46
To use the internet	71	14	4	9	2
To find information	71	15	5	6	3
To use email and chat on the internet	70	20	5	3	2
To get help with homework / study	33	22	10	24	11
Because it's free / cheap	1	2	4	55	38
To increase my confidence	4	2	4	38	52
To find out about future study / job options	11	17	13	32	27

All the users found the visit to the CTLCs important as it gave them the opportunity either to learn or to use the computers. For most of the users, who visited the centre, Internet surfing, emailing and chatting was of little importance. This could be due to the fact that most of the CTLCs visited did not have Internet connection. Low fee of the course was another important factor for which most (93 percent) of them joined the MS-UP course. For 90 percent, joining the course was also important as it increased their confidence level. As evident, learning and using computers was accorded high importance by trainees' for their visit to the CTLCs. Most of the women members acknowledged that the training programme helped in improving their self-confidence, which was one of the prime objectives of MS-UP project.

4.2 Purposes of Using Computers and Internet at CTLC

Users were asked to mention the purposes for which they used computers / Internet at CTLCs. The purposes for using computers are listed below.



Using computers either for preparing their resume or typing a letter was mentioned by one-fifth of the trainees. One-fifth of them also shared that sometimes they used this opportunity for entertaining themselves by playing computer games while 15 percent used computers for doing school work. It is pertinent to mention here that since most of the CTLCs visited did not have Internet connection incidences of using computers for purposes like paying bills, access government information / services, keep in touch with relatives or friends were very less.

4.3 Users Experience of using Computer and Internet

Apart from the experience of using computer / Internet during training, the study tried to know users' experience of using the computer and Internet. Majority (67 percent) of the users reportedly had six months or less experience of using the computers while 17 percent of the users had 7-12 months of experience. About the Internet, most (69 percent) of the users mentioned that they have not used the Internet yet while nearly one-fourth of users had less than six months of experience in using Internet. This brings out that most of them had gained experience of using computer or Internet only after joining the MS-UP project and had no or little experience prior to joining the CTLCs.

4.4 Skill Level of users on Computer and Internet

The study made an attempt to know users' perception about the level of computer and Internet skill they have attained. On computer, most (82 percent) of them had the competency level of basics or a little more than basics. Less than 17 percent mentioned that they were well familiar with computer use.

On Internet, three-fourth of users did not possess even the basic know how while 33 percent users had attained very basic skill to use the Internet. It has been pointed out earlier that in most of the CTLCs visited there was no Internet connection.

4.5 Place and Frequency of using Computer and Internet

The users were further asked about the place of using computer and Internet. Apart from using it in the CTLC few of them had mentioned other places where they had used it.

Table 4.2: Place of using computer and Internet (in %)

Place of use	Computer	Internet
N=170		
CTLCs	100	7
Cyber cafe or Internet cafe	4	4
At school/college	7	2
At work place	5	1
At home	8	1
At friends' place	4	1

The above data showed that a small proportion of users have used the computer at other places, as well. Nearly eight percent users reportedly have computer at their home while four percent have used it at Cyber cafe. About five percent each have used it at school and at work

place. Since most of the CTLCs visited did not have Internet connection only seven percent users have used Internet at their respective centres. Nearly four percent have reportedly used Internet in Cyber cafe. It can also be inferred from the above data that at the Cyber café, the users have used the computer for the purpose of surfing the Internet.

On the frequency of using computers, majority (73 percent) used it everyday, eight percent each used it frequently in a week and once or twice in a week and 7 percent used it once in few months. Regarding the frequency of Internet use, 2 percent each used it everyday and frequently in a week while 5 percent used in once or twice in a week.

The above findings underscores the fact that post learning scope for using the computers / Internet was very limited for the users since most of them did not have any personal computer.

4.6 Extent of help provided or received during training programme at CTLC

The users were asked about the extent of help they provided to or received from their fellow trainees at CTLCs during the course of training programme. The responses are given in the table below.

Table 4.3: Extent of help provided or received during training programme at CTLCs (in %)

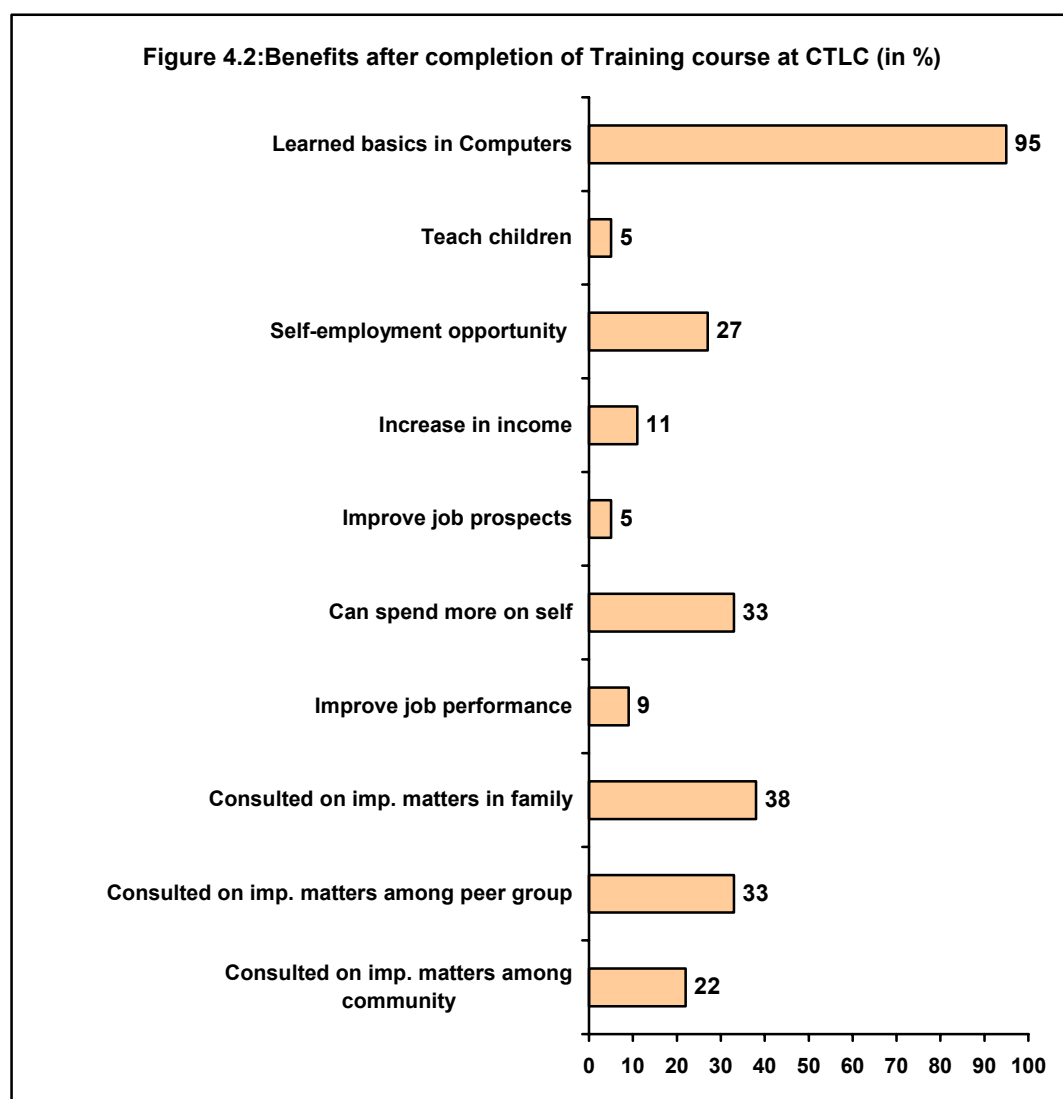
Provided or received help	Never	Rarely	Not so often	Quite often	Every time
N=170					
Helped other people with computers or the internet	3	12	16	58	11
Helped other people attending this centre (with other matters)	4	14	25	49	8
Received help for computer problems by other people attending the centre (not including staff)	3	13	21	55	8
Received help in other matters from people at the centre	2	24	16	48	10

While learning through computers, majority of the learners provided help to (69 percent) and received help from (63 percent) their co-learners at CTLC on computer related matters. One of the important reasons could be being from the SHG created a fellow feeling and they continued to help each other during the course of training programme and the helping attitude of the learners was not limited to only training related issues but on other matters as well. Over 57 percent users reported that they provided to and received help from fellow trainees on other matters also.

The users were further asked about the sharing of their skills learned under MS-UP project with family and / or friends who did not attend the centre. Almost all of them informed that they shared their knowledge with either family members or with their friends.

4.7 Benefits after Completion of Training Course at CTLC

The users mentioned a number of benefits, social and economic in nature, they got or expected to get after completing the computer course at CTLCs. The benefits are listed in the diagram below:



The most important and immediate benefit of the programme was learning basics in computer, with 95 percent users mentioning that the training programme gave them know how about using a computer. The training programme had a direct impact on those who were in the jobs and all

of them reported improvement in their job performance. For more than one-fourth, it helped in the creation of self-employment opportunity. The programme yielded a number of social benefits as well. Their exposure to computer training under MS-UP project has not only helped in learning the basics of computer but has given them lot of self-confidence. This has resulted into users now being consulted on important matters in the family (38 percent) as well as among community (33 percent) and peer group (22 percent). One-third of users reported that they could spend more on self while a small proportion of users (11 percent) reported increase in income. Despite the limited economic benefit the MS-UP programme succeeded in creating social and economic opportunities in the rural area.

4.8 Application of Computer Skills

On being enquired about usage of computer skills gained under MS-UP project, users informed that they are using it not only for one's professional work but for helping others also.

Table 4.4: Users' application of computer skills

(in %)

Response	N=170
Help children with their homework	26
To get information / sending mail through Internet	7
Teach computers to friends & SHG members	10
Used for one's professional work	11
Preparing contact list	3
Preparing resume / Drafting letter	7
Using calculator	5
Using present computer skill to learn advance course	2
Not used yet	42

More than one-fourth of the users reported that they helped the children with their homework and teaching basics of computer to their children. About one-tenth taught computers to the fellow members of SHGs and to friends. A few of them used the computer for preparing a resume / drafting a letter, preparing contact list and for calculation purpose. More than one-tenth used the computer in their professional work such as designing and printing visiting cards and using computerized machine for stitching. A small proportion (7 percent) of users reportedly used Internet either to get important information or to send mail to relatives / friends. However, more than two-fifth users reported that they have not used the computer yet.

4.9 Impact of CTLC Programme on User's Family and Community

The users were further probed on whether the computer training had any impact at the family and community level. Nearly four-fifth of them held that such training had an impact at the family level. Of them nearly 29 percent informed that they are respected more at home after the training. As mentioned earlier also, around 40 percent of them are now consulted on important matters in the family. As an impact, a large proportion (46 percent) of family started recognizing the importance of computer literacy. Nearly 56 percent users felt that their attending the training under MS-UP project had brought change in the community's look out towards them. Three-fifth of them held that they gained more respect within community while a few of them also mentioned that they gained more respect among the co-members of SHG. Most of the CTLC in-charge agreed that the programme did create an impact in the social sphere with trainees getting more respect at the family and community level.

4.10 Economic Impact Through CTLC Programme

Over 11 percent of the users were reportedly engaged in some kind of income generating activity prior to joining the CTLC. Nearly six percent users agreed that the computer course at CTLC did help in increasing / generating the earning. Out of 10 users who reported an increase in earning, four of them mentioned an increase in monthly earning in the range of Rs. 200 to Rs. 500. Two users, who are in private service, reported a monthly increase of Rs. 1500 each.

Among those users who are not engaged in any income generating activity, most (69 percent) of them were either housewife or student. About nine percent informed that they did not have computers to utilize the training while a few of them felt that their present skill in computer is not sufficient to look for a job.

Chapter - 5

SATISFACTION AND SUGGESTIONS OF USERS

The chapter discusses the process of learning and users satisfaction with regard to learning at CTLCs along with satisfaction about various other aspects related to training provided under MS-UP project. In addition, to make the CTLC functioning under MS-UP project more effective and far reaching, the chapter lists down various suggestions given by users, non-users, CTLC in-charge and NGO functionaries.

5.1 Process of Learning at CTLC

The study looked into the methods used for imparting training at CTLCs. All the users across districts mentioned that they took the help of instructors and had hands on experience on the computers during the training programme. Users informed that two participants shared one computer during training. Though there were specific instructions to the instructors to use instructor manual for delivering lessons, 36 percent users reported that hand written notes were used by the instructor to deliver lessons. Instructors on being enquired about this informed that they prepared the hand written notes in local language by using the instructor manual and the notes prepared by them were circulated to trainees on demand. However, among districts, in Wardha the instructors did not use any hand written notes to impart training to the participants.

To assess the satisfaction of users with regard to the training courses offered at CTLC, users were asked to share their extent of agreement with the following statements.

Table 5.1: Users rating about courses offered at CTLC

(in %)

Rating about courses offered at CTLC	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
N=170							
I can use the skills I learned in my life	0	8	5	58	29	0	0
The examples in the written text helped me understand the technical content	0	2	4	28	3	0	63
The practice exercises helped me improved my technology skills	0	2	9	64	25	0	0
The skills I learned with the UP courses will help me find employment	1	15	15	48	8	13	0
The UP courses are too advanced	2	87	5	6	0	0	0

Over 87 percent of the users agreed that they could use the skills they have learnt in the future. None of the users reported receiving any printed material but in some CTLCs handwritten notes prepared by the instructors were given to some of the trainees, on demand. Nearly one-third users agreed that the examples in the notes given by instructors helped them understand the technical content of the computer course. However, nearly 63 percent reported that they have not received any such hand written note, which could have used by them to grasp the technical content of the computer course in a better manner. Among districts, in Wardha 90 percent users reportedly not received any hand written note for reference.

Nine out of ten users admitted that the practice exercises helped them in improving their technology skills. About 56 percent agreed that the skills they had learnt under MS-UP project would help them in finding employment.

5.2 Extent of Learning of users in Courses at CTLC

The study tried to gather information on the extent of learning of the courses offered during the training programme at CTLC. It is pertinent to mention here that the training programme at CTLCs consisted of five topics such as Computer Fundamental, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint and Web / Internet and users did not have the option to choose the topics for their training programme.

Table 5.2: Extent of learning of users in courses at CTLC (in %)

Courses opted at CTLC	Very basic	A little more than basics	Well familiar	Advanced	Can't say	Did not learn
N=170						
Computer Fundamental	25	40	26	9	0	0
Microsoft Word	20	48	25	6	0	1
Microsoft Excel	22	47	23	5	0	3
Microsoft PowerPoint	21	42	24	8	0	5
Web / Internet	56	12	2	2	3	25

Majority of users felt that in all the five topics their level of learning was very basic or a little more than basics. Nearly one-fourth users thought that they were made well familiar with all the topics covered except Web / Internet. Regarding Internet learning, one-fourth users reported that they did not learn Internet. Of them, some participants were yet to learn the Internet while others reported that the topic was not covered during the training programme. Since most of the CTLCs covered did not have any Internet connection it might possible that some of the CTLCs did not impart theoretical lessons on Internet. It clearly emerges from the above discussion that the computer training provided under MS-UP project was not advanced in nature for the users, majority of whom got exposure to the computer for the first time.

5.3 Users' Preferences for Other Courses

The study made an attempt to know users' preferences of learning other courses that are presently not offered under MS-UP project in the state.

Table 5.3: Users preferences in learning other courses (in %)

N=170	
MSCIT	45
DTP	30
Tally	50
Internet	21
C++	10
Java	9

About 45 percent users wanted to pursue Maharashtra State Computer Information and Technology (MSCIT) course. This course is of three months duration and costs Rs. 2,250/- and it is recognized by government of Maharashtra. For most of the state government job this course is mandatory. Half of users preferred learning financial accounting course, namely, Tally and 30 percent wanted to learn DTP. The preference of courses like Tally and DTP suggests that since most of the users are members of SHGs they are interested to learn sound accounting packages for better financial management of their group and DTP packages for printing business.

It was mentioned earlier in this chapter that in some of the CTLCs even theoretical lessons on Internet were not imparted. In these CTLCs users were very much interested to learn about Internet. Nearly one-tenth each also showed their interest for advanced courses such as C++ and Java. Users' preference of the above mentioned courses amply demonstrates the desire of the learners to learn job-oriented courses in addition to the existing courses of MS-UP project.

5.4 Extent of users satisfaction with various aspects related to CTLCs

Users were asked to mention the extent of satisfaction on various aspects such as location, timing, support services and teaching quality, which have a direct bearing on the success of the training programme at CTLCs under MS-UP project. The findings of users' satisfaction level are presented in the table below:

Table 5.4: Extent of satisfaction with various aspects related to the CTLC

Issues	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not so satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Not applicable
N=170					
Training centre's distance from place of stay	58	30	11	1	0
Timings of the centre	44	52	4	0	0
Duration of training course	2	21	66	11	0
Course content is relevant to the market demand	4	25	58	13	0
Hand written notes prepared by instructors used*	5	33	0	0	62
Medium of instruction	67	31	1	1	0
Trainer's behaviour towards trainees	58	42	0	0	0
Trainer's method of imparting training	43	56	1	0	0
Electricity / power supply	7	32	46	15	0
Classroom / training room is spacious	18	43	36	3	0
Sufficient time for practice on computer	8	16	67	9	0

*In the state teaching-learning materials were not distributed to users

Most (88 percent) of the users expressed satisfaction, as the CTLC was located near to users' house. Regarding the timing of the centre, almost all the users expressed satisfaction since the trainees were attending the classes in small batches as per the timings suitable to them. Easy access to centre and convenient timing were the important motivators in joining the course especially for the SHG members.

On the duration of training courses most of the users (77 percent) felt dissatisfied. According to them, the training duration of 45 days was too short. To majority of the trainees, who were housewives and some of them in their 30s and 40s, the duration of training was short for these trainees to fully grasp the content of five different topics covered during the training course.

Regarding the course content meeting the market demand, majority (71 percent) of the users expressed dissatisfaction and for them the training courses taught them the basics of computer and did not have the potential to meet the market demand. Almost all of them expressed satisfaction over the medium of instruction since Marathi was used as the medium for teaching them.

Instructors' behaviour towards trainees was found to be satisfactory with all the users reported their behaviour nice and friendly. On teaching-learning material it has been mentioned earlier in this section that in the state none of the users had received any printed teaching-learning material. Some of them reportedly used the handwritten notes prepared by the instructors in Marathi language, which was useful for them for better understanding of the technical concepts. On instructors' training method, all of them expressed satisfaction since the users found the lessons easy to understand and the technical concepts were explained properly with suitable examples given in their mother tongue.

More than three-fifth of the users reported dissatisfaction on the electricity / power supply since frequent power outages was a major problem in the CTLCs located in the rural areas. The problem was compounded since in majority of the CTLCs there was no inverter for power back up. About the size of class room / training room, more than three-fifth of the users did not have any problem as they found the class room spacious but the rest were either not so satisfied or not at all satisfied as they found the size of the class room smaller. Regarding the availability of sufficient time for practice on computer, three-fourth of them expressed dissatisfaction since the time available for practical was not enough for them. As was observed by the CMS team as well as users, one computer was designated to two trainees for a practical of one hour duration, which means that half an hour time was available to each trainee for practical lessons.

5.5 User suggestions on functioning of CTLC

For further improving the functioning of CTLCs under MS-UP project, users' feedback and suggestion are important. A consolidated list of suggestions made by the users on different parametres are given in the matrix below:

Parametres	Suggestions
N=170	
Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More centres should be opened (69 percent) • Centres should be located closer to home (6 percent) • CTLC should start again (1 percent) • No suggestion (24 percent)
Accessibility of centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centres should be nearer to home (10 percent) • Transport facilities should be provided (2 percent) • No suggestion (88 percent)
Facility / logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More number of computers (45 percent) • Internet connection (19 percent) • Arrangement of inverter for power backup (7 percent) • Printer (7 percent) • Fax machine (3 percent) • More table and chair (11 percent) • Fans in the classroom (3 percent) • Toilet facility (2 percent) • More spacious classroom (2 percent) • No suggestion (14 percent)
Trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More number of trainers (44 percent) • Availability of female trainer (12 percent) • Trainers should be more trained (3 percent) • No suggestion (42 percent)
Course content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced courses (47 percent) • Tally (23 percent) • DTP (16 percent) • MSCIT (15 percent) • Internet (12 percent) • Language courses (2 percent) • No suggestion (2 percent)

A significant proportion (69 percent) of the users suggested that more centres (CTLC) should be opened in and around their place of residence so that more women, including the girls, could learn the computer course. Regarding accessibility of the centre, most (88 percent) of the users did not make any suggestion, which suggests that they did not have any problem to access to the centre as the centres were closer to their place of residence.

On the basic infrastructure for computer training, around 45 percent of the users wanted more number of computers in the CTLC because in the existing arrangement one computer was designated for two trainees. Nearly one-fifth users wanted Internet connection in their centre so that practical demonstration could be possible during the lesson on Internet. Around seven percent suggested arrangement of inverters for power back up. A few of them also suggested that each centre should have a printer (7 percent) and a fax machine (3 percent). Over one-tenth expressed the need of more table and chair in the classroom.

Regarding trainers at CTLC, majority (44 percent) of the users felt that there should be more than one trainer at the centre so that individual attention to the trainees could be paid. In addition to this, more than one-tenth users felt the need of a female trainer as all the users were either women or girls. Regarding the course offered at CTLCs under MS-UP project, majority (47 percent) of the users felt that more advanced courses should be introduced as part of the training programme. A large proportion (56 percent) of users wanted introduction of job oriented courses such as Tally (23 percent), DTP (16 percent) and MSCIT (15 percent) in the training programme.

The study also tried to gather the suggestions from the dropouts on different parametres of the programme. Of the total 86 non-users only three were dropouts. All the dropouts felt the need of opening more centres in their area. Of the three dropouts, two each suggested that there should be more than one trainer at the centre and advance course need to be introduced in the training programme.

5.5.1 Problems encountered and suggestion of community / opinion leaders:

The study garnered the views and opinions of community / opinion leaders to understand the acceptability and relevance of the MS-UP project from community's perspective. The community / opinion leaders interviewed included school teachers, sarpanchs, social workers, panchayat representatives, SHG members, anganwadi workers and doctors. Despite their diverse background, they talked about the problem areas and offered some valuable suggestions to make the project more successful.

Though the course fee in most of the CTLCs visited was Rs. 160/-, in some of the villages a few opinion leaders felt that the course fee at CTLC are not affordable for the poor household. Another respondent, a SHG member in a village from Usmanabad said “Households engaged in daily wage labour can not afford course fee of Rs. 160/-.” Similarly, a school teacher in a village from Pune held that “Households who are engaged as labour in agricultural activities found the course fee high”. Very few community / opinion leaders reported other difficulties or constraints faced by the trainees. A panchayat secretary in Wardha said, “To convince women in the village to join the computer course is difficult since most of the time they are busy in household chores.” On the constraints of women for joining the course, a SHG member in a village from Pune said, “Since many women in their village work as agricultural labour, they could not spare time to join CTLC and there is also lack of family support for joining the course.” However, most of community / opinion leaders were of the view that community members by and large did not discourage the women folk from joining the computer training programme at CTLCs.

On the location of the centre, the community / opinion leaders suggested that in large villages the centre should be located at a central place. Regarding the facilities most of the community / opinion leaders felt the need of more number of computers so that trainees could get more time for practical classes. Most of them also expressed the need of Internet connection in the centre since practical classes on Internet was impossible without an Internet connection. Like the users, most of the community members also emphasized the need to have a power back up facility to overcome the frequent power cut problem in the villages.

On the trainers, some community / opinion leaders, mostly from Wardha, suggested that periodic training or refresher courses should be conducted to upgrade trainer’s skill. The above suggestion gets credence from the fact that almost all the CTLC staff interviewed reported that the centre instructors did not receive the training from any Microsoft certified training partner. Regarding the nature of course most of the opinion leaders felt the need of introducing advance courses such as Tally, DTP and MSCIT. For them the introduction of these job-oriented courses could improve their job prospectus. According to them, some of the users could also use the advance training in their business venture to increase the income.

5.5.2 Problems encountered and suggestion of CTLC staff

Interaction of the CMS team with the CTLC staff revealed that most of them faced difficulties in garnering community support for participation especially in the districts of Pune and Usmanabad. Lack of awareness about computers was a major hindrance and in majority of these places SHG members were not very much interested in taking up the computer course.

Like the users and opinion leaders most of the CTLC staff felt the need of more number of computers, the use of which would help the trainees getting more practical exposure. Some of them also mentioned the urgency of providing course material in local languages and Internet connection to the computers. Most of the trainees wanted the introduction of advance courses such as Tally, DTP and MSCIT in the training programme.

5.5.3 Suggestions of NGO staff

During the study in-depth discussion was held with the Project Manager of implementing agency (VIIT) as well as with the senior project officer (Extension Services) of ISAP regarding the functioning of MS-UP project in the state. Some of the suggestions made by them on different aspects related to improvement of the programme are given below:

Infrastructure facilities / logistics – The NGO officials acknowledged that frequent power cuts in the rural area continued to be a major problem for imparting practical lessons to the trainees. There should be inverter arrangement in each centre for power backup.

Orientation and training of trainers – According to the senior project officer (Extension Services) of ISAP, periodic orientation or training of trainers should be done based on the first hand feedback from each centre.

Course content – Some specialized and job-oriented courses should be included / offered at the CTLCs, which would help in providing assured employment to the beneficiaries.

Sustainability of the centre – The financial health of the CTLCs could be improved by attracting the optimum number of trainees as well as by charging higher amount of course fee.

Chapter – 6

SUMMING UP AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summing Up

In the state women SHG members were the targeted group for the MS-UP project. Over two-third of the users were married. More than 92 percent of the respondents from both the categories (users and non-users) are Hindu. The users comprised of different social groups with majority of them belonged to OBC category. The users consisted of both girl students and older women with majority (53 percent) belonging to 18-29 yrs age group while eight percent users were above 40 years of age. The educational profile of the users revealed that three-fourth of them completed either secondary or senior secondary grade. Nearly half of the users were housewife while 31 percent of them were student. From the above data it appears that targeting has been done in accordance with the objective of the programme.

The occupational status of the earning family members of users shows that over two-fifth was in the service (government or private) while one-fourth was engaged in farming activities. Around 12 percent of them were shopkeepers while over 10 percent were engaged in embroidery / tailoring or making handicrafts. The above data suggest that among users the representation from households involved in farming is less as compared to households from service class. Among users, majority (52 percent) of the households had a monthly earning of more than Rs. 5, 000/- while 23 percent of the households had the monthly earning in the range of Rs. 3,000 - Rs. 5,000. It seems that most of the users did not belong to BPL households with majority coming from families with modest income.

Majority (53 percent) of the users came to know about the MS-UP project from CTLC staff while 14 percent of them got to know about CTLC through peer contact. Regarding the computer courses offered at CTLCs users were relatively more aware that it is under MS-UP project as compared to their awareness about the implementing NGO.

Most of the CTLCs surveyed had three computers. In almost all the CTLCs Windows XP was used as the operating system and in a few more than one operating system was used. Out of 17 CTLCs, in seven centres Internet connection was available. In most of the centres the CTLC staff were involved for maintenance of the computers while in Wardha hardware mechanics from outside did the maintenance job. Problems relating to hardware and virus attacks were reported to be rare in most of the CTLCs. However, in half of the CTLCs software 'crashes' were reported once in a month.

In most of the CTLCs users paid Rs. 160 as course fee while in some CTLCs of Wardha district some users paid Rs. 50 only. Regarding the process of registration at CTLCs, the users did not face any difficulty in registering themselves in the CTLCs. In all the CTLCs surveyed, one integrated course was offered under the MS-UP project. The most important reason for taking the computer courses was to learn basics in computer. A combination of other factors like cheaper course fee and convenient location and timing of the centre also motivated them to join the course.

Most of the users showed their interest in learning Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint and on Web / Internet. The CMS team observed that most of the SHG members wanted to practice more on Excel and PowerPoint. All the users across districts mentioned that they took the help of instructors to work on while learning. Some of the instructors used their hand written notes to deliver lessons. Majority of users felt that in all the five topics their level of learning was very basic or a little more than basics. On users' preferences of learning other courses that are presently not offered under MS-UP, half of the users preferred learning Tally and 30 percent wanted to learn DTP while about 45 percent users wanted to pursue MSCIT.

Almost all the users mentioned that the training programme helped in learning basics in computer. For those who were in jobs, the training helped in improving their job performance. For more than one-fourth, it helped in the creation of self-employment opportunity.

Undertaking the training under MS-UP project, not only raised the self-confidence of the learners but also raised their social status. As shared by some women users, now they are consulted on important matters not only in the family but also among community as well as peer group.

On the location of CTLCs and course timing, most of the users expressed satisfaction as the CTLCs were located near to users' house and timing was flexible and convenient for the trainees. On the duration of training three-fourth of the users felt dissatisfied since the training duration of 45 days was too short to grasp five different topics. Instructors' behaviour towards trainees was reported to be satisfactory by all the users. On teaching-learning material, none of the users had received any printed material while some of them had received the handwritten notes prepared by the instructors for better understanding of the technical concepts. More than three-fifth of the users reported dissatisfaction on the electricity / power supply since outages was a major problem and in majority of the CTLCs there was no inverter for power backup. Regarding the availability of sufficient time for practice on computer, three-fourth of them expressed dissatisfaction since the time available for practical was not enough for them.

Regarding the basic infrastructure at CTLCs, nearly half of the users wanted more number of computers in the centre. Some of them suggested that there should be inverters for power backup. Regarding trainers, majority of the users felt that there should be more than one trainer at one centre so that individual attention on trainees could be more. Regarding the course offered at CTLCs, majority felt that more advanced course should be introduced as part of the training programme such as Tally, DTP and MSCIT.

Most of the community leader / opinion leader expressed the need of Internet connection in every centre since practical classes on Internet was impossible without an Internet connection. Some of them suggested that periodic training or refresher courses should be conducted to upgrade trainer's skill. Regarding the nature of course most of them felt the need of introducing advance courses such as Tally, DTP and MSCIT. One of the important suggestions given by CTLC staff was that course material in Marathi language should be provided to the trainees.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the views and opinion of different respondent groups and field teams observation, some measures and initiatives are recommended by CMS Social to make the MS-UP Project more effective and far reaching in Maharashtra.

Awareness programme: The implementing agency should organize more awareness campaign and meetings among the SHGs so that more SHG members from villages could join the training. Implementing agency could arrange a rekki visit to a nearby CTLC for women folk of the villages to remove the hesitation, if any from joining the CTLC to learn computer.

Facility at CTLC: As emerged from the findings of the study, each CTLC should have more than one trainer. It is recommended that implementing agency should recruit at least one female trainer at each CTLC to make it convenient for female learners. To address the problem of frequent power outages in the rural areas, there should be inverters in the centre as power backup measure.

Course duration: The computer course offered at the CTLCs are integrated in nature and the course covers five different topics. The course duration, which is 45 hours at present, should take into account the occupation and age of the users. Since majority of them are housewife and in their 30s and 40s the duration of the course should be increased from 45 hours to 60 hours. The time devoted for teaching Excel and PowerPoint should be increased as most of the users have shown more interest to practice on these two courses.

Training of Trainers: In most of the CTLCs situated in rural areas, getting an efficient person as Master Trainers is not easy. Most of the trainers do not keep them abreast with the technological changes and advancement. In this context it is highly desirable to conduct orientation / training sessions from time to time for the trainers in the rural area to update their computer skill and knowledge.

Introduction of specialized courses: Since women SHG members are the target group the introduction of tailored made course that could cater to the need of the members should be offered. Financial accounting course such as Tally will help the SHG members in acquiring sound accounting knowledge for the financial management of their group as most of the SHGs require sound managerial skill to strengthen the SHG-Bank linkage. The use of specialized course such as DTP and designing by the SHG members has significant potential in scaling up their business activities.

Monitoring and Feedback: Periodic interaction with users, may be once in six months or in a year, will help in assessing the functioning of the CTLCs. This will help in gauging the impact of the programme as well as getting feedback of the trainees to take midterm corrective measures and make the programme more far-reaching and effective. To begin with, trainees' feedback could be taken on a prescribed format at the end of the course.

Course material in local languages: Since most of the members are housewives and some of them join the course at an age of 40 years or more, course material should be provided to each and every trainee to aid them in the process of learning. For easier understanding of the technical concepts the course material should be in local languages (Marathi in this case).

Sustainability of the centre: To meet the demand of the market, CTLCs should introduce specialized and advance courses such as Tally, DTP and Photoshop and may opt for a differential fee structure. This would help in increasing the employment prospects of the trainees. In the possibility of Microsoft phasing out the MS-UP project, this would give additional income to CTLCs to sustain themselves.

At the same time CTLCs should explore other alternatives for generating additional income. CTLCs should try to bring some computer job work so that trainees get more practical exposure and will fetch additional earnings for the centres as well as trainees.

ISAP, on a pilot basis, should identify few CTLCs to work as rural BPOs. For this, initially it could select few CTLCs from Pune, as it is a big industrial and business city. The interested trainees after the completion of training from the CTLC should be employed to work in the BPO.

Case Studies

Reaping the benefit of computer: A story of a village based entrepreneur

Dhanavasti, a sleepy village, is situated 15 km from Baramati town. In this village Shubhangi Kothari, a 44 yr. old married lady, stays with her husband and 2 school going children. Shubhangi has completed her graduation. She and her husband own a printing shop, Arihant Printers.

Even though they had printing machines since the last 6 years, printing work was done manually, which took more time to complete a work and reduced the productivity. They were struggling to survive and meet the needs of the family with a meager monthly income of Rs. 5000/ to Rs. 6000/.

Some of the neighboring printing shops were using computers for printing purposes, which made it tougher for them to compete with their competitors. Apart from delivery of service in time the neighboring printers were also using computer-simulated designs, which attracted more customers. As admitted by Shubhangi, *“Humein doosron par nirbhar rehna parda tha, jiski wajah se kai baar hum waqt par kaam nahi de paate thaye. Dheere-dheere kaam milna kam hone laga tha, kyunki grahak kai baar kaheen aur se kaam karwa liya karte the. Ek waqt aisa bhi aaya, jab humein apni dukaan band karne ke baare mein bhi sochna pada.”* (We used to depend on others for which many times we could not complete the work on time. Slowly there was less demand for printing work since the customer got their work done from others. There was a time when we had to think about closing our shop.)

Amidst all these hurdles Shubhangi saw a ray of hope. She, through one of the members of the local NGO, came to know about the CTLC functioning under MS UP project near her village and got her self registered. During the computer training at CTLC she learned the basics of computer. Training at CTLC proved to be a stepping stone, through which she explored many other applications of computer in her business. During the training days at CTLC she realized that desktop publishing systems have become increasingly popular for producing newsletters, brochures, books, and other documents. With the newfound confidence she went ahead to learn DTP (Desktop Publishing) for 3 months from another private computer institute.

Having a family with two school going children, it was not easy for her to join the computer training at CTLC. But the urge to learn and full support from the family members made it possible for her. Every day she used to finish her household chores before leaving for the CTLC and her children helped her in doing so.

All the pain taken by her and support from her family are yielding fruits. Shubhangi now works at her press with renewed vigor. The DTP and use of computer-aided latest designs are proving beneficial for her business. From being on the verge of closing down their shop, they are now able to earn a sum of around Rs 15,000/ per month. To meet the growing demand of work, they have employed two *karigars* (workers) in their printing press. Apart from the increase in their income, personally she feels, she has gained more respect at the society level. She attributes her success to the computer training she undertook at the CTLC, as she recalled *“Agar mainey CTLC par basic computer course nahi kiya hota, to mujhey na kabhi computer chalana aata, aur naa hi main kabhi DTP ka course kar paati, jissey mujhey itna fayda hua”*(If I have not done the basic computer course at CTLC neither I could able to operate computers nor I could learn DTP.)

Shubhangi further plans to learn Photoshop to expand her business portfolio. She feels that more and more females should come forward to learn computers to use it in income generating activities. She also suggested that some advance courses such as DTP, Tally should be introduced under MS UP project to meet the growing demand of market.

II

Beyond the household chore: The new role of a housewife

Shabnam, a 35-year-old woman, stays with her husband, a son and in-laws in a small village, Supa, located about 20 km from Baramati district headquarters. Her husband is in to concept marketing of a particular brand and runs a shop while Shabnam used to spend her day doing household chores and taking care of the family.

One day during discussion with a SHG member, she came to know about the CTLC under MS UP project in her village. The SHG member suggested her to join and learn computer. Initially, she was reluctant to join the CTLC, as she has to devote much of her time in taking care of her children but the SHG member informed her that the timing of the course is very flexible and she can attend the course at a time convenient to her. Finally she evinced interest and decided to get herself enrolled. Her family, especially her mother-in-law supported her and took care of Shabnam's son when she used to be at the CTLC.

Shabnam attended the computer course in the afternoon. The proximity of the CTLC from her house made it further easy for her. During the initial days of her training, she faced some problem to understand the technical concepts. But she did not lose her spirit and after few days she could grasp the subject matter. The medium of instruction was Marathi and the instructor explained the technical concept through suitable examples, which helped her in understanding the lessons.

After completing the course at CTLC, she is now able to help her husband in his shop by doing data entry, sending mails, keeping a track of the expenses etc. She now saves Rs 1200/- per month, which previously was being paid to the computer operator in the shop. As she stated *“CTLC mein course karne ke baad mein apne pati ka kaam mein haath batati hoon. Mere pati ki Concept Marketing ki dukaan hai, jismey grahakon ki bikri ka hisaab rakhana padta hai, usey mail karna hota hai, data entry karni padti hai. Pehle humne eis kaam ke liaye ek computer operator rakha tha. Course karne ke baad mein khud karti hoon”* (After doing the course at CTLC I am helping my husband in his work. My husband runs a concept marketing shop in which account on sales is kept, mails are sent to customers and data entry work is done. Before, we had engaged one computer operator for these works. After doing the course I am doing these works.)

After the computer course in CTLC she sees a positive change within herself. She has gained self-confidence. As Shabnam acknowledge, *“Is course ke pehle mujhme aatmaviswaas ki kami thi, khaaskar baahar ke kaam karne mein hamesha ek darr sa laga rehta tha. Ab aisa nahi hai.*

Ab mere pati dukaan mein bahar ka order laatey hain, aur main saare kaam swayam dekhti hoon". (Prior to the course my self-confidence level was low especially in doing the outside work I felt scared. Now it is not the same. Now my husband bring outside order and I myself take care of other works in the shop.)

She has also noticed a change at the societal level. Earlier, only males were considered capable of learning computers. But after the establishment of the CTLC this mindset has gradually changed. As she stated *"CTLC se samaaj ki soch mein kaafi badlaav aaya hai. Pehle log sochtey theye ki computer sirf purush hi chala sakte hain. Ab CTLC ke aaney ke baad, yeh dhaarna badli hain"* (Due to the impact of CTLC the outlook of the society has changed a lot. Earlier people used to think that only male person can operate computers. After the functioning of CTLC this impression has changed.)

Shabnam feels that the computer course offered under MS UP project should ensure that Internet is taught at the CTLC because now a day it is an important skill, which each computer literate should learn.

She plans to open a cyber-café in the near future to train ladies on the lines of CTLC. Apart from the economic benefit this venture will help increase computer literacy among women. As she put it *"Main sabhi ko kehna chahoongi ki woh computer jaroor seekhein. Yeh zamaana computer ka hai. Unka kaam sirf ghar ka kaam karna aur bachchon ki dekhbhaal tak hi seemit nahi hai. Ghar ke baahar bhi ek duniya hai, jahaan kaafi kuch hai. Zaroorat hai to bas, ek kadam aagey badhaane ki"*. (I suggest everybody should learn computers. This is the computer age. Female's work is not limited to doing household chores and taking care of children. There is another world outside the home. The need is to move a step ahead)

From Housewife to Accountant: Transformation of a rural woman

Manisha, a married 37-year-old lady from Nira village in Baramati, lives with her husband, 2 children and in-laws. Her husband is a clerk in a private company. She completed her graduation degree in Commerce before she got married. She always had an ambition to work but living in a village, she did not get the right opportunity. Moreover, since her village was 40 kms from the district headquarters, it was difficult for her to work at Baramati town.

She always wanted to do a computer course, as she knew that in today's world it is difficult to get a decent job without knowing the fundamentals of computer. Then, one day Manisha came to know from one of her friends that a CTLC has been functioning in their area, which provides computer education at a very nominal fee. She did not want to leave this opportunity for two reasons- one, the timings was flexible and second, the center was not far away from her home. Her family members supported her and gave a lot of encouragement. Manisha acknowledge this, as she said, *"Parivaar ke sabhi sadasyon ne har tarah se mera sahyog aur margdarshan kiya. Mere pati, jo Computer ke mahatva ko behtar dhang se samajhte hain, hamara kaafi utsaah badhaate they, aur har tarah se saath dete the. Saas-sasur bhi kaafi khush hotey the ki meri bahu kuch naya seekhne jaa rahi hain, jo anya mahilaaen nahi jaanti."* (All the members of my family supported me. My husband, who better understands the significance of computer, had encouraged me and supported me throughout. In-laws were happy in the sense that the daughter-in-law is learning something new, which is not known to other women.)

After completing the course at CTLC, she did an advance computer course in accounting. Soon after, Manisha joined an automobile shop as an accountant and is currently drawing a monthly salary of Rs 3500. She attributes her success to the computer course she did at the CTLC under MS UP project. As she adds, *"CTLC mein basic computer course karne ke baad meri computer courses mein ruchi jaag gayi aur mainey aagey bhi computer ka thoda advanced course kiya jiski wajah se aaj mein Computer Accountant ka job kar rahi hoon. (After doing the basic computer course at CTLC my interest in computer increased and I did an advance computer course due to which I am doing the computer accountant job.)"*

The training at CTLC, as Manisha feels, has given her a new identity. Earlier, she was just someone's daughter-in-law, wife or mother. But now she is a computer literate and financially independent. She has gained more respect in the community and is now consulted on important matters especially by the women folk in her community. Personally, she has gained a lot of self-

confidence. She did not want to stop here. To further sharpen and upgrade her computer skills, she plans to go for more advanced courses like Java, C++, Networking etc. in near future.

Manisha praises the objective of MS UP project to make rural women computer literate but feels that to provide optimum benefits of the training, each CTLC should have power back-up facility, some reference books/manuals and Internet connectivity to give hands-on experience of using Internet. She feels that the MS UP project could also plan to offer advance course at these CTLCs and the duration of the course should be increased to give more time to trainees for learning computers.

Manisha strongly believes that all females, especially girls should become computer literate, as it not only widens the scope of employment but also gives a lot of self-confidence. As she concludes, *“Main apne maadhyam se samaaj ke sabhi vargon ko, khaaskar mahilaayon aur yuvtiyon se vishesh roop se kehna chahoogi ki woh jaisey bhi sambhav ho, computer ki shiksha avashya le, kyunki aaj ke samay mein yeh bahaut mahatvapoor hai”*. (I want to tell all the sections of the society especially to women and girls community that they must receive computer education in all possible way because today computer education is very much significant.)

IV

Trainee to Trainer

Ujjwal is a married, 27-year-old lady from a village Taligaon, which is about 65 km from Wardha district headquarters. Ujjwal lives with her husband, in-laws and 4 daughters. Her husband owns an automobile spare parts' shop at a nearby small town and has a monthly earning between Rs. 4000-5000. The income was not sufficient enough to meet both the ends and sometimes they borrowed from their relatives to run a family of 8 members. The growing burden of taking care of four daughters with a meager household income always haunted her minds. Though she wanted to do something on her own to supplement the family income there was no such opportunity available to her.

Fortune knocked her door one day when she came to know from her neighbour about the CTLC under MS UP offering computer training in her village at a nominal fee. But her initial hiccup was that she might not be able to take time out from her routine house chore related activities. Moreover, she had to give more time to her two younger kids. But she found that the timing of the training at CTLC is flexible and she can attend at a time, which suits her. Ujjwal convinced her mother-in-law, who agreed to take care of the younger kids while she goes to attend the computer training.

But the going was not so smooth. As she narrates *"Bachchon ke bimar pad jane ke karan kabhi kabhi training classes attend nehin kar payee "* (Sometimes during the training, I could not attend the classes since my kids were not well.) She has all the praises for her instructor at CTLC, who was very cooperative and explained the lessons taught in the previous session to her during the next class. Her determination and zeal to learn computer skills and her grasp on the subject impressed the CTLC owner. After she completed the course at CTLC, the owner offered her the job of conducting CTLC classes. For Ujjwal, a young and determined woman, it was the most opportune moment and she immediately agreed to take computer classes at the CTLC.

After that there was no looking back for Ujjwal. To upgrade her knowledge and computer skill, she did a course on DTP from a private institute.

Ujjwal is now in-charge of the CTLC and conducts computer classes. After the classes are over she takes up other assignments such as designing marriage cards, visiting cards and translation jobs from Marathi to English. From all these avenues, she is earning around Rs 3000/- per month.

Ujjwal's income was a great support to her family and helped them in repaying the debts. She attributes her newfound success to her family members, as she acknowledged *"Parivaar ke sabhi sadasyon ke sahyog ke karan hi main training kar payee ewam unhi ke sahyog ke karan main job bhi kar rahi hun"* (All my family members were very supportive in not only making it possible for me to complete the training successfully but continuing with my current job.)

All this has given her a new identity. Now she wields more influence in decision making on family matters and sometimes even gives guidance to her husband on business matters. In future, Ujjwal wants to learn net processing so that she can improve her job prospects.