



Creating self-directed,  
learning spaces!

# 2018 PIPAL LIBRARY REPORT

PIPAL: Projects in Play and Learning

*Partners:*

- \* Dept. of Public Libraries, Govt. of Karnataka
- \* SNC-Lavalin Atkins
- \* Project Defy
- \* Headstreams

 The City Central Public Library  
Broadway Branch,  
Shivaji Nagar, Bengaluru

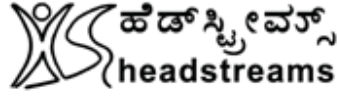
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# PIPAL Library Report 2018

**PIPAL (Projects In Play And Learning) NOOK**  
**@ The City Central Public Library, Broadway Branch,**  
**Shivajinagar, Bengaluru**

## **Introduction to PIPAL**

*PIPAL (Projects in Play and Learning) is an initiative of Headstreams, focusing on promoting libraries as a vibrant community space, catering to the information and learning needs of the local community. Headstreams, in association with Project Defy, has been working with the community in and around the City Central Public Library, Broadway branch, HKP Road, Shivaji Nagar, Bengaluru. The main objective of the project is **to create a community platform where opportunities for knowledge sharing, learning and skill development across all ages and abilities could be enhanced, by providing an opportunity for users to be exposed to advancements in technology, enabling access to relevant information and other resources.** The expected outcome is that the users will enhance their skills, through which they can qualitatively improve their lives and livelihoods. This project is conducted in collaboration with the Dept. of Public Libraries, Govt. of Karnataka, and SNC-Lavalin Atkins.*

## **A Brief about Shivajinagar**

*Shivajinagar is an old settlement of Bengaluru. There is a mixed population of people groups from all over India, with the majority belonging to the Muslim faith. Over the centuries, it has turned into a bustling commercial centre, catering to the market needs of the Bengaluru East and North residents. Russell Market, established in the British era, has lakhs of people thronging its stony path every day for all their home requirements. Due to this dense population, hygiene and living standards have been compromised. Always bustling with activity 24/7, rather chaotically, the menfolk are the predominant*

*breadwinners, as women working outside the home is not very common. As a result of the locality being a trading area, the literacy level is low. Generally, many children discontinue their studies and begin working at a very young age. The community has grown to accept its school and college dropouts, as long as they can earn a living.*

## **Beginning of PIPAL Nook**

*The idea of creating a PIPAL Nook started with a meeting of Headstreams co-founder Dr. Naveen I. Thomas with Dr. Satish Hosamani, the Director of Public Libraries, Karnataka, at New Delhi. During the discussion, Headstreams' objective of promoting self-learning through various public learning spaces was explained. The possibility of a Library being used for introduction of digital infrastructure and learning was considered to be both remarkable and a necessity.*



**Photo:** The state of the Library before the PIPAL Nook was brought into action.

*Based on the discussion between Headstreams and the Director of Public Libraries, Karnataka, a survey of over 20 public libraries in Bengaluru embarked on to find a suitable location. Discussions were held with the respective librarians to learn about the functioning, capacity and related matters of the libraries. Interactions with the public were also conducted to elicit their views. A comprehensive report on the survey was submitted to the Director of Public Libraries.*

*After their assessment of the survey report, the 38-year-old City Central Public Library at Broadway Road was earmarked to be converted into the first ever self-directed learning centre at a Public Library in Bengaluru. Project Defy, a Bengaluru based organization, was approached to provide the Nook learning format and contribute in setting up the learning environment. SNC-Lavalin Atkins provided the financial support for setting up the space.*

*This was the beginning of a public (State), private (Corporate) and Civil society (NGOs) partnership to create a self-directed learning centre.*

## **Inauguration of PIPAL Nook**



**Photo:** PIPAL (Projects in Play and Learning) Nook being inaugurated at the City Central Public Library, Broadway branch, Shivaji Nagar by Dr. Satish Hosamani, Director, Dept. of Public Libraries, Govt. of Karnataka, in the presence of partners, Headstreams, Project Defy and SNC-Lavalin Atkins.

*The ceremony began with the lighting of lamps. Then a brief tour of PIPAL Nook facility was followed by the invocation prayer by the staff of the Karnataka Public Libraries Department. Shri. Kailas Dulange and other representatives of project partners, SNC-Lavlin Atkins, Project Defy and Headstreams were felicitated by the Director of Public Libraries. The Deputy Director of the City Central Library (North Zone), Mr. Diwakar, then addressed the gathered members. Mrs. Gowri, from Headstreams, gave a brief introduction of the Project. She spoke of how PIPAL Nook functioned and of the various facilities available at PIPAL Nook. She shared with the audience how learning at the Nook was not restricted to books and went beyond scoring of marks. She briefed the audience regarding the number of participants in each batch, the activities and the elements of the Induction Programme and the Children's Corner (a small section, due to lack of space in the Library). She also spoke about the enrolment process and the Taster Sessions which were held for the public to witness how the Nook works.*

*After this, Mr. Abhijit Sinha from Project Defy spoke about the Nook and explained how self-directed learning works. He highlighted the importance of giving space for innovative ideas. Mamtha, who had participated in the Induction programme, then shared her*

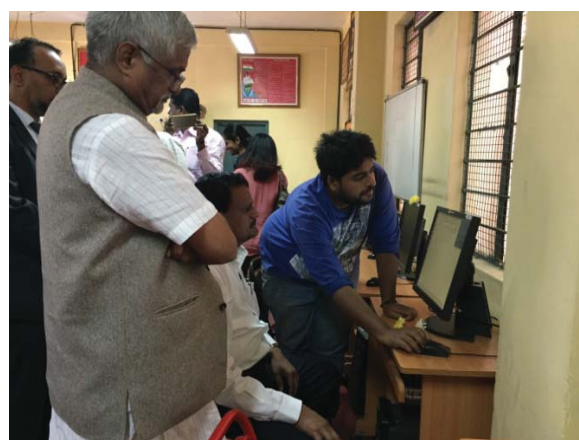


*experience of PIPAL Nook. She said, "I am very happy coming here. Earlier I did not know much about how to operate the computer. But now I have improved my knowledge. I can use the internet, look for information I want, and use the various options available in the computer very easily. I enjoy coming here."*

*The Deputy Director of Public Libraries in-charge of the zone, Mr. Venkatesh, said, "In Shivaji Nagar, there are many garages and small shops and not much scope for activities for the public. This Centre is really useful for the public to improve their knowledge and ladies too will benefit greatly from this as it is a safe learning space. I am happy to be associated with Headstreams and request that they incorporate these ideas in all the libraries under the East zone, and I am very happy that this very first Digital Library was inaugurated here."*

*The Chief Guest, Dr. Satish Hosmani, Director of Public Libraries, said, "I am very glad to witness the event. I am very impressed that the learning here can be so diverse and interesting. I am so excited to see the different tools kept at the Library for the use of Public. I would be glad to associate further with Headstreams and make such facilities available at all libraries across the state and that if the number of walk-ins at the Broadway Library increases, I would immediately turn it into a full-time Library. I am glad that the people of Shivajinagar are benefitting so much."*

*Dr. Naveen Thomas from Headstreams said, "We are very happy to initiate a self-directed learning space in a public library. We will use the learning from this project to plan on how to evolve this project further." The Librarian Mrs. Shobha gave the Vote of Thanks and concluded the ceremony.*



**Photo:** At the inauguration of the PIPAL Nook

## Beginning of the Community Outreach Programme



**Photo:** Door-to-door campaigning to reach out to different residential wards, to explain the possibilities within self-directed learning and how it can help develop skills.

*The first step in the project was the planning and implementing of ground processes as part of our efforts to reach out to the community at Shivaji Nagar. We started the process by studying the geographical locations of the commercial establishments, residential areas and institutions. We found that this area has many government and private schools, religious places of worship, several small shops, tea and bakery shops and garages, situated side by side in a single stretch. We identified that the library space could be potentially used by three wards of residential areas. We then planned a door-to-door campaign to meet people personally and appraise them of the goal of our project.*

*The door-to-door visits were made to places in and around the locality and also formed a part of the community mapping process. Houses on HKP Road, Old Cemetery Road, Pension Mohalla Lanes, Cockburn Road, HBS Hospital, Tasker Town and Queen's Road and towards Indian Express Circle and Police Quarters were covered. During the survey, the residential areas were the first to be covered. We interacted with individuals who introduced us to their local community, where we held group discussions in every lane. During the discussions, we highlighted the existence of the Library, its current facilities and the new facilities that were being introduced through project. We discussed also how individuals could inculcate new skills and better themselves through the use of these*

*facilities. After this discussion, some of the residents expressed their interest in visiting the Library, while others registered for its services on the spot.*

*The community group discussions and door-to-door campaigns yielded good results and are an ongoing process of PIPAL Nook. The conversations with the community members at different locations in Shivaji Nagar are elaborate and give insight into several community learning needs. The large number of school dropouts is one of the prime issues that is emerging through the discussions. The digital aspect of the project is also gaining a lot of attention in the community. Computers were introduced at the Library through PIPAL, as a means of encouraging self-directed learning. Some responses of the users are recorded here:*

*“The digital learning provided here is the best and the most necessary aspect at present. Many students will benefit from this, because at schools there are over 50 students in a class and the Computer Science period lasts for 40 minutes. And only a few computers are available at the school. Within this span, students don’t really learn anything practically, because the theoretical explanation takes a long time. The children here mostly cannot afford a system at home. So, this project has helped in increasing the knowledge of our children.”* **(Mr. Rehaman, local community member)**

*“We can learn about computers and use it at the Library. We learnt that we can use the Internet to transfer money, for bill payments, purchases, etc. Not only by means of computers, but we can do it through mobile phones too.”* **(Mrs. Gulab, local community member)**

## **Conducting the Enrollment and Taster Sessions**

*Following the outreach programme and door-to-door campaigns, more than 60 individuals applied to be part of the session at PIPAL Nook. 37 applicants came for the initial interview for the free Nook programme. Of these, 16 candidates fulfilled the criteria needed and were selected as the first batch of PIPAL Nook Induction Programme. On 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018, we started the first “Taster Session” with the selected learners and other interested individuals. The session started with introductions and a brief on the objectives of the space and its purpose. An electronics project that involved PCBs, Sensors, LEDs, soldering and batteries was done by the participants.*





**Photo:** Introduction to the “Taster Session” and its elements by Director of Project Defy, Abhijit. Members from the community, Project Defy and Headstreams were present.

*At the Taster Session, we asked the participants exactly why they had come here, what drives them to come, and what they find different here from the regular places of learning. Many reported being literally afraid of their teachers; they feared them and said they did not have room at school to learn new things from regular subjects. Here, they could learn to use computers and browse YouTube to start researching and experimenting creatively free of cost. What drives them to come here was this and that PIPAL was a safe place to be free, to be curious and looking, and above all to be able to make mistakes and learn from their mistakes freely without fear.*

*They also said that since there was no other learning centre, where they had the freedom to direct their own learning and receive guidance for starting on a new career path, they were inclined to join the group. The freebies available in terms of material for projects with no charges for entry and use of the facilities were other incentives. In some cases, individuals had heard of the Nook through word of mouth, through their friends and relatives, and had come and enrolled themselves.*

*Today, some features of PIPAL Nook are:*

- *People sharing their skills and talents*
- *Peer group learning*
- *Learners initiating own projects*

- *Making the library more efficient*
- *People donating their upcyclable materials*
- *People visiting the library on the regular basis, and participating in various workshops.*

## Induction Programme



**Photo:** Learners at their first Induction Programme, acquainting themselves with the available materials. Alongside, new learners are working on projects and building small peer groups.

*On 6th February 2018, the 15-day Induction Programme commenced with the selected 16 learners. Following the Nook induction programme, the learners were led through the introductions to the space, tools, computers, Internet, basic operations, and various computer applications. Learners were introduced to search engines, Google Translate, YouTube, Arvind Gupta Toys and Wikipedia.*

*The learners then spent several days doing projects from the above websites. The projects involved using trash and waste materials to make various articles. Plastic bottles, sticks, rubber, rope, paper, cardboard, pencils, boxes, old CDs, magnets, bottle caps, rubber-bands, etc. were used. The outcomes were simple toys and experiments like balloon bangles, balloon inflater and fans made of the plastic bottles. The learners also showed keen interest in learning to speak English fluently. Some were given tasks like storytelling, essay writing, public speaking, etc.*

<b><i>Details of Induction Programme</i></b>	<b><i>No. of Individuals</i></b>
<i>Mobilising of community outreach programme</i>	<i>Over-500</i>
<i>Registering of walk-ins for Induction Programme</i>	<i>256</i>

<b>Batch No.</b>	<b>Induction session (Start date)</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
1	06.02.2018	16
2	08.02.2018	8
3	06.03.2018	11
4	27.03.2018	15
5 & 6	24.04.2018	25
7 & 8	25.05.2018	26
9	20.06.2018	12
10	17.07.2018	14
11	04.08.2018	13
12	11.10.2018	16
<b>Total No. of people attended Induction Programme</b>		<b>156</b>
<b>Total No. of people completed Induction programme</b>		<b>122</b>

**Table:** The table shows the number of participants in each batch in the different Induction Programmes across the year.

*As a next step, the learners were asked to identify and discuss long-term action plans to meet their short-term goals. The learners were guided in identifying one short-term goal of their choice. In the very next session, they came back with their interests. They were then guided to plan and execute them. The majority of the participants were women. The interests evinced were in make-up and hair styling, fashion designing and dress making, and interior designing. The participants were then guided to work on planning by creating a list of material requirements, accessories, raw materials, tools etc., within a given timeline.*

*In the first batch, eight learners submitted their budgets. Five of these individuals were coached on how to plan, budget, make purchases and handle a project. After a few interactions, a realistic budget was worked out. Based on their budget, the learners purchased the materials required for their short-term goals and began working on them. They were given some guidance and insight on how to make this a business venture.*

*Meanwhile the enrollment process continued and new candidates joined for subsequent induction programmes. This is now an ongoing process in PIPAL Nook.*

## Assisting Learners in Goal Setting Skills

*A significant feature of PIPAL Nook is assisting learners in creating project plans that can lead eventually to acquisition of skills they can use for their livelihoods. So far interest areas have been in areas of make-up, tailoring, interior designing, and computer skills. A majority of participants who have keen interest in working towards honing skills are women.*

**Learning Goal Setting:** *The first and second batch of learners have completed their 3-month goals. The third and fourth batches are in the process of setting their goals for the next 3 months. Interest has been mostly in skills related to make-up, hair styling, fashion designing and dress making, with the presence of pre-dominantly women learners. All are guided in planning for material requirements, accessories, raw materials and tools etc., in a time-bound manner.*



**Photo:** Young women learners at PIPAL Nook preparing their budget plan for their long-term and short-term goals.

**Assisting with Learners' Project Materials:** *Learners who have set their goals are provided with necessary kits. Additionally, practice heads with long locks of hair, make-up kits, hairstyling tools, hair sprays, combs, pins and other accessories, fabrics, sewing kits, lace materials, threads and mehendi cones have been purchased and provided.*



**Photo:** Learners at the PIPAL Nook starting with the projects after setting short-term goals.



*The PIPAL Nook also saw learners exploring several innovative projects after the Induction Programme, using paper, cardboard, motors, fans, batteries, LEDs, etc. Several learners created their e-mail IDs and were introduced to documentation on Libre Office Writer and Libre Office Calc (Excel). Of the first batch, three of our learners - Ms. Afreen, Ms. Asha and Ms. Seema - have secured jobs with skills they picked up at the Nook.*

## **Careers shaped by PIPAL Nook**

**Ms. Afreen** completed her 2<sup>nd</sup> PUC and then did a computer course. She did not land herself a job and subsequently enrolled in a tailoring course. At the PIPAL Nook, she chose make-up and hairstyling in the beautician trade as her long-term goal. While working on this, she became interested in the process at work at PIPAL Nook and approached us with regard to her interest in Management. For the past 7 months, she has been working as a Nook Manager.

**Ms. Farheen**, another learner from the first batch, completed her Pre-University. She is interested in Fashion Designing. She trained in Tailoring and Sewing and has now upgraded herself to piece-work. She tailors frocks and blouses and makes an earning for herself, working from home.

**Ms. Asha** had completed her Diploma in Fashion Designing in Davengere, Karnataka, and did not pursue a career on completion of the course. She lacked confidence because of her perceived poor English speaking ability and very limited digital skills. She joined the Nook in the first batch. Within a couple of months, she had learnt to use the computer and harness information from the Internet. She slowly started to freelance with her skills, to add value to sarees, and started creating unique designs. She procured some orders and began earning a small amount of money. All these factors gave her the confidence to start looking for jobs online. She applied for an opening in a Garments Export company and landed herself a job in Karle International, Yeshwanthpur, Bengaluru, as a trainee in the purchase department.



**Photo:** Tassel-work made by one of the young women learners, now a professional.

**Ms. Seema**, another learner from the first batch, has landed herself a job in a beauty parlor in Shivaji Nagar, close to her residence. She's a 9<sup>th</sup> Std school dropout and was unemployed. She had done a run-of-the-mill tailoring course that most people in her community had opted to do. At PIPAL Nook, she chose hairstyling, haircut and mehendi designing, with becoming a beautician as her long-term goal. After four months at the Nook, she became confident enough to seek jobs in beauty parlors in and around the locality. She approached 'Aliya Beauty Saloon for Women', and impressed by her self-taught skills, the owner hired her as a trainee in facials, make-up and hairstyling.



**Photo:** Learners Seema and Firdose practicing to be beauticians

**Mr. Bharath and Ms. Misbha** joined the Nook with little to no knowledge in using a computer and are now well-versed through self-taught lessons. They have been since recruited at a call centre and have been successfully employed for a few months.

*With her experience at the Nook and the skill-set she chose and learned, **Mrs. Firdose Begum**, a teacher and a home tutor, is now mindful of her lessons as she imparts knowledge to students.*

***Mrs. Nagma**, the wife of a person with physical challenges and a mother of an infant, completed her Induction Programme. She works at Alma's Salon where she makes Rs. 5000 p.m., while also being trained in other skills necessary at the Salon.*

***Mrs. Mamtha**, who has made a career for herself through purchasing sarees from wholesale stores and is a retail seller who makes a profit of Rs. 50 to 100 per saree that she sells, is very creative and doesn't let her lack of good education impair her abilities to make a livelihood. She uses the Nook to enhance her career skills.*

***Mrs. Vijayalakshmi** was a learner from the first batch. On completing her Induction program, she immediately filled out her resume, looked for a job on her own and is now makes Rs. 12,800, working in an Insurance Company.*

*A few learners are still at the stage of goal setting, looking for employment or working from home. Most of them have completed their Induction Programmes. They face a lot of difficulty in goal setting as they are socially restricted to having to find work not too far from their residential locality. Filling out and updating their resumes is still an ongoing process.*

## **Interaction of Learners with Academic Institutions/Organisations**

*Many students and members of academic institutions and organisations visited PIPAL Nook to interact with the multi-age learners.*

*Students and volunteers from Amani University, Christ University, St. Joseph's Arts and Science College and Mount Carmel College, visited the Nook. They also campaigned at their respective colleges, detailing to their peers and faculty the importance of having centres like PIPAL Nook at prime locations such as Shivaji Nagar, and how the amenities could teach many individuals new means to improve their livelihoods.*

*Members and Centre Managers from different NOOK Centers (of Project DEFY) visited, to observe and mingle with the learners. They noticed the progress made by the learners, and their cognitive and social developments.*

*Various interested individuals visited the PIPAL Nook to see the ground reality of the hardships the learners faced and how they were still intrinsically motivated, to acquire new skills to improve their livelihoods.*

***An apprentice from our association partner, Project DEFY, described the locality's people thus:***

*“Shivaji Nagar is an old locality in Bangalore, it is an area dominated by Muslims and so, you have to work to become a part of its community. Initially, it may seem closed off, but day by day you can build a good bond with them. The quality of life on a Social Context has scope to improve, if the relationships between people generate identity and solder fidelity. The sense of belonging to a group or to a community is a powerful motivation, that drives those people to take part in collective construction processes and this is also the sense of familiarity that a Nook can provide to the people of Shivaji Nagar. Feeling a part of the community sets in motion acknowledgments, feelings of affection, collaboration, discovery, from which one thinks that ‘Together we can do!’”*



**Photo:** Students from Amani University at PIPAL Nook



## Potluck

*A fortnightly potluck activity was planned, to create awareness about the PIPAL Nook and to engage its users. On 17<sup>th</sup> March 2018, PIPAL Nook had its first potluck activity. A total of 25 individuals participated at the event, including nine SNC-Lavalin Atkins employees. An interactive, fun-filled event involving every participant was conducted. Each participant had to sketch a memorable or funny incident in their life, explain what had transpired, without concluding or revealing how the incident ended. Everyone else had to guess what happened or how the incident eventually ended. Subsequently more potlucks were conducted.*

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Date of Potluck</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
1	17.3.2018	18
2	31.3.2018	24
3	28.4.2018	21
4	9.6.2018	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>79</b>

## Summer Camp with Children

*A summer camp was conducted at the Government Tamil Higher Primary School, Cockburn Road (Sulthan Gunta), Shivaji Nagar, Bengaluru, in the month of April 2018. It was held for 5 days in the school premises. The camp was organized for 110 children; it gave the children a chance to experience different events and activities, such as Story and Art, Craft and Theatre, Music and Movement, etc. Children were allowed to volunteer at the food, interior decoration, upcycling, and cloth and accessories stalls. They were given the free choice of picking the stall they desired. They were all content and happy with what they were doing and, by the end of the camp, they wanted the Headstreams team to come for many more days. We also noticed that by the end of the camp, the children were communicating better with each other; there was no violent behavior as evidenced on the first two days. Instead they seemed to become a close knit group that appreciated each other, eagerly wanting to work in groups, and readily accepting constructive criticism from peers. Overall, this camp was filled with lot of self-learning, fun and connection.*



**Photo :** Summer camp at nearby school for the children of the Shivaji Nagar community

## **SNC-Lavalin Atkins celebrating India Employee's Day with Learners**

*SNC-Lavalin Atkins employees spent a day at the PIPAL Nook. The objective was to provide some assistance to the space by indexing and cataloging the books and doing a half-day workshop with the learners.*



**Photo :** SNC-Atkins Employees participating to at the NOOK Centre.

*Preparation for the half-day workshop began with a waste/reusable items collection drive within SNC-Lavalin Atkins India. This resulted in receiving several items like telephones, headphones, mobiles, clocks, watches, toys, cables and wires. Headstreams and Project Defy procured automotive and engineering materials, such as gears of various sizes and utilities, shafts, pipes, chains, chain sprockets, engine parts, rubber hose belts, piston rings and connectors. These were laid out for the participants to pick. The theme selected for the workshop was "STEAMPUNK."*

*After spending time cataloguing and indexing at the space, the workshop commenced. At the workshop, participants formed teams along with learners. The teams used their imagination to make any working or non-working model with the materials chosen, within a stipulated time of 3 hours. The results were some interesting versions of Steampunk, different types of motorbikes, a gramophone, etc.*



**Photo:** Models made during the Steampunk session

## **Current status**

*Overall, the PIPAL Nook has garnered traction and has set a pace for itself through regular outreach programmes or community engagement discussions, induction programmes, the goal-setting process, various events and other activities. The subjects that the women and girls have chosen thusfar are mostly enterprise-driven: hairstyling, beautician, tailoring and dress designing, mehendi, and jewellery designing. Most of the school children and some college boys have executed science projects (Physics, Electronics and Electromechanical), while others have made toys from Arvind Gupta Toys and other projects with instructions available online.*

*The first and second batches of learners have become ambassadors of the space and we constantly have new enrollments. The new learners are receptive to the previous learners at the PIPAL Nook. They communicate with each other and do collaborative projects. The previous learners take the time to teach the beginners, and preach to them of the opportunity they have at hand. This shows how they are forming a community and learning to co-exist. They are much more open to receiving the advice of the instructors at the PIPAL Nook, and give inputs on how they want to make their projects. They work with*

*new materials judiciously, so as to not spoil it for the ones coming later. They have also developed a keen creative mind to make do with the available materials during a shortage.*

## **Case Studies of Learners**

### **Learner: Firdose Begum**

*Firdose Begum is a 31-year-old married woman and the mother of a sixth grader. She dropped out of the education system after completing her 2<sup>nd</sup> PU. Coming from a family that lives off the wages of a single working parent, there had always been a shortage of resources; hence compromises had to be made. One among four sisters and three brothers, education was put on the backburner, becoming a secondary priority in her life. With no prospect of completing her education, she took to tutoring school students. She equipped herself with tailoring skills after her Pre-University education, earning minimum wages. Currently, she is pursuing her passion for teaching, by working as a Language Teacher at a school.*

*Introduced to the PIPAL Nook through campaigning, she enrolled herself during the month of April, 2018. With the help of the self-directed learning' approach of the programme, she learnt to access the Internet, create documents and utilize social media interfaces. With an aesthetic bent of mind, she learnt to make accessories and taught herself salon skills, periodically doing small-time beautician gigs at gatherings. When she began, she lacked self-confidence and had the fear of being judged or being unheard. However, once at the Nook, with her ability to learn quickly, she figured out how to set milestones, both mentally and with regard to her career options. Her long-term goal is to pursue a Bachelor's in Arts and her short-term goal is to learn image editing and interior designing. She has attended both the Induction and the Taster programmes, and has been at the Nook for 7 months.*

*The outcome is a self-motivated young lady, with the goal to empower herself. She is turning out to be a confident woman who can voice her opinions strongly, striving daily to be better than yesterday.*

### **Learner: Seema**

*Seema is a 22-year-old woman who dropped out of school before completion, due to financial constraints. Coming from an orthodox family, importance was only given to becoming a suitable bride, and she lost the drive to study. Shortly after turning 18, she*



*attended classes to learn the basics of how to use a computer, but dropped out because of disinterest and parental restrictions, a few months into the course. She learnt to sew gowns through a one-year training in tailoring and sewing.*

*On being introduced to the PIPAL programme through campaigning, she took up salon training. After the completion of the training, she had formal training for 2 months. She has been a volunteer during many of the Nook events and has showed a lot of enthusiasm towards helping elders and kids. Due to the PIPAL programme she has learnedt how to make a budget, find the different prices offered for the same product, and utilize her email ID to contact her colleagues. She attended both the Induction and Tester programmes, and has been at the Nook for 9 months.*

*She is now ardently training herself to be a Salon Stylist. Her long-term goal is to pursue a Bachelor's in Arts.*

**Learner: Syed Salman**

*Syed Salman is a 16-year-old teenager and currently a 7th grader (due to health issues, his education has been compromised multiple times). He is a curious teen, with immense interest in electronics. He loves making his own kites and flying it.*

*He has been a part of the PIPAL Programme for just over 2 months. He is keenly interested in electronics and makes it a goal to make one new thing every time he comes to the Nook. Judiciously working on projects, he is interested in learning more about automobile engineering. He has developed good knowledge with regard to using the computer and the internet; YouTube is his go-to site. A hard working teen with the sincere intent to learn and better himself, he attended the Induction programme but not the Taster session.*

**Learner: Asiya Bi**

*Asiya Bi is a 28-year-old married woman. She discontinued her education after her 10th grade. She then joined the tailoring and sewing class, and learned to sew dresses, do piece-work and design clothes.*

*On joining the PIPAL Nook, she learnt to use the Microsoft Office tools, create her own email ID and use YouTube to find new craft models to make. Her jobs always paid less than she needed but now with the skills she learnt here, she has begun receiving better offers and is being paid much higher. She has attended both the Taster session and the Induction*

*programme, and has been at the Nook for a few months. Due to health issues she hasn't been a regular learner, but is very enthusiastic to do so.*

*She hopes to learn Coral Draw and be able to make designs for portraits, gift boxes and wallpapers. She has been building herself a circle. She appreciates the freedom that the Nook offers and the facilities it offers for her to learn different skills.*

**Learner:** Ms. Misbah

*Misbah is a 20-year-old woman. She dropped out of the education system after her Pre-University. She loves reading books and watching videos on YouTube. She has always dabbled in many activities she wanted to pursue, but didn't follow through on any.*

*She initially enrolled herself for tailoring and sewing classes. But now, she has opted to learn the basics of using a computer and to train herself as a beautician. She has attended both the Taster session and the Induction programme, and has been at the Nook for 6 months. She was one of the few women interested in electronics.*

*She is now a freelance beautician, working among her family and friends. She also got a job at a call centre through the Nook. She has had quite a rewarding experience, as she is now confident in herself that she can make ends meet, no matter the restrictions.*

**Learner:** Bharath S

*Bharath S is a 17-year-old in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. He has great public speaking skills. He is also very interested in electronics. He plays cricket and is quite the batsman.*

*He enrolled himself at the Nook to learn how to use the computer and use it to help aid him in his exams. He has attended both the Taster session and the Induction programme, and has been at the Nook for 3 months. He wants to learn how to speak in English fluently, and to openly voice his opinions. He also loves group activities, being peer motivated. When he first came to the Nook, he lacked confidence in himself to approach people, but has improved manifold since then.*

*As he does not wish to pursue his education, he wants to train hard to be able to compete in being a part of the Indian Cricket Team. He would rather work than study, The Nook helped him learn skills that got him a job at the call centre.*

## Feedback from Learners and Users

*“The best experience, not just in terms of fun but equal learning. I can analyse a problem and make my own decisions now. I feel independent, because of my skills and how the Nook has helped me use it to make myself better.” (Firdose Begum)*

*“The Nook should be open on Sundays too, with more things to learn. Students are busy with homework and projects during the weekdays, and are only free on Sundays and Govt. holidays, hence the Centre should be open for more hours and on holidays.” (Nabeel Banu)*

*“Previously, I used to watch music videos or trailers on YouTube, but after enrolling at the Nook, I have begun using it to learn new skills. Now, with an android phone, I browse Google to clear my doubts, for cookery tips, spell checks and many more.” (Farheen)*

*“I enrolled myself at the PIPAL Nook and learnt many skills. Now, I come here to clear my doubts by browsing the Internet. When confused, I ask for help, with the guidance of the Instructor at the Nook, I weigh my pros and cons before making a decision.” (Misbah)*

*“Although I am irregular to the Nook, I learn what I come for, thus being productive. I am oriented towards the Fine Arts, and I watch videos about different ghazals and email myself the link to learn later. I think the Nook should have uniquely talented people coming over during the weekends and holidays to teach different techniques and work on different models. With a hectic school schedule for higher grade children, coming regularly isn’t an option.” (Sadatt)*

## Key Outcomes

*Here are some of the key outcomes for the last year:*

- *About 500 houses visited in the nearby communities, including schools and religious places*
- *Amateurs and regular users have increased in the library manifold, from 5 walk-ins per day to around 30 walk-ins a day*
- *A total of 120 applications for PIPAL Nook programmes were received*
- *PIPAL Nook has helped change the course of life for over 122 learners*
- *12 Induction Programmes were conducted in the last year*
- *More than 100 beginner level projects have been completed*
- *6 intermediary level projects are underway*
- *With the guidance of the Nook staff, 10 learners have been able to acquire jobs after they began coming to the Nook and 6 other learners were able to find placements on their own.*
- *4 potluck sessions were conducted with Nook learners and SNC-Lavalin Atkins employees.*
- *Learners have understood the purpose of the space and are open to learn what they want and do activities they have never done.*
- *Learners can make rational decisions based on their choices.*
- *Computer proficiency of the learners has improved.*
- *The ability to interact and voice opinions of the learners has increased.*
- *The learners are more open to suggestions and constructive criticism.*
- *The learners have begun building their own networks with other learners and individuals within the community.*



## Gallery



**Photo:** Members of Atkins helping to organize and barcode the Library.



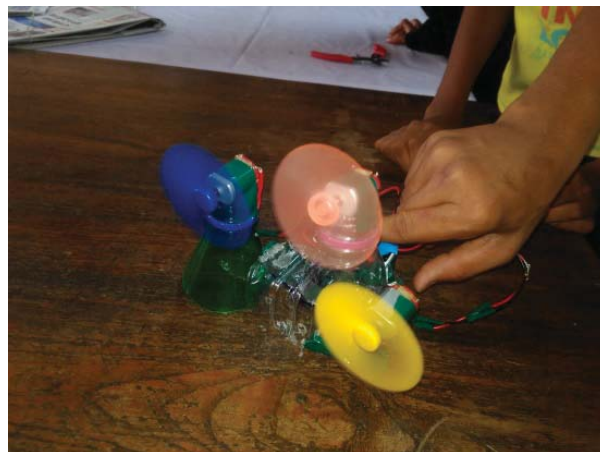
**Photo:** An electrical fan with waste material



**Photo:** Child learners using Clay to make models.



**Photo:** Learner has become a professional Tassel-maker.



**Photo:** One of the learners made multiple electronic fans using scrap materials.



**Photo:** Learners at their session planning and practising beautician skills.



**Photo:** Learners mingling with other individuals and volunteers at a Caravan session.



**Photo:** Jewellery made by a learner and one of the boys with his electric fan made out of a few pieces of wiring, motor and a battery.





**Photo:** Students from the Amani University at the library, before their interaction with learners.



**Photo:** Various craftworks created by the children at the PIPAL Nook.





**Photo:** Headstreams and Project Defy orienting the employees of Atkins about self-directed learning and how to help with the PIPAL Nook project.



**Photo:** Solar light



**Photo:** Steampunk



**Photo:** Community visits

