

Education Builds the Future: from Inconfidency to a Role Model

Twenty young women students look up to her. She herself gives them a good example of an idol, a woman having life and wishes of her own. She has done the same iLEAD-training the girls are now doing – and now she is in a position of a trainer in the same program. Her name is Kriya. She is 20-years-old young woman with a good education and future plans.

But was she so certain and confident about herself, when applying for the iLEAD-training? What does she feel is essential in what she has learned during the three months of training? First we need to go a step backwards in time to see what sort of background she had before participating such an education.

From Family Home to the Training

Kriya's both parents are educated and open-minded towards their daughters making decisions of their own. Although, the daughters are reminded not to cross their limits. Her parents have always had a view that a girl also needs education. Through her parents Kriya came to know about iLEAD. Although, at first she wanted to work later, only after enjoying her freedom. She wanted to be with her friends and travel around Jaipur. Though, her parents encouraged her to participate the training and advised her to be educated, independent and work hard.

The iLEAD-Training Begins

At first Kriya felt very insecure about participating and going alone to the training. She went to the beautician course, because her friend was also in there. She was a bit afraid of going there alone. This was also the first time for her to travel alone outside the community. During iLEAD she gained in confidence and to move alone. Now she is having meetings with people and traveling to the training centre from far away just by herself. Kriya says that she gained the confidence gradually when she started to come out from her family's company.

The person

Name: Kriya
Age: 20
City: Jaipur
Family: mother, father,
two sisters and
two brothers



Education until:
12th grade
iLEAD-training:
Beautician course in April to July 2012
Employment:
Trainer in Aide et Action's iLEAD centre.
She also studies fashion design at the
university.
Salary: Rs. 7 100

To Employment and the Work

Kriya has worked for iLEAD from July 2012, since she finished her own iLEAD training. It's her first job outside home and she is very happy about it. She even got the salary she demanded! Now she has monthly salary of Rs. 9 100, which she gives to her family. Kriya is economically independent, but wishes to live with her family. She is about to buy a mobile phone of her choice with her earnings.

Kriya wants to continue working even after getting married. She will marry a boy, who lets her to continue working. Her family is not to make decision who she is about to marry, but she can decide with whom and when she will get married. She thinks it's very important for a woman to get an education, go to a work and be independent before marriage. This is what she tells to her students as well. Kriya thinks that if a girl is educated and independent, she can take a better care of her family and children.

What Kriya likes the most in her work is that she helps the community and she is able to make difference in someone else's life. She thinks that lives of girls in the training not only are changing, but have already changed in a very good way! Kriya's family is proud of her, as she is now independent and doing such a good work, which benefits the whole community.

Gossip Circles for Empowerment

Kriya also attended Gossip Circle for Empowerment group during iLEAD, which dealt with a topic of gender equality. These discussion group sessions have opened her eyes to new views and altered her way of thinking. When asked what Kriya would like to change in women's lives, she replies that there should be equality between genders in the family. She feels that this change will happen sooner or later and she wants to start it from her own family, when she gets married. For example, she wants to share all the household chores with her future husband.

Kriya wants every girl to be educated and aware of her rights. Only that way women will be heard in the families and they will have the authority, which mainly males have at the moment. Kriya feels that through education and raising awareness attitudes and the way of thinking will gradually change. If she is going to have children in the future, she is going to educate them first and only after this think about their marriages.

Empowered and Going Further on Equity

Initially Kriya's students used to come to the centre with somebody from their family accompanying them. Today they are coming just by themselves. But not only traveling alone, girls

" I want there to be equal power for women and men in the family. I want to start it from my own family when I get married."

have become more independent and aware of women's rights and brought conversation and debate to their families as well. The girls feel they do have strength and confidence to question what is wrong in their families, as well as demand their rights and discuss about these topics. A part of the change in them is just because Kriya has become the girls' role model and they pay close attention to her opinions and speech.

Indeed, she has formed a very good relationship with them. She has even convinced and persuaded some of these girls' families to send their daughter to the training as she has strongly been active in promoting iLEAD and its impact on her life. Until now Kriya has educated three iLEAD-training batches, which makes it around sixty trained girls.

Life changes little by little. With unknown steps and with some support and confidence to a direction one wants to go. By education and knowledge one is able to get new opportunities and possibilities in life and in livelihood – just as Kriya gained from iLEAD-training.

Kriya with her students in a cloth-design class.

