

# Education Builds the Future: Going Forward and Gaining in Self-Confidence via Dancing



Name: Asha Kusva  
Age: 20  
City: Vashi  
Family: Mother, father, two sisters, three brothers, sister-in-law and her two children and Asha  
Education until: 12<sup>th</sup>  
iLEAD-Training: Beautician  
iLEAD-Batch: Completed in August 2012  
Employment: Shringar Beauty Parlour  
Employed from: One week after completing iLEAD-training  
Salary: Rs. 4 000

“I was doing nothing and I didn't believe in myself” Asha describes her past lifestyle. Basically days went by when she was only sitting at home. Though, she was interested in beauty parlouring, but didn't know how to convert it to a profession. Then she learnt how to do it. How did that change happen?

Joining the iLEAD Asha learnt how to be a beautician, build up in self-certainty and now she dreams about forming a parlour of her own. The three-months-long education did a lot of good to her. After iLEAD Asha got employed and now she is going to work six days a week in a parlour. On Mondays she is on the weekly holiday.

## Daily Stitching and Thoughts on Marriage

Asha is also interested in tailoring and stitching. Before moving to Mumbai, Asha was born and lived in state of Uttar Pradesh, where tailoring is traditionally highly regarded. Asha stitches regularly at her home for example while watching the TV. She has even done some cloth-design of her own.

Brothers of Asha are selling vegetables, driving an autoriksha and one of the brothers is studying. They think Asha should get into

marriage, though they do admit they are proud of their sister's working and being so independent. Asha herself doesn't want to be married right away, but instead help her family. When asked, where she sees herself after five years, Asha replies “in my father-in-law's house” and laughs.

## Community's Response

In the neighbourhood some appreciate her working, while some are rather jealous that she is earning a salary of her own. For Asha earning the salary and doing a job she is interested in is the perfection of the work. Most of the people are proud of her, as they think she was previously only sitting at home.

People do respect and listen to her more nowadays – and she has told them about iLEAD and recommended it. “In iLEAD they build confidence into students” Asha tells. “What I have gained, you go there and gain the same!”

For now Asha takes every now and then some customers to her home. She has bought a little parlouring kit to herself to make some hair-styling and make-ups. The nearby community is poor, so Asha thinks she would have to open her own parlour to some other, richer area. Job opportunities would be better there.



*Asha shows one of her self-made stitching work.*

### Dance iLEAD, Dance!

Asha wasn't going out of her home and her self-esteem was low. Meeting an audience was way out of her imagination. Although, during iLEAD there was an event that gave her a lot of self-respect and took her a step ahead. It was the iLEAD's cultural festival day held on the independency day of year 2012. Before the cultural festival day the iLEAD-students had a course in dancing and learnt different dances. For the first time Asha learned about dancing.

Finally the Independency day came. Not ever

before ,but for the very first time in her life Asha danced and performed in public during the Cultural program. Her family was very happy about her – and the whole family had came to see the performance. They cheered and gave blessings to Asha that she is able to do so much in life!

So, while working and sharing her knowledge, Asha is making a difference already in her life – and as for the local community, she is giving them a rolemodel of independent, working woman, who doesn't just sit home, but also has certainty to meet people outside the home. She can convinces people and affect their opinions on women related issues in the community – to go forward.

**" Now she is teaching us what she learned in iLEAD."**

- Asha's little sister, 8<sup>th</sup> grade

