Unlocking young women’s economic potential through digital mentoring in India

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Flow

- Women’s participation in the labor force in India
- The potential of digital mentoring
- Findings from the Mentor To Go digital mentoring program
- Policy and practice recommendations
Economic growth, increasing access to education, yet...

Source: World Bank Development Indicators. See detailed references in the full policy brief at bit.ly/digitalmentoringpolicy
Triple impact

Skills deficit  Network gap  Restrictive gender norms
How do we tackle this triple threat at scale for 19 million young women currently in tertiary education?
A Digital Mentoring Policy and Practice Ecosystem
Rapidly increasing internet usage

Source: World Bank Development Indicators. See detailed references in the full policy brief at bit.ly/digitalmentoringpolicy
Digital mentoring can tackle these deficits

Increasing women’s labor force participation

- Skills exchange
  1:1 matching of mentors and mentees

- Networks of opportunity
  Efficient social capital exchange

- Role models of new gender norms
  Influencing traditional mindsets

Digital mentoring can tackle these deficits
Did digital mentoring reach young women?

Did it improve skills, give access to networks, and transform gender norms?
Data from the Mentor To Go program

- 7000+ mentee applications
- 4000+ mentor applications
- 1093 mentorships made
- 6 intermediate outcome measures
- 13 interviews with mentors & mentees
- 156 survey responses
Reaching young women across India

70% of all mentorships

Indian states and union territories represented in the mentee group:
Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar

19.8 years
Average age

89%
Come from a family with an annual income less than US$6,667

Degrees focused on in tertiary education:
- 64% Bachelors in Engineering
- 18% Bachelors in Commerce
- 10% Bachelors in Science
- 4% Bachelors in Arts
- 5% Other
Addressing the skills gap

- Career decisionmaking scale: Indecision
- Work readiness scale
- Generalized self-efficacy beliefs scale
- Difficulty in emotional regulation scale
- Self-esteem questionnaire
- Life satisfaction scale

Effect size (Cohen’s d)

0.00  0.20  0.40  0.60  0.80  1.00  1.20  1.40
“‘Roadmap To My Vision’ was my favorite session... because [it] explained really well how to plan, keep oneself disciplined...I was able to plan well after that and also test myself weekly on ... my weaknesses and strengths, and how I can improve.”
An experienced, gender-balanced network

41% Female
59% Male

33 years
Average age of a mentor applicant

Age distribution:
- 20–29 years: 41%
- 30–39 years: 37%
- 40–49 years: 16%
- 50–59 years: 4%
- 60+: 1%
With immense latent social capital

Career domains amongst mentor group

- Communication, media, journalism & social media: 1.56
- Chartered accountancy: 1.67
- Learning and development: 3.83
- Human resources: 4.32
- Banking and finance: 4.34
- Commerce (related careers): 4.62
- Development sector: 4.71
- Marketing: 4.76
- Entrepreneurship (not industry specific): 4.86
- Teaching: 8.12
- Other: 8.98
- Research: 1.43
- Psychology: 1.11
- Computer science—software: 18.76
- General management: 15.71
- Any engineering background: 11.24
One world of transformative gender norms

“And you feel that … you're sharing the dream. It is not her dream, it is our dream … when you see young women who want to change the world … if you can help them even a little bit to change the world positively, we need to.”

Mentor, 64, Delhi
Yet another parallel world of traditional gender norms

“I don't have much time. Because in India in general, most girls get married at 23 or 24. In my family sometimes 20, 21. But I've been given a chance from my parents that yes, I can do post-graduate studies, and after that I can get a job. And then I will have to get married. So I don’t have much time.”

Mentee, 19, Maharashtra
Championing the economic empowerment of every young woman

Ensure access to tertiary education
Championing the economic empowerment of every young women

Promote inclusive participation of young women in mentoring
A digital mentoring ecosystem
Championing the economic empowerment of every young woman

Deliver quality digital mentoring at scale
A digital mentoring ecosystem
Thank you!

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