SKILLS THAT EMPOWER: Measuring Attitudinal Change in the context of interventions in Bangladesh

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POPULATION COUNCIL
Ideas. Evidence. Impact.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

EMPOWERMENT
an important goal in adolescent girls programming → Remains elusive and unobserved in quantitative surveys

GOAL

Identify and understand the patterns of empowerment among early adolescent girls using data from BALIKA

1. Do distinct classes of empowerment emerge among girls in early adolescence, and if so, how are they characterized?

2. Are background characteristics of wealth, parental education, religion and marital status predictive of latent class membership?

3. Did the BALIKA project's different skill-building strategies influence girls' probability of belonging to a certain class of empowerment?

BANGLADESHI ASSOCIATION FOR LIFESKILL INCOME AND KNOWLEDGE FOR ADOLESCENTS (BALIKA)

- Cluster randomized controlled trial
- Three Intervention Strategies: education, gender, & livelihoods
- Qualitative and quantitative research involving 9000 girls aged 12-19 yrs
- Baseline survey in 2013: 11,609
- Endline survey in 2015: 9982

  (14.1% attrition from baseline to endline)

Significant impact on child marriage in all arms

Greater intervention impact on time use, work and learning outcome in gender arm

SYNTHESIZES THE RESULTS FROM A SERIES OF PAPERS THAT EXPLORED IMPACT OF THE INTERVENTIONS

Outcome Area	Reference	Gender	Education	Livelihoods
Workforce participation	Makino and Amin 2020	+		-+
Time Spent In School	Makino, Amin, Misunas and Psaki 2020	+		
Learning Outcome (Numeracy)	Amin, Saha and Haque (forthcoming)	+	+	-
Learning Outcome (English)	Amin, Saha and Haque (forthcoming)	+	+	
School retention/dropout	Amin, Saha and Haque, (forthcoming)	+	~	
Child Marriage	Amin et al 2018	+	+	+
Empowerment	Amin and Misunas (2020)	+	+	

MEASURING EMPOWERMENT

Mobility: Access to school, adolescent center or NGO, library, playground, friends house, market, or bank

Social Support: Access to a non-family member for advice or a network of friends

Participation in society: Affiliation with a community group; Active participation in sports; Engagement in outdoor play

Freedom from family domination: Ability to socialize with people from other religion(s); Ability to disagree with parents on life decisions

Access to information: Recently read a newspaper, watched tv, listened to the radio; Mobile phone ownership mobile, basic computer skills

MEASURING EMPOWERMENT (cont.)

Attitude towards gender roles

Disagrees with the following statements:

- ✓ *"A woman should always obey her husband"*
- ✓ *"A father is not responsible for feeding his baby"*
- ✓ *"A woman's most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family"*
- ✓ *"Women should not have the right to divorce"*
- ✓ *"It is a woman's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant"*
- ✓ *"A man should have the final say in all family matters"*
- ✓ *"Men should not share the work around the house with women."*

Attitudes towards violence

Disagrees with the following statements:

- ✓ *"There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten"*
- ✓ *"A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together"*
- ✓ *"If someone insults a man, he should defend reputation, with force if he has to"*
- ✓ *"To be a man, you need to be tough."*

STATISTICAL METHODS

Latent class analysis (LCA): technique used to identify unobserved or "hidden" subgroups in a population based on a chosen set of indicators

1. **Conducted LCA using data at baseline and endline**
   - Used indicators from 7 different constructs of empowerment
   - Focused on young adolescent girls who were aged 10-14 at baseline

2. **Used latent class regression (multivariate) analysis to assess predictors of class membership**
   - Background characteristics of the girl
     - ✓ Household wealth
     - ✓ Marital status
     - ✓ Religion
     - ✓ Parents' level of education
   - BALIKA study arm (4): Gender, Education, Livelihoods, Control

RESULTS: 3 CLASSES OF EMPOWERMENT AT BASELINE

Domains	Least empowered 32% of the sample	Mobile, socially active 31% of the sample	Socially progressive 37% of the sample
Mobility	limited access	high access to school, adolescent centers, the library, playground, market, and their friends' homes	limited access
Social Support	limited access	high access to a network of friends	limited access
Participation in society	low participation	high participation in team sports, outdoor games and groups	low participation
Freedom from family domination	most restricted	able to socialize without restrictions	able to disagree with parents
Access to information	most likely to own mobile phone	most likely to watch television	most likely to read the newspaper, listen to radio, and know how to use a computer
Attitude towards gender roles	high acceptance of traditional gender roles	high acceptance of traditional gender roles.	low acceptance of traditional gender roles
Attitudes towards violence	high acceptance of violence	high acceptance of violence	low acceptance of violence

RESULTS: 4 CLASSES OF EMPOWERMENT AT

Domains	Least empowered 17%	Mobile, socially active 24%	Socially progressive 28%	Most empowered 31%
Mobility	limited access	highest access to playground and their friends' homes	limited access	highest access to school, adolescent centers, the library, bank and market
Social Support	limited access	high access to a network of friends	limited access	highest access to a mentor and friends
Participation in society	low participation	highest participation in team sports and outdoor games	low participation	high participation
Freedom from family domination	most restricted	able to socialize without restrictions	able to disagree with parents	most able to socialize without restrictions & to disagree with parents
Access to information	likely to own mobile phone	limited access	limited access; likely to own mobile phone	most likely to read the newspaper, listen to radio, watch television, and know how to use a computer
Attitude towards gender roles	highest acceptance of traditional gender roles	high acceptance of traditional gender roles	low acceptance of traditional gender roles	lowest acceptance of traditional gender roles
Attitudes towards violence	highest acceptance of violence	high acceptance of violence	low acceptance of violence	lowest acceptance of violence

RESULTS: PREDICTORS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP

Re-cap of classes at baseline and endline

1. Least empowered (32% at baseline; 17% at endline)
2. Mobile + socially active (31% at baseline; 24% at endline)
3. Socially progressive (37% at baseline; 28% at endline)
4. Mobile + socially active + socially progressive - most empowered (31% at endline)
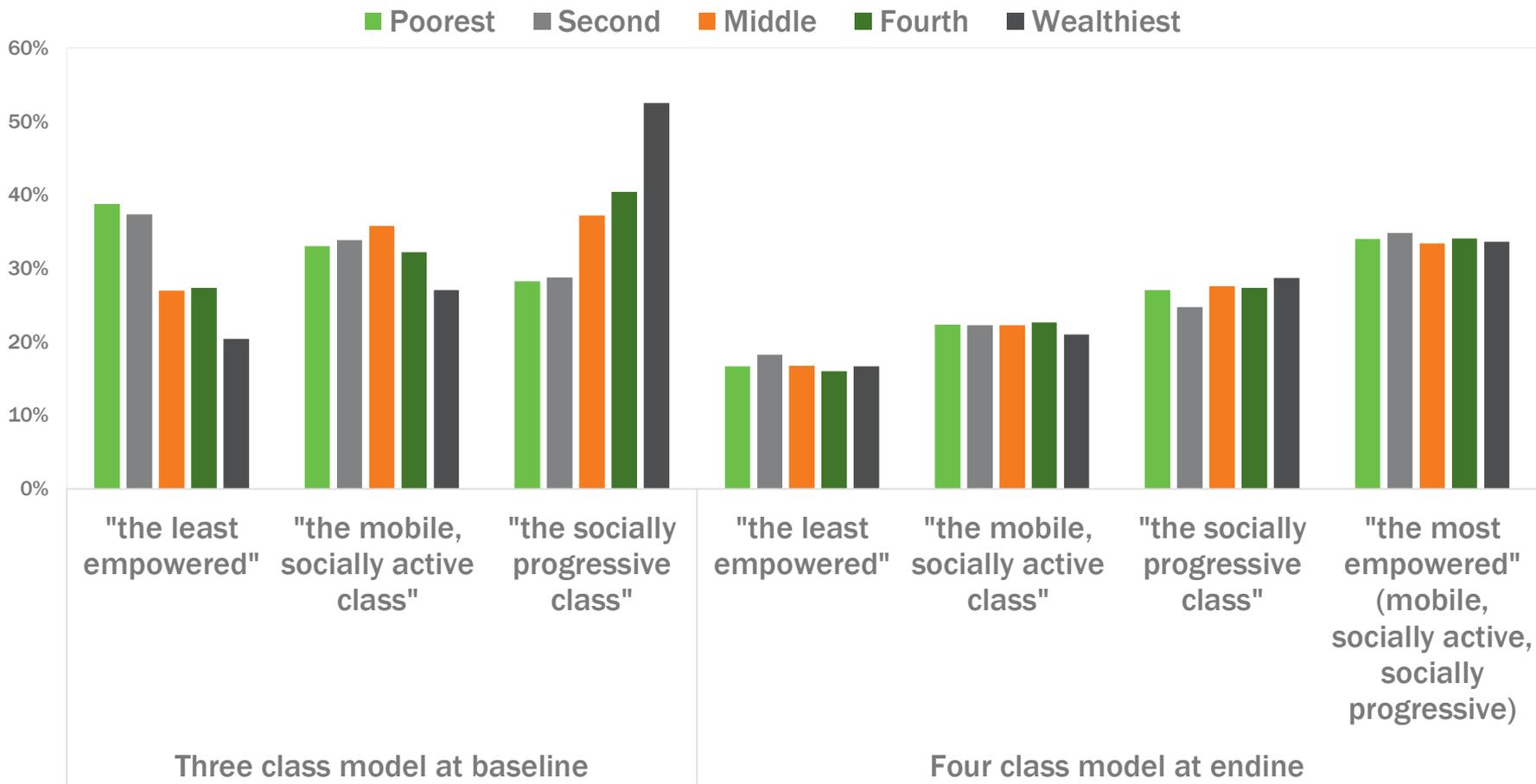
Predictors of class membership

- Household wealth was associated with class membership at baseline, but not endline

- Girls' marital status, religious affiliation, and parents' level of education were predictive of class membership at baseline and endline

- Study arm was predictive of class membership at endline

- Participants in the Gender and Education arms were significantly more likely to belong to the most empowered class

PREDICTORS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP: HOUSEHOLD WEALTH

Key takeaways
- Household wealth was associated with class membership at baseline but not at endline (p=0.96)
  - At baseline, girls from poorest and second poorest households had higher probability of belonging to *the least empowered class*
  - Probability of belonging to the *socially progressive class* was highest for girls in the top two wealthiest quintiles

Predicted latent class probabilities at baseline and endline, by wealth quintile
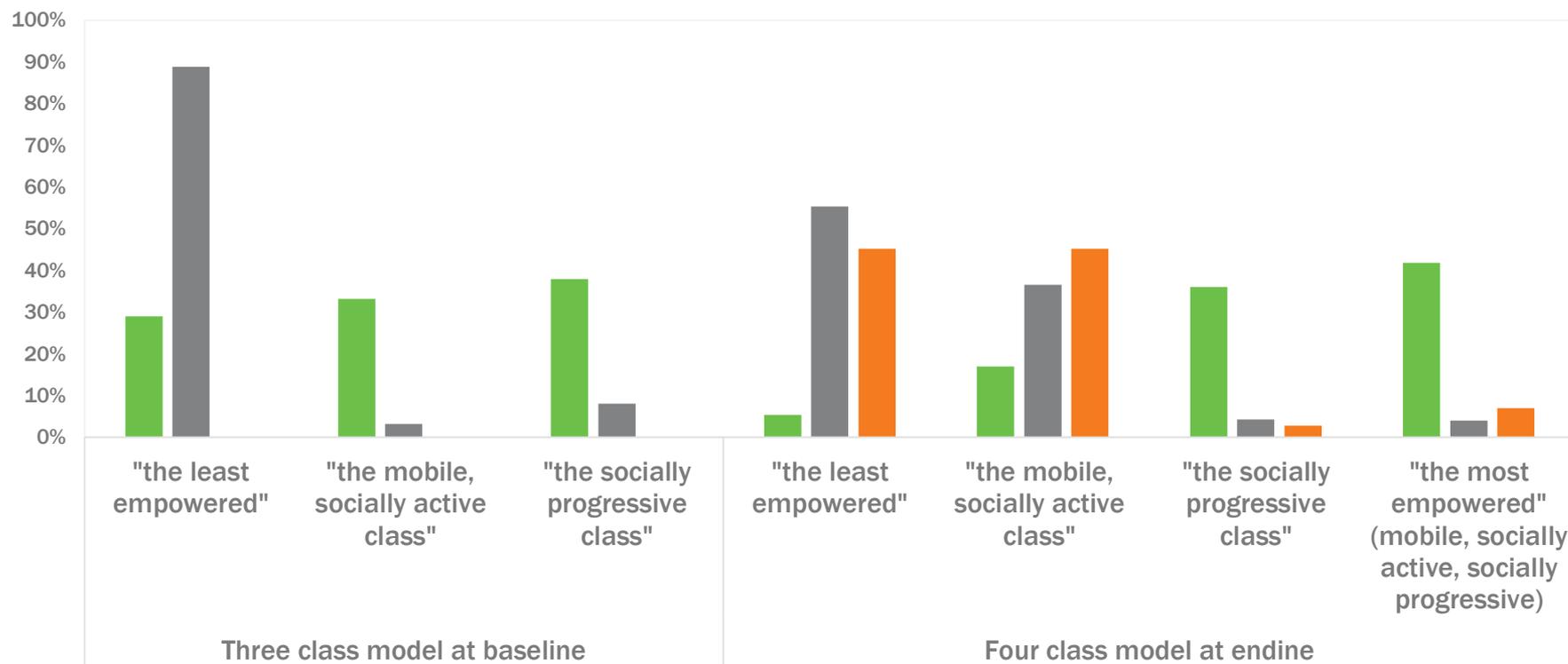
PREDICTORS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP: MARITAL STATUS

Key takeaways

- At baseline and endline, girls married by age 15 had a much higher probability of belonging to the *least empowered class* compared to their peers
  - At endline, girls married after age 15 were more likely to be in the mobile socially active class than girls married by 15—meaning girls who marry during early rather than later adolescence face greater restrictions in their movement and socialization

Predicted latent class probabilities at baseline and endline, by marital status
■ Never married ■ Married by age 15 ■ Married at or after age 15
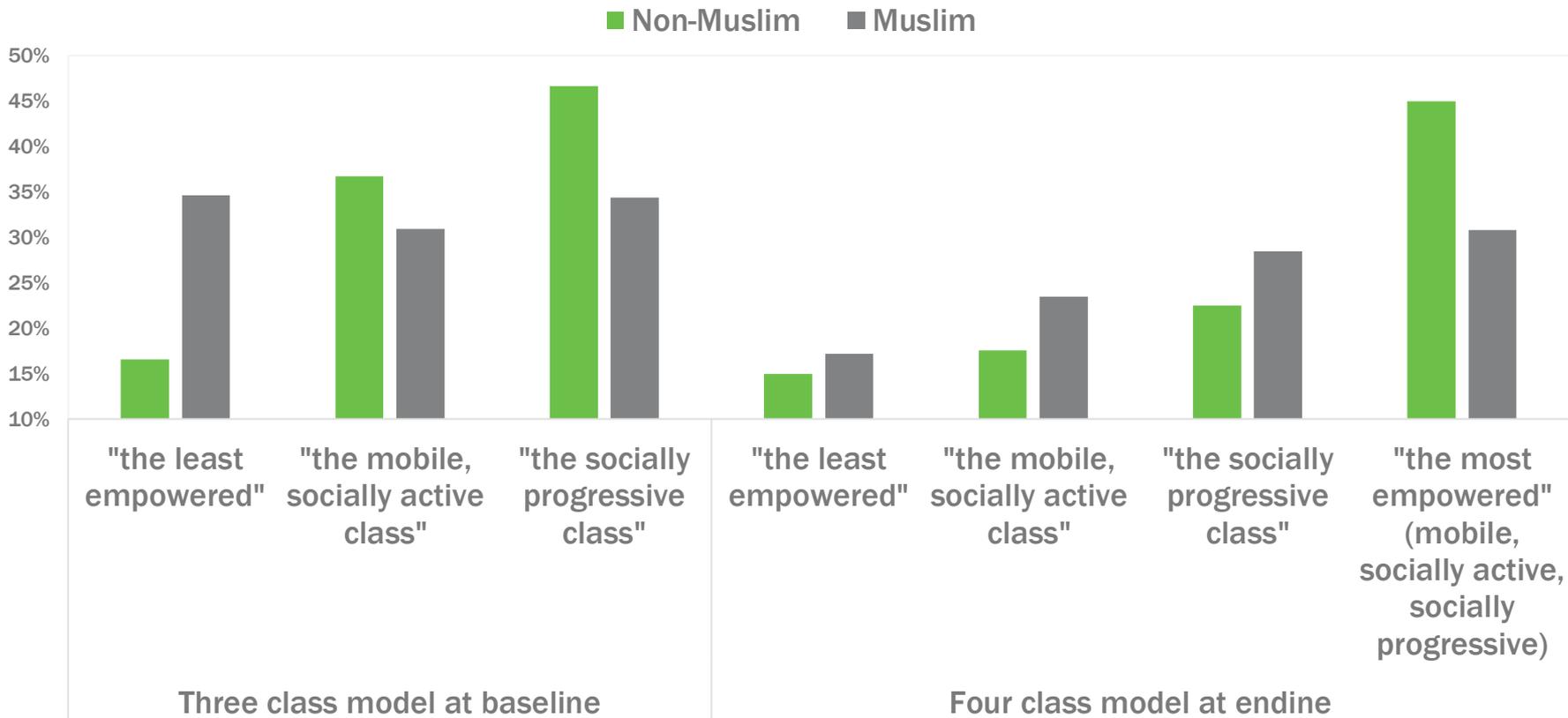
PREDICTORS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP: RELIGION

Key takeaways
- At baseline, Muslim girls had a higher probability of belonging to the *least empowered class*
- At endline, the probability of being in the *most empowered class* was higher for non-Muslims than for Muslims

Predicted latent class probabilities at baseline and endline, by religion

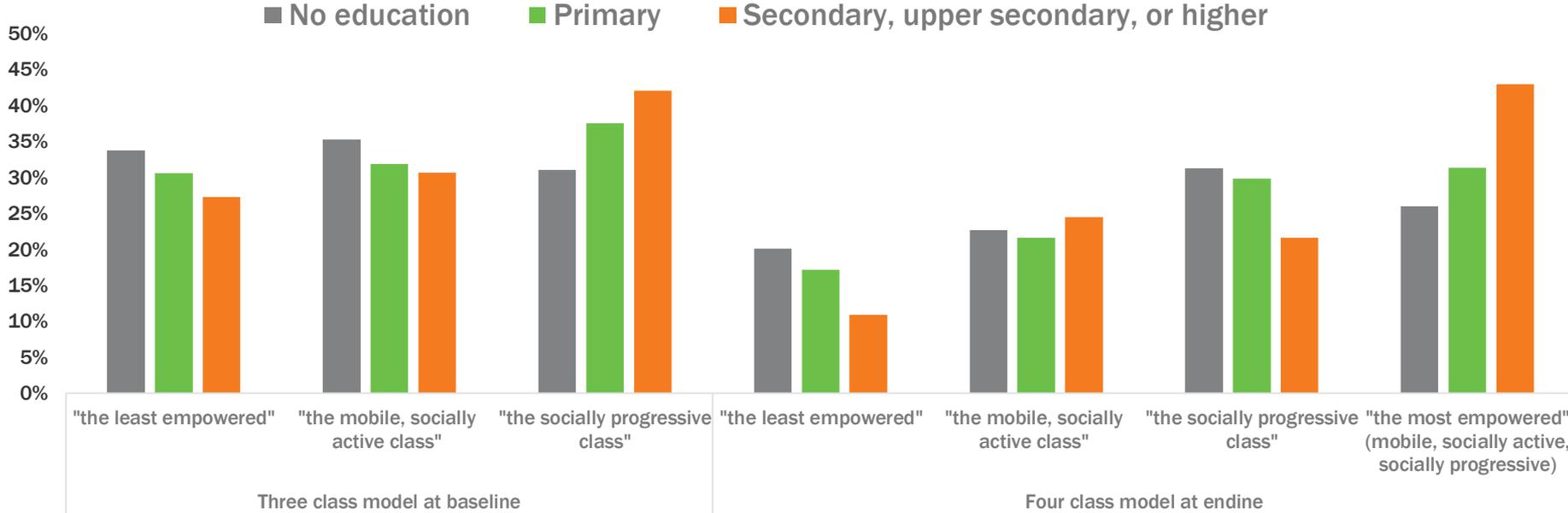# PREDICTORS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP: PARENTS' EDUCATION

Mother's level of education
- At baseline, girls whose mothers had completed secondary schooling or higher had a higher probability of belonging to the *socially progressive class*
- At endline, girls whose mothers had completed secondary schooling or above had a higher probability of belonging to the *most empowered class*

Father's level of education
- At baseline, girls whose fathers had had completed primary education had a higher probability of belonging to the *mobile, socially active class*
- At endline, probability for belonging to *the most empowered class* was lower for girls whose fathers had no education

Predicted latent class probabilities at baseline and endline, by mothers' education

PREDICTORS OF CLASS MEMBERSHIP: BALIKA STUDY ARM

Key takeaways

Study arm strongly associated with latent class membership in the four-class model at endline
- Gender and Education arms closely predictive of membership in the *most empowered class*
  - *C*ompared to respondents in the control arm, girls in the Gender Arm were 4 times more likely and those in the Education Arm, 3.5 times more likely to belong to *the most empowered class*
- A similar pattern for participants in the Livelihood arm, but the results were not significant

Predicted latent class probabilities at baseline and endline, by BALIKA study arm
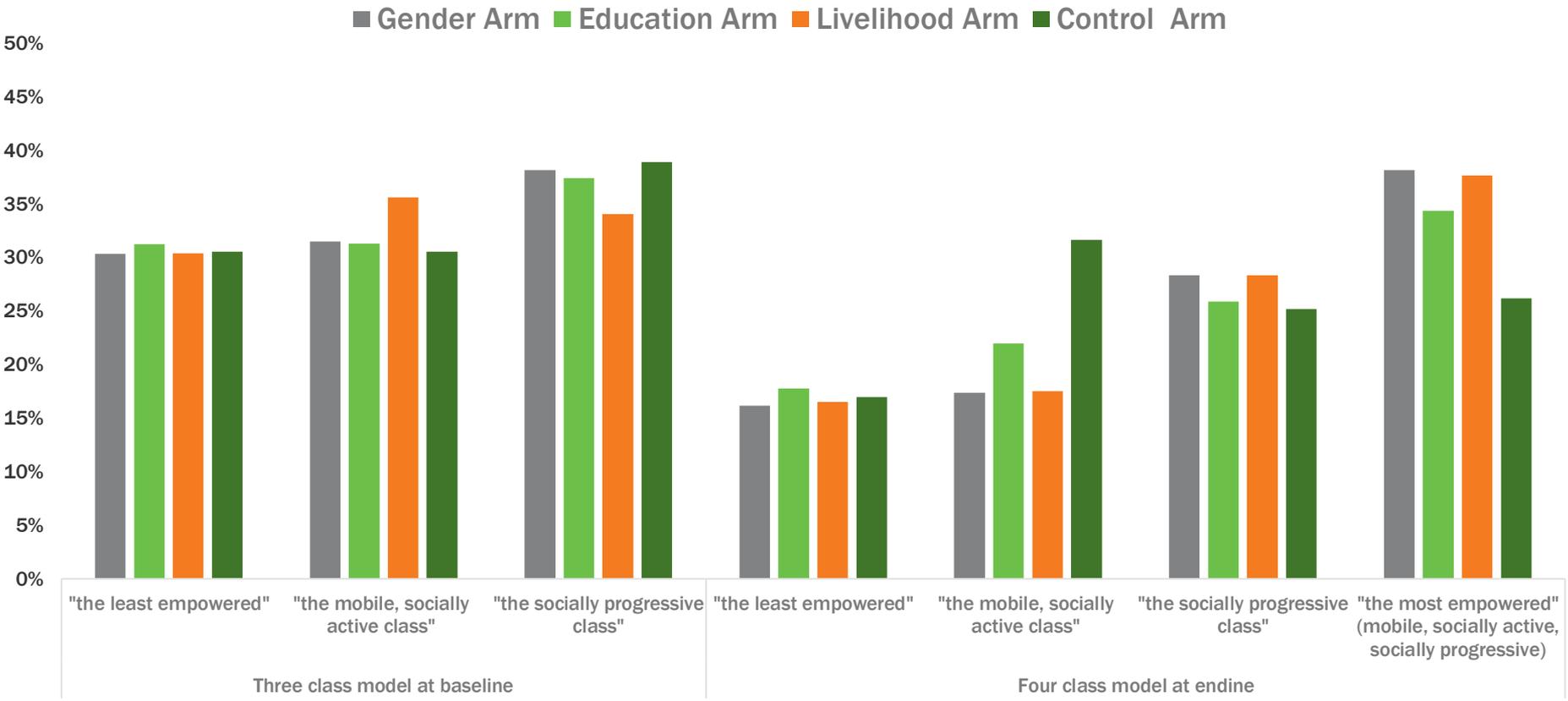
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

NEW CLASS OF GIRLS EMERGED IN ENDLINE

Socially empowered

➕

More progressive values

GENDER ARM ➡ Development of soft skills, i.e. negotiation, critical thinking ➡ Stronger relative impact on empowerment

EDUCATION ARM ➡ Tutoring in mathematics and English language skills ➡ Increased school competency, self-confidence, more progressive value

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Program works as an **equalizer**

Wealth is no longer significant predictor for empowerment in endline

Overall **empowerment improved**

Proportion of **least empowered group diminished from 32% to 17%**

Thank You