

Perceived Empowerment of Girl Students: A Study of KGBV in Bihar

Dr. Lakshmi Pandey* & Richa Kumari**

Associate Professor*, Research Scholar**

Univ. Dept. of Psychology, T.M. Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur- 812007, BIHAR (INDIA)

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ABSTRACT: : KGBV are a place where girls from disadvantaged sections can be transformed and secure their future life with effective skills. As per Rajya Sabha report 2018, there are 3707 KGBVs are sanctioned and 3697 are operational accommodating 3.78 lakh girl students in India. In the present study efforts were made to study the perceptions of different stakeholders about impact of KGBV on girls' education in Bihar. Three different stakeholders (15 teachers, 5 tutors and 5 wardens) were included in the sample frame. Responses were captured through interview schedule and questionnaire schedule in terms of activities of KGBV and its influence on students' educational development, which is developed by research in accordance with the national evaluation study of KGBV. Findings of the study reveals that overall positive perceptions were reflected by different functionaries of KGBV. Further, the study also revealed that KGBV students were ranked higher by teachers as compared to regular girl students in terms of classroom activities. The findings suggested additional academic support. At the same time, there was a lack of job satisfaction among teachers and other functionaries of KGBVs. Therefore, it can be concluded that the scheme KGBV has positive impact towards girl empowerment as well as, KGBV girls are performing well in classroom as compared to regular girl counterparts

Key Words: KGBV, Bihar, Teachers, Other functionaries and Perceptions

Introduction

Education of girls has been a high priority with the Government of India. To achieve actual development of the society, both men and women needs to be empowered in all the aspects. The national commitment to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the 6-14 years age group is now a Fundamental Right of every child in India after the passing of the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act in December, 2002. But it is seen that girl's education has suffered for many reasons in our society. Reaching out to the girl child is central to the efforts to universalize elementary education. SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (SSA) or "Education for All" programme recognizes that ensuring girls' education requires changes not only in the education system but also in societal norms and attitudes. To target pockets where girls education is lagging behind, the Government of India has launched two focused interventions for girls- the National Programme for Education for Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and the Kasturba Gandhi BalikaVidyalaya (KGBV) to reach out to girls from marginalized social groups in over 3282 educationally backward blocks in the country where the female rural literacy rate is below the national average and the gender gap in literacy is above the national average.

The Kasturba Gandhi BalikaVidyalaya (KGBV) scheme was launched by the GOI in August, 2004 for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC, Minority and other BPL communities in difficult areas. The scheme is being implemented in EBBs of the country where the female rural literacy rate is below the national average and gender gap in literacy is above the national average. The scheme provides for a minimum reservation of 75% of the seats for girls belonging to SC, ST, OBC or minority communities and priority for the remaining 25%, is accorded to girls from families below poverty line.

The scheme of the KGBV ran as a separate scheme but in harmony with the SSA, NPEGEL and MahilaSamakhya (MS) for the first two years. However, the KGBV has been merged with SSA programme as a separate component of that programme during the **XIth** Five Year plan since 1st April, 2007. The KGBV validates the point that both the community and girls are keen on quality education. The KGBV programme is primarily meant to bring out-of-school girls of 11+ age and girls from scattered habitations back into formal schooling. In exceptional cases girls who are in difficult circumstances and are unable to complete primary education would also be enrolled in the KGBVs. As per Rajya Sabha report, 2018, there are 3707 KGBVs are sanctioned and 3697 are operational accommodating 3.78 lakh girl students in India (GoI, 2018). It was decided to open KGBV in some blocks apart from EBBs where there is large concentration of minority groups. Most of the states numbers of KGBVs are equal to or more than the number of EBBs except Assam,

Karnataka and Punjab where the number of KGBVs are less than the EBBs. Initially, KGBVs are to be opened in rented or available government buildings. Later on suitable buildings can be constructed or accommodate KGBV. Three models are prescribed for residential schools.

- A. Model I: Schools with hostel for 100 girls.
- B. Model II: Schools with hostel for 50 girls.
- C. Model III: Hostels in existing schools for 50 girls.

By June 2014, there are 3609 KGBV sanctioned and 3573 are operational in which, 2352 model I KGBVs, 194 Model 2 KGBV and 1063 Model III KGBVs (GOI,2013). Some of the states adopted single models, while in other states more than one type of KGBVs are being run. In 11 states there is only Model I KGBV. As against this in 9 states there are only Model III KGBVs. Meghalaya is the only states where all the KGBVs are of Model II and in Gujarat all the three Models are available. However, the number of students admitted in a school is not as per the prescribed norm. Some states have fixed their own norms for the number of students. For example, in Bihar and Odisha though all the schools are of Model III but, admit 100 students. In Bihar total 535 KGBVs are sanctioned, in which 529 are operational and they are managed by-SSA (344), NGO (78) and MS (107). Linkage between Model III and the formal school is weak. While the girls go to the formal school; there are no functional linkage and there is only structural linkage and the KGBV works like a hostel. Total no of girls enrolled in Bihar is 47311 in which SC, ST, OBC, Minority and BPL/other were respectively 20937 (44.25%), 2955 (6.25%), 14774 (31.23%), 6371(13.47%) and 2274(4.81%). (Source: TSG, SSA, (Ed CHL) Dec., 2013).

The literature indicates that although various facilities have been provided in the KGBVs. The additional academic support, a stress free environment, specific skill training and vocational skill education is provided to these girls and it is expected that the girls will excel in at least one of the skills. Special capacity building activities such as historical and scientific visits, science fairs, quiz and competition have been also arranged for these girls. In some states, the team reported that most of the KGBV girls appear to perform better in the Government schools (Mode 3), than their counterparts.

Moreover, empowerment is the procedure of facilitate or authorizing individuals to think critically, take action and control work in own affairs. It is a process by which a person can gain control over his desired goals and the situation of ones lives. Empowerment refers to control over resources like physical, human, intellectual and financial and over ideology such as beliefs, values and attitudes (Baltiwalla, 1994). It is not only a feelings of higher extrinsic control, but also improve intrinsic capacity, better self-confidence as well as internal transformation of one's consciousness that facilitates one to prevail over external barriers to accessing resources or changing traditional ideology (Aniketsml, Pinto, 2001). Empowerment means a psychological feelings of personal control and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights. There are some ways like Sports, dance, music, computer education, and other vocational education like embroidery, stitching that help girls to increase self-confidence and self-esteem.

Literature on empowerment and education offers a wide range of definitions which draw out different facets of the relationship. Kabeer (1999) identifies the importance of measuring and categorizing empowerment and distinguishes between facets associated with resources, women's agency and achievements or outcomes. Stromquist (2002) identifies four dimensions of empowerment associated with education- the cognitive (critical understanding of realities), psychological (self-esteem), political (awareness of inequalities and capacity to mobilize) and economic (capacity to generate income).

It is well documented that the assessment has a greater influence in the field of quality education as well as teaching and learning process. It is widely understood and recognized that teachers are a vital component of educational process. Teachers interact directly with students and are responsible for implementing the curriculum in the classrooms. Teacher's perception about students learning achievement and overall personality development (cognitive and non-cognitive traits) has recently emphasized as an effective tool for assessment in many surveys. However, teacher's perception not merely related to the student's academic activities but it also related to his socio-emotional and personal characteristics. These conceptions are not necessarily explicit, but can presumably influence teacher's judgement of student's academic abilities and achievement in a significant ways, and by this means affect their expectations and assessment of student (Bennett et al., 1993). Bonvin and Genoud (2006) found in his study that a significant relationship between teacher's perception of student's maturity, motivation and interest as well as academic expectations. But not significant perceptions were found in the case of behavioural predictions such as aggression and disruptive behavior. Similar findings were noted by Hecht and Greenfield, (2002). Recently, Irshad et al., (2019) conducted a study in Kashmir Division and found that the teachers of KGBV in Kashmir Division have good and highly positive perceptions towards KGBV scheme. Das (2013) and Pandey (2015)

also revealed that KGBVs are performing well in development of life skills among girls and the teaching learning facilities were satisfactory.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study is to capture the perceptions of different stakeholders regarding the effect of KGBV on Girls’ retention, education and personality. In addition, to explore the observation of teachers during classroom about KGBV students as compared to regular girl students.

Research questions

Following research questions are framed for empirical investigation-

1. What are the perceptions of different stakeholders of KGBV regarding Girls’ retention, education, personality and impact of KGBV on girl students?
2. What are the observation of teachers during classroom about KGBV students as compared to regular girl students?

Methodology

Sample. A multistage sample design (MSD) was employed to cover units at different levels. At the first stage one district was selected the basis of available universe at district education office in a district of Bihar. Selected schools were primary with upper primary and secondary schools. At the second stage about 05 KGBVs and 05 government schools from rural areas were identified. At the final stage about 15 teacher of the sampled school, 05 wardens and 05 trainers/ tutor from KGBV were selected for the study.

Tools

- **Interview Schedule:** This interview includes teachers, wardens, and tutors gather information regarding objectives of KGBVs.
- **Questionnaire Schedule:** It was developed by researched based on national evaluation report of KGBV. This schedule includes questions related to perceptions about impact of KGBV on girl students and respondents were different stakeholders of KGBVs.

Results and Discussion

Results were analyzed in the light of objectives and research questions which guided the study. Perceptions of different functionaries about impact of KGBV as well as teachers observation during classroom were analyzed using simple percentage score. Table 1 presents the summary of the findings about perceptions of impact of KGBV.

Table 1: Perceptions of different functionaries about impact of KGBV (in per cent)

Sl. No	Items	Teachers’ Responses (yes in %)	Other Stakeholders Responses (Yes in %)	Discrepancies
1	Are you satisfied with the salary against your work-load?	46.67	60	13.33
2	Would you wish to continue with this job in future?	66.67	70	3.33
3	Are these girls intellectually capable of entering into secondary education?	86.67	90	3.33
4	Do you feel that the scheme helps in girl’s education and retention?	100	100	0
5	Do you feel that the scheme make empowered to girl students?	93.33	100	6.67
6	Do you think that the infrastructure facilities in KGBVs are sufficient?	73.33	70.00	3.33
7	Do you feel that the academic progress among girls are satisfactory?	80.00	80.00	0
8	Do you think that the extension of KGBV can be done up to secondary / higher secondary level?	100	100	0
9	Do you have any problem regarding activities of KGBV?	13.33	20	6.67
10	Has the KGBV being observed by CRCC?	100	100	0
11	Are vocational and life skills education provided to girls?	90	100	10

The table1 covers altogether 11 variables under study. About 47 per cent teachers and 60 per cent other functionaries were satisfied with their job in KGBV. More than 66 per cent teachers and 70 per cent other functionaries wish to continue with this job. Further, more than 86 percent teachers and 90 per cent other functionaries think that these girls are capable of entering in to secondary education. The results also shows that 100 per cent respondents think that the scheme has positive influence about girls' education and retention and they think that the scheme can be extended up to secondary/ higher secondary level. About 93 per cent respondents feel that the scheme has positive impact about girls' empowerment. Moreover, only 13 per cent and 20 per cent respondents reported that there are problems indicating the fact that there are no problems regarding activities of KGBV.Overall, positive perceptions were noted by respondents regarding impact of KGBV on girl students.

Table 2: Teachers' perception regarding classroom observation (in per cent)

Sl. No.	Variable	KGBV students	Regular students	Gaps
1	Classwork done	66.67	53.33	13.34
2	Homework done	80	46.67	33.33
3	Attendance	93.33	53.33	40.0
4	Ask questions during classes	13.33	13.33	0
5	Silent/confusion	86.67	86.67	0
6	Enthusiastic of learning	80	40.00	40.0
7	Student initiatives	80	53.33	26.67

Table 2 records the summary of classroom observation of teachers about KGBV students as compared with regular girl students. Altogether 7 variable were covered in table 2 in which higher gaps were reflected in the case of homework done (33 per cent), attendance (40 per cent) and enthusiastic of learning (40 per cent). Further, teachers also ranked KGBV girls higher on classwork done (66.67 per cent), and student initiatives (80 per cent). Overall, KGBV girls are performing well in classroom as compared to regular girl counterparts.

Conclusion

The findings are in complete accord with the earlier findings (Irshad,2019; Pandey, 2015; Das, 2013, Girija, 2007; Susmapande&Vijayanti, 2007 and Bhattacharya, 2007). KGBV are a place where girls from disadvantaged sections can be transformed and secure their future life with effective skills. The findings suggested additional educational support. At the same time, there was a lack of job satisfaction among teachers and other functionaries of KGBVs. In the case of KGBV, teachers and other functionaries are play dual role - tutors as well as parents. If teachers and other functionaries are unhappy and dissatisfied with their job, how can one imagine their dedication to job? On the other hand, KGBVs are a better opportunities for girls from disadvantaged sections, that secure girl's life by making them self-reliant, confident and empowered. Therefore, it can be concluded that the scheme KGBV has positive impact towards girl empowerment as well as, KGBV girls are performing well in classroom as compared to regular girl counterparts.

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