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RESEARCH ARTICLE

EMPOWERMENT OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS: PERSPECTIVE OF KANYASHREE PRAKALPA

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ABSTRACT

It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing. So for the development of a nation women should be educated with men. In Atharva Veda it is mentioned that Just as boys acquire sound knowledge and education by the practice of Brahmacharya, so should girls. So thoughts of girls empowerment is coming from ancient age. Several steps were taken with the change of era. As a result sati system was abolished, the scope of formal education system of girls has expanded but till now child marriage, sexual abuse of minor girls, child labour, trafficking, other forms of exploitation are existing in India. Present scenario of West Bengal is a matter of importance regarding the prevalence of child marriage. Proper education is needed for eradicating such type of evil practices in our society. After independence several measures are taken for proper education of girl child. In 2013, government of West Bengal launched a conditional cash transfer scheme, Kanyashree Prakalpa for incentivizing adolescent girls to complete secondary and higher secondary education, or equivalent in technical or vocational streams and to disincentivising marriage till at least the age of 18, the legal age of marriage. Increased rate of sanctioned Kanyashree application from 2013-2014 session to till date indicates the growth of enrolment of girls in formal education field. On the other hand Kanyashree girls campaign the evil effect of child marriage and also have interrupted child marriage forcefully with the help of police, BDO, NGO and others. Impact of this scheme enhances the attitude towards education and self power, self esteem of adolescent girl child which have a positive influence for the development our society. This scheme protects & empowers all adolescent girls by creating an enable environment for their participation and meaningful contribution to the society. It has immense potential to uplift the state by empowering girl child to an inclusive growth in the long run with sustainable development. If girls are allowed to be girls, then everybody wins. So Kanyashree Prakalpa is not just a social welfare scheme, it is future.

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INTRODUCTION

A nation can move to progress only by utilizing its all human resources. It may possible only when women in a society may give equal opportunity as their male counterpart in every aspect of social life. So to achieve a sustainable development in the society, women empowerment is essential. More than 3000 years ago, during Vedic period, they shared an equal status with men in all aspects of life and used to enjoy a kind of liberty. It began to decline since 500 B.C. In medieval period the status of Indian women further deteriorated. At that time a girl child should be married before reaching her age of 16. During the period of East India Company, many social reformers such as Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Jyotiba Phule and others had struggled for the improvement of status of woman in Indian society. In 1847, Peary Charan Sarkar had firstly started private girls' school in Calcutta (Sarkar, 2018).

After independence in India a special attention is given in the constitution to prevent gender discrimination. Till now the evil practices is continuing. To prevent child marriage and to ensure their education at least age of 18, the Government of West Bengal launched a conditional cash transfer scheme, "Kanyashree Prakalpa" in 2013. The main objective of this scheme is to reinforce formal education at least age of 18 without marriage. Sen (2016) in his study mentioned that due to implementation of free and universal elementary education, progress in enrollment and completion of study has been noticed in the elementary education but as the secondary education is not free, maximum girl child of the slum area stop their study after elementary education and due to poverty child marriage occurred. Kanyashree Project plays vital role in the development of post elementary education of slum girl's as well as decreasing of child marriage and it also promotes the social power and self-esteem of girls. Ghara & Roy (2017) in their study mentioned that Kanyashree Prakalpa not only minimizes the tendency of girl students to drop out from schools at early age, at the same time it will make a positive impact on the prevention of early marriage of girl child.

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Das (2014) in his study examined that this scheme motives girls of poor families to pursue higher study and protect them from the harmful social norms, preventing forced child marriage. Das (2014) in his study mentioned that this social welfare scheme not only ensures the basic literacy to girl child in our state, it would also be an effective tool to attain the inclusive growth through sustainable development. Reviews of related studies indicates that Kanyashree Prakalpa has a positive impact in our society through reduced rate of drop out and child marriage.

As few years had gone after implementation of this scheme, it is the time to explore the ratio of girls compared to boys in reference to empowerment for the development of our society after implementation of this scheme. In this paper present researcher has been tried to find out how Kanyashree Prakalpa empowered adolescent girl students and also the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa to eradicate the evil practices in our society.

METHODS

This study is exploratory in nature. Investigator has been used secondary data of relevant reports. While analysis the effect of Kanyashree Prakalpa reports from news paper, news channel etc. are under taken.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

International Perspectives of Education for Girl Child: Gender equality demands appropriate schooling environments, practices free of discrimination and equal opportunities for boys and girls to realize their potential. Gender disparity patterns vary between countries in different income groups. Among low income countries, disparities are commonly at the expense of girls. UNESCO aimed to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005. By 2015 only 70% of countries will have reached the goal. To eradicate gender-based discrimination state should take necessary effort (UNESCO, 2014).

National Perspectives: Since independence the Indian Government has been trying to improve the status of girl children. Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women (NPE 1986). Special Financial Incentive Schemes for the Girl Child in India has been implemented which have been mentioned in the following table. Few more scheme like Balika Samriddhi Yozana (BSY), Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) ETC. are continuing to provide education of girls. But the concept of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) first implemented through Kanyashree scheme in West Bengal. CCT seeks to provide short-term income support and at the same time promote long-term behavioural changes, through provision of financial incentives to poor families following the fulfillment of certain verifiable conditions (Sen, 2009). The optimum implementation of a CCT consequently requires defining a targeting and calibration rule that maximizes the gain in human capital subject to (1) confining eligibility to the poor, (2) meeting the project’s budget constraint, and (3) enforcing the condition of school attendance and use of health facilities (Sadoulet & Janvry, 2004).

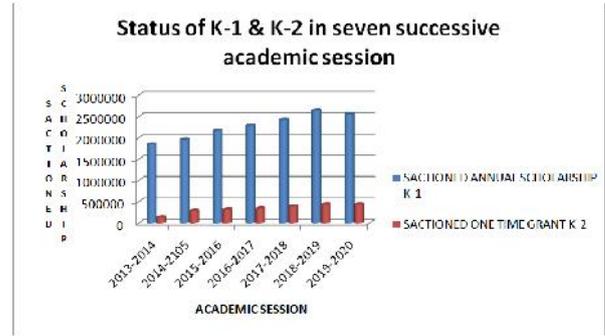


Fig.1. Graph of Kanyashree Prakalpa beneficiaries (both K-1 & K-2) in seven successive academic Session

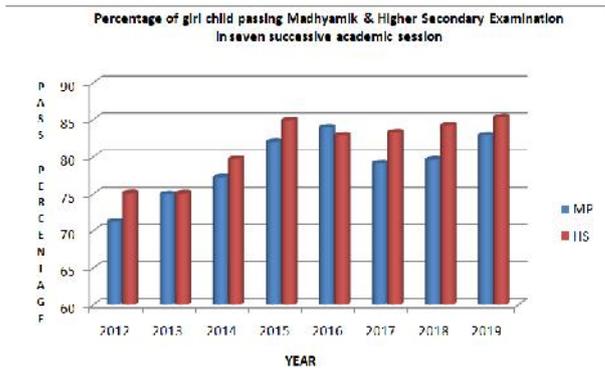


Fig.2. Percentage of girl child passing Madhyamik and Higher Secondary Examination in seven successive academic session

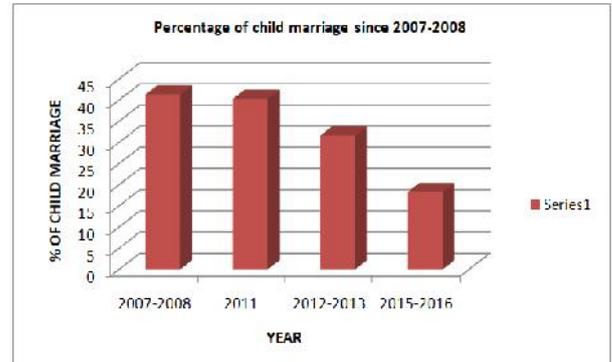


Fig. 3. Percentage of child marriage

Implementation effect of Kanyashree Prakalpa in West Bengal indicates the upliftment girls social status. The data computed in the following tables indicate the gradual achievement of this scheme. Table 1 indicates that at present 17,854 institutes provides facilities of accessing Kanyashree grant to 64,34,679 adolescent girl students. From table 2 it is quite clear that beneficiaries of accessing K-1 grant (annual scholarship of Rs.- 750/-, previously it was Rs.- 500/-) and K-2 grant (one time grant of Rs.- 25000/-) are gradually increasing since 2013-2014 academic session to latest academic session. Fig. 1 represents the increased rate of Kanyashree Prakalpa beneficiaries. Accessing K-1 grant indicates the steady enhancement of enrolment of girls and their retention in secondary and higher secondary section. On the other hand accessing K-2 grant indicates the high rate of enrolment of girls in higher education sector by delaying their marriage and successful completion of higher secondary level of education

Name of the Scheme	Year of initiation	Implementing Agency	Terminal benefit		Financial Institution
			Age	Amount	
Dhan Lakshmi Scheme	2008	Dept. of Women and Child Development, GOI	18 years	1 lakh	Nationalized Bank/Post Office
Bhagyalakshmi Scheme (Karnataka)	2006	Dept. of Women and Child Development	18 years	Rs. 1,00,097	LIC
Ladli Lakshmi Yojana (MP)	2006	Dept. of Women and Child Development	18 years	Rs 1,18,300	Post Office (NSC)
Girl Child Protection Scheme (AP) (New)	2005	Dept. of Women Development and Child Welfare	20 years	1 lakh for one girl child and (in case of two girl children) Rs. 30,000 for each	LIC
Ladli Scheme (Haryana)	2005	Dept. of Women and Child Development	18 years	Rs 96,000	LIC
Rajalakshmi Scheme (Discontinued)	1992	Dept. of Medical, Health and Family Welfare	20 years	Rs 21,000	UTI
Balika Samridhi Yojana	1997	Dept. of Women and Child Development	18 years	Rs. 6,700 (with maximum rate of interest)	Nationalized Bank/Post Office
Ladli Scheme (Delhi)	2008	Dept. of Women and Children Development	18 years	Rs 1,00,000	SBI/SBIL
Balri Rakshak Yojana (Punjab)	2005	Dept. of Health and Family Welfare	18 years	1 lakh	Nationalized Bank/Post Office
Mukhya Mantri Kanya Suraksha Yojana	2008	Social Welfare Department/ State Women Development Corporation	18 years	Rs. 18,000	UTI Children's Career Plan
Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana	2007	Social Welfare Department	18 years	Rs. 5,000	Bank
Kunwarbainu Mameru scheme	1995	Social Justice and Empowerment Department	At marriage	Rs. 5,000	Bank
Indira Gandhi Balika Suraksha Yojana	2007	Health and Family Welfare Department	At marriage or maturity	Rs. 25,000 to one girl child and Rs. 20,000 to both in case of two girl children	Bank
Mukhya Mantri Kanyadan Yojana	2006	Dept. of Social Justice	At marriage	Goods worth of Rs. 9000	-----

Table 1. Overall beneficiaries (Up to September, 2019)

Registered Institution	Enrolled Application	Sanctioned Applications	Unique Beneficiaries
17,854	1,85,88,791	1,82,92,840	64,34,679

Table 2. Status of K-1 & K-2 in seven successive academic session

SESSION	SACTIONED ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP K-1	SACTIONED ONE TIME GRANT K-2
2013-2014	18,44,990	1,38,965
2014-2015	19,63,982	2,95,384
2015-2016	21,71,439	3,29,348
2016-2017	22,89,220	3,44,825
2017-2018	24,23,763	3,92,662
2018-2019	26,47,267	4,42,914
2019-2020	25,61,974	4,44,209

Source: https://wbkanyashree.gov.in/kp_4.0/index.php

Table 3. Percentage of girl child passing Madhyamik & Higher Secondary Examination in seven successive academic session

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
% of girls passed MP	71.22	74.95	77.23	81.99	83.93	79.12	79.62	82.87
% of girls passed HS	75.10	75.08	79.71	84.88	82.86	83.26	84.20	85.30

Source: https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics/2012%20Exam_Publication.pdf & <https://sites.google.com/site/10thboardresults/> & <https://www.hindustantimes.com/education/wbse-class-10th-madhyamik-result-2019-declared-86-07-students-pass-west-bengal-board-ssc-exam-check-details-here/story-jLJDSocCF9RvFIPMGqxJOH.html> & https://www.google.com/search?ei=pth0XpzbC5Pb9QPano-gCg&q=west+ bengal+ council+of+high her+ secondary+education+result+percentage+since+2014&oq=west+bengal+council+of+high r+secondary+ education+result+percentage+since+2014&gs_l=psy-ab.3...1780.2727...5780...0.2..0.238.468.2-2.....0...1..gws-wiz.....0i71.-mANqLcJfFQ&ved=0ahUKewicxf2pqnoAhWTbX0KHVrPA6QQ4dUDCA&uact=5

Table 4. Child Marriage Statistics

Year	Women getting marriage before 18 years of age (%)
2007- 2008 (DLSH-3)	41.3
2011 (CENSUS-2011)	40.27
2012-2013 (DLSH-4)	31.6
2015-2016 (NFHS-4)	18.3

Table 3 represents the passed Madhyamik and Higher Secondary girl students since 2012 to 2019. Statistics indicates the growing percentage of passed female candidates in both Madhyamik and Higher Secondary since 2013 (launching year of Kanyashree Prakalpa). It is almost 8% higher in Madhyamik and almost 10% higher in Higher Secondary than in 2019 from the year 2013. Strikingly the rate of enrollment of girl child boosted from 2013-2014 onwards, which may be due to effective implementation of Kanyashree Prakalpa. Figure 2 represents the percentage of girl child passing both Madhyamik and Higher Secondary examination grows day by day since 2013 which justify the positive impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa. In the year of 2017 & 2018 it reduced little bit, may be due to syllabus change or changed pattern of question paper etc. This growing scenario identifies the tendency to continue education and professional training, identities which may - or may not - include marriage. Table 4 represents the rapid decrease of child marriage rate after 2013, launching year of Kanyashree Prakalpa. It indicates that effective implementation of Kanyashree Prakalpa has reinforced the positive impact of increased education and delayed marriages. Fig. 3 represents the graphical representation of child marriage. In 2015 the rate is extremely low than previous year. This may be due to effective implementation of Kanyashree scheme.

Conclusion

WHO identified adolescence as the period of preparation for adulthood during which several key developmental experiences occur like acquiring social skills and economic independence, development of identity etc. Steady enhancement of girls pass percentage in both secondary and higher secondary level from 2012-2013 session to onwards ensured school enrollment, school attendance and retention in school. Steady increment of K-2 beneficiaries indicates large number of girls are enrolled in higher education delaying their marriage which denotes the positive impact of attitude towards higher education of girls. Field survey revealed that girls are interested in various vocational, technical and sport courses available for this age group to become self-dependent. Early marriage rate falls rapidly in 2015-2016, this may be the effective implementation of K-2. Enrolled girls in Kanyashree Prakalpa grows day by day. They feel enormously that it is not just the prospect of receiving money it is a lifeline that has enabled them to continue their education. Not only that it has created a positive social perception and ambience so that they can lead a meaningful life. They restrict child marriage with the help of BDO, Police, NGOs ("Kanyashree clube samil", 2017). Kanyashree scheme is carrying the message to reinforce the positive impact of increased education and delayed marriage at least up to age of 18, and to enhance the social power, self-esteem of girls through targeted behavior change and public advocacy communication strategy ("Atharor age bie noy", 2018). So Kanyashree Prakalpa is not only a social welfare scheme, it is future.

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