

# Analysis of Kanyashree Prakalpa with Survey Data

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## Abstract

In India, several issues restrict a girl child to participate in an education system and one of the severe issues is child marriage. Though child marriage adversely affects both boys and girls, the practice has more adverse consequences for girls than for boys. Realizing the fact that reduction of child marriage would not be possible unless it included education as a gateway, the West Bengal Government introduced Kanyashree Prakalpa as a means of inclusive development and women empowerment. This paper studies the impact of a conditional cash transfer program called Kanyashree Prakalpa (KP) in the Indian state of West Bengal that aimed to improve the status and wellbeing of girls by reducing incidence of child marriage and increasing the secondary or higher education of girls till at least 18 years of age using secondary data. The main objectives of this paper is to analyse about the distribution pattern of grant and the effectiveness of this policy. Using different survey data, the present study is conducted to assess the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on the girl child in West Bengal. The paper also tries to highlight some social issues related to this policy. The study reveals that this policy has made success in reducing the child marriage as the percentage of drop out falls and number of girl child having formal education increases in the state throughout the year.

**Keywords:** Kanyashree, education, child marriage, dropout, girl child

## Introduction

India through its path of development faces many challenges and one of the most important challenge is the child marriage which is also the concern of the policymakers. Though recent data shows that literacy rate has increased for both males and females in the country, but child marriage still gives a serious thought in present day, especially in rural India. According to the reports presented by UNICEF India (2019), the national average of child marriage has declined from 47 percent in 2005-06 to 27 percent in 2015-16. But several states have rates much higher than the national average (27%), such as, Bihar (43%), West Bengal (42%), Jharkhand (38%), Rajasthan (36%), Andhra Pradesh (34%), and Madhya Pradesh (33%). The girl child having limited or no education, belonging to poor households and residing in rural areas are at a major risk of early marriage. According to the above data Bihar and West Bengal performed badly regarding this fact. Recent data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) do not indicate any improvement for the issue of child marriage in West Bengal. The percentage of women aged 20-24 married off before the age of 18 remains high at 41.6 per cent. The figure was the same in the NFHS-4 report from 2015-16. In rural Bengal, child marriage, according to NFHS-5, is much higher at 48.1 per cent: the figure is 26.2 per cent for urban areas. The fact that four out of ten women aged 20-24 are married off before 18 should ring alarm bells for policymakers. In this background, this study wants to analyse the scenario of the girl child of West Bengal after the introduction of “Kanyashree Prakalpa”.

Like other states, West Bengal also introduces various schemes to reduce this alarming fact. In this context, this paper attempts to discuss about the “Kanyashree Prakalpa” introduced by the Government of West Bengal to promote faster education and reduce dropout rate. This scheme was introduced for

girls to give them an incentive to continue with their education and thus to reduce dropout rate and prevalence of child marriage. The basic objective of this study is to analyse the impact of Kanyashree scheme in West Bengal in various dimensions with survey data. The present study wants to focus the benefits of “Kanyashree Prakalpa” that girls receive and its effectiveness in the society.

### Literature Review

The literature review demonstrates that the research problem has received prior attention and depicts that further research is needed to solve the problem. Dutta and Sen(2020) analyzed the justification for the implementation of this scheme and the impact of this scheme on underage marriage and adolescent dropout among girls in rural West Bengal using primary data in West Bengal for Kochbihar, Murshidabad and Hoara districts. The study reveals that in the districts of Haora and Murshidabad, nearly one fourth of adolescent girls in the age group 14-18 years were not eligible of the programme, that is, they are either married or dropped out or both. A clear exception is Koch Bihar as the ineligible share is below 20%. Across districts the share of actual KP beneficiaries is the highest in Haora and the lowest in Murshidabad. Though in Murshidabad 75% of girls in the 68 age group were eligible in terms of two criteria, the coverage among them was only 27%. Dey & Ghoshal (2021) studied the impact of a conditional cash transfer program called Kanyashree Prakalpa (KP) in the Indian state of West Bengal that aimed to improve the status and well-being of girls by reducing incidence of child marriage and increasing the secondary or higher education of girls till at least 18 years of age. Using the data from multiple rounds of National Family Health Survey (NFHS). The analysis suggests that the KP program has reduced the probability of child marriage by 6.7 percent and increased the probability of secondary or higher educational attainment by 6 percent. Mondal (2020) explored the perception and attitude changes among the adolescence girls covered under this scheme with an impact assessment viewpoint. The study found out the interrelationship between perception about early marriage and the different socio demographic factors. Among the different factors participant's age, education level have significant relationship with participant's perception about early marriage. Molla and Sarkar (2020) conducted a study of the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on academic performance of girl's students in West Bengal. The main objectives of this study are to know the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on academic performance in the respect of location (urban & rural), economic status (APL & BPL). The data are collected from randomly selected Parganas division. The findings of the study reveal that there are significant impact Kanyashree Prakalpa and academic performance in girls' students. GOI (2000), the average number of students per teacher in all categories of schools in India shows that highest number of student-teacher ratio was in Bihar (1:54) followed by West Bengal (1: 47) and minimum ratio was in Mizoram (1:16) The average student-teacher ratio for India was 1:37 which is quite high as compare to international standard. Karin et.al (2021) aims to trace and focus the difficulty faced by the girl students during the pandemic. Data have been collected from policy statements, newspaper reports, journals and relevant documents. The method used in this study is the document-based logical analysis.

### Data and Methodology

We use only secondary data in our analysis due to less time. The secondary data used is the District Level Household and Facility Survey 4 (DLHS 4), NFHS3, ASRER and the 71st Round of the National Statistical Sample Office (NSSO 71), Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18 & 2019-20 and the government of West Bengal KANYASHREE PRAKALPA data. For the analysis we mainly used charts and tables.

### Kanyashree Prakalpa

Department of Women Development and Social Welfare, Government of West Bengal (DWD&SW) has designed the Kanyashree Prakalpa in 2012 - a conditional cash transfer scheme with the aim of improving the status and well-being of the girl child in West Bengal by incentivizing schooling of all teenage girls and delaying their marriages until the age of 18, the legal age of marriage.

Kanyashree Prakalpa is a West Bengal Government sponsored scheme which will be implemented henceforth in all districts of the State. It was implemented in two different components.

The first is an annual scholarship of ₹ 750 to be paid annually to the unmarried girls between 13-18 years of age.

The second is a one-time grant of ₹25,000 to be paid to the girls on completion of 18 years, provided they are unmarried and engaged in some educational or occupational pursuit.

On July 28, 2017, the third component was announced to motivate girls for higher studies and to become self-independent. Girls pursuing a postgraduate degree in any university will be provided with a scholarship of ₹2500 per month for the Science stream and ₹2000 for Arts stream, irrespective of the marital status and the annual family income. However, the girls should be already enrolled in the first and second component and should have achieved 45% in the undergraduate degree. There is no age limit for this scheme. This dissertation will only consider the first and second component for studying the impact of the program because after the implementation of the third component, no national household level survey has been conducted in India that can measure its impact. The last survey was conducted in 2015-16.

### Target Beneficiary

1. All girl children within the age of 13 to 19 years from families with annual income up to Rs
2. Girls regularly attending institutions for education or vocational/sports training
3. Girls of Child Care Institutes registered under J.J. Act within the age of 18-19 years
4. For the one-time grant, girls who are completing 18 years on or after 1st April 2013

### Why Kanyashree?

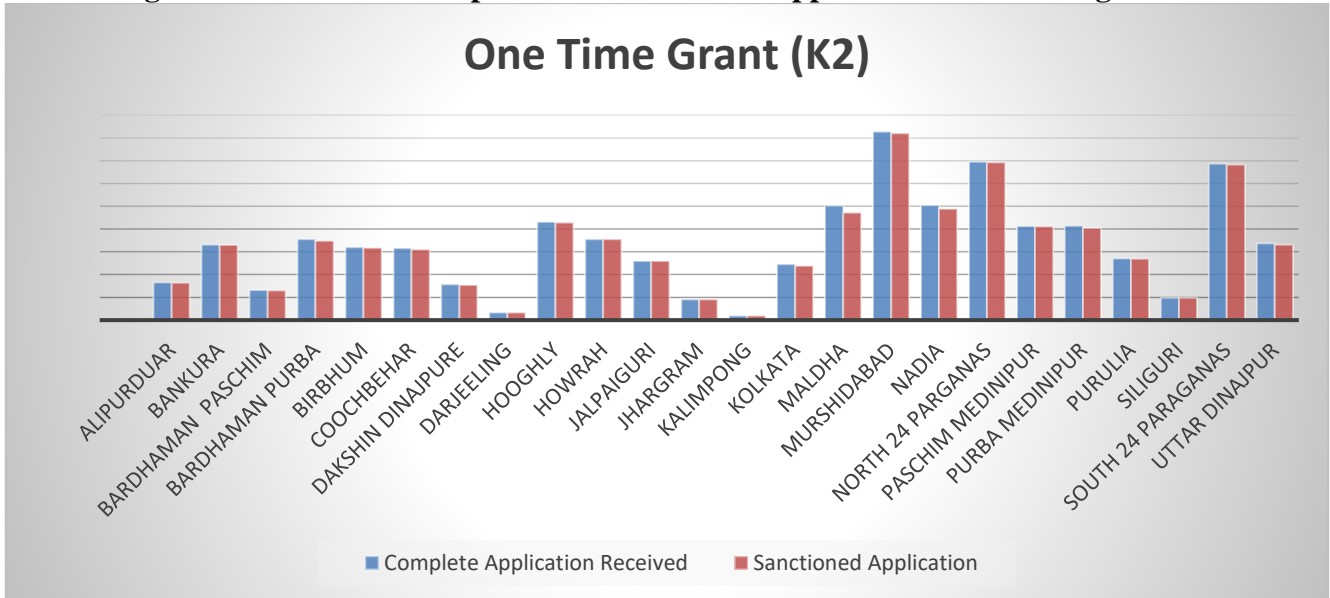
According to District Level Household Survey (DLHS-3; 2007-08), WB ranked fifth highest in India in the prevalence of child marriage (54.7%) and the National Family Health Survey (NFHS 3; 2005-06) documented that attendance of girls in schools dropped from 85% in the age group of 6-10 years to 33% in the group of 15-17 years. The drop-out rate between Class I-X was 63.5% for girls and 64.9% for boys which are relatively higher in comparison to all India average: The ASER 2012 (by Parham) shows that while only 4.2% girls are out of school in the age group of 11-14 the percentage goes up considerably (14%) for the age group 15-16 years which shows that the girls become more vulnerable in this age group. While a number of factors contribute towards girls dropping out of school, human rights research shows that the greatest obstacles to girls' education are child marriage, pregnancy and domestic chores, and that ensuring that girls stay in school is one of most effective protective measures against child marriage. Every second girl is in the high prevalence of child marriage in the district of West Bengal. The percentage of child marriage was higher in Murshidabad (61.04%) , Birbhum (58.04%) , Malda (56.04%) and Purulia (54.03%) , that is mainly in the rural areas. Considering such scenario, the government of WB, had come up with a much-needed intervention, called the Kanyashree Prakalpa (KP) in 2013, to improve the status and well-being of girls through the eradication of child marriage and increase in educational attainment of girls till at least 18 years of age. KP is the most prominent CCT program, especially to the socio-economically backward families (a family with annual income less than ₹ 1,20,000) . In the above context, the Government of West Bengal has decided on creating an enabling environment for elevating the education, health and nutrition status of women and children through an innovative scheme - "Kanyashree Prakalpa".

### Data Analysis

Figure 1 shows the number of complete applications received and the number of sanctioned applications on one time grant (K2) given by the government of West Bengal by multiple bar diagram. It is observed that number of complete application received and sanctioned application are less in Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Siliguri, and Jhargrame, Paschim Bardhaman, Alipurduar, Dakshin Dinajpure whereas it is

highest for the district Murshidabad followed by South 24 Parganas , North 24 Parganas , Nadia and Malda. From this scenario we can infer that Murshidabad is performing best in terms of receiving complete Kanyashree applications whereas the performance of Kalimpong is lowest.

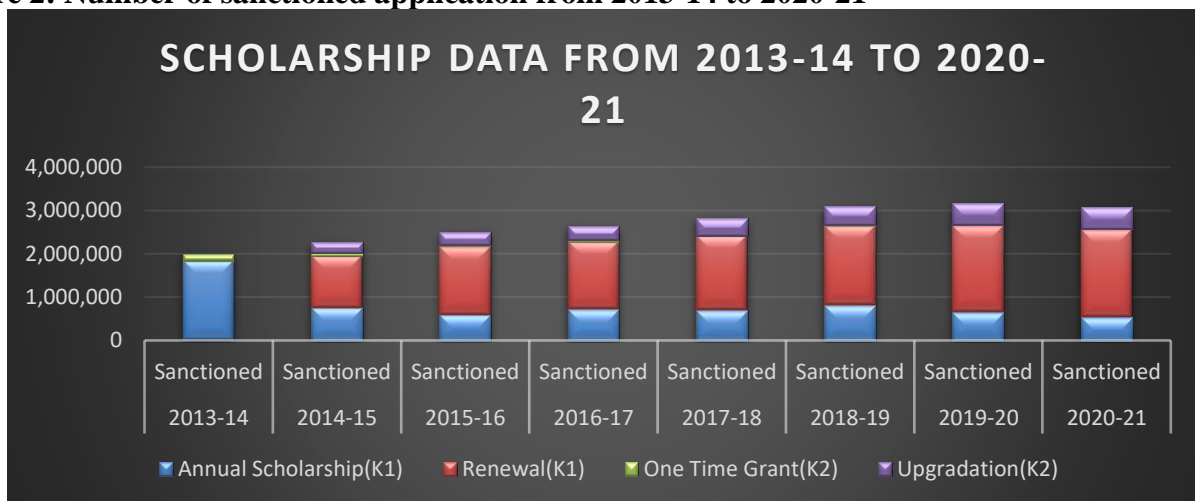
**Figure 1 : Number of completed and sanctioned application in one time grant K2**



Source- West Bengal Government Kanyashree Data

Figure 2 analyses the number of sanctioned scholarships in different forms given by the government over the years till now. It shows that from 2013-14 to 2020-21 there is a smooth increase in the sanctioned applications and this increment is mainly for renewal of K1 and upgradation of K2. The maximum increase is in 2019-20 and then it slightly decrease for the next period . From this trend it is clearly understood that over the years Kanyashree scheme is attracting more girls to participate in the formal education system.

**Figure 2: Number of sanctioned application from 2013-14 to 2020-21**



Source- West Bengal Government Kanyashree Data

Using unit-level NSSO 71st Round data on consumption on education, it is estimated that among persons belonging to age group 6-18 years, almost 7 percent students are new enrolled(NE) , while 10.21 percent are dropped out (DO) in overall India during 2014. Table 1 posits that though there is a significant gender gap in NE but DO appears to be almost gender neutral at all-India level. The figures for West Bengal, however, speak of contrary situations. There is no significant gender gap in NE in the

state, while male dropout is significantly higher than female dropout and also the percentage of females continuing current education was higher than males in Bengal which may be because of different government schemes to attract children towards education and Kanyashree is one of them.

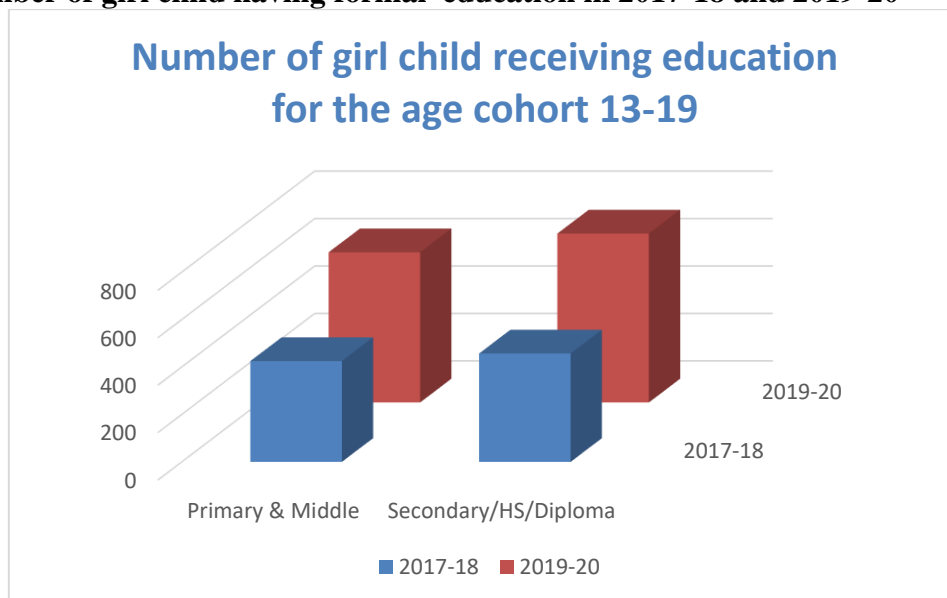
**Table 1: Percentage distribution (weighted) of Never Enrolled , Dropouts and Currently Continuing by gender in 2014**

Location		New Enrolled	Dropped Out	Currently Continuing
INDIA	Male	6.20	10.36	83.44
	Female	7.79	10.03	82.18
	Persons	6.93	10.21	82.86
WEST BENGAL	Male	5.01	14.84	80.15
	Female	5.34	9.36	85.3
	Persons	5.17	12.21	82.62

Source- NSSO 71<sup>st</sup> round data

In order to examine the effectiveness of Kanyashree Scheme in education we have considered Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data for the period 2017-18 and 2019-20. In order to observe the improvement of girl child having education, we have considered these two periods. The data of the figure below is based on the girl child of the ages 13 to 19 in West Bengal. Considering the two education levels, it is observed that number of girl child having primary/middle and secondary/HS/diploma have increased significantly between 2017-18 and 2019-20, which can be defined as a positive impact of Kanyashree scheme.

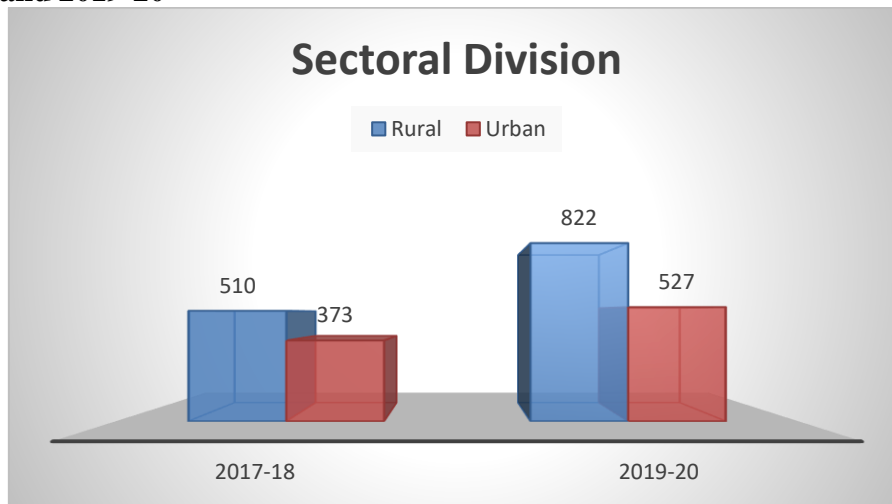
**Figure 3: Number of girl child having formal education in 2017-18 and 2019-20**



Source- PLFS 2017-18 and 2019-20 data

From the figure below we can observe that number of girl child in formal education have increased significantly both in rural and urban areas, though the increment in rural area was higher than urban area between 2017-18 and 2019-20.

**Figure 4: Number of girl child having formal education in rural and urban sector of the ages 13-19 during 2017-18 and 2019-20**



Source- PLFS 2017-18 and 2019-20 data

### Impact of Kanyashree Scheme

Kanyashree Prakalpa not only minimizes the tendency of girl students to dropout from schools at early age at the same time it will make a positive impact of the prevention of girl child marriage. Survey reveals that during a significant percentage of girl child marriage occurs during the age of 15 to 17. In most of the cases the marriage is organised by family. Parents of the girl through this marriage off load a liability. But after implementation of Kanyashree Prakalpa families think twice to marry their girl at early age. After that marriage the girl will not be a beneficiary. The amount of Rs 500/-per month means a lot to a poor family. Moreover, after completion of the school when the girl enrolls herself with a college she will get another opportunity to get the benefit of the scheme (K-2). The benefitted amount this time is higher than the previous one and its preconditions are (a) being unmarried and (b) the minimum age should be 18 and not more than 19. For obvious reasons the girl herself and her family would like to get the benefit and its result is that the family would not arrange the marriage of the girl before her age of 18. It obviously reduces the prevalence of child marriage in the state.

- ❖ According to West Bengal government data, in the secondary level, dropouts among girls fell from 23.06 per cent in 2012-13 to 19.79 per cent in 2015-16. Further, according to Kanyashree baseline survey of June 2015, conducted with a sample size of nine schools across three districts, the enrolment of girls increased from 9,021 in 2013-14 to 9,329 in 2014-15. The increase in enrolment significantly improved in the secondary and higher secondary levels. The number of girls dropping out of school reduced from 161 in 2013-14 to 71 in 2014-15, a reduction of 56 per cent, the survey said. Further, there was a 33 per cent drop in cases of child marriage.
- ❖ According to ASER survey report (2020), West Bengal ranks first in decline of school dropout rate from 3.3 percent to 1.5 percent. West Bengal also holds the first position in the country in terms of text books provided to the students with 99.7 per cent coverage. West Bengal's initiative to continue education during the COVID-19 pandemic through digital and other electronic modes has also been acknowledged in the report.

### Some Success Stories

- Pushpa Ghosh, a Class XIII student at the school, has been aspiring to join the police force since childhood. A few months ago, when she got to know that under the Kanyashree club at the school, girls have the opportunity to learn martial arts, she readily enrolled herself in it. Within eight months,

she learnt enough to teach her juniors the art of self-defence. Soon, she will get Rs 25,000 grant, which she would spend on higher education.

- Sonali Das, college student, Barasat, N 24 Parganas: family was pressurizing her to give up studies. Now she is doing her undergraduate studies using her KP money. Wants to train as a teacher.
- Champa Gayen, Class XI, Student Nabapally JogendraBalikaBidyamandir, Barasat, N 24 Parganas : Works as a domestic help while educating herself at the same time. Used the KP money to buy herself a new bag and pay her tuition fees.
- Monami Chakraborty, Class XII, Student Nabapally Jogendra Balika Bidyamandir, Barasat, N 24 Parganas : Daughter of truck driver, was looking for a loan so that she could study medicine. The Kanyashree Prakalpa was a godsend.

### Conclusion and Reflections

The KP, appears to be a unique CCT where the state has successfully attempted to act as a catalyst of a social change, rather than just an instrument. It appeals not only to the parents, but also to the adolescent girls, who themselves are supposed usher in this change. This study suggests that though this programme is not a new invention among bands of CCT schemes for adolescent girls, it introduces a new wine in the age-old bottle of CCTs. The early signs suggest that dropouts and early marriages have both declined. It also hints towards improvement in empowerment of these adolescent girls, who at least can dare to take decisions about their marriage and its timing. However, a significant share of this age group still lying outside the KP net indicates that a greater push and understanding is required from the state and beneficiaries respectively. With the introduction of this scheme , girls are now becoming self-sufficient and they are also helping their parents and family in different way . The study highlights that KP has been largely able to reduce drop out girl students increasing the consciousness of parents in rural area. It also shows that KP has been to some extent able to prevent child marriage in rural areas. The KP program in WB has been one of the transformative policy initiatives for paving the pathway towards women empowerment in the past decade and it is more effective in rural areas as the dropout rate and prevalence of child marriage is higher there than urban areas , so the effectiveness of this scheme is better observed in rural areas as we have shown by the data in this study.

Engaging women in higher education not only eradicates child marriage, but also leads to better labour market opportunity, lower exposure to domestic violence, greater recognition within family and in the society, reduction in sex-selection and breaking the inter-generational cycles of illiteracy, poor health and poverty. Thus, this research and its findings have tried to throw light on the long run impact of the policy undertaken by the government of WB towards reducing gender inequalities, achieving women empowerment, and boosting economic growth. This study wants to highlight this social problems faced by young girls. Government should make sure that after education these girls get a suitable job for a better living. Not only this, there is also many root problems of this policy. In rural areas there is lacks of communications and because of that many young girls are unaware of this scheme. So government also need to collect theses data from those areas.

### Policy Suggestions

- Government should be more active in taking proper steps where the parents and the girl child are still unaware of this policy and not getting the proper steps.
- In interior rural areas , where there is no proper communication system , government should be more active in those areas to properly implement this scheme.
- Government should observe at a regular interval whether the money is only spending for education purpose and not for any other purposes.
- Parents should also be aware to send their girl child to school and to provide proper education after receiving the money from the government.

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**Appendix**

Table for Figure 1 : One Time Grant (K2)

sl.no	District	One Time Grant(K2)	
		Complete Application Received	Sanctioned Application
		Total	Total
1	ALIPURDUAR	8266	8201
2	BANKURA	16538	16474
3	BARDHAMAN PASCHIM	6565	6543
4	BARDHAMAN PURBA	17747	17417
5	BIRBHUM	16012	15837
6	COOCHBEHAR	15769	15536
7	DAKSHIN DINAJPURE	7851	7713
8	DARJEELING	1665	1660
9	HOOGLY	21527	21437
10	HOWRAH	17791	17759
11	JALPAIGURI	12982	12975
12	JHARGRAM	4548	4538
13	KALIMPONG	995	991
14	KOLKATA	12282	11964



15	MALDHA	25151	23585
16	MURSHIDABAD	41375	41053
17	NADIA	25210	24455
18	NORTH 24 PARGANAS	34798	34651
19	PASCHIM MEDINIPUR	20667	20605
20	PURBA MEDINIPUR	20695	20216
21	PURULIA	13524	13469
22	SILIGURI	4878	4872
23	SOUTH 24 PARAGANAS	34336	34154
24	UTTAR DINAJPUR	16816	16557
	TOTAL	394772	392662

SOURCE – Government of west Bengal kanyashree data  
Table for Figure 2: Scholarship data from 2013-14 to 2021-21

e Type	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Till date
	Sanctioned	Sanctioned	Sanctioned	Sanctioned	Sanctioned	Sanctioned	Sanctioned	Sanctioned	Sanctioned
Annual Scholarship (K1)	18,44,990	7,59,061	5,95,221	7,09,517	6,87,625	8,05,701	6,53,033	5,41,499	65,96,647
Renewal(K1)	0	12,04,921	15,76,218	15,79,703	17,36,146	18,41,566	20,12,537	20,33,412	1,19,84,503
One Time Grant(K2)	1,38,965	46,118	32,379	23,797	3,270	16,625	7,067	1,694	2,69,915
Up gradation(K2)	0	2,49,266	2,96,969	3,21,028	3,89,392	4,26,289	4,82,700	4,95,863	26,61,507
Total Application	19,83,955	22,59,366	25,00,787	26,34,045	28,16,433	30,90,181	31,55,337	30,72,468	1,94,77,

SOURCE – Government of west Bengal kanyashree data