

Parents' Opinions Towards the Effectiveness of Kanyashree Prakalpa in Bankura District of Eastern India

Saptarshi Mondal¹, Sudip Bhattacharya², Prasenjit Deb³

^{1,2}Research Scholar, Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension, University of Kalyani, West Bengal

³Professor and Head, Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension, University of Kalyani, West Bengal

Abstract

Nowadays, Women's Education is being prioritised in every sector of the society. From the emerging point of view, education followed by entrepreneurship development as well as various job opportunities for women is the best way to empower them. The study has tried to investigate the behavioural and attitudinal role of the parents towards their girl child at Mejia block in Bankura. The study mainly includes the parents of the K2 (rs.25, 000) recipients in Mejia block. As the KP has become a part of the enlightening attainment in all over West Bengal; this is the crucial period to review the ground reality of the project implementation. After the study it is found that there is a significant relationship between KP and Women Empowerment at Mejia block in Bankura. Hence it is evident that KP is playing an important role in the development of women.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Women's Education, Entrepreneurship Development, Kanyashree Prakalpa (KP), Kanyashree one time grants (KOTG).

Introduction:

Parents are like pillars in the growth of a child's psychological and emotional structure. They are literally engaged with the great task of building up their child's character as well as his or her career so that the children can achieve a secure and prosperous life in the upcoming future. Mahatma Gandhi (1959) perfectly denoted that, the actual wealth which parents can offer to their children in true sense; that is nothing but educational attainment. Actually, Mahatma Gandhi was a proponent of social reconstruction. According to Gandhi, Education should be work oriented. He mainly indicated the necessity of vocational education to be included in formal education. He practically advocated for the involvement of 3H that is head, hand and heart.

In today's world parents are more worried about their kid's future as well as career. The current study area is not an exception. Parents from this part of society also try hard to enrich their children's life by fulfilling every basic requirement including food, shelter and education. The trend of this place is crystal clear that people here are very much concerned about the overall development of their kids, especially of their daughters. Hence, their positive reaction about the government sponsored schemes pertaining to their daughters' education has been observed during the whole study.

Practically, education is one of the most important requirements, which is to be provided to women for their overall empowerment. Empowerment is such a word which has been defined in so many ways. The word, women empowerment is composed with such components like education, decision making, and financial stability. Actually, women empowerment is nothing but giving more power to women in every sector of the society.

There are so many financial schemes being provided by public, private or public private partnerships. KP is one of those schemes offered by govt. of West Bengal in order to empower girl students through conditional cash transfer to them.

Here in Mejia block of Bankura district, it is evident that KP is facilitating every girl child irrespective of caste, creed, region or culture.

Review of related literature:

As education is supposed to be a powerful weapon in our society especially for the overall development of women, so many schemes have been introduced since independence in India. The blueprints of the schemes were not yet the same, goal settings were also not equal to each other. In spite of all the differences all the schemes aimed at the same point that is the overall development of our emerging society. Among all these a number of efforts had been given to improve the regular condition of women. Thus it is important to review the mechanism of those schemes through a few prior works before jumping into this current topic.

Gupta, Nimesh, Signal, Bhalla and Prinja (2018) in their paper which has been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the interference of BBBP programme in the state of Haryana for the improvisation of birth wise sex ratio and finally the study comes with the evaluation from the segmented time-series regression analysis which reveals that there was a significant change occurred after the interference regarding the gender ratio. Hence, the result statistically indicates a significant improvement between the pre and post slope of implementing the BBBP programme. This according to them is a positive sign for the development of women in the study area.

Kumari and Rani (2019) had made an attempt to assess and create awareness on gender empowerment as well as BBBP. Result of the study indicates that both junior and senior ladies were neither aware about gender empowerment nor the scheme. Additional awareness campaign was implemented and accordingly evaluated. It was revealed that effects of awareness campaign were proved as significantly positive over them.

Hazarika in his paper (2011) aims to identify the vital factors to make women confident to empower themselves by reducing illiteracy, unemployment and poverty. As a result the study shows that women empowerment can only be achieved through the collective effort of women in empowering themselves. It needs to reduce women's paucity, supporting education of women, anticipation and abolition of the violence against women.

Suresh in his research work (2011) focuses on the contemporary information and communication technology based tools including e-learning, e-marketing etc. and information and communication technology based development training like business process outsourcing as well as knowledge process outsourcing and their effect towards empowerment of women in the country. The study concludes with the fact that maximum women in third world countries do not have adequate access to information and computer technologies due to various bindings like lack of proper social, cultural and lingual

infrastructure. Accordingly, the study suggests an increase of information and communication technologies related knowledge and training for every woman.

The study area:

During the whole course of the study, an intensive survey was conducted in Mejia block of Bankura district in west Bengal. The researcher has collected the opinions of the parents of 100 K2 recipients regarding the Kanyashree grant and its utilisation for the development of girls' present condition. In this context the current study has replicated 5 Anchals (GP) through an equal division of total sample size 100 into 20 parents of respective K2 recipients in each gram panchayat area.

Objective of the study:

The current study has some certain goals like,

- To make an assessment of the success rate of K2 in the Mejia block of Bankura district.
- To make an inquiry regarding the utilization of the money received by the Kanyashree girls.
- To identify the link between SHG and employability of K2 recipients and implication on women empowerment.
- To recognise the impact of kanyashree prakalpa to overcome aforesaid problems.
- To recognize the opinions of respective parents of K2 receivers regarding the KOTG.
- To make an overall study regarding the style of functioning of KOTG towards women empowerment in this particular study zone.

Data Sources:

This particular source of the data mentioned here is confined to the parents in the Mejia block of Bankura district. This selected sample size is 100 in number. The main criteria which have been considered for selecting those, is that their daughter should have received the one time grant of Kanyashree Prakalpa. In this total interrogative process they have been mainly asked about the utilisation of the same amount of rupees 25,000 as well as their opinion towards women empowerment through this definite scheme.

Methodology:

This current study had gone through a long process of interactive sessions as well as definite kinds of semi structured schedules were also filled up for receiving detailed information on this particular matter. Total 100 schedules were meant to continue an effective study through a foolproof survey by reaching out to the selected respondents in order to meet the predetermined goals of the study. The method which has been used for selecting the sample size of the study is a purposive sampling method.

During the particular segment of the study, there were a total 100 parents who had been interviewed in this regard. The respondents had been selected on the basis of the basic criteria of being mother or father of a K2 (Kanyashree scholarship of 25000 Rs.) receiver.

Later on this collected information had been quantified and after that a statistical analytical tool that is SPSS had been used for data analysis purposes. This particular tool had acted as a correlation, regression, and step down model analyzer to measure the opinions of parents regarding women empowerment through K2 grant.

Result and discussion:

Table - I: Correlation study between dependent variable usefulness of K2 (Y) and 16 casual variables.

Variables	'r' Value
Respondent's age (X ₁)	-.0900
Educational competency (X ₂)	-.0952
Financial status of the family (X ₃)	0.1457
Types of home (X ₄)	-.0754
Engagement with any social Group (X ₆)	-.1692
Membership of SHG (X₇)	.1987*
Advantages of getting involved with SHG (X₈)	.2710**
Amount of loan taken from bank (X₉)	-.2239*
Reason behind taking the bank loan (X ₁₀)	-.0376
Amount of monthly savings (X ₁₁)	0.0066
Existence of siblings of the beneficiary (X ₁₄)	0.1564
Approx. estimation of the monthly amount expended for the education of girl child (X ₁₅)	0.1037
Main Obstacles behind education for daughters (X ₁₆)	0.1138
Function of rural library in receiving the information about different government schemes (W)	-.0739
Gram Panchayat's role in receiving Kanyashree grant (V ₁)	0.1521
Role of B.DO office in receiving Kanyashree grant (V ₂)	-.0033

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.05) = +or- 0.197 *Significant at 5% level
 Critical value (2-Tail, 0.01) = +or- 0.256 ** Significant at 1% level

Analysis of table-I

Based on the results, we can state that 3 out of 16 correlations were statistically significant and were greater or equal to 0.05 (0.05=0.197, 0.01=0.256).

The dependent variable **The effectiveness of K2 (Y₁)** and the independent variable, '**Membership of SHG (X₇)**' had a statistically significant relationship(r=.1987*). The direction of the relationship is positive (i.e. effectiveness of K2 and membership of SHG are positively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase together (i.e. greater effectiveness of K2 is associated with greater chances of taking SHG membership). As a reason it might be stated that as the undertaken study area having a rural based economy largely depends on agriculture and animal husbandry the micro financing system like SHG has a strong impact over this rural economy. Eventually, the kanyashree grant has also become a part of girls' empowerment. According to the respondents of the current study, the tendency for joining SHGs is increasing nowadays as a part of the greater effectiveness of K2.

'**Advantages of getting involved with SHG (X₈)**' and **effectiveness of K2** have a statistically significant relationship. The direction of the relationship is positive. The independent variable has a very strong positive correlation with the effectiveness of K2 (Y₁). The result shows that respondents have a tendency to stay connected with SHGs. According to them, local self-help groups primarily play an important role to accelerate women empowerment by providing various training and income generation programs to women. Nowadays the recipients of K2 are also taking interest to participate in such training to utilize

the grant in some constructive work. In that case their priority is entrepreneurship development for income generation. According to them they mostly intend to build up small businesses with the help of local resources. During the survey it is revealed that small businesses like tailoring, animal husbandry, poultry businesses, bee farming, mixed cropping etc. are the most preferred business types among the K2 recipients. Evidence shows that there are so many instances of entrepreneurship development in recent times among women of this particular area. Evidently most of those entrepreneurs are K2 beneficiaries.

The causal variable '*Amount of loan taken from bank (X₉)*' has a strong negative correlation with the dependent variable namely effectiveness of K2, meaning that there is a contrary relation between these variables. During the study it is revealed that there is a valid reason behind the reduction of the amount of bank loans. According to the respondents, previously parents had to take larger amounts of bank loans in order to meet the necessity of their children's education and other necessary requirements. Since the girl students have been receiving the kanyashree one time grant, the amount of loan taken from the bank has been reduced eventually. Most of them were not capable enough to keep security value against the loan to be taken. On the other hand they can easily depend on the K2 grant for their daughters' education without any bar and difficulties.

Table - II: Correlation study between predictor variable the observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z) and 23 casual variables

Variables	'r' Value
Respondent's age (X ₁)	0.0414
<i>Educational competency (X₂)</i>	0.4349**
Financial status of the family (X ₃)	-.0541
Types of home (X ₄)	0.1633
Engagement with any social group (X ₆)	-.1429
<i>Membership of SHG (X₇)</i>	.1976*
<i>Advantages of getting involved with SHG (X₈)</i>	.2067*
<i>Amount of loans taken from banks (X₉)</i>	-.2074*
Reason behind taking the bank loan (X ₁₀)	0.0730
Amount of monthly savings (X ₁₁)	0.1392
Existence of siblings of the beneficiary (X ₁₄)	-.0707
Approx. estimation of the monthly amount expended for the education of girl child (X ₁₅)	0.0529
Main obstacles behind education for daughters (X ₁₆)	0.1612
Function of rural library in receiving the information about different government schemes (W)	0.1720
If the girls are getting the monetary help from Kanyashree (Y ₁)	-.0001
Main monetary source for daughter's education (Z ₁)	-.0358
<i>Choice of scheme towards women empowerment (Z₆)</i>	0.2051*
More Preferable job for daughter(Z ₇)	-.0252
<i>Most disliked job for daughter (Z₈)</i>	0.2178*
Participation of rural library in women empowerment (W ₅)	0.1041

<i>Preferable service requirements from rural library (W₈)</i>	0.2876**
<i>Expectations for better services from rural library (W₉)</i>	0.3209**
<i>Opinions regarding the development of rural library (W₁₀)</i>	0.3685**

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.05) = +or- 0.197 *Significant at 5% level

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.01) = +or- 0.256 ** Significant at 1% level

Analysis of table II:

The table-2 shows the exact correlation between the dependent variable that is Impact of K2 towards women empowerment (Y₂) with the aforementioned independent variables which are total twenty three in number. Based on the results, we can state that 9 out of 23 correlations were statistically significant and were greater or equal to 0.05 (0.05=0.197, 0.01=0.256).

Independent variable namely '**Educational competency of the respondent (X₂)**' had a strong positive correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)** (r= 0.4349**). According to the study it is clear that parents who are more qualified academically are more interested in their children's education. Especially, the female respondent whose education level is high is positively utilizing the money in the purpose of her daughter's education. Therefore it is evident that Mother's education is most essential for her child's education.

The causal variable '**Self help group involvement (X₇)**' had a positive correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)** (r= .1976*). According to the respondents, the tendency of joining SHG is more among the younger generation girls rather than aged women in this particular area. As a reason it is revealed that the K2 grant is a Key factor here to make the girls think independently. According to the respondents the connection between SHGs and Women Empowerment is very high.

The next independent variable '**Advantages of getting involved with SHG (X₈)**' had a positive correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)** (r=.2067*). Actually SHG is an economical intermediary committee, which is generally formed with minimum 15-20 women in a particular zone or area. Here women of this undertaken study area are basically engaged with their household work and domestic activities. Some of them also contribute their time in agricultural activities in order to assist their husbands in their work. But the new generation girls don't prefer to delimit themselves within the household activities. Therefore they might find a self-help group necessary as a supportive organization. As SHGs play a pivotal role to foster women's economic development, the K2 beneficiaries are tending to utilize the grant by engaging with SHGs.

'**Amount of loans taken from banks (X₉)**' had a negative correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)**. Generally people of this area belong to the economically backward class, that's why they don't have the capacity to avail loans from banks or others. As they have nothing to keep as warranty or mortgage for taking loans, they can't avail the same. While they were asked this question their dependency over the K2 grant got revealed. Each of the respondents agreed that, the supportive money namely K2 had immensely curtailed down his expenses for daughter's education. Therefore, the rate of taking bank loan for daughters' education had been declined.

'**Choice of scheme towards women empowerment (Z₆)**' had a positive correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)**. Nowadays, people including women are very selective in any matter regarding financial advancement. Maximum of the parents from this particular study area envisage empowerment as economic development. That's why they mainly prefer those schemes which

provide financial assistance to their daughters. Hence, there is a significant positive correlation in this case. Most of the parents prefer vocational training for their daughters so that the girls can uplift their career with the help of work oriented education.

'The most disliked job for daughter (Z₈)' had a positive correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)**. Parents from our society are still so rigid regarding their children's occupation especially when the child is a girl. Parents are generally very much conscious about their daughter's social status and their safety as well as security. Though the emerging rural society allows females to be financially established, still females are not capable of going outside without the consent of their guardians. That's why there is a scope to have a preference of making money. Thus, parents of this undertaken study area would give a positive and significant reaction on this issue.

'Preferable service requirements from rural library (W₈)' had a strong positive correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)**. Actually the respondents from this study area significantly mentioned their requirements from local public libraries. As there are so many women who had been detached from their studies for a long time, they had a demand for a regular service from the adjacent library so that they would be in touch with study and other creativity. Thus they significantly reacted on that purpose.

'Expectations for better services from rural library (W₉)' had a strong positive correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)**. The fact is that the maximum libraries of this study area remain closed on maximum days and these all hardly provide services to the local people. That's why the respondents positively demand for a better service from the same. Actually the parents have requirements for free textbooks distributions and other learning and coaching services for their children and other job, business or agriculture oriented training for their own. Hence, there was a significant positive reaction by the respondents regarding that matter.

'Opinion regarding the development of rural library (W₁₀)' had a strong positive correlation with the **observation level of parents on women empowerment (Z)** because respondents from this study area had strong expectations from rural libraries. As most of the people belong to the low income group, they have a demand for free textbooks, competitive exam journals, etc. distribution from the adjacent library of their locality. And also had expressed their opinion about maintaining regularity in the library by the authority as well as they have the same demands like free coaching for their children and job training, basic computer training and other entrepreneurship development training for women at library. Most of all they are having a significant opinion towards the style of functioning of rural libraries and they also believe that rural libraries can be an epicenter of women empowerment through its various functions like knowledge disseminations, awareness building, and organization of training, coaching and other library activities.

Findings:

Table: III Monthly Family Income Profile of the respondents

Income	Total Number
Upto 3K	17
Upto 5K	14
Upto 10K	28
Above 10K	41

The predominant category of the parents of K2 recipients (i.e., 59) are those whose family monthly Income is not above 10K. Parents of K2 recipients from the above 10K monthly income are 41, which is just 41%.

The scheme, Kanyashree Prakalpa mainly delivers 1000 rupees per year to the unmarried, school going female students up to the age of 18. This has been termed as K1 scheme. Afterward the K2 scheme is for the unmarried female students who have already crossed the age of 18, still continuing their study. Here the government's intention is crystal clear, that is decreasing the dropout rate of girls and empowering them financially and socially as well as delaying their age at marriage. During my whole study it has been observed that concerned administrative sections are performing up to the mark with their limited resources.

After the field study in this particular block in Bankura, it can be clearly stated that all beneficiaries and administrations are fully aware about all the objectives of KP; and acknowledging that the scheme had really helped to bring down dropout rates as well as the rate of child marriage. There are also some instances of entrepreneurship development activities like tailoring, setting up cyber cafes, beauty parlour, animal husbandry etc. and some of them have acquired job oriented training programmes with the help of this grant.

From the above depiction it is crystal clear that there is a strong prominence in the parent's view towards KP and its contribution to women empowerment. Indeed, the statistical analysis done here sharply shows those respondents are significantly indicating the correlation between the effectiveness of K2 scheme and women empowerment. It is vastly examined and verified too.

From the above analysis it is evident that there are various factors which significantly determine the effectiveness of K2 and its specific impact on women empowerment in this particular study area. Such as, *Membership of SHG (X₇)*, *Advantages of getting involved with SHG (X₈)*, *Amount of loan taken from bank (X₉)*, *Educational competency of Parents (X₂)*, *Choice of scheme towards women empowerment (Z₆)*, *Most disliked job for daughter (Z₈)*, *Preferable service requirements from rural library (W₈)*, *Expectations for better services from rural library (W₉)*, *Opinion regarding the development of rural library (W₁₀)*.

From the above discussion it is clear that there is a tendency of being involved with SHGs and rural libraries in order to get specific public services.

Specific Findings:

Most of the people who had interacted during the field work at Mejia block in Bankura; it was found that relatively sound people were over there. Basically the parents of the Kanyashree girls who have received KOTG of Rs. 25000 were conscious enough about the utilisation of the money. As a researcher, the target was to find out the level of their awareness as well as their way of thinking regarding the usefulness of the amount. Somehow, it was realised that as this particular study area is multicultural as well as multilingual, Parents would not ride in the same boat of using the money. Though the respondents were randomly selected; still they belonged to different strata. That's why people possessed different opinions regarding the utilisation of the money and its contribution towards women empowerment.

Sri Asim Nayak, father of Krishna Nayak is a para teacher in a nearby high school. The person positively expressed his opinion regarding KOTG and its capacity of need fulfillment by assisting the parents financially; leading to a wholesome development of their daughters' academic and social life.

According to him, this scheme is quite helpful to curtail parents' expenses pertaining to their children's education and career. He had already invested a good portion of this grant for his daughter's higher education and the rest had been used to secure the girl's future by giving Premiums to an insurance policy, planned for his daughter in order to make her future better and secure. The person is also very much concerned about the activities of his nearby rural library. He had expressed his disappointment for the same. According to him, Public libraries should work on providing free books, free coaching to the poor girls and should offer job oriented training including basic computer training to the rural women too. In this way, he had signified his views on this particular matter. This phenomenon perfectly denotes that the statistical inference that is positive correlation between the effectiveness of K2 and Educational competency is accurate. (*Educational competency of Parents (X₂) r= 0.4349***).

Dilip Mondal is Sila's father. He is a farmer. The person always dreams for his daughter Sila's comfortable and happy life. Sri Dilip had an aspiration for his daughter Sila. She has already passed the higher secondary exam recently. Dilip babu had invested a portion of the KOTG for the study of his daughter, the rest of the amount had been utilised for purchasing a sewing machine for Sila. The girl had been using this sewing machine for tailoring purposes. She is associated with a local SHG. She has acquired a special training on Tailoring from the same. From the above study it is crystal clear that the new generation SHGs tend to develop successful entrepreneurs in the near future. Here, Adult education centres and SHGs are the same in the name of income generation as well as employability. The statistical inference also approves this. (*Membership of SHG (X₇) r =.1987**, *Advantages of getting involved with SHG (X₈) r =.2710***

Conclusion:

After all above discussions it may be concluded with general note that women have not yet been fully empowered still today. Though there is a huge push from the side of administration, still there exist many hindrances in the path of their ultimate success. Whereas, some women are reaching the sky, still there are so many women who do have no exposure to the greater world or not even out of the door. Here, in the study area Kanyashree receivers are quite aware about their study and career but most of them are still struggling with the limitations offered by the society. Though KOTG is trying to provide them a lump sum amount for making them independent, there is no rapid change in their mind sets. Parents here seem to be confused about their children's future and career. Though they are very much concerned about their children, still they are mixing up their daughter's marriage with their career. Some of the parents are making exceptions but the rest are still keeping their faith only in marriage for the sake of their daughter's upcoming future. According to some local people Rupashree Prakalpa is such a scheme which contradicts KP. As a reason, it has been said that parents are availing the both schemes at a time and merging the amounts; in this manner they are utilizing the total amount for the purpose of their daughter's marriage. Eventually, this particular activity has become a trend over there. However, there is no such space for pessimism. There are so many who are looking forward to their daughter's wellbeing by making their career opportunities, by delaying their age at marriage, as well as building the overall personality of their daughter so that they might be able to make their decisions by themselves. Parents here are very much dependent on KP to carry forward their daughter's study. As the society and its overall system don't treat everybody always in the same way; that's why scenarios are not alike to each other. Yet, a common phenomenon exists forever is that women are still far behind the actual

empowerment they need. It is evident from the whole study that women have to run more ways to achieve their desired post which they actually deserve.

Acknowledgement: The all-round support and cooperation of Shri Aniruddha Banerjee, Block Development Officer of Mejia C.D. Block and Shri Joydeb Das, Kanyashree Data manager for Kanyashree Prakalpa of the said Block is praiseworthy. They wanted to explore the effects of Kanyashree Prakalpa among girls.

Disclaimer: No financial assistance was received from any organisation in completing the present research works.

References:

1. Hazarika, D. (2011). Women Empowerment in India: A Brief Discussion, International Journal of Educational Planning & Administration, ISSN Gandhi, M. (1959). India of My Dreams, <https://www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/India-Dreams.pdf>
2. Gupta R, et.al. (2018). Effectiveness of India's National Programme to save the girl child: experience of Beti Bachao Beti Pado (B3P) programme from Haryana State, Health Policy and Planning, P. 33,870–876. DOI: [10.1093/heapol/czy065](https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czy065).
3. Kumari, K., and Rani, J. (2019). Beti Bachao Beti Pado: A boon, International Journal of Home Science, ISSN:2395-7476. IJHS 2019; 5(3):41-43. www.homesciencejournal.com
4. 2249-3093 Volume – 1, Number 3 (2011), pp. 199-202. Research India Publications <http://www.ripublication.com/ijepa.htm>
5. Lal, b. S. (2011). Impact of Information and Communication Technologies on Women Empowerment in India, Journal of Systematics, Cybernetics and Informatics, 9(4), 17-23. ISSN: 1690-4524. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335015076_Impact_of_Information_and_Communication_Technologies_on_Women_Empowerment_in_India