



The impact of welfare programmes on women education in Jammu and Kashmir

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Abstract

Educated women in Jammu and Kashmir can play a pivotal role in all-round development of the state. Women's education is considered as a powerful tool that changes the position of both society as well as nation. The literacy rate and education of the women of Jammu and Kashmir is far lower than national level. Poverty, ignorance of parents and lack of basic infrastructural facilities seem to be major obstacles in the attainment of gender equity in education. The present study is an attempt to study about the various women educational programmes, introduced in Jammu and Kashmir and further examines the perception of people towards schemes, satisfaction and awareness level of beneficiaries about these programmes. Moreover the present study also attempts to explore the barriers in women's education. The data used in this study were collected from 120 respondents on simple random sampling from both rural and urban areas of district Anantnag of Jammu and Kashmir. The educational schemes and developmental programmes seems have not helped to improve the condition of females. There is an essential need to make serious efforts by government, not-for-profit organizations and other local bodies to augment the pace of development in education of the women of Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords: development, women education, poverty, literacy

Introduction

Education is the most potent tool for socio economic mobility and a key instrument for building an equitable and just society. A well educated population, equipped with the relevant knowledge, attitudes and skills is essential for economic and social development in the twenty-first century [1]. Studies world over have revealed that education is the most important instrument for the empowerment of women. Education can enable women to discover, explore, and expand upon their hidden potential. Many research studies conducted, so far, reveal that education leads to women's emancipation and helps them to break the glass ceilings and enter the world hitherto monopolized by men. Emphasizing the importance of women's education Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once said: "If you educate a man, you are educating an individual only and if you are educating a woman, you are educating a family" [2]. In the modern world, the role of the women goes much beyond the home and the bringing up of children. She is now adopting a career of her own and sharing equally with the man the responsibility for the development of society in all its aspects. This equal partnership will have to continue in the fight against hunger, poverty, ignorance and ill health. Education will enable women acquire skills and self-confidence. By education a woman can be a better parent, competent worker and an informed citizen. It will equip women with good decision making powers. The children of educated mothers are more likely to go to schools. No society can work to its potential without adequately investing in developing the capabilities of its women folk. The

need for involvement of women in all aspects of development process is felt everywhere as the social gains from education of women are substantial. Since women are supposed to play a great role in the development of a nation in the context of family and the society at large, their education will act as a life line for their development and prosperity [3].

Objectives

1. To study about various welfare programmes for the upliftment of women education in Jammu and Kashmir
2. To examine the satisfaction level of beneficiaries about various educational programmes for women in Anantnag District.
3. To study about the awareness of beneficiaries regarding various welfare programmes for the upliftment of women education in Anantnag district.

Methodology

The present study was conducted in the Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir. For this purpose 120 respondents (20 from each programme) on simple random sampling basis from both rural and urban areas were selected. The information required for research is collected through pre structured interview scheduled. The collected data analysed with the help of simple percentage method and presented in systematic tables. The data was collected in the month of July.

Policies /Programmes

In order to uplift female education, various policies and

programmes have been initiated by the Governments in the State of Jammu and Kashmir and are given below:

Since the first Five Year Plan, provisions have been made with the major thrust on education of women. The total outlay incurred on education increased from Rs. 1274.15 lac to Rs. 216037 lacs in the first plan to Eleventh Plan respectively. Similarly the total expenditure on education increased from 48.86 Lacs to 36669.46 lacs in the first plan to Tenth Plan respectively. With the result the literacy level raised from 12.95 per cent in 1961 to 65.67 per cent in 2008^[4]. During the Twelfth Plan not only efforts will be made to enable girls to keep pace with boys, but girls' education will be viewed from the perspective spelt out in the National Policy on Education 1986/92 which states that education should be a transformative force, build women's self-confidence and improve their position in society. Interventions in the Twelfth Plan will be guided by the principle that gender equality in elementary education is both a quality issue and an equity issue. Special focus needs to be placed on developing gender-sensitive curricula, pedagogical practices, teacher training and evaluation. Schools should be developed to be inclusive and safe places. Specific modules on issues such as sexual harassment and violence will need to be developed and integrated into the teacher training design^[5]. Other specific initiatives to improve girls' education include:

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) promotes girls education through equalization of educational opportunities and elimination gender disparities. The State of Jammu and Kashmir joined Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in the year 2003. During 2006-07, 148 primary schools were upgraded to upper primary schools. There were 1,08,560 out of school children, out of which 20,702 children have been provided educational opportunity through Non-Residential Bridge Courses (NRBC). The gender gap appears to be closed as 80, 4,837 girls get enrolled against 93,0,476 boys therefore constituting about 46.62 per cent of the total enrolment^[6].

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) aimed at achieving universalization of elementary education, enrollment of all Out of School Children (OoSC) in Schools by 2012, retention of all OoSC in Upper Primary stage by 2012, thrust on quality education and bridging gender and social category gaps in enrollment, retention and learning besides development of school infrastructure. To achieve the goals of above mentioned interventions, a survey named "TALAASH" to identify OoSC was conducted throughout the state in 2012-13^[7]. After collection, compilation and analysis, of data, so collected the OoSC population found is 59061. Up to 2015-16, 19262 Out of School Children (OoSC) have been mainstreamed into nearby schools. Rest 39799 of the children proposed to be mainstreamed in different interventions like (Non-Residential Bridge Courses) NRBC level I, II, III, RBC-KGBV, CWSN (Children With Special Needs) & residential facility^[8].

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)

The KGBV scheme was launched in July 2004 for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging to the Schedule castes, Schedule Tribes, Other Backward

Classes and minority communities. It was intended to promote greater participation of girls in education at the upper primary level (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, MHRD, GOI).

On 31 January, 2008, percentage of girls enrolled in these 13 operational KGBVs include 16.65 per cent of Schedule Caste, 10.63 per cent of Schedule Tribe, 2.30 per cent of Other Backward Class, 65.94 per cent of Muslims and 4.48 per cent of Below Poverty Line category. The KGBVs and SSA are having common intervention in addressing the educational needs of marginalized girls. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) that has focus on girls' education^[9]. During 2014-15, 5032 children for nomadic seasonal centers approved by MHRD, 40 primary school approved for up gradation and 4076 girls enrolled in KGBVs during the year 2014-15. So far 97 KGBVs have been established in Educationally Backward Blocks having an enrollment of 4232 out of which 65 KGBVs are residential^[10].

Beti Anmol

The State Government rolled out "Beti Anmol" scheme during 2011-12 with a view to arrest post matric dropout rate of girl students belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) and enhancing their employment prospects. Under the scheme, an amount of Rs. 5000/- is to be given as incentive to the girl students of Educationally Backward Blocks, who pass their matriculation examination and get themselves enrolled in the 11th class. The incentive is given in the shape of a bank deposit, the amount of which is en-cashable only after the students pass their 12th class examination. Beti Anmol scheme is presently catering to the girl students hailing from 97 educationally backward blocks of the state. The ultimate objective of this new initiative is to encourage the education of the girl students in the State. The Scheme is operative from academic session 2011-12 both for winter and summer zones. 3088 girl students were provided incentive during 2015-16 and coverage of 4000 girl students has been targeted for 2016-17.

Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS)

In keeping with the Constitutional provisions to raise the level of nutrition of children and enable them to develop in a healthy manner, the NP-NSPE was launched as a centrally sponsored scheme in 1995. Commonly referred to as MDMS, this was expected to enhance enrolment, retention, attendance of children in schools apart from improving their nutritional levels. This was extended to upper primary (classes VI to VIII) children in 3,479 EBBs in 2007 and then universalized at the elementary level in the year 2008.

National Programme of Nutritional Support to Education (NP-NSPE) known as Mid-Day- Meal Scheme (MDMS) was launched in J&K State in September, 2004 with an objective to give a boost to the universalization of primary education by increasing enrollment, retention and attendance of children in schools apart from improving their nutritional levels.

The *Mid-day Meal Scheme* laid an important impact on the education of females. It was a sought of attraction to motivate parents as well as their children towards education. Due to this scheme girls were also motivated to go to schools as they would get their midday meals in the school. Moreover, special

attention was paid towards their health which was another motivating factor for parents to send their daughters to school. MDMS is primarily managed and implemented by School Management/Village Education Committees. At primary level 450 grams of calories and 12 grams of proteins and at Upper Primary level 700 grams of calories and 20 grams of proteins are availed by the Children. During 2015-16, 1042550 no. of children availed MDM in 23136 no. of schools and 30648 no. of cook cum helper were engaged under MDM Scheme. 11815 Kitchen-cum-stores have been sanctioned during 2006-07 to 2015-16, out of which 7118 Kitchen-Cum-Stores has been constructed and 22843 Kitchen devices sanctioned by GOI, MHRD during 2006-07 to 2015-16, out of 20266 kitchen devices has been procured.

Saakshar Bharat Mission Programme

A new initiative for Adult Literacy has been taken at the national level and 20 districts of J&K, having less than 50% Literacy Rate as per Census 2001, have now been approved under Saakshar Bharat Mission Programme. This is another major flagship scheme and focuses on the female adult literacy in the age group of 15 years and above across the state excepting erstwhile Jammu/Samba District.

Achievements

- Programme is under implementation in 20 low literacy districts of the State except Jammu and Samba with a target of 14.54 lakh non/neo-literates and project cost of Rs 61.77 crores.
- Funds available 2015-16 (USB only) Rs 3.85 crore
- Utilization 2015-16 (USB only) Rs 3.73 crore

Physical Achievements

- No of certified learners up to March, 2015 = 1.10 lakh
- No. of non literates appeared in basic literacy learner assessment tests during 2015-16 = 2.65 lakh^[11]

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

After the successful implementation of innovative schemes like the Jan Dhan Yojana, Make in India and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched one more scheme 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' (save the girl child, educate the girl child), on January 22, 2015. With an initial corpus of Rs 100 crore, the scheme has been launched in hundred districts across the country. In Jammu and Kashmir, where the child sex ratio (CSR) has been dismally low, under the new girl education scheme 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao', five districts of Jammu and Kashmir (Anantnag, Budgam, Jammu, Kuthua and Pulwama) has been covered out of 100 districts throughout the country. The scheme aims at making girls independent both socially and also financially through education. This approach of the Government can facilitate in generating awareness and improving the efficiency of delivery of welfare services meant for women^[12].

Status Female Education in Jammu and Kashmir

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is one of the largest states of the India. It lies between 32°-15' and 37°-05' North latitude and 72°-35' and 83°-20' East longitude. The area of Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir is 101387 sq. kms and it

comprises three natural regions viz., Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh and further subdivided into 22 districts for administration and carrying out developmental programmes. According to 2011 census data the total population in Jammu and Kashmir was about 12 million, of which male and female is 6,640,662 and 5,900,640 respectively^[13]. The State has its own Constitution besides the Constitution of India and enjoys the special status under article 370. Topography of the J&K comes in the way of rising adequate infrastructure and is further compounded by unrest with a series of violent protests and strikes, which have taken a heavy toll of life and public property besides throwing normal life out of gear. Education could not run away from this calamity as most of the educational institutions in rural areas were destroyed and loss of schooling hours immensely affected the learning outcomes. Since independence, various commendable provisions were made available in the Indian constitution and various initiatives were undertaken by the Government for the upliftment of women but despite of these initiatives the female education in India presents a dismal picture. The gap between men and women in terms of education keeps on widening. In Jammu and Kashmir, despite the progress made during the last 70 years, female literacy remains very low, particularly in the Kashmir as the education of women was given least priority and as a consequence illiteracy, ignorance and backwardness were rampant among women.

After 1947, all successive governments in Jammu and Kashmir attempted to improve the conditions of women by providing them free education which had a qualitative impact on the role and status of women. The Kashmiri women in general developed an interest and motivation to come out of their homes for education, employment and entertainment. The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference formed the first elected government in the State. The Party prepared the Draft of the future constitution of the State which was given the name of 'Naya Kashmir' in which education in the State of Jammu and Kashmir was a major and important demand. The Draft provides special arrangements for women's education in accordance with the provision of the Women's Charter^[14].

A breakthrough in women's education came in the year 1950, which saw the establishment of first women's college, on Maulana Azad Road, Srinagar and the higher education among Kashmiri women started to gain popularity with the establishment of this college. In 1961, another college (Nawa Kadal College) for women was established. With the establishment of institutions of higher education exclusively for women, there was change in the attitude of women and their consciousness rose. As a result of steadily changing attitudes of the community towards girls' education, the number of Muslim women in schools and colleges has gradually improved and their participation in modern education has increased though at a sluggish pace^[15].

Over the years, J&K has achieved many milestones in higher education. The number of colleges providing education in 1950-51 was just seven out of which one college was for female students. Up to 1999-2000, the number of colleges increased to thirty three including seven women colleges. By the year 2013-14, the number of colleges has increased to 95 including 12 women degree colleges. Despite of these efforts, gender disparity still persists in the State. In State Jammu and

Kashmir women are unequally access to education, physical, health care and financial resources opportunities in economic, social, political and cultural field. In 2011 female literacy in the state was recorded 58.01% ranking 32 in the whole national list (Census 2011). At the national level, the gender gap in literacy has decreased drastically from 25.06% in 1961 to 21.59% in 2001 and further to 16.68% in 2011. Contrary to this, the gender gap in literacy increased in the state from 12.71% in 1961 to 23.60% in 2001^[16].

The gender gap in the literacy is 6.19 per cent in favour of males. As per 2011 Census, Jammu Kashmir has recorded a literacy rate of 68.74 per cent. The literacy rate among female has been reported to be 58 per cent while as it is 78 per cent

among male. Districts of Jammu, Samba and Leh have recorded the highest literacy rates of over 90 per cent while as Bandipora, Ganderbal, Budgam, Ramban, Kulgam and Reasi districts have reported the lowest literacy rates of less than 60 percent.

On whole, there has been an improvement in education of women in cities and towns while as in rural and far flung areas the situation is still unsatisfactory. Jammu Kashmir figures among the poor female literacy level states like Bihar, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Manipur and Utter Pradesh. From the technical and vocational educational point of view our women folk lag far behind^[17]. Decade wise female literacy has been recorded as below in the form of a table.

Table 1: Census Wise Female Literacy Rate in Jammu and Kashmir

Sl. No	Year	Female literacy Rate	Increase in literacy in per cents
1	1961	5.05	NA
2	1971	10.94	5.89
3	1981	48.73	7.79
4	2001	43.00	24.27
5	2011	58.01	15.01

Source: Census 1961 to 2011 NA; Not Available

Barriers to female education

There are many socio-economic, cultural and religious barriers in the state hinder their participation of women in education:

Poverty

There is positive relationship between illiteracy and poverty. Inadequacies in the form of low family income, parents were unable to send their children to schools and boys education were prioritize as compared to female folks who use to look after their households works^[18].

Parental Illiteracy

Parental illiteracy is other constraints minimizing educational performances in general and female's performance in particular. Lack of parental support and poor learning environment at home leads to wastage and stagnation^[19].

Child Marriage

Girls in many districts of the State are married at an early age, which blocks their opportunities towards achieving education^[20].

Customs and cultural practices

Many customs and cultural practices hinders higher education of girls, many parents do not allow their daughters to attend schools in puberty^[21].

Molestation/abuse in school

Many parents feel insecure to send their daughters to schools keeping in view the ongoing abduction, rape, sexual harassment and molestation therefore all these practices widen the literacy gap in the State.

Toilet facility

This is another stunned block for lower participation of girls in education especially at upper primary level. Separate toilet

facilities for girls, female staff and security measures are warranted to upgrade their participation^[22].

Lack of girls' schools

Parents hesitate to send their daughters to co-educational schools especially at upper primary level. There is an urgent need to open separate schools for girls especially at upper primary level. Strong provision of good quality schools for girls is needed in the state^[23].

Lack of hostel facilities

Another obstacle in the way to girl's education is lack of hostel arrangements. Effortable Hostels facilities or free lodging and boarding facilities for girls belonging to SC/ST category would uplift the states of education in the state^[24].

The above six programmes for women education have chosen for study and the awareness, satisfaction of these programmes in the study area is discussed through appropriate tables

Table 2: Showing awareness of the beneficiaries regarding women educational programmes

Awareness	Yes	No	Total
Sarva Sikhsa Abhiyan	15 (75)	5 (25)	20 (100)
Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya	14 (70)	6 (30)	20 (100)
Beti Anmol	16 (80)	4 (20)	20 (100)
Mid Day Meal Scheme	18 (90)	2 (10)	20 (100)
Saakshar Bharat Mission Programme	10 (50)	10 (50)	20(100)
Beti Bachao Beti Pado	17 (85)	3 (15)	20 (100)
Total	90 (75)	30 (25)	120 (100)

Source: Computed field Survey

Table 2 shows the awareness of the respondents regarding various welfare programmes for the upliftment of women education. It is evident that 75 per cent of the respondents are aware of these programmes while the remaining 25 per are not aware about the welfare programmes meant for women education.

Table 3: Showing satisfaction of the beneficiaries regarding women educational Programmes

Opinion → Programmes ↓	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Total
Sarva Sikhsa bhiyan	5 (25)	12 (60)	3 (15)	20 (100)
Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya	6 (30)	10 (50)	4 (20)	20 (100)
Beti Anmol	4 (20)	14 (70)	2 (10)	20 (100)
Mid Day Meal Scheme	8 (40)	12 (60)	0 (0.00)	20 (100)
Saakshar Bharat Mission Programme	3 (15)	12 (60)	5 (25)	20(100)
Beti Bachao Beti Padao	4 (20)	13 (65)	3 (15)	20 (100)
Total	30 (25)	73 (60.83)	17 (14.17)	120 (100)

Computed: field survey

Table 3 highlights the satisfaction of the respondents related various welfare programmes meant for the education of women. It has been observed that 25 per cent of the respondents are highly satisfied, 60.83 per cent are satisfied through these programme and 14.17 per cent are not satisfied

with these educational programmes. Above information clearly shows that majority of the respondents are satisfied with Government programmes which provided for the education of women.

Table 4: Showing weather women educational programmes are helpful

Opinion → Programmes ↓	Helpful	Not Helpful	Can't Say	Total
Sarva Sikhsa Abhiyan	13 (65)	1 (5)	6 (30)	20 (100)
Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya	12 (60)	6 (30)	2 (10)	20 (100)
Beti Anmol	15 (75)	2 (10)	3 (15)	20 (100)
Mid Day Meal Scheme	17 (85)	0 (0.00)	3 (15)	20 (100)
Saakshar Bharat Mission Programme	8 (40)	4 (20)	8 (40)	20 (100)
Beti Bachao Beti Padao	18 (90)	0 (0.00)	2 (10)	20 (100)
Total	83 (69.17)	13 (10.83)	24 (20)	120 (100)

Source: Computed field Survey

Table 4 exhibits perception of the respondents weather the various welfare programmes meant for the education of female section are helpful to them. It has been observed that 69.17 per cent of the respondents opined that the various women welfare programmes meant for their education are very helpful to them, while 10.83 per cent respondents asserted that these programmes are not helpful for them and 24 per cent respondents are not able to say anything about all these programmes. Majority of the respondents have good opinion about programme selected for the study.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Results drawn above highlights, that the Government of India has launched number of programmes and schemes for upliftment of women education over the period. Majority of the respondents are aware of these programmes and most of the respondents opined that the programmes introduced by the Government are very helpful and contributed for the educational development of women. No doubt the Government programmes which meant for women bring changes in their educational status but unfortunately the development in education of women has not reached to the desired level.

Female education system of Jammu and Kashmir has remained educationally backward despite initiatives undertaken by government from time to time to improve the education system. Although, improvements are recorded by the joint operation of the governments in the State by a series of initiatives especially for the female/ backward/ underprivileged sections of the society, yet, a more complex

packages in the form of girls schools, up gradation of primary schools, financial incentives, and other scholarships for girls will help to achieve the target of cent per cent literacy in the State. Further, awareness programmes particularly in rural India where problems lies in the patriarchal and male-dominated system considered women as liability and practices were undertaken to surpass her. Therefore, there is a need to aware and sensitize male folks in the society regarding women education and try to inculcate a feeling of togetherness.

Further, government, voluntary sector and individuals should come forward for highlighting the essence of female education and make efforts to provide free education, free hostel facilities to encourage children of poor families to pursue good and higher education without many impediments. Special arrangements like separate girls schools, female teachers, nearby schools, washrooms, and transport facilities should be made for the female folk. The schools and colleges need to be safe places where parents will prefer to send their daughters happily. Parents of children belonging to poor, underprivileged families must be specially educated with proper social formula to help them as foundation for empowerment.

The welfare programmes for the development of women education in state need to be implemented properly. Separate allocation of budget for women's education is a crucial requirement. New schemes for girl education in rural and far-flung areas should be a matter of concern for the policy makers. The existing gaps in education of boys and girls need to be identified. Some special provisions and schemes for girl students like scholarships, free books, uniform etc will go a

long way in overcoming the barriers in female education. The Tamil Nadu Government provides bicycles to the school going girls which facilitates their reaching the school in time and saves them from the menace of overcrowded buses or covering long distances by foot. This initiative has helped the state in motivating girl students to attend their schools and has increased their enrolment. Such initiatives can attract our girl students from backward and remote areas towards schools.

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