

IMPACT OF KANYASHREE PRAKALPA ON SCHOOL GOING GIRLS: A CASE STUDY OF CHAPRA BLOCK IN NADIA DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT: *Kanyashree Prakalpa is an innovative project of the government of West Bengal. Kanyashree Prakalpa is a conditional direct cash transfer scheme for young girls of lower income families most at-risk for dropping out of school and for child marriage adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18. The effectiveness of the Prakalpa immediately appears just after the implementation of Kanyashree Prakalpa-2013 across the state. The districts do not have uniformity in effectiveness. The districts have been compared over the years on their effectiveness. So the researcher has motivated to find out the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa. The main objectives of the study is to find out whether the Kanyashree Prakalpa has any effect on school-going girls of Chapra Block in Nadia District in West Bengal. Both primary and secondary data have been used for this study. It is found 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.*

KEYWORDS: *Kanyashree Prakalpa, Enrolment, Drop-Out, Child Marriage*

INTRODUCTION

In October 2013, the government of West Bengal introducing Kanyashree Prakalpa addresses two major challenges in the society, a girl's dropout from school and the prevalence of a girl child marriage, which are believed to be the most influential obstacles in question of women education and empowerment. Kanyashree Prakalpa is a conditional direct cash transfer scheme for young girls of lower income families most at-risk for dropping out of school and for child marriage: adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18. It has two categories: K-1 and K-2. K-1 is applicable to Girls aged between 13 – 18 years and studying in a Government or a Government undertaking school. K-2 is applicable to girls who are enrolled in a government or a Government undertaking college aged between 18-19 years. As per the scheme K-1 Rs 750/- has been credited to the beneficiary account in each year up to the age of 18. The amount in some extent will meet the recurring expenses of education but more importantly it will prevent girls of poor families to discontinue the study, which reduces the tendency of drop out from school at early stage of education. Moreover, as per the scheme K-2 a beneficiary will receive Rs 25000/- as a onetime grant. It motivates girls of poor families to pursue higher education after completion of school education. A college girl with this amount can easily bear it recurring expenses in gradation level. So a girl who at the age of 13 comes under the purview of Kanyashree Prakalpa can easily continue her study up to Graduation without facing any financial obstacles. It relieves parents of economical weaker section to bear the expenses of girls education and also motivates them to encourage girls to attend the school and after completion of school education to pursue higher study.

Kanyashree is a conditional cash transfer scheme which targets those most at-risk for child marriage: adolescent girls between the ages of 13 and 18, and its conditions are aimed at incentivizing their education and discouraging child marriage till at least age 18, the legal age of marriage. The scheme has two benefit components:

- First, a cash benefit to be paid annually to the girls in the target age group for every year that they remained in education, provided they were unmarried at the time.
- The second benefit was a one-time grant, to be paid when a girl turned 18, provided that she was still engaged in an academic or occupational pursuit and was unmarried on her 18th birthday.

The term 'education' encompasses secondary and higher secondary education, as well as the various vocational, technical and sports courses available for this age group. Kanyashree Prakalpa draws its core design from evidence-based social safety net mechanisms that are playing an increasing role in development policy across the world, including India. Rather than directly confront the social elements that perpetuate child marriage, the scheme focuses on positive behavioural changes for adolescent girls (i.e. retention in the education matrix and delayed marriage) that protect them from early marriage, premature sexual activity and teenage pregnancies and their concomitant risks, allows them to complete the developmental tasks of adolescence in the relatively safe environs of educational institutions, and gives them the opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge that they can carry through into their adult lives. The Scheme however, does not ignore the structural factors that drive child marriage: the scheme's communication strategy, developed with the support of UNICEF, contains strong components of public advocacy and behavioural change methods designed to bring about positive attitudinal changes in the way adolescent girls perceive themselves, and are perceived by their families and communities.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

The researcher has tried to review a few literatures related to it:

- [1] **Adhikari, K. (2017), The role of Kanyashree Prakalpa In Empowering Adolescent Girls in West Bengal**

This article aims to probe the role of Kanyashree Prakalpa in Empowering Adolescent Girls in West Bengal. In this article the author have been studied and observed, the District Project Management Unit (DPMU), Birbhum has been working hard under the

leadership of the District Magistrate, Birbhum since the inception of the scheme in 2013 for successful implementation at grass-root level. The DPMU has been successful to include the names of 763 numbers of educational institutions registered under the Kanyashree portal of the department till today since the inception of the flagship programme of govt. in 2013. Accordingly schematic benefit in respect of 345676 K-1 cases and 38268 K-2 cases has been released so far by the DPMU, Kanyashree Prakalpa, Birbhum till June 2017. Kanyashree Prakalpa, Birbhum also have been working hard to promote various other multifarious activities (i.e. social awareness programme and convergence activities) involving the Kanyashree girls throughout the district for successful implementation of the programme in true sense.

- [2] **Tusar Kanti Ghara & Krishna Roy (2017)** writes on Impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa –District wise analysis. The main objectives of this study is to analyse the effectiveness of the scheme across the districts of West Bengal and their uniformity over time span of 4 years 2013-14 to 2016-17. In this study the data has been calculated from the year 2013-14 to 2016-17 for each of the districts. The study steers clear 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.
- [3] **Ali, H. & Jha, s. K. (2015)** This Article aims to highlight the impact of the Kanyashree Prakalpa to prevent child marriage. The authors pointed out the very beginning of the bad effect of early marriage which occurs between a minor girl and minor boy or one of them. The authors also reveal that Kanyashree Prakalpa not only minimises the tendency of girl students to drop- out from schools in early age at the same time it will make a positive impact of the prevention of girl child marriage. A pre-condition of the Prakalpa is not being married. A girl who gets the benefit of the Prakalpa (K-1) will enjoy the benefit till she is reached at the age of 17. Survey reveals that during a significant percentage of child marriage occurs during the age of 15 to 17. In most of the cases the marriage is organized 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 beneficiary of the scheme (K-2). The benefited amount this time is higher than the previous one. 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.
- [4] **Saha, B.(2015)** Conducted a study on **Impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on Girl Child in West Bengal, India** The objectives of this study are overview of Kanyashree Prakalpa, finding and analysing its effect on drop- out of girl's child in West Bengal, finding and analysing its effect on child marriage of girls. The author tries to find out whether this scheme actually able to improve the rate of school attendance of girl and simultaneously to look child marriage number has declined or not. Both primarily and secondary data is collected from various government aided schools and secondary data has been collected from various daily journal, website, etc. The study revealed that child marriage is a kind of socio- economic problem. It is a major social concern and the primary cause of high drop- out rate among girls, particularly between the age of 13 and 19 relatively higher than national average. As explored by the study a report by UNICEF finds that in Bengal currently almost one in every two girls is married off before they reach 18, the study also revealed that the district of Murshidabad has the highest incidence of child marriage in the state at 61% and Birbhum comes a close second at 58% followed by Malda with 56% and Purulia. West Bengal is among the top five states in India when it comes to child marriage a nationwide survey conducted by centre points that of all marriage taking place in Bengal; nearly 55% are of minor girls. It is under these circumstances the government of West Bengal decided to follow in the footsteps of epoch making Bengal social reformers and conceived the Kanyashree Prakalpa in 2013, a project that will work towards bringing down the cases of child marriage and keep young girls in school. The study finds that Prakalpa takes a great role in every regard, regarding social power and self esteem of girls. The findings of the study also shows that in some of blocks there were difficulties in opening zero balance account in bank. Annual scholarship for the meritorious student is not sufficient. Campaign about Kanyashree Prakalpa among the guardian was not adequate. Discussion with the students revealed that grievance redressal officer was not appropriate.

After reviewing related studies, the researcher identified some research work or survey had already been done on effectiveness of the Kanyashree Prakalpa. Existing literatures revealed that there are several positive effects of Kanyashree Prakalpa . But no study has been found on impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa of girls of Chapra Block in Nadia district. Therefore a wide knowledge gap was noticed by researcher and an intensive research is attempted in this field to full fill this knowledge gap. Thus the problem has stated as Impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on school Going Girls: A case study of Chapra Block in Nadia District of West Bengal.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In this study the researcher has taken up the study entitled- Impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on school Going Girls: A case study of Chapra Block in Nadia District of West Bengal.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on the educational progress of adolescent girls.
2. To analyses the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on School attendance of adolescent girls.
3. To finding and analysing the effect of Kanyashree Prakalpa on drop- out of adolescent girls.
4. To analyses the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on child marriage of girls.
5. To find out the impact of this scheme on adolescent girls about social awareness.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Whether the scheme Kanyashree Prakalpa helps in increasing the enrolment of the girl students in Chapra Block of Nadia district.
2. What is the impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on School attendance of adolescent girls in Chapra Block of Nadia district?
3. What is the effect of Kanyashree Prakalpa on drop- out of adolescent girls in Chapra Block of Nadia district?
4. Is there any effect of Kanyashree Prakalpa to restrain child marriage of girls?

METHODOLOGY

Methodologically this is a case study research. Fifty school going adolescent girls were taken to collect data from two school of Nadia district. Here each school consider as a case to describe and interpret the existing condition.

POPULATION

All the school going adolescent girls of Chapra Block in Nadia district are considered as population of the study.

SAMPLING

Purposive sampling method was used to collect the sample for the study.

TOOLS

- **ENROLMENT RECORD OF GIRLS:** The researchers used the school admission register with the help of the school authorities to know the exact number of the admission of the girl's students from class VIII to XII.
- **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE GIRLS STUDENTS:** The present researchers developed questionnaires to know about the Impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on school Going Girls of Chapra Block.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher would try to proceed keeping in view the objectives mentioned earlier. The significance and the ultimate goal of the research study are to find out the Impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on school Going Girls of Chapra Block in Nadia District of West Bengal. The study may have sociological, economical and educational significance.

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS**1. Do you know about the different projects initiated by the government for girls' welfare?**

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
94%	4%	2%

ANALYSIS: According to the table it is clear that 94% school-going girls know the various projects initiated by the government for girl's welfare. Among them 4% girls are not known about it and 2% girls have no idea about it.

2. Do you know that girls are lag behind to the boys in terms of education in our country?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
72%	20%	8%

ANALYSIS: The table shows that 72% adolescent girls know that they are lag behind to the boys in terms of education in our country. Among them 20% adolescent girls don't know about it and 8% girls have no idea about it.

3. Do you know the main objectives of the Kanyashree project?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
80%	20%	0%

ANALYSIS: It is clear in the table that 80% school-going adolescent girls of Nadia district knows the main objectives of the Kanyashree Prakalpa and 20% girls don't know about the objectives of Kanyashree Prakalpa.

4. Have you any concept about the two tiers of Kanyashree Prakalpa, K-1 and K-2?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
82%	16%	2%

ANALYSIS: As per the above table it is clear that 82% adolescent girls have the clear concept about the two tiers of Kanyashree Prakalpa, K-1 and K-2. 16% of them have no clear concept about it and 2% girls did not give any comments about this.

5. Does the scholarship motivate you in your education?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
90%	6%	4%

ANALYSIS: As per the table it is clear that this scholarship inspire 90% school-going adolescent girls towards their studies, 6% said the scholarship don't inspire them towards education and 4% girls didn't give any discussion.

6. Do you spend the total amount of the scholarship in your education?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
72%	22%	6%

ANALYSIS: It is understood from the above table that 72% of school-going adolescent girls spend the scholarship of Kanyashree totally for their education. Other 22% girls do not use the entire money of the scholarship for their education and 6% girls have not given any opinion about this matter.

7. Do you think that interest among girls to go to school is increasing due to this project?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
84%	2%	14%

ANALYSIS: It has been understood from the table that 84% girls think that the interest of going school among girls is growing for the Kanyashree Prakalpa , 2% girls do not think so and other 14% have not opined anything.

8. Does the scholarship of Kanyashree Prakalpa provide financial support to your guardians for your education?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
98%	0%	2%

ANALYSIS: It is clearly stated in this table that 98% girls think that the scholarship of Kanyashree Prakalpa does financial support to their guardians and 2% girls do not think the same.

9. Would you give consent to your marriage proposal during your education?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
0%	96%	4%

ANALYSIS: It is clear from the above table that 96% girls are not agree to marry during their education and 4% girls have not said anything about this.

10. Do you think that Kanyashree Prakalpa is helping the cause of prevention of early marriage of girls?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
62%	32%	6%

ANALYSIS: The above table shows that 62% girls think Kanyashree Prakalpa has been succeeding to stop girls early marriage, 32% girls do not think so and 6% have not opined.

11. Do you think that this initiative has accelerated the progress of girls' education?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
48%	32%	20%

ANALYSIS: The graph shows 48% girls think that the initiative of Kanyashree Prakalpa of the government has accelerated the progress of girl's education , 32% girls do not think same. Other 20% have not opined anything.

12. Do you think that the rate of girls drop-out from schools is being decreased by the Kanyashree Prakalpa?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
86%	4%	10%

ANALYSIS: According to the table that 86% girls think that the drop-out rate from school is decreasing for the scheme Kanyashree Prakalpa, 4% girls do not think so and 10% have not given any decision.

13. Do you think that the rate of girls' education is increasing due to Kanyashree Prakalpa?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
80%	12%	8%

ANALYSIS: The table has shown that 80% girls think that the rate of girls education is increasing for Kanyashree Prakalpa , 12% girls do not think same and 8% girls have not given any opinion.

14. Does the Kanyashree Prakalpa motivate you for higher education?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
94%	2%	4%

ANALYSIS: According to the table 94% girls, Kanyashree Prakalpa is motivating girls for higher education, 2% girls do not think as them and 4% girls have not given any opinion.

15. Do you think this project is making social awareness among girls?

YES	NO	UNDECIDED
82%	10%	8%

ANALYSIS: It is clear from the table that 82% girls think that social awareness is increasing for the Kanyashree Prakalpa , 10% girls do not think as them and 8% girls have not given any answer.

FINDINGS

From the study the investigator have found that there were several positive effects of Kanyashree Prakalpa at Chapra block of Nadia district. The Prakalpa is able to reduce the incidents of drop out, especially amongst girls from poor family and also discourage early marriage of girls to ensure compliance with the provisions pertaining to the minimum age at marriage. It encourages education of girl children in secondary and higher secondary classes and those undergoing vocational training or sports training through scholarship. Parents are also inspired by the Prakalpa to involve their girl child 13-18 years in schooling system. The investigator also revealed that in the present scenario the girl's fare achieving better percentage than the boys in Madhyamik Examination as well as in the college university also.

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