

REACHING THE UNREACHED : 'KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA'

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ABSTRACT

Reaching out to the girl child is central to the efforts to universalize elementary education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, or 'Education for All' programme recognizes that ensuring girl's education requires changes not only in the education system but also in societal norms and attitudes. Empowering women and girls especially belonging to ST, SC, OBC and minority community through education is one of the significant instrument for changing women's position in the society. It is true that the position of women of any society shows its cultural and social level of development.

In order to uplift the poor condition of girl's education in India the Govt. of India has introduced different programme for women's empowerment. "Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya" was launched by the Government in July, 2004 for those girls who are educationally, socially and economically backward to ensure access and quality education to the girls from disadvantaged groups of society by setting up residential schools at upper primary level. The present article is about "Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya" (KGBV) scheme for women's empowerment especially tribal education in India.

Key words: Elementary Education, Disadvantaged group, KGBV (Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya)

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Introduction

Education plays a vital role in the development of a nation. National development mainly refers to the development of physical and human resources. The development of physical resource totally depends on the development of human resource. Maximum utilization of human resource is need for national development. This is possible only when education is imparted to the human beings. Human resource is nothing but the man power. Thus development of a nation is directly related to the education of a nation is directly related to the education of the man power available in the nation. The man power includes both men and women.

Education is a process which is especially designed to facilitate an all round development of each and every child. Education always emphasized as the most significant instrument for changing women's sub-jugated position in the society. Once women are educated in the right way will contribute positively to build up strong nation.

Even some steps have been taken by (i) Mahila Samakhya (ii) Sarva Shikshya Abhiyan (S.S.A.) (iii) Operation Black Board (OB) (iv) Non-Formal Education (v) DPEP (vi) National Literacy Mission (vii) Navodaya Vidyalaya (viii) Vocational Education (ix) Boarding and Hostel facilities for girls (x) K.G.B.V etc. to educate girls.

Women Education

There can not be educated people without educated women. If general education had to be limited to man or to women, then opportunity should be given to women; so that it would more surely be passed on to the next generation.

Education is necessary for both man and woman, in fact for women more than men, because for healthy and happy home, improvement of society, economic prosperity, and national solidarity. Women constitute roughly one half of the world's population. But their social, economic and political status is lower than that of men in almost all countries of the world. Of course, women do enjoy better position in some societies than in others, but their over all position everywhere is lower than their male counterparts.

Rabindra Nath Tagore once had said that "The union of man and woman will represent a perfect co-ordination on the building up human history on equal terms in every department of life".

Educational Status of Women's in India

Census of India, 2001, shows the total literacy rate was 65.38% of total population where as, female literacy rate was 54.16% as against the male literacy rate 75.85% and again in 2011 census although the female literacy rate has increased by 65.46% but it is still lower than males literacy rate which is 82.14%. Thus the lower literacy percentage is largely contributed by female literacy. The total literacy rate of both male and female, according to 2011 census is given below:

Table -1.1.1 Showing Total Literacy Rate (in percentage)

Year	Total literacy rate	Female literacy rate	Male literacy rate
2001	65.38	54.16	75.85
2011	74.04	65.46	82.14

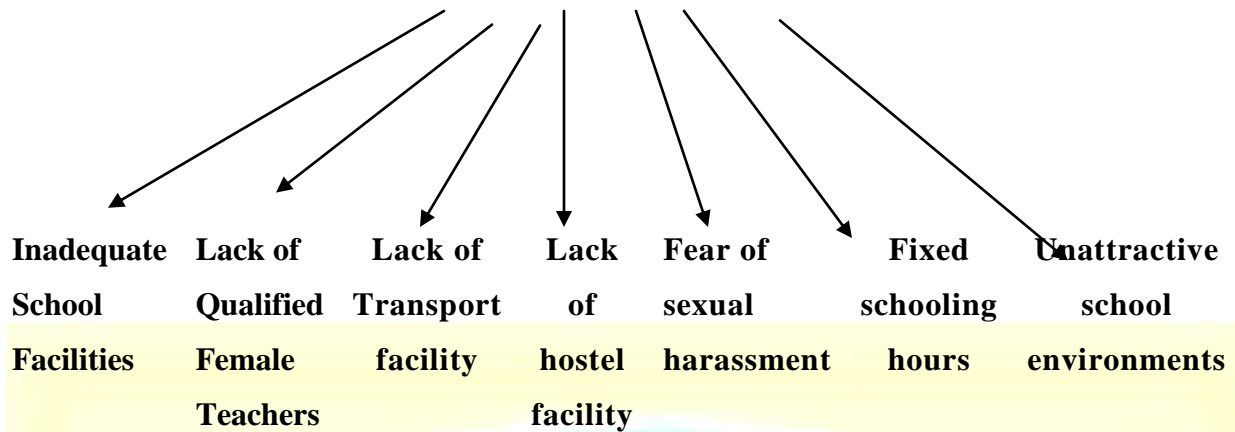
Source : Census of India, 20011

Female literacy or educational status of women may play an important role & it is the education which can make the women aware about their rights and duties, importance of small family norm, care and guidance for their children. It is the education which may help them in adopting innovative ideas by learning traditional ways of thinking and living and thus making them modernized women.

Barriers to Girls education

There are several barriers for low levels of literacy among females in India and not only the high level of poverty. One third of the population is estimated to be living below the poverty line (World Bank, 1997). Poor families are more likely to keep girls at home to do the household works and to care for younger siblings. It is widely accepted fact that poverty has a strong correlation with education. Negative parental attitudes towards educating daughters can also be a barrier to girl's education. Some other barriers to girl's education are:-

Barriers of Girls education



Constitutional Provisions for Girls Education

Education of girls has been a high priority with the Government of India. The National commitment to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the 6-14 years age group is now a Fundamental Right of every child in India after the passing of the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act in December, 2002. India has several other constitutional and legal provisions for safeguarding and promoting the interests of children and women.

Article 15 lays down that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of sex, and it adds that nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making any special provisions for women and children.

Article 45 of the Constitution upholds, “The state is enjoined to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years.”

Article 14 highlights that women will be given equal opportunity to obtain all types of training and education.

Education commission also states “for full development of our human resources, improvement of homes and for moulding the character of children during the most impressionable years of their infancy, the education of girls is of greater importance than that of boys”. Thus education of women is emphasized by the Indian constitution.

National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986)

National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) consider education for women’s equality as a vital component of the overall strategy or securing equity and social justice in education. This policy laid special emphasis on the removal of disparities and equalize

educational opportunities by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far. The POA, 1992 aimed at re-organising the educational activities so as to ensure that there was substantial contribution towards women's equality.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)

KGBV is a unique programme of central govt. which is started in July, 2004. It ensure access and quality education to the girls of disadvantaged groups of society by setting up residential schools at upper primary level. This scheme would be applicable only in the identified educationally backward blocks as per census data of 2001. The rural female literacy is below the national average and gender gap in literacy is more than the national average. This scheme is only for the ST, SC, OBC, and minority girls child those are left the school after the primary schooling. KGBV provides quality education to the girls of disadvantaged groups of the society by setting up residential schools at upper primary level.

At the upper primary level the emphasis is on adolescent girls who are unable to go to regular schools, the scheme targets 75% from SC, ST, OBC and minority community and would be enrolled in such residential school and thereafter 25% from the below poverty line (BPL) family.

Category wise enrolment of girls in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya

Total Enrolment	SC	ST	OBC	Minority	BPL
80,853	19,823	23,298	20,137	4,187	13,417

Source:ssa.nic.in

Objectives of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)

Gender disparities still persist in rural areas and among disadvantaged communities. Looking at enrolment trends, there remain significant gaps in the enrolment of girls at the elementary level as compared to boys, especially at the Upper Primary levels. The objective of KGBV is to ensure access and quality education to the girls of disadvantaged groups of society by setting up residential schools with boarding facilities at elementary level.

Coverage of the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)

The scheme covers educationally backward blocks in 24 states namely:- Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Jammu and Kashmir, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh, Rajasthan, Gujrat, Maharastra, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Uttaranchal, West Bengal and Union Territory of Dadar & Nagar Haveli.

Scope of the Scheme

The scheme is applicable in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) where, the rural female literacy is below the national average (46.13%; Census 2001) and gender gap in literacy is more than the national average (21.59% Census 2001). Among these blocks; schools may be set up in Areas with:-

- Concentration of tribal population, with low female literacy and / or a large number of girls out of school;
- Concentration of SC, ST, OBC & minority population, with low female literacy and or a large number of girls out of school.
- Areas with low female literacy or,
- Areas with a large number of small-scattered habitations that do not qualify for an upper from school.

Some Features/ Components of the Scheme

1. Setting up of residential schools where there is a minimum of 50 girls predominantly from the SC, ST, OBC & minority communities available to study in the school at the U. primary level. The number can be more than 50% depending on the number of eligible girls.
2. To provide necessary infrastructure for these schools.
3. To prepare and procure necessary teaching learning materials for these schools.
4. To put in place appropriate systems to provide necessary academic support and for evaluation and monitoring of these schools.
5. To motivate and prepare the girls and their families to send them to residential school.
6. At the primary level the emphasis will be on the slightly older girls who are not out of school and were unable to complete primary schools.
7. At the U.P level, emphasis will be on girls, especially adolescent girls who are unable to go regular schools.

8. In view of the targeted nature of the scheme, 75% girls from SC, ST, OBC or minority only thereafter, 25% girls from families below poverty line.
9. Established NGOs and other non-profit making bodies will be involved in the running of the schools, wherever possible. These residential schools can also be adopted by corporate groups or not for prohibit organizations.

Promotion of education amongst children belonging to disadvantaged sections i.e. ST, SC, girl's, minority, is a major concern of Sarva-Siksha Abhiyan. In many tribal habitations of the district it has not been possible to open primary or upper primary schools as they do not fulfill either population or distance criteria. This situation has aroused due to the fact that many tribal habitations are small, scattered & cut-off by hills, terrains & forests.

Many studies have shown demand for opening of residential schools to promote education among tribal children particularly girl children. Tribal parents shown interest in sending their daughters to residential schools. Therefore Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) have been opened in every educationally backward block with the major aim to provide upper primary education to girl's who, due to various reasons, have discontinued their education after completion of primary education.

Thus, this scheme Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) is a scheme meant for education of girls belonging to (ST/SC/OBC/Minority) & helps to uplift girl's education in educationally backward blocks in different states. The educational status of tribal women's /girls is increasing through this scheme & helpful in increasing female literacy rate from disadvantaged groups (ST/SC/OBC/Minority). Through this scheme we can fulfill one of the goals of educational development that is Universalisation of Elementary Education through proper implementation of the provision made for Educationally Backward Block girls.

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