



A STUDY ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN TEACHERS TOWARDS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYAS

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ABSTRACT

Education is one of the most significant means for empowering an individual or community in general and that of women and girls in particular. Level of educational attainment and literacy rate are the indicators of development of any society. Gender equality and empowerment of women are indispensable for achieving prosperity and sustainable development. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme, which was introduced by the Government of India in 2004, is an important flagship programme for uplifting the girls belonging to rural and marginalized groups of the society, particularly those belonging to SC, ST, OBC and other minority communities. The aim of the present study is to explore the perception of women teachers working in KGBVs and their level of perception towards quality improvement in KGBVs. The study was conducted using survey method. The sample of the study consists of 200 women teachers selected randomly from 25 KGBVs in Vizianagaram District of Andhra Pradesh. The data were collected using an attitude questionnaire. The variables considered for the study include Age, Marital status, Teaching experience and Location of the institution. The data were analyzed using Arithmetic Means, Standard Deviations and Critical Ratios. The findings of the study revealed that age, marital status, teaching experience and location of the institution have no influence on the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs. The study suggested that the school authorities should provide favorable working conditions for teachers in the school. The teachers in KGBVs should be appointed on a regular/permanent basis in order to attract committed teachers into the profession and utilize their services to improve quality in education.

Key words: *Perceptions, Women teachers, Empowerment, Quality improvement, KGBVs*

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most powerful instruments of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of national goals. It cultivates social, moral and spiritual values among people. It is essential for the economic and cultural development of a country. It helps in the transmission of culture from one generation to the other. It helps to increase the productivity, achieve national and emotional integration and accelerate the process of modernization. Gender equality and empowerment of women are indispensable for achieving prosperity and sustainable development. Since Independence, India has been adopting several strategies for national, social, economic and political development of the nation. There has also been improvement in the overall situation and status of women in the country. Even after several decades on achieving independence to the nation, there has been low enrolment and high drop-out rate of girls in schools; and these are the root causes for low female literacy in the country. The Government of India, after reviewing the prevailing situation regarding the low female enrolment in primary and middle schools, decided to provide quality education for girls, particularly those belonging to SC, ST, OBC and other minority communities.

CONCEPT OF 'KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYAS'

The Government of India had taken initiative in introducing Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme in August, 2004. It is a flagship programme of Government of India to establish initially 3609 KGBVs in 3451 Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) in co-ordination with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) scheme across the nation. The objective of KGBV scheme is to ensure access and quality education to the girls of disadvantaged groups of society by setting up residential schools at primary and upper primary levels. This ensures improvement in the enrolment of girls in schools and reduction in the dropout rate.

QUALITY EDUCATION FOR GIRLS IN KGBVs

Spread of quality education among marginalized sections of the society, particularly those belonging to SC, ST, OBC and other minority communities, has become a formidable task in India today. Quality education for girls needs to be considered on priority basis for the empowerment of women to achieve sustainable development.

To improve the quality in education for girls studying in the KGBVs, the following measures are to be taken note of on priority basis by the Central as well as the State Government Organizations.

- (i) The KGBVs should provide stress-free education for girls.
- (ii) The classes should be conducted in a pleasant environment.
- (iii) The girls may be encouraged to participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities apart from the regular academic programme in KGBVs.
- (iv) Vocational training should be given to the students in order to make them self-supported.
- (v) Life skills education need to be integrated with the curriculum
- (vi) The students should be provided delicious nutritious food in the attached hostels of KGBVs.
- (vii) Teachers who are committed and dedicated to the profession, particularly those interested in the education of girls from downtrodden communities, should be appointed in KGBVs.
- (viii) The teachers working in KGBVs should be paid good salaries in regular pay scales attached to the respective positions.
- (ix) The teachers should adopt innovative methods in the teaching-learning process.
- (x) The teachers should use good teaching-learning material to make the teaching more concrete and meaningful.
- (xi) The health and hygiene of the girls in KGBVs should be taken care of by the authorities.
- (xii) The parents of the inmates are to be invited to the KGBVs at regular intervals of time and given orientation on the need for education of girls and empowering women in the changing society.

NEED FOR THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

When the investigator approached some of the KGBVs and interacted with the teachers working therein, it has been observed that there is not much difference in the functioning of these KGBVs and other general schools except the residential facility provided to the girls. Some of the teachers do not possess favorable attitude towards the education of girls studying in KGBVs. The infrastructural facilities available in some of the KGBVs are inadequate. There are no innovative practices observed in the teaching-learning process. Further, from the review of related literature, it is observed that there are very few studies conducted earlier by the other researchers on the perceptions of teachers towards quality

improvement in KGBVs. Hence, the investigators thought it desirable to conduct research in this area. The present investigation is an attempt to study the functioning of KGBVs with special reference to the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh. The study takes into its purview the influence of certain demographic variables, viz., age, marital status, designation, teaching experience and location of the school on the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the present investigation is to know the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs. The present study also aims at studying the influence of age, marital status, teaching experience and location of the school on the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present investigation:

- (i) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of women teachers aged below 30 years and those aged 30 years and above towards quality improvement in KGBVs.
- (ii) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of married and unmarried women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs.
- (iii) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of teachers with an experience of less than 5 years and those with 5 years and above towards quality improvement in KGBVs.
- (iv) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of women teachers working in rural and urban schools towards quality improvement in KGBVs.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to find out the perceptions of women teachers working in KGBVs in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh towards quality improvement in KGBVs. The study is confined to know the influence of four demographic variables, viz., Age, Marital Status, Teaching experience and Location of the school on the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs.

METHODOLOGY

- (a) **Sample:** The sample of the study consists of 200 women teachers working in 25 KGBVs located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh selected by using Random Sampling technique.
- (b) **Research Tool:** The researchers used a well-prepared questionnaire consisting of 30 items as the research tool for the present investigation. The reliability, validity and objective of the tool were tested for purpose of standardization of the tool.

(c) **Administration of the Tool**

The questionnaire consisting of 30 items was administered to 200 teachers working in 25 KGBVs located in rural as well as urban areas in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh. These teachers include both married and unmarried females aged below 30 years and those aged 30 years and above with a teaching experience of less than 5 years and those with an experience of 5 years and above.

STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The data collected has been analyzed and interpreted using different statistical techniques such as:

- (i) Mean score values,
- (ii) Standard Deviations; and
- (iii) Critical Ratios.

The hypotheses formulated have been verified and tested on the basis of the results obtained. From these results, the researchers have arrived at the findings. These findings formed the basis for drawing conclusions and arrive at generalizations.

Table showing the significance of difference in the perceptions of women teachers towards Quality improvement in KGBVs

S. No.	Variable		N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio	Result
1	Age	Below 30 years	60	95.84	27.66	0.32*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		30 years & above	140	97.21	28.04		
2	Marital Status	Married	150	97.97	27.35	0.33*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Unmarried	50	96.50	26.80		
3	Teaching Experience	Less than 5 years	160	96.12	27.72	0.54*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		5 years & above	40	93.50	27.45		
4	Location of the Institution	Rural	180	95.61	27.69	0.15*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Urban	20	96.50	24.17		

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of data, the researchers have arrived at the following findings and drawn the conclusions.

1. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of women teachers aged below 30 years and those aged 30 years and above towards quality improvement in KGBVs.
2. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of married and unmarried women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs.
3. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of women teachers with a teaching experience of less than 5 years and those with an experience of 5 years and above towards quality improvement in KGBVs.
4. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of women teachers working in rural and urban areas towards quality improvement in KGBVs.

CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that age, marital status, length of service of the teachers and location of the institution have no influence on their perceptions towards quality improvement in KGBVs. The study suggested that the school authorities should provide favorable working conditions for teachers in the school. The teachers in KGBVs should be appointed on a regular/permanent basis in order to attract committed teachers into the profession and utilize their services to improve quality in education.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The following are the educational implications of the present study.

- (i) The study helps to bring about awareness among the rural villagers on the need for education of girls in the society.
- (ii) The study would certainly help the administration to provide favorable working conditions in KGBVs to attract talented teachers into the profession.
- (iii) The study would help the administration take right decisions in making policies while recruiting teachers of high standard to the schools.
- (iv) The study would help the managements of schools to provide pleasant and healthy working environment in schools.
- (v) This study would help to develop strategies for creating satisfactory service conditions for teachers in KGBVs in order to make teaching an attractive profession.
- (vi) The study is an eye-open to all the stake-holders to realize the need for education of girls in attaining women empowerment for sustainable development.

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