

Status of implementation of a women empowerment government scheme in rural India: A case study

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Abstract

India is a country where several Goddesses are worshipped, and women have been respected since ancient times. For overcoming this gender-based discrimination and suffering and for empowering a girl child, the Government of India, introduced various schemes. 'Save Girl Child, Educate Girl Child', introduced in 2015, is one such scheme. The paper intends to find the awareness levels, issues, and hurdles in the implementation process of this scheme; and takes a few villages of U.P., India as case study. The methodology involves

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both- quantitative and qualitative analysis. The findings could be helpful in making future strategies for the success of the scheme for rural women empowerment.

Subject Classification: H81, I38, J64.

Keywords: Girlchild, Women, Awareness, Education, Mindset, Hurdles.

Introduction

The launch of various women welfare schemes, no doubt, led to improved condition of women in various ways: education, job, freedom, health and overall empowerment, but this success story could not extend to rural area and perhaps this is the reason why researchers revealed that if compared to men, average women in India are still disempowered (Kishor and Gupta, 2004). The efforts for women empowerment continued. The improvements were seen, and despite female illiteracy being higher than that of males, gender parity in enrolment rates specially, at middle school level, was an evident positive sign in India. (Sinha & Mukherjee, 2015). Still, a lot was to be done.

Objectives of the Scheme:

- To improve balanced Child Sex Ratio by averting gender biased sex selective elimination
- To ensure survival & protection of the girl child
- To ensure education and empowerment of the girl child

Literature Review:

Discrimination against the Girl Child is a very serious social problem prevailing in India. The social-economic-cultural thinking in India promotes preference for male child. (Kapoor et. al. 2012). Literacy: As per facts mentioned in Population Census of India 2011, there is an improvement of 9% in the overall literacy rate of India, which has gone up from 65.38% in 2001 to 74.01% in 2011 (Population Census of India, 2011).

However, as regards gender concerns in literacy, a wide gap in male-female literacy rate still persists, which is a serious concern (Navneet Kaur Brar, 2018). Social Construct: Various socio-cultural set ups also encourage preference for sons and discrimination against daughters. For example, the fact that a girl must leave her parents' home and become the member of groom's family, once she gets married, reduces a parent's incentive to

send her child to school (Tiwari, S., & Chaturvedi, S. (2021). Sending a girl to school is like 'watering someone else's plant', according to popular perception (Dreze and Sen, 2002). The similar kind of views are also advanced by Payal Kapoor, Ashish Shah (2012).

Kavita Kumari, Jyoti Rani (2019) rightly said that "there is a need to create awareness among people to attain the gender equity and equality".

Research Methodology

Quantitative: Questionnaire based data analysis, *Qualitative:* Interview based analysis, Non-verbal communication analysis., *Sample Size:* 210 questionnaires were collected from people of every age group and of both the genders - male and female. Out of these 175 questionnaires were usable, *Survey Area:* A few Villages of U.P.

Hypothesis

Awareness: H_{1a} : Majority of the villagers were aware of the schemes
 H_{1b} : Various sources of information (TV, Radio, Relatives, NGOs,) are equally contributing to spreading awareness, H_{1c} : **At least 50% of the awareness is spread by Relatives and Radio**

Hurdles: H_{2a} : **Grandparents** are not willing to educate girls, H_{2b} : There is no higher secondary school in the village, H_{2c} : **Parents are not willing to send girls to a higher secondary school in the neighborhood**, H_{2d} Home chores are more important to girls than the education. H_{2e} : Parents want to save money for dowry rather than investing on girls' education.

H_{2f} : Most of the girls, who think home chores are more important to girls than the education, are not educated.

Quantitative Analysis

We were interested in knowing if majority of people are aware of the scheme.

If 60% of people say that they are aware of the scheme, we will assume that majority is aware of the scheme. To check the claim, we used Z test for proportion

Of the 175 respondents 127 informed that they are aware of the scheme, while 48 informed that they are not aware of the scheme. Let p be the population proportion which is aware of the scheme:

$$H_0: p \geq 0.60, H_1: p < 0.60$$

Table 1
1-sample proportions test without continuity correction

data: 127 out of 175, null probability 0.6
X-squared = 11.524, df = 1, p-value = 0.0006871
95 percent confidence interval: 0.6552985~0.7864336
sample estimates p=0.7257143

As per Table 1 p Value = 0.7257143 > 0.05 = α , level of significance we accept Null Hypothesis and so one can say with 95% confidence that majority of people are aware of the scheme.

To check whether we can claim with 95% confidence that various sources of information (TV, Radio, Relatives, NGOs, etc) are equally contributing to spreading awareness, we used Chi Square test.

H_0 : Expected frequency, i.e. all sources of information are equally contributing to spreading awareness, H_1 : Expected frequency, i.e. all sources of information are not equally contributing to spreading awareness

Table 2
Chi square test of awareness media

S. No.	Source	Observed frequency	Expected Frequency	(Observed-Expected) ² /Expected
1	Relatives	48	21.875	31.20071429
2	Radio	45	21.875	24.44642857
3	TV	13	21.875	3.600714286
4	Aganwadi	12	21.875	4.457857143
5	Newspaper	7	21.875	10.115
6	Bank	1	21.875	19.92071429
7	Gram Pradhan	8	21.875	8.800714286
8	Others	41	21.875	16.72071429
	Total	175		
			Chi Square Calculated	119.2628571
			Chi Square Tabulated	14.06714045

Chi-squared test for given probabilities, X-squared = 119.26, df = 7, p-value < 2.2e-16

As per Table 2 since Chi Square calculated is more than tabulated as also p value is less than level of significance 0.05 we do not accept

null hypothesis. So, H_2 is rejected. Thus, one can say with 95% confidence that all sources are not equally contributing in spreading awareness. As a sequel to the above finding and further digging into the collected data it is proposed to look at major contributors in spreading awareness. We intend to look at least 50% of the awareness is spread by Relatives and Radio.

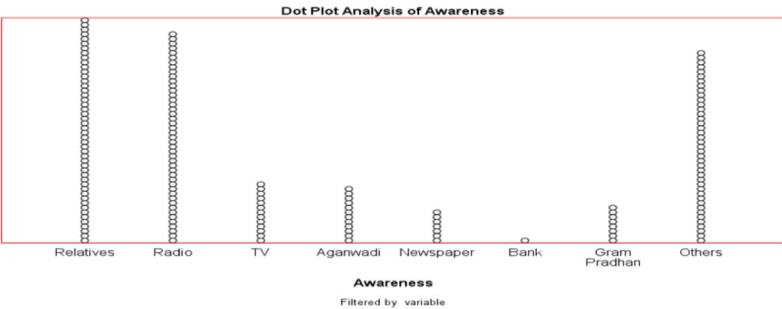


Figure 1

From Figure 1, we observe that the two most important media of awareness are relatives and radio. So, we accept H_{1c} that more than 50% awareness is spread by relatives and radio.

Table 3
Codebook of the female participants (Educational qualification)

Value	Count		Percent
1	Not Qualified	4	2.3%
2	Class 1 to class 5	19	10.9%
3	Class 6 to class 8	4	2.3%
4	Class 9 to class 10	2	1.1%
5	Class 11 to class 12	1	0.6%
System		30	82.9%

Table 3 shows the educational qualification of the female participants to whom questions were asked privately.

Table 4 shows that most of the detailed analysis of educational qualification of the female participants according to age. The female respondents were instructed to rank the given problems accordingly. At first, they were told to evaluate the statement “Grandparents are not willing to educate girls” as the main hurdle in their education. Their response is shown in frequency polygon below:

Table 4
Crosstabulation of education & age of the female participants

Education * Age Crosstabulation							
		Age					Total
		15 to 17 years	18 to 20 years	21 to 23 years	24 to 26 years		
12 to 14 years							
Education	Not Qualified	2	0	2	0	0	4
	Class 1 to class 5	4	6	4	2	3	19
	Class 6 to class 8	1	0	0	1	2	4
	Class 9 to class 10	1	1	0	0	0	2
	Class 11 to class 12	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total		8	7	6	4	5	30

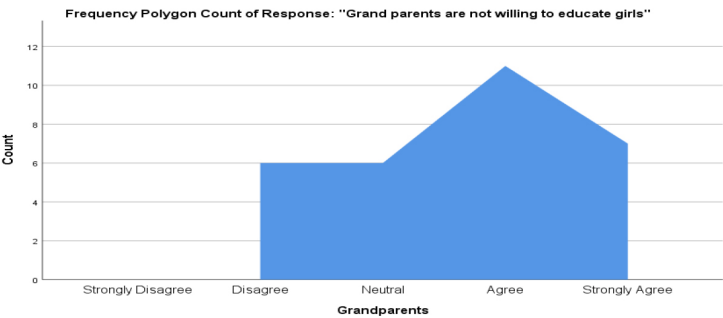


Figure 2

The frequency polygon in Figure 2 shows that most of the girls agree to the statement that grandparents are not willing to educate girls. Thus, H_{2a} is accepted.

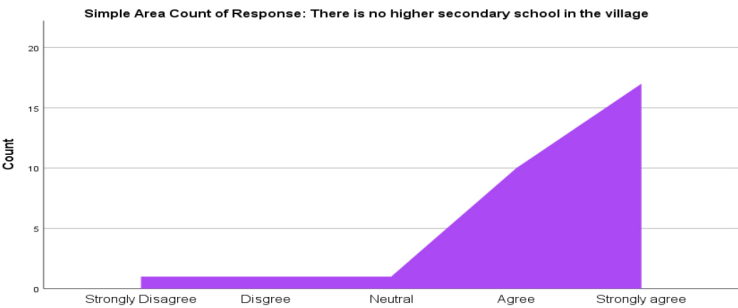


Figure 3

From Figure 3, it is observed that most of the respondents strongly agree to the statement that there is no higher secondary school in the village. So, Thus, H_{2b} is accepted.

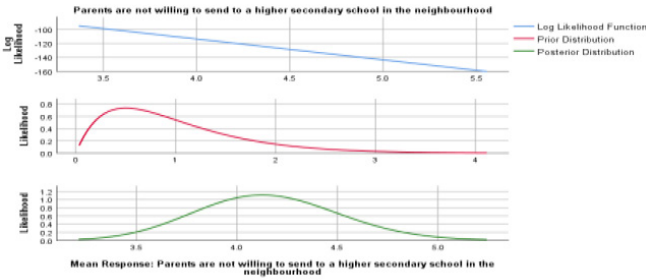


Figure 4

Log likelihood of Response: Parents are not willing to send to a higher secondary school in the neighborhood.

Figure 4 shows that the mean of the response lies between 4 & 5 (4 is labeled as agree & 5 is labeled as strongly agree for the purpose of analysis). From the analysis of the response, it is observed from Figure 4 that the parents are not likely to send their girls to a higher secondary school in the neighborhood. Thus, H_{2c} is accepted.

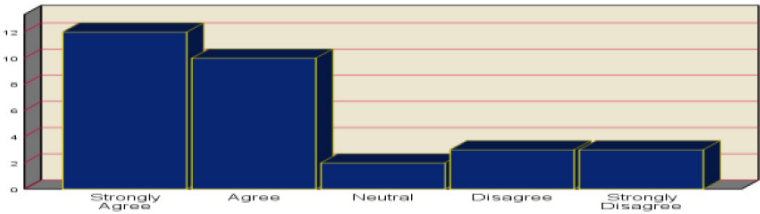


Figure 5

Simple Histogram Count of Response: Home chores are more important to girls than the education

The histogram in Figure 5 shows that most of the respondents strongly agree about the statement that house chores are more important to girls than the education. Therefore, we accept H_{2c} .

The line count of the responses obtained from the respondents prove that girls strongly agree to the statement that parents want to save money for dowry rather than investing on girls' education. So, we accept H_{2e} .

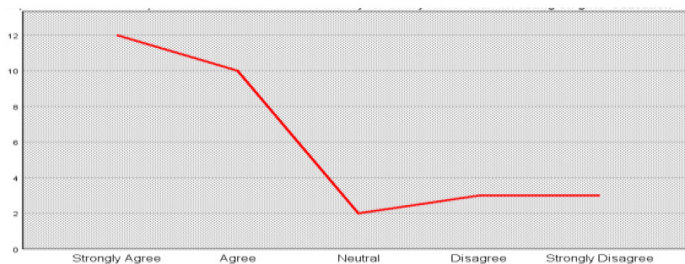


Figure 6

Simple Line Count of response: Parents want to save money for dowry rather than investing on girls' education

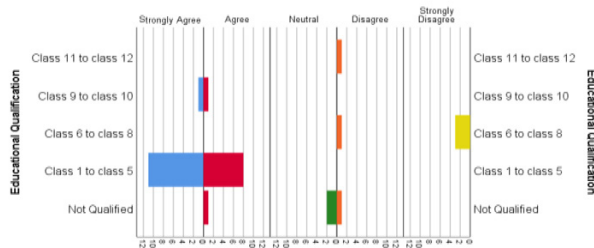


Figure 7

Population Pyramid Count Analysis: Educational qualification by Response: Home chores are more important to girls than the education

Figure 6 shows that the Parents who want to save money for dowry rather than investing on girl's education. Figure 7 clearly shows that most of the respondents who agree to the statement 'Home chores are more important to girls than the education' have completed up to class 5 only, i.e. not qualified. Therefore, we accept H_{2f} .

Suggestions:

To sensitise people about girl child's and women's sufferings based on gender discrimination and lack of education. The same gender influence is likely to be effective. So, men should sensitise men and women should sensitise women. Publicity campaign extolling the benefits that might accrue to educated girl's family in the form of monetary gain through job, increased status and prestige in the society, and happiness of the females; should be intensified and monitored. Certain job opportunities at village level should be considered.

Conclusion:

The 'Save girl child, educate girl child' scheme is a commendable initiative by the Government of India to address the issues related to girl children in India. Success of this scheme will add tremendously to the happiness and wellbeing of girl child, her family and also to the economic growth of the nation. However, allotting funds and schemes alone will not suffice. It requires active action, participatory involvement of family members and society, and also, every citizen's contribution for the betterment of female children. Though a little awareness has been created, a lot is still to be done.

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