

Factors Influencing the Perceptions of Women Teachers towards Quality Improvement in Kgbvs

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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. Gender equality and empowerment of women are indispensable for achieving prosperity and sustainable development. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme was introduced by the Government of India in 2004 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 present study is an attempt to explore the perception of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs. Descriptive survey method of research was used for the present investigation. The data were collected from 200 women teachers selected randomly from 25 KGBVs in Vizianagaram district with the help of a questionnaire duly prepared and standardized by the researchers. The influence of different job dimensions, viz., Professional commitment, Physical facilities, Working environment and Service conditions on the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs. The data were analyzed using Percentage Analysis. The profiles of teachers with high perceptions have been prepared. The preferences of teachers on components under different dimensions have been identified. The findings of the study revealed that women teachers working in KGBVs possess the highest positive perceptions with the dimension, 'Working environment' (57.1%) followed by the other dimensions, 'Professional commitment' (50%), 'Physical facilities' (50%) and 'Service conditions' (42.9%). 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 permanent

basis in order to attract committed teachers into the profession to provide quality education for girls.

Key words: KGBVs, Women empowerment, Professional commitment, Quality improvement.

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. Even after several decades on getting independence to the nation, there exists still gender discrimination in a developing country like India. 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, decided to provide quality education for girls, particularly those belonging to SC, ST, OBC and other minority communities.

CONCEPT OF 'KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA' (KGBV) SCHEME

The Government of India had taken initiative in introducing Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme in August, 2004. The scheme is primarily meant for the underprivileged and rural areas where literacy level for girls is very low. It is a flagship programme of the Government

of India to establish initially 3609 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) in 3451 Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) in harmony with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) 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 upper primary level with a view to improve the enrolment of girls in schools and reduce their 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.

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 functioning of KGBVs play a significant role in providing quality education to girls during their crucial period of development. 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 four job dimensions, viz., Professional commitment, Physical facilities, Working environment and Service conditions on the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs. Further, the study tries to find out the highest and the least preferred dimensions along with different components that influence the perceptions of 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 different job dimensions, viz., Professional commitment, Physical facilities, Working environment and Service conditions 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 towards quality improvement in KGBVs with regard to the dimension, 'Professional commitment'.
- (ii) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of women teachers towards quality

improvement in KGBVs with regard to the dimension, 'Physical facilities'.

(iii) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs with regard to the dimension, 'Working environment'.

(iv) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs with regard to the dimension, 'Service conditions'.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to find out the perceptions of 200 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 job dimensions, viz., Professional commitment, Physical facilities, Working environment and Service conditions on the perceptions of women teachers towards quality improvement in KGBVs.

METHODOLOGY

(a) **Sample:** This sample of the study consists of 200 teachers from 25 KGBVs located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh selected by using Random Sampling technique.

(b) **Research Tool:** The researchers used a well-organized questionnaire consisting of 30 items as the tool of research for the present investigation. After selecting the items for the tool, the researchers verified whether the tool prepared for the present investigation is in conformity with the conditions required by a standard measuring instrument.

(c) **Administration of the Tool**

The questionnaire consisting of 30 items on various issues relating to quality improvement in KGBVs has been administered to 200 teachers working in 25 KGBVs in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh. These teachers include both married and unmarried of different age groups; 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 using Percentage Analysis. The investigator thought it relevant to convert the obtained scores into percentages with a view to know the percentage of acceptances of the respondents on a particular item in relation to the other items included in the scale. A percentage frequency distribution is a display of data that specifies the percentage of observations that exist for each data point or grouping of data points. It is a very useful method of expressing the relative frequency of survey responses and other data. This application of using percentages is particularly important in analyzing or comparing the attitudes or perceptions of individuals on a particular criterion in comparison with other criteria.

PROFILE OF HIGH ACCEPTANCES OF RESPONDENTS ON DIFFERENT ITEMS IN THE SCALE, DIMENSION-WISE

To know the high acceptances of all the subjects on different items included in the tool, the investigator has calculated the total score obtained from all the respondents in respect of each item under the four different dimensions, taking into consideration the score relating to 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' for favorable (positively worded) statements and 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' for unfavorable (negatively worded) statements. The total score given by all the respondents for each item in the tool has been calculated; and then the total scores for all the 30 items have been converted into percentages. The higher percentage score indicates a higher level of perceptions of teachers with regard to that particular component.

The high acceptances (total score of 80% and above) of respondents for different components of the dimensions included in the scale together with the percentages are provided in the table given below.

Table showing high acceptances (total score of 80% and above) in respect of all the subjects for different items included in the scale, dimension wise

S. No.	Dimension	S. No. of item showing high acceptance in the dimension	Total number of items in the dimension	Percentage of high acceptances in the dimension
1	Professional commitment	1, 2, 5, 8	4	50.0
2	Physical facilities	9, 11, 14, 16	4	50.0

3	Working environment	17, 18, 20, 22	4	57.1
4	Service conditions	24, 25, 29	3	42.9
	TOTAL		15	

From the above table, it is understood that the women teachers working in KGBVs possess the highest positive perceptions with regard to the dimension, 'Working environment' (57.1%) followed by the other dimensions, 'Professional commitment' (50%), 'Physical facilities' (50%) and 'Service conditions' (42.9%).

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.

(i) Professional commitment

From the high score of acceptances (80% and above) given by the teachers with regard to their perceptions towards quality improvement in KGBVs on the dimension, 'Professional commitment', it is concluded that:

- (i) Teaching is the noblest of all professions.
- (ii) They feel proud of being teachers in KGBVs.
- (iii) They adopt innovative practices in teaching.
- (iv) They participate in training programmes organized by KGBVs to improve their teaching skills.

From the above findings, it is understood that teachers working in KGBVs expressed their commitment and dedication towards providing quality education for the benefit of the girls studying in KGBVs.

(ii) Physical facilities

From the high score of acceptances (80% and above) given by the teachers with regard to their perceptions towards quality improvement in KGBVs on the dimension, 'Physical facilities', it is concluded that:

- (i) The school is located in a permanent building.
- (ii) There is a good playground in the school.
- (iii) Toilet facilities are available in the school.
- (iv) There is a well-furnished staff room available for women teachers in the school.

From the above findings, it is understood that teachers have expressed their higher levels of perceptions towards quality improvement in KGBVs with regard to the physical facilities and infrastructure available in the school.

(iii) Working environment

From the high score of acceptances (80% and above) given by the teachers with regard to their perceptions towards quality improvement on the dimension, 'Working environment', it is concluded that:

- (i) Teachers maintain cordial relations with their colleagues in the school.
- (ii) Teachers working in KGBVs are very co-operative
- (iii) Teachers take suggestions from their seniors on academic matters.
- (iv) The health and hygiene of the girls in the school is taken care of by KGBV authorities.

From the above findings, it is understood that teachers working in KGBVs have good working environment. The teachers have expressed their happiness over their services in KGBVs, wherein they maintain cordial relations with their colleagues. They also expressed their view that they are taking suggestions from the senior faculty members on issues relating to academic matters

(iv) Service Conditions

From the high score of acceptances (80% and above) given by the teachers with regard to their perceptions towards quality improvement in KGBVs on the dimension, 'Service conditions', it is concluded that:

- (i) Teachers expressed that they are being paid salaries on consolidated basis in the posts held by them.
- (ii) Majority of teachers felt that the salaries paid to them are very meagre.
- (iii) Majority of teachers felt that there is no security of service for them in the profession.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The following are the educational implications of the present study.

The study helps to bring about awareness among the rural villagers on the need for education of girls in the society.

- (i) The study would certainly help the administration to provide favorable working conditions in KGBVs to attract talented teachers into the profession.
- (ii) 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 stakeholders to realize the need for education of girls in attaining women empowerment for sustainable development.

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