

Views of the Adolescent Girls on Services Provided in the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) of Assam

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Abstract

*The study aimed to assess the views of adolescent girls, regarding the services provided in KGBVs. Multi stage sampling design was adopted for the study. To assess the views of girls in KGBVs the overall sample of 120 was selected randomly. **Results** - 100 per cent of the girls love to stay in the KGBVs, 77.5 per cent expressed that they did not miss their home and family members. 93.33 per cent of the girls also viewed that they felt free to share problem with their teachers. 19.16 per cent of the girls viewed that as they cannot meet their parents for long so they sometimes disliked KGBVs. 100 per cent of the girls had framed aim and they were confident that they will be able to fulfill their aim. These confidence could be seen in the girls as the all round development of the girls was taken care of at KGBVs. Majority of the girl showed positive views towards the KGBV and very less number of negative views was found which can be taken care for rectification for successful implementation of the programme.*

Keywords: Views, adolescent, services, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya

Introduction

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is currently the most important initiative in the context of school education, where deepest churning is taking place. SSA activities are reaching those pockets of the country which are most difficult and hard to reach. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme an important flagship programme for girls under SSA is a step in this direction. It is meant for uplifting the girls belonging to rural and marginalized groups of the society. This scheme had given a second chance to those girls who have dropped out. Teachers of KGBV should be radical and revolutionary in their outlook and should be much above the prevailing stereotypes in the society. Enrolment of girls from marginalized communities, by itself is a challenge, which is further compounded by the phenomenon of dropping out, especially in the higher grades. Inaccessibility, financial constraints of the families, sibling-care, engagement in economic activities to supplement family income, and difficult and unfamiliar academic curriculum are some of the causes that often push marginalized girls out of the school. Traditional social norms and beliefs such as early marriage, further keep girls away from education. There is also a concern for the physical and moral safety of the girl child, which does not permit travel for long distances to school everyday, especially in areas with high crime rates (Sinha 2008). Adolescent girls are therefore structurally and culturally excluded from the learning opportunities available in the country. Education of girls has been a high priority with the Government of India. To achieve actual development of the society, both men and women need to be empowered in all the aspects. Therefore the educationist and the planners should plan and deliver pragmatic comprehensive educational services so that it would help in improving existing situation and motivates the girls to continue their education in future.

Review of Literature

Rawat (2011) conducted a study on status and functioning of KGBVs Uttarakhand and found that the parents are generally happy with the education and vocational skill training being imparted to their children. They also reported having noticed attitudinal and behavioral changes in their daughters towards betterment on the whole, KGBVs have certainly make a significant contribution in mainstreaming the out-of-school and drop-out girls belonging to the socio-economically backward communities living in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs). However, in order to bring at par with their counterparts studying in Government schools, availability of trained subject-specific teachers in these schools needs to be ensured. Planning commission (2009) visited Gujarat KGBV and found that the girls seemed to be very well adjusted. On three days of the week, vocational training is imparted in tailoring, mat making, computers etc. On the other three days extra classes are taken by the teachers. The students are also taught to sing and play the tabala and the harmonium. The visit was extremely satisfying as the girls seemed to be well disciplined and happy at the same time. Mukherjee (2011) stated that the five-day workshop on candle making, organized especially to train tribal girls studying in KGBV at Senha block under a special project of the Central Government, concluded. Vital information on marketing for both raw materials purchasing to selling of candles was provided to the students on the occasion. Though girls are not ask to start any trade now, but the training would not have been complete without giving them an idea on how to get raw materials and sell the products, if they wish to be self-depended after completing their school education. TNN Lohardaga (2012) stated that Rachi KGBV girls slugs it out on sports as the girls hailing from the maoist-affected villages of Senha block studying at KGBV, the residential schools run by the Jharkhand Education Project Council exclusively for dropout and BPL girls, they displayed their sports skills on a borrowed ground.

Parameswaran (2013) published a study for Tackling school dropouts in a creative manner. In the KGBV they met Sheela near the small village of Kanauthi, near Jaipur in Rajasthan. A coy girl, she stood up on instructions of her class teacher and confidently said “My name is Sheela. I am studying English in this school. I like the school very much”. What may surprise the average reader in this context may be the fact that Sheela is eighteen, never had any formal education and probably is the first person from her remote hamlet in Western Rajasthan to speak English. All because of the imaginative residential school programme called KGBV for girls being implemented as part of the SSA. Government of India (2013) conducted a second national evaluation of KGBV programme and the findings revealed that in many of the KGBVs visited by the teams, nutrition and sanitation received little attention. The teams came across students (most of whom are from socially and economically disadvantaged sections of society) who complained of persistent hunger and inadequacy of food. Growing children need adequate and nutritious food. Many evaluation team members expressed concern and shock at the situation they encountered in some of the KGBVs visited. There was one instance where the girls were beaten for complaining they were hungry, one place where children were not fed any lunch because the mid day meal (MDM) was not provided on some days (like sports day) in the school.

Objectives

1) To assess the views of adolescent girls, regarding the services provided in KGBVs.

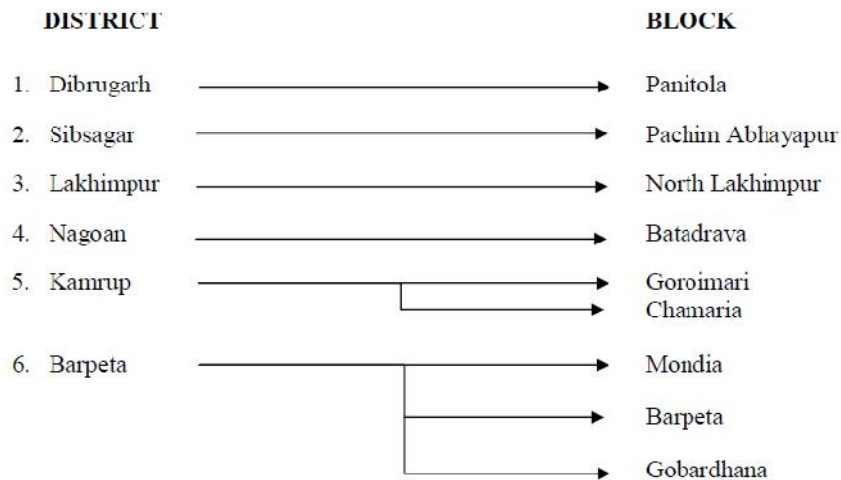
Study Area

The state of Assam in India was selected for the present study. Multi stage sampling design was adopted for the study. The sampling units at different stages were State, Districts and KGBVs. The six District namely Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur, Nagoan, Kamrup and Barpeta district were selected purposively for the study. The main reason for selection of these areas was to study the KGBVs of Upper Assam, Middle Assam and Lower Assam and to fulfill the criteria of representing the entire scenario of Assam. Out of total 16 numbers of districts with KGBVs namely, Dhemaji, Darrang, Dibrugarh, Karbi Anglong, Nalbari, NC Hills, Sibsagar, Tinsukia, Dhubri, Barpeta, Kamrup, Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Nagaon, Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon, 6 numbers of district of Assam were selected purposively for the study. Out of the selected districts:

- In Dibrugarh there is 1 KGBV covering 50 children and it falls under Model 2
- In Sibsagar there is 1 KGBV covering 50 children and it falls under Model 2
- In Lakhimpur there is 1 KGBV covering 50 children and it falls under Model 2
- In Nagoan there is 1 KGBV covering 50 children and it falls under Model 2
- In Kamrup there are 2 KGBVs covering 200 children and it falls under Model 1

- In Barpeta there are 3 KGBVs covering 200 children and 1 KGBV falls under Model 1 and 2 KGBVs falls under Model 2

A total number of nine KGBVs were selected for the study. The KGBVs of the different District were established under different blocks.



Methodology

To assess the views of girls in KGBVs, the KGBVs which had 50 numbers of girls 20 per cent of the samples were selected. Out of this from class six names of three numbers of girls were selected randomly from the attendance. In the same method, three girls were selected randomly from the attendance of class seven and four girls were selected randomly from the attendance of class eight. Total ten girls were selected. In KGBVs which had 100 numbers of girls 20 per cent of the sample were selected out of which from class six, names of six numbers of girls were selected randomly from the attendance. Similarly, six numbers of girls were selected randomly from class seven and from class eight names of eight numbers of girls were selected randomly from the attendance. Total twenty numbers of girls were selected. The overall sample of 120 was selected to assess the views of girls in KGBV. To elicit information from the sample, an interview schedule was developed. The scheduled contained both open-and close-ended questions. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to get data from the field for primary data collection. Eighteen to twenty five informal focus group discussion were held with five to six participants in each groups who shared their views, opinion, health and hygiene issues, and practices on aspects related to KGBVs. The collected data was organized, coded, consolidated and tabulated by using Microsoft excel sheet and analyzed systematically. The preliminary analytical devices expressed in frequency and percentages were used.

Result and Discussions

The information regarding views of the girls in the KGBV were illustrated under the following sub heads

Table 1: Distribution of Responses on views of the Girls in KGBV

Sl. No.	Views of the girls in KGBV	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage (%)
1	Love to stay in the KGBV		
	Yes	120	100
2	If yes specify reasons	(N=236)	Percentage (%)
	a) Stay with friends	36	15.25
	b) Leisure time	3	1.27
	c) Discipline environment	10	4.23
	d) Kind teacher	33	13.98
	e) Good education facilities	69	29.23
	f) Extracurricular activities	38	16.10
	g) Scope for knowledge	22	9.32
	h) New learning experience	8	3.38
	i) Development in studies	2	0.84
	j) Adequate facilities	3	1.27
	k) Scope to learn Assamese	2	0.84
	l) Scope to learn computer	3	1.27
	m) Friendship between hindu and muslim	1	0.42
	n) Library facilities	1	0.42
	o) Availability of TLM	3	1.27
	p) Scope to learn good handwriting	1	0.42
	q) Learn cooking	1	0.42

From Table 1, it can be revealed that 100 per cent of the girls love to stay in the KGBVs and when they were asked to specify the reasons behind their likeness, a higher percentage of 29.23 per cent expressed that they were getting good education facility in the KGBVs and 16.10 per cent expressed that along with education facilities they also got the scope to learn many extracurricular activities, such as self defense, music, vocational trainings etc. 15.25 per cent also expressed that they got chance to live with their friends and enjoyed good times with them. While interacting with the girls during data collection they also expressed that they miss their friends and teachers of the KGBVs when they go home for holidays. In all the KGBVs under study, the girls expressed that all the girls in the KGBVs were their friend. This also reflects that companionship was nurtured in the environment of KGBVs. From the findings it is revealed that 13.98 per cent of the girls also said that their teachers were very kind and took care of them and also stated that during any problem they faced they approached their teachers to find out the solution and all the teachers tried to help them out in every possible way at any hour of the day. As the girls have developed a good social relation amongst themselves and their teachers at KGBVs, it is a good indicator for the success of this scheme.

Table 2: Distribution of the Responses on views of the Feelings of the Girls in KGBV

Sl. No.	Feelings	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage (%)
1	Miss home and family members		
	Yes	27	22.5
	No	93	77.5
2	Free to share problem with teachers		
	Yes	112	93.33
	No	8	6.66
3	Necessary items when required		
	Yes	116	96.66
	No	4	3.33
4	Satisfied with the food items provided in the KGBV		
	Yes	110	91.66
	No	10	8.33
5	Secured to stay in KGBV		
	Yes	110	91.66
	No	10	8.33
6	Reading materials timely		
	Yes	120	100
7	Adequate time to study		
	Yes	120	100
8	Facility to learn, sports they are interested in		
	Yes	97	80.83
	No	23	19.16
9	Facility to learn music and dance in KGBV		
	Yes	110	91.66
	No	10	8.33

From Table 2, higher per cent of 77.5 expressed that they did not missed their home and family members. This may be because the residential facilities contributed in the overall development of the girls and all the facilities which otherwise girls in poor households would not have dreamt of are made available for them in the KGBVs. 93.33 per cent of the girls also viewed that they felt free to share problem with their teachers, as the teachers and the girls stayed together, so they became free with the teachers and shared the problem they faced. The teachers also tried to find out the solution for the problems. In the KGBVs the girls and teachers sit together and talked openly with each other. The teachers became their friends and crack jokes, and at the same time guided them as their guardian as well. Majority of the girls 96.66 per cent also expressed that they got the necessary items when required and 91.66 per cent of them also expressed that they were satisfied with the food items provided in the KGBVs. As most of the girls in the KGBVs were from the households below poverty line therefore they were satisfied that they got to eat thrice a day at KGBVs. In this situation what they eat was the least concern comparing with whether or not they had something to eat. In KGBVs, the girls received three balanced meals so they were satisfied with the food items provided in the KGBVs.

From the Table 2, it can be revealed that 91.66 per cent of the girls felt secured to stay in the KGBVs as the teacher took complete care of the girls in KGBV, in terms of health and hygiene to education. Also they stayed with the girls for 24 x 7 so there was lot of scope for improvement. 100 per cent of the girls also viewed that they received reading materials on time and also got adequate time to study in the KGBVs as the residential school permits a lot of free time for self study without any disturbance. 80.83 And 91.66 per cent girls expressed that they got the facilities to learn sports, music and dance at KGBVs respectively. The talents of the girls were observed at KGBVs as the teachers stayed together with the girls'. The teacher got the opportunities to know the innate talents of the girls as they were nurtured at the KGBVs. Each girl stands out unique because of their distinct talents. The girls were also taught sport activities, self protection skills. All round development of the girls were taken care of, which gave them the opportunity to be groomed for a better future at KGBVs.

Table 3: Distribution of the Responses of girls, Allowed for Marketing, Watching Television and views on Different Aspects of KGBV

Sl. No.	Different aspects of girls at KGBV	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage (%)
1	Allowed to go for marketing		
	Yes	35	29.16
	No	85	70.83
2	Allowed to watch television		
	Yes	118	98.33
	No	2	1.66
3	Live in very discipline environment		
	Yes	64	53.33
	No	56	46.66
4	Scolding in KGBV		
	Yes	23	19.16
	No	97	80.83
5	Beating in KGBV		
	Yes	5	4.16
	No	115	95.83

From Table 3, it can be revealed that 70.83 per cent of the girls were not allowed to go for marketing from KGBVs. This may be because the distance from KGBVs to the market was far and the availability of appropriate mode of transport was a question in many of the KGBVs due to their remote location. As the adolescent girls were vulnerable so the teachers and wardens do not want to take the risk. They were only permitted to go to market with their parents. The other reasons for not allowing the girls to go to market were because many girls before enrolment in the KGBVs were addicted to gutka, limestone and tobacco, etc. Therefore if they were allowed to go to the market then they may purchase these and get in the habit of consuming it again. 98.33 per cent of the girls expressed that they were allowed to watch television in the KGBVs. By watching television the girls' got the opportunities to know the different events going around the world. From Table 3, it can also be revealed that 53.33 per cent of the girls expressed that they have to live in much disciplined environment in the KGBVs.

This may be because to train the girls with regular habits of self hygiene and the routine at KGBVs the teacher had to be strict at times. It was also revealed from the findings that the newly enrolled girls found the environment in KGBVs very strict and disciplined but the other girls who have stayed for two to three years found the environment of the KGBVs conducive. Many girls who have got adjusted to the KGBVs routine do not want to go back to their own homes as their homes lack the facilities, care and concern that they found at KGBVs. A very negligible percentage of girls 19.16 per cent and 4.16 per cent expressed that they got scolding and beating at KGBVs. When the girls were asked when they got beating and scolding, then most of the girls replied that when they do not study properly and did not get good marks in their examination. This also reflects that the KGBVs teachers took special care of the girls as their own wards.

Table 4: Distribution of Response of Girls Dislike towards KGBV

Sl. No.	Dislike in KGBV	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage (%)
1	Problem in food	4	3.33
2	No water facility	9	7.5
3	No space for play	19	15.83
4	Not allowed to go to market	3	2.5
5	Toilet and bathroom problem	6	5
6	No contact with parents for long time	23	19.16
7	Few holidays	8	6.66
8	Non availability of teacher	14	11.66
9	Partialities among girls	1	0.83
10	Conflict between friends	26	21.66
11	Loss of goods and stealing	7	5.83

From Table 4, it can be revealed that 21.66 per cent girls expressed that sometime conflicts happen between the friends as they had to stay together in the same room and there was no privacy so they sometime disliked KGBVs. When the girls were asked for reasons for their disliking the KGBV then 19.16 per cent of the girls viewed that as they cannot meet their parents for long so they sometimes disliked KGBVs. The two numbers of KGBVs which were in temporary buildings did not had a play ground, therefore 15.83 per cent girls expressed that they could not enjoy outdoor games and therefore they disliked KGBVs. 11.66 per cent also expressed that as the post of teachers were lying vacant in one or two KGBVs, therefore the classes could not be conducted regularly and therefore the girls sometime disliked staying in the KGBVs. A very less percentage such as 7.5 per cent did not like KGBVs since there was no proper water facilities, 6.6 per cent expressed, due to very few holidays, 5.83 per cent for loss of their personal assets in the KGBVs they did not like KGBVs, 5 per cent expressed toilet and bathroom problem, 3.33 per cent expressed problems in food, 2.5 per cent expressed that they were not allowed to go to market and 0.83 per cent expressed that teachers showed partiality among the girls and gave more importance to the girl whom they liked most.

Table 5: Distribution of Response of Aim Framed and Confidence to Fulfill

Sl. No.	Aim and confidence to fulfill	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage (%)
1	Framed aim		
	Yes	120	100
2	Confidence to fulfill the aim		
	Yes	120	100

The Table 5, reveals that 100 per cent of the girls had framed aim and they were confident that they will be able to fulfill their aim. These confidence could be seen in the girls as the all round development of the girls was taken care of at KGBVs. So their future seems to be good. Girls also got the opportunities to be groomed for a better future. The self confidence and self reliance in girls were nurtured for their well being in the KGBVs.

Table 6: Distribution of the Responses of girls' Specification of their aim

Sl. No.	Aim	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage (%)
1	Teacher	36	30
2	Doctor	29	24.16
3	Nurse	17	14.16
4	Lawyers	13	10.83
5	Police	6	5
6	Service	5	4.16
7	Professor	3	2.5
8	Singer	2	1.66
9	Pilot	2	1.66
10	Martial art instructor	2	1.66
11	Good individual	2	1.66
12	Weaver	1	0.83
13	Scientist	1	0.83
14	No response	1	0.83

When the girls were asked to specify their future aim, they have specified as per Table 6. It can be said that education provided through this scheme was a powerful tool for empowering girls and also becomes an instrument for social change. The girls had also planned for their future as they got an opportunity to be groomed for a better future in the KGBVs.

Table 7: Distribution of the Responses of Girls Receiving Awards and Exposure Trips in KGBV

Award in KGBVs	Frequency (N=120)	Percentage (%)
Yes	65	54.16
No	47	39.16
No response	8	6.66
Exposure trip during their stay in KGBVs		
Yes	72	60
No	48	40

The Table 7 reveals that 54.16 per cent of the girls expressed that they got award in the KGBVs. This indicates that the girls have participated in different programmes, events and sports organized at block, district and state levels and there they also got the opportunities to show their talents and perform their best. Such events also encouraged the girls to be confident. The findings also revealed that 60 per cent of the girls also got the chance to go for exposure trips during their stay in KGBVs. The exposure trip should provide alternative educational opportunities. Students visiting different educational institution and different places get to learn on a more hand on experience and an interactive manner than they do in schools. This also proves to be a welcome break from their mundane activities. They also got to spend the whole day in a different learning environment and could complete a lesson on the topic after the trip is over. Girls learned about different professional ideas and opportunities when they traveled outside their own neighborhoods. A field trip can awaken the desire in the girls to try new things and pursue previously unconsidered dreams. Field trips can introduce girls to job opportunities and can sparks new interest and passions.

Conclusion

Majority of the girl showed positive views towards the KGBV and very less number of negative views was found which may be taken care for rectification for successful implementation of the programme. A dream has to be nurtured in the girls for a better and secured future. The KGBVs should play an important role in individual empowerment, especially by being a residential institution that provides these girls a safe space where they get to express themselves freely. In KGBVs the girls experience a liberal environment for the first time in their lives and most importantly the KGBV act as a channel for adolescents to access education and open up future options through which their aspiration can both grow and be realized. The girls in future can be the role models for their fellow villagers as educated and independent women who have of their own voice.

Therefore, to make the KGBV scheme a successful one, all the members of the KGBVs at the district level, block level, administration, and guardian will have to work whole heartedly for the same goal in a co-operative manner.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to place on record, her thanks to all the wardens, staff and student of KGBV of Assam for the support and co-operation during this study.

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