

29. Free education to girl-students upto 12th std (1994-95)

1. Background :

Most of the parents are unable to give education to girl child due to financially bad condition. As a result, the girls are deprived from education and are not able to achieve desirable status in family, social, educational, financial and in political field. It also affects girls education in next generation and as such social change from female angle is not achieved. Therefore, Maharashtra Government, by considering state's social and educational tradition and also to give real awakenings to thoughts of Late Mrs. Indira Gandhi, started the scheme of giving "Free Education for Girls from standard first to twelve from 1st June, 1985. The scheme is implemented without any income obligation.

The scheme is applicable to Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools/Junior Colleges of State Government, Zilla Parishad, Municipal Corporation, Nagar Palika. Also, girls in Private recognised Aided Schools and Non-aided Institutes (which are charging Government determined Education fees) which runs Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools/Junior Colleges are eligible for benefit under the scheme.

2. Implementing Programme :

For availing the benefit of the scheme, the parents have to submit application form along with the parent's declaration. The school scrutinizes the applications. Thereafter, scrutiny of application for urban region is done through the Education Officer and for rural region, through office of Block Education Office or staff from Shikshan Adhikari Office. The recommendation letters are sent to schools and the copy of the same is sent to the Education Officer of primary/secondary. On the basis of recommendation letter, the Education Officer (on the basis of available grants) makes the arrangement for sending of cheques or demand draft to related schools for reimbursement. The school presents the proof of deposited education fees receipts (Co-operative Bank) along with the every month salary bill (by deducting the concessional girls education fees). The schools of Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools/Junior Colleges have to submit the certificate of 1/12 per cent amount deposited (of educational fee) in Co-operative Bank (by deducting the concessional girls education fees) for every month.

Implementing Agency

The implementation of the scheme at State level is done through the Education Director, at District level the Education Officer (Secondary) and at Taluka level Block Development Officer.

3. Objectives of the evaluation study :

The following objectives were fixed for the evaluation study.

- (1) To study the method of implementation of the scheme.
- (2) To study the proportion of girls who avail the fee concession and to find the reasons for deprivation of concession.
- (3) To study about the fees required to be paid to girls education and the remittance proportion.
- (4) To see whether the girls who enjoyed the benefit were fulfilling eligibility criteria or otherwise.
- (5) To study about the difficulties faced by the Implementing Officers while implementing the scheme and to suggest remedies.

4. Sample Selection :

From each Revenue Division two districts, one having maximum proportion and one having minimum proportion of female literacy (1991) were selected. On the same logic, in each selected district, two talukas were selected. For the selection of schools, in each selected talukas, a list of Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary School / Junior Colleges was prepared and two schools were selected by the simple random sample method. From each standard benefit receiving four girls and two girls who were deprived of the benefit were selected by Simple Random Sample Method. Accordingly, a total 12 districts, 24 talukas and 138 schools, 1270 beneficiaries and 166 non-beneficiaries girls were selected.

5. Period of Field Work

The field work for this survey was completed during February-March, 1995.

6. Finding

The conclusions are as follows.

- 1) Out of 73,520 schools/colleges 82 per cent schools are for primary, 15 per cent are for secondary and 3 per cent schools were for Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges Level education.

- 2) Out of 73,520 schools/Junior Colleges 538 schools are only for boys and remaining 72,982 schools are for girls education, out of which 3,006 schools are only for girls.
- 3) Out of total 73,520 schools, one per cent schools are government school, 70 per cent are Zilla Parishad, 3 per cent Municipal Corporation, 3 per cent Nagar palika, 15 per cent recognized private aided and 8 per cent are recognized private non-aided schools.
- 4) During the year 1990-91, 44.01 lakh girls student were enrolled in primary schools. 17.21 lakhs were enrolled in secondary school and 5.06 lakhs were enrolled in Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges. During 1993-94 the corresponding figures were 48.85 lakhs for primary standard, 20.02 lakhs for Secondary , and 6.29 lakhs for Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges.
- 5) As per National Policy on educational, the students between the age group 6 to 14 in Government, Zilla Parishad, Local Bodies, Nagar Palika and Municipalities Management schools are provided free education. Therefore the question of availing benefit of this scheme by the girl student does not arise in those schools. The girls of private recognized aided schools (for the period 1990-91-91 to 1993-94) have taken the benefit. Under this scheme 39 per cent, 41 per cent, 41 per cent and 47 per cent respectively of the enrolled girls took the advantage of the benefit of the scheme (of the Attendance Sheet). The said percentages for the private recognized un-aided schools were 25 per cent, 25 per cent, 23 per cent and 27 per cent respectively. The said percentages for the secondary level were 64 per cent, 65 per cent, 63 per cent and 62 per cent respectively. For the schools of Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges, the percentages were 75 per cent, 73 per cent, 73 per cent and 70 per cent respectively.
- 6) For the year 1993-94, the boys-girls proportion for Primary was 46 per cent girls and 54 per cent boys, for Secondary 41 per cent girls and 59 per cent boys and Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges it was 38 per cent for girls and 62 per cent boys.
- 7) In Brihan Mumbai, girls dropout rate for primary school was 6.45 per cent, for Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges level it was 5 per cent. In Nashik region this proportion was 2.2 and 3.7 per cent. In other regions this information was not available.
- 8) Under the scheme, the year-wise expenditure of 99 per cent, 98 per cent, 97 per cent and 98 per cent was incurred during the period 1990-91 to 1993-94 respectively.
- 9) Under this scheme, for the period 1990-91 to 1993-94, the yearwise target achieved was 91.08 per cent, 87.97 per cent, 89.90 per cent and 88.35 per cent respectively.

10) Under the National Policy, the students between six to fourteen age group avail free education and therefore, girls upto seven standard of the Government, Zilla Parishad, Municipality and Local Bodies are not benefitted under this scheme. But in the Private Recognised Aided and Non-aided primary schools 47 per cent and 27 per cent girls respectively are benefitted. Under this scheme, girls from 8 to 12 standard of Secondary and Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges of the levels of Government, Zilla Parishad, Municipality and Local Bodies receive the benefit. The girls of 5 to 12 standard of Private Recognised Aided and Non-aided type receives the benefit. The Private Schools/Junior Colleges which are not charging educational fees according to rates fixed by the government, the girls of these schools are deprived of the benefit.

11) In the reference period in all 14900 girls in the State were deprived of the benefit of the scheme due to various reasons. Out of that 19.4 per cent girls were deprived benefit due to being fourth child, 4.2 per cent due to not being fifteen years domiciled in Maharashtra, 70.8 per cent due to failure in the previous exam, 2.2 per cent due to non-satisfactory progress, 1.6 per cent due to non-presentation of certificate, 0.1 per cent due to presentation of false information in Affidavit letter and for other reasons 1.7 per cent.

12) Besides this scheme, the number of girls who took the benefit of other scheme has increased for the year 1990-91 to 1993-94. This type of information is not kept in Ratnagiri, Raigad, Nashik, Pune, Kolhapur, Aurangabad, Jalna, Beed, Buldhana, Nagpur, Wardha and Chandrapur districts.

13) The responsibility of the scheme is not given to the Block Development Officer in the districts of Thane, Raigad, Sindhudurg, Nashik, Dhule, Pune, Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur, Aurangabad, Parbhani, Nanded, Latur, Osmanabad, Akola, Yavatmal, Nagpur, Bhandara and Gadchiroli. However, in the remaining districts, the scheme's responsibility is given to the Block Development Officer, which shows that there is no uniformity in implementation of the scheme.

14) The number of girls, who were deprived of the benefit under this scheme is very meager and therefore, it will be proper to give benefit to all the school girls by which the work of checking the certificates and other related work will not be necessary. This was the opinion of the District Education Officers.

15) In the selected 138 schools, 86 per cent schools provide information of the scheme to girls by issuing circular through Class Teacher.

16) In the selected 138 schools, 37 per cent teachers were female.

17) From the selected 138 schools, for the year 1993-94, the region-wise girls education proportion for Mumbai was 46 per cent, Pune 48 per cent, Aurangabad 34 per cent, Amravati 37 per cent and Nagpur 47 per cent.

18) In the 138 schools during the year 1993-94, the regionwise proportion of benefit receiving girls to total number of girls was as follows – for Mumbai 89 per cent, Nashik 92 per cent, Pune 89 per cent, Aurangabad 93 per cent, Amravati 87 per cent and for Nagpur 88 per cent.

19) In the selected 138 schools, 12 schools (9 per cent) were not checking the certificate. Out of that 12 schools, 4 were from Nashik and 2 each from Pune, Aurangabad, Amravati, Nagpur.

20) Out of the selected 1270 beneficiaries, for the year 1993-94, 72 beneficiaries parents' were contacted for lacunae in certificate and the same was resolved. Fees were collected from three girls who could not provide satisfactory explanation for lacunae and the same was reported to Social Welfare Department.

21) Out of the selected 138 schools, 58 primary schools (42 per cent) and 22 Secondary, Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges (16 per cent) schools, were depositing the fee in Co-operative Bank along with Payment Bill.

22) The school faces the following difficulties while providing the benefit of the scheme.

- (1) While filling the certificate, the expected response from the parents is not received.
- (2) The parents give false information regarding child and its domiciliation.
- (3) The parents are not available for the queries in the certificates.
- (4) The failed girls of poor families are not eligible and consequently dropouts increases.
- (5) The grant for Term fee and Entry fee gets delayed.
- (6) The Audit Report is not available in time.
- (7) (7) The release of grant to Zilla Parishad is delayed.

23) Out of the selected 1270 girls, 18 per cent girls were not having a single brother. The percentage of girls having brothers was 47. The percentage of girls having two brothers was 29. The percentage of girls having three brothers was 6..

24) The girls who were not having a single sister, were 37 per cent.. The percentage of girls having a single sister was 38. The percentage of girls having two sisters was 18. The percentage of girls having more than two sisters was 7.

25) Out of the selected 1270 girls, 33 girls (3 per cent) availed the benefit of other schemes other than this scheme. From the above it seems that the number of girls availing benefit of different scheme at a time is very meagre.

26) Out of the selected 1270 girls, 543 girls (43 per cent) told that the certificates were not checked.

27) Out of the selected 1270 girls, 895 (70 per cent) girls told that because of this scheme, they got encouragement for education. Out of that, 275 girls (31 per cent) expressed that if the scheme is discontinued then they will be deprived of education due to financial problem. The girls who left schools, even after getting the benefit under the scheme was 112 girls (9 per cent).

28) Following are the percentages of marks obtained by the girls in the survey (excluding first standard) during the year 1992-93.

| | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|---|----|--------------------------|
| (1) | Upto 35 percentage | - | 4 | percentage beneficiaries |
| (2) | 36 to 50 per cent | - | 38 | percentage beneficiaries |
| (3) | 51 to 60 per cent | - | 19 | percentage beneficiaries |
| (4) | 61 to 75 per cent | - | 19 | percentage beneficiaries |
| (5) | 76 and more than per cent | - | 12 | percentage beneficiaries |

29) Out of the total selected 138 schools, there were 168 non-beneficiaries in 103 schools (75 per cent). From the above it is observed that just 0.5 per cent girls did not get the benefit of fee concession.

30) Out of the 166 non-beneficiaries' girls, 6 per cent girls were belonging to scheduled caste, 3 per cent scheduled tribes, 4 per cent V.J.N.T., 33 per cent Other Backward Class and 54 per cent girls were from other categories.

31) Out of the 166 non-beneficiaries' girls, 66 per cent were deprived of benefit because of failure in previous year and 34 per cent girls were deprived because of being fourth child in the family .

32) Out of the 166 non-beneficiaries' girls, 109 (66 per cent) girls had failed in previous year. Out of that 10 per cent girls failed due to family problems, 21 per cent failed due to illness and 65 per cent failed due to other reasons .

33) The 166 non-beneficiaries' girls, paid Education fee by way of Entrance fee Rs. 784 (4 per cent), Term fee Rs. 1,726 (10 per cent), Laboratory fee Rs. 915 (5 per cent), Examination fee Rs. 12,548 (72 per cent) and other fees Rs. 1,454 (8 per cent), likewise total Rs. 17,427. On an average every girl paid Rs. 105 as fees .

34) Out of the surveyed 166 non-beneficiaries' girls, the family members of 2 per cent girls were illiterate and 98 per cent girls family members were educated.

35) Out of the surveyed 166 non-beneficiaries' girls, Head of family of 23 per cent girls were Agriculturist, 39 per cent as agriculture labourers, 10 per cent as doing service, 12 per cent doing business and 16 per cent were doing own business.

36) Out of the surveyed 166 non-beneficiaries' girls, their household annual income and their percentage were as follows.

| | | | | |
|-----|--------------------|---|----|----------|
| (1) | Upto Rs. 3500 | - | 5 | per cent |
| (2) | Rs.3501 - 4800 | - | 5 | per cent |
| (3) | Rs. 4801 – 11,000 | - | 20 | per cent |
| (4) | Rs. 11,001- 20,000 | - | 16 | per cent |
| (5) | Rs. 20,000 & Above | - | 54 | per cent |

37) Out of the surveyed 166 non-beneficiaries' girls, 44 per cent (73) girls faced financial problem while paying fees. Out of the difficulties faced 73 girls (82 per cent) said that the same will affect their education in future.

Recommendations:

- (1) Generally, parents are inclined towards male child and, therefore, they try for admission in good schools, whereas this tendency is lacking towards the female child. Therefore, reservation requires for girl child for admission in good schools/colleges for higher education.
- (2) The girls avail educational facilities under different schemes under different criteria and therefore, deprivation of girls from educational facilities is very meager. It takes more time for filling of application, to check declaration form and therefore it will be better to provide directly facilities/benefit without following the above procedure.
- (3) The record of girls, who left the schools, were not maintained and therefore, it becomes difficult to find out the reason for drop-out which creates difficulties for preventing dropouts. Therefore, Directorate of Education should issue proper instructions to all the schools.
- (4) The funds should be made available according to district demands.
- (5) As per the scheme, the girls upto twelve (12) standard avail, the benefit of the scheme and also the income criteria is not a pre-condition. Therefore, Higher Income Groups girls also enjoy the benefit. In this context, proper propaganda is required.
- (6) The 3.5 per cent schools proposals were rejected because the same were not presented in time and therefore the girls of those schools were deprived of the benefits. Therefore, proper instructions regarding the presentation of proposal in time needs to be given. It is also necessary to take corrective action against the schools which do not present their proposal in time even though the scheme is applicable.
- (7) As there is no uniformity in the implementation of the scheme, the responsibility of implementation of the scheme should be given to Block Development Officers of all districts.
- (8) The 44 per cent non-beneficiaries girls faced difficulties in payment of fees. The 82 per cent girls, of this 44 per cent girls stated that this will create problem in future education. Therefore, it will be beneficial to give educational facilities to all the girl students.
- (9) The private institutes are reluctant to open schools of Secondary, Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges in under-developed regions. Therefore, it will be prudent to impart higher education in the Government owned schools.

(10) The dropout of girls from primary level to Secondary level and Secondary level to Higher Secondary/Junior Colleges level occurs due to various reasons. Therefore, it is essential to make available all necessary educational facilities to reduce the dropout.
