



## **KANYASHREE SCHEME THROUGH THE EYES OF ITS BENEFICIARIES: A CASE STUDY OF TWO DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL**

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### Abstract:

Smoother access to higher education for girls at nominal cost where the bright minds can study and learn from the best are very much necessary for making a sustainable society and progression of every nation across the world. The strength of the nation depends on healthy, educated, and economically empowered women. Educated women can transform the future in their own lives, for their families, for the state, and for the country. Despite several years of this Act, being in existence, the early child marriage continues to be practiced across the country and West Bengal is not out of this scenario. More than a quarter of girls are married before they reach adulthood in rural areas of West Bengal and non-slum areas of Kolkata. Child marriage and school drops outs go hand in hand. In the above context, the government of West Bengal has decided on creating an enabling environment for elevating the education, health and nutrition status of women and children through an innovative scheme that is “Kanyashree Prakalpa”, which has been launched by the Government of West Bengal on 8<sup>th</sup> March in 2013. Kanyashree scheme represents one of the world’s largest and most unique scheme for preventing school dropout and child marriage and empowering women in West Bengal. With this background, the present study have been designed to know the opinion of Kanyashree scheme’s beneficiaries regarding various aspects of the said scheme along with organization of awareness camp regarding Kanyashree Scheme at the Institution level. The study has been conducted during the month of February, 2024 to March 2024 in Purba Medinipur and Jhargram district of West Bengal, India. 59% beneficiaries are satisfied with the money that they get from the Kanyashree scheme, though 29.33% beneficiaries of Kanyashree demand the amount of Kanyashree money should be increased to Rs. 2000 – Rs. 5000 yearly at K-1 level. About 95% beneficiaries opined that Kanyashree scheme has made them motivated towards higher education. Only 5% beneficiaries expressed that Kanyashree scheme has not made them motivated towards higher education due to their different family issues.

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**Keywords:** Kanyashree Scheme, Higher Education, Aspirations of beneficiaries

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

Smoother access to higher education for girls at nominal cost where the bright minds can study and learn from the best are very much necessary for making a sustainable society and progression of every nation across the world. In this context, we may highlight the statement made by our country’s first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, where he said “You can tell the condition of the nation by looking at the status of the women.” Truly education can empower women in every dimension. The strength of the nation depends on healthy, educated, and economically empowered women. Educated women can transform the future in their own lives, for their families, for the state, and for the country. One of the main problem of developing south Asia and African country is child marriage. In India, under the prohibition of child marriage act, 2006 (PCMA), the legal age of marriage for girls and boys are 18 years and 21 years respectively. Despite several years of this Act, being in existence, the early child marriage continues to be practiced across the country and West Bengal is not out of this scenario. More than a quarter of girls are married before they reach adulthood in rural areas of West Bengal and non-slum areas of Kolkata. Child marriage and school drops outs go hand in hand. In West Bengal, attendance of girls from 85% in age group 6-10 years to a mere 33% in age group 15-17 years (NFHS III, 2005-06). In the above context, the government of West Bengal has decided on creating an enabling environment for elevating the education, health and nutrition status of women and children through an innovative scheme that is “Kanyashree Prakalpa”, which has been launched by the Government of West Bengal on 8<sup>th</sup> March in 2013. Kanyashree scheme represents one of the world’s largest and most unique scheme for preventing school dropout and child marriage and empowering women in West Bengal. In June 2017, United Nations (UN) honours Kanyashree scheme with the highest public service award. At present, Kanyashree scheme successfully completes 10 years. The different types of Kanyashree scheme are mainly K-1, K-2, and newly introduced K-3. The K-1 is an Annual Scholarship of Rs. 750/- to be paid annually to the girls in the age group 13 to 18 years (studying in Class VIII equivalent or above for every year that they remained in education, provided they are unmarried at the time. The K-2 is a One-Time Grant of Rs. 25,000/-, to be paid after a girl turns 18, provided that she was engaged in an academic or occupational pursuit and was unmarried. At the K-3 level of the said scheme, unmarried students who are pursuing their Post-graduate course in regular mode have been provided Rs. 2500/- for science stream and

Rs. 2000/- for arts stream monthly. With this background, the present study have been designed to know the opinion of Kanyashree scheme’s beneficiaries regarding various aspects of the said scheme along with organization of awareness camp regarding Kanyashree Scheme at the Institution level.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

The objectives of the present study are—

- 1) To know the opinion of Kanyashree scheme’s beneficiaries regarding various aspects of the said scheme.
- 2) To enquire that awareness camp regarding Kanyashree scheme has been organised at the institution level.

**METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:** The present study is a survey type research. The study has been conducted during the month of February, 2024 to March 2024 in Purba Medinipur and Jhargram district of West Bengal, India. We have applied multilayer stratified sampling method to determine the require sample size among the large number of sample. We have taken one rural block from Jhargram district namely Sankrail and an industrial area from Purba Medinipur district namely Haldia Municipality in West Bengal. From the each selected area, we have taken three schools. From each selected school data have collected through the self-made interview scheduled from the girl child students who are presently studying in class XI. We have taken interview of twelve students from each selected school of the said districts. Then the collected data have been analyzed qualitatively.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:** The findings of the study along with discussion are given below:

- A) **Satisfaction of Beneficiary with Amount of Kanyashree Money:** In this present study, It has been seen that 59% beneficiaries are satisfied with the money that they get in the Kanyashree scheme. 41% beneficiary’s express that they do not satisfied with this amount of money.

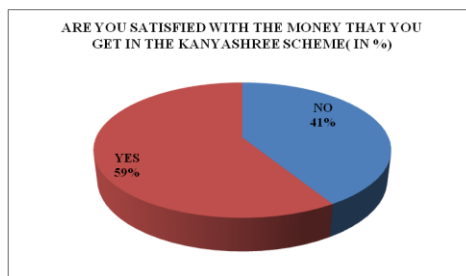


Figure 01: Are You Satisfied with the Money that You Get in the Kanyashree Scheme Source: Primary Data

- b) **Amount of Money to be Expected at K-1 Level of Kanyashree Scheme:** It has been revealed from the present study that most of beneficiaries (29.33%) demand the amount of Kanyashree money should be increased to Rs. 2000 – Rs. 5000 yearly at K-1 level. Some of beneficiaries (2.67%) express that the amount of Kanyashree money should be increased to Rs. 5001- Rs. 10000 yearly at K-1 level. 1.33% and 4% beneficiaries opined that the amount of Kanyashree money should be increased to Rs. 10001- Rs. 20000 and above Rs. 20001 respectively at the K-1 level.

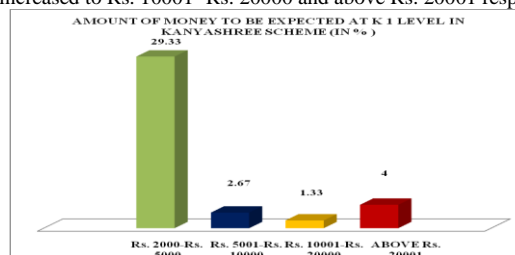


Figure 02: Amount of Money to be Expected at K-1 Level in Kanyashree Scheme Source: Primary Data

- c) **Awareness Camp Regarding Kanyashree Scheme in Last One Year:** It has been seen that 63% beneficiaries tolled that awareness camp regarding Kanyashree scheme has been held in last one year in their institution. 37% beneficiaries said that any kind of awareness camp regarding Kanyashree scheme has not been organized in their school in last one year.

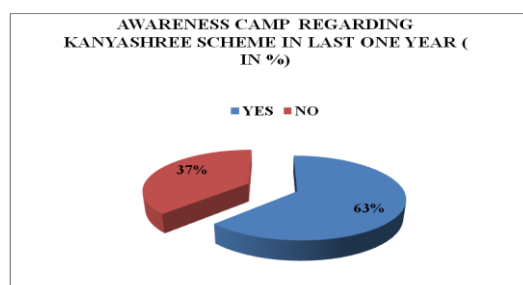


Figure 03: Awareness Camp Regarding Kanyashree Scheme in Last One Year Source: Primary Data

**d) Knowing About K-2 Level of Kanyashree Scheme:** In this present study, it has been found that 52% beneficiaries know about the K-2 level of Kanyashree scheme. 48% beneficiaries do not know about the K-2 level of Kanyashree scheme.

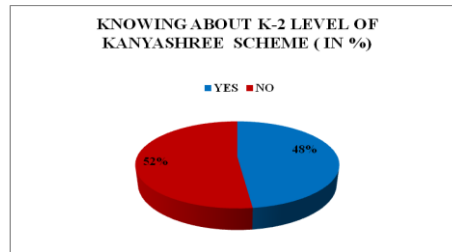


Figure 04: Knowing About K-2 Level of Kanyashree Scheme Source: Primary Data

**e) Knowing About K-3 Level of Kanyashree Scheme:** Analysing figure 05, It has been found that most of the beneficiaries (92%) do not know about the K-3 level of Kanyashree Scheme. Only 8% beneficiaries know about the K-3 level of Kanyashree Scheme.

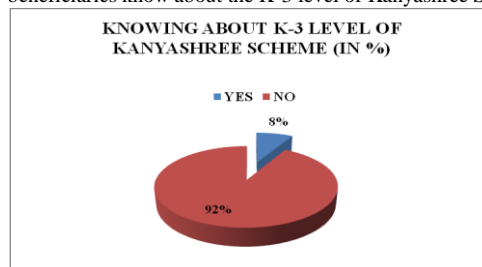


Figure 05: Knowing About K3 Level Kanyashree Scheme Source: Primary Data

**f) Sincerity of Nodal Teacher of Kanyashree Scheme regarding Solving Your Problems:** In this present study, it has been found that the nodal teacher is sincere in solving 65% beneficiaries Kanyashree problem. 35% beneficiaries tell that their Kanyashree nodal teacher is not helping in solving their Kanyashree scheme related problem.

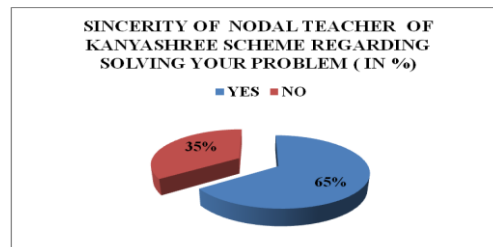


Figure 06: Sincerity of Nodal Teacher of Kanyashree Scheme Regarding Solving Your Problem Source: Primary data

**g) Kanyashree Scheme has Motivated You towards Higher Education:** In the present study, It has been seen that 95% beneficiaries opined that Kanyashree scheme has made her interested in higher education. Only 5% beneficiaries express that Kanyashree scheme has not made her interested in higher education.

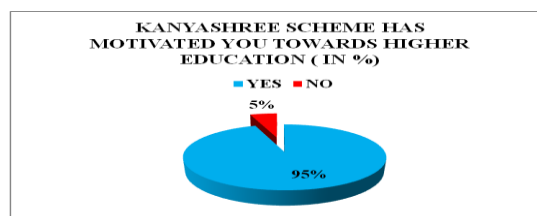


Figure 07: Kanyashree Scheme has Motivated You towards Higher Education Source: Primary Data

**MAJOR FINDINGS:** The major findings of the present study are:

1. It has been seen that 59% beneficiaries are satisfied with the money that they get from the Kanyashree scheme.

2. It has been revealed from the present study that most of the beneficiaries (29.33%) demand the amount of Kanyashree money should be increased to Rs. 2000 – Rs. 5000 yearly at K-1 level.
3. It has been seen that 63% beneficiaries tolled that awareness camp regarding Kanyashree scheme has been held in last one year in their institution.
4. About 37% beneficiaries said that any kind of awareness camp regarding Kanyashree scheme has not been organized in their school in last one year.
5. It has been found that 52% beneficiaries know about the K-2 level of Kanyashree scheme.
6. It has been found that 48% beneficiaries do not know about the K-2 level of Kanyashree scheme.
7. It has been found that most of the beneficiaries (92%) do not know about the K-3 level of Kanyashree Scheme.
8. It has been found that the nodal teacher is sincere in solving 65% beneficiaries Kanyashree problem.
9. About 35% beneficiaries expressed that their Kanyashree nodal teacher is not sincere in solving their Kanyashree scheme related problem.
10. About 95% beneficiaries opined that Kanyashree scheme has made them motivated towards higher education.
11. Only 5% beneficiaries expressed that Kanyashree scheme has not made them motivated towards higher education.

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## CONCLUSION:

In conclusion of this present study, we may highlight that 59% beneficiaries are satisfied with the money that they get from the Kanyashree scheme, though 29.33% beneficiaries of Kanyashree demand the amount of Kanyashree money should be increased to Rs. 2000 – Rs. 5000 yearly at K-1 level. It has been seen that 63% beneficiaries tolled that awareness camp regarding Kanyashree scheme has been held in last one year in their institution. About 37% beneficiaries said that any kind of awareness camp regarding Kanyashree scheme has not been organized in their school in last one year. 52% beneficiaries know about the K-2 level of Kanyashree scheme, though 48% beneficiaries do not know about the K-2 level of Kanyashree scheme. Unfortunately most of beneficiaries of Kanyashree who are presently belong to K-1 level of the said scheme of Purba Medinipur, and Jhargram district of West Bengal (92%) do not know about the K-3 level of Kanyashree Scheme. It has been found that the nodal teacher is sincere in solving 65% beneficiaries Kanyashree Scheme related problem. About 35% beneficiaries expressed that their Kanyashree nodal teacher is not sincere in solving their Kanyashree scheme related problem. About 95% beneficiaries opined that Kanyashree scheme has made them motivated towards higher education. Only 5% beneficiaries expressed that Kanyashree scheme has not made them motivated towards higher education due to their different family issues.

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