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Effectiveness of Kanyashree Prakalpa towards Lifelong Learning in the light of Public Library Manifesto: Parental deliberation

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Abstract

Kanyashree is a milestone initiative taken by the Government of West Bengal to improve the income, livelihood and economic conditions of girls by providing financial assistance to all female students so that families do not have to take additional burden for their education due to pecuniary difficulties. The purpose of the programme is to raise girls from poor families, who are unable to continue their education due to poor economic conditions. After attaining the age of 18 years, each girl student will get an amount of rupees twenty-five thousand. It prevents early child marriage, reduces drop-out rate and empowers women to take part in the development process of the society. Information is essential to all human endeavours; so, it is necessary that information be provided to all categories of people. This is the call of many organizations, including public libraries who also place emphasis on access to information. The present study was conducted in the Jalangi community development block in Murshidabad District, where daughters of one hundred parents received Kanyashree,a one-time grant of rupees twenty-five thousand at the age of 18 years. The main purpose of the study was to assess the role of public libraries in the empowerment of women. It has been found that the age of the respondent (X_1), educational status (X_2), involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help groups (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}), attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}) and difficulties towards daughter's education (X_{13}) have clear implications on the level of perception of parents about the effectiveness of Kanyashree as a one-time grant towards the empowerment of girls. It has also been established that economic difficulties of the family (X_3), housing condition (X_4), availing bank loan

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(X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12}), difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}) and role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25}) had immense bearing on the level of perception of parents about the empowerment of girls. It has been further recognized that the variables like association with rural public library (X_{23}), role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25}), available services of rural library (X_{26}), activities of public libraries (X_{27}) and up-gradation of public library (X_{29}) had significance on the level of perception of parents to evaluate the function of public libraries towards women's empowerment. Based on this, the article concludes that disseminating information creates an effect on the perception of parents to appraise the role of public libraries in empowering women i.e., the end-product of lifelong learning.

Keywords: *Kanyashree prakalpa, women empowerment, public library, scholarship, female education, child marriage*

Introduction

In the Kanyashree Prakalpa for girls, the core objectives are simple and focused. It aims to ensure that girls stay in school and delay their marriages till they attain 18 years of age. Kanyashree uses a social safety net mechanism that has shown a high degree of success in transforming the lives of children and adolescents in the State of West Bengal through conditional cash transfers.

The scheme has two cash transfer components: i) 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 that time; ii) The second 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.

Under the Sabooj Sathi Scheme, Government of West Bengal makes bicycles available to the students of class IX to XII in all Govt. /Govt. aided/ Govt. sponsored schools. A steering committee headed by the Principal Secretary, MSME&T department has been constituted to supervise, monitor and issue necessary guidelines regarding implementation of the scheme.

In theYuvashree Scheme(for youth),the State Government aims to provide an unemployment allowance of Rs.1,500 per month to 1,00,000 unemployed youth.The State Labour Department has made a comprehensive list of 1,00,000 beneficiaries

(who must be in the age group of 18 to 45 years) based on several criteria like education (those who have passed at least eighth standard). The recipients of the allowance are required to use it for training, vocational or otherwise, which will make them fit for employment.

The Sikshashree Scheme (for members of SCs) intends to provide quality assistance to SC students of Classes V to VIII in a smooth, transparent and efficient way. This is a new scheme of aiding the target groups. The original 'Sikshashree' scheme of aiding SC day-scholars of Class V-VIII has been re-formulated by merging the existing schemes of Book Grant and Maintenance Grant. It is applicable to the day scholars students of West Bengal in class V-VIII of any governmentaided school and all government recognized schools of West Bengal. The objective of the new scheme is to provide financial assistance to the SC students reading in classes V to VIII to improve their participation in pre-matric stage and minimize the incidence of drop-outs especially in the case of girl students.[1]

Women's empowerment is one of the main pillars of rural economic development. Without women's empowerment, a successful rural economy cannot be achieved because women appear to be the main driver of economic development. Women's effective participation in the rural economy is, therefore, necessary and desirable.

In the study of Hazra (2015), it was found that women are also accustomed to the restrictions imposed on them in the current era, which are antipodal to their status in society as also anathema to the concept of democracy and equality. It also defends the prospect of conducting gender and technology research. Research is needed on women's access to technology. Feminist central arguments may be useful in studying important aspects of gender as a man. Women's awareness of the library is an important source of progress[2].

Mamman and Esievo (2013) studied the impact of library information services on the empowerment of women and the transformation agenda and concluded that libraries as information providers can be vigilant, proactive and responsive to women's information needs; this has implications for women's empowerment and the transformation agenda. Governments at all levels should ensure that public libraries are equipped with high-quality technology, internet connectivity and trained staff to

[1]documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/405221482305811911/pdf/111214-REV-EA-P159427-Box402887B-PUBLIC-Disclosed-2-15-2017

[2]Hazra.(2015)
.The Role of Digital Libraries in Women Empowerment. Society Toda

[3]Mammanand Esievo. (2013). Women empowerment and the transformation agenda in Nigeria: the impact of library information services

provide girls and women access to benefits related to the use of ICTs; UNICEF, IFLA, UNESCO and Special grants from other international agencies such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to improve school library facilities, especially information resources that empower women and girls; repackaged and rebranded women's information will also be quite handy in ensuring such access. The establishment of networks or resource sharing among information providers, such as research and development institutions, academic, special and public libraries, should be encouraged. This will be a better way to create local content and localize what they can use to develop their own gender-specific information.The Global Library Association (with the support of IFLA) should tackle the challenge and establish libraries that can help women and girls and other special interest group information units or departments to have expanded access to information and empower them; libraries should better understand women's information needs and redesign existing information systems and services to take into account women's information needs; women should form groups to enable them to share information and access services such as health care, business enterprises, etc[3].

Oyelude and Bamigbola (2012) examined the various programmes/services of the libraries, resource centres and NGOs in meeting the socio-economic and political information needs of women; it ascertains how women access the information provided by the NGOs (especially those that have information or documentation centres) and its impact on their socio-economic status. It also identifies the challenges the NGOs face in providing information to empower the women. The most used means of accessing information by the women was the radio,television, and person-to-person communication either by the word of mouth or by telephone. The NGOs were found to be slowly but steadily gaining ground in educating the women and creating awareness among them of their potential to do better, to be empowered, and to stand up for their rights and themselves anywhere[4].

Sukumaran and Sureshkumar (2016) study conducted a growth process that involved women's intellectual inspiration, economic enrichment, and social liberation. Each SHG must be a public library patron (Puravalar). Reprography services (Xerox photocopying) through SHGs in regional and branch libraries will be provided by local library authorities. For cleaning and other related activities, SHGs can be entrusted to women. The library staff will meet regularly to enhance its capabilities

[4]Oyelude and Bamigbola. (2012). Women empowerment through access to information (ATI): the strategic roles of non-governmental organizations in Nigeria

[5]Sukumaran and Sureshkumarar. (2016). Community engagement of public library towards women empowerment in Tamil Nadu

[6]Badawi. (2009). Public Library Services and the Information Needs of Women in Northern Nigeria.

and carry out extension services. The SHG public library linkage programme is to be started[5].

Badawi (2009) surveyed that most families generally support early marriage and very few girls go to formal western schools or receive primary education. As a result, the percentage of illiteracy of the population in northern Nigeria is high, especially among the female population. Public libraries in northern Nigeria have also been rejected by the community because they have English-language documents stored by the British. At that time, few people could read, and very few people could read documents written in Arabic. After independence, the desire for development and the desire for education encouraged political leaders in northern Nigeria to build more schools in towns and villages and encouraged girls to attend school. In the 30 years since independence, the number of students (especially women) in all educational institutions in the region has increased significantly. Increase in the rate of literacy among the population has enhanced the pace of library utilization, which has encouraged the government of northern Nigeria to increase its support for libraries and provide related services to meet their information needs. Public libraries in the area now actively engage citizens through technology and multi-stake related activities. These activities make the people more democratic and enable women to better choose and control their own destiny[6].

In the study by Sinha (2015), the survey results showed that most of the respondents (47.0%) belonged to the 16-25 age group. The study shows that respondents know more about rural public libraries, with the highest percentage of respondents visiting public libraries once a week (34.53%). It also emphasizes that most respondents (40.29%) prefer to spend at least one hour in rural public libraries. The study also revealed that the greatest demand for information by respondents (88.44%) came from employment-related information. TV channels (100.0%) and newspapers (98.56%) are two important sources, and most public library users (67.44%) can obtain the required information needed from them. Most of the respondents (86.33%) said that the information provided by various sources was medium. The study also shows that most of the respondents (82.73%) are satisfied with the information provided by the rural public library; most of the respondents (64.74%) have not encountered any difficulty in accessing information and rarely receive visitors (32.25%) who encountered any problem with access to right information[7].

[7]Sinha. (2015). A Study on Information Needs and Information Seeking Pattern of Public Library Users of Barak Valley, South Assam

Objective of the Study

General Objectives

1. To know the present status of women's empowerment through public libraries of Jalangi Community Development Block in Murshidabad district of West Bengal;
2. To find the outcome of a Kanyashree one-time grant at the age of 18 years with rupees twenty-five thousand.

Specific Objectives

1. To understand the socio-economic background (i.e., the age of the respondent, educational status,financial difficulties of the family, housing condition, involvement towards the society, association with self-help groups, reasons behind the association with self-help groups, availing bank loan, reasons behind taking the bank loan, nature and extent of savings, attention towards daughter's education, expenditure towards daughter's education, difficulties towards daughter's education, role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant and role of Block Development Office in getting public services of parents of beneficiaries;
2. To obtain the effectiveness of the Kannyashree Prakalpa in helping girl students to continue their education and reducing the incidence of child marriage from different socio-economic variables such as age of the respondent, educational status, economic difficulties of the family, housing condition, involvement towards the society, association with self-help groups, reasons behind the association with self-help groups, availing bank loan, reasons behind taking the bank loan, nature and extent of savings, attention towards daughter's education, expenditure towards daughter's education, difficulties towards daughter's education, role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant, role of Block Development Office in getting public services, effectiveness of Kanyashree grant, use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education, encouragement towards women's empowerment, social taboos towards women's empowerment, role of public libraries towards women's empowerment and activities of public libraries;
3. To identify women's empowerment through public libraries from different consequential variables such as effectiveness of Kanyashree grant, use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education, encouragement towards women's empowerment, social taboos towards women's empowerment, assessing the level of women empowerment, availability of public library,

association with rural public library, level of association with rural library, role of public libraries towards women's empowerment, services available at the rural library, activities of public libraries, up-gradation of public library and suggestions towards development public library as a matter of policy.

Methods

Study Setting

Kanyashree Prakalpa, launched by the West Bengal government in 2013, is a unique conditional cash transfer program targeted at 18-year-old girls and offers a three-tier scholarship of Rs.750 per year for continuing education (K1) and one time grant. Rs. 25,000 on completion of age 18 years provided the girl is unmarried, and continues her education up to that age (K2). Kanyashree girls, whether single or married, can receive financial assistance if they receive PG studies in the Swami Vivekananda Merit-cum-Means-Scholarship Program (K3) provided that these girls have graduation marks of at least 45% and enroll themselves for Post-Graduate courses in the State of West Bengal. For pursuing post-graduate studies in Arts and Commerce, each K3 beneficiary will receive Rs. 2000 p.m. and for pursuing post-graduate studies in Science, each K3 beneficiary will get Rs.2500 p.m. The aim of this scheme is three-fold i.e, to promote secondary education among females, to stop marriage of girls before the age of 18 years and to empower women in the society.

To evaluate the direct and indirect effects of this unique conditional cash transfer, we propose to:

I. Identify the plausible effects on female drop-outs, early marriage and on empowerment of women in the Jalangi Community Development Block of Murshidabad district in West Bengal;
II. Study how the money received from this scheme was used;
III. Examine whether the cash transfer to the adult girl is likely to change her bargaining power within the family.

Abraham (2014) stated that the basic functions of all libraries remain the same i.e.,collection, preservation and dissemination of knowledge. The public library is treated as a welfare center which promotes education, culture, and provides space for healthy entertainment and spreads information for society[8].The purpose of the

[8] Abraham, Laila T. (2014). Role of public libraries in non-formal education in Kerala.
[9] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jalangi_(community_development_block)

study was to find out the level of functioning of public libraries in empowering women to provide information in Kerala.

Study design

The paper is based mainly on primary data collected from parents relating to getting Kanyashreeone time grant of Rs. 25,000 to girl students inJ alangi Community Development Block of Murshidabad district in West Bengal. The survey was conducted from December, 2018 to March, 2019.

According to the 2011 Census of India, the total population of the Jalangi Community Development Block is 252477. Male population is 129430 (51%) and female 123047 (49%). In the 2011 census, the Muslim population in the Jalangi community development block is 184980 accounting for 73.27% of the total population of the block; whereas the Hindu population is 67089 representing 26.57 % of the total population. In the same census, the population over the age of 6 is 148291 (67.35% of the total population) of which 78389 are male (69.36% of the total male population) and 69902 are female (65.24% of the total female population). In 2013-14, Jalangi CD Block had 113 primary schools with 12913 students, 25 middle schools with 4733 students, 4 high schools with 4790 students, and 13 higher-secondary schools with 22169 students. Block has 1 general degree college with 1236 students, 4 technical / professional institutions with 379 students, 421 special and non-formal education institutions with 22168 students[9].

Measures

Outcomes

The results of this analysis involve three steps. In the first step, the analysis includes the effectiveness of Kanyashree as one time grant (Y) which is the predictor variable. The age of the respondent (X_1), educational status (X_2), pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3), housing condition (X_4), involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help groups (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}), attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}), expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12}), difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}), role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14}) and role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15}) are the consequent variables.

In the second step, we conducted a study to assess the perception level of parents on the end product of lifelong learning i.e. women's empowerment (Z) from 22 causal factors such as the age of the respondent (X_1), educational status (X_2), pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3), housing condition (X_4), involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help groups (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}), attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}), expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12}), difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}), role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14}) and role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15}), Kanyashree grant (X_{16}), use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17}), (X_{18}), encouragement towards women's empowerment (X_{19}), social taboos towards women's empowerment (X_{20}), role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25}) and activities of public libraries (X_{27}).

In the third step, data was collected to assess the role of public libraries considering public library manifesto towards empowering women (W) from 15 following variables, such as the Kanyashree grant (X_{16}), use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17}), encouragement towards women's empowerment (X_{19}), social taboos towards women empowerment (X_{20}), assess the level of women empowerment (X_{21}), availability of public library (X_{22}), association with rural public library (X_{23}), level of association with rural library (X_{24}), role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25}), available services of rural library (X_{26}), activities of public libraries (X_{27}), expected services of rural library (X_{28}), up-gradation of public library (X_{29}) and suggestion towards development public library (X_{30}).

Analysis

Using coefficient of correlation, multiple regression and step-down regression models, we evaluated the relationship of three dependent variables namely, (i)Effectiveness of Kanyashree one-time grant (Y) with 15 casual variables, (ii). Perception level of parents on women's empowerment (Z) with 22 independent variables and (iii)Role of public libraries considering public library manifesto towards women's empowerment (W) with 15 consequent variables. Independent variables are different socio-economic and personal factors.

Table I depicts the parents' assessment on the effectiveness of Kanyashree one-time grant (Y) which comes from 15 independent variables, such as, age of the respondent (X_1), educational status (X_2), pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3),

housing condition (X_4), involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help groups (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}), attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}), expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12}), difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}), role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14}) and role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15}). It is found from the correlation result that the age of the respondent (X_1), educational status (X_2), pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3), housing condition (X_4), involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help groups (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}), attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}),and difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}) are closely associated in explaining the effectiveness of Kanyashree one-time grant towards successful implementation of lifelong learning.

Table I: Correlation Analysis between Dependent Variable Effectiveness of Kanyashree one-Time Grant (Y) with 15 Casual Variables

Variables	**'r' Value**
Age of the respondent (X_1)	-0.3270**
Educational status (X_2)	0.3963**
Pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3)	0.3675**
Housing condition (X_4)	0.3422**
Involvement towards the society (X_5)	0.2836**
Association with Self Help Groups (X_6)	0.2704**
Reasons behind the association with Self Help Groups (X_7)	0.2838**
Availing bank loan (X_8)	0.3625**
Reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9)	0.2472*
Nature and extent of savings (X_{10})	0.3242**
Attention towards daughter's education (X_{11})	0.4284**
Expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12})	0.1135
Difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13})	-0.2629**
Role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14})	0.1479
Role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15})	0.1512

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.05) = +or- 0.197 *Significant at 5% level
Critical value (2-Tail, 0.01) = +or- 0.256 ** Significant at 1% level

Table II presents the multiple regression analyses with â values and corresponding t-values. It is visible that the variables like age of the respondent (X_1), educational status (X_2), pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3), housing condition (X_4),

involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help groups (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reason behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}), attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}), expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12}), difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}), role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14}) and role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15}) have been identified which affect the effectiveness of the Kanyashree one-time grant. It should also be mentioned that all fifteen variables put together can explain 36.60% per cent($R^2 = 0.36602$) of the total effect. This indicates that these 15 variables cannot adequately explain the predictor variable. More inclusion of variables will be needed to reach to elucidate the total effect.

Table II: Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	**"β" value**	**"t" value**
Age of the respondent (X_1)	-0.173476	-1.515
Educational status (X_2)	0.071632	0.533
Pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3)	0.192373	1.199
Housing condition (X_4)	0.057102	0.417
Involvement towards the society (X_5)	0.168977	1.473
Association with Self Help Groups (X_6)	-0.361243	-0.959
Reasons behind the association with Self Help Groups (X_7)	0.208347	0.695
Availing bank loan (X_8)	0.110865	0.685
Reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9)	0.047109	0.180
Nature and extent of savings (X_{10})	0.115855	0.394
Attention towards daughter's education (X_{11})	0.344543	2.204*
Expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12})	-0.291961	-1.982
Difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13})	0.147296	0.943
Role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14})	0.073447	0.793
Role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15})	0.034904	0.370

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.05) = +or- 1.987 *Significant at 5% level
Critical value (2-Tail, 0.01) = +or- 2.637 ** Significant at 1% level

Multiple R = 0.60500
R Square = 0.36602
Adjusted R Square = 0.25281
Standard Error = 1.47359
Analysis of Variance
DF Sum of Squares Mean Square
Regression 15 105.30737 7.02049
Residual 84 182.40263 2.17146
F = 3.23307 Signif F = .0003

Table III: Step-down Regression Model

Step I: X_{11}	
Multiple R	= 0.42840
R Square	= 0.18352
Adjusted R Square	= 0.17519
Standard Error	= 1.54823
Step II: X_1	
Multiple R	= 0.50998
R Square	= 0.26008
Adjusted R Square	= 0.24482
Standard Error	= 1.48144
Step III: X_8	
Multiple R	= 0.53998
R Square	= 0.29158
Adjusted R Square	= 0.26945
Standard Error	= 1.45709

Table III shows the stepwise regression model. It is found that after the 3rd step, 3 variables namely, attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}),age of the respondent (X_1) and availing bank loan (X_8) together can explain 29.16 per cent of the total effect.Here, these 3 variables can explain for a regression effect of 29.16 per cent on the effectiveness level of Kanyashreeone-time grant, while the total estimated value is 36.60per cent.

We use socio-economic with personal variables including the role of Gram Panchayats and Block Development Office as consequent variables to appraise the perception level of parents towards the effectiveness of the Kanyashree one-time grant.

Table IV describes the level of perception on women's empowerment from 22 causal factors (Z) viz. age of the respondent (X_1), educational status (X_2), pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3), housing condition (X_4), involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help groups (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}), attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}), expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12}), difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}), role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14}) and role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15}), effectiveness of Kanyashree grant (X_{16}), use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17}), encouragement towards women empowerment (X_{19}), social taboos towards

women's empowerment (X_{20}), role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25}) and activities of public libraries (X_{27}).From the correlation coefficient table it has been found thateducational status (X_2), pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3), housing condition (X_4), involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help group (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}),expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12}), difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}),use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17}),role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25}) and activities of public libraries (X_{27})had strong bearing on the level of perception towards the empowerment of women.

Table IV: Correlation Analysis between Dependent Variable - The Perception Level of Parents on Women's Empowerment (Z) and 22 Casual Variables

Variables	**'r' Value**
Age of the respondent (X_1)	0.0196
Educational status (X_2)	0.2614**
Pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3)	0.3459**
Housing condition (X_4)	0.3237**
Involvement towards the society (X_5)	0.2798**
Association with Self Help Group (X_6)	0.3235**
Reason behind the association with Self Help Group (X_7)	0.4045**
Availing bank loan (X_8)	0.2590**
Reason behind taking the bank loan (X_9)	0.3614**
Nature and extent of savings (X_{10})	0.2939**
Attention towards daughter's education (X_{11})	0.1430
Expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12})	0.3888**
Difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13})	-0.2471*
Role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14})	-0.0474
Role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15})	0.1763
Effectiveness of Kanyashree grant (X_{16})	0.1939
Use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17})	-0.2873**
Wages towards women's empowerment (X_{18})	0.0059
Encouragement towards women's empowerment (X_{19})	-0.1883
Social taboo towards women's empowerment (X_{20})	-0.0091
Role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25})	0.4581**
Activities of public libraries (X_{27})	0.2768**

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.05) = +or- 0.197 *Significant at 5% level
Critical value (2-Tail, 0.01) = +or- 0.256 ** Significant at 1% level

Table V presents the multiple regression analyses with â values and corresponding t-values. It is visible that the variables namely, age of the respondent (X_1), educational status (X_2), pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3), housing condition (X_4), involvement towards the society (X_5), association with self-help groups (X_6), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), availing bank loan (X_8), reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9), nature and extent of savings (X_{10}), attention towards daughter's education (X_{11}), expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12}), difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13}), role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14}) and role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15}), effectiveness of Kanyashree grant (X_{16}), use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17}), encouragement towards women's empowerment (X_{19}), social taboo towards women's empowerment (X_{20}), role of public libraries towards women empowerment (X_{25}) and activities of public libraries (X_{27}) had been found significantly in assessing the level of parents' perceptions towards women's empowerment. Different factors affecting the level of women's empowerment have been identified. It is also mentioned that adding all 22 variables together can explain 48.49 per cent ($R^2 = 0.48487$) of the total effect.

Table V: Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	**"â" value**	**"t" value**
Age of the respondent (X_1)	0.068992	0.603
Educational status (X_2)	0.095872	0.692
Pecuniary difficulties of the family (X_3)	0.174818	1.093
Housing condition (X_4)	0.022449	0.164
Involvement towards the society (X_5)	0.038131	0.320
Association with Self Help Groups (X_6)	-0.089273	-0.244
Reason behind the association with Self Help Groups (X_7)	0.664912	2.245*
Availing bank loan (X_8)	-0.206372	-1.207
Reasons behind taking the bank loan (X_9)	0.196111	0.756
Nature and extent of savings (X_{10})	-0.482461	-1.677
Attention towards daughter's education (X_{11})	-0.324113	-1.970
Expenditure towards daughter's education (X_{12})	0.109648	0.694
Difficulties towards daughter's education(X_{13})	0.001950	0.012
Role of Gram Panchayats in getting Kanyashree grant (X_{14})	-0.175101	-1.877
Role of Block Development Office in getting public services (X_{15})	0.180752	1.775
Effectiveness of Kanyashree grant (X_{16})	0.128574	1.090
Use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17})	-0.147378	-0.876
Encouragement towards women empowerment (X_{19})	-0.213107	-1.409
Social taboos towards women empowerment (X_{20})	0.066458	0.634
Role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25})	0.188429	1.727

Activities of public libraries (X_{27}) 0.122412 1.189

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.05) = +or- 1.987 *Significant at 5% level
Critical value (2-Tail, 0.01) = +or- 2.637 ** Significant at 1% level
Multiple R = 0.69633
R Square = 0.48487
Adjusted R Square = 0.33770
Standard Error = 0.75213

Analysis of Variance

	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square
Regression	22	41.00097	1.86368
Residual	77	43.55903	0.56570

F = 3.29446 Signif F = 0.0001

Here, the socio-economic role of public libraries, with personal variables, the role of local self-government, the effectiveness of Kanyashree one-time grants, issues related to women's empowerment, and participation of public library in women empowerment are considered independent variables to assess the level of parents' perception towards women's empowerment.

Table VI: Step-down Regression Model

Step I: X_{25}
Multiple R = 0.45806
R Square = 0.20982
Adjusted R Square = 0.20176
Standard Error = 0.82572

Step II: X_7
Multiple R = 0.52384
R Square = 0.27441
Adjusted R Square = 0.25945
Standard Error = 0.79532

Step III: X_{27}
Multiple R = 0.56131
R Square = 0.31507
Adjusted R Square = 0.29367
Standard Error = 0.77673

Step IV: X_{10}

Multiple R	= 0.59049
R Square	= 0.34868
Adjusted R Square	= 0.32125
Standard Error	= 0.76141

Table VI shows the use of a step-down regression analysis to isolate the main independent variables. It was found that after step 4, the 4 variables namely, role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25}), reasons behind the association with self-help groups (X_7), activities of public libraries (X_{27}) and nature and extent of savings (X_{10}) can together explain 34.87 per cent of the total effect.

Table VII: Correlation Analysis between Dependent Variable - Role of Public Libraries towards Women's Empowerment (W) and 15 Casual Variables

Variables	**'r' Value**
Effectiveness of Kanyashree grant (X_{16})	0.1670
Use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17})	-0.4349**
Encouragement towards women's empowerment (X_{19})	-0.2714**
Social taboo towards women's empowerment (X_{20})	-0.1567
Assess the level of women's empowerment (X_{21})	0.3151**
Availability of public library (X_{22})	0.2638**
Association with rural public library (X_{23})	0.4746**
Level of association with rural library (X_{24})	0.3742**
Role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25})	0.5720**
Available services of rural library (X_{26})	0.6610**
Activities of public libraries (X_{27})	0.4474**
Expected services of rural library (X_{28})	0.2967**
Up-gradation of public library (X_{29})	0.4682**
Suggestion towards development public library (X_{30})	0.4909**

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.05) = +or- 0.197 *Significant at 5% level
Critical value (2-Tail, 0.01) = +or- 0.256 ** Significant at 1% level

Table VII is derived the parents' perception on the role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (W) from 15 casual variables such as the Kanyashree grant (X_{16}), use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17}), encouragement towards women's empowerment (X_{19}), social taboos towards women's empowerment (X_{20}), assess the level of women's empowerment (X_{21}),

availability of public library (X_{22}), association with rural public library (X_{23}), level of association with rural library (X_{24}), role of public libraries towards women empowerment (X_{25}), available services of rural library (X_{26}), activities of public libraries (X_{27}), expected services of rural library (X_{28}), up-gradation of public library (X_{29}) and suggestion towards development public library (X_{30}).From the correlation coefficient table, it is seen that consequent variables such as, Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17}), encouragement towards women's empowerment (X_{19}),assess the level of women empowerment (X_{21}), availability of public library (X_{22}), association with rural public library (X_{23}), level of association with rural library (X_{24}), role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25}), available services of rural library (X_{26}), activities of public libraries (X_{27}), expected services of rural library (X_{28}), up-gradation of public library (X_{29}) and suggestion towards development public library (X_{30}) had strong bearing on the level of perception of parents in evaluating the functions of public libraries towards women empowerment.

Table VIII: Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	**"â" value**	**" t "**
valueEffectiveness of Kanyashree grant (X_{16})	0.001875 0.020	
Use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17})	-0.164981	-1.718
Encouragement towards women's empowerment (X_{19})	0.171814	1.421
Social taboo towards women's empowerment (X_{20})	-0.081839	-0.957
Assess the level of women's empowerment (X_{21})	0.059994	0.679
Availability of public library (X_{22})	-0.120406	-1.378
Association with rural public library (X_{23})	0.053186	0.511
Level of association with rural library (X_{24})	-0.069335	-0.667
Role of public libraries towards women's empowerment (X_{25})	0.109494	0.909
Available services of rural library (X_{26})	0.376858 .	084**
Activities of public libraries (X_{27})	0.207641	1.938
Expected services of rural library (X_{28})	-0.002001	-0.024
Up-gradation of public library (X_{29})	0.122660	1.231
Suggestion towards development public library (X_{30})	0.136892	1.398

Critical value (2-Tail, 0.05) = +or- 1.987 *Significant at 5% level
Critical value (2-Tail, 0.01) = +or- 2.637 ** Significant at 1% level

Multiple R	= 0.76588
R Square	= 0.58658
Adjusted R Square	= 0.51275
Standard Error	= 0.85335

[10] https://www.wbkanyashree.gov.in/readwrite/publications/000113.pdf

Analysis of Variance

	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square
Regression		1586.79012	5.78601
Residual		8461.16988	0.72821

F =7.94549 Signif F =.0000

Table VIII provides a multiple regression analysis with â values and corresponding t-values.It can be seen that the variables like effectiveness of Kanyashree grant (X_{16}), use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education (X_{17}), encouragement towards women empowerment (X_{19}), social taboo towards women's empowerment (X_{20}), assess the level of women's empowerment (X_{21}), availability of public library (X_{22}), association with rural public library (X_{23}), level of association with rural library (X_{24}), role of public libraries towards women empowerment (X_{25}), available services of rural library (X_{26}), activities of public libraries (X_{27}), expected services of rural library (X_{28}), up-gradation of public library (X_{29}) and suggestions towards development public library (X_{30}) have been established to implement the significant regressive outcome on the level role of public libraries towards women empowerment.

Various factors were found to impact on the role of public libraries towards women's empowerment. It is also mentioned that all fifteen variables together can explain 58.65 percent ($R^2 = 0.58658$) of the total effect.

Table IX: Step-down Regression Model

Step I: X_{26}	
Multiple R	=0.66105
R Square	=0.43698
Adjusted R Square	=0.43124
Standard Error	=0.92198
Step II: X_{29}	
Multiple R	=0.69766
R Square	=0.48673
Adjusted R Square	=0.47615
Standard Error	=0.88483
Step III: X_{27}	
Multiple R	= 0.72403

[11]http://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/women-and-child-development/child-development-1/girl-child-welfare/state-wise-schemes-for-girl-child-welfare/west-bengal-kanyashree-prakalpa

[12]Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 18.02.2020.

R Square	=0.52422
Adjusted R Square	=0.50935
Standard Error	=0.85633

Table IX shows the step-down regression process. It was noted that only 3 variables like available services of rural library (X_{26}), the public library (X_{29}) and activities of public libraries (X_{27}) can explain 52.42 percent of the total effect.

Results and Discussion

We have studied the perception level of parents of girl students who have received the Kanyashree one time grant of Rs. 25,000 at the age of 18 years and we found that the age of the respondent and difficulties towards daughter's education had a negative effect on the level of perception i.e., effectiveness of Kanyashree one time grant (Y). This indicates that the level of perception will decline when parents are older. The educational status, pecuniary difficulties of the family, housing condition, involvement towards the society, association with self-help groups, reasons behind the association with self-help groups, availing bank loan, reasons behind taking the bank loan, nature and extent of savings, and attention towards daughter's education of the respondent showeda positive bearing on the level of perception.

Parents believe that most of the parents try to give away their girl children at a very early age because of the socially apprehended 'risk of love affairs' and 'to tie a knot with a good groom'. According to the Headmistress of Badmundi Girls' High School, parents belonging to socially disadvantaged groups are now sending their children to school. She reported that girls who used to study at Class V were getting married earlier, while children who are now studying at XI and XII are getting married. This change is evident in families belonging to SC, ST and OBCs.[10]

According to the 2006 Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), the legal age of marriage in India is 18 years for female and 21 years for men. Although despite the existence of the law, the practices of early child marriage continue in West Bengal. Child marriage is a form of gender discrimination that affects girls more than their male counterparts. This is probably the most common form of sexual exploitation of teenage girls, negatively affecting their health and the health of their children, leaving them economically and socially under-privileged and exposed to child labour, trafficking and other forms of exploitation. In fact, the districts with the highest incidence of child marriage in West Bengal are also those where trafficking is rampant. Following the enactment of PCMA 2006, the Ministry of Women's Development and Social Welfare and Child Development (DWD) launched an anti-child marriage campaign, disseminated information on prevention, recognized

the law and its help to adults, and taught children's criminal law to control marriage. However, it quickly became apparent that legal prohibition and social messages were largely ineffective in addressing child marriage. First, India's many forms of common and religious law complicate the issue of the proper age of marriage for girls. Secondly, because this custom is attributed to a long tradition and is justified from a patriarchal perspective, it is essential to protect girls from social fads. There are many taboos, dogmas and obscurantist ideas and other abominable practices, so eradicating this custom requires a real society with drivers of change, to alter victims' actors who become vulnerable due to age and gender to take decisions about their lives[11].

Since the launch of the Kanyashree programme in October 2013, nearly 6.08 million girls have been enrolled in the school. Kanyashree is praised nationally and internationally. The scheme was selected as the best project by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (2014-2015) for final evaluation. It was considered to be one of the "best practices" at the 'Girls Summit 2014' organized Department of International Development UK and UNICEF in London. International Recognition of Highest Award for Best Public Service in the World was also given to 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' to empower the girl child with education by United Nations on 23rd June, 2017 in Hague of Netherlands. As on 31st December 2019,59,88,537 Kanyashree recipients and 3,22,277 families benefitted through Rupashree Scheme by getting Rs. 25,000 for the marriage of their daughters.[12]

The perceptional level of parents on women's empowerment was assessed from 22 casual variables. This study shows that parents have a higher level of perception and variables like educational status, pecuniary difficulties of the family, housing condition, involvement towards the society, association with self-help groups, reasons behind association with self-help groups, availing bank loan, reasons behind taking the bank loan, nature and extent of savings, expenditure towards daughter's education, role of public libraries towards women's empowerment and activities of public libraries have a strong positive bearing on the dependent variable. Better family education and economic conditions suggest healthier housing conditions which ensure a considerable level of expenditure for the daughter's education. The present study shows that attention of the parents to the difficulties underlying daughter's education and uses of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education have a negative impact towards women's empowerment. This indicates that the attitude towards girls has not changed overnight. Moreover, very few cases existed where Kanyashree scholarship amount was incurred towards women's empowerment. Therefore, the role of public libraries in empowering women is not only essential, but also one of

the main sources for parents and their daughters to utilize them for empowering women.

Rural women in West Bengal are mainly engaged in agriculture. They produce common agricultural products in their land. They should be provided with the necessary information, knowledge, resources and training to have the very best agricultural output as also for the successful utilization of Rs. 25,000 towards achieving their financial empowerment. This study shows that parents have the role on public libraries towards women's empowerment. While assessing the level of women's empowerment, the variables such as availability of public library, association with rural public library, level of association with rural library, role of public libraries towards women's empowerment, available services of rural library, activities of public libraries, expected services of rural library, up-gradation of public library and suggestion towards development of public library showed their strong significance on the predictor variable. The present study shows that parents may play a vital role in getting associated with public libraries towards women's empowerment through variables like the use of Kanyashree scholarship grant towards education, wages towards women's empowerment and encouragement towards women'sempowerment have shown their negative effect on the dependent variable. They should redesign the information in such a way that rural women can use the information.

Table X: Parents' Opinion about their Preference of Expenditure

Priorities of expenditure	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
Daughter's education	36	36	25	2			1
Son's education	29	55	12	3			1
Investment of Agriculture/ Business	13	7	42	25	9	2	2
Treatment of family		1	10	36	46	7	
Construction of sanitation facilities and maintenance of houses			1	14	18	47	20
Savings					7	27	66
Marriage of daughter	22	1	11	20	20	17	9

Table X showed that in questionnaires raised before 100 respondent parents about their preference of expenditure, 36 per cent of respondents agreed with their first and second, and 25 per cent agreed with third priorities on daughter's education. In case of son's education, 29 per cent parents gave their first and 55 per cent of parents considered it as second preference. Respondent parents expressed their mixed consent on various issues like priorities of expenditure, daughter's education, son's education, investment of agriculture/ business, treatment of family, construction of sanitation facilities and maintenance of houses, savings, and marriage of daughter.

Table XI: Parents' Estimation towards Social Rectification

riorities	1st (in %)	2nd (in %)	3rd (in %)	4th (in %
radication of illiteracy			24	
educing child labour or school opouts		27		
op violence against women	34			
elaying child marriage				15

Table XI explained the estimation of 100 parents towards change of social disadvantage. 100 interviewees were given questions about their opinion regarding the change of social disadvantage and 34 percent of total respondents agreed with their first priority on "stop violence against women". While 27 percent of the total respondents opined in favour of reducing child labour or school drop-outs as their 2nd preference. Eradication of illiteracy comes as third preference with 24 percent opinion poll and delaying child marriage ranks fourth position in the rank matrix with 15 percent of choice.

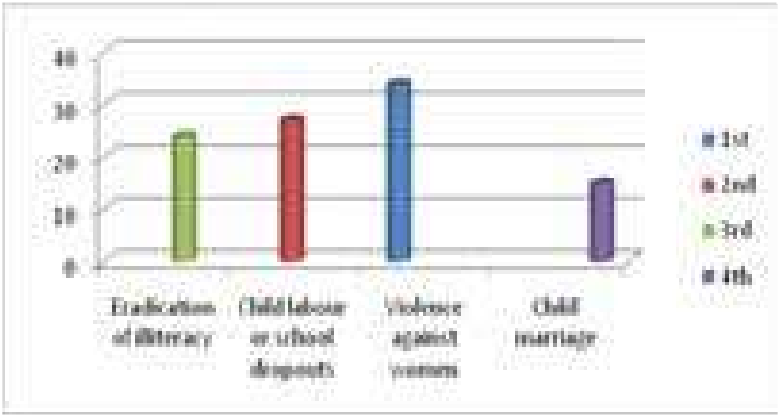


Figure-1

Table XII: Meaning of Women Empowerment

Priorities	1st (in %)	2nd (in %)	3rd (in %)	4th (in %)
Financial empowerment	48			
Decision within the family			15	
Societal decision		25		
Decision in rural administrative matters				12

Table XII describes the priorities of parents about the meaning of women's empowerment. While 100 parents were asked about the meaning of women's empowerment, 48 percent of respondents agreed with their priority that women's empowerment is meant for financial empowerment. For them without financial empowerment, women cannot exercise their rights in social, political, and family environment. Societal decision, decision within the family and decision in rural administrative matters are in second, third, and fourth places of preference respectively.

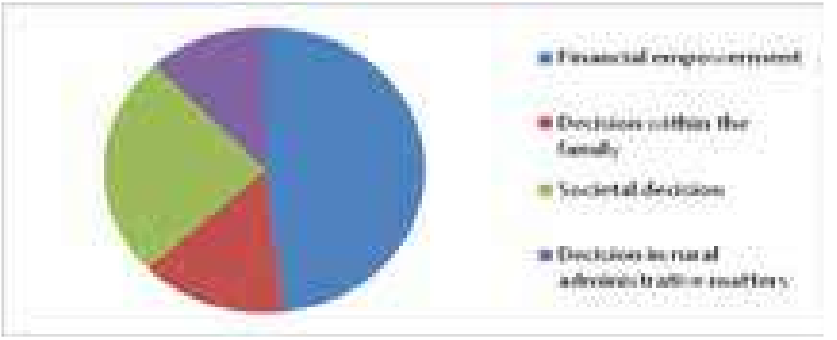


Figure-2

Connotation of Lifelong Learning with Kanyashree Prakalpa

Lifelong learning believes education should not be limited to formal education but integrate formal, non-formal and informal learning. It is essential to raise awareness on the premise that lifelong learning should include a wide range of learning settings and create more complementarities and continuity between formal, non-formal and informal learning. It also believes that education is the key to foster equity, social cohesion and active citizenship. It believes that the objectives of education and training should not only be described in terms of employability or economic growth, but also as a framework for personal development.

Lifelong learning is a form of self-initiated education that is focused on personal development. One of its objectives is that it should create equal opportunities available for everyone to acquire basic skills, a qualifying education and to get the employment.

Through Kanyashree Prakalpa, the Government of West Bengal has been successfully implementing Article 14, 15(i), 15(3), 16, 39(a) of the Indian Constitution. In developed countries like Europe and America, employment is mostly dependent on the demands of the labour market. In India, where the population is around 1.3

billion, lot of opportunities are still open in Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME). 18 years plus Kanyashree girls can start micro enterprises with their start-up grant of Rs. 25,000 as received from Kanyashree Prakalpa. ITIs, Polytechnics, Utkarsha Bangal Centres are now spreading across the State to give free training on almost all sectors. So Delors' (1996) four 'pillars' of education that is, Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to live together, and with others; and Learning to be are definitely fulfilled by this unique public welfare scheme.

UNESCO Public Library Manifesto and Kanyashree Prakalpa

Freedom, prosperity and the development of society and of individuals are fundamental human values. They will only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society. Constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture, information and skills. The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision- making and cultural development of the individual and social groups. The Manifesto proclaims UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women. UNESCO, therefore, encourages national and local governments to support and actively engage in the development of public libraries.

The State Government assumed several liabilities and responsibilities in setting up and running 2480 public libraries across Bengal. 187 crores in the State Budget were allocated for Public Libraries for 2018-19. It has substantially increased from 135 crore in 2010-11. A lot of responsibilities are assumed by the public librarians in disseminating knowledge and information among the stakeholders. Still, 3500 vacant positions in different public libraries pose a major challenge towards lifelong learning and successful implementation of the aims and objectives of Kanyashree Prakalpa.

Conclusion

The present study is an attempt to measure the effectiveness of Kanyashree Prakalpa towards lifelong learning in the light of Public Library Manifesto through parental deliberation in the Jalangi community development block of Murshidabad district of West Bengal. It is one of the Muslim-dominated areas of the district. Female students under the age 18 generally being forcefully given away in marriage, was a regular phenomenon. Various Government of India studies show that the

rate of early marriage has decreased substantially. Implementation of Kanyashree Prakalpa could be one of the reasons for delayed marriage. Another important development observed during the study was the enhancement of the rate of girls' education as a result of Kanyashree Prakalpa and the subsequent use of one-time grant of rupees twenty-five thousand for their start-up to initiate micro enterprises. It was also observed that some people deposit this money in a bank while some people buy a cow and a cow-calf and sell milk and milk products. The monthly household income of these families due to empowerment of their female children is now around three thousand rupees. It was also found from the study that some female students have received higher education and continue their studies. At the same time, Kanyashree girls wanted to help their fathers in their business. Some students purchased books and exercise books and engaged themselves for further study. Kanyashree had brought good luck for such parents who for economic or any other reason found that they cannot afford the luxury of continuing the education of their daughters. Providing information through public libraries is a timely necessity, a valuable service as also a tool of empowerment of rural women. As the saying goes, 'trained women train the nation'. These women are diligent and passionate about their work and should help to improve their careers. Although the West Bengal government is working to aid these women, the government should increase its efforts to help and encourage rural women in order to give them a sense of belonging. If public libraries can provide more information to these women, the impact on the lives of these women will be greater.

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