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INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES IN KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA IN ASSAM FOR DROP OUT AND NEVER ENROLLED ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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ABSTRACT

To target pockets where girls' education is lagging behind, the Government of India has launched Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV). The objective of KGBV is to ensure access and provide quality education to girls from disadvantaged groups by setting up residential schools at upper primary level. 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. Primary data collection method was used in the study. It is seen that 44.44 per cent of the KGBVs were functioning in their own building and 55.55 per cent of the KGBVs were functioning in rented accommodation. Although they have the permission to have their own building but it was either under construction or the construction was yet to begin due to several administrative problems. Infrastructural facilities and KGBV buildings need reconsideration. More number of rooms is required for the girls and teachers for comfort stay in KGBV.

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INTRODUCTION

The National commitment to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the 6-14 years age group, is now a Fundamental Right of every child in India after the passing of the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act in December, 2002. But it is seen that girl's education has suffered for many reasons in our society. Reaching out to the girl child is central to the efforts to universalize elementary education. Sarba Shiksha Abhijan (SSA) or 'Education for All' programme recognizes that ensuring girl's education requires changes not only in the education system but also in societal norms and attitudes. To target pockets where girls' education is lagging behind, the Government of India has launched Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV). The aim is to reach out to girls from marginalized social groups in over 3282 educationally backward blocks in the country, where the female rural literacy is below the national average and the gender gap in literacy is above the national average.

Verma (2008) stated that KGBV was the first politically correct step in the field of girls education as it focuses on the most marginalized and deprived sections of the society. She added that while the scheme appears to be laudable in its conception and yet great care should be taken in its implementation. She was particularly concerned about the transmission of stereotypes that is often visible in schemes designed for promoting girls education. Rath (2008) stated that this scheme drew its inspiration from Kasturba Gandhi, who contributed in promoting education among the people of Champaran, especially when Mahatma Gandhiji was busy in addressing the causes of the indigo farmers of West Champaran. She took the initiative of running the ashram, hospital and school for the children. She specially made efforts to educate girls. The objective of KGBV is to ensure access and provide quality education to girls from disadvantaged groups by setting up residential schools at upper primary level.

Objective

To evaluate the infrastructure facilities in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya in Assam.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

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 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.

Method of data collection

The researcher had collected the data initially from the State Mission Office of SSA Assam from the State Programme Officer (SPO) of KGBV component. After getting the details the researcher had collected all the phone numbers of District Mission Coordinator (DMC) and District Programme Officers (alternative schooling) DPO (AS). At the beginning the DPO (AS) was contacted in the office of the SSA and after getting the permission the concerned KGBVs were visited. Primary data collection method was used in the study. The interview and focus group discussion (FGD) were conducted. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to get data from the field for primary data collection

Statistical procedure adopted for analysis and interpretation of data

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.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chaudhari *et al.* (2012) conducted a study on Impact of KGBVs on girls' education and retention. The findings of the study revealed that there were lot of problems faced by the functionaries and the beneficiaries regarding the design of the building of the KGBV. There is a lack of availability of sufficient rooms which can be used for teaching, staff room and storage etc.

Deputy Director, Planning (2012) conducted a physical verification at Bhagwah and the findings of the study revealed that in KGBV Bhagwah the structure of the ground floor has been raised up to slab level. The building is along the slope of the mountain range of middle Himalayas. The rear wall of the school has been damaged due to sliding of mud and boulders during rains. Moreover, the rooms are damp. The condition of the building is deteriorating due to stoppage of work about two years back and its non-utilization. The KGBV Bhagwah was functioning from a rented building in the village. A monthly rent of Rs. 2500 is being paid to the owner of the building. Economic Survey-finance-Jharkhand (2012) found that buildings of different KGBVs are still waiting for completion because of laxity on the part of building construction committee officials. Funds of Rs. 40 lakhs for each building were sanctioned in 2006-07. This was revealed in a review meeting chaired by District Superintendent of Education (DSE). The KGBV buildings remained incomplete at Meral, Dhurki, Ramuna, Dandai, Ranka and Bhandaria. DSE expressed dissatisfaction over the unnecessary delay in construction of KGBV buildings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As per Government once the land is identified, suitable building should be constructed for KGBV. The unit cost of new KGBV building was revised since October, 2010 to confer to the state Public Work Department (PWD), Schedule of Rate (SOR). The minimum area for the KGBV hostel building was calculated based on basic amenities and requirements as indicated below:

- For 50 girls the carpet area of the building should be approximately 80 sq.ft/girl.
- For 100 girls the carpet area of the building should be approximately 60 sq.ft/girl.

Infrastructure facilities in the KGBV

From the Table 1, it is seen that 44.44 per cent of the KGBVs were functioning in their own building and 55.55 per cent of the KGBVs were functioning in rented accommodation. They have the permission to have their own building but it was either under construction or the construction was yet to begin due to several administrative problems. The rented or temporary buildings were usually crowded and lack basic amenities, such as number of toilets and bathrooms. Girls were found sharing beds. As the buildings were not planned for KGBVs, there were many adjustments that were necessary. Under the circumstance it is indeed important that the construction of new buildings be expeditiously completed or construction done at an early date.

Table 1. Establishment in own building

Own building	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Yes	4	44.44
No	5	55.55

From the Table 2, it can be revealed that 88.88 per cent of the respondent viewed that there was no sufficient room to accommodate all the girls of KGBVs because out of nine

KGBVs five numbers of KGBVs were in rented venues. Since all the KGBVs were in interior villages, so such big accommodations were not available. Therefore until construction or completion of new building they were required to adjust.

Table 2. Distribution of responses on infrastructure facilities in the KGBV

Infrastructure facilities	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Sufficient room		
Yes	1	11.11
No	8	88.88

Table 3. Distribution of responses on availability of different infrastructural facilities in KGBV

Different infrastructural facilities	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Availability of bed		
Yes	8	88.88
No	1	11.11
Availability of table/chair		
Yes	2	22.22
No	7	77.77
Availability of desk bench		
Yes	9	100
Separate class room		
Yes	6	66.66
No	3	33.33
Sufficient windows in the classroom		
Yes	6	66.66
No	3	33.33
Sufficient light in the classroom		
Yes	8	88.88
No	1	11.11
Sufficient ventilation in the classroom		
Yes	8	88.88
No	1	11.11
Sufficient utensils in KGBV		
Yes	9	100
Sufficient cooking facilities in KGBV		
Yes	7	77.77
No	2	22.22
Almirah and cupboard to keep girls belongings		
No	9	100
Play materials		
Yes	6	66.66
No	3	33.33

From the Table 3, it can be indicated that 88.88 per cent of the respondents expressed that the beds were available. 100 per cent expressed that desk and benches were also available and only 22 per cent expressed that tables and chairs were available in KGBVs. This may be because table and chairs were only provided for the teachers to be used in the classroom and for the students, desk and benches were provided. 66.66 per cent said that there were separate classrooms for conducting classes in the KGBVs. 66.66 per cent also revealed that there were sufficient windows in the KGBVs. 88.88 per cent said that there was sufficient light and ventilations in the classrooms. This indicates that a good learning environment was created in the KGBVs which will definitely enhance the interest of learning among the girls. Regarding utensils and cooking facilities, 100 per cent revealed that they had sufficient utensils and 77.77 per cent said that they have sufficient cooking facilities in the KGBVs.

The KGBVs spreads across the states have shown a good supply of materials. Hundred per cent of the respondent also revealed that they do not have almirahs and cupboards to keep girls belongings. This may be due to lack of space in the KGBVs, such materials were not provided to the girls. Instead a steel trunk was supplied to the girls that can be easily stored underneath the bed and at time it was observed that girls used it as table for studying and writing because there was no provision of table and chair in their rooms. Desks and benches were only available in their classrooms. In this regard the warden of Mondia KGBVs expressed that there should be a few numbers of wardrobes or almirahs in the KGBVs because everything cannot be placed in the trunks. Almirahs were required to store the personal things and this would ensure proper storage.

During data collection it was also observed that as the girls were provided double decker beds, therefore the girls who stayed below did not get sufficient light to study. Moreover the beds were very closely placed in the room which does not allow sufficient light to enter which may later create eye problems. Although such beds are ideal for space saving yet the girls were found to have posture problem and they do not get sufficient comfort during the summer as the breeze of fan could not reach them. Further, analysis revealed that 66.66 per cent of the respondents expressed that they have sufficient play materials in the KGBVs. At the time of opening of KGBVs different recreational materials were provided such as carom board, ludo, chess board, one badminton set etc., but a few of them were not in a usable condition so they were dumped in some corner of the KGBVs. For this reasons 33.33 per cent said that play materials were not sufficient. To add variation and quantity as per the requirement of the girls different play materials should be provided every year so that the girls can enjoy and have fun in KGBVs.

Result of Table 4, indicates that 100 per cent of the respondents expressed that they have audio-visual aids in the KGBVs for girls' entertainment. When they were asked to specify, 55.55 per cent revealed that they have radio, 100 per cent television, 88.88 per cent Compact Disc players (CD), 55.55 per cent tape recorder and 33.33 per cent said K-yan machines. The aids were supplied to the KGBVs in collaboration with different banks of the local areas. Along with the CD players and tape recorder, some selected cassettes for upgrading the following areas such as motivational level of girls, promoting self esteem and self confidence of girls', learning good habits, health and hygiene and cleanliness were also included. Hundred per cent respondents also expressed that they received audio-visual aids for girls' knowledge which include 44.44 per cent projectors, 100 per cent computers for upgrading their knowledge and views. Seventy eight per cent used audio-visual aids sometimes for the girls' entertainment and 100 per cent used sometime for girls' knowledge. In spite of using the computer sometime, the use of computer should be often so that the girls could learn more from it. Although three to four computers were provided in the KGBVs most of them were found out of order and caked in dust. As the KGBVs were located in the interior villages there were very often irregularities in the electricity supply. Therefore the use of computer was not up to the satisfactory level.

Table 4. Distribution of responses on availability of different audio visual aids in KGBV

Audio visual aids in KGBV	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Audio visual aids in KGBV for entertainment		
Yes	9	100
Specify		
Radio		
Yes	5	55.55
No	4	44.44
Television		
Yes	9	100
CD players		
Yes	8	88.88
No	1	11.11
Tape recorder		
Yes	5	55.55
No	4	44.44
Video games		
No	9	100
If any		
K-yan		
Yes	3	33.33
No	6	66.66
Audio visual aids for girls knowledge		
Yes	9	100
Specify		
Projector		
Yes	4	44.44
No	5	55.55
Computer		
Yes	9	100
Audio visual used for girls entertainment		
Often	2	22.22
Sometime	7	77.77
Audio visual used for girls knowledge		
Sometime	9	100

From the Table 5, it can be revealed that apart from the listed registers mentioned in the questionnaire prepared there was also a numbers of other registers found at KGBVs. Those were prepared as per the needs of KGBVs for maintaining records and other administrative purpose. 100 per cent of the respondents expressed that they have attendance for girls, employee, movement register for the girls and visitor register at KGBVs. After analysis it was revealed that 55.55 per cent expressed that they have guardian visit register and 66.66 per cent health register. It was found that the health registers were named as medical profile where the major indicators like the weight and height of the girls and any major or minor illness of the girls were maintained. A higher, 88.88 per cent of the respondents expressed that they have account register and material receipt register in the KGBVs. 66.66 per cent said that they have learning materials receipt registers, food item purchase register, book issues registers and different items issues registers in the KGBVs. From the findings it was revealed that 100 per cent of the KGBVs do not have any Petrol Oil and Lubricant (POL) registers and 88.88 per cent said that they also do not have any record of fuel register in the KGBVs. Most of the registers were available at KGBVs and the entries were found to be regular in many of them, only few of them were not updated. Apart from the listed registers some other registers such as evaluation register, child profile register, mid day meal register, vocational training register, guardian meeting, movement register of staff, station leave

register and stipend received registers were maintained. When asked 100 per cent of the respondents also expressed that the registers were maintained properly in the KGBVs. However in few it was observed that although the registers were maintained properly yet the things were not as such regular.

Table 5. Different registers in KGBV

Different registers	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Attendance for girls		
Yes	9	100
Attendance for employee		
Yes	9	100
Movement register of girls		
Yes	9	100
Guardian visit register		
Yes	5	55.55
No	4	44.44
Visitor register		
Yes	9	100
Health register		
Yes	6	66.66
No	3	33.33
Accounts register		
Yes	8	88.88
No	1	11.11
Material receipt register		
Yes	8	88.88
No	1	11.11
Learning material receipt register		
Yes	6	66.66
No	3	33.33
Food item purchase register		
Yes	6	66.66
No	3	33.33
POL register		
No	9	100
Book issue register		
Yes	6	66.66
No	3	33.33
Issue register		
Yes	6	66.66
No	3	33.33
Fuel register		
Yes	1	11.11
No	8	88.88
Any other evaluation register		
Yes	2	22.22
No	7	77.77
Child profile register		
Yes	1	11.11
No	8	88.88
Mid day meal register		
Yes	1	11
No	8	89
Vocational training register		
Yes	1	11.11
No	8	88.88
Guardian meeting register		
Yes	2	22.22
No	7	77.77
Movement register		
Yes	2	22.22
No	7	77.77
Staff station leave register		
Yes	1	11.11
No	8	88.88
Stipend received register		
Yes	1	11.11
No	8	88.88
Register available maintained properly		
Yes	9	100

From the Table 6, it can be revealed that 100 per cent of the respondents expressed that they have library in the KGBVs and 88.88 per cent said that they have bookself and almirahs in the KGBVs. Regarding availability of the books, only 22.22 per cent said that they have sufficient books in the KGBVs. During the discussion session with the girls they informed that the library books were not used frequently. Although all the KGBVs were having library with books but still the content and quality of books required review. In many KGBVs the books were not used as they were locked up. Even the teachers were not familiar with the books available. A well-integrated library programme with right mixture of enjoyable fiction, fun books and information-oriented books need to be provided in the KGBVs. The Table 6 also indicated that only 22.22 per cent of the KGBVs had place for worship. The place for worship was not made compulsion in all the KGBVs because girls of different caste and communities stayed together. In the contrary, the girls practiced morning assembly and sang prayers, did meditation and yoga in the school premise. 100 per cent of the responded also expressed that there was no facilities of vehicle in the KGBVs but when needed for any emergency or to go somewhere along with the girls than they hired vehicle from the contingency head of the KGBVs.

Table 6. Distribution of responses on availability of library, place of worship and vehicle in KGBV

Library, place of worship and vehicle in KGBV	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Library in KGBV		
Yes	9	100
Bookself and almirah		
Yes	8	88.88
No	1	11.11
Sufficient books in library		
Yes	2	22.22
No	7	77.77
Place for worship		
Yes	2	22.22
No	7	77.77
Vehicle in KGBV		
No	9	100

Table 7, indicated that 77.77 per cent of the KGBVs had playground, and the land area for play ground was sufficient in the KGBVs. Two numbers of KGBVs, one at Barpeta and one at Kamrup district, did not have play ground for the girls to play. Both the KGBVs were in rented buildings. Although in Goroimari KGBV of Kamrup district there was play ground but the land was low, so water stagnation was found during data collection and the ground was not appropriate to be used for playing. Availability of play ground was found in the KGBVs, comprising 1 bigha land for 57.14 per cent and 1.5 bigha for 42.85 per cent. Table 7, also indicated that 44.44 per cent of the plantation/cultivation was done by the students and 55.55 per cent of plantation in KGBVs was done by the staffs. Although the majority of the girls were from the farmer's family and yet their innate skills regarding farming was not considered and nurtured as required. One should have sensitivity towards the socio-cultural background of the girls. Their knowledge regarding farming should be shared, noticed and applied in daily life, so that they will remain associated with the place and background they come from and above all they will love and respect the occupation, which form the base of their existences. There were many upcoming fields of

further education related to agriculture therefore girls should be made aware of it. The plantation and cultivation done by the student and staff would add variety to the food menu in the KGBVs too.

Table 7. Distribution of responses on availability of play ground and plantation at KGBV

Play ground and plantation	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Playground in KGBV		
Yes	7	77.77
No	2	22.22
Land area covered for play ground	(N=7)	Percentage (%)
1 bigha	4	57.14
1.5 bigha	3	42.85
Cultivation/plantation done by student	(N=9)	Percentage (%)
Yes	4	44.44
No	5	55.55
Cultivation/plantation done by staff	(N=9)	Percentage (%)
Yes	5	55.55
No	4	44.44
Specify plantation/cultivation	(N=10)	Percentage (%)
Kitchen garden	4	40
Flower garden	6	60

Table 7, also reveals that 40 per cent of the staff and girls were involved in kitchen gardening and 60 per cent grew flowers. This added to the beauty and aesthetic appeal of the KGBV buildings and the surroundings. The staff and the girls should also take the initiative to grow some locally available herbs and medicinal plants in the KGBVs such as Basel, Mint, Coriander, Curry leaves and Alovera etc.

Table 8. Distribution of electricity and fuel in KGBV

Status of electricity	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Electricity		
Yes	9	100
Status of fuel	Frequency (N=13)	Percentage (%)
Fuel used for cooking		
Gas	6	66.66
Firewood	7	77.77

From the Table 8 it can be seen that 100 per cent of the KGBVs had electricity connection in the buildings. It was also observed that during load-shedding as alternative power source, generator, lamps, emergency lights and candles were also available in KGBVs. Although generator were provided to the KGBVs it was observed most of them were out of order and not in used since long period. None of the officials from the block level or KGBV level took the initiative to repair the generator. When the warden and caretaker were asked regarding repairing of generator, the following were expressed by the respondents:

- Oil required for use of generator were not provided timely by the block and district authority.
- The authority informed not to use the generator as fund for purchase of oil was not available.
- When the authority was informed that the generator was not working and repairing was required, they said that there was no budget in account for repairing.

Researcher found that generator lying in the KGBVs as a waste. Another finding revealed from the Table 8, was that the KGBVs used both gas and fire wood i.e. 66.66 per cent used gas and 77.77 per cent used fire woods. Even though gas cylinders were available in KGBVs mostly the fire woods were used as fuel. In most of the case due to high price and due to delay in refillment of cylinders in remote location, firewood comes to rescue to serve a large number of girls in the KGBVs. As most of the KGBVs were using fire wood as fuel for cooking, facilitation support was required in this regards from the GOI to make it possible for the KGBVs to get LPG cylinder regularly. In rented building, it was observed that kitchen was made of bamboo, wood and straw that enhance the risk of fire outbreak. Staff orientation on safety and disaster preparedness is required in this regards.

Table 9. Distribution of responses on cleaning of kitchen, toilets and bathrooms

Status of cleaning	Frequency (N=9)	Percentage (%)
Provision of cleaning kitchen		
Yes	9	100
If yes specify		
By cook and assistant cook with the use of detergent and phenyl	9	100
Cleaning of toilets and bathrooms		
Yes	9	100
If yes specify		
By girls with the use of toilet cleaner and phenyl	9	100

From the Table 9, it can be revealed that 100 per cent of the respondent expressed that they had the provision for cleaning the kitchen regularly and it was done by the cook and assistant cook jointly after cooking food. They generally use to sweep and mop the floor regularly either by using phenyl or detergent. It was also observed by the researcher during data collections that although the kitchen was clean and hygienic, but the outlet for water from kitchen was into open ground behind the building which was very unhygienic. There was also no arrangement for sewage at KGBVs. This also should draw attention of the authorities. The cleanliness and hygiene at KGBVs must be the prime concern for the residents of the KGBVs. The teachers and supportive staffs can ensure this aspect and teach the girls to do the same. 100 per cent of the respondent said that they have the provision of cleaning the toilets and bathrooms regularly and 100 per cent also expressed that it was done by the girls on rotation basis. The cleaning of the bathroom and toilet was done by using toilet cleaner and phenyl regularly. During visit it was observed that the bathrooms and toilets were almost hygienically maintained by the girls and the KGBV authorities.

Conclusion

Success has been achieved in bringing the girls to KGBVs with the consent of their parents. This indicates that certain level of awareness has been definitely created among the people of EBB by the functionaries of KGBVs. A dream has to be nurture in them for a better and secured future by providing adequate physical facilities. 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.

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