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A study on profile characteristics, communication behaviour and constraints faced by the beneficiaries of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme

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Abstract

The scheme Beti Bachao Beti Padhao was launched by Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi, on 22nd January 2015 which means “save the daughter, educate the girl”. The scheme was launched in Haryana because of its lowest female to male sex ratio in the country (775:1000). The scheme aims to improve girl child enrollment in schools, sex ratio, and their rights. An ex-post facto research design was used. The state Andhra Pradesh, district Prakasham, and four blocks from the district were selected purposively because of their low Child Sex Ratio. Two villages from each block and 10 respondents from each village were selected randomly constituting a sample of 80 respondents. The data was collected through personal interview with the help of a structured interview schedule. Findings revealed that the majority were middle aged (52.50%) belonging to OBC (40.00%) with education up to secondary level (25.00%) and parent education was primary level (40.00%). Most had occupation as daily labor/ agriculture and allied activities (27.50%) and an annual income of 50,000 to 1,00,000 rupees (36.25%). A large portion of the respondents had up to 2 children (57.50%) with 1 girl child (40.00%). The majority had a medium level (71.25%), followed by high level (15.00%) of communication behaviour. Major constraints faced by them were lack of seriousness among the policy implementers as well as machinery workforces, lack of proper implementation of awareness programmes and poor fund rotation chain in case of socio-cultural, technical, and economic constraints, respectively.

Keywords: Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme, communication behaviour, constraints, women, economy

Introduction

It is argued that lack of women education can be an obstruction to countries economic development. In India, women receive less education compared to men. At the National level, the literacy rate of an individual about 15 years or more is 74.04 percent. But among males it is 82.14 percent but in females, it is only 65.46 percent, and the gap in this literacy rate is far more observed in rural areas. The educational level, health, and nutritional status of mothers are central to the quality of life and a key ingredient for the welfare of her children in terms of health, nutritional status, behavioral, physical, and motor skills mainly in developing countries (Kaur *et al.*, 2015a and Kaur *et al.*, 2015b) ^[5, 6]. Dr. Sanjay Salivkar (2012) ^[9] in his work stated that female foeticide had driven the health of society in danger. Due to this evil practice against women, their self-power, self-confidence, independence, etc, are castigated leading to many problems.

Studies revealed that there has been considerable improvement in enrollment of girls during the post-independence period, yet it continues to be below 50.00 percent both at primary and upper primary levels of school

education. Keeping this in mind, Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi, launched the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme on 22nd January, 2015 which means “save the daughter, educate the daughter”. The scheme was launched in Haryana because of its lowest female to male sex ratio in the country (775:1000). The scheme aims to have three major effects i.e., enrolling more girls in schools, balancing the sex ratio, and emphasizing the importance of child rights. To summarize, the scheme aims to eradicate gender inequality and promote financial and social independence for females. It also fights to prevent inhumane practices like child marriages, female infanticide, and feticide, thereby contributing to women’s empowerment. The scheme is implemented with the help of Anganwadi workers. Their nutritional knowledge and skills do have a direct impact on the implementation of the programme and the health of the people due to their close and continuous contact with the people of the community, especially the children and women (Sharma and Jain, 2015) ^[10].

Analysis by Ambay Singh *et al.*, (2020) ^[13] revealed that there has been an improvement in the sex ratio at birth (SRB) from 918 in 2014-15 to 926 in 2016-17 as per Health

Management Information System (HMIS) data after the implementation of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme. The study conducted by Rakesh Gupta *et al.* (2018) [4] revealed that there has been a steady increase in the sex ratio at birth in the Haryana state after this implementation of the scheme. Keeping these points in view, the purpose of this study is to conduct an in-depth examination of whether the scheme has been successful in achieving its goals and to know its extent of success in terms of profile characteristics, communication behavior, and constraints faced by the beneficiaries.

Methodology

The ex-post facto research design was used as the events occurred already. The state Andhra Pradesh and district Prakasham were purposively chosen for the study because the literacy rate of the women was quite low (59.50 %) and this condition is worse for rural women residing in AP, where people don't value women's education. From the district, four blocks namely, Marripudi, Racherla, Tangatur, and Chandra Sekhara Puran were purposefully selected for the study based on their low child sex ratio. For the study, two villages from each block and ten beneficiaries from each village were taken randomly into consideration thus making up a total sample size of 80 beneficiaries from 8 villages. The response was collected with the help of a structured interview schedule by interviewing the beneficiaries personally and the list of beneficiaries was obtained from the Anganwadi center of the respective village. The profile characteristics were studied and the data was presented in terms of percentage and frequency. Communication behavior was studied under three components i.e., Impersonal Cosmopolite, Personal Cosmopolite, and Personal Localite. The responses were taken on a three-point continuum viz., Always, Sometimes, and Never with a score of 3, 2, and 1. Based on the mean and standard deviation, the respondents were divided into low, medium, and high categories. Socio-cultural, technical, and economic was the constraints studied. Using the rank order method, the constraints were ranked based on the frequency of responses.

Results

Profile characteristics of the beneficiaries

The findings related to different aspects of the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries are given below:

The results from the Table 1 show that, 52.50 percent of them were from middle age group of 25 to 50 years followed by the young age group of below 25 years (30.00%). In the case of caste, 40.00 percent of them were from OBC followed by general (32.50%). 25.00 percent of them had completed their secondary level of education followed by primary education (21.25%). In the case of parental education, 40.00 percent had a primary level of education followed by illiterate (35.00%). The majority of the beneficiaries (27.50 %) were working as daily labor/ agriculture and allied activities followed by self employed/SHG/NGO (20.00%) and students (20.00%). In terms of a number of children, 57.50 percent had upto two children followed by 2 to 4 children (37.50%), and 40.00

percent with at least one girl child and 36.25 percent of them were earning around Rs.50,000 to Rs.1,00,000 annually.

Table 1: Distribution of beneficiaries according to their Profile characteristics

(N=80)

S. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
A.	Age		
1.	Young age (below 25 years)	24	30.00
2.	Middle age (25 to 50 years)	42	52.50
3.	Old age (above 50 years)	14	17.50
B.	Caste		
1.	General	26	32.50
2.	OBC	32	40.00
3.	SC/ST	22	27.50
C.	Education		
1.	Illiterate	07	08.75
2.	Primary (up to 5 class)	17	21.25
3.	Secondary (6 to 8 class)	20	25.00
4.	Higher secondary (9 and 10 class)	14	17.50
5.	Intermediate	13	16.25
6.	Graduation	06	07.50
7.	Post-graduation	03	03.75
D.	Parental education		
1.	Illiterate	28	35.00
2.	Primary (up to 5 class)	32	40.00
3.	Secondary (6 to 8 class)	10	12.50
4.	Higher secondary (9 and 10 class)	06	07.50
5.	Intermediate	04	05.00
6.	Graduation	0	0.00
7.	Post-graduation	0	0.00
E.	Occupation		
1.	Housewife	13	16.25
2.	Daily labor/ agriculture and allied activities	22	27.50
3.	Self-employed/SHG/NGO	16	20.00
4.	Student	16	20.00
5.	Small independent business	10	12.50
6.	Widow pension	03	03.75
F.	Number of children		
1.	Up to 2	46	57.50
2.	2 to 4	27	33.75
3.	More than 4	07	08.75
G.	Number of girl children		
1.	1 girl child	32	40.00
2.	2 girl children	17	21.25
3.	3 and above	06	07.50
H.	Annual income (in rupees)		
1.	<50,000	14	17.50
2.	50,000rs to 1,00,000	29	36.25
3.	1,00,000rs to 2,00,000	22	27.50
4.	2,00,000rs to 5,00,000	11	13.75
5.	>5,00,000	04	05.00

Communication behavior of the beneficiaries:

Impersonal cosmopolite

The result from Table 2 indicated that the majority of the beneficiaries mostly used newspapers (55.00%), T.V. (47.50%), and social media (37.50%). Campaign (77.50%), Radio (61.25%) and Mobile/computer network (56.25%) were never used by the majority of the respondents.

Table 2: Distribution of beneficiaries according to their communication behavior

(N=80)

S. No.	Particulars	Always		Sometimes		Never	
		F	P	F	P	F	P
A.	Impersonal cosmopolite						
1.	T.V	26	32.50	38	47.50	16	20.00
2.	Radio	07	08.75	24	30.00	49	61.25
3.	Newspapers	13	16.25	44	55.00	23	28.75
4.	Mobile/computer network	09	11.25	26	32.50	45	56.25
5.	Social media	21	26.25	30	37.50	29	36.25
6.	Campaign	00	00.00	18	22.50	62	77.50
B.	Personal Cosmopolite						
1.	Anganwadi workers	12	15.00	45	56.25	23	28.75
2.	Government officials	16	20.00	33	41.25	31	38.75
3.	Educational institution	11	13.75	22	27.50	47	58.75
4.	Hospital officials	12	15.00	43	53.75	25	31.25
5.	ASHA workers	15	18.75	52	65.00	13	16.25
6.	ANM workers	12	15.00	31	38.75	37	46.25
7.	Village convergence coordinators	16	20.00	42	52.50	22	27.5
C.	Personal localite						
1.	Neighbors	18	22.50	52	65.00	10	12.50
2.	Friends/colleagues	37	46.25	31	38.75	12	15.00
3.	Relatives	24	30.00	37	46.25	19	23.75
4.	local leaders	19	23.75	27	33.75	34	42.50

Personal cosmopolite

It is observed from Table 2 that in the case of personal cosmopolites, maximum number of respondents approached ASHA workers (65.00%), Anganwadi workers (56.25%), hospital officials (53.75%), Village convergence coordinators (52.50%) and government officials (41.25%) to get information. Educational institutions (58.75%) and ANM workers (46.25%) were never approached.

Personal localite

The findings from Table 2 represent personal localites

approached by the beneficiaries. Neighbors (65.00%) and relatives (46.25%) were approached moderately whereas friends/colleagues (46.25%) were mostly and local leaders (42.50%) were never approached.

Overall communication behavior of the beneficiaries

Table 3 reports the overall communication behavior of the respondents the majority of them had medium level (71.25%) of communication behavior followed by a high level (15.00%) of communication behavior.

Table 3: Distribution of beneficiaries according to their overall communication behavior

S. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (below 33.17)	11	13.75
2.	Medium (33.17 to 39.93)	57	71.25
3.	High (above 39.93)	12	15.00
Mean= 36.55		SD=3.382	

Constraints faced by the Beneficiaries

Socio-cultural constraints

The results from the Table 4 revealed that lack of seriousness among the policy implementers as well as the machinery workforces (76.25%) was the major constraint followed by enrollment and education of every girl child in their area has not reached its goal (66.25%) and the workers under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme to a large extent failed in changing the attitude and conservative mindset of the people (61.25%).

Technical constraints

The result from Table 4 revealed the technical constraints faced by the beneficiaries. Delay in registration of births by

the Civil Registration System (66.25%) was the main constraint, followed by lack of proper implementation of awareness programmes (56.25%) and poor monitoring of diagnostic centers resulting in the detection of foetus sex (38.75 %).

Economic constraints

Table 4 shows the economic constraints faced by the beneficiaries. Poor fund rotation chain (72.50%) was the major constraint followed by Under the scheme, basic food requirements are not received by the people who are in real need (52.50%) and Non-availability of loans for secondary education in time (30.00 %).

Table 4: Distribution of beneficiaries according to the Socio-cultural Constraints

(N=80)

S. No.	Statements	F	P	Rank
A. Socio-cultural constraints				
1.	Enrollment and education of every girl child in your area has not reached its goal	53	66.25	II
2.	Lack of proper involvement of ASHA workers, ICDS officials, and other govt. service agents to deal with the problems of the women under this scheme	24	30.00	IV
3.	Antenatal care and post-natal services are not provided to its full extent by govt. workers	17	21.25	V
4.	Female feticide is still an evil practice against girl child undergoing	14	17.50	VI
5.	The workers under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme to a large extent failed in changing the attitude and conservative mindset of the people (which led to continued practices of child marriages, dowry system, and many more)	49	61.25	III
6.	Lack of seriousness among the policy implementers as well as machinery workforces	61	76.25	I
B. Technical constraints				
1.	Kasturba Gandhi Bal Vidyalayas, (which is a sub-scheme under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao) is not providing the benefits it is meant for	26	32.50	IV
2.	Poor monitoring of diagnostic centers resulting in the detection of foetus sex	31	38.75	III
3.	Delay in registration of births by the Civil Registration System	53	66.25	I
4.	Lack of proper implementation of awareness programmes	45	56.25	II
C. Economic constraints				
1.	Under the scheme, basic food requirements are not received by the people who are in real need	42	52.50	II
2.	Delay in repayment under Sukanya Samridi Yojana (sub scheme of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao)	11	13.75	V
3.	Delay in getting loans and other facilities	20	25.00	IV
4.	Poor fund rotation chain	58	72.50	I
5.	Non-availability of loans for secondary education in time	24	30.00	III

Discussion

The result from the above table shows that, most of the beneficiaries are from middle age, with secondary education and undertaking some other holdings along with agriculture for external income. As reviewed by Naaz Bano *et al.*, (2021) [2] education is the most significant component in raising the social and economic status of women in society and making them well aware of the surrounding threats and opportunities. Fifty percent of the households had at least one girl child in their family and most of them earned an annual income of about a lakh. Similar results were represented from the study conducted by Aritra Gosh, (2020) [3].

Among the various media of communication, television is the unbeatable mass media source that is trusted and used by almost all people among the impersonal cosmopolite sources followed by newspapers. The findings of Aisharwaya (2010) [1] revealed that mass media exposure and socio-economic status had a positive and significant association with the awareness of rural and urban respondents about female foeticide. So, the information distributed through these sources should be quite reliable and accurate to have a qualitatively better communication experience towards the beneficiaries. People generally have good dependence and belief towards personal cosmopolite sources, but among them, they mostly preferred ASHA workers, hospital officials, and Anganwadi workers as they have reasonably direct contact with the beneficiaries compared to others, and in case of village areas, they go with village convergence coordinator whom they meet frequently. A descriptive survey on social learning, and public awareness of the Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao scheme conducted by Shiva Parmar *et al.*, (2020) [8] concluded that there was a powerful impact on the child sex ratio and a raise in the survival and protection of girl children. Through the scheme, there has been a measurable increase in girl education and was influencing the social mindset of people.

From the above results, it can be noticed that, almost all the means of communication through personal localite are well used by the beneficiaries to receive the information pertaining about the scheme. As concluded by Alhaji Liman *et al.*, (2022) [15] for the effective realization and actualization of successful girl child education programmes, parents, community leaders, society, govt., and NGOs as well as the media must take responsibility. Care should be taken in identifying those target areas that lack proper communication networks and take necessary steps so that, no citizen is left out or forbidden from the right to receive information. As it is evident that most of the beneficiaries fall under the medium to high category of communication behaviour, it implies that the beneficiaries are well-versed with the usage of all means of communication channels in seeking information and making the best use of it, to elevate their living conditions.

From the above table, it can be said that, the proper involvement of govt. officials working under this scheme still need to be improved for the effective implementation of the scheme and proper use of the benefits provided by it. A study conducted by Kumari (2015) [7] proves that by simply increasing female literacy and autonomy without bringing about a change in mindset of people will not be completely successful in combating the problem of female foeticide. Another constraint was lack of proper recorded evidence about the results of the tasks that come under this scheme, thereby giving a scope for negligence of duties and manipulation of the results leading to decreased efficiency of the scheme. Trilok Singh, (2018) [12] through his study, concluded that there is a dire need to review the ongoing strategies and re-examine efforts that are formulated by several agencies to tackle the declining rate of CSR in India. Whenever there is lag in the implementation of duties, the people in real need are not getting the deserved benefits they seek for. If that is a case of emergency, then their economic development gets seriously impaired. Sheila C. Vir *et al.*,

(2015) ^[11] highlighted the dimension of the malnutrition problem of women in India presented concerning its implications on birth outcome and under nutrition in children. Results revealed that the causative factor of under nutrition in women is not only food unavailability but is influenced by factors like early marriage and conception, education, empowerment, decision making power, and domestic violence. A number of policies in India address these issues but their implementation remains weak, so it must be accorded as a high programme priority.

Conclusion

The beneficiaries expressed satisfaction with the change in their socio-economic profile and improvements in their lifestyle as a result of enrolling in the scheme. They were middle aged with secondary education and parental education of primary level. Their major occupation was daily labours with an annual income of 50,000 to 1,00,000 rupees. The majority followed family planning techniques with up to 2 children and one girl child. The medium level of communication behaviour towards all means i.e., impersonal cosmopolite, personal cosmopolite, and personal localite indicates that still there is more to be taken care of to give the beneficiaries the maximum level of knowledge and information that can be used to their advantage. Some of them include proper fund rotation to meet the regular needs of the beneficiaries thereby enhancing their well-being and social and economic status, timely delivery of required information to the beneficiaries when in need, using two or three communication channels at a time which makes the information reach the beneficiaries faster, eye catching and motivate them to act upon the information that they received. The government workers and other officials under the scheme should be monitored regularly so that they never show negligence in their duties, especially in target specific rural areas where means of communication are comparatively low. Also, there is a need to review the ongoing strategies and re-examine efforts that are formulated by several agencies to tackle the constraints faced by the beneficiaries in receiving the services of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme.

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