

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme: An Attempt to Empower Beyond the Imagination

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Abstract

If we outlook the population of India, females are considered to be half of the total population. Women are the most important part of society. It has been said that a country in which women are given equal importance, the country is also prosperous. To be a prosperous nation, the government of India launched a nationwide programme to save and educate the girl child. The scheme has been initiative by the government of India on 22 January 2015, by the honourable Prime Minister of India, Narendra Damodar Das Modi, in Haryana (Panipat) The objective behind this scheme is to ensure protection and education for the girl child. Although the NDA government took initiative in October 2014 to address the issue of decreasing child sex ratio, it is one in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Health and family welfare and Human resource development. The Purpose of the scheme is to empower girl children and work for the welfare of women's education.

Keywords: *Females, Women, Equal Importance, Government Initiative, Girl Child Education, Empowerment.*

Introduction

As the slogan of “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” comprises two terms under its objectives: Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao.

Beti Bachao: Under this scheme, an initiative is taken to provide security and bring awareness among females during pregnancy period and after birth to save girl child sex. Various health services are being provided by bringing different social programs for this purpose.

Beti Padhao: Under this objective, the focus is on the upliftment and promotion of female child education. Efforts are made to improve facilities at the primary

education and higher secondary education levels so that girls' children have the opportunity of quality education. They are encouraged to pursue higher education, vocational skills and training. Through this scheme, efforts have been made to improve the social status of girl children, provide them equality, security and opportunities to encourage them. As we all know, in many developing nations, including our country India, there are still areas where the outdated myths of society prevail, suggesting that women are not suited for positions outside of the household work. This mindset confines

them within the four walls of their homes, limiting their roles to domestic responsibilities. This has led to significant gaps not only in the sex ratio but also in the literacy rate. In regions like Haryana, where the sex ratio is 775 females per 1000 males, an initiative was launched by the Government of India on 22nd January 2015. This initiative is a joint venture of three departments of Government of India: The Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Education. The scheme cover states and union territories of India. The primary focus of the initiative is to take small steps towards the education of girl children, enabling them to emerge as a source of pride for the nation. “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” is more than just a slogan; its main motive is to take individual level steps for the up liftment of girls, recognizing that they are the hope of tomorrow and precious gifts of nature.

The scheme proposed by the Government comprises two main reasons:

1. Rising crime against women: In many Indian families, a large number of illiterate individuals still consider the birth of a girl child as a burden, as sons are seen as the sole property holders. This discriminatory attitude often leads to abortion cases and a decline in the female population. To

combat such practices “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” scheme was initiated.

2. Low sex ratio: According to census data, there were 933 girls per 1000 boys in 2001. However, by the year 2011, this ratio had dropped to approximately 918 girls per thousand boys, indicating a decline in the female-to-male sex ratio. The “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” initiative aims to address and improve the ratio.

Review of Literature

Walia (2017) conducted a study to determine the awareness of the scheme and the availability of benefits among the targeted population of one hundred married females. The study took place in the area of Jalandhar City, Punjab, with participants selected randomly. The research revealed that rural females don't show interest in the functioning of the government despite the schemes formulated for them.

Rani & Patil (2018) conducted their study on “Brief information about the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme”. The researchers collected data from primary and secondary sources, focusing on stopping gender bias in sex selection, abolishing it to ensure the persistence and safety of the girl child not as a burden but as a source of power for the family, society and country.

Biswas & Sinha (2020) conducted their study on “Implication of BBBP scheme on Girl child in India: A critical Analysis” The researchers used qualitative methods with primary and secondary data related to girls’ mortality rate and compared them to those of boy children.

Women Empowerment

Still, a few parts of our country show a dark picture where men are considered as prime or all in all, whereas women are oppressed in both rural and urban areas for multiple reasons. There are still households in which women are kept within four walls, and they have a fear of raising their voice. Earlier, women were seen to perform household work, give birth to children, feed them, maintain the home, and provide care, and nothing more but the present and modernized situation has changed this perception of people towards women; now they are modern and independent. “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” is an initiative taken in terms of scheme to empower women by promoting literacy of girl children and also by emphasizing the improvement of the gender ratio. Addressing the goal of a self-reliant nation, Prime Minister Modi said that without empowering women, we can’t attain “Atamnirbharta” (self-reliance). By focusing on and supporting the female power of the nation, we ensure women’s

empowerment. Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” is one of the initiatives to make women empowered. This scheme aims to boost self-esteem, eliminate negativity toward females, create public leaders, support women, and cultivate them an open and honest attitude toward them. Thus, it is clear that if the female power of India becomes fully empowered, they can contribute to building the nation towards self-reliance.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao: Caring for a Girl Child

The motive behind the logo is “*Beta Beti Ek Saman*” Let us celebrate the birth of girl child; we should be equally proud of our daughters. I urge to plant five trees when your daughter is born to celebrate the occasion. This was proposed by Pradhan-Mantri Narendra Modi to the citizens of his adopted village, Jayapur. Yet, society also thinks of women as inferior to men. The scheme aims to provide nationwide awareness and emphasizes a mindset change to raise awareness and community mobilization on the ground. The Government of India is trying to bring transformation shift the way our society looks at the girl child.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” scheme.

- To focus on the challenges and new reforms made in the scheme.

Methodology of the Study

The research is descriptive in nature. The qualitative study is based on secondary data. For the collection of secondary data related to public policy, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, various published articles from government and other non-governmental institutions have been consulted to derive results from the study. Researchers' articles have also consulted. Secondary data have been gathered from government websites, research papers, blogs, journals and newspapers.

Objectives of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Yojana as follows:

- Improve the child sex ratio.
- Secure and empower gender impartiality and women's representation.
- Prevent gender prejudice, sex selective abolition.
- Ensure viability and defence of the girl child.
- Inspire education and engagement of the girl child in community aspects.
- The scheme aims at address a range of issues, including reducing the child sex ratio (CSR) and enhancing women's engagement to empower them.

Requisite to be part of beneficiaries of the Scheme

- The family should have a girl child below the age of 10 years. In the name of the girl child in the family, a Sukanya Samridhi account (SSA) should be opened in an Indian bank.
- The recipient girl child must be a citizen of India; otherwise, she is not eligible for the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme.
- To be a recipient of scheme, one must have a birth certificate provided by any government body or institution.
- Parents identity proof, such as ration card or Aadhaar card.
- Evidence of address, such as electricity bills, telephone bills, utility bills, water bills, as well as a driving license or passport, among others.
- Passport-size photograph.

Scheme mostly affects communities

- *People from poor and socially weaker areas:* This campaign affects families that are economically disadvantaged and where boys are given priority in education over girl children due to family pressure. Through this scheme, the government provides financial aids to the recipient girl child for their education and raises awareness about the social security of the girl child.

- *People in Rural Areas:* The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign works in collaboration with partner organizations in rural areas, gram panchayats and local communities to successfully implement this scheme. The government promotes access to education facilities, the establishment of girl child education centres and work for the development of girls.
- *Social Workers and NGOs:* The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme is initiated to promote and protect the rights of the girl child. These non-governmental organizations organize various programs to sensitize community members and exert pressure on government policies to achieve campaign goals.

Benefits of Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme

A lot of welfare is done in favor of the girl child under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme:

- An account opened under this scheme aims to provide financial security for a girl child.
- The account remains protected under the Act 1961 u/s 80C and is completely tax-free.
- There is a reasonable rate of interest on this account and money is withdrawn

from the account only when the girl child attains the age of 18 years.

- Under this scheme, a saving scheme known as a Sukanya Samriddhi Account (SSA) has been announced.
- The scheme focuses on addressing issues related to girls and women.
- It aims to decrease the child sex ratio (CSR), in critical states and regions.
- There is an 8.1% interest rate per annum on the Sukanya Samriddhi Account under the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana.
- The maximum deposit limit is Rs 1.5 lakh per annum.
- It provides better education opportunities and integration for women.
- The policy ensures the efficiency and implementation for the welfare of women.

Provocation of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme

- The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme will be difficult to implement and benefits each beneficiary until the scheme is properly executed.
- To change mindsets, there is a need for extensive awareness programs to be conducted at ground level. There are still places where females are considered secondary within homes and are confined to four walls.

- The scheme requires civic support to meet its objectives.
- Fund released for the scheme are used for promoting activities rather than distributing them to the districts for scheme execution.
- There is a significant gap between the allocated fund amount and the actual released fund amount.

Reforms in Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme

- Providing quality education to empower the girl child.
- A memorandum was signed between the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minority Affairs to ensure adolescents complete their education and enhance skills in various professions.
- A national committee was set up, headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Women and Child Development, formed under Mission Shakti to review the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme.
- Some other scheme that supports girl education, similar to the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme, include Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, CBSEUDAAN scheme, National scheme of Initiative to Girls for Secondary Education, and more.

- Since this is a welfare program for girl child empowerment, it is completely tax-free; no amount will be deducted from the account after it is opened.

Recommendations

- To raise awareness, the government has appointed brand ambassadors to popularize the scheme. Just as Vidya Balan for the hygiene and cleanliness campaign and Akshay Kumar for the Menstrual Hygiene campaign, the seam bassadors help spread awareness nationwide, maximizing the scheme's benefit.
- Increasing the training of ASHA workers to raise awareness among illiterate mothers during pregnancy about the ill effects of sex-selective abortions.
- To include sex education courses in schools. This would help young teenagers properly understand sexual relationships, ensuring they do not get molested or exploited (Roshni, 2018).
- Steps should be taken at an individual level, like educating and sensitizing sons to respect women and girls as equal members of society. This would help change people's thinking and empower them to overcome the perception of women as a burden ("Bojh") or "Paraya Dhan". Encouraging admissions and ensuring

the retention of girl children in school is also crucial.

- Don't consider the birth of a girl as a burden; see it as a matter of pride and promote gender equality, regarding girls as 'laxmi'. This is also stated in epics: "*Yatra Naripujyante Ramante Tatradevta*".

Conclusion

For the successful implementation of the scheme, strategic planning and effective communication are required to ensure that the beneficiaries understand the program's usefulness. towards the usefulness of this programme. Education of the girl child benefits two families for better lives. While the government has initiated numerous schemes for societal development, the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme uniquely focuses on empowering girl children and providing them basic rights. However, even with various laws and policies in place to empower girl and encourage their education, the challenge remains due to policy paralysis. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao is the most effective initiative taken by the Government of India for empowering and improving the health, nutrition and economic status of households. The scheme has brought about a marked improvement in the living standards of girl children under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Campaign. Today,

girls represent themselves not only in household tasks but also on the global stage in various fields. There is no field where girls do not demonstrate their power of success.

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