

LADLI BETI SCHEME: SUCCESS OR FAILURE IN JAMMU DISTRICT

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Abstract

Era has transformed. A global attention to various issues in the society has reached an unprecedented level as nations prepare themselves to achieve higher economic growth. The future of India, rests on the foundation being laid today. Children of today are the leaders of tomorrow. If the role of children in the development of the nation is so important, the role of the way they are being brought up is much more important. And here comes the issue of raising a girl in a family as compared to boys. As we know the status of girl child stands very low in Indian society hence there is a low sex ratio in our country. In the process of preparation of the future builders of the nation it has become very important to look towards this issue very seriously. Even after more than seventy years of independence the situation is no more different. Considering these factors in mind the government of Jammu and Kashmir has started few projects for the benefit of women and girls. Ladli Beti scheme is one of them which is started as a pilot project in few districts of Kashmir and Jammu showing low child sex ratio in April 2015 under the Integrated Child Development Service Scheme. The present study was thus carried to know about the Ladli Beti Scheme and its functioning. Also who are benefitted by the scheme, the problems faced by the beneficiaries in availing this scheme and any change if brought so far. The present study was carried on a total of 24 AWCs. A total of 96 parents were interviewed for the study. The results showed 18.75% of the parents were benefitted by the scheme 76.04% of the parents were not benefitted by the scheme. It was found that the beneficiaries should be provided proper help and guidance time to time by the authorities for proper benefit of the scheme. Some more efforts and focus is required by the authorities towards the scheme.

Keywords: Ladli Beti Scheme, Economic growth, Integrated Child Development Service Scheme, Child sex ratio.



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Introduction

Government of India from time to time launch various schemes and services for the welfare of its citizens as per the needs of the society and after the Independence of India the need is more felt as the nation felt to indianize the system of the country.

Same happened with the education system of India, the constitution of India provides free and compulsory education to the children between the age group of 0-14 years as per article 21 and the article 45 also states the welfare of the children and the women. Govt of India in 1975 started a flagship programme named Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS), which was uniquely designed for addressing the educational, health and overall development of children of 0-6 years of age and for the welfare of women that are pregnant, lactating and adolescent girls also other women of the community are benefitted by the scheme. This programme started under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the scheme is executed at the ground level by the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) run by Anganwadi Workers and Helped by the Anganwadi Helper. The AWCs work in convergence with the other departments such as PHC, PHE, sanitation, education. Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS) launched in 1975, is a unique early childhood development programme addressing health, nutrition and the development needs of young children, pregnant and nursing mothers. It is designed to promote holistic development of children under 06 years, through strengthening capacity of care givers and communities and improve access to basic services at the community level. It provides the convergent interface/platform between communities and system such as primary health care, education, water and sanitation among others. The flagship scheme of Ministry of Women and Child Development, GOI under which Anganwadi Centres are established in villages/hamlets in rural as well as in urban areas for the target groups. The services provided under the Scheme:

- Supplementary Nutrition
- Immunization
- Health Check-ups/referral Services
- Pre-School/non-formal educations
- Nutrition and Health Education (<https://jksocialwelfare.nic.in/citizensw.pdf>).

The scheme is monitored by National Institute of Public and Child Cooperation Department (NIPCCD) as a central monitoring unit and by the regional monitoring centres at the State/UT level. The scheme has attracted the attention of so many people in common as it aims to benefit mostly the underprivileged part of the society. Various others schemes are also started under the Umbrella ICDS

- 1. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna**
- 2. Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG)**

3. Poshan Abhiyaan
4. Early Childhood Care & Education
5. Ladli Beti Scheme
6. Strap: state training action plan
7. Aadhaar Enrolment (<https://www.jkicds.com/order.php>)

The present research is conducted to evaluate the Ladli Beti Scheme run by ICDS department in the Jammu district of J&K UT-

LADLI BETI Scheme:

The Ladli Beti scheme is sponsored scheme of the UT. The scheme benefits the girl child born on or after 01-04-2015. The government deposits an amount of 1000 Rupees in the account of the girl born till she attains the age of 14 and after 21 years the girl can withdraw an amount of 6.5 lakh in total. Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Kishtwar, Anantnag, Pulwama, Budgam and Srinagar are the districts where the scheme is currently running showing low CSR (Child Sex Ratio).

Eligibility Criteria

- a) The girl child is born on or after 01.05.2015
- b) The girl child is a permanent beneficiary of the concerned district (where scheme is implemented)
- c) The family income of the girl child is below Rs. 75000/annum from all sources
<https://www.jkicds.com/order.php>

The scheme is a hybrid deposit plan having two phases:

Phase I: A recurring deposit for 14 years having date of completion as one month after the last installment received in the account.

Phase II: A Cumulative Term Deposit (CCR) for 07 years.

The monthly contribution of Rs. 1000/- in Phase-I is made by the J&K Govt.
<https://www.jkbank.com/deposits/personal/ladliBeti.php>

Review of Related Literature

There are various studies conducted on the functioning of the ICDS scheme from time to time. **Anuradha and Komala (2003)** revealed poor infrastructural facilities in the AWCs. **Arora, Bharti and Mahajan (2006)** revealed that the Non-Formal education provided by the AWCs satisfied most of the parents but few were not. **Biswas, Das et al. (2007)** revealed that 84.2% of beneficiaries are aware of the schemes under ICDS. **Samanta, Basu et al. (2015)** conducted a study and found that for better formal

preparation of children a proper physical facilities and congenial environment is required with support and supervision of Anganwadi Workers. **Kapoor and Singh (2019)** revealed deficiencies in infrastructure and logistics at the Anganwadi centers. The basic infrastructure of AWCs should be strengthened which would further help in delivering quality services to the beneficiaries.

At the national level, there have been only two evaluations of ICDS scheme, one conducted by **National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD)** in 1992, and the second conducted by **National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)** in 1998 (<https://icds-wcd.nic.in/>).

The studies done from time to time showed various results but the results obtained are almost same which revealed that the status of AWCs has not improved with time and still is the matter of concern. The Govt. has taken so many steps to make the scheme better but the infrastructure of the AWCs does not allow that. The scheme of Ladli Beti is recently started in J&K and has no reviews yet. This study is therefore conducted to know about the functioning and the developments made by the Ladli Beti Scheme running under ICDS. The study will also help in removing any shortcomings in the functioning of the scheme.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the Ladli Beti Scheme under the Integrated Child Development Service Scheme (ICDS).
2. To identify the beneficiaries of the Ladli Beti scheme under the Integrated Child Development Service Scheme (ICDS).
3. To identify the problems faced by the beneficiaries of Ladli Beti Scheme under ICDS Scheme.

Research Questions

1. What is the Ladli Beti Scheme under the Integrated Child Development Service Scheme (ICDS)?
2. Who are the beneficiaries of the Ladli Beti Scheme?
3. What are the problems faced by the beneficiaries of Ladli Beti Scheme under ICDS Scheme?

Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to three projects of ICDS Scheme i.e. Dansal, Marh and Gandhinagar.

Methodology

This was a descriptive study that was conducted in 24 AWCs of the three projects of the District Jammu i.e. Dansal, Marh and Gandhinagar. All the AWCs of the projects were identified and 4 AWCs from urban and 4 centres from rural area from each project were selected. The centers were visited on a pre-informed day. A semi structured interview schedule was applied on the parents who were the beneficiaries of the ICDS scheme to get the information about the Ladli Beti Scheme and to know if they were benefitted by the Ladli Beti Scheme. The interview schedule was used to know the beneficiaries of the scheme and problems faced by the beneficiaries of the Ladli Beti scheme. To fulfill the objectives of the study 4 parents were selected from each AWC of the project; total 32 parents were interviewed from each project.

Results of the Study

The present study was carried on a total of 24 AWCs. A total of 96 parents were interviewed for the study. The study showed the following results (Table 1).

Table 1: Number of beneficiaries of the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme benefitted by the Ladli Beti Scheme. (Total Beneficiaries=96)

Sr. No.	Beneficiaries	Number	Percentage
1	Beneficiaries Benefitted	18	18.75%
2	Beneficiaries applied	4	4.16%

The above table depicts that 18 out of 96 parents were the beneficiaries of the Ladli Beti Scheme i.e. 18.75% of the parents were benefitted by the scheme and 4 out of 96 parents had freshly applied for the benefit i.e. 4.16 %.

The study also found that there were various reasons behind the non-benefit of the beneficiaries of ICDS scheme by the Ladli Beti Scheme (Table 2).

Table 2: Reasons for non-benefit of the beneficiaries of the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme by the Ladli Beti Scheme. (Total Beneficiaries=96)

Sr. no.	Beneficiaries	Number	Percentage
1	Beneficiaries without PRC	13	13.54%
2	Beneficiaries born before April, 2015	03	3.12%
3	Beneficiaries with male child	46	47.91%
4	Beneficiaries with income more than Rs. 75,000/year	10	10.41%
5	Pregnant ladies	01	1.041%

The above table depicts that 76.04% of the parents were not benefitted by the Ladli Beti Scheme and 13.54% of the parents had no state subject which is mandatory for applying for the scheme. The table further shows that 3.12% of the girl children were born before April 2015 and 47.91% of the children were male. The table further reveals that 10.41% of the parents had income more than Rs. 75,000/- which is more than the required criteria and 1.04% of the women were pregnant hence unable to be the beneficiary of the scheme.

The reasons for their non-benefit also stated that the beneficiaries are not satisfied with the criteria of the Scheme 13.54% of the beneficiaries told that they don't have Permanent Resident Certificated (PRC) but are staying here since years and even after the abrogation of Article 370 they are still asked for PRC, thus not benefitted.

Discussion

The scheme was launched for the benefit of the female beneficiaries of the ICDS Scheme where there is low sex ratio but still they are restricted from getting the benefit. It was found that it becomes very difficult for the beneficiaries to fulfill the eligibility criteria, it takes several days to get income certificate from the authorities. In addition, the beneficiaries do not even get the benefit after fulfilling all the formalities and are not even known about the rejection of the form. The form which were applied with the state subject are returned back after months of their submission to the beneficiaries to add the domicile certificates along with the other requirements. The other reason that gained light for the non benefit of the scheme was the fake income certificates, beneficiaries also complained that people who are well off still manage to get the income certificates with income below Rs. 75,000/-, but the true beneficiaries spend several months to get a income certificate from the authorities. Such cases were found in the project of Dansal, where the scheme was temporarily stranded to fix this problem of fake income certificates. It is worthwhile to mention here that even the Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) sometimes do not know about the status of the forms they fill for the beneficiaries and they are unable to convey the same to the beneficiaries. The project of Gandhinagar had one case of Ladli Beti Scheme because the beneficiaries under that project do not fulfill the criteria as most of the beneficiaries are non-local and were unable to produce the PRC and the local beneficiaries have income above Rs. 75,000/-. The project of Dansal and Marh are doing equally in benefitting the beneficiaries i.e. 28% and 25% respectively.

Suggestions for Further Study

After doing this research it is felt that this topic can further be extended to other schemes of ICDS. The research can also be extended to other districts and also more projects. This research was carried on a small sample but it can be further done on a large sample. The functioning of the scheme can also be compared to other districts as well.

Conclusions

The study was done very comprehensively to evaluate the number of beneficiaries of the Ladli Beti Scheme and the problems of their non-benefit. The study found that scheme is doing good and the beneficiaries who get the benefit are very satisfied, happy and reach the AWCs regularly but the ones who are not benefitted are very dissatisfied.

The reasons behind the non-benefit should be looked into seriously and be removed as soon as possible as these types of schemes do encourage the beneficiaries to visit the AWCs regularly. The beneficiaries should be provided proper help and guidance time to time by the authorities and for that they need to keep the service providers updated. It is undoubted that these type of schemes do benefit the people and encourage them for good living and healthy thinking about girl child but still it is pertinent to mention here that the scheme needs some more efforts and seriousness from the part of the service providers.

It is found that for the successful execution of any programme proper implementation of the program is required. The Ladli Beti Scheme can be made more successful by spreading awareness among the masses about the scheme and its benefits.

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