

Girl Child Friendly (NPEGEL) Schools and its Impact on Enrollment and Dropout of Girl Child

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Abstract: Improving girls' educational levels has been demonstrated to have clear impact on the health and economic future of young women, which in turn improves the prospects of their entire community. The government of India launched National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) in 2003. It was an incentive to reach out to the girls who the SSA was not able to reach through other schemes. The present study was taken up to see the impact of girl child friendly environment in NPEGEL SCHOOLS on enrolment and dropout in three regions of Andhra Pradesh. The data was collected from 20 schools of each region. The study revealed that NPEGEL schools had better infrastructure, water, sanitation, toilet, menstrual hygiene and vocational courses than the non NPEGEL schools. The enrolment was found to be more and dropouts less in NPEGEL schools. A positive correlation was found between school facilities and enrolment.

Keywords: Girl friendly environment, rural areas enrolment, dropout, NPEGEL Schools.

1. Introduction

In India, particularly among the rural societies, girls are not always educated and many have minimal understandings of their own rights. The national average shows that there is only 1 woman for every 2 men that receives an education in India. Rural communities are often completely unaware of the concept and benefit of educating girls. With only 55% of schools in India having girls' toilets and only 42% of teachers being female, enrolling marginalized girls poses an immense challenge. Educating girls is giving them the power. Giving them genuine choice over the kind of the life they like to lead. Not only this the society as a whole is also benefitted as educated women has skill, knowledge and self confidence that are needed for better parent, worker and citizen.

The Government has approved a new programme called 'National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)' as an amendment to the scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for providing additional components for education of girls at elementary level. The NPEGEL will form part of SSA and will be implemented under the umbrella of SSA but with a distinct identity. The present study was taken up to see the effect of NPEGEL programme in enrollment and retention of girl child in schools of Andhra Pradesh

1.1 Objective

Evaluation study of NPEGEL (Girl child friendly schools) in Andhra Pradesh state

1.2 Specific Objective

- To study the availability of girl friendly environment in selected schools
- To study the enrollment, retention and dropout rates of girl students in NPEGEL & Non-NPEGEL Schools

2. Methods & Materials

2.1 Sample

The sample for the study comprises of 60 schools from three regions of Andhra Pradesh. The schools selected comprise of elementary schools, upper primary schools, Zilla Parishad high schools.

2.2 Tools

Interview schedule: The interview schedule was developed for the study which include, general profile of the school children and their family background information

Checklist to study girl child friendly environment facilities:

To find out the existing infrastructure facilities of the schools studied an effort was made to develop the checklist by extensive review of literature. Scoring was done based on the presence of facilities in the school.

2.3 Statistical Analysis

Frequencies, Percentages, means, S.Ds, 't' and 'f' ratios, correlations analysis were used to present the data.

Table 1: Details on girl child friendly facilities availability in selected schools

S. NO	Details	Andhra region(n=20)				Rayalaseema (n=20)				Telangana(n=20)				
		NPEGEL		NON-NPEGEL		NPEGEL		NON-NPEGEL		NPEGEL		NON-NPEGEL		
		SSA	MSS	SSA	MSS	SSA	MSS	SSA	MSS	SSA	MSS	SSA	MSS	
1	School infrastructure													
	a. good	5	2	1	1	3	2	1	2	4	1	2	2	
	b. average	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	3	1	1	
	c. poor	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	

2	School furniture												
	a. good	4	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1
	b. average	4	2	1	1	3	2	1	2	3	2	1	1
	c. poor	1	-	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	2
3	School incentives												
	a. good	2	1	2	2	5	3	1	2	4	2	2	1
	b. average	6	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	2
	c. poor	1	-	1	1	-	-	2	1	-	1	1	1
4	Extra facilities (computer lab, science lab, library)												
	a. good	5	2	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	2	2	1
	b. average	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2
	c. poor	2	-	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	-	1
5	Extra curricular activities												
	a. good	6	2	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	1
	b. average	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1
	c. poor	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
6	Vocational courses												
	a. good	6	1	1	-	5	3	1	2	2	1	1	1
	b. average	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	4	3	1	1
	c. poor	1	1	2	3	-	1	1	1	-	2	2	2
7	Water facilities												
	a. good	5	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
	b. average	3	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	1
	c. poor	1	1	2	1	1	3	1	2	1	3	2	2
8	Sanitation facilities												
	a. good	6	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	-	1	1
	b. average	2	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	3	2	1	2
	c. poor	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	4	2	1
9	Menstrual hygiene												
	a. good	3	1	2	1	1	-	2	1	2	1	1	1
	b. average	4	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	1
	c. poor	2	-	1	1	3	4	1	1	1	3	1	2

- a) **School infrastructure:** Sufficient number of class rooms were found in all the selected schools maintained by SSA and MSS. The quality of flooring is good in both NPEGEL and Non-NPEGEL schools maintained by SSA. In MSS maintained schools it is found to be average. There is proper ventilation in most of the schools visited.
- b) **School furniture:** Availability of benches, tables, black board, cupboards, lights, fans were not sufficient in some NPEGEL schools. In non NPEGEL schools it was found that quality of school furniture was of below average level.
- c) **School incentives:** The distribution of free textbooks and uniforms is found to be good in all the selected schools. The midday meal scheme being carried out in all the selected schools of three regions to be average.
- d) **Extra facilities:** Additional facilities like the computer lab, library, science lab and play ground in SSA NPEGEL schools and the same is absent or found to be less in MSS schools and other Non-NPEGEL schools.
- e) **Vocational courses:** Vocational courses are found mainly in SSA maintained NPEGEL schools than the other schools. Though found only few courses are offered.
- f) **Water facilities:** Source of water in most of the selected schools is tap. In few schools tube well was main source of water. In one or two schools in telangana region have bottled water. In most of the school water is chlorinated for treatment. And in some schools water allowed to stand and settle before using it for drinking.
- g) **Medical facilities:** Medical facilities were good in Andhra, poor in Rayalaseema and average in Telangana region of SSA maintained schools. In MSS maintained schools this facility is found to be poor. Frequency of health checkups in SSA maintained schools is found to be average in Andhra region and poor in other regions. In MSS schools there is no or very few health checkups. Presence of first aid box is not found in many of selected schools.
- h) **Menstrual hygiene:** In SSA maintained NPEGEL Schools girl students are educated on menstrual hygiene except in telangana region. This is absent in Non-NPEGEL and MSS maintained schools. There is no provision for private wash area and disposal facilities in any of the selected schools. Only in few NPEGEL schools maintained by SSA we can find napkin distribution.
- i) **Sanitation facilities:** There is separate toilet facility in SSA maintained NPEGEL schools and is average in Rayalaseema and telangana regions. The separate toilet facility is absent or less in MSS maintained schools. The cleanliness of the toilets is found to be very poor in all the selected schools. The frequency of visiting the toilets is also found to be less in students. There no availability of

soap to wash hands for students after going to toilet in all the selected schools

Table 2: Mean differences in girl friendly facilities available in selected schools based on type, management and region.

S.No	Details	Mean	SD	't' values/'F' ratios
1.	School type			
	NPEGEL	5.78	3.91	0.054 *
	NONNPEGEL	2.75	0.13	
2.	Management type			
	SSA	5.24	4.22	0.15 NS
	MSS	3.29	0.83	
3.	Region			
	Andhra	5.6	5.3	0.529 NS
	Rayalaseema	3.7	1.1	
	Telangana	3.4	1.0	

The study reveals that there is significant difference in school facilities between NPEGEL and Non-NPEGEL schools. NPEGEL schools have better facilities than the Non-NPEGEL schools. There is no difference in school facilities between SSA and MSS maintained schools. There is no difference in school facilities between the three regions. It can be inferred that NPEGEL schools had better water and toilet facilities in comparison to non NPEGEL schools. Vocational courses, extra facilities like open ground, lab and library facilities were found in NPEGEL schools in all the three regions. Thus it can be said that NPEGEL schools are girl child friendly schools.

Table 3: Mean differences in the enrollment in selected schools based on type, management and region.

S.No	Details	Mean enrollment	SD	't' values /'F' ratios
School type				
1	NPEGEL	1045.6	370.50	0.018355**
2	NONNPEGEL	657.8333	387.48	
Management type				
1	SSA	788.8	299.68	0.341 NS
2	MSS	796.5	463.32	
Region				
1	Andhra	729.5	544.67	1.438 NS
2	Rayalaseema	1127.25	313.13	
3	Telangana	698.5	286.86	

P < 0.05, F > 1.85

There is significant difference in enrollment between NPEGEL and Non-NPEGEL schools favouring NPEGEL schools. There is no significant difference in enrollment between SSA and MSS maintained schools. There is no significant difference in enrollment among the regions. But of all the three regions enrollment is more in Rayalaseema region than the other two regions. Interestingly enrollment is high in NPEGEL schools than the Non-NPEGEL schools. In Andhra region enrollment is more in SSA NPEGEL schools than the other schools. In Rayalaseema and Telangana region there is no difference in enrollment between the schools. So we can say that NPEGEL programme showed its effect on enrollment. NPEGEL schools had more children enrolled than the other schools, because these schools had better water, toilet facilities. In addition they also have lab, library facilities along with vocational courses.

Table 4: Details about drop outs in schools selected in three regions (Average of three years 2010-13)

School Category	Andhra (n=20)	Rayalaseema (n=20)	Telangana (n=20)
SSA NPEGEL	9	15	22
MSS NPEGEL	8	40	26
SSA NONNPEGEL	28	43	26
MSS NONNPEGEL	4	20	100
Total	49	118	174

From the records available in the selected school the number of dropouts were collected and presented in the following table.

Drop outs are more in Non NPEGEL schools than in NPEGEL schools. Dropouts are more in MSS maintained schools than the SSA maintained schools. Again the results show that NPEGEL programme helped in retention of the students, decreasing the dropouts.

Table 5: Relationship between available enrollment, drop outs and girl friendly environmental facilities available.

S.No	Details	School facilities
	Enrollment	0.99 ***
	Dropouts	-0.04*

The above table shows a interesting fact that there is a strong positive correlation between enrollment and girl child friendly facilities provided by school. The better the facilities the more the enrollment and retention. From the above table it can also be inferred that there exists a negative correlation between dropouts and school facilities. It means that the better facilities at school the less dropouts. And if the school doesn't provide girl friendly facilities the dropouts are likely to go up.

3. Conclusion

School facilities in terms of school building, furniture, water facilities, and toilet facilities are found to be good in SSA NPEGEL schools than the other schools. Sanitation facilities can be increased as it was found that cleanliness of the toilets and the number of toilets is less than requirement. Privacy in sanitary napkin disposal is absent in all the sample schools.

4. Implications

- Life adaptive skills of the girl students attending schools can be studied.
- Self confidence and emotional intelligence of the girls attending schools can be studied

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