

“SCHEME OF GIRL CHILD: EVALUATING KNOWLEDGE AMONG URBAN POPULATION”

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ABSTRACT

The scheme for girl child by Maharashtra’s Department of Women and Child Welfare was launched in 2017 to support and empower girls (Maji Kanya Bhagyashree Yojana). Aimed at alleviating economic challenges for families with daughters, the program provides financial support at the birth of each girl child, scholarships for higher education, and healthcare services. Through this study, the knowledge and awareness regarding the girl child’s scheme were assessed among urban population, focusing on socio-economic impacts and effectiveness in enhancing girls' welfare.

The study surveyed 300 people in selected urban areas of Pune city to assess their knowledge about the scheme and its objectives. Participants varied across demographic categories, including age, gender, religion, educational status, and family income. The study used a structured knowledge questionnaire, validated by experts and proven reliable, to collect data on participants’ awareness of girl child’s scheme.

Key findings of the study revealed that a majority, or 59% of respondents, displayed an average level of knowledge about the girl child’s scheme, while 41% demonstrated a good level of knowledge. Interestingly, no participants fell into the poor knowledge category, indicating at least a basic level of awareness across the sample. Statistical analysis showed significant association between age and knowledge levels, with younger participants aged 28–37 demonstrating a higher understanding of the scheme compared to other age groups. However, no significant association was found between knowledge levels and other demographic factors, such as gender, religion, educational background, or family income.

Despite generally adequate awareness levels, the study identified gaps in knowledge on certain details, especially among older participants. The response distribution for various questions indicated that while basic information on financial incentives was widely known, fewer participants were aware of additional benefits like healthcare support and scholarship opportunities under the scheme. The data underscored the importance of targeted outreach to improve understanding, especially in communities with lower awareness of comprehensive benefits.

The findings suggest that while girl child’s scheme has reached many families in Pune, enhanced outreach efforts are needed to improve knowledge levels in all demographic groups. Such efforts could ensure more families are aware of the scheme’s full range of benefits, particularly healthcare and educational support, further promoting gender equality and girl child welfare in Maharashtra

Keywords- knowledge, girl child's scheme(Maji Kanya Bhagyashree Yojana) ,urban population

INTRODUCTION

The girl child's scheme(Maji Kanya Bhagyashree Yojana) initiated by the Department of Women and Child Welfare , Government of Maharashtra , in 2017 . The main objective was to provide support and empower girls. These scheme aims to tackle various economic challenges faced by families with daughters and promote the nurturing upbringing of girls. Under this initiative, families receive financial support when a girl is born. On one girl child Fixed Deposit of Rs 50,000/- will be provided. On two girls, each child will receive a fixed deposit of Rs 25,000/-. The plan provides ₹5,000 upon the birth of the first daughter, another ₹5,000 upon the birth of the second daughter, and an additional ₹5,000 for the birth of a third daughter. The goal is to reduce the financial burden of raising girls and advance gender equality by recognizing the importance of girls in society.

The scheme had a significant impact in areas where awareness levels are high. According to a study conducted by Jadhav et al. (2021), regions with effective dissemination of information about the scheme experienced a notable improvement in the girl-child sex ratio and school enrolment rates. The study underscored the importance of community-based awareness programs and the involvement of local leaders in enhancing knowledge and utilization of the scheme

Another important aspect of the girl child's scheme is its effort to raise awareness and change societal attitudes towards girls. Through various outreach and advocacy programs, the initiative aims to challenge gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices against girls, while advocating for their rights and empowerment. By nurturing a supportive and inclusive environment for girls, the program aims to foster a society where girls are valued, respected, and given equal opportunities to succeed. This scheme is a praiseworthy initiative by the Maharashtra government aimed at promoting the welfare, empowerment, and socio-economic development of girls in the state. Through financial aid, scholarships, healthcare services, and awareness campaigns, the program aims to create an environment where girls can fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.

NEED OF STUDY

Girl child's scheme play a crucial role for economic development of girl education in the society. Understanding there is key to realizing its importance in promoting gender equality. In many countries of the globe, including India where this initiative operates, girls encounter obstacles to accessing education and healthcare due to societal norms, financial constraints, and cultural prejudices. By learning about this scheme, people become aware of its efforts to support the educational and healthcare needs of girls. This awareness empowers parents and communities to prioritize the well-being of their daughters and invest in their future, thereby challenging gender biases and fostering equal opportunities for all.

Exploring these scheme helps individuals understand its eligibility criteria and application process. Many potential recipients may be unaware of their eligibility or lack the necessary information to apply for the program. Through targeted research and outreach efforts, people can learn about the specific requirements for enrolment and how to navigate the application process. This knowledge ensures that deserving families can access the benefits provided by the initiative, thereby reducing disparities in education and healthcare access.

The scheme possesses the capacity to substantially ameliorate the socio-economic status of girls in Maharashtra. Nonetheless, the efficacy of the scheme is contingent upon the level of awareness and knowledge among the populace. Studies have indicated a significant lacuna in awareness, particularly in rural areas. Addressing this deficiency through effective communication strategies and community involvement is pivotal for the scheme's success. Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term impact of girl child's scheme and exploring innovative methods to enhance public awareness.

The awareness and knowledge of government schemes are pivotal for their successful implementation. Studies have consistently demonstrated a significant gap between the formulation of policies and their reach to the intended beneficiaries (Kumar & Rani, 2016). This lack of awareness can often lead to the underutilization of the benefits provided by such schemes. For instance, a study conducted by Sharma et al. (2019) on various social welfare schemes in India found that only 40% of the target population was aware of the schemes' existence, and even fewer understood the eligibility criteria and the associated benefits.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study is to assess the knowledge regarding girl child's scheme among urban population,

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study follows a quantitative approach with a non-experimental descriptive design to assess people's knowledge of the girl child's scheme. The research was conducted in selected urban population, targeting a sample of 300 people using non-probability purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria required participants to be Pune residents up to 60 years' old who could read and write in Marathi or English, while those unwilling to participate were excluded.

Data collection utilized a structured tool with two sections: demographic variables (age, occupation, education, religion, and family income) and a knowledge questionnaire on the scheme. The tool was developed through literature review, expert consultation, and investigator input, with content validity ensured by 15 experts from different Nursing Institution. Reliability was established through a test-retest method on 30 participants, yielding a Karl Pearson correlation coefficient of +0.8034, confirming the tool's reliability.

A pilot study was conducted among 30 samples in urban population of Pune, assessed the research design's feasibility and effectiveness. For the main study, participants provided informed consent, ensuring confidentiality. Data was collected using the finalized questionnaire from 300 people from urban population, with each survey taking about 30 minutes.

RESULTS

1) Analysis of data regarding demographic variables.

The demographic profile of 300 participants reveals significant diversity in terms of age, gender, religion, education, family income, and the presence of a female child in the family.

The majority of participants (30%) belonged to the 28-37 age group, followed by 28% in the 38-47 age group, 27% in the 18-27 age group, and 15% in the 48-60 age group.

Regarding gender, 65% of the respondents were female, while 35% were male, with no transgender participants in the sample.

In terms of religion, most participants (57%) identified as Hindu, followed by 27% as Muslim, 15% as Buddhist or other specified religions, and 1% as Christian.

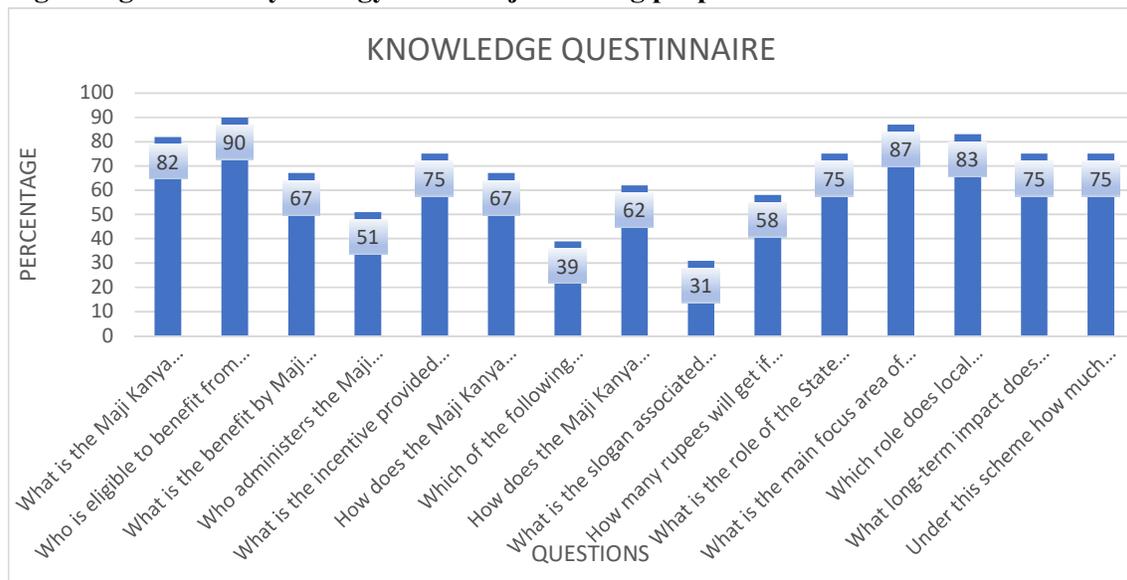
The education level of participants showed that 46% had completed education at the 10th-grade level or above, 24% had secondary education, 16% had primary education, and 14% had no formal education.

The family income distribution revealed that 31% of participants had a family income between ₹20,001 to ₹30,000, 28% had an income of less than ₹10,000, 25% had an income between ₹10,001 to ₹20,000, and 16% had an income of more than ₹30,000.

Lastly, 53% of participants reported having a female child in their family, while 47% did not have a female child.

These findings highlight the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample, which form the basis for understanding the knowledge levels of participants regarding the girl child’s scheme.

2) Analysis related to item wise analysis of self-structured questionnaire regarding Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Yojna among people



The table no. 2 shows finding related the knowledge questionnaire responses on level of knowledge regarding regarding Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Yojna among people.

The highest response 90% was given on .Q.no. 2

3) Analysis of knowledge regarding girl child’s scheme among urban population

N=300

Level of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Poor knowledge	00	0%	11.26	1.48
Average knowledge	177	59%		
Good knowledge	123	41%		

Table no – 3 shows that, majority 59% of samples had average knowledge regarding , 41% of samples had good knowledge regarding girl child’s scheme and there were no sample having poor knowledge.

DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

The motive of this study was to check the knowledge regarding girl child's scheme among people. After taking collecting data from 300 people result shows that 38 majority 59% of samples had average knowledge regarding Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Yojna , 41% of samples had good knowledge regarding Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Yojna and there were no sample having poor knowledge. From the findings we concluded that large part of the population of this study have average knowledge regarding Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Yojna. The study as outlined provides a solid foundation for assessing the knowledge of the Maji Kanya Bhagyashree Yojana. While the scheme appears to be well-received, there is room for further targeted efforts to enhance knowledge, particularly among younger and older age groups, as well as those who might not have direct familial experiences with raising daughters. Additionally, future research could focus on evaluating the actual impact of the scheme on long-term socio-economic outcomes for girls and their families, rather than just measuring awareness and knowledge. This would provide a more comprehensive picture of the program's success in promoting gender equality in Maharashtra.

Similar study was done on The awareness and knowledge of Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Yojna, are influenced by various factors. According to Pandey and Tripathi (2018), the education level, socio-economic status, and access to information are crucial determinants of an individual's awareness of these schemes. The role of media in disseminating information about such schemes is significant, as emphasized by a study conducted by Rao (2020). The study highlighted the effectiveness of mass media campaigns in improving public awareness of social welfare programs. However, it also pointed out that rural areas often suffer from inadequate media penetration, leading to lower awareness levels among the population residing in these regions.

CONCLUSION

The study on the "Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Yojana" aimed to assess people's knowledge of the scheme in selected areas of Pune city. The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents (59%) had an average understanding of the scheme, while 41% demonstrated good knowledge. Notably, no participants were found to have poor knowledge about the Yojana, indicating a moderate level of awareness among the community. while most participants had an average or good knowledge of the Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Yojana, there is still a need to increase awareness and understanding of the scheme. Community outreach, education campaigns, and targeted awareness programs could play a crucial role in bridging the knowledge gap. The findings provide a foundation for policymakers and stakeholders to enhance the visibility and effectiveness of the Yojana, thereby promoting the welfare, empowerment, and socio-economic development of girl children in Maharashtra.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We, researchers, understand that conflict of interest refers to situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise our judgment in evaluating, conducting, or reporting research. We hereby declare that we do not have any personal conflict of interest that may arise from our application and submission of our research proposal.

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