

## **‘Conditional Cash Transfer’ As a Public Policy Design on Women Education: A case Study of ‘Kanyashree Prakalpa’**

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### **Abstract**

*Educating woman is the way of educating nation, because woman form the foundation of society. To bring about positive and progressive changes in society, women are most instrumental agent. In West Bengal like other states of India, patriarchal socio-political and socio-economic practice has prevented the girl children from enjoying equitable right in education. RTE-2009 was a major policy response on the part of Union Government which creates a provision to equalize the right of education for girl child up to elementary level. The State of West Bengal has launched the ‘Kanyashree Prakalpa’, Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), a universal social protection scheme on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 for girl child of Class-VIII-XII, which is historical till date in post independence Bengal to promote girls’ education. The very scheme is further up-scaled by accommodating Kanyashree girls, whether single or married, for financial assistance for pursuing PG studies in the year 2017. No doubt, such a ‘Public Policy Design’ of women empowerment is reciprocating and befitted in nature with the International policy advocacy and National policy. It is not only promoting policy of inclusive education by boosting women education in terms of enrollment and retention and attendance but qualitative evidence also document a change in perceptions about the importance of education for girl child which in turn expected to initiate a anabolic change in architecture of society in Bengal, especially in rural sector.*

**Key Words:** Kanyashree Prakalpa, girls’ education, inclusive education, women empowerment, Public policy Design

### **Introduction**

“There is no more valuable investment than in a girls’ education.” —Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-general, United Nations. On ‘Malala Day’ (12 July 2013). The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education urged governments worldwide to do their part: “Malala’s example inspires untold numbers of mothers and daughters to face down intimidation and fear, and to demand from their local governments what is their most basic right – an education.”(UNESCO, 2014)

In West Bengal like other states of India, patriarchal socio-political and socio-economic practice has prevented the girl children from enjoying equitable right in education. RTE-2009 (MHRD, 2009) was a major policy response on the part of union government which creates a provision to equalize the right of education for girl child up to elementary level. The State of West Bengal has launched the 'Kanyashree Prakalpa', conditional cash transfer, a universal social protection scheme on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 for girl child from class-VIII to XII, up to completion of 18 years. Such an endeavour to promote girls' education is first of its kind in the history of West Bengal (Khatun, R., 2014). The scheme protects environment for girls within which they can be safeguarded from being married before the legal age or trafficked. In the year 2017 the W. B. State Government has come out with a major boost in the policy through up-scaling the 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' by accommodating 'Kanyashree girls', whether single or married, for financial assistance for pursuing PG studies with a nominal condition of at least 45% marks in Graduation and pursuing Post Graduate courses in the State of West Bengal. If girls are allowed to be girls, then everybody wins (Das, 2014).

In this paper, after in-depth study of literature especially Policy Instruments, the researchers has tried to evaluate 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' as a case study of Public Policy in terms of aims, objectives, implementation, monitoring and management tactics in the global context of 'Conditional Cash Transfer' as policy design. While evaluating the impact of the scheme, we consider statistical pattern of literacy, enrolment, and attendance of girls as impact indicator.

### **Methodology of study**

1. Materials and Methods: The study is exploratory in nature. To evaluate the analysis we take secondary data of relevant reports.
2. Techniques of Analysis: While analysis the effect of the Kanyashree Prakalpa on women education in the current scenario of women empowerment, policy and programme analysis is under taken. Relevant graphical representations of the numerical data are used.

### **Policy Perspectives**

Public policies, in general, are courses of action, regulatory measures, laws, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives in order to resolve certain discrepancies and to maintain social and distributive justice and equality (JNU, 2014). West Bengal State Government had formulated, in accordance with international policy advocacy and also befitting with the central government policy, specifically with the objective of countering the negative attitude of society towards girls, it is found that 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' is an interesting and innovative policy tool, one that was specially designed to enhance the value and perception of girls in society while improving their material conditions. While scrutinizing 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' a policy, it is needed to look through the lens of Public Policy Design of Conditional Cash Transfers.

## **International Perspectives of Education for Girl Child**

Advocacy on the right to education as a fundamental and inalienable right is essential, emphasizing inclusion and State obligations to ensure its effective implementation. Starting from UNESCO Convention (1960) against Discrimination in Education to Dakar Education for All Framework for Action (2000), Goal 5, aimed to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and aims to achieve gender equality in education by 2015 in consonance with the Millennium Development Goals. To promote girls' and women's education, it is critical to intensify efforts to eradicate gender-based discrimination, in line with the normative international standard-setting instruments (UNESCO, 2014).

## **National Perspectives**

Since independence the Indian Government has been trying to improve the situation of girls. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) says: "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge in favour of women. The National Education System will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women...."

In consonance with the policy as adopted by union government, there are several central government-sponsored schemes especially targeted towards women, which are also implemented by the government of West Bengal, like Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG), Balika Samridhi Yozana (BSY), Sukanya Scheme, Swabalamban, Swayamsidha, Swadhar, Support to Training and Employment Program for Women (STEP). Besides these, schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) are also there. The state adopt Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), where in collaboration with Unicef and NGOs such as Ramakrishana Mission etc. government lays special emphasis on building separate toilets for girls in school premises (Mukherjee, 2004).

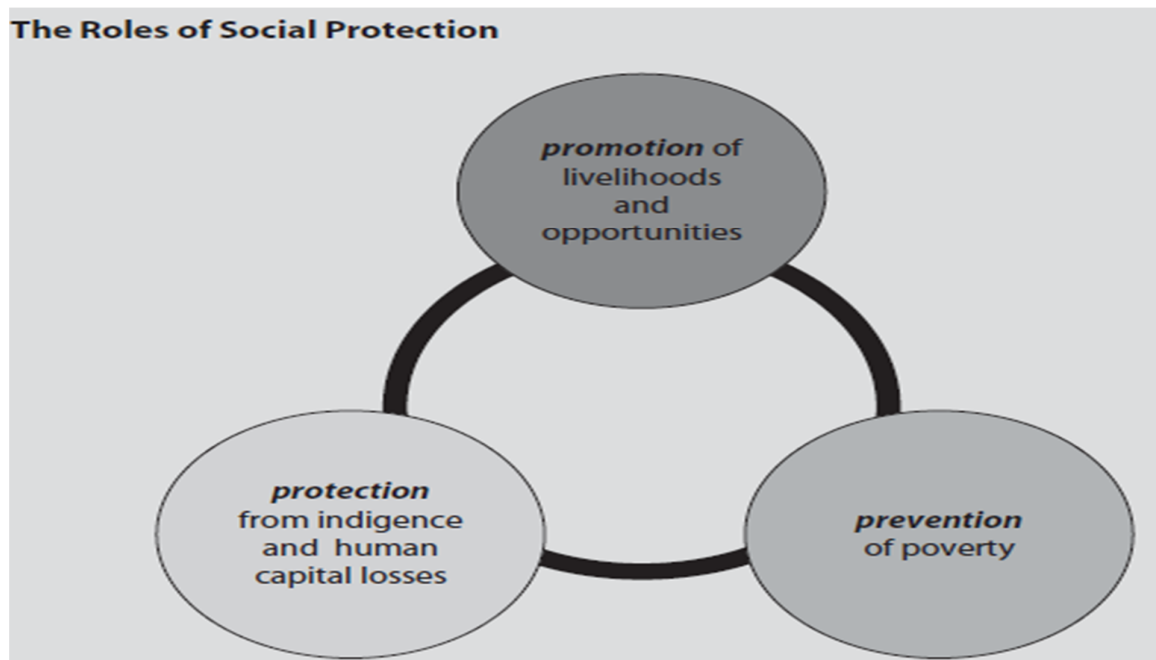
Finally the Government of India implemented Right to Education (RTE) Act, is a milestone in the movement towards achieving the goal of universal, equitable and quality education. The Act is not only legislative sanction and it is the most substantive declaration of the commitment and responsibility of Indian Government towards education for all (Mukherjee, 2014). Such a policy of inclusion ensures the education of Girl child without discrimination. Very recently, Government of India has announced *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* initiative. This is a joint initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resource Development with the objectives of Prevention of gender biased sex selective elimination, ensuring survival & protection of the girl child and ensuring education and participation of the girl child (Ministry of Women and Child Development Government of India, BBBPS Scheme, 2015)

## **'Conditional Cash Transfer' As a Public Policy Design for Women Education**

The core concept of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) was originated in Latin American countries, mainly in response to the macroeconomic crisis of the 1990s. (Prabhu *et.al.*2009). These schemes are a marked departure from the traditional approaches in social programming and welfare politics as they seek to provide short-term income support and at the same time

promote long-term behavioural changes, through provision of financial incentives to poor families following the fulfillment of certain verifiable conditions. Typically, such schemes aim at reducing extreme poverty and assist in the formation of human capabilities ( Sen, A.,2009). Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) schemes provide cash directly to poor households or Individual with specific conditions such as minimum attendance of children in schools, attendance at health clinics, and participation in immunization Programme etc. These kinds of schemes create incentives for households to adjust their behaviour towards nationally accepted social goals.’ (Janvry and Sadoulet, 2004). The other benefits associated with these programmes are that of empowering women, enabling the inclusion of people belonging to marginalized groups, improving accountability and reducing inequality.

CCT has been instrumentally used (a) to incentivize private behaviour to secure positive externalities such as enhanced consumption of merit goods like health and education (b) target vulnerable groups who are unable to access merit goods due to negative income effects caused by cyclical downturns. These schemes have typically been used to improve school attendance by children, boost attendance at health clinics and enhance participation in immunization programmes (Prabhu. *et. al.* 2009). Social protection interventions are seen as complementary to market-based mechanisms: they are able to provide protection from market failures and adverse market-based corrections (European University Institute 2010). The transformative social protection includes policy making and information campaigns and negotiation with the stake holders to influence individuals’ attitudes or behaviors. The role of social protection as advocated by World Bank is illustrated below where Promotion, Prevention and Protection tailored together. Such programmes typically have multiple objectives that foster the virtuous cycle between social protection and human development.



**Source:** World Bank.(2011). “Managing Risk, Promoting Growth: Developing Systems for Social Protection in Africa—Africa Social Protection Strategy 2011–2021.

The imposition of certain ‘conditions’ in CTC is significant as such controls help the government agencies to handle larger budgets than those to which they are accustomed, and concerns of corruption must be addressed (World Bank 2010a). Fiszbein and Schady (2009), suggested firmly that placing conditions on human capital investments may be appropriate for cash transfer programs. They suggest that ‘conditions’ may be useful when households under invest in human capital or when adding conditions increases the programme’s political acceptability and sustainability.

Prabhu *et. al.* (2009), after extensive study of literature, opined that such Conditional Cash Transfers are of particular contemporary policy relevance in India which despite its high growth performance lags with respect to alleviation of various dimensions of human poverty. Cash transfer schemes are also being advocated in the Indian context as a measure of enhancing the efficiency of delivery of Government programmes. As far as education is considered, the CCT schemes address demand-side factors on the assumptions that:

1. The lack of adequate income is what prevents parents from sending children to school or make use of health/immunization facilities resulting in inadequate demand;
2. Schools and public health facilities exist, are functioning and are accessible to the poor; and
3. Attendance improves learning outcomes and, therefore, life chances of children.

#### **‘Kanyashree Prakalpa’-Structure of the scheme**

Till the time, considerable inequalities prevail in women education in West Bengal. Even National Sample Survey data shows in 2011, literacy rate in West Bengal was 76.26%, where that in men and women were 82.67% and 71.16% respectively. Even in rural district like Uttar Dinajpur (53.15%) and Malda (57.84%) women literacy rate is very poor.

Patriarchal social culture also creates gender inequality in education. In the patriarchal social structure, parents are not expected to use the income of their daughters (Drury, D., 1993). Even school environment is itself responsible for the lagging behind the equity in education. (Ghosh, B. and Kar, A. M. , 2010).

In the present context, State Government should undertake measures to minimize the gap and if required undertake positive discrimination in favor of females and introduce infrastructure to bring women to the arena of education. (Pramanik, A., 2014).

#### **Objectives of ‘Kanyashree Prakalpa’**

The specific objectives of the Scheme as specified by the Department of Women Development and Social Welfare, Government of West Bengal, 2013, are to:

- a. Incentivize through scholarships, the continuation of education of the girl child in Secondary and Higher Secondary classes, vocational training or sports training. To reduce drop outs, especially amongst girls from poor families, who are not covered by any other scholarship.

b. Dis-incentivise child marriage of girls to ensure compliance with the legal provisions pertaining to the minimum age at marriage.

Apart from the above objectives, reducing the incidence of drop outs, especially amongst girls from poor families, eradication under nutrition & mal-nutrition of girl child, preventing trafficking & exploitation of the girl child are also embedded within greater objectives.

### **Components of Conditional Cash Transfer**

**Kanyashree 1 (K-1):** Annual scholarship of INR 500 to unmarried girls aged 13-18 years enrolled in Grades VIII-XII or equivalent

**Kanyashree 2 (K-2) :** One-time grant of INR 25,000 to unmarried girls aged 18 years pursuing education, vocational / technical training / sports

**Kanyashree 3 (K-3) :** ‘Kanyashree girls’, whether single or married, for financial assistance for pursuing PG studies under the SwamiVivekananda Merit cum Means Scholarship Scheme, with a nominal condition of at least 45% marks in Graduation and pursuing Post Graduate courses in the State of West Bengal . For pursuing Arts and Commerce, each K-3 beneficiary will receive Rs.2000 /- p.m. and for pursuing Post Graduate studies in Science, each K-3 beneficiary will get Rs.2500 l- p.m. Alike K-1 and K-2, even the married incumbent are also eligible to enjoy the benefit.

**Banking:** Zero-balance bank accounts in girls names, simplified opening procedures, direct transfer of funds

#### **Uniqueness of the scheme:**

The strength and uniqueness of the ‘Kanyashree Prakalpa’ (Sen, R., 2014):

**Efficient service delivery mechanism:** Designed for accessibility & speed

<b>Service Mechanism</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>
One-window service delivery	Application forms available in schools, enrollment and bank account opening facilitated by schools
Application, scrutiny and sanctioning through e-portal	reduces paperwork and increases the response time at each node of the process
Scrutiny of eligibility criteria	Monthly random-sample scrutiny
Unique ID for each beneficiary	Renewals annual scholarships and for the one-time grant at age 18 will be facilitated through the beneficiary’s data already available on the portal.

1. **Targeted communication strategy:** Documented communication strategy with components of public advocacy and behavior change methods
  - Awareness through-
    - a. Schools & other Institutions
    - b. Mass media & celebrity endorsement, and traditional formats such as fair, street theatre
  - Kanyashree Day' at state, district and block levels, with girls achievers being felicitated
  - Kanyashree movement through
    - c. events, poetry writing competitions etc.
    - d. Kanayshree clubs
    - e. methods that attract young girls such as specially designed bangles, ID cards,
    - f. a pledge
  - Publicized by various Government Departments
    - g. ASHA newsletters (Dept. of Health & Family Welfare)
    - h. Libraries of Dept. of Mass Education
    - i. Advertisements of Consumer Affairs Dept.
  
2. **Convergent Development & Implementation:** Government, Banking sector & Social sector-

Department	Key Functionaries
Department of Woman Development and Social Welfare	Nodal department
Department of Finance, Departments of School Education, Higher Education and Technical Education and Training, Minority Affairs & Madrasah Education	Key partner departments
Department of Mass Education Extension and Library Services, Panchayat and Rural Development, Municipal Affairs, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Information and Cultural Affairs, Sports & Youth Services	Promoting and supporting the scheme in their own domains
Banking sector	Opening of zero-balance accounts and disbursement of funds
NIC West Bengal	E-governance
UNICEF Office for West Bengal	Technical support
Private sectors	JWT India, Nielson India P. Ltd, distribution of bicycles to beneficiaries
NGOs at the grassroots	Encouraging enrollments, developing Kanyashree clubs etc

### 3. Management & Monitoring Structures:

Management	Administrative Level	Monitoring
State Project Management Unit	State	Steering and Monitoring Committee chaired by Hon'ble Finance Minister
District Level Project Management Units	District	Steering and Monitoring Committees chaired by DMs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Block level units</li> <li>• Schools &amp; other Educational Institutions</li> </ul>	Blocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering and Monitoring Committees chaired by BDOs</li> <li>• Schools &amp; other educational institutions</li> </ul>

- Continual communication through video conferences, feedback based on analysis of MIS data
- Responsive action on grievances in application form distribution, enrollment and remittances through interaction of ground level field implementers and beneficiaries.
- State, district and block and district level officials monitor the performance of schemes, and continually refine processes to work around area-specific challenges

### 4. One Window online Management Portal:

- The entire scheme is enabled through a dedicated online portal
  - a. Enrollment
  - b. Scrutiny
  - c. Sanctioning of applications
- Serves as a real-time reporting system
- Ensures transparency, efficiency and zero leakage
- Has a feedback mechanism

### 6. Sustainability:

- Low administrative cost – high impact
  - Administrative and publicity budget: Rs. 67 crores, approx. 10% of the estimated Rs. 600 crores disbursement to beneficiaries.
- Government of West Bengal views expenditure incurred as an investment in the education of adolescent girls.
  - Flagship scheme of the Government and it is entirely State-Government funded



- Rs. 700 crores earmarked by West Bengal Government despite financial crunch

**Remark-** Political ownership, leadership and commitment from the top and huge response from the bottom-up has made the scheme vibrant and sustainable

### **7. Replicable in its entirety:**

- ▶ Single point of service-delivery: schools & other educational institutions – where target recipient is enrolled
- ▶ Implemented & monitored through existing Government machinery
- ▶ End-to-end IT enabled
- ▶ Has a comprehensive implementation guidelines and a documented communication strategy which can be periodically updated

### **Key Policy changes in the academic year 2015-16**

The concerned Departments of State Government after a multi-level review, brought about some key qualitative changes in the policy frame work the project. These may be listed as follows:

1. Enhancement of the annual Scholarship: Annual scholarship enhanced from Rs.500/- to Rs. 750/-
2. Introduced mature e-governance '**Kanyashree Online 3.0**' to enhance usability, efficiency and accuracy with the features-
  - a. The portal was integrated with public finance management system for improved screening of bank account system.
  - b. Security upgradation was accommodated
  - c. Pre-printed application forms (bi-lingual in nature) are available with institutional level
  - d. Portal generated application forms are provided to the beneficiaries for availing annual scholarship (K-1) to one time grant(K-2)
  - e. Annual scholarship achiever are automatically renewed for the next academic session at the institutional level
3. Amendment in eligibility criteria and certification for Annual Scholarship (K-1):
  - a. Age verification may be done apart from birth certificate from competent authority, by the institutional head in special case to reduce the barrier.
  - b. In terms of educational institute, along with School and Madrasha, equivalent open schools also included. Vocational, Technical & Industrial Training Centre are also included. A college and equivalent Open University courses are included in the ambit.
  - c. Condition of minimum class-VIII enrollment was waived and students of class less than VIII may be accommodated for the girls with the special need (Minimum Disability is 40 percent)

- d. Death certificate of deceased parents is included as instrument for minimum family income waiver.

### **Major up-gradation of the policy frame work in 2017-18**

#### **1. ‘Kanyashree 3’:**

The State Government has been considering the need to provide financial assistance to Kanyashree girls under Swami Vivekananda Merit-Cum-Means Scholarship Scheme in order to encourage and incentivize them for pursuing post graduate studies in general education. Accordingly an order was issued from Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology and Biotechnology vide No. 08-EH/N/M&MS-06/2013 (Pt.-I) dated 28.07.2017 to include Kanyashree girls, (K-2 beneficiaries, receiving financial assistance under Kanyashree Prakalpa, stage-2) for eligibility of applying for getting financial assistance under Swami Vivekananda Merit-Cum-Means Scholarship Scheme as “K-3 component” in a sub-scheme. If they are pursuing Post Graduate courses in Science, Arts and Commerce stream from Universities of this State with 45% marks in aggregate at graduation level from Institutions of this State in the year 2017. Online application for scholarship including K-3 component through Swami Vivekananda Merit-cum-Means Scholarship portal started from 11th September, 2017.

Applications were invited for scholarship **for the year 2017**, under “**SWAMI VIVEKANANDA MERIT-CUM-MEANS SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME**” for providing financial assistance to the poor and meritorious students of West Bengal, pursuing higher studies. The students of Post-Madhyamik levels and onwards in regular courses, who are pursuing the studies and who are domiciled in West Bengal and studying in educational institutions of this state after passing out from the State Board/council of Secondary/Higher Secondary and Madrasha Education or a University of West Bengal set up by State Act and **whose annual family income is Rs. 2,50,000/- or less**, may apply for this scholarship subject to other eligibility criteria as stated below category wise :-

#### **For Kanyashree applicants (K-3 component) (@Rs. 2000/- to Rs. 2500/- p.m)**

Kanyashree recipients with valid sanctioned K-2 ID pursuing Post Graduate courses in Science, Arts and Commerce stream from Universities of this State must obtain at graduation level with 45% marks in aggregate from Institutions of this State in the year 2017 are eligible to apply.

2. **Kanyashree Mobile Application:** Kanyashree Mobile Application v2.0 was launched on July, 2017. This application is meant for the beneficiary Girls as well as concerned administrators. This app in one hand facilitating the incumbent to know status of the application in various stages and can able to lodge grievance with user-id and password. On the other, the application will also be helpful for administrators at various levels to carry out their work with respective dedicated virtual workspace protected with unique user-id and password.

### Impact Assessment on Girls' Education

The data reveal that the scheme has a very positive impact on women education in all possible dimensions, especially in enrolment, retention and attendance. The unique design and administrative mobility under the dynamic leadership has proved to be fruit full.

The data computed in following tables-1 & 2, clearly indicate that the scheme achieve more than 100 percentage achievement in terms of target. In both case of annual scholarship designated as K-1 and one time grant (K-2) the scheme has cross the target in four successive academic vis-à-vis financial years. Strikingly the numbers of rejected applications are very few due to simplicity of eligibility criteria and as the implementer reach the door steps of beneficiaries.

**Table-1: Over all beneficiaries (Up to August, 2017)**

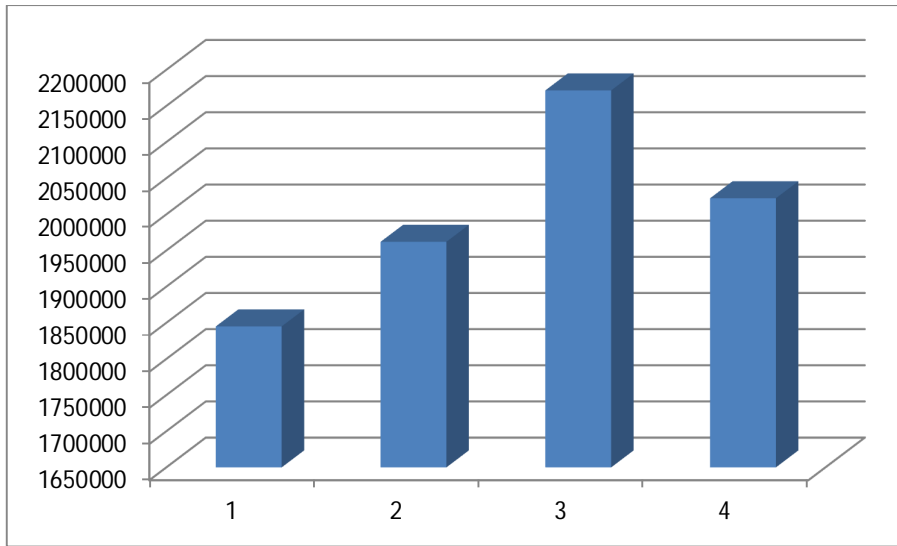
Registered Institution	Enrolled Application	Sanctioned Applications	Unique Beneficiaries
15826	9417297	9052115	4193558

**Source:** 'Kanyashree Prakalpa': Annual Report 2015-2016  
([https://wbkanyashree.gov.in/kp\\_4.0/index.php](https://wbkanyashree.gov.in/kp_4.0/index.php))

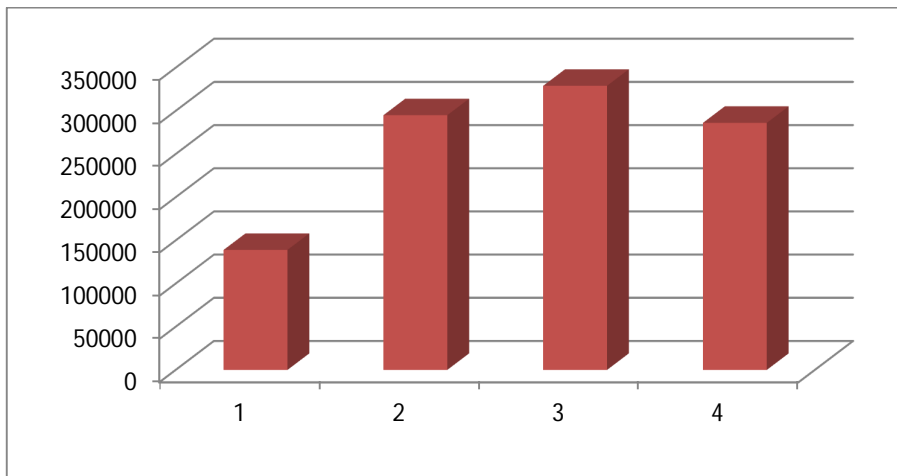
**Table 2: Status of KP-1 & KP-2 in four successive academic session:**

SESSION	ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP (K-1)					ONE TIME GRANT (K-2)				
	TARGET	COMPLETE	SANCTIONED	REJECTED	(%)	TARGET	COMPLETE	SANCTIONED	REJECTED	(%)
2013-14	1552265	1889960	1844990	55601	122	130206	144197	138965	12297	<b>111</b>
2014-15	1800000	1992066	1961976	38337	108	251000	305636	294940	11280	<b>115</b>
2015-16	2200000	2194002	2171405	22597	100.27	--	336786	329027	7759	--
2016-17	2300000	2228466	2022234	206232	103	--	325126	286079	39047	--

**Source:** [wbkanyashree.gov.in/kp\\_districtwise\\_dashboard\\_pdf\\_2014\\_15.php](https://wbkanyashree.gov.in/kp_districtwise_dashboard_pdf_2014_15.php) & [https://wbkanyashree.gov.in/kp\\_4.0/index.php](https://wbkanyashree.gov.in/kp_4.0/index.php)

**Figure-1: Annual Scholarship (K-1): Number of beneficiaries**

**Note: 1 = 2013-14, 2 = 2014-15, 3 = 2015-16, 4 = 2016-17**

**Figure-2: One Time Grant (K-2): Number of beneficiaries**

**Note: 1 = 2013-14, 2 = 2014-15, 3 = 2015-16, 4 = 2016-17**

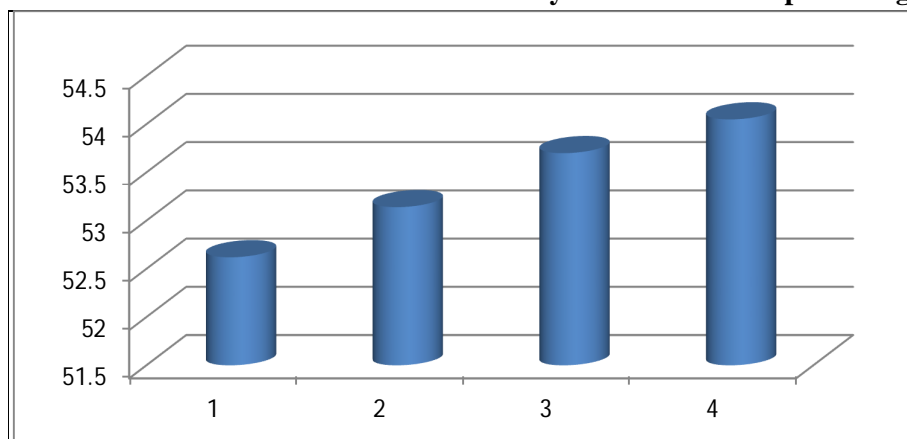
The above two graphs plotted from data of table-2, both the graphs indicate steady increase in number of beneficiaries in both K-1 and K-2 from 2013-14 session onwards though there is little decline 2016-17.

The data collected and computed from U-DISE, prepared by NUEPA clearly indicates that there is steady rise of enrollment of girls in both secondary and higher secondary level from 2012-13 to 2015-16. Strikingly the rate of enrollment of girl child boosted from 2013-14 onwards, which may be due to effective implementation of Kanyashree Prakalpa.

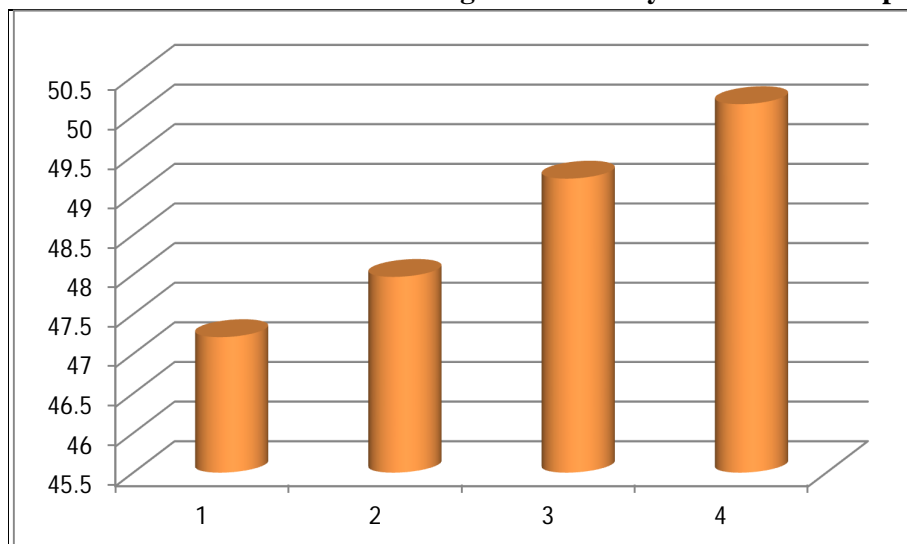
**Table-3: Trend of enrollment pattern of Girls in Secondary and Higher Secondary level in West Bengal**

Session	Secondary Level (IX-X)			Higher Secondary Level (XI-XII)			Kanyashree Prakalpa Status
	Total	No.of Girls	% of Girls	Total	No.of Girls	% of Girls	
2012-13	2414738	1270635	52.62	1479279	698440	47.21	No KP
2013-14	2534192	1346616	53.14	1535084	736378	47.97	KP
2014-15	2630890	1412770	53.70	1596827	785828	49.21	KP
2015-16	2759187	1491350	54.05	1636859	820881	50.15	KP

**Source:** U-DISE -2012-13, 2013-14 & 2014-15, Flash Statistics, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, 17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110016 (INDIA)

**Figure-3: Trends of enrollment of Girls in Secondary level in terms of percentage**

**Note:** 1 = 2013-14, 2 = 2014-15, 3 = 2015-16, 4 = 2016-17

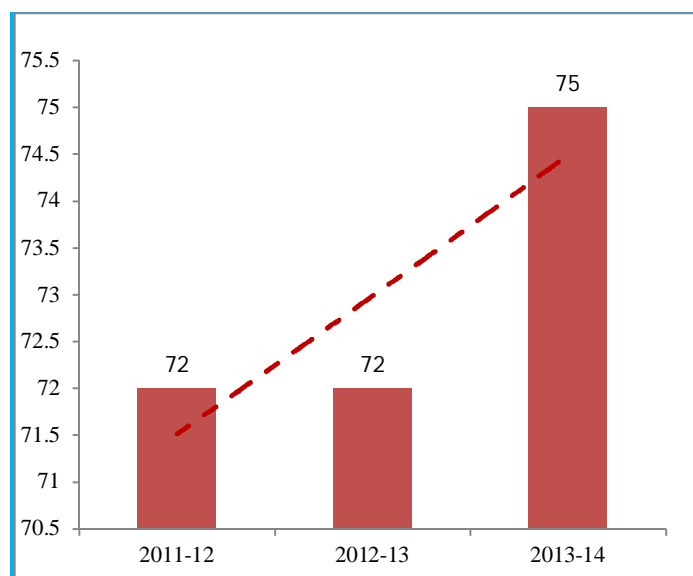
**Figure-4: Trends of enrollment of Girls in Higher Secondary level in terms of percentage**

**Note:** 1 = 2013-14, 2 = 2014-15, 3 = 2015-16, 4 = 2016-17

The above graphical figure give specific indication of steady enhancement of enrolment of girls child in both secondary and higher secondary level from 2012-13 session to onwards, which justify the positive impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa.

According to data from the National Sample Survey 2014 (NSS, 2014), the school dropout rate among girls in the State has come down. The report says that while the National average for school dropout rate for girls is 3.23%, the same for the State is 1.28%. In the 2009 survey, the figure stood at 2.34% for Bengal. According to U- DISE, 2015-16, the retention rate for the academic year 2013-14 to academic year 2015-16 enhanced in case of Girls in secondary level from 54.14 to 56.11, while in case of boys it was nearly steady that is 45.20 to 45.03. Field level data validation reveals that KP had a positive impact on boosting girl children's aspirations and reinforcing their parents' desire to have them educated. Within the first year of implementation, the scheme has covered 1,943,403 beneficiaries; of these, the coverage of SCs (23.2 percent), STs (5.7 percent) and minorities (24.3 percent) for the annual scholarship is approximately proportional to their population ('Kanyashree Prakalpa': Annual Report 2015-2016).

**Fig-5: Trends of school attendance of Girl child, Rapid Assessment (UNICEF, 2014):**



**Source:** Girl Summit 2014 (Department for International Development, UK and UNICEF in London.)

The interim rapid assessment done by UNICEF in 2014 indicates School attendance rate of girl child has improved from 72% in 2011-12 to 75% in 2013-14. Thus the data available till the time document the very positive impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa.

### **Discussion**

From policy perspectives the 'Kanyashree Prakalpa', a Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), a universal social protection scheme has earned its credit from National and International community. It has established the best practices for implementation, monitoring and

management among global CTC schemes. The justification of Policy has been endorsed by national and international awards, notably among others, it achieved 1st Place as winner in UNPSA Award 2017.

Cash transfer programs are not a panacea. They are not always an appropriate tool, they cannot address all vulnerabilities or problems, and they face steep challenges to their effective implementation. Such a policy design does not only reveal that the question is not whether cash transfers can be used, but how they should be used, and how they can be adapted and developed to meet social protection and development goals similarly as opined by Garcia and Moore, (2012). Grosh. *et. al.* (2008), devices the method of evaluations and specified the areas should be addressed in CCT process evaluations, included (a) timeliness of program inscription; (b) timeliness of financial distributions and associated bottlenecks, both directly for the CT and between agencies involved in the CT; (c) accessibility of transfers to beneficiaries; (d) beneficiaries' and other stakeholders' knowledge of program rules and procedures; (e) presence and performance of equipment and personnel at CT program offices; and (f) receipt of complaints or appeals to determine whether problems have been resolved, uncover recurring problems, and find out whether specific groups are differentially affected by those problems. From above noted criteria, the 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' has proved itself with parameter and final amendment in 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' brought about in 2016 and 2017 is befitted.

Thus the 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' has ensured school enrollment, school attendance and retention of girl child in school system. Many CCTs in Latin America and the Caribbean and Cambodia have had positive, significant impacts has been documented in the same tune of 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' (Maluccio and Flores 2005, Fiszbein and Schady 2009, Ferreira, Filmer, and Schady 2009). Fundescola in Brazil, and the EGS in India could also be viewed as effective policy experiments for future educational policies.( Neha Raykar ,2011). The study commissioned by UNFPA to review the performance of fifteen ongoing schemes to promote the well-being of the girl child in India. These promotional schemes (CCT) for girl child could potentially have far reaching positive implications in enhancing the value of a daughter within a family (Sekher, T.V., 2010). The shifting of Unconditional to Conditional cash transfer in 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' was decisive policy change has also supported by finding from the international studies. Baird, McIntosh, and Özler (2011) by a comparative study of impact of Unconditional to Conditional cash transfer in education, came with the conclusion that the CTC girl beneficiaries are more achiever in terms of enrollment and school attendance. A UNESCO review (Reimers, et al, 2006) of the impact of CCT schemes across five countries indicates that these schemes have a positive impact on school attendance rates and consequently in the number of years of schooling attained. In Mexico, as impact of CCT scheme, secondary school enrollment increased from 70 to 78 percent between the year 1998 and 2000 (Skoufias, 2005). School enrollment by CTC scheme for girls of class-VI-IX, in Bangladesh has enhanced and school incentives resulted in marriage delays for young girls and further qualitative evidence also documents a change in perceptions about the importance of education for underprivileged groups in society. (Amin, S.*et.al*, 1998)

The impact of increased enrolment on learning outcomes, however, is limited and inconclusive and thus their impact on improving human capital, which is one of the chief objectives for the introduction of CCT schemes, is also not clear. It is also true in case of the ‘Kanyashree Prakalpa’. In Progres, the results pertaining to educational achievement indicated that beneficiary students did not obtain better test scores as compared to non-beneficiary students. Similarly, the results for Brazil’s Bolsa Familia indicated that “beneficiary children are almost four percentage points more likely than non-beneficiaries to fail at school” (Soares, et al, 2007). Therefore, such kind of impact analysis is urgently needed for the ‘Kanyashree Prakalpa’ too.

### **Concluding Remark**

The authority of Governments with clear vision about vulnerability among different groups in the country and that fully understand the purpose of their CCT programme should have realistic expectations regarding graduation of the scheme as policy mandate. Apart from educational impact the programme has positive impact in preventing trafficking of girls and preventing early child marriage. Not only that, it has created a positive social perception and ambience so that the girl children can lead a meaningful life. Thus relevant and unique ramifications are needed and the government has rightly responded by accommodating beneficiaries in non-formal education with livelihood support along with life skill education. Bridging with government and non-government agencies to bring such beneficiaries with in network for employability, inculcating entrepreneurship will create the real path of women empowerment. In this context we have to evaluate the scheme, ‘kanyashree prakalpa’ which is instrumental in promoting education of girl children on the other, ending of child marriage will help to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty by allowing girls & women to participate more fully in society (Das, P.K.-2014). We can conclude that ‘kanyashree prakalpa’ as policy intervention will have long lasting effect in women empowerment in West Bengal, especially in women education. The uniqueness of design and positive impact already demonstrated and justify the necessity of further in-depth study.

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