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## Information seeking behavior and media exposure among Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) of Jharkhand state

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### Abstract

The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme launched by the GOI in August, 2004 for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC, Minority and other BPL communities in difficult areas. The scheme is being implemented in EBBs of the country where the female rural literacy rate is below the national average and gender gap in literacy is above the national average. Adolescent age is the transition phase of growth and development between childhood and adulthood. It is a distinctive developmental stage of life. This age group is unique in terms of their intellectual, social, emotional and physical development. The present investigation was carried out in Ranchi district of Jharkhand state to study the information seeking behavior and media exposure of KGBV adolescent girls. The sample size comprised of 120 adolescent girls who were selected by random sampling technique. The data were collected from the respondents by using pre tested interview schedule through personal interview. Scale developed by Agosto and Hassell - Hughes (2006) was used to study information seeking behavior and self-developed schedule was used to study media exposure i.e. how frequently they utilize it, among the adolescent girls. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents had low level of media exposure. Teachers were the primary source of information with 82.50% in daily life routines information need areas. As much as 94.17% respondents marked teachers as primary source of information in academics. Family was the main source of information in area pertaining to social life activities with 70.83%, followed by teachers with 53.33%. Further, in the area of emotional health family and friends were the major source of information with 83.33% and 72.50% respectively. Considering the fashion aspect, the family (75.83%) was the major source of information, followed by friends (70.83%). print media and new media contributed equally as information source for getting information with 67.50%. In the area of Health, the teachers with 77.50% were marked as the primary source of information, followed by new media (60.83%).

**Keywords:** Adolescent, information, information seeking behavior, KGBV, media exposure, new media

### Introduction

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme (KGBV) is an innovative and constructive step to empower the girls strengthening their elementary education. The scheme enables opening of special residential schools for girl child belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Castes and Minority in educationally backward areas having low female literacy. KGBV adopts community-based approach for the development of children under difficult circumstances to check drop out of girls, working girls, girls from marginalized social groups, girls with low levels of achievement to gain quality elementary education and develop self-esteem of girls.

The information is needed to satisfy individuals conscious along with unconscious needs. Information is needed by every individual in day-to-day activity, it aids in decision making. Existing information generates new information along with new knowledge. During adolescence age person go through a transition phase from childhood to adulthood which poses various challenges and decisions before them. According to the World Health Organization, adolescence refers to the life stage between 10 to 19 years of age, in line with current children's earlier puberty and rapid physical maturation, and is a time of rapid cognitive, affective, and social development. Adolescents need to make many decisions that influence their lives both short-term and long-term. Besides general challenges of living in a modern society, they face some particular challenges which pose significant demands on their decision-making abilities. Information is often considered as support in making choices about career, health, daily life activities, religious and other important life aspects.

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This paper highlights the information seeking behavior and media exposure of KGBV adolescent girls.

### Material and Methods

The study was conducted in the Ranchi district of Telangana state. By using random sampling technique 120 KGBV adolescent girls were selected who were studying class eight. The data were collected from the respondents by using pre tested interview schedule through personal interview. Scale developed by Agosto and Hassell - Hughes (2006)<sup>[1]</sup> was used to study information seeking behavior and self-developed schedule was used to study media exposure i.e. how frequently they utilize it, among the adolescent girls. The data collected was tabulated and analyzed using suitable statistical technique.

### Results and Discussion

**Table 1:** General profile of the KGBV adolescent girls in Jharkhand state

| Age (in years)      | Jharkhand State |       |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------|
|                     | Frequency       | %     |
| 13-15               | 94              | 78.33 |
| 15-17               | 25              | 20.83 |
| 17-19               | 2               | 1.66  |
| Family type         |                 |       |
| Nuclear             | 84              | 70.00 |
| Joint               | 35              | 29.16 |
| Single parent       | 1               | 0.83  |
| Parent's education  |                 |       |
| Father education    |                 |       |
| Illiterate          | 15              | 12.50 |
| Primary             | 40              | 33.33 |
| Upper primary       | 31              | 25.83 |
| Secondary           | 23              | 19.16 |
| Higher secondary    | 8               | 6.66  |
| Graduate            | 3               | 2.5   |
| Mothers' education  |                 |       |
| Illiterate          | 24              | 20.00 |
| Primary             | 26              | 21.66 |
| Upper primary       | 40              | 33.33 |
| Secondary           | 13              | 10.83 |
| Higher secondary    | 12              | 10.00 |
| Graduate            | 5               | 4.16  |
| Fathers' occupation |                 |       |
| Government job      | 14              | 11.66 |
| Private job         | 1               | 0.83  |
| Self employed       | 5               | 4.16  |
| Farming             | 79              | 65.83 |
| Caste Occupation    | 1               | 0.83  |
| Labors              | 20              | 33.33 |
| Mothers' occupation |                 |       |
| Government job      | 3               | 2.50  |
| Private job         | 2               | 1.66  |
| Self employed       | 1               | 0.83  |
| Farming             | 60              | 50.00 |
| Caste Occupation    | 1               | 0.83  |
| Labors              | 25              | 20.83 |
| Home makers         | 28              | 23.33 |

Age was the number of years completed by the respondents at the time of investigation. The age of students studying in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> class in KGBV ranged between 13 and 16 years. Usually by the age of 13 years, a child should be in 8<sup>th</sup> class, if he or she is enrolled for 1<sup>st</sup> class at the age of 6 years and by 16 years they complete 10<sup>th</sup> class. The data revealed that

majority 78.3% of the population were in the age group of 13-15 years. As much as 20.83% were in age group 15 -17 years, followed by 1.66 % in the age group 17- 19 years of age.

Nanda (2013)<sup>[5]</sup> conducted a study on behaviour modification through family and life skills education of adolescents. For the implementation of the intervention, a statistically viable sample of 171 non-migrant, unmarried adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years belonging to low socio-economic background was purposively selected. The girls were divided into two age groups i.e. early adolescent girl (11-15 years) and later adolescent girl (16-18) for analyzing the impact of intervention on behavior modification.

The family type in the present study were categorized namely nuclear family, joint family and single parent family. Data relating to Jharkhand explicated that majority i.e. 70.00 percent belonged to nuclear family followed by 29.16 percent joint family and 0.83 percent belonged to single parent family type. The above data clearly indicated gradual disintegration of the joint family system and emergence of nuclear family. The possible reason for this could be impact of western culture, financially independent, socially organized and self-reliant family. Prajina and Godwin (2015)<sup>[6]</sup> studied the life skill of the adolescent children. They found that majority (93.8%) were living in nuclear family that is the traditional joint family system of rural area has been broken to nuclear families.

Relating to father's education the majority of the respondent's father's education qualification was primary i.e.33.33, followed by 25.83 percent upper primary. As much as 19.16 % respondents father had secondary level of education, 12.50 percent were illiterate, followed by 6.6 % with higher secondary level and rest 2.5% were graduates. Data relating to Jharkhand explicated that majority 32.91 percent of respondent's mother had upper primary educational level. As much as 28.75 % had primary level of education, followed by 18.33% illiterate, 9.58 % with secondary, 7.50% with higher secondary education level. It was observed that only 2.91% of respondents mother had graduation level of education.

The above figures are discouraging indicating low level of literacy among the rural and economically weaker sections of the society. The girls enrolled in KGBV schools are mostly of BPL families. Gayatri *et al.* (2017)<sup>[3]</sup> in their study on "Life skills education program among high school children: An intervention study" found that majority i.e. 53% mothers and 26% fathers of children were illiterate and they had not attended formal schooling.

Parent's occupation was operationalized as parental occupation of the respondent. Information was collected on four categories *viz.*, Government job, private job, self-employment, farming, caste occupation and laborers for both mother and father. In the mother occupation a category was included as homemakers.

The respondent from Jharkhand state also depicted a similar trend were a majority (70.00%) were involved in farming. As much as 13.75 % were laborer, followed by 9.16% with government job, 3.33% self-employed, 2.50 % caste occupation and rest 1.25% were private job employee. Data pertaining to maternal occupation of the respondents from Jharkhand state revealed that majority (47.91%) were engaged in farming, followed by a substantial percentage engaged as labors and home makers (22.08 and 20.83%, respectively), 3.75% were in government job, 2.5% in private job and rest 1.66% and 1.25% were self-employed and practiced caste occupation respectively.

Prajina and Godwin (2015) [6] studied the life skill of the adolescent children. They found that 80% of fathers and 54.7% of mothers are coolie workers. 23.8% said that their mothers were house wives and their father’s income is enough to run the families. Only 5% of the fathers and 1.3% of the mothers were in government service.

**2. Media exposure**

Mass Media can provide exposure, knowledge, and information to help adolescent girls access resources for their development. It has the potential to boost self-use, trust, and collective strength.

Mass media exposure was defined as being exposed to various media, i.e. electronic and print media, mobile and internet. In the present study, the mass media exposure of the respondent was studied in terms of how frequently they utilize them. On the basis of the scores, respondents were classified into three categories namely low exposure (0-12), medium exposure (12-24) and high exposure (24-36).

**Table 2:** Distribution of the respondents according to Mass media exposure

| Mass media exposure | Jharkhand State |            |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|
|                     | Frequency       | Percentage |
| Low                 | 88              | 73.33      |
| Medium              | 31              | 25.83      |
| High                | 1               | 0.83       |

The overview of the data presented in the table 4. Depicts the mass media exposure across different states of KGBV

**Table 3:** Distribution of the respondents according to information sources used for seeking information n=120

| S. No. | Information needs Area | Information Sources |             |                  |            |             |             |                  |            |
|--------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------------|
|        |                        | Friends             | Family      | School employees | Wardens    | Teachers    | Print media | Electronic media | New media  |
|        |                        | F (MPS)             | F (MPS)     | F (MPS)          | F (MPS)    | F (MPS)     | f (MPS)     | f (MPS)          | f (MPS)    |
| 1      | Daily life routines    | 76 (63.33)          | 83 (69.17)  | 45 (37.5)        | 64 (53.33) | 99 (82.50)  | 39 (32.50)  | 41 (34.17)       | 52 (43.33) |
| 2      | Academics              | 33 (27.5)           | 39 (32.5)   | 32 (26.67)       | 23 (19.17) | 113 (94.17) | 46 (38.33)  | 37 (38.33)       | 47 (39.17) |
| 3      | Social life activities | 56 (46.67)          | 85 (70.83)  | 34 (28.33)       | 49 (40.83) | 64 (53.33)  | 40 (33.33)  | 37 (30.83)       | 38 (31.67) |
| 4      | Emotional health       | 87 (72.50)          | 100 (83.33) | 49 (40.83)       | 63 (52.50) | 73 (60.83)  | 46 (38.33)  | 22 (18.33)       | 54 (45.00) |
| 5      | Fashion                | 85 (70.83)          | 91 (75.83)  | 25 (20.83)       | 48 (40.00) | 20 (16.67)  | 81 (67.50)  | 61 (50.83)       | 81 (67.50) |
| 6      | Health                 | 43 (35.83)          | 69 (57.50)  | 27 (22.50)       | 47 (39.17) | 93 (77.50)  | 53 (44.17)  | 28 (23.33)       | 73 (60.83) |
| 7      | Careers                | 36 (30.00)          | 63 (52.50)  | 42 (35.00)       | 38 (31.37) | 114 (95.00) | 42 (35.00)  | 47 (39.17)       | 54 (45.00) |
| 8      | Social norms           | 38 (31.67)          | 84 (70.00)  | 45 (37.5)        | 54 (45.00) | 93 (77.50)  | 48 (40.00)  | 37 (30.83)       | 39 (32.5)  |
| 9      | Sexual safety          | 67 (55.83)          | 85 (70.83)  | 43 (34.83)       | 64 (53.33) | 99 (82.50)  | 49 (40.83)  | 43 (35.83)       | 64 (53.33) |
| 10     | Religious              | 49 (40.83)          | 42 (35.00)  | 22 (18.33)       | 19 (15.83) | 14 (11.67)  | 80 (66.67)  | 73 (60.83)       | 61 (50.83) |

The data highlights the distribution of the respondents according to information sources used for seeking information in various areas of Jharkhand state. Teachers were the primary source of information with 82.50% in daily life routines information need areas. As much as 94.17% respondents marked teachers as primary source of information in academics. The print media and electronic media contributed equal of (38.33%) for source of information among KGBV students. Family was the main source of information in area pertaining to social life activities with 70.83%, followed by teachers with 53.33%. Further, in the area of emotional health family and friends were the major source of information with of 83.33% and 72.50% respectively. Considering the fashion aspect, the family (75.83%) was the major source of information, followed by friends (70.83%). print media and new media contributed equally as information source for getting information with 67.50%. In the area of Health, the teachers with 77.50% were marked as the primary source of

adolescent girls. It was indicated that majority 73.33% had low media exposure, followed by medium mass media exposure 25.83%, and only 0.83% had high mass media exposure.

This might be due to residential school campus of KGBV which does not permit the students to keep personal mobiles phones or any other gadgets. Besides this the respondents had fixed timetable in which they have limited access of media that also for few hours. Or in some school the respondents can see television on weekly basis.

Kaur (2017) [4] found in her study “information-seeking behavior of women regarding health and hygiene practices” that half of the respondents (50%) had medium level of mass media exposure and 38.5 per cent of respondents belonged to the low exposure category of mass media sources. While only 11.5 per cent of respondents had high level of mass media exposure.

**3. Information seeking behavior**

Information seeking behavior was operationally defined as the process where people search information and utilize this information to acquire new knowledge and skills. Information seeking behavior is the totality of human information needs in relation to sources and channels of information. The information needs of the students were categorized as daily life routines, Academics, Social life activities, Emotional health, Fashion, Health, Careers, Social norms, Sexual safety, Creative and religious from various sources like friends, family, wardens, teachers, electronic media, print media and new media.

information, followed by new media (60.83%). Teachers were the primary source of information (95.00%) in Career areas for seeking information, followed by family and new media with 52.50% and 45.00% respectively. Social norms areas respondents used to seek information mostly from teachers and family members with 77.50% and 70.00% respectively. In the area of sexual safety teachers and family members were the major source of information with of 82.50% and 70.83% respectively. Considering the Religious area the respondents sought information mostly from print media (66.67), followed by electronic media (60.83) and new media (50.83).

According to Fisher *et al.* (2005) [2], women usually begin their information gathering by consulting informal, interpersonal sources, such as friends and family. While not always dominant in terms of guiding decision-making, these sources provide outlook about the health issue in question, links to more formal sources such as books, doctors etc. and, importantly, comfort, validation and support. This latter

aspect of care is, perhaps, more significant than all the others. Poston-Anderson and Edwards (2013) [5] found that adolescents who participated in their study did not believe that the information which they needed is available in school libraries or in public libraries. They reported that they were successful in finding answers on factual questions by asking family, especially mothers, friends and teachers.

Agosto and Hughes-Hassell (2006) [1] explored everyday life information seeking (ELIS) of urban adolescents and developed a typology of urban adolescents' preferred ELIS sources, media types and topics. [82] They found their heavy preference for people as information sources, friends and family being the most preferred sources. School employees were also consulted to meet ELIS needs. Cell phones were reported to be the most preferred and the most convenient method way of mediated communication. The adolescents also reported turning to telephones, televisions, computers, and radios before turning to print resources such as newspapers, books, and magazine to satisfy their information needs.

### Conclusion

Information is the basic need of all human being including the KGBV adolescent girls. The information is acquired by the adolescent through the various sources to make one's life comfortable. In KGBV school's new media should be popularized to facilitate early learning, exposure to new ideas and knowledge, increased opportunities for social contact and support, and new opportunities to access information. New media exposure can provide exposure to new ideas and information, raising awareness of current events and issues. Interactive media also can provide opportunities for the promotion of community participation and civic engagement. The information is needed to satisfy individuals conscious along with unconscious needs. Information is needed by every individual in day-to-day activity, it aids in decision making. Existing information generates new information along with new knowledge. During, adolescence age person go through a transition phase from childhood to adulthood which poses various challenges and decisions before them.

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