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# Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana: A Unique Effort Towards Girl Child Education in Patna

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**Abstract :** *Education is the basic requirement for human development and right to education is the fundamental human right. Every person irrespective of his/her sex, caste, creed, religion should be provided with opportunities to get education and to attain complete human development. In India women were deprived of basic education owing to various social, economic, political factors. Education of girls has been a priority for the Government of India these days and steps have been taken to bring them to the mainstream. Among several welfare initiatives taken by the Bihar*

*government over the past few years the Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana (MBCY) is very popular. This scheme has changed the face of Bihar with lakhs of school girls riding bicycles to their schools everyday with a purpose. About three years ago it was rare to find a school girl riding a bicycle even on the streets of Patna. In Bihar, cycles have now become a veritable instrument for social change which can be felt in any part of the state. The remarkable aspect of this project is that this has benefited girls from all sections of society. It is a universal scheme. The only eligibility criterion is that the beneficiary should be studying in class VIII and in a government run school. This scheme is a small step in the direction of women empowerment. Bihar emerges as a vibrant state which truly believes in empowering its women through various ways. Educating girl is one of them. This paper evaluates this programme with respect to public policy design in terms of aims, objectives and implementation tactics with reference to the extent to which it involves the grassroots.*

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**Keywords:** MBCY, School girl, girl's education, Bicycle.

## **Introduction:**

Empowerment of girls through exposure to activities other than text books is necessary in order to enhance their information base, their self esteem and self-confidence, skills and capacities, to equip them to cope with different situations in life, to enable them to make informed choices, to participate in decision making processes, and to access resources that will assure them quality of life.

It was the Sixth Five Year Plan in which the focus on women's interests shifted to 'welfare' and 'development'. Planners and policy makers began to recognize women not only as partners but also as stake-holders in the development of the country. The Seventh Five Year plan was development programme which aimed at raising the economic and social status of women and at ensuring that they get the benefits of national development. This is when beneficiary oriented programmes extending direct benefits to women in different development sectors began. The Eighth Five Year Plan focused on Human Development. It tried to ensure that the benefits of development do not bypass women and it implemented special programmes for women to complement the general development programme and to monitor the flow of benefits to women in education, health and employment. The Ninth Five Year Plan was rather ambitious. It took up "empowering women as agents of socio-economic change and development" as a major commitment to begin with. It adopted the National Policy for Empowerment of Women.

Among several welfare initiatives taken by the Bihar government over the past few years the Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana (MBCY) is very popular. Bihar, one of the most backward States decided to encourage girls to go to school. This scheme has changed the face of Bihar with lakhs of schoolgirls riding bicycles to their schools every day with a purpose. About three years ago it was rare to find a schoolgirl riding bicycle even in the

streets of Patna. But now we can watch scores of confident looking schoolgirls pedalling away everywhere from the narrow lanes of a remote village to the bustling roads of the cities across the state. In Bihar, cycles have now become a veritable instrument for social change which can be felt in any part of the state. It would be no exaggeration to say that the scheme has been an unqualified success. It has helped to check the dropout rate of schoolgirls to a great extent across the state. The dropout rate among the schoolgirls has been very high in Bihar over the years. The girls particularly those from rural areas, often discontinue their studies after the primary or middle schools. Most of them are married at an early stage, which leaves them with fewer contributions towards economic development of society. Nevertheless, dropout rate for girls in the age group of 11 to 14 in Bihar dropped from 17.6% in 2006 to 6% in 2009. All are hopeful that this incentive would go a long way not only in arresting the dropout rate of schoolgirls in the high schools but also be a significant step towards women empowerment. It would bring about a real transformation in the field of girls' education in Bihar.

A remarkable aspect of this project is that this has benefited students from all sections of society. It is a universal scheme; it does not exclude anybody on the basis of caste, creed or economic background. The only eligibility criterion is that the beneficiary should be studying in class VIII and above all in a government run-school. It is true that a society cannot progress unless they are educated. This scheme is a small step in that direction for Bihar as well as for India. Bihar emerges as a vibrant state which truly believes in empowering its women through various ways. Educating girls is one of them.

## **Objective:**

- To identify awareness about MBCY.
- To assess whether the flow of fund in a proper manner.

- To assess whether the fund is being utilized by the beneficiaries as per guideline.
- To assess improvement of girls enrolment and attendance in school.

**Hypothesis:**

- It will boost the morale of the girls and will kindle their spirits and lead to their educational development.
- This project will ultimately contribute to the economic and social welfare of the state.

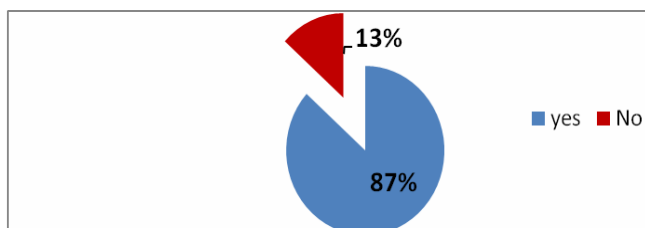
**Methodology:**

The present study was undertaken in three Government schools of Patliputra locality in Patna District to check whether the scheme has been successfully implemented or not. The study is based on primary and secondary data, the primary data was collected by using well prepared interview schedule and the secondary data was obtained from various published and unpublished records, books and journals .60 respondents were selected from these three schools i.e. 20 respondents from each school. On the basis of interview schedule findings have been enumerated. In the end, conclusion and suggestions have been given.

**Findings and Interpretation :**

**(a) Awareness about MBCY:**

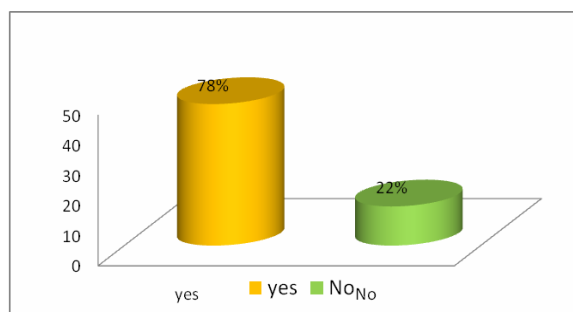
Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	52	87%
No	8	13%
Total	60	100%



**Interpretation:**

Out of 60 respondents, 87% were aware of MBCY and 13% were unaware of MBCY.

**(b) Amount for the bicycle received:**



**Interpretation:**

Out of 60 respondents, 78% received the amount for the bicycle and 22% did not receive.

**(b) Number of days girls attended school before getting the bicycles:**

No. of days	Percentage
Less than 10 days	20%
15 days	22%
20 days	16%
25 days	02%

**Interpretation:**

Out of 60 girls who attended their schools before getting the bicycles, 20% less than 10 days, 22% 15 days, 16% 20 days, and only 2% girls had attended their schools for 25 days. This shows the lower rate of attendance.

**(c) Girls attending school after getting bicycles:**

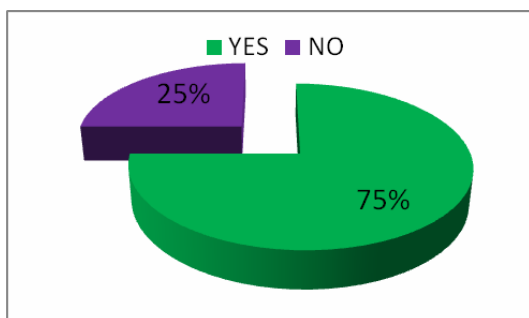
Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	51	85%
No	9	15%
Total	60	100%

**Interpretation:**

Out of 60 respondents, 85% of them attended school regularly after getting bicycles.

**(d) Regarding convenience after getting the bicycle:**

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	45	75%
No	15	25%
Total	60	100%

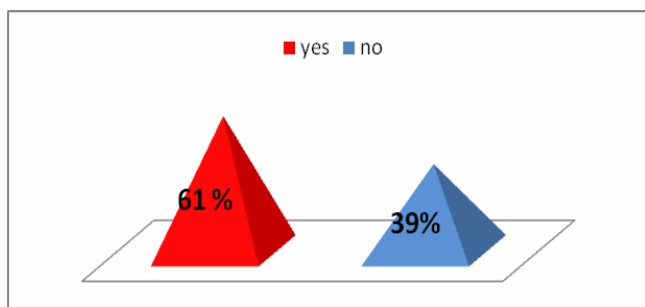


**Interpretation:**

Out of 60 respondents, 75 % answered yes regarding their convenience in coming to school after getting the bicycle and 25 % answered “ No.”

**(e) Utilization of the amount for buying bicycle :**

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	36.5	61%
No	23.5	39%
Total	60	100%

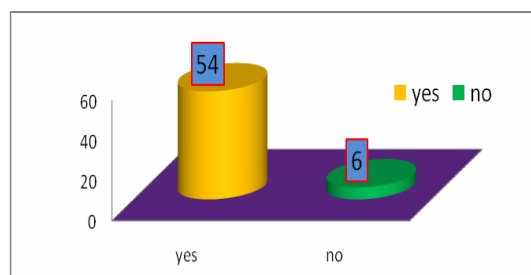


**Interpretation:**

Out of 60 respondents, 61 % utilized the amount for buying the bicycle and 39 % did not utilize the amount.

**(f) Girls thankful to the C.M for introducing MBCY:**

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	54	90%
No	6	10%
Total	60	100%



**Interpretation :**

Out of 60 respondents, 90 % girls are thankful to Mr. Nitish Kumar (C.M. of Bihar) for introducing MBCY and 10 % are not thankful.

**Results and discussions :**

**The results of the study are as follow:**

- The dropout rate has decreased among the school girls.
- They are keener on coming to school for getting proper education
- They have become more confident after getting bicycles.
- They are working towards their future goals and understand the importance of education.
- They are all set to contribute to the Economic, Social and political needs of the State/Country.

**Conclusion of the Study :**

- The project based on the introduction of MBCY in Patna as a unique step for promoting girl child education has come up with fruitful results.

- The introduction of MBCY by our C.M., Shri Nitish Kumar, has paved a new path for the girls of the State who are eager to learn and excel in different fields.
- The figures have clearly shown the changes. Earlier they were reluctant or rather found it difficult to reach their schools on time.
- This scheme needs to be applauded as it has helped the girls of the State who once lagged behind and were suppressed in the society.
- It has uplifted the spirits of the girls and has boosted their confidence to achieve greater heights in every field.

#### **Suggestions / Recommendations :**

As per the survey conducted through the interview schedule for the school authority and the school girls, certain suggestions came out regarding the implementation of MBCY. They are;

- The amount received (Rs.2000/-) is less for buying a bicycle.
- The amount received is not on time. The girls receive the amount late sometimes even at the end of the session.
- Many girls do not utilize it for buying cycle thus it is suggested that the government should provide bicycles only rather than cash.

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