

An Analysis of Impact of the Government Schemes for Women's Education to achieve Sustainable Development.

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ABSTRACT

Education is a fundamental driver of women's empowerment and a critical enabler of sustainable development. In India, the Central Government and the state governments have introduced several educational schemes and initiatives to improve girls' enrolment, retention, literacy, skill development, and access to quality education. This empirical study examines the impact of selected schemes in uplifting the status of women in terms of education. Primary data was collected from a sample of 400 women respondents across selected rural regions of Lucknow district through semi-structured questionnaires and personal interviews. The findings indicate that there is no significant impact of selected schemes in uplifting the status of women in terms of education in U.P.

Keywords: Women's Education, Government Educational Schemes, Sustainable Development, Women Empowerment, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Educational Attainment, Skill Development, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and India.

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INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Development

In the report titled "Our Common Future" (1987), which was compiled by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) and chaired by Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, the phrase "sustainable development" was introduced for the very first time (WCED, 1987). It placed a focus on the necessity of intergenerational justice and defined sustainable development as the process of satisfying existing demands without compromising the capacity of future generations to address their own requirements. While it urged for a comprehensive approach to development, the report highlighted the ways in which economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social equity are interdependent on one another (Roseland, 2000).

In practice, sustainable development involves pursuing integrated economic, social, and environmental objectives that ensure long-term human well-being while preserving natural resources for future generations. Its core priorities include eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities, promoting responsible consumption and production, ensuring environmental sustainability, and combating climate change. These objectives are comprehensively embodied in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, providing a global framework for achieving inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). Each

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is interrelated, necessitating holistic methods that strike a balance across various elements.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are important because they offer a framework that is universal, integrated, and comprehensive for solving the most pressing difficulties that the world is currently facing. These challenges include poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, and climate change (Iyer-Raniga & Vahanvati, 2020). They serve as a worldwide roadmap to achieve sustainable economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection by the year 2030, protecting the environment and ensuring that no one is left behind in the process. Recognising that achievement in one area influences progress in other areas, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) place an emphasis on interconnectedness and foster global collaborations among governments, corporations, and civil society in order to drive change that has a significant impact (Leal Filho et al., 2024). Through the alignment of national policies, the promotion of innovation, and the encouragement of responsible consumption and production, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) strive to design a society that is more egalitarian, resilient, and sustainable for both the current generation and the generations to come (Husainy et al., 2024).

Women's Welfare as Key Component of SDGs

Women's welfare is widely recognized as a key driver of sustainable development because it enhances human capabilities, promotes gender equality, and supports

inclusive economic growth. Research has shown that improvements in women's health, education, economic participation, and social protection contribute not only to individual well-being but also to broader development outcomes across multiple Sustainable Development Goals (Leal Filho et al., 2023; Guthridge et al., 2022). Furthermore, recent empirical evidence indicates that women's empowerment has a significant positive impact on sustainable development in developing countries, highlighting the importance of gender-responsive policies and welfare programmes (Achuo et al., 2025).

Recognizing the critical role of women in national development (Akinwale, 2023), both the Government of India and the state governments have introduced several women-centric welfare schemes to enhance education, health, economic participation, and social security.

Education is instrumental in bridging gender gaps and empowering women economically and socially. In India, the government has introduced comprehensive educational schemes like Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao to improve women's literacy and educational attainment.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

This paper is based on the following objectives:

To understand the present status of women's education in U.P.

To explore the impact of selected schemes in uplifting the status of women in terms of education in U.P.

To assess the deficiencies and the constraints experienced by the beneficiaries under the selected schemes.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For better understanding the different schemes in relation to sustainable development the below mention literature has been reviewed:

Achuo et al. (2025) found that women's empowerment has a significant positive influence on sustainable development in developing countries. The study demonstrates that improving women's welfare enhances economic growth, social inclusion, and overall development, highlighting the importance of gender-responsive policies in achieving sustainable development.

The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Gender Report (2024) evaluates global progress toward achieving SDG 4 and gender equality in education. The report notes that substantial improvements have been made in girls' access to education over the past two decades. However, it also highlights persistent inequalities in digital access, technology use, educational quality, and learning opportunities, particularly among disadvantaged populations. The report recommends strengthening gender-responsive education policies, improving digital inclusion, and increasing investment in girls' education to achieve sustainable development.

The UNICEF Global Annual Results Report (2024) emphasizes that equitable access to quality education is fundamental to improving children's and adolescents' future opportunities. The report highlights that UNICEF's

education programmes contribute not only to SDG 4 (Quality Education) but also to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) by promoting girls' education, reducing educational inequalities, and strengthening learning opportunities in vulnerable communities. It stresses that investing in girls' education enhances human capital, promotes gender equality, and supports long-term sustainable development.

According to Leal Filho et al. (2023), gender equality is an integral component of sustainable development that supports progress across all 17 SDGs. The study highlights that improving women's welfare enhances social inclusion, economic development, and environmental sustainability, making it a key requirement for achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Mishra, Avantika (2023) women's empowerment plays a pivotal role in achieving sustainable development. "By promoting gender equality and providing women with equal access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, societies can experience comprehensive progress". When women are empowered, they contribute significantly to the workforce, enhance family welfare, and drive social change.

Tamuli and Mishra (2023) explored the relationship between women's empowerment, gender equality, and sustainable development in India. Their study emphasized that despite significant policy initiatives, gender disparities remain a major challenge to inclusive development. The authors argued that strengthening women's participation in education, employment, governance, and environmental management through comprehensive policy reforms is crucial for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Guthridge et al. (2022) conducted a systematic review of interventions aimed at promoting gender equality and improving women's well-being. Their findings indicate that comprehensive and evidence-based policies can effectively reduce gender disparities, enhance women's access to education, healthcare, employment, and decision-making opportunities, and strengthen women's welfare, thereby supporting sustainable development.

Singh, Reena (2021) reviewed various government initiatives aimed at promoting women's development in India, with a focus on education, healthcare, and financial assistance. The study found that these schemes have improved women's access to essential services and resources. However, limited awareness, socio-cultural barriers, and prevailing misconceptions continue to restrict the effective utilization of these programmes. The author emphasized the need for stronger awareness campaigns, improved outreach strategies, and capacity-building initiatives to enhance the accessibility and overall effectiveness of government schemes.

Mukhopadhyay, Mitra, Javadekar, and Mishra (2024) examined the educational impact of the *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* campaign using empirical evidence from India. The study found that the programme had a positive effect on girls' learning time and educational engagement, although its impact on broader educational outcomes and learning achievement remained limited. The authors

suggested that awareness campaigns should be complemented with improvements in educational infrastructure and institutional support to produce sustained gains in girls' education.

Hoque and Chalil (2024) critically assessed the *Samagra Shiksha* programme and observed that it has significantly improved access to inclusive and equitable education by strengthening school infrastructure, teacher training, and curriculum development. However, the study identified persistent challenges related to resource allocation, teacher preparedness, and community participation, which continue to affect the quality of education. The authors concluded that sustained investment and effective implementation are essential for achieving SDG 4 and promoting educational equity in India.

Kumar, G. (2023) evaluated the *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* (BBBP) programme and found that it has contributed to increasing public awareness regarding the value of the girl child and the importance of girls' education. The study acknowledged that the programme has promoted positive social attitudes toward gender equality; however, it also highlighted implementation challenges, regional disparities, and the need for stronger monitoring and policy coordination to achieve sustained improvements in women's education and empowerment.

In their study, (Kumari, P., n.d.) looked at how Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) helped increase female literacy and decrease the gender gap in school enrolment. They found that while the program worked well in cities, it encountered problems in rural areas because of cultural and social obstacles.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology opted for the research:

Research Design

The study adopts a **descriptive and analytical research design** to examine the effectiveness of government schemes for women's education and their contribution to sustainable development in the Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh. The descriptive component of the study focuses on understanding the level of awareness, accessibility, utilization, and implementation of selected government schemes among women beneficiaries.

The analytical component of the study evaluates the impact of the selected government schemes on women's educational attainment and empowerment. In addition, the study identifies the major challenges faced by beneficiaries in accessing and utilizing these schemes.

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the research problem, the study employs a **mixed-methods approach**, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative data are collected through semi-structured questionnaire administered to women beneficiaries and analysed using appropriate statistical techniques. Qualitative information is obtained through personal interactions and respondents' opinions to gain deeper insights into the implementation process and challenges associated with the schemes. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data enhances the

reliability, validity, and comprehensiveness of the research findings.

Samples in the Study

Data collection was done in Lucknow district's two blocks (Malihabad Block and Mall Block) and from each block two villages (Bhadeshar Mau and Hamirapur Villages from Malihabad Block, Nabi Panah and Saleh Nagar from Mall Block) were selected.

Sampling Technique

In this study, the sampling technique employed is "Convenience Sampling, which falls under the category of non-probability sampling methods". Convenience sampling is chosen primarily due to the practical considerations associated with data collection within the Lucknow region. This method is effective for gathering data from readily accessible and willing participants.

Sample Size

The sample size was calculated by the Cochran formula, which is widely used when the population size is large or unknown.

Sample Size: $n_0 = ((1.96)^2 * 0.34 * 0.66) / (.05)^2 = 344.8$

Therefore, a sample size of 400 (100 respondents from each village) was chosen in order to increase the representativeness of samples and minimize the error in the analysis.

Sampling Units:

The study was conducted in four villages within two blocks of Lucknow district:

1. Malihabad Block:	2. Mall Block:
Village 1: Bhadeshar Mau (100 respondents)	Village 3: Nabi Panah (100 respondents)
Village 2: Hamirapur (100 respondents)	Village 4: Saleh Nagar (100 respondents)

Data Collection

Primary Data Collection: The primary data has been collected through semi-structured questionnaires and personal interviews with selected respondents.

Secondary Data: The secondary data has been collected from the government reports, policy documents and published literature related to the selected schemes. The data is also gathered from national and international conference papers. The relevant studies are summarized under the review of related literature section.

Hypothesis Development

For the testing of the hypothesis on Women's education the following two schemes are selected:

Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

The Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, launched in 2018, is an integrated scheme that amalgamates the previous Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), and Teacher Education (TE) schemes. It aims to provide quality education from preschool to senior secondary levels. The scheme focuses on improving school infrastructure, promoting digital education, and supporting girls' education through initiatives like the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas. The scheme's holistic approach ensures inclusive education, targeting marginalized girls and reducing dropout rates. By integrating digital literacy and vocational training into the curriculum, Samagra Shiksha has fostered skill development, making education more relevant to employment needs (Teichler & Kehm, 1995).

The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme was launched by the government of India in 2015 in response to the alarming decline in the Child Sex Ratio, particularly highlighted in the 2011 census. The scheme aims to address gender-based disparities by preventing female foeticide, ensuring the survival and protection of the girl child, and promoting her education. The BBBP scheme has brought national attention to gender disparities and encouraged positive discourse around girl's education but its effectiveness has been limited by centralization and the need for local action (Garg, T., 2022).

The following hypothesis has been constructed for the analysis:

Null Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant impact of selected schemes in uplifting the status of women in terms of education in U.P.

Alternate Hypothesis

H₁₁: There is a significant impact of selected schemes in uplifting the status of women in terms of education in U.P.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The collected data will be analysed using relevant statistical and analytical tools to determine the role of the selected schemes. The study will employ:

Graphs and Tables: for presentation of data.

Mean, Median, Mode and Standard Deviation: for describing the data.

Correlation Analysis: To measure the degree of relation between government schemes and women welfare, education, health and employment status.

Regression Analysis: To identify the cause-and-effect relationships between scheme implementation and its impact on women welfare, education, health and employment status.

ANOVA (Analysis of Variance): To compare the means of different aspects of scheme implementation and their outcomes.

V. Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis of data collected from the respondents for assessing the impact of selected schemes on education has been divided into following sections:

Number of Beneficiaries under each selected scheme

The Table 1.1 shows the number of beneficiaries for each selected scheme under education.

Table 1.1 Number of Beneficiaries

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	BBBP	139	34.75	34.75	34.75
	None	184	46.00	46.00	80.75
	SSA	77	19.25	19.25	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

The above data has also been depicted in the form of a Bar Chart and a Pie Diagram. The Figure 1.1 shows the number of beneficiaries under each selected scheme in the form of a Bar Chart.

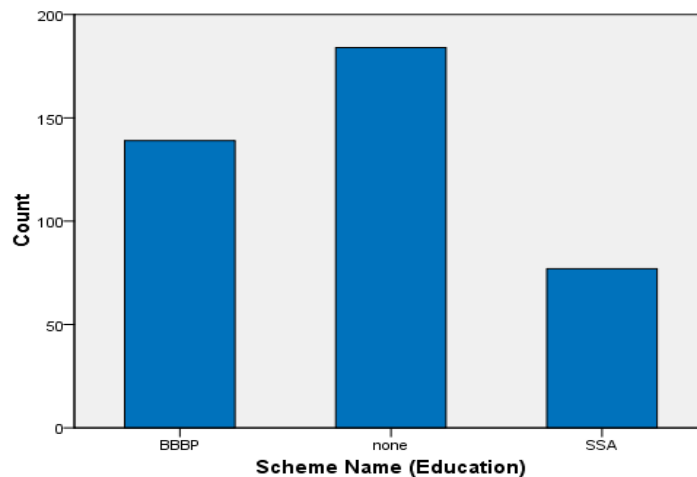


Figure 1.1 Beneficiaries of SSA and BBBP

The Figure 1.2 shows the number of beneficiaries under each selected scheme in the form of a Pie Diagram.

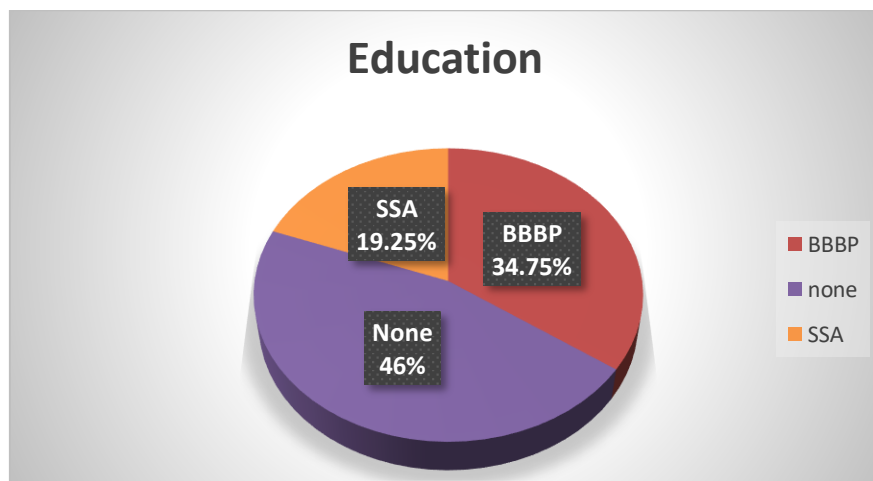


Figure 1.2 Beneficiaries of SSA and BBBP

Correlation

The Correlation has been calculated between the dependent variables (impact on beneficiary, effectiveness and accessibility of the education related schemes) and independent variables (demographic factors i.e. age, educational qualification and employment status of the beneficiaries). The Table 1.2 shows the correlation matrix of the hypothesis.

Table 1.2 Correlation Matrix

Correlations				
		Impact on Beneficiary (Education)	Effectiveness of the scheme (Education)	Accessibility Rating Women's Education
Age	Pearson Correlation	.015	-.005	.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.763	.921	.846
Educational Qualification	Pearson Correlation	.044	-.078	-.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.380	.119	.987
Employment Status	Pearson Correlation	-.015	-.050	.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.762	.319	.849

Listwise N=400

The Table 1.2 represents the correlational matrix of the relationship between demographic details which are independent variables i.e. age, education qualification and employment status and dependent variables which are impact on beneficiary, effectiveness and accessibility of the education related schemes. The obtained results indicate that, no significant correlation exists between IVs (demographic details) and DVs (impact, effectiveness and accessibility of the education related schemes).

Result

The Correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) for all the variables. Hence, with due consideration to this empirical analysis the null hypothesis H_{01} i.e. There is no significant impact of selected schemes in uplifting the status of women in terms of education in U.P is accepted and alternate hypothesis H_{11} i.e. There is a significant impact of selected schemes in uplifting the status of women in terms of education in U.P is rejected.

4.3.4 Constraints and Deficiencies:

The education related schemes have not been successfully utilized because of many factors conferred by the respondents. The following constraints were shared by the beneficiaries:

Socio-economic limitations,

Mismatch between language and curriculum,

Poor awareness,

Bureaucratic inefficiency and

Financial burden on them.

CONCLUSION

Gender equality and women's empowerment are essential for social progress, economic growth, and sustainable development. Education is a key driver of gender equality. The findings of this study show that there is no significant impact of selected schemes in uplifting the status of women in terms of education in U.P.

Although the government has introduced several initiatives to promote women's education, their overall effectiveness remains limited due to various implementation and accessibility challenges. The beneficiaries identified several major constraints, including socio-economic limitations, inadequate awareness of government schemes, a mismatch between the language of instruction and the curriculum, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and the financial burden associated with education. These challenges reduce beneficiaries' ability to access, utilize, and fully benefit from the available schemes.

To enhance the effectiveness of these programmes, policymakers should focus on strengthening implementation mechanisms and improving service delivery. Comprehensive awareness campaigns should be organized through schools, colleges, community organizations, and digital platforms to ensure that eligible women are informed about the available schemes and their benefits. Administrative procedures should be

simplified by reducing unnecessary documentation, introducing transparent digital application systems, and ensuring timely processing of applications. Educational institutions should provide language support, bridge courses, and academic counselling to address language-related barriers and improve learning outcomes. In addition, greater financial assistance in the form of scholarships, transport allowances, digital learning support, and reimbursement of educational expenses should be provided to reduce the financial burden on economically disadvantaged women. Regular monitoring, periodic evaluation, and active involvement of local administration, educational institutions, and community organizations are also essential to improve programme implementation and accountability.

Overall, government schemes for women's education have considerable potential to promote gender equality and contribute to sustainable development. However, achieving these objectives requires not only the formulation of effective policies but also their efficient implementation, continuous monitoring, and equitable access. Addressing the identified barriers will enhance the effectiveness of these schemes, improve women's educational attainment and empowerment, and contribute significantly to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality) in India..

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