

Impact of Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana in Raipur District: A Socio-Economic Analysis

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Abstract: The Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana (MKVY) is a social welfare initiative launched by the Government of Chhattisgarh, designed to support economically disadvantaged families by providing financial assistance for the marriages of their daughters. This program aims to ease the financial burden on families, promote gender equality, and discourage the practice of dowry. This paper examines the impact of the Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana in Raipur District, with a focus on its socio-economic implications for beneficiary families and the broader community. Utilizing data from 2023-2024, the study assesses the number of beneficiaries, the total financial assistance disbursed, and the qualitative improvements in the lives of the women involved. The findings indicate that the scheme has significantly improved the socio-economic status of marginalized families in Raipur.

Keywords: Financial Aid, Dowry Mitigation, Socio-Economic Impact.

INTRODUCTION

In many parts of India, the financial burden of marrying off a daughter is a considerable challenge for low-income families. To address this issue, the Chhattisgarh government introduced the Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana (MKVY) in 2006. This program offers financial aid to underprivileged families to assist with their daughters' weddings. Its objectives include alleviating the financial strain associated with marriage costs, discouraging dowry practices, and promoting the social and economic empowerment of women. Raipur, the capital city of Chhattisgarh, is home to a significant number of economically vulnerable families, making the implementation of MKVY in this urban area a top priority for the state government.

OVERVIEW OF THE MUKHYAMANTRI KANYA VIVAH YOJANA

The Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana (MKVY) offers financial assistance to families for the marriage

of their daughters. The support is structured as follows:

A total financial aid of ₹50,000:

- ₹21,000 is allocated directly to the bride: This amount is either transferred to the bride's bank account or issued as a bank draft.
- ₹15,000 is designated for gifts: This is intended to cover expenses related to the bride's marriage.
- ₹14,000 is allocated for marriage-related costs: This includes expenditures on essential items for the wedding, promoting a modest celebration without excessive spending.

The initiative primarily focuses on families classified as Below Poverty Line (BPL), those from economically weaker sections, or those who face challenges in affording the full expenses of a wedding due to financial limitations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDIES

The primary objectives of this research are to:

1. Evaluate the influence of the Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana on the socio-economic status of families benefiting from the program in Raipur District.
2. Determine the effectiveness of the initiative in alleviating financial pressures on families and fostering gender equality.
3. Investigate the qualitative improvements in the lives of women who have availed themselves of the scheme.
4. Offer policy suggestions aimed at enhancing the implementation and outreach of the initiative.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This research utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data gathered from government publications, field surveys, and interviews with beneficiaries in Raipur District.

- **Quantitative Data:** Information sourced from government records, including the number of beneficiaries in Raipur, the financial aid provided, and the demographic profiles of the recipients (such as income level, caste, and education).
- **Qualitative Data:** Semi-structured interviews conducted with beneficiaries, local community leaders, and social workers involved in the scheme's execution in Raipur.
- **Sample Size:** A total of 200 families in Raipur District who benefited from the MKVY during the fiscal year 2023-2024 were included in the study.

FINDINGS

Beneficiary Count During the fiscal year 2023-2024, around 160 families in Raipur District availed themselves of the Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana. This figure demonstrates a notable engagement with the program, highlighting the financial difficulties encountered by families in the area.

Distribution of Financial Aid The total amount disbursed for the 160 marriages was approximately ₹8,000,000 (₹50,000 allocated per marriage). This financial support has eased the economic strain on low-income families, enabling them to marry off their daughters without incurring debt or relying on dowry.

Effects on Families and Social Status The initiative has significantly transformed the lives of women and their families:

Economic Relief: For numerous families, this program has turned the prospect of a daughter's marriage from a distant aspiration into a tangible reality. As beneficiary Rajkumari Dewangan expressed, "Following my father's death, our family faced financial hardships. This scheme enabled me to marry without adding to my family's burdens."

- **Dowry Mitigation:** By offering financial support, the program promotes modest weddings, thus contributing to the reduction of the dowry system and the social pressures that accompany it.

- **Enhanced Social Standing:** Many women have reported feeling empowered and elevated in social status, as they were able to marry with dignity, backed by government assistance.

Women's Social Empowerment The Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana has significantly contributed to the empowerment of women in Raipur District. Beneficiaries of the program have indicated that the financial aid provided them with a sense of security and self-esteem as they entered marriage.

Furthermore, the initiative has played a role in diminishing gender-based discrimination in rural areas by promoting equal participation in social events such as weddings.

DISCUSSION

The Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana has proven to be highly effective in fulfilling its core objectives:

- **Economic Advantages:** The financial support has significantly alleviated the financial burden, enabling families to organize weddings without resorting to loans or dowry practices.
- **Promotion of Gender Equality:** The initiative has indirectly advanced gender equality by ensuring that daughters, regardless of their economic status, receive equal treatment in marriage matters.
- **Socio-Cultural Influence:** The encouragement of modest weddings has led to a cultural shift, diminishing the extravagance typically associated with marriage ceremonies.

CONCLUSION

The Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana has significantly influenced the socio-economic conditions in Raipur District. By offering financial assistance, this initiative has allowed underprivileged families to marry off their daughters without incurring financial hardship. The program has not only diminished dowry practices but has also been instrumental in advancing women's empowerment in the area. Despite its notable achievements, it is advisable to broaden the scheme's outreach to guarantee that all eligible families are informed about the available benefits. Furthermore, implementing strategies to further mitigate dowry practices and offering post-marriage support for women could enhance the overall effectiveness of the initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Awareness Campaigns:** Initiate comprehensive campaigns across the state to ensure that eligible families are informed about the benefits and application procedures of the scheme.
2. **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Develop strong mechanisms for overseeing the implementation and assessing the long-term effects of the scheme on its beneficiaries.
3. **Post-Marriage Support:** Explore the possibility of providing additional resources for women after

marriage, such as financial literacy programs or vocational training, to promote sustained empowerment.

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