KNOWLEDGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

Knowledge Partnership Programme

Policy Brief

Residential Schooling Strategies: Impact on Girl's Education and Empowerment

Centre for Budget and Policy Studies

Submitted to

Department for International Development (DFID)

IPE Global (P) Ltd.

February 2015

Residential Schools for Girls in India: Review of the Policy and Practise

Photo Credit: Siddharth Lunia

Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (CBPS)
Bangalore
February 2015

POLICY BRIEF: RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS IN INDIA: A REVIEW OF THE POLICY AND PRACTISE

Photos from Site visits: CBPS

A. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLING FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT: THE MISSING LINKS

1. The Context

Several residential schooling strategies exist for girls in the publicly funded school system in India but there is no definite policy on residential schooling in general or for girls in particular. The information on the performance of these schemes / programmes / initiatives remains uneven, isolated and sporadic. A good number also exist in private sector catering to both girls and boys, and information about them is even more limited. It is in this context that this study based on review of literature and documents coupled with some validation visits to a few sites and consultations with key stakeholders plays an important role in providing several key pointers for policy.

2. Mapping of the schemes

There are basically four types of residential set-ups in the country: (i) Formal Schools, (ii) Hostels attached to formal schools, (iii) Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP), and (iv) the Bridge courses. The study focussed on formal schools and ALPs, and did not delve deep into hostels or the bridge courses. A number of hostel schemes exist with fund support from both union and state governments and meant largely exclusively for Scheduled Tribe (ST) or Scheduled caste (SC) students, but the information available on their functioning is almost non-existent. Bridge courses are short term interventions and hence though important links for schooling, they themselves are not means for sustained education, and therefore excluded from inquiry. ALPs are included for their specific

contribution to the conceptualisation of residential schools as space for embedding girls' education and empowerment with an emphasis on building collective identity, and strengthening individual capabilities and aspirations using shared living and learning experiences as an important means for that purpose.

Major schemes funded by the union government include Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNV) and Kasturba Gandhi Ballika Vidyalaya (KGBV) funded mainly by Ministry of Human Resource Development, and Ashram Schools (AS) and Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) funded by Ministry of Tribal Affairs. In addition, both union and a number of state governments have grants-in-aid schemes to support exclusive schools for ST or SC children known generally as ashram schools. Several other non-fee-charging residential schools source their funding from development / philanthropic sources.

Barring some isolated small initiatives, Mahila Samakhya run Mahila Shikshan Kendras (MSK) started as part of Mahila Samakhya (MS) under the Ministry of Human Resources Development, with presence in a number of states, can be termed as one of the first major accelerated learning programme (ALP) that focussed on women / girls keeping the gender concerns as the central theme. This and other similar programmes such as Lok Jhumbish's Balika Shikshan Shivirs in Rajasthan, M.V.Foundation's residential bridge courses for girls in Andhra Pradesh, and Udaan - a CARE-India initiative for out of school girls

in the age group 9-14 years, has been the major models that informed the design of KGBV, which started in 2004-05 as a pan Indian residential scheme for upper primary schooling of girls. KGBV, meant for educationally backward, low-female-literacy blocks is perceived as a major policy response to the issue of girls' dropout after primary education.

As against KGBV, the genesis of JNV, started during 1980s, can be traced to the high-fee-charging residential schools catering to both boys and girls from elite sections of the society modelled after British boarding schools of the colonial era. The policy goal was to provide the same opportunity for excellence to rural boys and girls by opening one well-endowed residential school to each district in the country. EMRS is also modelled after JNV though located in tribal areas. Structured after some similar initiatives and the oldest of all, the ashram school model was adopted as a policy soon after independence, to promote formal schooling among Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). The rationales were both economic: covering living as well as accessing costs, and social: taking children away from their contexts which were not conducive to meet the demands of formal schooling per se.

3. The Reach

DISE, the Indian national database for elementary level suggests that with girls' enrolment being nearly 28 lakhs in 2013-14, residential schools now cover about 2.8 to 3 per cent of total girls' enrolment at elementary level in the country.

*Girls' enrolment through major residential school schemes (2012-13)*

Scheme/ Initiative	Total enrolment	Girls enrolment	Grades usually covered
KGBV	3,49,037	3,49,037	VI to VIII
Ashram	12,68,898	6,47,138	III to X
JNV	2,24,659	83,951	VI to XII
Sources: National Evaluation of KGBV, GoI, 2013; DISE 2012-13 for Ashram; 2012; http://www.nvshq.org/; Annual Report, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2013-2014			

Framework for Review and Analysis

Criterion	Indicators for the criteria
Reaching girls from marginalised sections	a. Representation (e.g. SC, ST, Muslim, OBC, other forms of disadvantage, i.e., working children, married early, etc.) b. Identification, Enrollment / Selection processes of students
Management	a. Basic infrastructure and opportunities for living, dining, bathing, studying, play/sports and leisure b. Security and safety aspects c. Management practices in tandem with teaching learning approach
Curriculum/ Teaching Learning	a. Emphasis on empowerment b. Methods used for teaching-learning and evaluation (classroom and outside classroom) c. Use of residential space for increasing the time and enhancing the variety in learning experiences d. Teacher selection process, profile and development process
Influence	a. Policy (whether the programme/ scheme has influenced wider policy) b. Construct of education for adolescent girls (whether the programme has influenced curriculum design and delivery, especially for girls) in any particular context c. Targeting and reach (whether the programme has reached a large number or/and most marginalised girls) d. Transforming influence on girls, families, communities (continuing further education, postponing marriage, questioning injustice in various forms and so on)
Cost effectiveness	a. The application of cost effectiveness technique is not possible but an analysis of costs / expenditure vis-à-vis delivery has been attempted.

More than half of the girls in residential schools are enrolled in schools run by the education and social/tribal welfare departments. Ashram schools are the biggest providers of residential schooling among publicly funded residential schools with private sector emerging as a major player at both elementary and secondary levels. Girls form about 51 per cent of total enrolment in Ashram schools, and 37 per cent of total enrolment in JNVs. The proportion of girls served through residential schools at elementary level is the highest for Odisha (10.92%) followed by Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra (between 3 & 5%). The number of residential madrasas and enrolment is high in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and girls are enrolled in significant numbers in these institutions. However, the hardly any information is available for madrasas in the public domain. The information base is extremely poor for private sector as well, and so is the case for state funded residential schools.
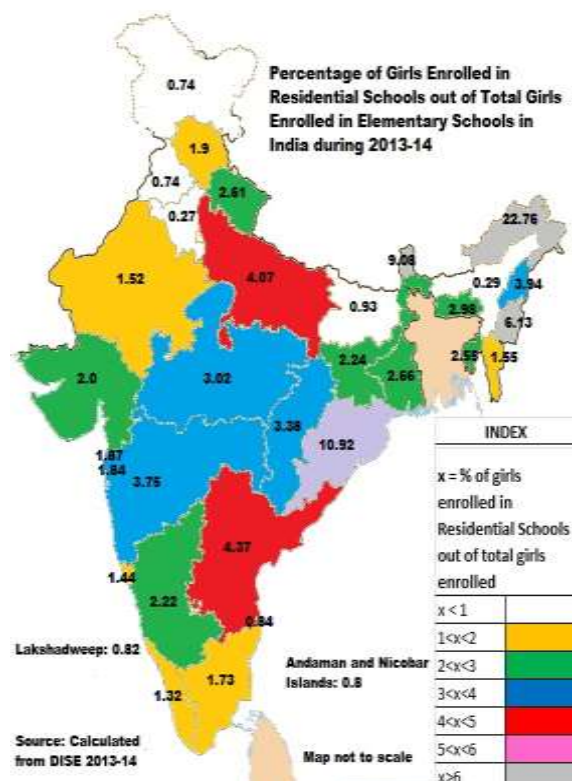
The representation of educationally backward communities: SC, ST and OBCs is high in KGBVs, the representation of another educationally backward group, Muslim at 7.5 per cent of total enrolment, is not high and remains an area of concern. Another area of concern is that though the girls are coming from these educationally backward communities, they are not necessarily from the most deprived sections. The incidences of artificially creating a 'dropout' situation by deliberately forcing the girl to stay away from schooling to be eligible for KGBV, has apparently been high and common.[1]

Ashram schools by definition are meant for adivasi and dalit children, and hence the girls in these schools are assumed to be from these communities.[2] We do not know what percentage of girls in JNV comes from SC, ST or Muslim communities.

Percentage of Girls Enrolled in Residential Schools out of Total Girls Enrolled in Elementary Schools in India during 2013-14

INDEX

x = % of girls enrolled in Residential Schools out of total girls enrolled

x < 1	
1<x<2	
2<x<3	
3<x<4	
4<x<5	
5<x<6	
x>6	

Lakshadweep: 0.82

Andaman and Nicobar Islands: 0.8

Source: Calculated from DISE 2013-14

Map not to scale

4. Physical, social and emotional environment

A residential or boarding school is different from other schools as an educational institution in that the students here not only study but also live together. The act of living together beyond classroom hours has significant implications for management, living environment, relationships and learning.

Physical Infrastructure and facilities

JNV and EMRS with much greater financial allocations for physical infrastructure and other facilities, have better norms than KGBV and Ashram Schools. However, it is not necessary that these norms translate themselves into reality, and even when complied with, these do not necessarily translate themselves into creating an enabling environment for girls.

Although no formal evaluation is available, the JNVs by and large seem to follow the norms in most places, as suggested by most of the key informants interviewed. Same is not true for Ashram schools. Most

---

[1] Evaluation studies, Review mission reports, consultations and site visits – all pointed towards this being widely in practise.
[2] DISE raw data shows a good number in ashram schools coming from non-SC/ST/OBC backgrounds. This needs further examination and clarification.

evaluations undertaken in different states at various time periods, as well as the Parliamentary committee have raised the issue of poor provisioning and maintenance. Wide variations exist in norms and conditions for ashrams supported by both state and union governments.

Infrastructure and facilities norms

Norms	KGBV	JNV	ERMS	AS
Boundary Wall	√	√	√	√
Drinking Water	√	√	√	√
Electric Installation	√	√	√	√
Uniform		√	√	
Library (Books & TLM)	√	√	√	√
School Bag		√		
Bedding	√	√		√
Teachers resource room		√	√	
Laboratories		√	√	
Recreation Room		√	√	
Sick Room		√	√	
Housing for teachers and warden		√	√	
Dormitories		√	√	
Warden Office		√	√	
Kitchen with storage	√	√	√	√
Rainwater harvesting		√	√	
Reliable sewage system			√	
Accessible infrastructure			√	

Source: Compiled from different schemes/programme documents

Maintenance is also reported to be poor in case of KGBVs in many cases. A good number do not fulfil the Right to Education (RTE) norms. Addition of hostels for girls in grades IX and X to KGBV hostels in many states either under RMSA or as the state initiative without commensurate funding provisions has also adversely affected the ratio of facilities to users in KGBVs. This was reported by the KGBV evaluation (GOI 2013) and confirmed in site visits. One good practice observed was the use of solar lighting facility in in the KGBV in Bodhgaya (Bihar) and the provision for solar lamps to girls for studying in the night in the KGBVs in Jharkhand. Wide variations exist in terms of space, infrastructure and access to facilities in the NGO run programmes.

Libraries are present but rarely upgraded and used barring a few exceptions seen in some NGO run schools.

Food, health and nutrition
JNVs and KGBVs appear to be more regular in organizing periodic health checks and taking remedial steps. Site visits confirmed that most schools maintained a first aid kit, maintained a set of medicines used in common cold and fever, and had some system of having a doctor on call. This was true for schools in both State and non-State sectors, and for both the types: those running full time schools and those imparting accelerated learning courses, including JNVs, KGBVs and MSKs. In contrast, health of students has emerged as a major concern in Ashram Schools.

Although food is always identified as an important reason for liking their schools; indicating that they come from backgrounds where they do not have access to adequate food on a regular basis, both the quantity and quality of food emerge as an issue in Ashram schools; and to an extent also in KGBVs and MSKs. The access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities is poor in most cases.

Safety and Security
A number of shocking incidents related to girls' safety and security have been reported in the context of Ashram schools. JNV is the only system with the presence of a safety protocol but in absence of any evaluation, it is difficult to comment on the real practice. The absence of clear protocol and lack of adequate stress on ensuring the importance of safety and security has resulted in poor provisioning in most cases. The concern for safety and security in JNV has resulted in strong disciplining rather than creating a system where suitable safety measures are coupled with positive problem solving approach. The situation is varied in KGBVs. To an extent this enabling approach is visible in some isolated cases of ALPs, but has rarely been institutionalised. Teacher training in Udaan, the CARE supported ALP, is reported to have combined the counselling aspects in teach

training in a manner that it helps in resolving adolescence issues as well as managing the safety and security.

Day to day living and relationships

Residential schools were advocated for the most marginalised girls for 'the possibility and potential for providing diverse learning opportunities, having fun with the peer group and experiences of joy and excitement to counter the experiences of disadvantaged lives and opening up avenues for aspirations, dreams and resolves'. The literature suggests that KGBVs and NGO-led initiatives are relatively better in having management practices in a manner that learning becomes integrated to the whole living experiences as compared to Ashram schools where the management is reported to be poor. In general, the atmosphere in JNV is too discipline focused to allow for any spontaneous teacher-child relationship to flourish.

All schools follow a routine of combining classes, additional study time, sports and exercises, but the evidences indicate towards complete lack of any free time in JNV leading to stress and fatigue among students. On the other hand, the girls in KGBVs, in general, are reported to be much more at ease with the daily routine and enjoy their stay. This is despite that fact that KGBVs have also turned most of the tools, such as self-defence training or children's parliament borrowed from MSK and other similar experiences into a routine exercise. Instances of clear discrimination in assigning cleaning tasks to dalit girls have also been reported in some cases. However, in spite of these limitations, living together with peer has resulted in strong bonding and contributed in building their self-confidence and aspirations for future.

The issue of relationships is also important to examine from the perspective of the debate on whether residential schooling is desirable at a young age. This is especially significant for ashram schools that start at grade 1 or 3 in most cases as overwhelming evidence exist to show that it is better for children at a very early age to stay with their parents. There is not much evidence but the presence of negative feedback on the presence of an enabling emotional environment in Ashram schools is a cause of worry.

Teacher related Issues

Heavy workload coupled with anxiety for their children's education, low salaries and unstable jobs are common for contract teachers in KGBV. Though the situations vary from state to state; the range was Rs.6000-17000 per month in Bihar, Jharkhand and Rajasthan (states where site visits were made). Rajasthan also places two regular teachers in all schools and their monthly salary was higher at Rs.27000. The salary differential in the same school with hardly any difference in workload adversely impacts the inter-teacher relationship. Teachers' salaries are low in the NGO sector as well; the monthly salary ranging from Rs.6000-25000 was reported. The range in Ashram school in Andhra Pradesh was reported to be Rs.14000-40000 and that for JNV in Karnataka to be Rs.40000-55000 per month. JNV also allows teachers' children to be admitted there without any screening.

Barring some exceptions made for short term, all teachers in JNV are permanent whereas the situation is varies from state to state, and depending upon how and through what source it is funded when it comes to Ashram schools. While all teachers are permanent in some cases, the studies have reported presence of temporary teachers in large number in many states. Barring a few exceptions, majority of the teachers in KGBVs are on contract. This indicates towards feminisation of low-paid, contract jobs that offer almost no protection. Some evidence of differential salary for teachers teaching Mathematics and English was also noticed signifying privileging of these subjects.

5. Learning and empowerment of girls

The evidence on the exact impact of residential schools on girls' learning and empowerment is thin, especially when it comes to large, publicly funded schemes. Sporadic evidence that is available indicates towards an uneven situation. The evidence

base is stronger for accelerated learning programmes such as MSK and Udaan and the impact on both cognitive and psycho-social empowerment have been found to be strong. Use of multiple texts and methods, coupled with strong focus on (i) creating opportunities for discussions, music, dance, excursions and theatre, and (ii) feminist ideology, have helped in creating alternative socialisation experiences for these girls. The impact on the change in attitude towards marriage, and on building aspirations for a different kind of life has also been recoded. The feedback is mixed when it comes to academic performance; there are indications that content teaching at post primary levels suffer in such institutions probably because the teachers are not as qualified and professionally trained.

KGBV evolved out of success of ALPs but the curricular and transactional practices do not come across as, as intense and clearly defined as they are for the ALPs. There is no major difference between MS run and SSA run KGBVs except that the focus on developing an alternative gender image is slightly more visible in the former. Though KGBVs have often been credited with being better than average public school in terms of girls learning and empowerment levels, a number of practices are in fact clichéd or even reinforcing the prevalent gender images rather than questioning those. The choice of vocational courses such as tailoring and beautician's without any reference to or discussion on the issues of feminisation and objectification of women to make the girls aware of these issues is one such example. Research studies have also highlighted the lack of academic rigour in KGBVs. Considering that large scale initiatives are far more rigid and lack creativity visible in small scale programmes, it can be safely concluded that it general, scaling up makes the approaches rigid and diffuses focus.

There is no systematic study available on asserting learning and empowerment levels of girls in Ashram schools (whether run by government or non-government agencies) and JNV. However, the very design and provisioning of JNV focuses on academic excellence and therefore, the focus on academic performance is very high. A perusal of practices in JNV suggests a lack of focus on gender issues and hence a conscious use of residential setting to provide an alternative socialisation seems to be absent there.

Some international evidences indicate that single sex schooling experiences have potential for developing collective identity and gender images in the case of both boys and girls but it can go either way depending on the curricular and transactional focus: either reinforce or counter the prevalent gender practices. The ALPs and KGBV are also conceptualised around the idea of using the single sex space to develop a common identity and have been successful to varying extent in questioning the existing gender relations. A school need not be single-sex; single-sex opportunities can be created even in co-educational schools but absence of any gender focus seems to have prevented any such effort or engagement in Ashram Shalas, JNV or other NGO run co-educational schools. Instead, a string focus on the need to maintain discipline has resulted into forced separation of boys and girls in these schools where they are often disallowed even to talk and become friends. The issues related to gender, sexuality and interpersonal relations remain either unaddressed or are handled only with the punitive disciplining approach.

6. Cost Norms and Expenditure Patterns

The funding norms and provisions for different publicly funded residential schooling schemes are very different from each other, the norms being much better for JNV and EMRS as compared to Ashram or KGBV. While JNV and EMRS are viewed as a strategy for promoting 'excellence' among rural or tribal children respectively, Ashram and KGBVs are perceived more as fulfilling the 'equity' commitment of providing schooling to the disadvantaged: girls, dalits and adivasis.

Per Student Expenditure for selected residential schooling schemes: A rough estimate*

	Per student annual expenditure (Rs.)
JNV(2011-12)	70,033.25
KGBV (2012-13)	13,603.87
Udaan (2013-14)	26,851.00

*estimated by dividing the annual reported expenditure by the number of students in the same year.

Source:
http://www.nvshq.org/display_page.php?page=Budgetper_cent20andper_cent20Accounts;_30.06.2014, National Evaluation of KGBVs (GoI 2013), CARE UP Udaan Budget for Udaan expenses.

JNV has often been termed as the school for rural elite, and the State obviously spends more for them: rough estimates suggest that per- student expenditure in JNV is more than five times higher than that of KGBV. The presence of differential norms confirms that there is no appreciation for equity and excellence goals to be embedded into each other.

High expenditure in JNV is primarily due to higher expenditure on almost all heads: more qualified and better paid teachers, better facilities, and higher allocations for food, sports, medical and co-curricular activities. The provisions for certain aspects such as excursions and travel, something that can enhance the learning experiences, are absent in Ashram and KGBV. Budget norms for food, medical and other basic necessities are also lower in KGBV and Ashram schools. KGBV includes allocations for vocational training that JNV does not. The emphasis on vocational is welcome if it helps in making the girls more self-reliant and independent but not if it comes at the cost of academic rigour, and reinforces gender stereotypical images.

The public policy choice between residential and non-residential is to be determined by the established or potential cost-effectiveness estimates. Available evidences indicate that it is an effective strategy for reaching girls in deprived situations for a variety of reasons:

compensating the living and schooling costs, safer environment as it avoids travel to school and risks therein, potential for greater attention to studies by making her free from household chores and the possibility of creating experiences that leads to an alternative socialisation. However, a lot depends on how the whole residential school has been conceptualised and implemented; in itself does not ensure much except for some cost advantage for the household. Therefore, it is important to ensure that residential school strategy in its design, conceptualization and provisioning is actually geared towards this transformational goal.

Though the very act of living and learning together along with exposures to rigorous academic environment and access to facilities for sports, science and music made possible by higher allocations and better norms helps students achieve their schooling goals, the full potential of JNV into translating itself into an empowering experience for all girls and boys has not been realised. This is because the curriculum as well as the entire design for residential set up has not been designed with any consideration for transformative and gender-responsive aspects in JNV. On the other hand, the KGBV has been designed with these considerations but in absence of resources and focussed monitoring, these goals are not realised fully; lack of resources makes even the academic aspect weak in the KGBV. Ashram schools in most cases lack both: it neither has the academic rigour nor a focus on transformation. The experiments such as Udaan, though not as well-resourced as JNV, have tried to embed academic rigour to a transformative approach of schooling, and succeeded to an extent though the limitations exist on academic front. The resource allocations in Udaan and other examples from NGO sector such as VTLC includes provisions for follow up activities with those who have passed out, and hence continues being supportive for further education and other initiatives

B. LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCES: SOME GOOD PRACTICES AND EMERGENT PRINCIPLES

1. Reach: How to overcome 'elite capture'

Considering that residential schools are relatively high-cost exercises, especially in a situation where the differences between day-schools and residential schools are wide, and the demand for alternative allocations within the school sector is also high, it becomes imperative to ensure that residential schools are reaching the most needy and deserving. Some NGOs have identified specific communities and have worked only with them. For instance, Eklavya Parivartan Vidyalaya in Maharashtra runs a school for girls from Katkari tribal community where girls have rarely gone to school, and Nari Gunjan in Bihar works with adolescent girls from Musahar community that is categorised as Mahadalit, the lowest within the Dalit community. Certain MSKs and Mahila Samakhya run KGBVs have also attempted to focus on specific focus groups. Identification of specific deprived group/s within a particular block helps in ensuring that such schools reach the most-needy in that area.

2. Teaching, learning and curriculum: ensuring both academic rigour and empowerment

a. Integrated curriculum planning with consideration for both academics and empowerment.

Nirantar and MSKs offer good examples of practices such as using girls/women's own life histories and narratives to build various skills especially around Language while helping them realise about the exploitation and abuses that they have been facing and building a collective understanding of these trends in the society. Udaan curriculum integrated Social Learning as a subject alongside Language, Mathematics and Environmental Science, and developed those in close contact with each other; one was not delinked from the other – if water as a theme was being covered in Social Learning, it was not repeated in EVS in the

same manner. This allowed faster learning in all the subjects while also building a perspective that takes the various dimensions of inequality into account; water is not only an issue of science but also of society and with skewed access. This is just one example; a number of NGOs have attempted such integration with varied level of success.

b. Building non-gender-stereotypical vocational skills.

MSKs and some KGBVs have introduced skill development courses in areas that are otherwise not commonly offered to girls: mechanic, plumbing, etc. These are important as they provide the income generating skills while at the same time break the gender stereotypes. Using the advantage of additional time available in residential schools, there is potential to introduce skill-development but it is important to ensure that the choice of skills is not reinforcing the stereotypes. The KGBV tie-up with NIOS for vocational training is a good practice as it leads to certification but it has limitations of promoting skills that could reinforce stereotypes.

c. Creative use of library, exposure trips and inter-school competition.

Creative use of known teaching –learning experiences such as the use of library, exposure trips and inter-school competitions to strengthen learning and generate greater confidence among students emerged as an important distinguishing feature; how these processes are planned and carried out determines whether it is a good practice or not; some NGO and NGO supported programmes supply examples of good practices. Careful planning with clear linkages to the dual curricular objectives is necessary.

d. Teacher training and support: well-planned and reflective of the integrated curriculum planning

Another good practice that emerged as a precondition to success is well-planned and well-conceived teacher training strategies, largely visible in NGO run and supported

programmes. Certain common principles that emerge are: (i) teacher training should be continuous and evolving rather than one time and fixed, e.g., experiences show that teachers were better equipped in places where a group of trainers interacted frequently with teachers and the training focused on both pre-planned contents and issues that teachers wanted to discuss. If required, they changed the training plan to address the teachers' needs; (ii) the content should include academics, empowerment/relational and management aspects as all these are critical in a residential school; (iii) one of the best ways of training teachers is to have the training processes (organisation, classroom interactions, activities, interpersonal relation between the trainer and teachers, etc.) should be indicative of what is expected from teachers in the school.

e. Qualified and trained teachers

The study clearly shows that though a well-conceived and planned teacher training is very helpful, it goes only that far and there is no substitute for academically and professionally qualified teachers. In the end, residential schools need both, and not one or the other: professionally qualified teachers and a well-planned and executed teacher training plan.

3. Ensuring effective management and using management experiences for enhancing learning

a. Involving children in school-management through well-planned processes and structures. This is a common and very useful exercise that most schools follow albeit in different ways. A number of students committees are constituted either through election or allocation for various purposes (library, cleaning, food, health, sports, etc.) and the responsibilities are usually rotated. Elections help in inculcating the sense of responsibility and democratic values, and a better understanding of democracy as an institution. Rotation is also important and if managed well it ensures that all children get an opportunity to get involved in all kinds of jobs, and it also plays a role in breaking

social barriers. In co-educational institutions, rotation helps in breaking the gender stereotypes.

b. Presence of some free time in daily timetable. MSKs, a number of NGO programmes like Shivir and Udaan, and KGBVs ensure that girls have some free time in their hands in the daily timetable. This free time is used for chatting, dancing, playing, etc., and helps in forming relationships, and also discussing various issues that help in developing aspirations and also a collective identity. These are critical for empowerment. And absence can lead to issues of frustration and repressed emotions, as is apparently the case in some JNVs.

4. Engaging with and Influencing the Community

One good practice followed by VTLC and Udaan is to send teachers to the villages from where the students are to come. This builds confidence among parents in addition to making teachers more aware of the students' contexts. Another good practice followed by Udaan is to organize community seminars where some of the games and activities meant for children are modified for adults and done with parents. Some activities are meant for all while some meant only for men and some for women. The objective is to expose the parents and the community to some of the schooling processes and also to challenge some of the existing gender norms so that they also start reflecting. It has helped in making them more understanding of the changes that they see in their girls and more supportive of their demands for further education and postponement of marriage.

5. Ensuring Adequate Costs for all Relevant Activities

Assuming that investments in residential schooling is effective if it is reaching the most needy girls and they have access to all the facilities and services based on acceptable standards, the cost norms of JNV appears to be as a good practice in terms of details and allocations. In terms of attention

to activities with a perspective of providing long term support to students, one good practice followed by Udaan and VTLC is to have clear allocations for follow up activities. This is important as these two programmes also reported how these activities assisted students in continuing with their education and also in negotiating with their parents.

C.   MAJOR POLICY SUGGESTIONS

Residential schooling has emerged as a major system of providing school education spread over all parts of the country. These schools are spread over all kinds of management and access their funding from various sources: Union and state governments, private agencies and international foundations. The exact distribution of funding sources and their proportional share is not known though the state governments and private agencies emerge as major players in terms of the number of schools they support. This review based analysis is largely limited to residential schools existing in state and NGO sectors, and the detailed inquiry is further limited to a few yet critical schemes of residential schools that serve girls using public funds. Nevertheless, some important and clear pointers for policy initiatives emerge. These are listed here:

1. *Strengthening data and information base*
The gaps in information, data and credible evaluations are huge, pointing out to an urgent need for major steps to streamline this issue. Unless this issue is addressed, the knowledge base is going to remain poor, and the analyses weak and tentative. The need for creating a bank of all existing information from diverse sources which involves collecting information pertaining to all schemes and initiatives that fund and support residential schools in any form is urgent. The details of spread and coverage, funding norms, expenditure patterns – all need to be collected and processed in a user friendly manner with details of sources, and placed in the public domain. Integration of clear data points in the existing education database (e.g., UDISE) could also facilitate disaggregated analysis.

2. *Funding and supporting research and evaluation studies*
The evidence base for residential schooling can only be improved by creating credible evidences, which is one of the weakest links at the moment. Credible evidences can be created only when high-quality, well-designed research and evaluation studies are carried out. Dependable research and evaluations are as important for formulating policy decisions as for adding to the knowledge base. The need for carrying out formal evaluations of schemes such as JNV, Ashram and KGBV, following experimental and quasi experimental designs and using innovative methods, is immediate. It is surprising that a scheme such as JNV where the union government spends nearly one third of its total spending on secondary schools has never been evaluated comprehensively. A comparative, field based research on different kinds of residential schools for their philosophy, functioning, budgeting, reach and impact on learning and empowerment, covering a few Indian states, would be of immediate use and relevance. Gender can be an important marker for such a research.

3. *Comprehensive Policy and shared vision on Residential Schooling*
At present, there is no comprehensive policy on residential schools backed by any clear thought and rationale. Different schemes emerged at different points of time in history and followed a different trajectory of evolution. It is important to take a look, review, reflect and develop a comprehensive policy based on clear conceptual framework and a vision that directs all initiatives. The policy should also be able to provide clear pointers towards essential elements and non-negotiable features of any residential schooling programme: this can then act as a guide for the state and private players and help in developing their schemes and initiatives accordingly. The vision on residential schools in India must take the gender, and other equity concerns in addition to the issue of efficiency and effectiveness into

consideration. Also important will be to break the equity-excellence dichotomy.

4. Interim institutional measures contributing to policy development

a. Defining Essential Quality Parameters for built and social environments: This would help to develop a set of protocol and essential parameters that can serve as a ready reckoner for all relevant purposes. International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) has a handbook that recommends standards for access, safety and protective learning environment, quality learning and teacher management which could be used to develop the parameters. Any such guideline or protocol must have a clearly defined negative list outlining the practices that are barred coupled with punitive provisions in cases of violation; this should especially take the safety and security aspects into consideration.

b. Review of budget and institutional norms across schemes and removing the anomalies: This is an essential step towards a comprehensive policy for residential schooling. Review followed by removal of sharp anomalies would also help in raising the morale and will give a clear signal about policy objectives. In this context it is important to allay the fears that presence of a unique vision or standardisation of norms could be detrimental to experimentation and would lead to homogenisation. Presence of a guiding framework that ensures basic rights of students and teachers should not be seen as an effort to homogenise, as widely unequal norms and practices cannot be promoted on the name of diversity. For instance, the presence of universal right to food does not mean everyone has to eat the same food; it ensures that everyone gets adequate food and desired nutrition. Similarly, it is possible to build accountability norms for residential schools such that it ensures certain degree of equality but also allows the teachers/managers at the school level an

agency to act and facilitates independent action.

c. Facilitating cross learning among schools / schemes and enhancing the influence: Although some level of cross learning has taken place but in general, the level of sharing and cross learning is low. The teachers and administrators of different kinds of residential schools rarely get together to discuss, share and learn from each other. The presence of formal mechanisms for facilitating such exercises periodically could help all concerned. Cooperation and exchange of experiences, concerns and solutions can also help in enhancing the influence of these schools operational under various schemes. Schools located close to each other can allow the use of certain facilities to make the use more efficient.

d. Ensuring higher proportion of girls in well-funded schemes such as JNV: A coherent public policy would expect the same rationale to be extended to similar schemes: if residential schooling is viewed as a good policy option to reach girls from deprived communities, the same should be reflected in all State funded schemes. Hence, JNVs should have higher reservation for girls and within that, for SC, ST and Muslim girls. There is a need to go beyond ensuring participation of these groups, as more privileged among those tend to gain and retain access. One way could be to make it compulsory to identify the group for which the female educational status is the lowest in the particular district/block for filling particular percentage of seats (e.g., at least half the seats in KGBV). This could be, for instance, Meos (Muslims) in in Mewat areas of Rajasthan and Haryana, Mushers (SC) in parts of Bihar, Kols (ST) in parts of Madhya Pradesh and Upparas (OBC) in parts of Karnataka. What is implied here is that such an exercise would help overcome the limitation of the broad categories of communities such as SC, ST, OBC and Muslim, and address the elite capture from within these communities to some extent.

e. International exchange and learning: Cross learning can be facilitated across

many other levels, sharing of international experiences through appropriate platforms is one such means. For instance, the experiences from Vietnam, Nepal or Kenya appear to be could be relevant for improving the schemes in India. The choice of exchange could be preceded with a detailed inquiry and analysis of the programme to determine the relevance.

Indian schemes can also benefit by knowing more about Gender Responsive Management practices in the African countries. Kenya's human rights-based approach to promote inclusive and persuasive gender responsive discourse in girls' education could also be a good model for replication. Indian experience also has a lot to offer, as visible from the section on good practices.

CBPS Team
Dr. Jyotsna Jha
Dr. Geeta Menon
Puja Minni
Shanmuga Priya T

Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (CBPS), Bangalore is a non-profit research organisation working in the areas of policy, budget, governance and public service delivery. Social sectors such as education, health and gender are our special focus areas. We specialise in public policy and finance issues especially in the context of a federal framework. CBPS conducted this review-based study, funded by Knowledge Partnership Programme (KPP) of Department of International Development (DfID), Government of United Kingdom.

Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (CBPS)
United Lodge of Theosophists, Maitri Bhavan
No. 4, M.N.Krishna Rao Road
Basavanagudi Bangalore – 560004
Ph: +91-80-2656 0735; Fax: +91-80-2656-0734
www.cbps.in

To be cited as: Jha, Jyotsna; Menon, Geeta; Minni, Puja and T, Shanmuga Priya "Residential Schools for Girls in India: A Review of Policy and Practise", Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (CBPS) & IPE Global, India

Knowledge Partnership Programme (KPP), funded by DfID, aims at Production and dissemination of high quality research, sharing Indian and global evidence on policies that impact development outcomes and supporting advocacy towards strengthening policy and programmes in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Kenya, Rwnada, Uganda, Myanmar, Nepal, Bangladesh, India and Ghana.

IPE Global, New Delhi, is managing the KPP programme on behalf of DfID.

Disclaimer: This material has been funded by UK Aid from UK Government's Department for International Development under the Knowledge Partnership Programme, however the views expressed are of the Partner organization CBPS (Centre For Budget And Policy Studies), Bangalore and do not necessarily reflect the UK Government's official policies. This brief is a draft version and solely for internal circulation.