

Hindi Language Competency of KGBV Students in Bihar

CHANDRA B P SINGH

Department of Psychology, T M Bhagalpur University

Email: chandrabsingh@gmail.com

Received: August 17, 2017| Revised: October 12, 2017| Accepted: October 14, 2017

Published online: November 6, 2017

The Author(s) 2017. This article is published with open access at www.chitkara.edu.in/publications

Abstract The study identified reasons for poor performance (about 40%) in Hindi language of class VI students in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) of Bihar and also noticed loss in transition (about 6 to 24 %) at the upper primary level despite residential facilities being provided to them. There existed acute shortage of teachers (46%) as well as wardens (46%) in KGBV, resulting in poor management of residential facilities. Additionally, non-availability of language teacher for teaching Hindi and their limited understanding of pedagogical processes left the teaching-learning transaction unattended. Their insufficient training to language at the time of induction showed a gap in inputs concerning what the students desired and what the teachers had. In some KGBVs (e.g. Kishanganj) there existed minimal activities to overcome learning deficiencies in Hindi. They had virtually no idea about how to evaluate students and formulate plan for improving Hindi language. Non-literate mothers had strong desire to educate their daughter (40 per cent achievement in Hindi language). Attitudinal problem of the school teachers and headmasters were prominently observed. They attributed to the KGBV stakeholders for the managerial activities. The study suggested deployment of teachers and their intensive training for improving Hindi language among the students of KGBV.

Keywords: Hindi language, Knowledge, Skill, Application, Learning, Teachers

1. INTRODUCTION

The study was designed to assess Hindi language competency level of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV) students in Bihar. The basic objective of KGBV is to ensure access and quality education to the girls of disadvantaged groups of society by setting up residential schools at upper primary level. In Bihar 304 wardens (56%) and 891 part time teachers (56%) under KGBV

Issues and Ideas
in Education
Vol-5, No-2
November 2017
pp. 127-141

Chandra, BP

are committed to educating the dropped out students (DOS) and out of school children (OOSC). The learning needs of such children demand greater understanding including sensitivity to their background. Hence, it is essential to work out the methods and study materials to be used for accelerating learning, and also to enable children to reach grade level knowledge and skills. It is also a challenge to teach Hindi language to such girls who either break their study at the primary school level or join the school first time. Addressing the teaching-learning needs of girls in the KGBV is a challenge as well as an opportunity. All KGBV students have had a break in their schooling due to family or other circumstances. Many of the girls have in the past been out of school or have dropped out of the schooling cycle at some stage. Such girls are likely to be lagging behind academically. The entire process of enabling girls to reach class VI needs to be ascertained.

National Evaluation Report of KGBV (NER, 2007) captured some teaching practices in various states. In Karnataka for instance, a zero class was provided to the students till they reached class 6 level. In Gujarat, Model 1 was used to complete the primary cycle of the enrolled girls. In Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand the primers developed for bridge courses were used but the rush to prepare them for early school leaving class (ESLC) was also evident (NCERT, 2008). Andhra Pradesh enabled students by offering bridge courses to enrol in KGBV thereby, doing some amount of preparatory work before they were formally enrolled in class VI. Some states used supplementary materials. At the initial stage Bihar used bridge course for the new-entrants in KGBV. The most worrying outcome was that there was little understanding of the programme in several states (Gogoi and Goswami, 2015; NER, 2013; PEO, 2015). The Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO, 2015), a wing of NITI AAYOG observed that “the initial momentum that the programme gained was not sustained after 2009”. In many cases, where Model 3 was being followed, the learning related issues were similar to that of the formal school system (NER, 2007). The entry level of learning was not taken as a point of departure or as the baseline for planning their academic growth. There was lack of clarity about “who was eligible for admission in KGBVs” and “how to identify the eligible girls”. It was also observed that no standardised and uniform method was followed for identification of girls for the admission in KGBVs. There was no curriculum, no separate classes (except in Gujarat) and no teachers’ training for this purpose (PEO, 2015). Many states followed their own methods for bridging the academic gap of the out of school children (OOSC) and the dropped out students (DOS) in KGBV. In Gujarat for instance, the number of never enrolled girls was quite high in the Model 3 KGBVs. It was not clear how they were tackling the bridging process for various levels.

It was worth noting that the teaching and learning processes visible in KGBVs was textbook-oriented and in most states it was not very different from the formal schools (NER, 2013). Teachers had little inputs in participatory and activity based teaching practices. In some areas where model 3 was being implemented (with the exception of Karnataka) the children went to the formal school during the day and the part-time teachers of KGBV provided remedial teaching and support before and after school. This practice still continues in Bihar.

The study on KGBV was undertaken because of twin reasons: first, girls studying in class V in Bihar showed low achievement in Hindi language (NAS cycle3, 2012) and second, Bihar did not have benchmark data of Hindi language of class VI for KGBV. Usually, girls outstrip boys in language acquisition because of early cognitive development. In Bihar the scenario is quite different. Girls scored less than their counterparts in Hindi language (NAS cycle3, 2012). National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) conducted national achievement survey (NAS) on class V of the government schools excluding KGBVs in 2012. Language is a serious issue in Orissa and Jharkhand where the tribal girls continue to face learning difficulties as the textbooks are in the local state language. Even the teachers are young urban women who have limited understanding of pedagogical processes (NER, 2013). In border districts of Bihar where minority or a few tribal communities concentrate, language poses a serious problem in learning of students (BEPC, 2015).

The 2001 Census identifies 27 mother tongues listed under Hindi. More than 20 per cent districts at the national level are linguistically heterogeneous. The *National Curriculum Framework* (2005) supports the idea of teaching through mother tongue at the primary level and recommends gradual addition to other languages in elementary classes. The language problem poses a moderate to severe learning disadvantage for children who shift to Hindi from regional dialect. Maithili, Angika, Bajika and Maghi are widely spoken in Bihar while Hindi as the medium of instruction is used in the government schools. The National Achievement Survey (NAS) highlights the position of Bihar in the context of language learning in classes 3, 5 and 8. Bihar scored less than 45 per cent as compared to national average (55%) in reading comprehension in class V (NAS cycle 3, 2012, NAS cycle 4, 2015). Both Boys and girls scored lower than the overall average score on all the mental processes. Boys performed better than girls in reading comprehension. Similar cases were recorded in class III (Bihar 53% as compared to national average 64%). Where the medium of instruction is not the mother tongue at the primary school level, it becomes difficult for the girl child to cope with the school instruction. A major challenge

Chandra, BP

being faced by the children of KGBVs in Bihar is that they do not compete with the required level of grade VI. The study primarily focuses on the assessment of achievement in Hindi language and finds out gaps in language competencies.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study included the followings:

1. To study the learning achievement level in Hindi language of class VI KGBV students,
2. To examine academic support system of KGBVs,
3. To study KGBV management system and competency level of Hindi teachers in KGBVs.

2.1 Hypotheses

A set of hypothesis was framed based on previous findings.

1. There will be low achievement in Hindi language of KGBV students as compared to NAS score.
2. There will be low achievement in Hindi language of the minority group.
3. There will less academic support to KGBV teachers.
4. There will be significant variation in competencies score of Hindi language.
5. There will be a pressure on management for dual functions.

3. METHOD

3.1 The Setting and Coverage

A total of 535 KGBVs in 530 blocks of 38 districts (altogether 534 blocks) were operational under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) since 2011-12. In five districts more than one KGBV was functioning because of large concentration of minority population. Altogether 48719 students (45% SC, 36% OBC, 8% Minority, 7% ST and 4% BPL) were admitted in KGBVs (BEPC, 2015). The study was conducted on 20 KGBVs spread over 20 blocks in 10 districts of nine divisions. It was a multistage sampling covering district at the first level, KGBV at the second level and girl students of class VI, part time teachers and warden at the third level. At the second level two KGBVs from each district were selected with the help of standard operating procedure (SOP). At the third level 398 girl students (20 from each KGBV were sampled through systemic random sampling with replacement technique. Additionally, 20 wardens, 20 Hindi Teachers and 20 HMs/Teachers of the feeder schools participated in the study.

3.2 Tools Used

1. **Hindi Language Test for Class VI Students:** To measure the learning level of penultimate class, a Hindi language test for class VI (28 objectives items and two descriptive type items), based on IRT model was developed. The test consisted of two set of items viz., language-specific elements such as contents of textbooks, grammar and contents of writing skills. These two categories of items represented four competencies - Knowledge, Understanding, Skill and Application (KUSA).
2. **KGBV Teacher Schedule:** It covered dimensions such as group formation for remedial teaching, time spent on teaching, feedback and monitoring, competency wise planning for improving language, etc.].
3. **Warden Schedule:** Items included were related to aspects such as ensuring textbooks for students, health care, promoting life skills activities, making child profile, etc.
4. **KGBV Management Schedule:** It was developed for measuring process of enrolment, convergence with the feeder school, teacher and staff deployment, continuous assessment of students, etc.
5. **School HM Schedule:** It enfolded some questions of convergence with the school and interaction with the KGBV teachers.

3.3 Procedure

A two days orientation workshop to Field Investigator was organized in the 3rd week of October, 2016 at SCERT, Patna. A set of team was formed comprising four FIs for each district-two FIs for each KGBV. Similarly, for each district one Field Coordinator was inducted to coordinate with the DLO. A tryout was arranged for them.

Table 1: Area Wise and Class Wise Distribution of Hindi Language Test.

Area	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V	Total
Knowledge	3	6	0	0	9
Understanding	0	0	4	2	6
Skill	0	0	0	9	9
Application	0	0	5	1	6
Total	3	6	9	12	30

4. RESULTS

Table 2 presents mean per cent of learning outcomes in Hindi language. The state mean per cent is 40 with SD 20.57. Nalanda and Jamui secured 54% and 55% respectively while Kishanganj and West Champaran underscored by obtaining only 25% and 29%. Bhagalpur had 36%, showing 4% below the state mean per cent. Madhepura and Madhubani secured 37% and 38% which was about 2-3% less than the state mean per cent. The results further, revealed substantial differences in learning outcomes between the highest performing districts (Nalanda followed by Jamui) and the lowest performing districts (Kishanganj followed by West Champaran).

Table 3 illustrates percentile score in Hindi language for districts. West Champaran had an inter-quartile range of just 4 while Siwan had a corresponding value of 14. These values suggested that the class VI KGBV students in West Champaran were far more homogeneous than that of Siwan. For other districts such as Kishanganj, Gaya and Jamui the inter-quartile range varied between 4-9, 9-15 and 12-17. The range of performance for the same districts was between 4-6 scale-score points. It was to note that Jamui was the highest performer while Kishanganj lowest. But variation was noted in both districts. The percentiles provided additional information while comparing achievement scores among districts. For example, when the districts were arranged in order of average score, the differences between adjacent districts tended to be small. However, the range of score could not be similar. For

Table 2: Mean Per cent Achievement of class VI Students.

District	Mean %	SD
Bhagalpur	35.63	20.468
Kishanganj	25.36	14.372
Madhepura	36.88	22.665
Madhubani	37.86	18.026
Siwan	42.95	24.986
West Champaran	28.93	12.859
Gaya	42.77	11.817
Jamui	53.57	15.514
Nalanda	54.98	24.343
Rohtas	40.36	17.518
Bihar	39.85	20.571

Table 3: Percentile Score in Hindi Language for Districts.

Hindi Language
Competency of
KGBV Students in
Bihar

District	Percentile					Range	
	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th	75-25	90-10
Bhagalpur	3	6	9	13	20	7	17
Kishanganj	2	4	7	9	12	5	10
Madhepura	2	5	10	18	20	13	18
Madhubani	4	6	11	15	17	9	13
Siwan	3	5	12	19	20	14	17
West Champaran	3	6	8	10	14	4	11
Gaya	8	9	12	15	17	6	9
Jamui	8	12	16	17	21	5	13
Nalanda	8	10	15	21	25	11	17
Rohtas	4	7	12	15	18	8	14
Bihar	4	7	11	15	20	8	16

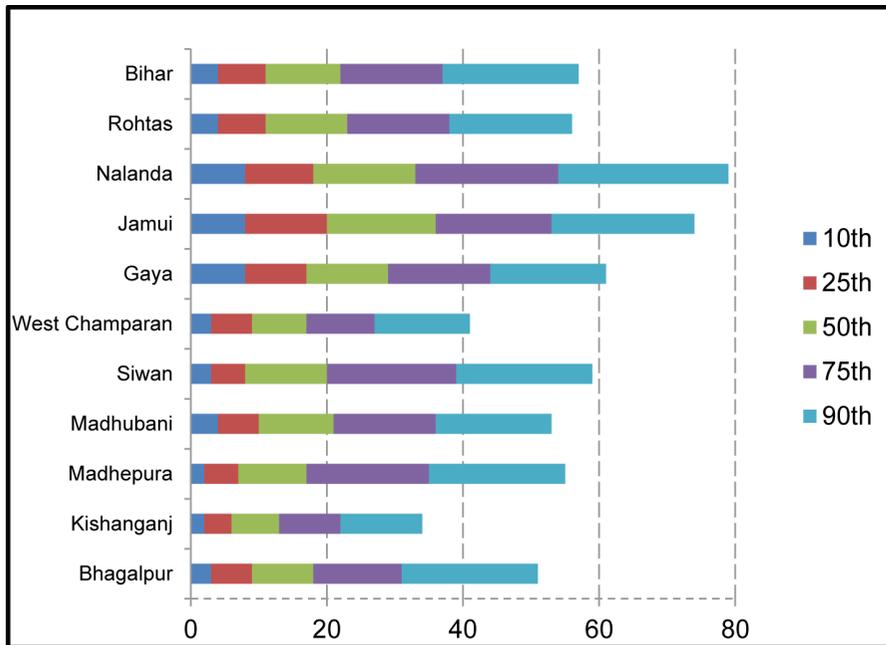


Figure 1:

Chandra, BP

example, there was no significant difference between the average score of Madhepura, Madhubani and Rohtas. However, the range of scores between the 25th and 75th percentiles was very different: Madhepura (13), Madhubani (9) and Rohtas (8)). Further, the 50th percentile scores of the students of Madhbani (11) and Siwan (12) were far better than 75th percentile scores of Kishanganj (9) and West Champaran (10). An overall achievement score (39.85 per cent) was less than NAS score of Bihar in Hindi language (< 45 per cent) Hence,

hypothesis 1 was substantiated

The study compared category wise average achievement scores of students (Table 4). Students of minority group showed lower performance (about 32%) than the state average (39.85%). Performance of ST students was better than SC and OBC. Though only 4 students in general category were available, their performance was better than the remaining groups. Altogether 160 OBC students followed by 134 SC appeared in the evaluation session. The findings confirmed **hypothesis 2**.

Table 5 throws light on overall achievement on each competency (KUSA). The results show a descending trend from knowledge to application (mean per cent varied between 35 and 44). An apparent reason of poor performance in Hindi language was that they did not have sufficient skills to apply their knowledge to different situations. In each competency there existed variation in responses making a few items either easy or difficult. A large number of students either skipped questions or answered incorrectly. A few students (< 5%) guessed the answer. In case of passage writing and letter writing the results were less encouraging. About 69% respondents fairly copied the text with sufficient space while 49% maintained shape and size of the letters. However, about 41% copied the text with a number of errors ranging from 1-7 (Fig. 2). It was expected that students should have letter writing skill. The entire format of the letter writing was divided into five sub-headings-*heading of the letter*,

Table 4: Achievement of Class VI Students by Category.

Category	N	Mean %	SD
SC	134	41.74	20.767
ST	47	43.77	19.596
OBC	160	39.6	20.045
General	4	49.11	11.056
Minority	53	31.67	21.314
Bihar	398	39.85	20.571

Table 5: Overall Achievement of KUSA.

Achievement	Mean %	SD
Knowledge	43.66	22.91
Understanding	43.47	28.10
Skill	34.60	26.08
Application	36.64	27.17
Total	39.85	20.57

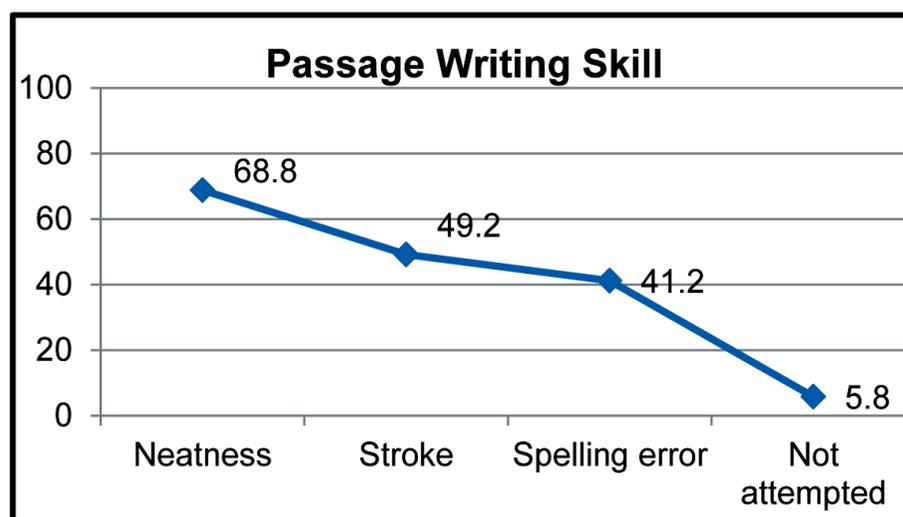


Figure 2:

date, content, spelling error and end of the letter. About 17% students did not attempt this question. There existed a wide variation in response distribution at each sub-heading. Only 19% followed the heading style of the letter at the left end. Hardly 3% of them mentioned date on the letter. About 66% committed spelling errors while elaborating contents of the letter. About 24% used KGBV experiences in the content. And finally, 9% concluded the letter at the right end. This showed a significant gap in letter writing skill (Fig. 3). **Hypothesis 4** got substantiated by the findings.

The study followed Item Response Theory (IRT) model for analysis and item difficulty level of each item was computed. The study categorized learning outcomes competency wise and item wise for viewing response distribution pattern. About 44% students worked out questions of knowledge competency

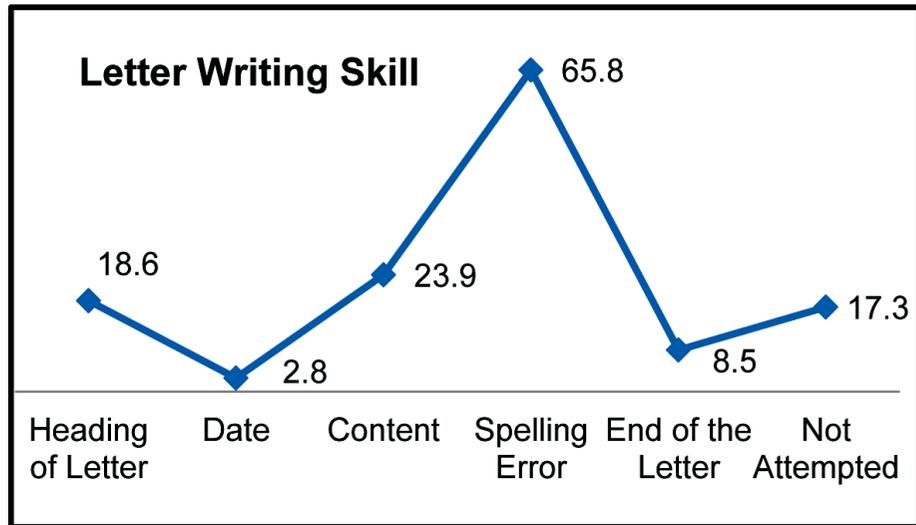


Figure 3:

meaning that 56% failed to locate the information. Understanding competency had six items. Of these five items were moderate while the remaining one easy. About 44% respondents could solve the questions of understanding. A large segment of them (56%) did not give the correct answer. A descending trend in learning outcomes was noted in case of skill and application competencies (about 35-36%). In case of skill competency the results were not encouraging. By the same token, four items were reported difficult while the remaining two easy. Only 36% respondents could apply basic skills to answer the questions correctly. On an average respondent had fewer tendencies to guess the correct answer (about 4%). A sizeable number of students (about 33%) could not answer the questions correctly. About 23% students did not attempt the questions. Altogether, about 60% students missed to answer the questions correctly at the state level.

4.1 Family-background

The study attempted to categorize achievement scores in terms of parents' occupation and education. Of 398 students 236 had a family background where fathers were labourers, 78 small farmers and 25 skilled workers. Their learning outcome varied between 36 and 43%. Father's educational level was also categorized. A total of 133 fathers were non-literate, 98 had education up to primary level and 88 up to middle level. Remarkably, students whose fathers' were non-literate secured about 43% marks in Hindi language as

compared to fathers of others children who had school education (about 39%). More or less similar trend was found in case of mother. About 51% students' mothers were non-literate, 28% had primary school background and only 9% had completed elementary education. Non-literate mothers had strong desire to educate their daughter (40% achievement in Hindi language). Probably, growing realization of girls' education in the society motivated non-literate mothers to send their girls for schooling. Another attempt was made to ascertain where any educational background of family members supported the motivation for educating the girl child. The data revealed the fact that about 50% family members had secondary/higher secondary education. It supported the education of the girl child (about 40% cent achievement in Hindi language). Even the family members who had education up to primary level motivated the girl child for rejoining the school (about 59% achievement in Hindi language).

4.2 Teachers

The study noted acute shortage (46%) of part time teachers in the KGBVs. There existed no language-specific teachers. Instead they were inducted on the post of language teachers irrespective of professional qualification. Previous studies (NER, 2013; PEO, 2015) on KGBV witnessed multiple activities of KGBV teachers. They were engaged in hostel management in addition to teaching. They had inadequate training to teaching (PEO, 2015) depriving them of getting learning activities based on group formation. About half of them had time-table of classes for KGBV students. Group formation was an important exercise in all KGBVs. Many of them formed group either on the basis of grade as recorded at the time of admission (48%) or level of knowledge after evaluation (33%). Hence, they promoted their students accordingly from one group to another after continuous evaluation (45%) but, could not place substantive evidences of promotion. They assessed their students after admission (65%). There was no standard format of evaluation for group formation. Even there existed inconsistency in displaying and updating child profile. The study disclosed some unusual facts. Only 50% teachers used to study Hindi textbook of class VI before engaging classes. About 50% did not know the number of units prescribed in Hindi textbook. About 60% teachers spent about one hour in teaching Hindi. When asked about last unit of Hindi textbook taught in the school by the teachers, 55% had no idea about it. Lack of interaction with the school teachers was evident in the sense that a few (40%) had information about the units taught by school teachers. Only 40% teachers kept monthly progress. About 45% teachers got feedback from students about school activities.

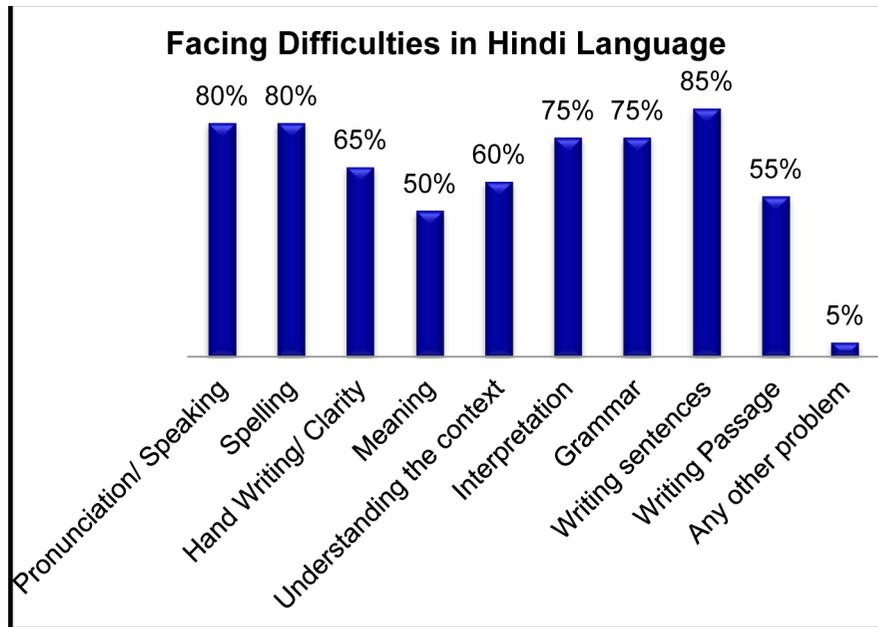


Figure 4:

Though teachers had identified problems in Hindi language (about 70%), less activities to improve it were noted (about 50%). In some KGBVs (e.g. Kishanganj) there existed minimal activities to overcome learning deficiencies in Hindi. No proper training to Hindi teachers in KGBVs was provided. They had virtually no idea about how to evaluate students and formulate plan for improving Hindi language. KGBV teachers could not properly track month wise distribution of units to be taught by school teachers, subject wise monthly progress report of the student and progress in Hindi language. Instead of getting feedback on the units taught by the school teachers they relied on students' saying. Thus, **hypothesis 3** got substantiated by the results.

4.3 KGBV management, warden and headmaster

The KGBV management used multiple sources such as block and panchayat for fresh admission. The management was expected to be aware of the concept- the dropped out under the state rules RTE notification, 2011. There existed ambiguity on the concept-drop out among stakeholders. 55% wardens had an idea of the dropped out students who were absent from the class for more than six months. 45% respondents had an impression of absence from the class for either one or three months. Previous studies confirmed this

pattern (PEO, 2015) Confusion also prevailed in their mind, when asked about direct admission in class VI. They frankly admitted that 55% students were directly admitted in class VI. 35% were admitted after evaluation. Panchayat played a vital role in the fresh admission as they (50%) recommended the application for KGBV. Similar pattern was evident in the previous evaluation studies (NER, 2007, 2013) Altogether 748 students were enrolled in class VI. Of them, 49% shared class V, 11% class IV, 7% class III and 3% class II. The warden assumed managerial role in KGBV. 55% OBC category wardens were working whereas, one ST category warden made her presence felt in the centre. 70% wardens were graduate. About 40% of them used to teach Hindi language. In some cases they located a few hours for other subjects in a week. About 65 per cent wardens kept subject wise monthly progress report of students.

School headmasters extended their support as Sanchalak and facilitated functioning of the warden. Some relevant information was extracted from them to assess activities of KGBV students in the school. The study witnessed loss in transition from class VI to class VIII (about 6.60 to 24%) in KGBV. The girl students left out KGBV because of many reasons. Of them KGBV poor management was more prominent. The study noted uncongenial hostel environment and its poor delivery mechanisms. As a result, a large number of girl students left their study from KGBV at various time intervals. It was surprising to note that KGBV students could not cope with the changing situation where they were expected to adjust. The study also observed that students were allowed to go home during holiday. Many of them overstayed in home and did not return to KGBV. Attitudinal problem of the school teachers and headmasters were the prominent issue. Where the coordination between the school and KGBV was observed, the latter performed well. Whatever resources they had, were properly utilized by the stakeholders. Despite a circular of engaging at least one class in the school by KGBV teacher the school did not take it seriously and kept them away from the school. A few KGBVs run under NGO. Their management was questionable in the sense that they manoeuvred the situation to grab resources. An intense interaction with the school teachers may reduce attitudinal problems as was noticed in the study. KGBVs had acute shortage of teachers and auxiliary staff. Another constraint was temporary stay of teachers in the KGBV. It supported **hypothesis 5**.

4.4 Limitations

To learn Hindi language was very often incompatible with mother tongue. Mother tongue preceded Hindi language during learning process. Students experienced bi-lingual problem while interacting with teachers. They could

Chandra, BP

understand contents of textbooks but, had problems in speaking, reading and writing. They used their conditioned language during learning. It was more apparent in border districts like Kishanganj and West Champaran where either minority or ST/SC was dominant. They used their regional dialect. In Kishanganj 26 (65%) out of 40 students was Muslim in class VI. Another reason was the nature of test and its administration. In case students were alien to the test, there could be possibility of lowering down the performance. A few negative questions posed problems to elicit correct answer. Even guessing tendency was high in case of negative questions.

4.5 Summing up

The study suggested an instructional manual covering various learning materials in Hindi language based on the problems being faced by teachers in KGBV. Since teachers had no professional competency, a few inputs of pedagogical processes required to be inducted during training. This would help improve basic competencies in Hindi language which in turn facilitates the learning process of class VI. There should be a substantive arrangement of engaging classes in the school by KGBV teachers. Teachers and auxiliary staff need to be appointed at the block level. The child protection demands a security management in KGBV.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study was completed with the help of UNICEF, Patna and SCERT, Patna in the month of November, 2016. Thanks are acknowledged to Parul Sharma, Education officer and Dr. S. A. Moin, Director, Distance Education, SCERT, Patna for their cooperation.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bihar Education Project Council (2015). **State Component Plan**, Document, BEPC, Patna.
- [2] Gogoi, S., & Goswami, U. (2015). Infrastructure facilities in KGBV in Assam for drop out and never enrolled adolescent girls. **International Journal of Development Research**, 5 (6), 4842-4872.
- [3] National Evaluation Report (2007). **Report on Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya**. Portal accessed from ssa.nic.in/girls.../Nat-report- /view. Retrieved on 17/1/2017.
- [4] National Evaluation Report (2013). **Evaluation of KGBV**, SSA accessed from ssa.nic.in/...final%20revised%20national. Retrieved on 18/1/2017.

-
- [5] National Council of Education Research and Training (2008). **National Consultation on Kasturba Balika Vidyalaya**, Accessed from www.ncert.nic.in/html/.kgbv report, retrieved on 20/1/2017. Hindi Language Competency of KGBV Students in Bihar
- [6] National Council of Education Research and Training (2012).**National Achievement Survey**, Class V, Cycle 3, New Delhi.
- [7] National Council of Education Research and Training (2015).**National Achievement Survey**, Class V, Cycle 4, New Delhi.
- [8] Planning Evaluation Organisation (2015). **Evaluation Study on KGBV**, NITI AAYOG, GoI, New Delhi, SSA accessed from [ssa.nic.in/...final %24 revised %24](http://ssa.nic.in/...final%24revised%24).
