

# Enhancement Of Quality Of Teaching And Learning In Women’S Colleges Of West Bengal- A Critical Analysis

**Dr. Sreyasi Ghosh**

Assistant Professor and HOD of History Dept.,  
Hiralal Mazumdar Memorial College for Women, Dakshineswar, Kolkata

*Abstract: At present Govt. of West Bengal is giving utmost effort to improve the educational status of girls, specifically those from socio- economically disadvantaged families (through agendas like Kanyashree Prakalpa etc). The fortunate section of girls who are obtaining the coveted opportunity of studying in colleges are undoubtedly getting the golden scope of going through many career oriented programmes besides conventional UG Honours and General curriculum. Government Colleges for Women (Bethune College, Lady Brabourne College etc) are maintaining vibrant career- counselling cells to make girl students capable enough for job market. Many renowned Govt.- sponsored and Govt. -aided Colleges in whole West Bengal are now giving opportunity of various career- oriented programmes to give benefit to students in their attempts to go up in the social ladder. Some eminent Colleges, where teachers are not recruited through WBPSC or WBCSC, are also offering many career oriented Enrichment Courses (such as Loreto College). This study has shown that through many job- oriented courses girls are now breaking conventional gender structure of our patriarchal society. Broad and balanced system of teaching, regular career- counselling, seminars and workshops, regular tests, remedial classes, tutorials, inter- disciplinary approach taken to learning, educational tours/ excursion and various extra- curricular programmes like NSS unit etc are continuously making full- fledged development of students in various colleges for women in West Bengal.*

**Keywords:** Kanyashree, Women, Placement, Enrichment, Career- Counselling.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays Govt. of West Bengal is trying its level best to improve the socio- economic status and well-being of girls, specially those from underprivileged families through conditional cash transfers by incentivizing them to continue in education for a longer period of time, and complete secondary or higher secondary education, or equivalent in technical or vocational streams (Kanyashree Prakalpa). Total population of West Bengal as per 2011 census is 91276115 of which male and female are 46809027 and 44467088 respectively. The fortunate section of girls who are getting the precious opportunity of studying in various colleges are going through the scope of many career oriented programmes besides traditional curriculum. Some colleges are offering PG and B.ED courses also for upliftment of their students. Kanyashree Prakalpa has played a significant role in enhancement of

student strength in colleges for women in West Bengal and that is why it has received national and international recognition as a symbol of good governance. This scheme achieved National E- governance Award 2014- 2015 awarded by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India. The scheme was also appreciated as a good practice at the *Girls’ Summit* organized by DFID and UNICEF, (London, July, 2014) and in Consultation on “Empowerment of Adolescent Girls” organized by the World Bank, Ranchi, May 2015.

In this article I would try to give a brief sketch of learning activities of some well- known women’s colleges of West Bengal but it must be admitted that the topic undoubtedly is a theme of extensive research.

## II. GOVERNMENT COLLEGES FOR WOMEN

Bethune College (first college for women in Asia, reaccredited at the A level by NAAC, 2015) is maintaining a quite active career counselling cell to transform each student to eligible human resource. While analysing recent activities of the career counselling cell of this eminent college one can see that the cell mentioned above has organized three career counselling seminars/ workshops- 1) One seminar was on How to prepare yourself for an interview in February 2016, where notable speakers were DR. Bibhas Chowdhury, Director, Eastern Zone, National Sample Survey Organization and Mr. Sandip Kar, Regional Head, Yes Bank, Kolkata. 2) Second seminar was on The Scopes and Prospects after Graduation in January 2017, by GLOBSYN Business School and Career Launcher Educate Limited. It had three separate sessions on Higher Studies, Corporate jobs and Competitive Examinations for Government jobs. Career counselling cell of Bethune College has been successful enough in bringing the best of companies, like WIPRO, TCS, GENPACT etc., to the Campus head hunting so far and also making honest endeavour to enhance connections with many other well-reputed organisations/ industry leaders and giving importance on career opportunities related to Graphics, Web designing, Media and Entertainment. Through its effort a workshop was arranged on prospects of higher studies in UK in 2014. Psychometric test of the final year students was arranged following the Myers- Briggs type Indicator Assessment method for helping to choose the correct career option, 2013. The cell mentioned above has given thrust on Communicative English classes and on- campus/ off- campus selection programmes were conducted by WIPRO, TCS, COGNIZANT etc. in 2013 and 2014.

The career counselling and job placement committee of Lady Brabourne College (A Grade) is very active. This college is one of the premier institutions for education of women in Kolkata. Here the committee mentioned earlier has been organizing many programmes for career building and placement since 2002. Major IT/ BPO organizations like Infosys, TCS, IBM, Cognizant, Tech Mahendra, Accenture and WIPRO conducted campus recruitment programmes for final year undergraduate students. The college runs two self-financing certificate courses in Public Relations and Advertising (UGC sponsored) and Multimedia and Animation (UGC sponsored). The college has been running a Computer Diploma Course in collaboration with WEBEL informatics for upliftment of students since 1996. A Spanish Language Training Programme began in November 2007 in collaboration with WTCC School of Trade and Communication, Kolkata.

New set- up Govt. colleges for women like Sister Nibedita Government General Degree College for Girls (2015), Government Girls General Degree College, Ekbalpur (2016), Jhargram Raj College ( Girls Wing), Shahid Matangini Hazra Government College For Women are making tremendous effort for upliftment of their girl students. Sister Nibedita College bears the rarest distinction of being the first degree college (Government) for women in Kolkata in the Post- Independence era (Both Honours and General Courses offered). In Govt. College of Ekbalpur all first year students

are advised to take admission in the two years Diploma in Computer Application course against a minimum payment. The course is being conducted successfully by WEBEL INFORMATICS LTD. The college is preparing ground to start other career oriented courses such as Diploma in Public Relations and Advertising (2 years) and Diploma in Multimedia and Animation (2 years). Matangini Hazra College was established by the Govt. of West Bengal with the aim of providing quality education to girl students of Purba Medinipur and surrounding areas (both Honours and General courses offered). Girls Wing of Jhargram Raj College (Paschim Medinipur) has been established to inculcate higher education among girl students of backward area of Jungle Mahal (Honours and General courses studied here).

## III. GOVT. SPONSORED AND GOVT.-AIDED COLLEGES FOR WOMEN

One can find many renowned Govt.- sponsored and Govt.- aided colleges in whole West Bengal now who are showing sufficient initiative in different fields of job- oriented learning and placement for their girl students. At first I would discuss about situation of colleges for women in Kolkata and nearby areas. Basanti Devi College (Govt. sponsored college, NAAC reaccredited Grade- B) is offering Certificate course in English language training (to get placement in BPO, Banking sector, Media, Hospitality etc.) and giving good opportunity to build successful career in MNC, Private Companies as well as in Government Companies (Certificate & Diploma in Export Import Management- U.G.C sponsored). We can find U.G.C sponsored career- oriented courses in Calcutta Girls' College- 1) advertisement and sales promotion 2) tax- practice and procedure. This famous college provides special training classes for Information Technology. Vivekananda College For Women, Barisha, Kolkata started its Computer training centre (UGC- NRC) in January 2002. The following courses are offered to the students- 1) Basic computer knowledge, 2) DTP, 3) Web page design, 4) Basic programming knowledge, 5) Basic internet knowledge. Vidyasagar College For Women (NAAC accredited with Grade B) has formed its placement cell in 2014 as per the recommendation of NAAC PEER Team with a motto to encourage the students for future career orientation. Placement cell of this college has organized a significant seminar in the month of February, 2017 where DR. Abhijit Bhattacharyya (Associate Professor and Assistant Dean of University of Arkansas Little Rock, USA) delivered lecture on opportunities of studying abroad for Indian students. If we analyse situation of Victoria Institution (College) we can notice that the college is offering career oriented computer course in collaboration with WEBEL. Its computer centre was undoubtedly quite active since 1990. Women's College, Kolkata has invited different companies for placement of its enthusiastic students in IT Companies, Retail, and Front office Jobs. Mock tests and training programmes are held regularly to make the students more equipped for the present competitive job market. The different Govt. and Non- Govt. jobs are regularly updated in their website by the alumni association. This college is offering annual certificate course

on spoken English. Surendranath College For Women (Grade B++) has collaborated with IIT Bombay as part of the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology NMEICT for providing Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) courses relevant to its students- Libre Office, Writer, Calc, Impress, GIMP, Blender, Inkscape, Ktouch. On completion of the course through video tool-spoken tutorial students are provided certificates by IIT Bombay. South Calcutta Girls' College (B++ Grade) made an agreement and signed MOU with George Telegraph Training Institute regarding crash course of three months on Front and Back Office Management, Spoken English and Personality Development. Tata Consultancy Service (Kolkata branch) arranged for an interview for campus recruitment for projects in Business Process Service (BPS) division and data processing role. This college is running WEBEL Computer training course, Tailoring and Beautician courses. Sivanath Sastri College has signed MOUs with Tata Consultancy Services and Pricewaterhouse and Coopers and they vigorously train and recruit capable students in corporate world. A "Campus to Corporate" scheme is in place in collaboration with TCS. A valuable course in Communicative English is being offered in collaboration with the Brainware to prepare deserving students for competitive job market. IDP and International Management Institute visited this college to screen capacity of students to increase their employability on a regular basis. Career building related activities are popular enough in Muralidhar Girls' College (NAAC B++):- 1) Rice Education Talent Search Examination on December 11, 2016, 2) TIMESPRO (Times of India Group) Career development and Placement Seminar on November 26, 2016. Rani Birla Girls' College has introduced a three year undergraduate degree course in Fashion and Apparel Design from the 2008-2009 academic session under C.U. This renowned college offers a lucrative opportunity to students to build up a career at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> year from college campus itself in textile and garments. Jogamaya Devi College (Grade B) has a vibrant placement cell which acts as a facilitating body between the recruiter and students. Well-known companies conducted campus interview here and many students were selected. Gokhale Memorial Girls' College, Kolkata is running various skill development courses- 1) Diploma in Pre- Primary Teachers Education- Montessori, 2) Supervisory Skills and HR Associate (PIMT), 3) Computer Course. Pranavananda Institute of Management and Technology, an initiative of Bharat Sevashram Sangha, is conducting those courses.

Sarojini Naidu College for Women (Govt.- sponsored) is arranging placement training by TCS. Hiralal Mazumdar Memorial College for Women (B++) is offering wide opportunity for choosing vocational courses in Pharmaceutical Marketing Management, Agricultural Biotechnology and Industrial Microbiology making collaboration with Guru Nanak Institute of Pharmaceutical Science and Technology. Besides this, the college has certificate courses in Communicative English and Computer Literacy arranged in collaboration with Sri Sarada Math Rasik Bhita, Dakshineswar and a MOU was signed with RICE.

Hooghly Women's College has given scope of studying many value added courses such as Computer Course, Spoken English and Multimedia. Serampore Girls' College is running

add on courses like Spoken English and Basic Computer Training.

Bijoy Krishna Girls' College, Howrah (NAAC B accredited College with CPE status) has a separate wing for certificate and diploma based UGC sponsored career- oriented courses on different subjects:- 1) E- Commerce, 2) Computer Data- care Management, 3) Industrial Microbiology, 4) Food and Nutrition, 5) Functional English, 6) Insurance Management.

Raniganj Girls' College ( NAAC accredited B+ College) has successfully arranged coaching classes for entry in services for S.C., S.T., OBC, Minority, physically challenged and economically disadvantaged students( UGC sponsored). Asansol Girls' College ( Grade A), a premier institution of coalfield zone and industrial region of West Bengal is offering a number of career- oriented programmes- 1) Community Development, (After successful completion a student can join various NGOs or Govt. survey works.) 2) Travel and Tourism management, 3) Communicative and Functional English, 4) Information and Computer Science Technology. The career counselling centre of the college mentioned above is equipped with UGC- Network resource centre. With support from the U.G.C, Durgapur Women's College (B++ Grade) has introduced Remedial Coaching for students belonging to the reserved( SC and ST) categories, Minority Communities and those belonging to BPL families. These students benefit a lot from in- campus tutoring under the special coaching programme.

Any student of Berhampore Girls' College (Murshidabad) can take career related assistance from the career counselling cell of the college. Here free of cost coaching is given for entry into different types of Govt. services such as P.S.C (WBCS, Misc, Clerkship), School Service Commission, Staff Selection Commission, Bank, Rail, Defence Services etc. to the students belonging to SC, ST, OBC, PH, Minorities, BPL categories. General category students can also apply with a nominal fee. In Krishnagar Women's College (B+ Grade), IQAC (under the UGC scheme of Career Counselling) has encouraged the college to facilitate professional courses and jobs for students. Professional agencies like Frankfinn and P.C. Chandra were invited for student counselling. The college has UGC approved Coaching Classes for entry in service unit. This unit trains students for Bank, SSC, PSC, Rail and other competitive exams.

Mahishadal Girls' College (Midnapore) has a quite active career counselling cell (UGC funded). The college runs Coaching Class for entry in services for SC/ST/ OBC and Minorities. This scheme (for non- creamy layer) is funded by UGC.

Colleges of North Bengal such as Balurghat Mahila Mahavidyalaya (B+ Grade), Thakur Panchanan Mahila Mahavidyalaya and Malda Women's College (NAAC accredited Grade B) are also making sincere effort for all-round development of their deserving girl students.

#### IV. COLLEGES WITH SPECIAL STATUS

Some colleges of West Bengal where faculty members are not recruited through WBPSC or WBCSC are giving

enormous endeavour in the field of career- building of capable students. Loreto College, which was established by the Religious of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary ( founder of the order- Mary Ward) offers various Enrichment Courses- 1)Human Rights and Empowerment, 2)Calligraphy ,3)GIS, 4)Advanced Computer,5) Fashion Designing, 6)Web Designing, 7) Photography, 8) Jewellery Designing, 9) Public Speaking Course, 10) Legal Awareness, 11) Interior Designing, 12) Public Service Examination Coaching.

Women's Christian College, Kolkata (NAAC reaccredited A Grade College) is very keen to open the world of professional opportunities to its students. This well-reputed college has conducted a two month course in collaboration with Webel- Opsis Geomatics Academy which familiarized students with the QGIS software. Spoken English course has obtained sufficient importance here (in collaboration with School of Languages, Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Golpark). Other short term professional courses are- 1) Certificate Course on Climate Change, 2) FOSS Course (Free & Open Source Software), certified by IIT, Mumbai is completely free with flexible class schedules.

Shri Shikshayatan College (A Grade) was established by the Marwaris, a linguistic minority, and it is managed by Shikshayatan Foundation (formerly known as Marwari Balika Vidyalaya Society). This college runs various value added courses to give students an edge in the intensely competitive job market. Those are- 1) Tally ( ERP 9), 2) DOEACC:- Basic Computer Course- A scheme of All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) and Department of Information Technology (DIT), Ministry Of Communication and Information Technology ( MCIT) of Govt. of India, 3) Hindi Journalism, 4) Multimedia Course.

Ramkrishna Sarada Mission Vivekananda Vidyabhavan (A Grade) is a partly residential college for women which initiated a 52 week preparatory course for Public Sector Jobs like Bank, Rail, PSC, WBSSC etc. in collaboration with the George School of Competitive Exams (GSCE) in 2015. Other career oriented programmes of this college are- 1) Certificate Course in Spoken English and Soft Skill Development in collaboration with Acharya Institutes, Bengaluru.

Certificate Course in Basic Computer Training in collaboration with WEBEL.

## V. CONCLUSION

Finally we can say that quality of teaching and learning in women's colleges of West Bengal has increased overcoming many obstacles and hindrances. Kanyashree Prakalpa undoubtedly has played a pivotal role in the emancipation and enhancement of strength of girl students here. Kanyashree uses a social safety net mechanism that has shown a high degree of success in transforming the lives of women. The term "education" encompasses secondary and higher secondary education, as well as the various vocational, technical and sports courses available for a specific age group. Technological upliftment definitely contributed a lot in running of career- oriented courses in colleges besides conventional subjects. All endeavour of giving girl students a better footing in both the economic and social spheres would be a large research topic and would take place in various academic and intellectual discussions related to Women's Studies here.

## REFERENCES

- [1] [www.Wbkanyashree.gov.in](http://www.Wbkanyashree.gov.in) (accessed on October 20, 2018).
- [2] Official websites of various colleges mentioned in the article accessed in 2017 and 2018.
- [3] Wikipedia resources (seen in 2017 and 2018 for data collection on various Colleges of WB).
- [4] [www.census2011.co.in/census/state/west+bengal.html](http://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/west+bengal.html) (accessed on October 27, 2018).
- [5] Report - a) Infoscape- September 1, 2016 (Vol. 1) and April 1, 2017 (Vol.3)—Newsletter of Hiralal Mazumdar Memorial College For Women.
- [6] Newspaper - The Statesman and The Anandabazar Patrika: relevant reports and articles.