

RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND GIRL CHILD IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

*“You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation”
.....Bringham Young*

According to Nelson Mandela “Education is the most powerful weapon ,we can use to change the world”. Education as an enterprise provides equal opportunity to people to grow in their life irrespective of caste, class, religion, age, gender etc. Education is the process of development of a person from infancy to maturity, while girl child is generally discriminated in India. She continued to be discriminated and denied education due to various reasons despite being various plans and policies of the Government of India. This research tries to find out those various problems and suggest viable solutions so that at least educationally they can come at par with men in the society. For this, right to education needs to be properly implemented, keeping in view of the special requirement of girls/women. This small research is an attempt in this direction, whereby the current educational status and condition of girl/women has been analyzed in the light of data and their historical background in India.

INTRODUCTION

Rights are vital conditions for healthy life style and without them human personality cannot develop completely. For every child to attain full personality development is to assured these rights. A right may be defined as a claim or power of an individual against others which are recognized and enforced by the state. Prof Laski defines rights as "those conditions of social life without which no man can seek, in general, to be himself at his best." According to T. H. Green "Right is a power claimed and recognized as contributory to common good." "Thus, right means some opportunities and privileges that are granted by the state to its people for the development of their inner potentialities.

Rights consist of those privileges in the absence of which nobody can attain his best self. A right has to satisfy five conditions those are: (a) the rights are claims of citizens from the state, (b) it aims at the development or enrichment of the personality, (c) it promotes social good, (d) it must be recognized by the state, and (e) they are regulated by the state in the interest of the community.

The citizens of a state enjoy a number of privileges or rights. Many thinkers believe that education is only the process through which one attains individual full development. As according to Herbert Spencer it is complete living of human being. Education is that constructive process which drags a person out from darkness. The right to education is reflected in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Article 26 states: "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages."

Till the 18th century India had a distinct tradition of advanced scholarship in Hindu gurukulas, Buddhist Viharas and Quranic Madrasas. About 20 percent of Indian children between the ages of 6 and 14 years were not attending school even in 2005–06, and about 10 percent of children of that age group had never been enrolled in any school at all. The neglect is particularly strong for Indian girls, nearly half of whom were out of school in large parts of India (e.g. Bihar) in the same year. In this respect, South Asia (including India) has remained very much closer to sub-Saharan Africa than to the rest of Asia. And even within South Asia, India is not doing particularly well. Education is fundamental human right and every child is entitled to it. Education of any child

start from family and mother is the first teacher of child. In rural and urban, literate and illiterate, secluded and employed or rich and poor, parents and family members talk about boys and girls rather than use the collective category 'children.' Deliberate discrimination against girl children takes several forms including, female infanticide, medical care, nutritional denial, sexual exploitation, sex abuse, female feticide.

The education system does not function in isolation from the society of which it is a part. Unequal social, economic and power equations deeply influence children's access to education and their participation in the learning process. This is evident in the disparities in education access and attainment between different social and economic groups in India. The world cannot reach its goal to have every child complete primary school without India. To overcome above issues government provided free and compulsory education to children in age of 6 to 14 years under SARV SHIKSHA ABHIYAN of Right to Education Act 2009. The Indian government has expressed a strong commitment towards education to all. However, India still has one of the lowest female literacy rates in Asia. The low rates of female literacy not only have a negative impact on women's lives but also the country's economy as well. But the status of girl child in India seems to be an average. The present day girl is the mother of tomorrow and what Napoleon once said that is true, give me educated mother and I will give you the great nation.

For nation to be developed it must concentrate on girl education because ignoring her, keeping her illiterate means creating ignorant generation. So the primary objective of the study is to see that what are effective implementation of government policies to Right to Education and status of girl child in today scenario in India. The new millennium is the age of awakening of girls. They are trying to compete with male in all spheres of life. There are many people who oppose girls' education. They say that the proper sphere of girls is the home and argue that the money spent on girl's education is wasted. This view is wrong, because girl's education can bring a silent revolution in the society. Girls' education plays a vital role through up gradation of depriving marginalized sections, especially girls in society. Because girls are the back bone of society, they are the mother of the race and guardian of future generation, so that education is very much necessary. Girls must be educated, for it is the girls who mould the next generation and hence the destiny of the country.

GIRL CHILD AND RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Girls' education is a big opportunity for India to be developed socially, economically and in all sectors. Educated girls' are the weapons who yield positive impact on the Indian society through their contribution at home and professional fields. They are the reason of improved economy in the country as well as society. At elementary and secondary level girls' enrolment rate has been slightly increased from 2009 to 2015. Parental attitude, lack of infrastructure, lack of security, superstitions related to girls, socio-economic condition of parents are the major challenges for promoting girls' education in India. Higher authorities, community members, NGOs and all citizens of India must have to take responsibility to eradicate different barriers related to girls' education from our society. There was a time when people thought that it was not necessary to educate girls but now we have begun to realize that girls' education is essential.

STATUS OF GIRL CHILD EDUCATION IN INDIA

It is quite well known that India has made progress in education, but not enough and definitely not at a pace we would have like to see. Even after seven decades of independence, almost sixty percent of girls/women are not properly literate. Most of them have never been to school or any other education programme. Recent surveys (even those done after the launching of Total Literacy Campaigns) do not reveal any dramatic change. According to a survey published by 'Save the Children', only 14 in every 100 girls in our cities reach Class XII. While ahead of rural India, where only 1 in 100 reach Class XII, this is still abysmal. Even the Ministry of Human Resources data, based on school reports, shows that only 33% girls reach class XII. This is not to take away from the dramatic improvements in enrolment, which is almost 100% for girls at the primary level with more girls enrolled in primary schools than boys. Enrolment, however, is not the same as attending or completing school. A

UNESCO study puts primary school attendance for girls at 81% and secondary school attendance at a mere 49%.²

The literacy rate of women is much lower compared to men. In the Indian society which is patriarchal, girls have fewer privileges and lower status than boys. Very few girls are admitted to schools and among them many are school drop outs. Many girls cannot attend school due to conservative cultural attitude. Gender inequality reinforces itself in education as it is factually proved that the rate of literacy for women is 65.46% against 82.14% of men according to 2011 Census. The Census report also shows that the rate of literacy of Indian women is even lower than the national average literacy rate that is 74.04%. Studies show too that the rate of unemployment in case of young females belonging to the age group of 15-24 is 11.5% whereas for young males of the same age group it is 9.8%. In India a survey was conducted which showed results supporting this fact that the rate of infant mortality is related inversely to female rate of literacy and level of education. The survey as well suggested correlation between economic growth and education.

LITERACY RATES IN INDIA

CENSUS YEAR	PERSONS	MALE	FEMALE
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29
2001	64.84	75.26	53.67
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46

Source: Census Reports of India

Literacy in India is a key for socio-economic progress, and the Indian literacy rate has grown to 74.00% (2011 figure) from 12% at the end of British rule in 1947. Although this was a greater than sixfold improvement, the level is below the world average literacy rate of 84%. Despite government programmes, India's literacy rate increased only 'sluggishly'. The 2011 census indicated a 2001–2011 decadal literacy growth of 9.2%, which is slower than the growth seen during the previous decade. An old 1990 study estimated that it would take until 2060 for India to achieve universal literacy at then-current rate of progress. There is a wide gender disparity in the literacy rate in India: effective literacy rates (age 7 and above) in 2011 were 82.14% for men and 65.46% for women.

There are 29 states in India and 7 Union Territory, year 2011 which shows that **Kerela has the highest literacy rate with 91.98%** then Mizoram with 89.40%. According the census **Rajasthan is the last in this table with only 52.66% female literacy rate**, then with only few percentage Bihar is in the list having 53.33%. According to the report, the growth in enrolment of girls has also increased than the past decades. In 2006 girls' enrolment was 43.3% and slowly and gradually it raise to 45.05% in 2007 where enrolment rate of girls according to 2008 was 45.58% but with the coming of the Right to Education Act in 2009 it results in providing right to get access to have education and the result is positive that from that year onwards there is increase in enrolment ratio of girl child that it was 45.98% in 2009 and in 2010 it seems to be 46.05% and slowly and gradually it was 48.02% in 2013-14.

The Constitutional Mandate in 1950 made education a directive principle of state policy. It states that “The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years.” 'Right to Education' was under the Directive Principle of State Policy. **According to 86th Amendment Act 2002, eleventh Fundamental Duty was added in the main fundamental duties, which is the duty of parents to send their children in the age group of 6 to 14 years to school.** In the same year new article was inserted in Fundamental Rights with reference to that is Article 21A which describe “The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6 to 14 years in such manner as the state may by law, determine ”¹⁰ as the government have sufficient amount of resources that it can provide education to all children under Fundamental Right.

Education does not mean only acquiring the knowledge of subjects but to develop complete and responsible human being. It improves the value and excellence of one's life as well. Mothers who have gone to school have healthier, better-nourished children, who are most likely to succeed. Also, girl who goes to school and go to college marry later, have fewer kids, and have improved parental care. Education makes us more

independent and aware of one's own rights. Thus education is only that factor which results in better life of an individual. All this could be only possible with the efforts of government policies and plans under Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan under Right to Education Act, 2009 for the improvement of girl child status and also for the development of nation as whole because no nation can develop with its left behind marginalized section. Thus is the result that government of India gave more emphases on girl child through Right To Education Act and wishes to be more developed among other nations not educationally but economically also. Education will not only ensure more participation in development processes but also enhance awareness of rights and entitlements in society, so that girls can enhance their participation in society as equal to boys.

CONCLUSION

The present day education system in India has come a long way and the age old traditions have undergone a new makeover. Government of India is doing lots of efforts in this field so that the objective of inclusive growth can be achieved very soon by it. A great achievement of the Indian government is a big jump in the literacy rate from 18.3% in 1950-51 to 74.04% in 2010-11. Such an achievement is the result of a lot of efforts by the Indian government in the education sector. The government is improving the country's education status to enhance the standard of living of the people and also to achieve other goals like, overcoming the problem of poverty and unemployment, social equality, equal income distribution, etc. Right to Education and its impact on girl education can be seen through following facts:

- The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) disclosed that private school enrolment for rural children in the 6-14 age group increased from 16.3% in 2005-06 to 24.3% in 2010.
- There is growth in enrolment ratio of girls which was 43.3% in 2006 but after Right to Education Act in 2009 there is increase in enrolment ratio of girl child that 48.02% in 2013-14 suddenly in 2014-15 the enrolment ration of girls came down to 47.84%.
- The dropout ratio of girls seems to be 61.5% in 2006 , after Right to Education Act, 2009 we can see there are good results that it came down to 47.7% in 2010-11. In 2011-12 the dropout ratio of girls rises to 52.2%.
- The literacy rates of female found to be 8.86% in 1951, in 2011 it was 65.46% after the implementation Of Right to Education Act We can see that it is approximately 16.68% less than the literacy rates of males that is 82.14% in the same year.

- Top Five States/UTs of Female Literacy Rate of the year 2011 which shows that Kerela has the highest literacy rate with 91.98% then Mizoram (89.40%), Lakshadweep (88.25%), Tripura (83.15%) and Goa (81.84%)
- Least Five States/UTs of Female Literacy Rate of the year 2011, Rajasthan is the last with only 52.66% female literacy rate, Bihar (53.33%), Jharkhand (56.21%) Jammu & Kashmir having (58.01%) and Arunchal Pradesh (59.57%)
- In the words of Urvashi Sahni, an Indian girls' education activist, "even without all of the „developmental and economic goodies“ that come from girls' education, we should care about educating girls because it is inherently valuable to them and is their right". □ Girls' education is a powerful weapon for development of any nation. □ Educated girls and women aspire to become leaders and thus expand a country's leadership and entrepreneurial talent.

CHALLENGES OF GIRLS' EDUCATION IN INDIA: It is generally accepted that there are many benefits and rights for the child in Indian Society where Indian people considered child is form of god. But there is one section of Indian society which is being deprived of most of these benefits and rights. We can see that women's movement is the result that today girls can get access to have education for their overall development which was their one of most precious and important demand from the society and the government of India. Thus finally they get this right but still Girl child education is affected by many issues such as poverty, social values, inadequate school facilities, shortage of female teachers, and gender bias in curriculum which became there challenges in getting the Right to Education. They have to face challenges and hindrances from familial to societal levels to administration level also.

The education of girls is an integral part of national development. We can help girls get the education they deserve by supporting the following:

- **Educating Boys about Gender Equality:** Gender equality is good for everyone; boys and girls, women and men. There are societal norms that boys are superior to girls and girls are inferior and subordinate to them but in reality it is not true. God has created everyone it is the society which creates this difference and a line of separation. So the notion that all are born equal and free should not be bound by any section of society. Thus boys should be given education about gender equality.
- **Scholarships for Girls:** Scholarships help girls with tuition fees, school uniforms, school supplies and safe transportation, so there should be more scholarships plans for girls so that they did not depend upon any other source for economy spend on their future education. There are already some such policies like AICTE Pragati Scholarship Scheme, Begum Hazrat Mahal Scholarship Scheme, CBSE Single Girl Child Scholarship Scheme, Swami Vivekananda Single Girl Child Scholarship Scheme and many such others but the number of these scholarship should be more so that more girls can get access and benefit of it.
- **Challenging Gender Roles:** Raising awareness at family and community levels will promote positive attitudes towards education for girls. It's also important to engage parents in open dialogue regarding commonly held gender stereotypes.
- **Preventing Violence in Schools** –Schools should provide and ensure the safety of girl child in campus and to build networks of peers, role models and mentors, train female teachers, and offers social support to help create a safe space for girls to learn.
- **No Fixed Schooling Hours:** Fixed schooling hours do not suitable for girls in rural areas, as they are needed for domestic work at home or in farms and fields during these hours. This is one of the causes of lower participation rates of girls in education. The enrolment rates of girls and their retention can be improved if educational facilities are made available to girls during periods suitable to them when they are free from domestic chores. Flexible school timings have been tried in Rajasthan through the Shiksha Karmi Project and Lok Jumbish, and the results are encouraging.

- **Quality of Education:** We need to divert our attention from enrollment rates, infrastructure etc. to learning outcomes to ensure the young generation get access to quality education specially in case of girl child.
- **Provide incentives:** Government and schools for proper implementation of right to education should provide facilities like free uniforms, free textbooks, free exercise books, attendance scholarship, free bus passes etc.
- **Curriculum:** Government should make the curriculum relevant to the lives of poor children who are engaged in battle for survival and also they could not find any difficulty in understanding this curriculum.
- As far as opportunities are concerned, the government should make sure to provide Primary Schools and an Upper Primary School at 1 to 3 km distance respectively. Recruitment of female staff is also essential for schools. Girls are often taken out of school to fulfil family responsibilities such as caring for younger siblings and many others.
- **Government Responsibility:** Government of India plays very important and significant role not in making policies and programmes for welfare of citizens but also in its implementation thus after the implementation of the Right to Education Act government should provide aid and grants on time without any delay.
- **Responsibility of Informal Authorities:** Higher authorities, community members, NGOs and all citizens of India must have to take responsibility to eradicate different barriers related to girls' education from our society.
- **Awareness Program's :** The proper implementation of any policy could be seen when the program reaches to its aim and moving in right path for this government should aware the general public about this Right to Education Act and explain the policy in details so that public get aware and can have proper access to it. Educational planning should be decentralize, bring it closer to people so that it reflects the special needs and aspirations of the community

Thus more educated girls and women aspire to become leaders and expand a country's leadership and entrepreneurial talent. Parents have lower aspirations for their daughters than for their sons, and so the daughters are internalised that they don't get feel motivated about them self and think themselves lower as compared to boys. But if given the chance, girls and women have the confident and skills to be change- makers then she aspire to be great leader and work for a nation as similar she work for maintain unity of house. Also, women leading in their communities can make a different policies and programs that improve family and community well-being. Finally in the words of Brigham Young we can say, "You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation.