

## Create Space for Girls' Education

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### ABSTRACT

Indian education system is a biggest system in the world, where primary, middle, secondary, higher secondary and college plays a vital role in sharpening the personality of individual. As India ranks second in its population among all countries and also being under developing, still it is a home for largest illiterates. The only weapon which can remove this dark spot is education. Thus education is a stepping stone in once life which transforms illiterates to literates. In this pertain one must not neglect the importance of educating a girl child. As girls' education is very important for the country to fully develop. Ignoring and keeping a girl illiterate means we are creating an ignorant and illiterate future generation. An attempt has been made to expose how Nation can find its progress by educating girls'. The main objectives of the study are to highlight barriers and advantages of girl child education. Further suggestions have been made as to how girls' education helps in sustainable development and the implementation.

**Key words:** Education, Girl child and Sustainable development.

### Introduction

**“I ask you all so earnestly to open girls' schools in every village and try to uplift them. If the conditions of women are raised, then their noble actions, glorify the name of the country.” Swami Vivekananda.**

There was a time when people thought that it was not necessary to educate girls. Now the trend has changed one has begun to realise the essential of girls' education, as they are trying to compete with men in all spheres of life and showing excellent performance.

### NEED OF THE STUDY

Education empowers a grown up girl to become economically independent. They will be able to stand up for their rights. At

the same time education of rural girls is equally important. Progress of a country depends on girls' education. Educated girls can brightened the future of their country by the good upbringing of their children. Education gives a girl freedom of thoughts, broadens her outlook and makes her aware of her duties and responsibilities. There are people who oppose girls' education. They say that the proper sphere of girls is the home. So they argue that the money spent on girls education is waste. This view is wrong, because girls' education can bring about a silent resolution in our nation. Hence this study has been taken up

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

“Create Space for Girls' Education”

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

**Education:** Education is the process of providing information to an inexperienced person to help him or her develop physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, politically and economically. It means the process of helping an individual to acquire adequate and appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes and values known as cognitive, psychomotor and effective behaviours to be able to function optimally as a citizen.

**Girl-child:** The girl-child is a biological female offspring from the birth to eighteen years of age. It is the age before one becomes young adult. This period covers the creche, nursery or early childhood (0-5 years) primary (6-12). During this period, the young child is totally under the care of the adult who may be her parents or guardians and older siblings. It is made up of infancy, childhood, early and adolescent stages of development. During this period, the girl child is malleable, builds and develops her personality and character.

**Sustainable Development: Brundtland** (1987) "Development that meets the needs of the present without jeopardizing the ability of future generation to meet their needs."

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

### BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION

**01. Economic Factors** – As a result of economic condition, choice has to be made for whom to send to school. Most often it is the girl child that remains in home. Due to poverty girls are withdrawn from schools. Though

education should be free and compulsory, there are a lot of costs associated with sending girls' to school. The cost of uniforms, textbooks or bus fare can be too much to bear for a family living in poverty.

**02. Distance to school** – In many parts of the developing world, the nearest primary school to a particular community might be a 4 or 5 hour long walk away. On top of that, girls may face dangers or violence on the long way to school, so many parents opt to keep their daughters at home.

**03. Violence at school** – Once arriving to school, girls may face various forms of violence at the hands of teachers, peers and other people in the school environment. If parents find out school isn't safe for their daughters, they may withdraw them from school.

**04. Gender norms** – Typically, girls are asked to fetch the water, take care of their younger siblings and to help their mothers cook and clean. Due to this, girls may not have the opportunity to attend school because their contributions to the household are valued more than their personal education.

**05. Poverty** – In many parts of the developing world, children's health is a big concern, especially if they're facing poverty. If there's not enough food or sufficient clean water to keep girls nourished and healthy, they may not be well enough to attend school.

**06. Early marriage and pregnancy** – When girls are forced to marry young, they are often pulled out of school at a very critical age in their development. The transition from primary to secondary education is key for girls to

gain the life skills they need to escape the cycle of poverty. Yet, this is often the same time that many girls leave school due to early marriages or pregnancy. Girls who become pregnant are often discouraged from attending school because of the stigma surrounding them.

**07. Discrimination-** Education is meant for all, in fact it is the fundamental human rights of every child whether boy or girl. It usually so happens that the intelligent girl is made deprived of opportunity to go to school, while allowing a less intelligent or least ambitious boy to go to school. Therefore no discrimination should be made as to who goes to school and who does not, as education recognises and helps to unlock the potentials of every child.

**08. High Dropout Rate-** This is seen more in rural areas, although they may be enrolled at the beginning of academic, but do not remain in school till the end, as they are taken out of school to share family responsibilities, such as caring for younger siblings, domestic work. Girls are more likely to be taken out of school when they reach puberty as high premium is placed on virginity.

**09. Religious and Cultural Pressure-** Many a times girls' are not sent to school due to religious and cultural pressure.

**10. Non Female Teachers-** Because of the absence of female teachers to teach, girls' are held back from going to school.

## **ADVANTAGES OF GIRLS' EDUCATION**

**01. Future Educated Generations –** If a girl is educated, it's more likely to ensure that her children also receive better education. Educating a girl child means making the next generation well educated, full of virtues, confident and capable to do good for the family, for the society and for the country. As they claim investing in a girl's education is investing in a nation. **“Give me a good mother and I will give you a great nation.” Napoleon.**

**02. Lowering Infant and Child Mortality Rate-** Children born to an educated mother are born healthy and less likely to die before their first birthday.

**03. Lowering Maternal Mortality Rate-** Educated mothers are less likely to die during pregnancy and can prevent themselves from deadly infections and diseases.

**04. Reduced Child Marriage-** Educated girls' tend to marry at a right age, when they feel they are better able to bear and care for their children.

**05. Decrease in Population Explosion-** Educated girls know the problem of population explosions, they tend to have fewer and healthier babies. Knowledge of nutrition and family planning.

**06. Increase involvement in Political process-** Educated girls are more likely to participate in political discussions, meetings and decision-making, which in turn promotes a more representative and effective government.

**07. Decreased Domestic and Sexual Violence-** Educated girls are less likely to be victims of domestic and sexual violence even though they cannot

tolerate such in their family and in neighbourhood.

- 08. Improve Socio-Economic Growth-** Educated girls' have a greater chance of escaping from poverty, to lead healthier and more productive lives and in raising the standard of living for their children, families and communities.

### SUGGESTING FACTORS TO HELP SUSTAIN GIRLS' EDUCATION

- 01. Parental and community involvement** -Families and communities must be important partners with schools in developing curriculum and managing children's education.
- 02. 02. Low-cost and flexible timetables** - Basic education should be free or cost very little. Where possible, there should be stipends and scholarships to compensate families for the loss of girls' household labour. Also, school hours should be flexible so children can help at home and still attend classes.
- 03. 03. Schools close to home, with women teachers** -Many parents worry about girls travelling long distances on their own. Many parents also prefer to have daughters taught by women.
- 04. 04. Preparation for school** -Girls do best when they receive early childhood care, which enhances their self-esteem and prepares them for school.
- 05. Relevant curricula** -Learning materials should be relevant to the girl's background and be in the local language. They should also

avoid reproducing gender stereotypes.

- 06. School Infrastructure-** Schools should have good ventilated classrooms, sitting arrangements, drinking water facilities with separate toileting facilities.

### POLICIES AND SCHEMS FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION

A focus on girls' education was put in action since:

- 1986- National Policy on Education.
- 1992- Programme of Action.
- 2001- SAS.
- 2005- National Curriculum Framework.
- 2010- National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education.

Schemes such as National Programme for the Education of Girl at the Elementary Level, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme, both ensuring inclusion and quality education for girls. Mahila Samakhya Programme was launched in 10 states targeting marginalised sections of rural women.

Access to education was also facilitated by separate schools for girls, availability of open learning resources, residential schooling, coaching facilities, scholarships, textbooks, uniforms and transport including bicycles. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (known as RTE) Act 2010 made a new road map for gender equity in education in India.

## CONCLUSION

Education is basic human rights that should be exercised fully in all nations. Though constitution provides equal opportunity in the field of education for both the genders, but it never was brought into force in the true spirit to render justice to girls to be par with boys. Girls' always remained at receiving end. Despite various girls upliftment schemes are brought into force they are misgoverned and the benefit required to reach the vary point for girls' education always leaked making such scheme redundant and futile. The need of the hour is to create lasting space for competent girls' only then said girls' can haul over the system.

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