Promoting Gender Equality through Education in India

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Abstract--- In recent years, we continue to hear many rapes of children and women either in the house or at their work place. India approves a tougher new anti-rape law to punish sex crimes, including death for repeat rape offenders. Girls and women are attacked every day across the country, particularly young people, are sick of it. The students and public started to protest. The crime against women and children are not the main reason for protests, instead the pervasive gender inequality in India. But always the questions remains, how to improve the status of women and girl in India? All sectors of our society including students, academia, politician, public, civil and judiciary, the police and the government have to give voice against gender equality. Gender equality norms is fundamental thing in India for long term sustainable change in developing new systems, enforcement law, policy makers and bureaucrats. This chapter emphasis and highlights educational needs and gender equity.

Keywords--- Gender, Women, Education, Equity.

Introduction

Gender Parity is the ratio of female to male ratio in participation in both in private and public schools. Gender parity and Gender equity together measures the nations progress towards societal needs and goals. Educating all sector girls and women's is a must to improve nations’ economy. Therefore, concentrating on issues of children belonging to scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and Muslims, disability, poverty and child labour and facilitating the women’s participation in education, employment and providing equal opportunities reduces gender parity and inequality. The rate of school completion can be increased by reducing gender gaps at primary and secondary level of schooling. It is to be noted that the family background and economic situations predominantly with draw them from secondary and higher education.

Gender Education

India accounts for 30 percent of the world’s total illiterate population, wherein around 70 percent of these illiterates are women. As per 2001 Census data, women constitute 48 percent of the total population in India out of which 46 percent of women are still found to be illiterate. Problems of gender disparity and discrimination begin with access to schooling (Madhumita & Ramya, 2008). Hence, educating females make stronger impact on social and global developments. Also, incomplete school education affects the health and nutritional status of women (Mehrotra, 2006). Furthermore, 56 percent of illiterate women suffer from anemia, the percentage declines to 40 percent in the case of the women who have completed at least high School. According to Govinda and Bandyopadhyay in 2007, there are six zones of classifications, which have been categorized as: Zone 1 – children never enrolled in schools, Zone 2 – children drop out before completing primary level of schooling, Zone
3 – children entered primary schooling but at risk of dropping out, Zone 4 – children completed lower primary level but cannot complete upper primary level of schooling, Zone 5 – children drop out before completing upper primary schooling, Zone 6 – children completes only primary schoolings. This necessitates the importance of education more precisely for female children. The reasons for parental under-investment in female education are diverse and well-known (Subrahmanian, 2005). Moreover, female labour has been identified in many communities to support their family becomes big issue for dropping out children from schools. The early marriages, gender parity, caste inequalities, poverty, geographical locations are studied across all social groups, which exhibited greater male social status has been the predominant reason (Jha & Jhingran, 2002).

**Steps to Improve Gender Equality**

1. **Women and Girls as Policy Makers**

   In every decision making women and girls voice has been excluded. This starts from global, nation, state, district, town, village and house of every one. Rather asking our girls to fetch water, caring their siblings etc., we have to give importance by including their needs and decisions while making plans and polices for our betterments. Girls have to give complete safety by nullifying the risks of sexual assaults both in schools and in the surroundings. This gives strength to girls to continue their schooling educations.

2. **Access to Resources**

   The girls have to be given equal importance to access science and technology resources. In India, majority of girls are not accessed to use computers, cellular Phones, tabs and other internet related features. The role of girls in science and technology is to give equal opportunities and rights along with self confidence so as to enrich their skills.

3. **Stopping Child Marriage and Sexual Harassment**

   The girls are starting their primary education but secondary education is always remains a question. It was found by many researchers that the reason behind is child marriage. Each girl has to complete their education to provide them equal opportunities. The major barrier to discontinue their education is insecurity to girls. Also, sexual harassment to girls, both inside and outside the school campus is the major reason given by parents for marrying their daughters at their early age. Hence, the protection to female children becomes mandatory and awareness through sex education at school levels to be infused.

4. **Need Counseling to Girls and Parents**

   There is progress in increasing access to education but the degree is slow. The proper counseling to girls and parents is needed, which could be a strategy for improvement in this process. The level of confidence within female children would make them successful as future Scientists, Engineers and/or Entrepreneurs. Hence, educating parents becomes important for every girl to come out of their homes for shaping them as good citizens.
5. **Empower Mothers**

Educating mothers will educate the whole family, in turn whole nation. This may be one of the good initiatives, which has to be started in all our villages. All mothers have to be educated formally with the basic education in all villages and districts. This has to be implemented as a progressive policy. The reason being, educating all mothers in a community will enhance and empower their lives. Thus, empowering mothers will also bring their daughters to school.

6. **Give Importance to Women’s Role**

The nation’s economy and financial status depends upon the family's growth and prosperity with regard to their socio-economic conditions. Hence, every family has to be improved by paying equally. This message has to be highlighted through media for uplifting all community women workers and every state has to adopt the policies like pledges, campaign, laws and other financial programmes to replicate it.

7. **Powering Women**

The equal rights and power have to be given to women at their respective work places. Also, due respect and dignity should be provided for all community women’s in their working environment. Moreover, harassing women in their work place needs to be curbed and high penalty and punishments have to be enacted. It is to be noted that equal importance at their work place will empower women. Many western countries have adopted this policy of equality in their constitution and devised a system that provides opportunity to women in socio-economic sectors. This system indulges women’s to participate without any limitations in the social, economical and political avenues. Thus, respecting women’s voice and her ability will overcome all the barriers and make her global leaders.

8. **Gender in equality**

Gender inequality is the grass root for all violence against women. The gender gaps and inequality is an alarming issue in our Indian society. This can be eradicated by helping girls to continue their education: primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Furthermore, male-domination is a serious sick that every women is facing globally. Hence, working women has to be given a forum to enter in all sectors to address their issues and problems. This may facilitate and encourage women’s to participate in improving nation’s economy. The education, employment, equal wages, respect and power to women could prevent and forbid the violence against them.

**Conclusion**

Most of public discussion enforces India’s patriarchal norms like, changing and updating laws and supporting women’s movement towards gender equality. The fundamental thing for long term sustainable change in India is educating people in general and women in particular. The reason being this only changes their views and perspectives of women in accordance with women around the world, which leads to the new forms of behaviour, ways of relating with others and ultimately social norms. For instance, if things go through this aforementioned practice, then they understand the need for education and educate their girl children, which play an important role in redefining gender norms in India. Moreover, adequate awareness of schemes and
scholarships for downtrodden families needs to be fostered through media, governmental and non-governmental agencies. This may convince their parents to permit them for education and higher education without any economic liability to their respective families. Also, the policy on employment opportunities needs to be revised so that women have to get paid equal to men, wherein it may encourage women’s economic participation to bring in economic development and build a progressive nation.

References


