

## Prioritizing Rural Girls Education: Ways To Mitigate Gender Based Discrimination

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### Abstract

*Throughout the developing world, girls face significant barriers to getting a quality education. Often, families living in poverty cannot afford to send all of their children to school and, when forced to choose, send their sons. Gender equity in education includes equal access to school and creating a school environment that has a safe, enabling environment for both girls and boys, equal opportunities in learning, and a focus on improving learning outcomes for basic literacy and numeracy as well as life skills. Educating girls and women is a powerful investment that benefits both individuals and society by unlocking the potential to improve health, nutrition, social justice, democracy, human rights, social cohesion, and economic prosperity for current and future generations. The Education 2030 agenda recognizes that gender equality requires an approach that 'ensures that girls and boys, women and men not only gain access to and complete education cycles, but are empowered equally in and through education. Poverty, geographical isolation, minority status, disability, early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based violence, and traditional attitudes about the status and role of women, are among the many obstacles that stand in the way of women and girls fully exercising their right to participate in, complete and benefit from education. This article highlights the problems in educating and how to overcome forlifelong development.*

**Key words ; Rural Girls, Quality Education, Gender Discrimination.**

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## **Introduction**

Educating a girl child in India is very necessary to remove various social issues against girls in the Indian society. Girls are treated as load and taker of money by the parents especially in the rural areas. Often, girls are marginalised and are out of school simply because they are girls and it is not the cultural norm in some society. Their chances of getting a quality education are even smaller if they come from a poor family, live in a rural area or have a disability. The education of the girl child has the ability of bringing socio-economic changes. However, as we live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and know well the value of both, boys and girls; both are equally responsible for the development and bright future of the country. So, it is an urgent need to save and educate a girl child in India if we really want to be the citizen of a developed country.

Democratic countries including India have a constitution that guarantees equal rights to both women and men. Primary education is a key right. When a girl is protected through her rights, the society is assured of its sustainability. Realizing how important education is, both government and non-government have taken various projects to strengthen girl's child education.

## **Learning to Lead**

Girls' education and women's empowerment have an obvious connection. Girls who are able to attend school, and thus to develop important skills such as literacy and numeracy and greater analytical skills, are better able to navigate the world around them. And from that comes a sense of control and an ability to exercise their voice. Women with higher levels of education are less likely to accept domestic violence, have greater control over household resource decisions, and have greater freedom of movement. World Bank researcher Jeni Klugman, who ultimately concludes that "education is particularly powerful in helping women overcome unequal and oppressive social limits and expectations so they can make choices about their lives."

The female education in India is highly necessary for the future of the country as women are the first teachers of their children means future of the nation. If education of the women is

getting ignored, it would be the ignorant of bright future of the nation. An uneducated women cannot actively participate in handling the family, proper care of the children and thus weak future generation. We cannot count all the advantages of the women education.

An educated women may easily handle her family, make each family member responsible, infuse good qualities in children, participate in the social works and all would lead her towards the socially and economically healthy nation. By educating a man, only a man can be educated however educating a woman, whole country can be educated. Lack of women education weakens the powerful part of the society. So, women should have full rights for the education and should not be treated as inferior to men.

## **Barriers to Girls Education**

Many of the barriers to girls' education are within the school system itself.

- Indifference in attitudes and practices against girl child including their health and wellbeing.
- Illiterate parents and guardians have little awareness of the importance of education, particularly for girl children.
- Financial constraints for various types interfere in the education.
- Various domestic responsibilities along with the necessary to earn money from 13-14 years of age.
- Crisis at home snubs needs to study. i.e., no parental support, densely populated houses with bad lighting.
- Peer pressure from non -school going friends who discourage the pursuit of education.
- Lack of aspiration as the only professional options are the traditional ones which don't require education.
- Discrimination, or the perception of discrimination, by higher caste peers and teachers at school.

- The government does not adequately invest in schools. Secondary schools are in shorter supply than primary schools, and colleges are even more scarce, especially for girls.
- In government schools, parents and students complained of teachers not showing up, overcrowding, and poor facilities.
- Girls disproportionately share the burden and care of ill family members and relatives.
- Inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, poor girls spend six hours each day collecting water, leaving little time for school.
- Girls living in conflict-affected areas more likely to be out of secondary school than those living in peaceful areas. Schools can be destroyed in conflict situations, while targeted attacks on girls' schools can make parents afraid to send their daughters to school.
- In emergencies, including natural disasters, increased poverty for families and lack of employment opportunities means girls are at higher risk of early marriage or ending up in prostitution.
- Child marriage interrupts and ends girls' education also means girls have early and frequent pregnancies, which contributes to higher rates of girls dropping out of school.
- Girls with disabilities face discrimination both because of their gender and their disability, making them among the most marginalised groups of children.

Despite India's promise to ensure certain rights for all children, huge challenges remain before the promises are realized. Sustainable development can only succeed when all children are assured of their survival, protection, and full participation in the development process. It is to move towards a world where children enjoy the full range of their rights and opportunities. The tremendous benefits to educating girls include:

- (1) increased economic productivity and reduced poverty;
- (2) lowered maternal and infant mortality rates;
- (3) delayed sexual activity and improved reproductive health;
- (4) increased gender equity
- (5) strengthened democracy;
- (6) enhanced social status; and
- (7) improved management of water and other environmental resources.

## **Mission to Bring Change**

Aside from the barriers to education within the school system, girls also face barriers in their homes and in the community. These include poverty, child labor, gender discrimination and harmful social norms, and insecurity and dangers on the way to school. To overcome these barriers, the following measures to be implemented.

- Providing conditional cash transfers, stipends or scholarships.
- Reducing distance to school.
- Targeting boys and men to be a part of discussions about cultural and societal practices.
- Ensuring gender-sensitive curricula and pedagogies.
- Hiring and training qualified female teachers.
- Building safe and inclusive learning environments for girls and young women.
- Ending child/early marriage.
- Addressing violence against girls and women.

## **Conclusion**

Equal rights to quality education of everyone and committed to achieving gender equality in all fields, including education, through their acceptance of human rights. This means that states have legal obligations to remove all discriminatory barriers, whether they exist in law or in

everyday life, and to undertake positive measures to bring about equality, including in access of, within, and through education."Every girl, no matter where she lives, no matter what her circumstance, has a right to learn. Every leader, no matter who he or she is or the resources available to him or her, has a duty to fulfil and protect this right."

*-MalalaYousafzai, Student, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and Co-Founder of the Malala Fund, in the foreword to the research report 'What Works in Girls' Education*

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