

## Gender Inequality in School Education

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Education is viewed as a key factor in the development of human capital. However, in India it marked by high levels of gender inequality Indian civilization recognizes education as one of the pious obligations of human society. The right to education has to be treated as an important issue in the life of an individual. This has been recognized not only in this country for thousands of years, but all over the world the right to education occurs on as many as three articles in part 4<sup>th</sup> of the Indian constitution showing the importance attached to it by the founding fathers. Even some articles in part II speak of education. Only education can imbue people with the knowledge, the sense of purpose and the confidence essential for building a dynamic, vibrant and cohesive nation as well as for creating a better, fuller and more purposeful life. In human terms democratic development implies the availability of caste, creed, sex and religion to develop their personalities development of the community and group concerned in all its aspects should be directed towards the reshaping of the existing literacy, imparting of vocational skills and income generating capabilities.

Human development will have a positive effect on growth when human capabilities and freedom are enhanced for economic growth to take place on the other hand, economic growth will enhance human development when increased incomes widen choices and capabilities of people at large. Human capital being a major component of the overall capital formation required in the process of growth and development. Enhancing educational attainment would therefore assume a central and key position in such efforts. The role of education is not only limited to human capital formation but encompasses a much broader spectrum. Most important of all it is viewed as a means to bridge inequality among people and nations. However, in most developing countries including India, gender inequality in education has been one of the major eyesores eclipsing their growth and developmental efforts. One of the many indicators of gender inequality is in fact access to education and it specifically applies to (I) the numbers and percentage of literate persons, by age and sex. (II) Years of schooling Completed, by level and sex. (III) Gross primary and secondary school enrolment ratios for girls and boys in India, the increase in the educational facilities and opportunities for women and the removal of traditional bias on the entry of women's emancipation from the nineteenth century onwards. However the Indian reformers of the nineteenth century wished to educate women to perform their role of good wives and mothers and meet to make them as direct active participants in the process

of national development. In a society as deeply stratified as India, disparities in education can be observed through various distributions such as caste, religion and gender, among others. It is interesting, however, that even within such disadvantaged communities, a consistent feature is widespread gender disparity in educational attainment for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe girls. The gender gap in education is almost 30 percent at the primary level and 26 percent at the upper primary stage. In India's most depressed regions the probability of girls getting primary education is about 42 percent lower than boy and it remains so even when other variables, such as religion and caste are controlled. It will take a bold and creative policy to bridge this gap. Acknowledging this, the Indian government has made female education priority. Its flagship programme for the achievement of universal primary education— sarva shiksha abhiyan (SSA) or “education for all” – places special emphasis on female education and the achievement of gender parity. The question remains, of course, whether this can be attained before the MDGs deadline is 2015.

Addressing social problems in a financial context. Societal blocks to female education must be understood as part of much larger social, fabric, which has spawned numerous institutions of gender inequality. Traditionally, a boy's education has been seen as an investment, increasing the earnings and social statuses of the family, however, different standards apply for girls. The benefits of a girl's education are generally seen as going to the family she marries into, thus providing little incentive to invest scarce resources, both human and monetary, into such activity. Also, given the relatively low educational attainment, especially in rural areas, the marriageability of an educated girl presents its own problems. These factors combine to cement attitudes inherently opposed to female education.

The Indian government has not been unresponsive to such findings. The promise of free and compulsory education has been earnestly pursued it is worthwhile to study the general aspects of SSA before addressing its specific programmes for taking gender disparity. By examining the various aspects of education such as the literacy rates, years of schooling completed and school enrolment ratios, it can be safely stated that gender equality in school education has not been achieved.

Finally, the regional differences in education as well urban-rural disparities also need to be addressed. The concentration of better educational institutions in urban and metropolitan areas is resulting in a large number of rural children to drop out of schools. A more concerted effort is therefore required to generally improve infrastructure in such backward areas of the country. The main challenge for us, however, remains that we bridge this gap in education by increasing equality of opportunities for girls with emphasis to be laid not just on primary but also higher education. One important factor that would work in favour of this effort at reducing gender inequality lies in the inherent structure of the north Indian societies themselves. The social practices prevalent in these societies – which manifest in the equal treatment of both boys and girls – should be further encouraged to achieve the desired goals in education hence a rational approach has clearly stated

focusing on improving the daily life conditions of moments existence and enhancing the status in family community and society.

## References

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