



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

A STUDY ON GIRL'S RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN THE SLUMS OF GUWAHATI CITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PUNJABI PATTY AND TELEGU COLONY

KEY WORDS: Girl education, slum, right to education, hindrance

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ABSTRACT

Education has been considered as the birth right of each and every child of our country. It also includes within its fold the slum children of the country in respect of educating them. The present study was aimed at to study the awareness of right to education among the slum girl and factors that hamper girl education. The present study was delimited to girl children and their parents in Punjabi and Telegu colony slum of Guwahati city. A sample of 100 girls and 100 parents were interviewed through self structured interview schedule. The study reveals that only 18% of children know about the right to education. further 37% favours education of the girl child. The primary factors responsible for hindrance of girl education were early marriage, indifferent attitude toward girl education and economics difficulties.

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality begins in the family. In this present era where people talk about reaching the moon and mars, girls in the neighbourhood are still deprived of many facilities. Among all the deprivation education still remain the topmost. If we educate a girl, we educate a family- and a whole nation. The importance of the role a woman plays in household affairs, in developing human resources, in moulding characters of children and outside, the urgency of the need for educating her becomes very clear.

The University Education Commission (1948-49) observed: "There cannot be educated people without educated women. If general education had to be limited to men or women, that opportunity should be given to women for then it would most surely be passed on to the next generation". The Resolution on the National Policy (1986) stressed the importance of women education in these words, "The education of girls should receive emphasis not only on grounds of social justice but also because it accelerates social transformation".

The United Nation Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against women (1967) took note of the great contribution made by women to social, political, economic and cultural life and the part they play in the family and particularly in the rearing of children and recommended in Article 9 of the Declaration: "All appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure to girls and women, married or unmarried, equal rights with men in education at all levels and in particular".

Under the fold of urbanization slums are found to be rise in the metropolitan cities. The main reason for slum proliferation is rapid and unplanned patterns of urbanization along with increasing rural migration to urban areas. The slum population of India is 65.49 million (Census 2011). According to the Census report on 2011, Assam's slum population is 1, 97,266 with 1, 01,424 males and 95,842 females and 25,739 in Guwahati city.

The literacy rate is 84.11% for slum dwellers in India with 88.76 per cent for males and 79.11 percent for females. The gender inequality in the level of literacy is evident from Table 1, which demonstrates comparatively higher literacy rates for males than females with a gap of 9.65 percentage points.

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Education of girls can bring about drastic change in the society. Educated girl can play an important role in the development of their society and country. They can solve and share the burden of men in the different walks of life. When girls are well educated, they will be able to serve the society in different way. Girl's education is necessary for making the homes a happy place. A men's life blossom if he is blessed with well educated women as wife and mother. Educated girls can brighten the future of their

country by the good upbringing of their children. Education gives a woman freedom of thought. It broadens her outlook and makes her aware of her duties and responsibilities. Education empowers a grown up girl to become economically independent. They will be able to stand up for their rights. Girls have all the rights to get educated. Empowerment of girls and women is necessary to fight the problems of gender-inequality.

Literacy rate in Assam is 72.19 percent according to 2011 census. Of that, male literacy stands at 77.85 percent while female literacy is at 63.00 percent. In 2001, literacy rate in Assam stood at 63.25 percent of which male and female were 75.23 percent and 51.85 percent literate respectively. The average literacy rate of Guwahati city is 91.11 percent of which male and female literacy was 92.89 and 89.16 percent. This overall picture of education reveals that female literary rate is much lower than that of the male section of the society.

Thus through this study a humble effort was made to study the awareness of girls towards right to education and also to find out the reason behind their slow enrollment in schools.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study has stress on the girls' right to education as well as the factors that hamper education of the girls. Thus, the statement of the problem has been formulated as-

"A study on girls' right to education in the slums of Guwahati city with special reference to Punjabi patty and Telegu colony"

4. OBJECTIVES

The present study has formulated the following objectives:

- To study the awareness of right to education among the girls of Punjabi and Telegu slums
- To find out the factors that hampers the education of the girl children in these slums.

5. METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on descriptive study method. Descriptive research deals with the relationship between variables, the testing of hypotheses and the development of generalizations, principles, or theories that have universal validity.

5.1: POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Purposive sampling is a non probability sampling where the elements/units selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher or investigator. Purposive sampling technique is used to select the sample for this study.

Due to limited time, the sample was restricted to 100 slum girls of

age group 6-18 years and 100 parents living in Punjabi Colony and Telegu Colony. Thus, a sample of 100 slum girls and 100 parents was taken purposively.

5.2: TOOLS

In any research the researcher have to use special technique or tools for the collection of research data. These tools and technique of data collection will vary in their complexity, design, administration and interpretation. The researcher has to select from the available tools but in some cases, he may find that the existing research tools do not suit the purpose and so he may have to modify them or construct his own tool.

To find out the awareness of girls' right to education and factors that hamper their education, self-structured interview schedule was constructed.

6. FINDINGS

The data collected for the study has analyzed statistically using simple percentage and graphical diagram has been used for better presentation of the scenario. The investigator also tried to highlight the awareness of girls' right to education and the factors that hamper girls' education.

- i. **Awareness of girls' right to education:** It has been found that girls are not very aware of right to education in the Punjabi and Telegu slum areas. It has been seen that 22% of girls living in urban slum are aware that education is their birth right. In fact knowledge regarding primary education as free and compulsory education and knowledge about right to education is comparatively very disappointing with 35% and 18% respectively. Further another interesting that has been seen is that parents do not favour girl's education as only 37% supports girls' education.

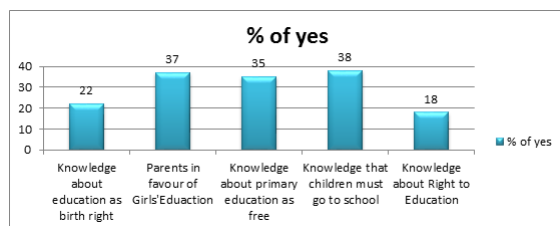


Fig1: Graphical presentation of girl's right to education

- ii. **Factors that hamper girls' education:** There are number of factors that are creating hurdles in the education of girl child in the slums of Punjabi and Telegu colony of Guwahati city. The factors are basically found to be socio-economic in nature. The factors that basically hampers girls' education are discussed below:

- a. **Early marriage of the girls:** Early marriage of the girl primarily occupies the top place in this regard. It has been found that 87% of girls have to discontinue their studies due to their early marriage. Most of the girls got married before the age of 18. The parents of these girls highlight the fact that economic difficulties, good prospect, dowry issues etc are some of the factors behind early marriage of the girls.
- b. **Domestic chores:** Girls of these slums are often found to engage in household chores. These activities include sibling care, cooking, washing clothes etc. Some parents also opine that this would prepare the girls for their marriage as the main role of girls is to look after household chores.

- iii. **Indifferent attitude of parents toward girl child:** The survey shows that parents often have indifferent attitude toward girls' education. The data shows that 79% of women do not support girls' education. They have an indifferent attitude toward their education and do not motivate the girl child to pursue education. The parents of these children believe that too much education would create problems at the time of marriage.

- iv. **Economic factors:** Financial constraints were found to be crucial factor in causing hindrance of girls education. 63% of parents have opines that they could not educated their girls because of economics problems. Although education is free and compulsory yet to run and manage the family, the girls work as domestic help in the nearby neighbourhood.

7. CONCLUSION

Education empowers women and undoubtedly contributes to development of the society. It is universally accepted that female literacy rates have a positive impact on health, marriage, awareness of rights etc. However, the study shows that girls living in the slums are not aware of right to education. In fact, parents are found to discourage girls' education. The survey reveals early marriage, good prospect of bridegroom; financial difficulties and indifferent attitude of parents towards girl education are some of the factors that create hindrance toward girls' education and slow enrolment.

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