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Political Science

EDUCATION OF THE GIRL CHILD: A STRONG STEPS TOWARDS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT.

KEY WORDS:

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ABSTRACT

This article shows the empowerment of women through education. Women were oppressed in all spheres of life and there is continued inequality, vulnerability prevails in all sections of society. To swim against the system they require more strength which comes from empowerment and education only. Improper education creates insecurity and lack of confidence. Education of a Girl Child and empowerment of women is an important step towards sustainable development of a country. It reduces inequalities, improves their status within the Family and society and also enables them to take challenging roles and transform their lives.

INTRODUCTION:

Literacy is a human right, a weapon of personal empowerment, and an aid of human growth; education is the most significant instrument for human resource development. Literacy is critical tool for eradicating poverty, controlling population growth, ensuring gender equality, and ensuring sustainable development, peace, and democracy. A solid basic education provides students with the literacy skills they need for life and further education. India has ratified three important international treaties that guarantee the right to a basic education. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, adopted in 1966, and The Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989. The Indian state was also happy to join a growing list of countries that provide a constitutional guarantee of free and compulsory education. Focusing on a girl's educational accomplishments and job goals assists society to provide economic security, a higher quality of life, and more career options for women which also results in reduction in social assistance. By focusing on more fair educational practises, not only will individual women's lives be improved, but the community as a whole will benefit from having that many more valuable participants. In recent years, the emphasis of planning has turned away from preparing women for their traditional roles as housewives and mothers and toward recognising their value as producers who contribute significantly to family and national revenue. Over the course of three decades of planned growth, efforts have been made to increase the number of females enrolled in schools, encourage them to stay in school, complete their education as long as feasible, and create non-formal educational alternatives for women. Since the country's independence, policymakers have fought for universal education and the use of education as a weapon to achieve social fairness.

Right to Education Act:

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act went into effect on April 1, 2010, marking a watershed moment in Indian history, as the right to education would now have the same legal significance as the right to life, as stipulated by Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. Children between the ages of 6 and 14 will be required to attend school. According to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the right to free and compulsory primary education for all, the obligation to develop secondary education that is accessible to all, and the progressive introduction of free higher education are all included in the right to education. In addition to these requirements concerning access to education, there is a need of eliminating discrimination, and establish minimum standards to improve quality. The Right to Education are separated into three levels (i) Primary Education: This will be mandatory and free for all children aged 6 to 14, regardless of their nationality, gender, birthplace, or any other form of discrimination. (ii) Secondary

Education: This was developed with the goal of developing a consistent educational pattern across the country in terms of organisation, content, and mobility. Both girls and boys will master the fundamentals of science and mathematics, as well as social sciences and humanities, up to matriculation, gaining a holistic basic education that will prepare them to participate actively and meaningfully in the labour market. (iii) Higher Education: Higher education should be provided on a capacity basis, meaning that everybody who meets the required educational requirements should be able to attend university.

Education And Empowerment Of Women:

Women's empowerment is a global problem, and numerous formal and informal initiatives around the world focus on women's political rights. The concept of women's empowerment was first established in 1985 at the NAROIBI International Women's Conference. Education gives them empowerment, it helps them to adapt to difficulties, take up challenging roles, and to transform their lives. Education offers women the confidence and skills to engage in the entire development process. Learning how to solve problems is an important component of the empowerment process, which necessitates a holistic approach to development and poverty reduction.

Five Year Plans Towards The Women Education:

In the context of the country's planned development, women's education has taken on a special significance. This is because women account for about half of the country's population, representing significant human resources who play an important role in community and national economic development. Education allows women to gain basic skills and abilities, as well as create a value system that allows them to advance in society. Recognizing this, the five-year plans place a strong emphasis on women's education.

1. The first five-year plans emphasise the importance of taking special measures to address women's education issues. It stated that women "shall have the same opportunities for all types of labour as males, as well as equal facilities." As a result, educational opportunities for girls have continued to develop in recent years.
2. The emphasis on overall educational facility expansion was maintained in the second five-year programme. The National Committee on Women's Education Report (1959). The Second Five-Year Plan organised women into Mahila Mandalas, which served as focal centres for women's development at the grassroots level.
3. The Third Five-Year Strategy It introduced essential programmes like as adult women's condensed school courses, Bal sevika training, and child care programmes. These initiatives include free textbooks and scholarships for female students.
4. The Fourth and Fifth Strategies Although there was a wide scale increase of educational facilities up to the fourth

plan, substantial discrepancies in the relative utilisation of existing facilities by boys and girls at various stages of education prevailed. As a result, In addition to incentives like as free textbook distribution and mid-day lunches, girls were to be awarded uniform and attendance scholarships to promote enrolment and retention in schools.

5. Sixth Five-Year Plans (FYPs) By including a separate chapter and adopting a multidisciplinary approach with three fields of health education and employment, it became a watershed moment in the history of women's growth. During the plan period Balwadi-cum-creches built at the school so that girls who were responsible for sibling care at home might attend the school. In rural regions, where necessary, women teachers were to be employed to support girls' education.
6. The seventh five-year plan calls for reorganising educational programmes and changing school curricula to minimise gender bias. Girls' enrolment in official and non-formal elementary, secondary, and higher education courses has been given top importance. To achieve 100 percent coverage in elementary education, sustained efforts will be made through various schemes and initiatives. Financial aid programmes for non-profit organisations that run early childhood education in primary and secondary schools will be expanded.
7. The Eighth Five Year Plan, which began in 1992, showed a transition in the approach to women's development from development to empowerment. It vowed to ensure that the advantages of growth from various sectors do not go to men, and that women are able to participate in development as equal partners.
8. For the first time in planning history, the eighth and ninth five-year plans take two big advances toward gender equity. The first is the inclusion of women's empowerment as a significant plan goal. The other is to suggest that all Central Ministries Departments and State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations include a women's component plan in their plans.
9. The Tenth Plan intends to empower women by putting into practise the recently established National Policy for Women's Empowerment (2001) and assuring the "survival" protection and development of children through a rights-based approach.
10. The goal of the tenth five-year plan is to empower girls inclusively in all aspects so that they can shake their hands with males on the path of progressive development. In order to achieve this, the strategy and actions outlined in the National Plan of Action for Children, 2005, will be prioritised and given special attention, with a focus on survival, protection, and well-being of girl child. Their right to life and liberty, as well as their dignity, security, equality, and justice in the family and society, will be prioritised.
11. During the plan term, the Twelfth Five Year Plan targets for a 9-9.5 percent growth rate (present averages at about 8.2). To do this, the programme focuses on a few key areas, including agriculture, industry, education, and underprivileged people. Education is one of the key goals of the plan.

Government Scheme For Develop Woman Education National policy on education (1986) on ECCE:

Early Childhood Care and Education was given a high priority in the 1986 National Policy on Education. The ECCE thus encompasses a child's whole development, including physical, motor, cognitive, verbal, emotional, social, and moral development. The NPE stated that ECCE programmes should be child-centered, with a focus on play and the child's indivisibility.

Mahila Samakhya Programme:

The Mahila Samakhya Programme, was launched in 1988

with an aim to assist women of all ages, particularly those from economically and socially weaker sections. Its goal is to combine formal, non-formal education for girls, as well as to provide vocational training and education to adult women. Women's organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are nodal agencies to implement the program. These organisations establish Mahila Samikhaya Societies or Mahila Sanghas to carry out field initiatives for education and empowerment of women. The goal of Mahila Sanghas was to empower women to realise their full potential and shift from passive acceptance to assertiveness and collective action.

The Mid-Day Meals Scheme:

According to the aforementioned PROBE Survey, the presence of Mid-Day Meals in the communities raised the likelihood of a girl child's enrollment in school by 15%. The Mid-Day Meals has this effect because it elevates the value of a girl's education in the eyes of her parents. A girl's opportunity cost of schooling is often higher because she is expected to care for the household, especially if her mother works. As a result, an increased advantage will sway a parent's implicit cost-benefit analysis in favour of girl child's schooling. The Mid-Day Meals also helps to eliminate caste prejudices by requiring children from various castes to eat together. Every youngster in a government school receives 100 grammes of cereal grain per school day.

Balika Samridhhi Yojana:

The BSY launched on October 2, 1997, with an aim to provide scholarships to girls from BPL families and the daughters of rag pickers, vegetable fish merchants, and other low-income people to retain them in school. Under the scheme the state deposits scholarship in the account of the girl child. If the girl is still unmarried as confirmed by the Gram Panchayat when she turns eighteen, she is eligible for the money.

ICDS

The ICDS aims to promote preschool education, nutrition, immunization and primary healthcare services to children with age group 0 to 6, pregnant women, and nursing mothers from the poorest of families, disadvantaged areas, backward and rural areas. Under the scheme training will be given to Angawadi workers, primary school teachers, and health professionals in order to provide Supplementary nutrition, referral services, nutrition and health education, preschool education, vaccinations, and health check-ups which are part of the ICDS's activities. The ICDS also strives to lay a foundation for children's optimal psychological development.

Kishori Shakti Yojana:

The KSY is a revamped version of the ICDS's teenage Girls Scheme. The KSY, like its predecessor, aims to help females aged 11 to 18 years old. Its goals include enhancing teenage girls' nutritional, health, and development, raising knowledge of health, hygiene, nutrition, and family care, returning out-of-school girls to school through bridge courses and non-formal education channels, and providing vocational training and sex education.

Role of NGO

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have made significant contributions to the implementation of various programmes for the empowerment of women and the development of children, particularly in the areas of raising awareness and gender sensitization in order to change people's minds in favour of women and the girl child, as well as combating violence and atrocities against women.

Sarvo Sikhsha Abhiyana

SSA was launched in compliance with the Eighty Six Constitutional Amendment for Universal Elementary Education, and it was integrated with the District Primary

Education Programme. It was launched in ninth Five-Year plan and carried over into the tenth Five-Year Plan as well. Its goal was to ensure that all children were enrolled in school by the year 2003

KGBV

The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, launched by Government of India in July 2004, is a residential secondary school for girls from weaker sections as well as minority communities. It is implemented in Educationally Backward Blocks, where female rural literacy is below the national average. SCs, STs, OBCs, and minorities are given 75 percent of the seats in KGBVs. The remaining 25% of vacancies are filled by girls from low-income homes.

Short Stay Home for Women and Girls

The SSH plan for women and girls, launched in 1969, with an aim to provide rehabilitation and temporary shelter to women and girls who are in social and moral risk due to family issues, mental pressures, exploitation, or other factors. Medical care, mental treatment, casework services, occupational therapy, educational and vocational training, and recreational amenities are among the services provided in these homes. Grants are offered to non-profit organisations who run short-term housing in various parts of the country under the scheme.

Causes Of Low Literacy Among Women In India:

Indian girls and women have been unable to fully utilise the existing possibilities and facilities for intellectual development due to social, economic, and cultural concerns, as well as a variety of other factors. Some of the primary factors that have worked against girls and women taking full use of educational opportunities are discussed here.

1. **Early Girl Child Marriage:** The realisation that educating girls may be monetarily fruitless has discouraged many families from actively seeking education, as well as social inhibitions against girls continuing their education after marriage.
2. **Dowry Systems:** The fact that, despite a rapidly increasing economic crisis, India's dowry system has not been eliminated, but that is entirely due to the country. The quantity of dowry varies by class and religion; for example, some poor households believe that if their daughter is educated, they must offer more property as dowry when she marries. Dowry has taken on an ever-exorbitant dimension, and this is one of the main reasons for opposition to the right to education for girls.
3. **Poverty:** Because a considerable portion of families are economically disadvantaged, the cost of educating girls may be a burden, especially as the cost of education at the elementary level may not provide a direct financial benefit. The financial gain from any expenditure is a strong motivator among the economically disadvantaged strata. Given the fact that primary school offers few career options, most families do not believe in educating girls.
4. **Child Labour Practice:** The prevalence of child labour among girls from the poorer sections of society, as well as the difficult family difficulties that prevent some unmarried girls, even from middle-class families, from pursuing school.
5. **Unsuitable Curriculum:** The school curriculum does not fully fit to the requirements and interests of many girls and their parents. Domestic science, home craft, decorating work, needlework, childcare, and other subjects should be taught in schools, according to the Education Commission.
6. **Caste System:** Due to a variety of causes, children from low-caste families are compelled to learn skills and labour methods and are not encouraged to attend school. Strict instruction/threat from high caste families to maintain them as domestic slaves and child labourers in fields and factories for their own selfish objectives.

7. **Discrimination on Gender Basis:** Boys and girls perform differently in school due to biological variations, gender biases, and socioeconomic circumstances, according to gender gap. This is also the fundamental reason why, in many regions of the world, fewer adolescent girls attend and finish school than boys.
8. **Poor School Environment for girls:** Unsuitable and inflexible school schedules, as well as poor facilities for girls in schools, are major reasons for girls dropping out of school, particularly in co-educational institutions.
9. **Responsibility at home:** In many homes, girl children take on the role of second mother by helping with domestic chores such as looking after siblings, fetching water, collecting firewood, bringing cattle fodder, cleaning, and cooking. This conventional sex role handicaps and discourages girl children from attending school. As a result, the girl child loses her basic and essential right to education and independence.
10. **Lack of lady teachers:** Some female instructors refuse to work in rural schools because they lack the essential resources. As a result, a significant proportion of rural schools lack the required number of female teachers. This hinders the advancement of women's education.
11. **Lack of schools:** There are a lack of schools in rural areas, and there are many schools in urban areas that are well-served, yet there are many places where there are no women's schools. Girls must walk considerable distances to attend school; this is a major issue that prevents women from receiving an education.

CONCLUSION

Women are working hard today to break free from their shells of passivity, dependency, and helplessness; they want to be considered as capable, intellectual, and active participants and contributors in the development process on an equal basis with men. Modern women are dissatisfied with their traditional roles as single mothers and housewife. Despite significant constitutional guarantees and programmes for women, the harsh reality is that women continue to lag behind in many areas and confront numerous problems. Education is a one-of-a-kind investment in the current and future. If our aim is to provide universal education for indigenous children, we must educate all of your children as well as every child in our country. Education is the first step toward making girls and women equal players in the development process and providing them with the tools they need to make educated decisions and control their own lives. If the gender gap in educational attainment and literacy is to be bridged, a specific focus on reaching girls and women will be required. There is no single strategy to enhance girl enrolment and retention in school. Non-formal education is to be implemented in reaching out to girls and women who are not in school. Failure to do so will merely increase the number of adult illiterates, feeding the illiteracy-population-growth loop. Even in states with a small gender gap, concerted efforts are needed to reach the most isolated and disadvantaged groups of girls and women. Only through this effort will universal education become a reality. It necessitates vision, commitment, and a genuine belief in the worth of girls and women.

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