



## Education: A fundamental tool fighting gender equality

Sanjay Pandey<sup>1</sup>, Amit Stieve Henry<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Professor, Department of Management, Chouksey Engineering College, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, India

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Chouksey Engineering College, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, India

### Abstract

Equality or non-discrimination is the condition under which all individuals have equal opportunities and rights. All individuals in society aspire to equal status, opportunities and rights. However, it is a common observation that there is a lot of discrimination between people in India. Discrimination exists because of cultural differences, geographical differences, and gender. Gender inequality is a pervasive problem around the globe. We are living in the 21st century still men and women around the world do not enjoy the same privileges. Gender equality means providing equal opportunities for men and women in all the aspects of the society. Education is the only way that helps to fight against this problem. A nation can progress and attain higher development growth only when both men and women are entitled to equal educational opportunities which will create a feeling of oneness for the betterment of the society.

**Keywords:** Education, gender equality, study material, opportunity, society

### Introduction

India is a land of diversity. Exactly we are still living in an unequal nation. There is no confusion about the growth of India, progress has been made, we have achieved success in many areas but still we find women continue to be a prime target for discrimination and violence. It is a matter of fact that education plays a fundamental role in changing this state of affairs and is responsible for the development of both personality and the creation of ideas in both men and women which dictate attitudes, actions and perspectives on the world, guiding us through life and shaping our career choices. Moreover now days power relations, discrimination and the guarantee of equality are defined through education. It can be used as a tool to form biases that lead to discrimination, or we can teach students to accept a multicultural and diverse society in which men and women are equal.

### Objective of the study

The broad objective of this study is to seek the significance and relevance of the education in removing the inequality among the men and women. Study is focused on balancing the education among both men and women thereby using education as a tool to remove the disparity in the society.

### Literature survey on National & International scenario

As per the World Economic Forum's gender gap ranking, India stands at rank 108 out of 149 countries. This rank is a major concern as it highlights the immense gap in opportunities in women with comparison to men. In Indian society from a long time back, the social structure has been such that the women are neglected in many areas like education, health, decision-making areas, financial independence, etc.

The goal of a human rights-based approach to education is simple: to assure every child a quality education that respects and promotes her or his right to dignity and optimum development. Achieving this goal is, however, enormously more complex. The right to education is high on the agenda of the international community.

At the time of independence, considerable difference in economic and social development of different regions of the country existed. One of the main objectives of the planning process initiated in the early 1950s was to reduce these regional differences and to achieve, regionally balanced development<sup>3</sup>. Various policy instruments including direct public investment by the Centre in infrastructure, guided private investment and building up of capacity enhancing institutions have been tried to achieve this objective. These policies were continued during the first three decades of planning.

Widening Economic & Social disparities: implications for india N.J. kurian October 2007, Okumu *et al* 2008; Husain and Chatterjee 2009). These studies have also found the presence of strong gender differences. The finding that gender disparity reduces at higher levels of education is interesting. In fact, Hasan and Mehta's study (2006) of college education focuses on disparities across social castes, but ignores gender dimensions, as also does Sundaram (2006). Thorat (2006) notes gender differences in access to higher education but does not look at regional variations. Overall, studies have tended to neglect the study of regional dimensions in gender disparities at higher levels of education.

Recently, the Government of India has made the right to education a fundamental right, under its Constitution, of every child. However, the focus of policy makers and researchers generally has been on the primary level. The four-five years of education imparted as primary education is undoubtedly useful in ensuring the functional literacy of recipients of such education.

### Role of education in removal of gender inequality in the society

School, colleges and higher educational institutes does not just serve to endorse knowledge. Additionally they are also fundamental institutions for the promotion of equality. Education should therefore develop scientific, cultural, social and personal skills that help increase young people's

self-confidence, enhance their capabilities and improve their social participation. Independent education should fight stereotypes and discrimination, opposing all theories which perpetuate the incorrect ideologies and value systems that are finely deep-rooted into our minds from a young age. The idea of women as caretakers and in charge of looking after the household has been accepted as a norm without question. Even educational and curricular options are markedly stereotyped, with fewer women choosing to study science and technology-related subjects. This promotes gender segregation in the society, preventing women from reaching their full potential. These choices are still linked to the traditional view of social and cultural gender roles.

In Indian scenario independent education should be based on criticism and questioning on the part of students, teachers, parents and other educators, and should promote multiplicity. Even study materials contain gender stereotypes which should be critically examined by teachers. This is why it is important to train teachers to eliminate discriminatory views. There is also a need to turn our attention to formal and informal courses in order to develop equal opportunity for education in India, providing identical starting conditions and encouraging girls to take up science and research and boys to look into areas traditionally linked to women. Now is when we should speed things up and make up for lost time. Education is the only way to do this.

#### Conclusion

For overall wellbeing and growth of India, keep count high on gender equality is a crucial aspect. As already observed, the countries with less disparity in gender equality have progressed a lot. The government of India has also started taking steps to ensure gender equality. Several laws and policies are prepared to encourage girls. "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Yojana" (Save girl, and make girls educated) campaign is created to spread awareness of the importance of girl child. Several laws to protect girls are also there. However, we need more awareness of spreading knowledge of women rights. In addition, the government should take initiatives to check the correct and proper implementation of policies.

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