

WHY GIRLS ARE STILL OUT OF SCHOOLS? AN ANALYSIS OF GOVERNMENT POLICY AND ATTITUDE OF THE PARENTS

MANOJ CHAUHAN

Abstract: Education is the most powerful tool which can shape the future of whole nation. For the development of nation every individual should be empowered. Government plays an important role in empowerment of its citizen by making different policies and laws. But after many years of independence even after providing free education the girls in our country are not literate. Even knowing that education is the only medium for empowering the girls, still they are out of school. This study attempted to answer why girls are still out of school. The paper critically compared and analyzed two major government policies i.e. RTE Act. 2009 and Child Labour Act. 2016 and also the attitude level of parents who are beggars towards education of girl child. The study focused on beggars living in Chandigarh. The findings showed that there are shortcomings in these two government policies and are also contradicting each other's aspect. Also the labour and beggar parents were having low level of attitude towards girls' education.

Keywords: girls education, RTE Act, Child Labour Act, attitude and beggars.

Introduction: Educating women in India plays a very important role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources, but in improving the quality of life at home and outside. According to Census, (2011) 74.04% of the population is illiterate, comprising 65.46% females. Some people thought that educating girl is just waste of time and the should only be taught household work and should be prepared for marriage but they don't know that Educated women not only tend to promote education of their girl children, but also can provide better guidance to all their children. There are 33 million child labours in India (UNICEF, 2016). According to Global Slavery Index, report 2016 India had the largest estimated prevalence of modern slavery in proportion to its population. About 18.35 million people of India's population live in condition of modern slavery including sex work, domestic work, child labour and manual labour or even forced marriages. According to SECC, (2011) 4 million children in working children in age group of 5-14 years. There is an urgent need to reduce the child labor issues by making effective policies to attain equality. According to World Bank gender equality can be achieved by Educating girls, increasing literacy rate among women, strengthening labour policies affecting women and expanding family support policies. According to UNICEF, a child is involved in child labour if he or she is between 5 and 11 years, does at least one hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of domestic work in a week. One-fifth of the child labourers rescued worked with their families. Government of India is doing a lot for the education of children and for that bringing time to time many policies and laws but the situation is not coming under control. For this will of government and awareness among parents is needed most. This paper

covered the analysis of government policies and attitude of parents for the education of girls education. Two government policies RTE Act. and Child labour act. were studied as these two are very important from educational development aspect of children.

Highlights of Free and Compulsory Education Act. 2009: Free elementary education to children age between 6 to 14 years.

No detention of child till completion of elementary education.

Duty of the government, local authority and parents for enrollment and completion of elementary education of child.

No corporal punishment and setting up of school management committees.

25% seats reserved for economical weaker section.

Highlights of Child Labour Act. 2016: No child and adolescent can work in any occupation except helping family and family enterprises.

Can work only after school hours and on vacations.

Family means parents, siblings, uncle and aunt.

No to work in mines, inflammable and explosives, and hazardous processes as defined by factories act. 1948.

Objectives of the study: To evaluate the government policy for education of children

To study the attitude of parents towards girls education.

Research questions: What are the short comings in government policy for the education of children?

What is the attitude level of parents towards girls education?

Research Methodology: For the study mixed method approach was used. Government policies regarding education were analyzed qualitatively and attitude towards girls education of 30 parents involved in begging and labour activities at

Chandigarh was studied quantitatively using schedule. Chandigarh was selected for the study as it is a city and had lot of job opportunities for the migrants whether in government or private sector. Also it has lot of government schools more than private schools and the status of government schools is good.

Analysis and Interpretation: Analysis of Research was conducted in two stages and on the bases of that interpretation was done.

Stage 1: Evaluation of Free and Compulsory education Act. 2009 and Child Labour Act. 2016

Right to education act made it mandatory for the govt. and parents to provide their wards elementary education but there are no strict provisions for them as if they don't enroll them in schools. Also the private schools who are getting subsidy from government for their institutions are not accepting the recommendations of RTE. Act. They even don't want 25% seats reserved for e.w.s. category. The educational institutions run by minority and religious institutions are against it as they think it is against their rights. Child labour act. has slashed the list of hazardous occupations for children from 83 to just mining, explosives and occupations mentioned in the Factory Act. This means that work in chemical units, cotton farms, battery recycling, and brick kilns, among others have been allowed. Further, even the ones listed as hazardous can be removed, as per Section 4 not by Parliament but by government authorities at their own discretion. Secondly, section 3 in Clause 5 allows child labour in family or family enterprises or allowed the child to be an artist in an entertainment industry. It does not define the hours for work. It simply stated that children may work after school hours or during vacations. Law is a big challenge, as it will be difficult to determine whether a particular family is running an enterprise, or some faceless owner has employed them.

References:

1. UNICEF, child protection child labour database, (2016). <http://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-labour/>.
2. CENSUS, census report for 2001-211, (2011). http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/PCA/PCA_Highlights/pca_highlights_file/inida/chapter-1.pdf
3. Global slavery index, (2016) report on india. <http://www.globalslaveryindex.org/cc>.
4. SECC report, (2016). <http://secc.gov.in/reportlistContent>.
5. <http://m.timesofindia.com/india/inida-tops-global-slavery-index-with-18-35-million-people-enslaved/articleshow/52517632.cms>.

Stage 2: Analysis of attitude of parents towards girls education.

Figure1: frequency of parent's level of attitude towards girls education

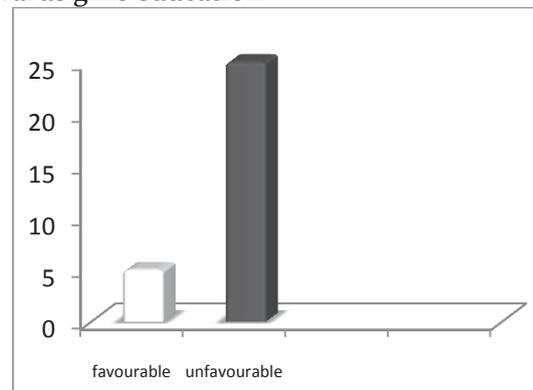


Figure shows that out of 30 parents involve in begging and labour work, 25 parents were against girls education and only 5 parents were in favour of girls education but their children were with them at the time data collection.

Conclusion: Education is the only source for development and empowerment of the girls. Most of India's child labour is caste-based work, with poor families trapped in intergenerational debt bondage.. So child labour policies should be made with reference to educational policies to help them get out of these activities. Parents will and attitude is also important for the education of girls. But study showed that parents involved in begging and labour activities were not in favour of girls education. Reason for this attitude was poverty, no awareness of schemes, hesitation to take children to schools, tradition of family etc. The right to education was made to provide free and compulsory elementary education to children but without involving every sector of society it cannot be achieved.

Manoj Chauhan

Junior Research Fellow, Department of Education, Panjab University, Chandigarh.