



Right to Education Act 2009 and Gender Skill development in India

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'You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its girls' - Jawahar Lal Nehru

Abstract- The paper examines the issue of girls' access to skill development in India in light of the constitutional provisions. Drawing on existing literature and various statistics pertaining to female skill development the objective of this paper is to study the positive or negative impact of constitutional provisions on skill development especially female skill development and, to examine the influence of Right to Skill development on initiating gender equality in skill development in negative or positive manner.

It also highlights some of the issues and, barriers to girls' education. Based on an analysis of emergent issues, some recommendations and suggestions are offered in terms of grassroots level interventions, strategic initiatives and enabling policy framework, towards improving girl's access to education. **Findings:** The outcomes demonstrated that skill development is found to have a significant impact on the participation of girl's labor force. The only drawback that discourages the commercial employment of girl are the concepts of culture and social norms. **Practical Implications:** A higher participation of females in computer science, engineering and technology-oriented jobs would spur innovation and economic advances in all countries. **Originality Statement:** The research also depicted procedures to accomplish girl's participation as a fundamental requirement for the achievement of developmental goals.

INTRODUCTION

Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Skill development Bill 2008 was passed in Lok Sabha August 5, on 2009 that makes free and compulsory skill development a fundamental right for all children between the ages of 6 and 14. The Human Resource Minister Kapil Sibal described it as "harbinger of a new era" for children to meet the challenges of the 21st century and the parliament hailed it as 'historic' for providing better future to children of the country that could lead India far in its commitment to an equitable and progressive society. This bill to realize had a long history. After freedom in the Article 45, 1950 of the Indian Constitution, provision was made for free and compulsory elementary skill development for all the children in the age-group 6 to 14 years within 10 years of launching of the constitution i.e. by 1960. But the target was not achieved within the stipulated time limit. After this Kothari Commission (1964-66), National Policy on Skill development 1968, NPE 1986, revised NPE 1991 and its Programme of Action (POA 1992), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, 2000, also aimed to ensure that free and compulsory skill development should be provided to all children up to 14 years age. The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act 2002 introduced new article 21A making the right to skill development of children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right (Dua, 2014).

Importance of Girl Skill development

We are all well aware with the importance of female literacy skill development in girl empowerment. Skilled and Empowered girl lead directly to, economic growth, and better family health, lower rates of child mortality and malnutrition control on spread of HIV & AIDS. Girls' skill development strengthens economies and reduces inequality. It contributes to more stable, resilient societies that give all individuals – including boys and men – the opportunity to fulfill their potential.

But skill development for girls is about more than access to school. It's also about girls feeling safe in classrooms and supported in the subjects and careers they choose to pursue – including those in which they are often under-represented.

They can be effective voice for articulating girl related causes. They can fight against female foeticide, child marriage, dowry, rape and subjugation of any sorts. It is the skill development which will equip the girl and girls to lead a life of dignity, to exercise their rights, to make their own choices/or decisions. The educated girl's are better able to assert their families' interests. At present need of communal harmony, increasing activities of terrorism, the society becoming self centered, erosion of

Males dominate women all over the world, resulting in widespread unjust circumstances against them. This inequality in the society inevitably has a negative impact on the girl's right to skill development in terms of the provision of opportunities -- entry or continuance of skill development and content of education.

Gender inequality in skill development is extreme but it is all the more in rural, slum and with uneducated parents of the country. Girls are less likely to enroll to school if it's a financial burden for their parents, or to achieve in society due to many social factors whether they are from within the families or from societal end or may be cultural or from within the school boundaries and these related factors keeping girls away from the school/ and challenging their participation in skill development are many and denying their right of skill development but some of them are discussed below-

➤ **Salient Features of the Right to Education Bill**

- Free and compulsory skill development for every child between the age group 6 to 14 years.
 - 25% reservation in private schools for disadvantaged children from the neighbourhood, this point needs special attention because it may result that girls from some influential families at the cost of poor girls.
 - at the entry level, no donation or capitation fee for admission; no interview of the child or parents as part of the screening process,
 - Prohibition of denial of admission irrespective of the time of the year ,no holding back, no expulsion, no punishment, no mental harassment of the children, and ban on private tuition by teachers ,
 - Awarding a certificate to the child after the completion of his primary course,
 - Calls for a fixed student-teacher ratio,
 - Mandates improvement in quality of education,
- School teachers will need adequate professional degree within five years or else will lose the job,
- School infrastructure (where there is problem) to be improved in three years, else recognition cancelled.
 - Financial burden will be shared between state and central government.

Scenario of Female Education

Despite evidence demonstrating how central girls' education is to development, gender disparities in education persist.

Around the world, 132 million girls are out of school, including 34.3 million of primary school age, 30 million of lower-secondary school age, and 67.4 million of upper-secondary school age.

Table-1 Gross Enrolment Rate (GER)- All Categories of Students

Level/ Year	Secondary (IX-X) 14-15years			Senior Secondary (XI-XII) 16-17years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2001-02	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2002-03	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2003-04	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2004-05	57.4	45.3	51.7	30.8	24.5	27.8
2005-06	57.6	46.2	52.2	31.4	25.2	28.5
2006-07	58.6	47.4	53.5	31.5	26.1	28.9
2007-08	62.6	53.2	58.2	36.3	30.4	33.5
2008-09	64.8	55.5	60.4	37.5	31.6	34.5
2009-10	66.7	58.7	62.9	38.5	33.5	36.1
2010-11	69.2	60.9	65.2	42.3	36.2	39.4
2011-12	69.0	63.9	66.6	47.6	43.9	45.9
2012-13*	69.6	67.0	68.1	41.9	39.5	40.8
2013-14*	76.8	76.5	76.6	52.8	51.6	52.2
2014-15*	78.1	78.9	78.5	54.6	53.8	54.2
2015-16*	79.2	81.0	80.0	56.0	56.4	56.2

NA-Not Available

Data Source:

For School Education: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India / National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi

Data Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

The Gross Enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and, senior secondary has shown a remarkable improvement. Although the budgetary allocation under 12th Five Year Plan was less as compared to the 11th Five Year Plan The aggregate data reveals an improvement in female enrollment ratio at all levels. This is encouraging and data supports that RTE has encouraged female participation at all levels. However if we look at the ratio of boys and girls in Government and Private schools the trend is reversed. We find a higher enrollment of girls in Government schools and higher ratio of boys in private schools.

Table -2: Funds allocated under the Scheme Saakshar Bharat

Sl. No.	Year	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Expenditure
XI Five Year Plan (Outlay for last 3 years of Plan was Rs 4993 Crore)				
1	2009-10	315.00	345.00	335.43
2	2010-11	1167.00	388.50	373.01
3	2011-12	488.50	487.80	471.49
XII Five Year Plan (Outlay was Rs 3000 Crore)				
4	2012-13	590.00	420.89	387.33
5	2013-14	572.00	354.00	297.26
6	2014-15	450.00	371.35	358.25
7	2015-16	450.00	360.00	344.09
8	2016-17	320.00	244.15	209.42

Data Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

Table-3 Reasons of Drop-out from school

Sl. No.	Major reasons for drop-out	Percentage	
		Male	Female
1	Child not interested in studies	23.80%	15.60%
2	Financial Constraints	23.70%	15.20%
3	Engage in Domestic Activities	4.80%	29.70%
4	Engage in Economic Activities	31.00%	4.90%
5	School is far off	0.5%	3.40%
6	Unable to cop-up with studies	5.4%	4.60%
7	Completed desired level/ Class	5.70%	6.50%
8	Marriage		13.90%
9	Other reasons*	5.1%	6.20%

Source: National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi
Government - Central Government, Department of Education, Local body, Tribal / Social Welfare

Table-4 Beneficiaries of Adult Education Program

Year	Male	Female	Total
2016-17	6,057,019	13,226,056	19,283,075
2015-16	5,840,589	13,397,738	19,238,327
2014-15	3,082,314	7,607,631	10,689,945

Source: National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi
Government - Central Government, Department of Education, Local body, Tribal / Social Welfare

The market was established in the 16th century following the imposition of the labour system, *lallup-kaba* in 1533 CE. The *lallup-kaba* was a **forced labour** system in Manipur which required male members of the **meitei community** to work in distant lands or to serve in the army. As a consequence of the system, girl had to support their households by cultivating their fields or weaving textiles and then selling the products on improvised markets. The improvised markets led to the formation of the organized Ima Keithel.^[6] The Ima Keithel was the primary permanent market in Manipur until the 20th century.

In 1891, the **British colonial administration** attempted to impose economic and political reform in Manipur which disrupted the functioning of the market.^[6] The reforms involved large scale seizure and export of food corps from Manipur without consideration for local requirements which caused starvation at times of **Mautam**.^[8] It led to agitations by the girl of the Ima Keithel and in response, the British attempted to sell off the assets and properties of Ima Keithel to foreigners and external buyers. This among other causes resulted in the **Nupi Lan** or the girl's war, which eventually seized with the **Japanese invasion of India**.^[9]

Following **independence**, the market regained prominence as a commercial center and a hub of socio-political discussions.^{[6][9]} In 2010, the market was moved into the Khawairamband Bazaar complex constructed by the **Municipal Corporation of Imphal**.^[10] The complex had sustained damaged in the **2016 Imphal earthquake** which effected the livelihood of around 800 vendors.^[11]

- Awareness programmes for parents/community/School faculty with regard to importance of girl child skill development and also about this bill must be focused. Media as T.V. can act excellently.
- Good sanitation, good infrastructure, severe punishment for those found guilty in girl abuse of any type ,power to be exercised by National Commissions for protection of child rights in pursuance of provisions of this bill can serve the purpose.
- Girls are to be given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity, their protection against exploitation of any type must be ensured by the school authorities.
- Pre primary skill development in skill development group of girls of 0-6 years should be taken care of.
- Girls involved in child labour should be motivated to learn.
- Teachers can be sensitised for taking care of girl students. If something foul on the part of male teachers /principal /or fellow boys is found should be dealt severely.

Teachers' wrong assumptions and expectations that girls do not need skill development and will not do well can be dealt through special arrangement of lectures /some seminars.

- Female teachers must be there in the primary school in whom the girls can not only easily confide but also they will serve as role model not only for the girls but it will pass a strong message to the community about economic independence of the girls.
- Some remedial teaching for those weak girls who do not find time in their homes due to their involvement in domestic work should be stressed.
- Girls with learning disabilities can be provided with special extra facilities as ramp, Braille readers or any other help as and when required.
- Some girl's schools taking consideration of girl population of the area can be established in the neighbourhood so that distantly located school may not hamper the girl's education.
- Girls with disabilities can be taken care of in neighbourhood schools .Again there is need of specially trained teachers to look into the skill development of this category of the girls.

Parents, specially rural and uneducated, should be made aware about the importance of their daughters skill development through some nukkar natak, choupal which still occupies a large share in village life.

- Mothers of the girls in particular can be educated through adult skill development programmes because it the mother who can lead her daughter's education.

Conclusion

With a literacy rate of just 64.60 percent (as per data collected in 2011) girl's skill development continues to be one of the most important issues in India. At both rural and urban levels, the skill development of girls still lacks the desirable jump that will indicate a change in mindset. This is why the government has even launched initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao. But has this rise in awareness led to any concrete changes in the educational status of Indian girls?

- In October, the Delhi government launched a mobile-learning app called STEM for schoolgoing girls. The app aims at removing the gender disparity in the field of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) owing to the stereotyping that girls are not competent enough to study science, which eventually affects their choice of subject and career. Through STEM, Delhi Government wants to encourage girls to study science and technology.
- Nazara Technologies, a leading game developer in the country has made a heavy investment in Paper Boat Apps, a company focusses on digital skill development in India, in November.

To make this bill a success in view of girl's skill developments some suggestions can be---

□ This Bill states free and compulsory skill development for every child between the age group 6 to 14 years, Here again girl child skill development should be taken care of .there are a number of chances that again it is she who can be sacrificed against skill development of her brother when there is her need in family related works at home and this can be done through awareness programmes about the necessity and importance of girls education.

□ Unjust circumstances within the skill development system must be abolished, and skill development materials and processes must not only refrain from reinforcing gender discrimination, they should also actively combat it and this can be achieved through change in curricula, not highlighting the gender defined roles (collecting firewood, childcare, domestic tasks) .

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