

BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO

(Save girl child, Educate a girl child)

Bilal Ahmad Bhat, Ghulam Ud Din Qurashi

Ph.D Research Scholars, School of Education and Behavioral Sciences, University of Kashmir,
Kashmir India

Email: bhatbilal.scholar@kashmiruniversity.net



BILAL AHMAD BHAT



GHULAM UD DIN QURASHI

ABSTRACT

The girls play a prominent role in the cultural, social, political, and economic life of a country. Our constitution gives great importance to the equality of status and opportunities for girls. This paper examines how girls' education can be enhanced through imparting information to all in various meaningful ways. Girls' education should be progressively considered in relation to national development. In this paper BETI BACHAO, the BETI PADHAO scheme has been briefly highlighted. Also the aim of this paper is to give some information to all readers regarding problems, challenges, and constitutional and legal provisions of girls. The national policy on education (1986) states, "the education of girls should receive emphasis not only on grounds of social justice, but also because it accelerates social transformation. "My paper wants to point out here that there cannot be educated men without educating girls.

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Introduction

It is a social campaign of the Government of India's that aims to generate awareness and improve the efficiency of welfare services intended for girls. This campaign had called for the eradication of female foeticide and invited suggestions from the citizens of India. The BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO scheme was launched on 22 January 2015 by prime minister NARINDER MODI. It aims to address the issue of the declining child sex ratio and is a national initiative jointly run by the ministry of girls and child development, the ministry health and family welfare, and ministry of human resource development. According to census data, the child sex ratio (0-6 years) in India was 933 girls per 1,000 boys in 2001, which dropped to 918 girls for every 1,000 boys in 2011. A 2012 UNICEF report ranked India 41st among 195 countries. In the population census of 2011 it was revealed that the population ratio of India 2011 is 943 females per thousand males. The sex ratio 2011 shows an upward trend from the census 2001 data. The saying goes "When you educate a man, you educate a man, but when you educate a woman, you educate a generation". Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao is the social awareness campaign making the parents celebrate the birth of a baby girl instead of getting unhappy.

Hundreds of years have witnessed Indian families not rejoicing in the birth of girl child not only in rural areas but also in educating urban circles. On the top of it, the orthodox families used to go for female foeticide or abandoning the girl child, if at all she happened to be born. Social and family constraints did not allow the Girls go to school or to opt for higher studies.

Importance of Girls Education

"The fastest way to change society is to mobilize the women of the world." — Charles Malikleio. There are currently 31 million girls of primary school age that are not in school. A girl in Sierra Leone is more likely to be sexually abused than to attend high school and 1 in 9 girls in the developing world are married before the age of 15. There are 4 million more girls out of school than boys and 3 countries have over a million girls not in school. There are 774 million illiterate people in the world and two-thirds are female. To many these are just numbers on a page, but for the 31 million girls it's a harsh reality. In 2018, statistics like these are unfathomable, and quite simply unacceptable. Today we have the resources and the ability to eradicate these realities once and for all, and yet – as a global society – we sit back and allow them to continue. How is this



possible? Amnesty International says that whenever and wherever a fellow human being is being persecuted, tortured, oppressed or abused, you have the right to sit silently by; you also have the right to speak out. The time has come to speak out and fight for our girls' education.

“Girls’ education is about so much more than knowledge. By ensuring that a girl has equal access to education, employment and adequate health care, the benefits will be passed on to her children (both boys and girls), community and her country.”

If women all over the world had a secondary education, child deaths would be cut in half, saving 3 million lives. Not just girls’ lives, but all life. Christina Taylor, the Community & Bequests Officer for Plan International, notes, “All children are important, they have the same rights and deserve the same opportunities, however because girls face the double discrimination of being female and young it is so important that we focus efforts specifically on addressing their disadvantages and systemic abuse.” According to UNESCO, if all women had a secondary education, 12 million children would be saved from stunted growth and malnutrition. Considering that malnutrition contributes to nearly half of all deaths in

children under 5, it is undeniable that it is imperative that we educate girls who will become mothers. It is easy to see how a lack of education has a ripple effect across societies. A girls’ education not only provides knowledge, it gives them power and awareness over their own lives, which benefits all in the long run. According to UNESCO, if all mothers completed primary education, maternal deaths would be reduced by two-thirds. Every child deserves to grow up with the love and guidance of their parents, and by denying girls' education, we are increasing the chances of a motherless childhood for so many.

During ignorance era, people used to bury their daughters alive, which the Holy Quran condemned severely. It is totally unlawful and haram to abort the foetus when it is four months old without severe compulsion it said. “Islam orders us to treat our daughters well,” it said, adding there is no concept in Islam that girls bring misfortune and disrespect. According to the teachings of Islam, education is very important. The Prophet Muhammad told his followers:

- "Acquisition of knowledge is binding on all Muslims, male and female."
- "Seek knowledge, from the cradle to the grave."



- "Acquire knowledge, even if you have to go to China for it."
- "The person who goes forth in search of knowledge is striving hard in the way of Allah, until his/her return."

Aims And Objectives

- To stop the discrimination of the girl child and practice of sex determination test.
- To ensure the survival and protection of girls.
- To ensure the participation of girls in education and other areas.
- Mass campaign for advancement of girls in all areas.
- To provide consultancy services in the areas of girls' education and development.
- To act as a catalyst in promoting innovations and progress of girls' education in the country.

Problems Limiting Girls

- **Rape and sexual assault:** - Sexual violation of girls is stark but the perpetual violence of the society. The high rates of rape in India point to this chronic problem. In some of the most

horrifying accidents which have come to the fore, these violations intersection with other margins to create a system of violence's for girls based on caste, religion, region or militarization.

- **Dowry deaths:** -Even though the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 bans the practice of Dowry, but the problem still exists. Every now and then we hear stories of girls being targeted by their in-laws for non-payment or partial payment of Dowry.
- **Harassment in public places:** -The modern economic change has placed girls at the forefront of economy and girls have taken up new positions in business, Government and society. However, violation of workplace emerges as a key problem in the age today.
- **Domestic violence:** -In India, it has been pointed out that incidents of domestic violence may have reduced but in some contexts, this violence's have become means of limiting girls at home.
- **Eve teasing:** -Eve teasing is common in public settings.



- **Conservatism:** - Most of the people of India are conservative. Because of this conservatism, they are not awakened to the modern trends. They feel that educated girls become morally depraved. This is an erroneous belief.
- **Poverty:** - Poverty is a great curse. The majority of the people are so much economically strained that they can't think of education of the girl's folk. Education on the other hand has become a costly affair. Hence the parents are not sympathetic towards girls' education.
- **Illiteracy:** - Lack of education of parents discourages them to send their daughters to school. They do not realize the importance of girls' education.
- **Problem of wastage and stagnation:** - There is a good deal of wastage and stagnation in girls' education. Many social and economic reasons are responsible for it. Because of this wastage and stagnation, the workers in the field of girls' education feel discouraged.
- **Lack of lady teachers:** -The lady teachers do not prefer to go to village schools where they are not safe and ordinary facilities of life are absent.

Quite a large number of schools in the rural areas are without lady teachers. Moreover, the right type of lady teachers who are devoted to the teaching profession are very few.

Challenges Faced By Girls in India

- **Education:** -The gap between men and girls is severe.
- **Poverty:** -Due to high levels of poverty, girls are exploited as domestic helps and in other menial jobs.
- **Health And Safety:** -There are alarming concerns where maternal health care is concerned. There is still a wide gap that exists between those under protection and those not.
- **Inadequate Nutrition:** -One of the most understated problems facing the Indian girls is that of poor nutrition.

What We Can Do Individually: -

- Expressing joy at the birth of the girl child in the family and community.
- Find ways to promote equality between boys and girls.



- Daughters are our pride and we should do away with the tendency to treat them as “burden” and “others” property.
- Challenge gender stereotypes and roles of men and boys for the safe entry of girls in school.
- Educate your children to respect girls and girls as equal members of the educated and aware members of society.
- Report any incident of sex determination test.
- Efforts to create safe and violence free neighborhood for girls and girls.
- To promote simple marriage within the community and family and oppose dowry and child marriage.
- Encourage girls to go out, to obtain higher education, further their work, do business, visit public places freely, etc.
- No citizen shall be discriminated against or be ineligible for any employment or office under the state on the ground of sex {article 16 (2)}.
- The state to secure for men and girls equally the right to an adequate means of Livelihood {article 39 (a)}.
- The state shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief (article 42).
- Equality before law for girls (Article 14).
- The state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people (Article 47).
- The state to make any special provision in favor of girls and children {Article 15 (3)}.
- Protection of girls from domestic violence act (2005) is a comprehensive legislation to protect girls in India from all forms of domestic violence.

Some Constitutional and Legal Rights Of Girls

- The state shall not discriminate against any citizen of India on the ground of sex {article 15 (1)}.



- Indecent representation of girls (prohibition) act (1986) prohibits indecent representation of girls through advertisements or in publications, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner.
- Dowry prohibition act (1961) prohibits the giving or taking of dowry at or before or any time after the marriage from girls.
- Legal services authorities act (1987) provides for free legal services to Indian girls.
- National commission of a girl's act (1990) provided for the girls to study and monitor all matters relating to the constitutional and legal rights and safeguards of girls.
- Minimum wages Act (1952) does not allow discrimination between male and female workers or different minimum wages for them.
- Family Courts Act (1984) provides for the establishment of family courts for speedy settlement of family disputes.

Steps to Improve Education and Rights of a Girl

There are a number of steps that could be taken to improve education and the rights of a girl child in India. Creating awareness is very vital in the promoting girls' education in India or any part of the world for that matter. Individuals and organizations can take it upon their selves to educate the populace on the importance of sending their female children to school and how it would be of benefit for them in the long run. There are a lot of options for creating this awareness. The options include, but not limited to, through media houses such as television and radio stations as well as newspapers and magazines, through the placing of stickers in strategic places and by going house to house to educate individuals about why they should send their female children to school. The aim would be to get across to as many people as possible and give them the requisite information that would encourage them to educate their children. Government policy is another vital means through which girls' education in India can be carried out. The government policies should enforce that parents must send their children to school at a particular age. It should also make primary and secondary education compulsory for every child, irrespective of



if they are male or female. Based on this, punishments and sanctions could be meted out to parents who prevent their children from going to school. The sanctions would come in handy in forcing parents who do not want to send their children to school, especially their female children, to send them to school irrespective.

There is the need to put in place programs and activities that would encourage parents to send their children to school. First of all, the government could make education at the primary and secondary level to be free of charge. This would take away the excuse of being unable to avoid the money to send such children to school. Furthermore, other means of encouragements could include provision of school uniform and books for the children and provision of free meals for the children. Amongst others, the private sector could also support the government in this regard by paying for some of these expenses. Before these programs are put in place, such private establishments could organize scholarship programs for children, with some of the scholarships particularly aimed towards girls' education in India. This would go a long way in helping parents that desire to send their children to

school, but does not have the means to do so. Education loans could also be provided by the government and private organizations.

Conclusion

The women of today are very conscious of their social, economic, intellectual, mental, and spiritual development. Their role, both within the home and outside the home, has become an important feature of the social and economic life of the country. It will become more significant. Therefore, they cannot be deprived of education, at any cost and greater attention should be paid to the problems of training and development of women.

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