

# ***IMPACT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION (DISADVANTAGE CLASS) ON DEVELOPING THE RURAL POOR***

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## ***ABSTRACT***

*Education as a concept has become the centre of a global pedagogic debate in the last few decades. Its definition has undergone many transformations and its role in social interventions has been alternatively questioned and defended. If education is seen to be instrumental in providing a better life, then it is necessary to define what is meant by education or by a better life, where and for whom. However, for the young girls growing up and for marginalised class i.e. SC & ST, it remains simply the magic word that is supposed to bring to them all that they are deprived of.*

*It has now been an established fact that the countries with high GDP have higher literacy rate. In other words the GDP of a country is directly proportional to its educated mass. The expenditure on education is an investment in the present and the future. It is an important and necessary infrastructure for the development of the nation, individuals and community etc. Time and again it has been reported that investment in elementary education gives maximum and speedy returns particularly in poorer countries, as it is an effective tool of elimination of poverty. Therefore there is increased financial expenditure (20 to 25% of the total budget) on elementary education in 8<sup>th</sup> plan and in the current plan. Despite this we could not achieve the goals of UEE by the turn of the century as envisaged in NPE (1986). In a few months we will be in the new millennium and all efforts have to be directed to achieve the goals of UEE as early as possible.*

*We should not do it keeping in mind that it is our constitutional obligation but seeing the Indian scenario where 80% population resides in villages. If we want to raise our standard and if we really want to draw this 80% in the main stream then to make them literate is our liability. The condition of marginalised class (in this paper, we are including SC, ST and girls in this category) has to be looked in detail in view of the data presented by VI All India Educational Survey published by NCERT.*

## **RATIONALE:**

**Primary education** is one of our basic rights that gives us the art of living and empowers us too. That is why special priority has been given to the universalisation of primary education in the country. All most all states have established a separate department as one form or other for the universalisation of primary education in their state. It has been established to work in social mission mode for necessary changes in basic education system and to bring social and cultural change in the entire society through it. The main aim of these projects are:

1. To eradicate illiteracy in the areas of operation by means of education.
2. To enroll all the children of deprived target/focus group, increase retention and reduce dropouts.
3. To impart minimum level of learning by means of competency based education.

The philosophy behind this type of thinking is very rationale, which may be described in quantifiable terms as follows:

1. Education is thought as means of eradicating social disparity & bringing social change.
2. Education is treated as the best investment done for the sake of people because it is related to global development.

## **FOCUS GROUP PROBLEM:**

The population of disadvantage classes in every state is sizeable. Under this class we consider SC & ST and girls. It is now-a-days believed that by imparting education to one male child we educate a single person whereas by educating a girl child we are educating a family. Apart from this, their say in the developmental works in their area is negligible. The other factors responsible for low education rate in the focus group may be delt in two separate heads i.e. problems of SC & ST and problems of girls:

## **PROBLEMS OF SC & ST:**

The main problem of SC & ST in the country is their scattered habitation and geographical isolation. Apart from this, their say in the developmental works in their area is negligible. The other factors responsible for the problems may be as follows:

- poor economic conditions.
- illiteracy of parents
- lack of educational monitoring.
- education not related to needs
- dry and non-interesting classrooms
- children engaged in earning livelihood.

- unsuitable school hours.
- linguistic and cultural barriers.
- lack of reading materials in Tribal Languages in lower classes.
- non-availability of schools.

### **PROBLEMS OF GIRLS:**

The stature of women from various angles continued to be disturbing. The decline in the sex ratio, general neglect of women of all ages, preference for son, inadequate basic health care facilities, unfavourable attitude, low female literacy rate and depressed class feeling are indicators that much need to be done to improve the status of the women. Enrolment of girls child particularly in the villages is causing very big problem. The main reasons may be the following:

1. Girls have to go to their in-laws so there is no use of educating them.
2. They are required to help their mother in household work.
3. They have to take care of their siblings when the mothers are away working in fields.
4. Parents of girls belonging to socially & economically disadvantaged groups have a thinking that, the incentives provided under welfare schemes are inadequate and not distributed in time.
5. Parents are hesitant to send their daughters to schools where no female teacher is employed.
6. Girls remain absent from the school because of main domestic reason resulting in discontinuity and lack of interest in education.
7. Teachers appointed in the villages do not take interest in schools activity.
8. In some part of the country particular communities like Rajput & Brahmin demand a separate school exclusively for girls.
9. Lack of sanitation facilities in schools and distance of schools in rural areas is a direct variable for sending girls to school.
10. Child marriage and big family size is another burning issue.
11. In the hilly, forest and isolated areas for security reasons parents are not willing to send their daughters to school, if the school is outside their village.
12. Most of the girls of 9+ age group are out of school, assisting their parents within the family and outside and therefore they are not free to attend regular school and are not eager to return to formal schools as they are considered 'older'.
13. Child marriages persist in the rural areas and as a result a large number of girls in the 9+ age are married and hence unwilling to return to primary school. Often their parents also hesitate to send them to school as these girls are not counted in children.
14. Girls from highly marginalised and deprived communities are prevented from coming to school as they do not have proper clothing and other necessities to feel at ease in the school.

15. Special life-oriented curriculum is needed to attract girls to the centre, help them to master the primary level competencies in language, maths, Evs, and to educate and prepare them for life, even if they do not pursue their studies later.

16. Girls from Muslim communities are often not able to attend regular schools due to various reasons.

17. Some girls are eager to return to school to pursue their education and according to their age they need to be prepared for a higher class.

### **WE MAY ENLIST SOME OF THE SOLUTIONS:**

#### *ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLING FOR SC & ST:*

1. For small habitants, situated in remote and inaccessible areas, where opening of formal school may not be suitable and cost-effective.

2. For children whose own routine does not match with the timings of formal schools.

3. For children of wander tribes.

4. For children of highly marginalised communities, who are socially alienated from formal schooling system.

5. For left out /dropped out children.

#### *ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLING FOR GIRLS:*

The above problem can't be looked out in disassociation. School in the localized area in form of "AGNA VIDYALAYA" may be one of the better alternative. Mother's Association may be empowered through community mobilization to run such centers directly. The instructors may be one of the mother/sister educated up to class VIII and by giving her training by the department may be utilised. There should not be any tight lipped timing but it may vary according to the season, working style, etc.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Several lessons can be gleaned from the success stories of Kenya, Indonesia and others to accelerate the goal of achieving the elementary education in the country at the earliest. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments relating to Panchayat Raj and urban bodies provide the possibility of a greater participation to local communities. The turn of century is also characterized by fast technological, social and economic developments. There is little need to emphasize the value of eight years of education, which will prepare better these marginalised class people for subsequent level of vocational and skill training as well as different avenues of employment. UEE can also be utilized to replace orthodox and decant value systems with more egalitarian perspectives and promote the scientific temper, humanism, peace and harmony among different communities.