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Education: The pathway that leads towards gender equality

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Abstract

“Both men and women should feel free to be sensitive. Both men and women should feel free to be strong...it is time that we all perceive gender on a spectrum not as two opposing sets of ideas.”
— Emma Watson

Education decreases social inequalities, empowers women and helps each individual reach their full potential. Education is the key to achieving all other human rights. Education for all is a fundamental human right. So too is equality of women and men. Gender equality is one of the severe issues in our current modern Indian society. It refers to the equality of responsibilities, rights, and opportunities for females and males. Women, as well as girls, still fall behind the men and boys on the fundamental aspects.

Educators should foster student equality, promote and strengthen the constitutional culture and stability. To promote equality, it will be necessary to provide for equal opportunity to all not only in access to education, but also in the conditions for success. Everyone has to be reminded of the inherent equality of all through education. School education and social culture also play an important role in spreading gender equality in India. The importance of education helps in breaking the walls of gender inequality. “If you educate a man, you educate an individual. If you educate a woman, you educate a family.” It is the process of elevating women in social, economic and political environments so that they can play a role equal to that of men in society. The purpose of this paper is to state that education alone can remove prejudices and complexes that hinder gender equality transmitted through social environment and the accident of birth, to bring about a positive change in India.

Keywords: Gender equality, human rights, education, educators, equal opportunity, social culture, positive change

Introduction

Human beings are a different race as compared to other animals and treat themselves superior to animals. However, there has been discrimination among humans as well. Women, in society, have not been treated at par with the males and this gender inequality has been there since ages. All human beings should be treated equally irrespective of their gender. Gender equality means that males and females have equal opportunities to realise their full human rights and contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political development. It refers to the equality of responsibilities, rights, and opportunities for females and males.

i. Gender equality and its importance

By offering gender equality in areas of health services, education, jobs, and involvement in administrative and monetary decision-making practices will ultimately benefit in attaining the economic sustainability overall. Numerous global organisations emphasise the significance of gender equality as a motivation for resolving several demographic, economic, and other issues.

ii. This is what gender equality aims at

Gender equality aims at removing all boundaries and differences between men and women. It eliminates any kind of discrimination between male and female. It ensures equal rights and opportunities for both males and females, be it at home or in educational institutions or at workplaces. It also guarantees political, social, and economic equality.

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iii. Pitfalls in gender equality in India

1. Discrimination against women and girls is a pervasive and long-running phenomenon that characterises Indian society at every level.
2. A preference for sons: A culturally ingrained parental preference for sons- emanating from their importance as caregivers for parents in old age is linked to poorer consequences for daughters.
3. Poverty is another pitfall in gender equality in India because it pushes girls into sexual abuse, child trafficking, forced marriages, and domestic violence.
4. Insensitivity towards women exposes them to rapes, stalking, threats, unsafe atmosphere at workplaces and roads due to which achieving gender equality in India has become a tough task.

Suggestions and solutions

1. Educating Indian children from an early age about the importance of gender equality could be a meaningful start in this direction.
2. Gender equality through curriculum: One should spell out the concerns that are to be addressed by the teachers and administrators for eliminating sex biases in an endeavour to promote gender equality and positive self-concept through curriculum and life skills approach.
3. The education system must play a positive role in the empowerment of people and removal of all kinds of biases which are basically man made.
4. India will not fully develop unless both girls and boys are equally supported by educating them to reach their full potential.

Conclusion

The road to an absolute gender equality in India is tough but not impossible. We must be honest in our efforts and work on changing the social outlook towards females. For a full-fledged gender equality in India, both men and women must be well educated, work together and bring a positive change in society.

To conclude-“Achieving gender equality requires the engagement of women and men, girls and boys. It is everyone’s responsibility.” — Ban Ki-moon

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