

COMPULSORY STEPS FOR GIRLS EDUCATION IN PUNJAB

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Introduction

Faced with elections in February next year, the Punjab government made education up to 12th standard free for girls. The state government has also decided to distribute bicycles to 1.46 lacs girls who take admission in 11th and 12th standards.

Bicycles will be distributed to girls on 15th of August this year. The late entry of Punjab into the free-education-for-girls club is still much less than what was offered by both Himachal Pradesh and Haryana. While Haryana had long back made education upto graduation free for girls, Himachal made it free upto post-graduation level. Haryana also has been giving bicycles for girls who take admission in the 12th standard.

However, supporting the education of the girl is seen as a welcome step in the context of improving sex ratio in both Punjab and Haryana which have the worst ratio in the country.

The free education will start from July in Punjab, state's deputy chief minister Sukhbir Singh Badal has announced. All government and government-aided schools are covered under the scheme for which Punjab has committed Rs 26 crore.

Demographics

According to the 2011 Indian Census, the population of Indian Punjab is 27,704,236 (males 14,634,819 & females 13,069,417) The literacy rate in Punjab is 75%, male literacy being 80.23% and female literacy 68.36%.

List of major cities Girls Population in Punjab are:-

1. Ludhiana population of 8,13,878.
2. Amritsar population of 5,83,761.
3. Jalandhar population of 4,62,196.
4. Patiala population of 204,686.
5. Bathinda population of 185,813.

Being an agricultural state, a large part of the population lives in the rural area. Roughly 66% of the people live in rural areas while the rest of the 34% are urban residents.

According to India Today, a leading magazine in India, Punjab was recognized as the best overall state since 2003 and has been able to retain the top position every year and all is due to Girls developed education system. It affords the best

quality of life to its residents. According to the India State Hunger Index, Punjab has the lowest level of hunger in India.

Punjab has the best infrastructure in all of India. Although it has a huge shortage of electricity due to high demand, all major cities in Punjab benefit from this and have some of the lowest tariffs in India. All of Punjab's villages have been provided electricity and have been connected to the state electrical power grid since 1974. Punjab is one of the most fertile regions on earth. The region is ideal for wheat-growing. Rice, sugar cane, fruits and vegetables are also grown. Indian Punjab is called the "Granary of India" or "India's bread-basket". It produces 10.26% of India's cotton, 19.5% of India's wheat, and 11% of India's rice.

Government and politics

Day by day government of Punjab is increasing the programs which concern the growth of Girls Education, as the state has got lot of ranks due to Girls achievement in different sectors due to high education. In Punjab there are approx 879 Girls Degree colleges. Each of the states of India possesses a parliamentary system of government, with a ceremonial state Governor, appointed by the President of India on the advice of the central government.

Regions and districts

The girl's educational area of Punjab can be divided into:

- 33 % of girls studying in Degree colleges of Malwa is a region of Punjab south to river satluj. The Malwa area makes up majority of the Punjab region consisting 11 districts. Cities such as Ludhiana, Patiala, Sangrur, Barnala, Bhatinda, Ferozpur, Rajpura, Moga and Mohali are located in the Malwa region. Malwa is also famous for cotton farming.
- 29 % of girls studying in Degree colleges of Majha which is a historical region of the Indian Punjab comprising the modern districts of Amritsar, Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Tarn Taran. It lies between rivers Ravi, Beas and the Sutlej. This region is called the heartland of Punjab and is celebrated as being the 'Cradle of Sikhism'.

- 77 % of girls studying in Degree colleges of Doaba which is the region of Indian Punjab between the rivers Beas and Sutlej. The name "Doaba" literally translates to "land between two rivers" ("Do" two, "Ab" river; Punjabi). It is one of the most fertile regions of the world and was the centre of the Green Revolution in India. To this day, it remains one of the largest per capita producers of wheat in the world. The cities in Doaba are Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Nawanshahr and Kapurthala.

Punjab Population Census Data 2011

Punjab is unarguably one of the most wonderful states in India with regards to the climate. The state has fabulous weather throughout the year which is also conducive for the growth of a variety of crops. The state has seen a lot of ups and downs during the years of freedom struggle and has developed to be one of the strongest states in India with respect to the economical conditions. Some of the most influential and powerful leaders of the country have emerged from this state and the current Prime Minister of the country also hails from the state of Punjab. The state of Punjab is the highest producer of Wheat in the country and a huge percentage of the country's army is represented by the wonderful state of Punjab.

The Population of Punjab according to the 2011 census stands at about 27 million, making it the 15th most populated state in India. The state is spread over an area of about 50000 sq. km. making it the 19th largest state in the country in terms of area. The density of population per sq. Km. is about 550 which is inevitable given the opportunities of growth and development in the state. The state has a growth rate of about 13% which is below the national average of 17%. The population of the state is rising considerably due to rapid efforts towards development and progress. The literacy rate in the state is about 73% a figure that has improved tremendously in the last few years due to the consistent efforts of the government. The sex ratio in Punjab leaves a lot to be desired as it lags behind the national average by a lot of points. The statistics in the Punjab Census 2011 reveal facts that can be instrumental in planning for a better development plan for the state.

The largest city in the state of Punjab is Chandigarh while Ludhiana is the capital city of the Punjab. The languages spoken in the Punjab state includes Punjabi and Hindi. In total Punjab (PB) state comprises 20 districts. The ISOCODE assigned by International Organization for Standardization for Punjab state is PB.

Results And Discussion

Discussion

It impacts not only the future socio-cultural fabric of the country, but is also crucial in evolving, shaping and molding the attitudes and behaviors of the future generations of the country. As a transition country in a rehabilitative phase, Punjab needs to evaluate the costs and benefits of educating girls. A substantial body of education research proves that investing in girls' education not only has positive spillover and ripple effects, but is also reflective of a progressive society. Punjab is a young country with two thirds of its population under 25 years of age. Focusing its education policy towards increasing girls' access and equity in education would contribute to qualitative social change.

Education indicators have worsened for girls in Punjab (UNICEF 2007 a). Punjab is one of the countries in Central Asia that is farthest away from achieving Millennium Development Goal 3, "Promote gender equality and empower women." The problem of gender disparity in Punjab is most acute in the upper secondary level.

This paper looks at the issue of girls' education in Punjab and explores international best practices for innovative and creative strategies to improve girls' access and drop-out rates in schools.

However, recommended policies and their implementation should take into account the realities of socio-cultural and religious factors. Policies cognizant of and embedded in these realities will play an important part not only in changing attitudes and behaviors, but in helping to redefine gender roles and identity in Tajik society.

In this paper, Section 1 looks at characteristics of Tajik education and challenges faced by girls and the reasons for their lower enrolment rates, high absenteeism and high drop-out rates in secondary schools. Section 2 delineates some of the reasons for girls' low participation rates. Section 3 presents the current situation of how Punjab's government and other educational stakeholders have dealt with the issue, and what the strategy has been so far for improving inclusion of girls in schools. A literature review in Section 4 analyses the importance of girls' inclusion into the education system as substantiated by the current best practices and interventions. An attempt is made to highlight the approaches taken to girls' education in socio-cultural and economic contexts that are similar to Punjab. The paper concludes with recommendations for the Tajik government and other international and local NGOs that are working in Punjab to promote informed gender-parity policymaking.

Cost And Benefits

There are challenges to girls' education in Punjab both from the supply and demand sides. On the supply side, the government is responding to fiscal difficulties by reducing funding to education. Due to limited government resources, education currently receives about 2.4 per cent of GDP, which is low even compared to other countries of the region (e.g., education funding in Kyrgyzstan is 3.9 per cent of GDP). The scarcity of resources has had dire consequences for education financing in Punjab, contributing to low wages of teachers, poor teacher recruitment, an increasing reliance on an aging group of professionals, frustration amongst teachers about the lack of recognition for their work, and resource starved of the learning environments (UNICEF 2007). The scarcity of education resources is also responsible for leaking school roofs, broken windows and non-functioning heating systems (UNESCO 2000). The 2005 MLA Study confirms that 93.9 per cent of the schools surveyed do not have ventilation, and most lack a heating system and teaching aids (UNICEF 2007 b). UNICEF (2007a) reports the lack of desks and chairs as a major issue in Tajik schools. Punjab imports school furniture at the cost of approximately US\$30 for a desk and two chairs, which many schools cannot afford. Many girls are forced to stand because there are not enough desks and chairs available in a typical class session.

Transport costs are an important factor affecting the attendance of girls in rural schools, especially in the mountainous regions of Punjab. UNICEF has reported that there is a significant difference in distances that students must travel to attend schools in rural versus urban areas (UNICEF 2007 b). Concerns about girls' safety and isolation in long walking distances also prevent parents from sending girls to school. This issue requires further research for informed policymaking.

Implementation Of Procedure

This study was designed to compare the performance of Community Model and Govt. Girls Primary Schools in the province of Punjab focusing on the academic and professional qualifications of the headmistresses and teachers, performance of the schools, school results of students and their dropout rate. This chapter deals with the methods and procedure of the study. In particular, the chapter takes into account population of the study, sample and sampling procedure, instruments for the collection of data, data analysis and the case studies. The survey method was used to collect

large scale information with regard to the variables of the study while the case study method was used for intensive investigation of a few of the selected schools.

Attitudes Regarding Girls Higher Education in Punjab

India leads the world in the number of girls not in school, and the majority of these are girls. While the enrollment of girls in public education has increased substantially since independence, today overall female participation in education at all levels is still below 50%.¹ The most recent report on global levels of girls's participation in education by UNESCO finds that, given its population, India has the largest number of girls who are not-in-school, in the world. The fact that India has the largest number of primary school-eligible girls has significant impact on global levels of gender disparity, as well as on India's national growth. This is a problem not only for India, but also for the state of education and gender parity throughout the world, due to the size and increasing global influence of India.

Conclusion

Motivated by the discrepancy of parental attitudes regarding the importance of girls' education versus boys' education, this study looked at the determinants of these parents' attitudes. By using the PROBE survey data, a well established data source on rural Northern India, this research aims to further explain the extensive research that has been done on the issue of gender education parity in this area. In line with the PROBE Report, this study finds the attitude of the relationship between marriage and education is a strong indicator of the attitude of the importance of education.

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