

Gender Disparity in the Educational System: An Investigation of the Universal Primary Education in India

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Gender inequality in education is one important aspect of educational disparity. The Constitution of India provided for universal education to all children up to the age of 14 years; the goal was to be achieved by 1980. While considerable progress has been made in this regard in the decade of the 1990s, much still remains to be done for girls' education. Enrolment rates at the primary level have risen considerably but many of the children that enroll drop out and only a very small number manage to get beyond the primary stage. Female literacy rates varied from 20% in Rajasthan and 25% in Uttar Pradesh to 86% in Kerala, reflecting very uneven efforts to expand educational achievements. The comparative data of males and females reveals the literacy gaps between them in the Indian society especially in the State of Punjab. According to 2001 census the State of Punjab is ranked seventh in terms of education amongst the states. This study is analytically based using surveys, chronological facts and figures with inferences deduced from the status of primary education in the state of Punjab, India; it evaluated the status of female education in the State. Incidentally, the selection of districts represents traditional geographical categorization of Punjab, Majha, Malwa, and Doaba. The three divisions are further divided into sub-divisions and villages. The research is an outcome of questionnaire prepared to collect data from 200 respondents which includes Girl Students. The paper criticizes the lack of judicial protection of the rights of female education and concludes that the National Commission for Women should take initiatives for checking gender disparities in education.

Keywords: Education, Right to Education, Female Children, India.