

“If every girl is valued and given the same opportunities as boys; if she is free from not only child marriage, but from all forms of violence and discrimination, amazing things can happen – not only for the girl whose life is changed forever but for the whole world which becomes safer, happier and more balance”.

A SPECIAL FOCUS ON GIRL CHILD

Education of Girls

Reports estimate that more than 50 percent of girls in India fail to enroll in school and those who do are likely to drop out by the age of 12.

As in a series of other aspects, the girl child is also discriminated against extensively in the right to education, even basic at times.

Lack of education denies the girl child, the knowledge and skills needed to advance their status. Education enables the child to realize her full potential, to think, question and judge independently; to be a wise decision-maker, develop civic sense and learn to respect, love his fellow human beings and to be a good citizen.



Figures also report that there is discrimination even in the field of higher education. At least a 40% of girls are not allowed to pursue higher studies, due to the conservative familial ideologies.

Girl Child: Poverty and Healthcare

Experts suggest direct linkages between poverty and adolescent girls' health and also with the vast majority of poor girls caught in the vicious circle of early motherhood. This in turn deprives her of the basic rights to health, education, development and independence.

As per research figures, the under nourishment and neglect of the young girls is reflected in their poor body size/growth and narrow pelvis as they grow into adolescence, rendering child bearing a huge risk.

Girls between 13 to 18 years of age have also shown a lower percentage of iron, making them prone to anemia and similar health issues.

Girl children in action

We must recognize that girls participate in diverse aspects either in school or outside it. Participation is a process and at the same time an end which brings empowerment as a positive consequence. We have to recognize different ways of children participation, like arts, class representative, song's lyrics and graffiti. Promoting girls participation in collective activities must be one of our objectives. The challenge of the adult world consists of decoding demands expressed in different languages by children and translating them into public policies destined to satisfy those demands. It involves accepting adult limitations to really understanding the world and to assume the necessity to integrate those who are directly implicated, children in this particular case. At the same time, we should appeal as a society for a change in policies where the state is made more accountable to society to all the groups, including girls and boys.

SHE

Watery cushion cuddling her, she thrives
Her limbs grow at a silent natural pace
Closed are her eyes and tiny her ears
Yet fully aware of life and its vibrations
She doesn't know the pangs of hunger,
Her tiny pouch is filled without asking for
She kicks gently and coos silently
She is tenderly molded, perfectly modeled
Wet and glistening like a pearl in an oyster,
She is a magic of the creator
Created within a mother's womb

The magic is gone
The day she is born
Seems she is a load too heavy
Even to that woman who bore her for months
Reasons are varied, result is the same
She is left to the earth and winds
By the mother who proceeds nonchalantly to
Bear only sons!

Are such women
Mothers or man – making machines?
Women so heartless to finch at a girl
But who don't mind bleeding and dying for
The pride called son!

Let such un – womanly women and their uncouth men
Break down, vanish and get annihilated
Heralding and welcoming the birth of a
GIRL – Child
Into a safe and halcyon world
Where girls of any color and race are received with
Joy, triumph and grace!
Hail and happiness to thee oh girl child
Welcome, welcome and welcome again!

- Ambika Ananth

Women Empowerment

Women Empowerment refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal-right to women, and to make them confident enough to claim their rights, such as:

- freely live their life with a sense of self-worth, respect and dignity,
- have complete control of their life, both within and outside of their home and workplace,
- to make their own choices and decisions,
- have equal rights to participate in social, religious and public activities,
- have equal social status in the society,
- have equal rights for social and economic justice,
- determine financial and economic choices,
- get equal opportunity for education,
- get equal employment opportunity without any gender bias,
- get safe and comfortable working environment,



Women have the rights to get their voices heard. Women population constitutes around 50% of the world population. A large number of women around the world are unemployed. The world economy suffers a lot because of the unequal opportunity for women at workplaces. Women are equally competent. Nowadays, women are even ahead of men in many socio-economic activities. Women are as talented as men. Previously, women were not allowed higher education like men and hence their talents were wasted. But nowadays, they are also allowed to go for higher studies and it encourages women to show their talents which will not only benefit her individually but to the whole world at large. The main advantage of Women Empowerment is that there will be an

overall development of the society. The money that women earn does not only help them and or their family, but it also help develop the society. Women Empowerment also leads to more economic benefits not to the individuals but to the society as well. Unlike earlier days when they stayed at home only and do only kitchen stuffs, nowadays, they roam outside and also earn money like the male members of the society. Women empowerment helps women to stand on their own legs, become independent and also to earn for their family which grows country's economy. Women Empowerment leads to decrease in domestic violence. Uneducated women are at higher risk for domestic violence than an educated woman. Women Empowerment is also advantageous in case of corruption. Women empowerment helps women to get educated and know their rights and duties and hence can stop corruption. Women Empowerment also reduces poverty. Sometimes, the money earned by the male member of the family is not sufficient to meet the demands of the family. The added earnings of women help the family to come out of poverty trap.

Gender Equality

Anything that makes a woman feel inferior and takes away her self-respect is abuse. Compulsory Registration of Marriage Act can be beneficial in preventing the abuse of institution of marriage and hindering social justice especially in relation to women.

It would help the innumerable women in the country who get abandoned by their husbands and have no means of proving their marital status. It would also help check child marriages, bigamy and polygamy, enable women to seek maintenance and custody of their children and widows can claim inheritance rights. The Act is applicable on all women irrespective of caste, creed or religion. It would truly empower Indian women to exercise their rights.



To what extent legislative measures have been able to raise the status of women in India? Are women now feel empowered in the sense that they are being equally treated by men in all spheres of life and are able to express one's true feminine urges and energies? These are the important questions to be investigated with regard to women's empowerment in India.

We all know that girls are now doing better at school than boys. The annual results of Secondary and Higher Secondary Board examinations reveal this fact. More women are getting degrees than men, and are filling most new jobs in every field.



National Girl Child Day Celebration

State Child Protection Society, Assam celebrated National Girl Child Day on 24th January 2017 centrally at the State Level in Collaboration with Utsah, a non- voluntary organization with support from UNICEF. On the occasion an Educative Comic Strip was launched with stories on different child protection issues which were distributed in the govt. schools, hospitals & other public places. National Girl Child Day was also celebrated by all the districts with different innovative ideas.

Glimpses of the Celebration of National Girl Child Day.





Editorial

The girl-child is a biological female offspring from birth to 18 years of age. During this period, the young girl is totally under the care of the adult who may be parents, guardians or elder siblings. It is also a period when the girl-child is malleable, builds and develops her personality and character. She is very dependent on others on who she models her behaviour, through observation, repetition and imitation. Her physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional developments start and progress to get to the peak at the young adult stage.

Girl education is like sowing the seed which gives rise to green, cheerful and full grown family plant. Today's girl child will be the mother of tomorrow. As a mother she can give her child a sound nursing and capable upbringing. A woman has the maximum impact on the social, economical decisions making in the family generally.

Undoubtedly true that girl education stimulates educational consciousness and civic sense among the family members. She can teach the family members more comfortably than anyone else. Illiteracy is the cause of many ills. A woman influences the activities and decisions of family than anyone else. The educated girl can shoulder any kind of responsibility. An educated woman not only helps in nourishing the family in a better way but can also help in earning. Rightly said that God made the mother because He could not be present everywhere.

"One could judge the degree of civilization of a country by the social and political position of its women" -Charles Fourier

"She makes the world bright, but still struggles to see light."

"Give girls the wings to fly, not the pain to cry and die."

"The worst form of inequality is to try to make unequal things equal".