

## REPORT ON COMMUNITY SURVEY

Preeti Pawar

**EDUCATION** is vital to the human resources development and empowerment in the stages of growth of a nation... On the need for education, I wish to quote our Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, who once said that education not only moulds the new generation, but reflects a society's fundamental assumptions about itself and the individuals which compose it.

The survey conducted brought a different aspect of the educational system of the country forward. We talk about the progress and digitalizing of the country but how can we say that when the mass population remains uneducated and unaware of the various options available to them.

Gender equality, woman empowerment is only the hash tag of the educated class; the mass population still believes in early marriages for girls to get rid of them and considers the girl child as a burden.

The boys of the family are sent to English medium or private school while the girls are sent to BMC schools in the vernacular medium. The girls are not sent for further education after they finish their 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

We can still find a series of girl children in the family till the mother delivers a male child. The ignorance level is still so high that the responsibility for boring a male child is on the lady of the family. The girl is taught from a very young age to take care of her siblings and the household. The parents also believe that if the girl gets highly educated it becomes difficult to find a match for her in their community.

The mothers are ignorant about the name of the school the child goes to. There were mothers who weren't even aware of the standard their child studies in. There is also no regret in them for not getting educated because they strongly believe that it is their destiny to remain uneducated and take care of the household.

There is abuse and violence in the house. The girl grows up with an understanding that it is ok for the male member of the family to abuse physically or mentally the females in the family because she see it every day in her house without the mother or elder sisters retaliating to the father. The boys too grow up with the idea that this is the only way to treat females of the house because he too is observing the father and learns from his behavior.

In a rented house of 8x8 where it is difficult to breathe with no ventilation and no toilets there are 8-10 people staying together. These houses are also their workplace where they run their small scale workshops of pasting chappals, jari work, carpentry etc.

It was observed that the children are sent out on the streets in the morning once they get up. They wander around the area in their school uniform without bathing or brushing. Then in the afternoon, they go to school. The bag which was brought yesterday remains untouched and is picked up again to go to school. The only place they get to use the washroom free of cost is the school. Otherwise they have to spend Rs 30 per month to use the public toilets. The child's only motive to go to school is to eat the mid day meal. He has never thought about the quality of the food there, because that is the only source of his food. The pathetic quality doesn't make any difference to him because he has tasted only those flavours so far. He comes home in the evening puts his bag in a corner and again wanders around on the streets.

In government schools the teachers are lack responsibility and are barely willing to teach devotedly. Some schools don't even have different teachers assigned for different subjects and some days only one is teaching all six subjects. Sometimes they are absent, sometimes they are present in the class but they don't care to teach. The teachers need to be more responsible as they end up ruining the future of the children who can't afford private schooling. It is not good enough, particularly in government schools the education system is infected with irresponsibility and carelessness of teachers as well as students. Neither the teachers take the responsibility themselves, nor do they instigate students to come forth and show some interest. The students are hence left to suffer because of the carelessness of the authorities.

The blame game continues in a vicious cycle the teachers blame the parents apathy- the parents blame the teachers carelessness- they both blame the government. None of them wanting to take the responsibility or onus for their development

There is nothing as family time or spending time with the family. The mother is so busy taking care of the house hold chores and the other members of the family. The father works through the day and comes home drunk at night ready to abuse the

lady of the house. The child sleeps to the memories of the father hitting the mother and the mother sobbing herself off to sleep. This is repeated every day.. day after day.

There is battle between survival and education. It is proved by psychologist Maslow that the physiological needs are to be met first then in this battle between providing for basics or providing for education. Education will always lose.

While analyzing the community survey database there was a revelation that a large chunk of the grandfathers were mill workers. How could mill worker provide for education to his son when the mill had closed down and there is no way to meet the daily requirement of the members of the family? They had to resort to other means of income and force their children to drop out from school to earn for livelihood.

To conclude the three major areas to be focused to ensure that our education system is sustainable and meets global standards:

- i. Quality of Education – in terms of infrastructure, teachers, accreditation, etc.
- ii. Affordability of Education – ensuring poor and deserving students are not denied education.
- iii. Ethics in Education – avoiding over-commercialization of education system.

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### **Reasons for dropouts**

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We are aiming towards a digitalised nation when a large chunk of our population is still either under educated or not educated at all. It is definitely a sad state of affairs when a country's future generation skips on education or refrains from it. More and more children are dropping out of schools. Some drop out of schools voluntarily while others are forced to do so under dire circumstances.

- **Apathy of parents:**

There is huge ignorance on the part of the parents of the drop out. There seems to be no need on their side to educate their children. For them just going to school is a means of getting food and stationery for them. These first generation learners therefore have no motivation from the home to study well or study further. The girls child is still considered a burden and is not sent for higher education.

- **Never ending debt.**

The section of society is forever in debt and to repay this debt they prefer to send their children for odd jobs rather to school. These debts are taken for weddings in the family or any other religious function; which should have not been necessary.

- **Disengagement from school**

Often, students disengage from learning, feeling that their teachers do not care for them or teach them appropriately. The untrained and uninterested teachers don't take any efforts to retain the students in school. It becomes easy for the child to drop out rather than take the efforts to study harder since there is no motivation or encouragement.

- **Illness in the family**

The people staying in slums are susceptible to forever illness. The illness of especially the earning member of the family demands the child to drop out from the school and get enrolled in the family business or some other kind of money making activity to take care of the family.

- **Death of a parent**

The death of a parent specially the father in India is one of the factors for students to quit studies. The patriarchal society tries to suppress the mother and she has no other option rather than to live in with another man or to get into odd jobs. The step

father doesnot take any interest in the eduaction of thechild and also abuses the child.

- **Failure in school**

Some students fail repeatedly in school. The constant failure causes the lack of self confidence in them. As and when the failure persists, the lack of self-confidence vanishes. In its space emerges a feeling of being least bothered. which is more fatal as compared to the former. Once the person starts to feel disinterested in the consequences any more, then she or he goes for what they feel is the best. They no longer find any logic behind succumbing to the rules and regulations, thereby following what is desired of them. In the face of repeated failures, they give up school education.

- **Delinquency**

School students get fascinated by the fancy things that life seems to offer. Every short-cut taken to acquire all those fanciful things is a step ahead towards delinquency. Sometimes willingly and sometimes unknowingly they get caught in its web. Once caught, it becomes impossible to get out of it. Be it petty thefts, buying and selling of porn videos, helping in unethical crimes, it is a host of evil that they get trapped in. School becomes long forgotten after taking up such pursuits.

- **Mental health issues**

The mental health of the students also contribute towards their interest in education. On one hand there is abuse in the home environment and on the other hand the student salso get bullied in the school by elder children. This effects their mental equilibrium and they are not able to concentrate on their academics leading to drop outs.