

UPSCprep Free Daily Answer Writing Initiative

Subject: GS 4

Syllabus: Case Study

Questions

Q1. Literacy levels have been increasing in India over the past few decades, and the literacy rate was found to be 74.04 per cent after the 2011 census. Though this increase in literacy rate seems like a very great accomplishment, it is a matter of concern that still so many people in India cannot even read and write. Children are going to school but not learning much beyond “floor level tasks”. Moreover, the higher literacy level has not resulted in better human values and this is manifested in the troubled atmosphere in the society at large. This failure of the education system to reform human behavior is troubling for a young democracy, like India. Given this situation, answer the following:

- a) What role is education expected to play in reforming human behaviour and inculcating human values?
- b) Do you think only the government is responsible for this state of the education system? If not, identify the stakeholders who should press for a change in the education system in this regard.

(250 words)

20

Q2. You are working as a District Magistrate in an aspirational district where women literacy and sex ratio is one of the lowest in the country. It is brought to your notice that a woman who has been elected as ‘Sarpanch’ on a seat reserved for women candidates in a panchayat in your district is headed ‘only on the paper’. All the work related to the panchayat is actually carried out by her husband. Even the flag hoisting ceremony on Independence Day is carried out by her husband. However, her husband happens to be a good administrator as indicated by that panchayat’s performance on various developmental parameters as compared to other panchayats

in the district. Also, her husband enjoys the support of the local people. Given the situation, answer the following:

- a) Identify the stakeholders and issues involved in this case?
- b) What options are available to you as the District Magistrate in such a scenario? Also, evaluate each option and indicate what option you will choose.

(250 words)

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Model Structures

Q1. Literacy levels have been increasing in India over the past few decades, and the literacy rate was found to be 74.04 per cent after the 2011 census. Though this increase in literacy rate seems like a very great accomplishment, it is a matter of concern that still so many people in India cannot even read and write. Children are going to school but not learning much beyond “floor level tasks”. Moreover, the higher literacy level has not resulted in better human values and this is manifested in the troubled atmosphere in the society at large. This failure of the education system to reform human behavior is troubling for a young democracy, like India. Given this situation, answer the following:

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(20 marks)

Introduction:

- The current education system in India has contributed to substantial rise in literacy levels and enabled the younger generation to earn livelihoods by performing floor level tasks.
- However, going beyond these achievements, the Annual Status of Education Report has regularly highlighted poor learning outcomes at school level.

- Further, increasing instances of hate crimes, mob lynching, caste wars, and rape incidents indicates social degradation.
- **Role education is expected to play in reforming human behavior and inculcating human values**
 - Through education, the **aspects of behaviour can be fine-tuned with the societal realities.**
 - Education imparts general knowledge, which exposes young minds to the world beyond the family and surroundings.
 - **Expands the horizon of understanding**, which is reflected in their responses.
 - Though observation is inherent in human nature, the education process develops the **powers of reasoning and judgment** therefore enhances it further.
 - An individual learns about the accepted and unaccepted set of behaviors. Accordingly, he/she tries to align himself.
 - A **proactive feedback system** from teachers and peers on actions gives ideas about the behavioral aspects.
 - **Human values are the virtues** like compassion, tolerance, kindness etc., which guide individuals to take into account the human element when they interact with other human beings.
 - It is the prime concern of education to evolve the good, the true and the honest so as to establish a moral life in the world.
 - It is expected that education through a value-based system **creates morally strong characters** driven by greater instincts.
 - It enables not only to identify and differentiate between right and wrong but also gives courage to speak against injustice and inequality.
 - It introduces the **element of rationality in the human mind.**
 - Help to see through existing prejudices and ills and encourage the informed people to fight them.
 - It develops a **deeper understanding of culture of their own as well as others** so that they can learn to respect the diversity and tolerate others' social and cultural practices.

- **The government alone can't be held responsible for the present state of education**
 - **Limited resources:** The government has to rationalize the utilization of resources according to various priorities.
 - It hinders the capacity of the state to provide free quality education to all and create a large number of institutions of excellence.
 - **Inadequate demand for quality education:** Despite the government introducing and popularizing the right to education as a legal right, peoples' exercise of their rights and the demand for quality education is still not adequate.
 - **Lack of public support:** The policy formulation and its execution are the responsibilities of the state.
 - Without active public support, the novel desired objectives remain unachieved.
- **Stakeholders needed to press for a change in the education system**
 - **Parents:** They should raise their voices and demand better education.
 - They should actively engage with administration to ensure that institutions deliver real capabilities rather than certificates for namesake.
 - **Media:** It should engage in sustained scrutiny of public offices to hold them accountable.
 - Build strong public pressure on the political class and the executive for it.
 - **Corporates:** They should come forward and support the government educational initiatives, which are in the right direction.
 - They may also supplement the exchequer by creating additional support systems for existing educational institutions.
 - **Not-for-profit organizations:** These can engage more deeply with political processes to demand effectiveness from the institutions of the state.
 - Further, they can use their network to deliver the educational services as well.

Conclusion:

- The need of the hour is to focus on holistic development of children and not just providing them skills to earn livelihoods. We must provide the children an education, which builds their character and develops the nation, as envisioned by Gandhiji.
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- c) Identify the stakeholders and issues involved in this case?**
- d) What options are available to you as the District Magistrate in such a scenario?**

Also, evaluate each option and indicate what option you will choose.

(20 marks)

Introduction

- This case depicts the phenomenon of “Sarpanch Pati” in which a male relative of an elected woman Panchayat Sarpanch/member discharges all the official responsibilities of the woman.
- This phenomenon arose as a result of the provision of reservation of seats in Panchayat elections for women in the backdrop of the patriarchal mindset of society.

Main Body

- Various stakeholders and issues involved in this case are the following-
 - Sarpanch: She has been deprived of her rights to discharge her official duty, participate in the political process and take decisions.
 - Husband of sarpanch: Though a good administrator, he is indulging in impropriety by discharging official duties of the Sarpanch, which is a case of unauthorized appropriation of an elected office.

- Villagers: Though their Panchayat is ahead of other panchayats in the district, this incident clearly points to their regressive attitude towards women.
 - This may also be a factor behind the district's low performance on women's literacy and sex ratio.
- District and state administration: The district administration must ensure that there is no violation of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, which seeks to involve women in decision-making and leadership roles.
- Women and society at large: Such incidents strike at the very root of the process of women empowerment.
 - Perpetuate traditional patriarchal society & ensure that women are kept subjugated.
 - This acts as a hindrance to the overall development of society.

As a District Magistrate, I have the following options available:

- Take legal action against the Sarpanch under relevant provisions of the state Panchayati Raj Act:
 - Pros: This will act as a deterrent for others and will create the space for women empowerment as envisaged by the PRI Act.
 - Cons: Without a proper enquiry into the matter, this step may prove hasty.
 - Also, there is a chance that the local aids of the 'Sarpanch Pati' start creating law and order issues.
- Conduct an enquiry into the allegation:
 - Pros: This will establish the facts of the case, which will help in taking informed decisions based on evidence and will also uphold the rule of law.
 - Cons: This may initially give a message that the administration is going lenient over the issue, as the enquiry may take time to conclude.
- Inform counsel and if needed, warn the Sarpanch
 - Pros: It will also ensure that the legal repercussions of their actions are well understood by the Sarpanch.
 - It will also provide an opportunity to the woman Sarpanch to put across her point as well.

- Also, based on this conversation, a future course of action can be decided.
- Cons: Though this step takes into account the sensitivity of the situation, this might give an impression that the administration lacks the desired will power to take strong action against such perpetrators.
 - Going lenient on an unlawful act might prove detrimental
- Course of action:
 - I will order a time-bound inquiry into the allegations. If the allegations are true, a show cause notice will be served to the Sarpanch first.
 - Based on the nature of the reply of Sarpanch I will take following action, as suitable:
 - If cited any personal problem or lack of administrative skills, I will ensure that she gets the required training/help etc. as per the law of the land to enable her to discharge her official duties.
 - If she remains adamant that her husband should carry out the official functions of the Panchayat, I will move forward to initiate further legal proceedings.
 - I will also order legal action against her husband as he is impersonating as a Sarpanch.

Conclusion

- It is important to recognize that this situation is more than a law and order issue; capacity issue and social mindset are some of the other issues involved.
 - In addition to the above steps, at the district level, I will conduct social awareness drives to raise awareness about women empowerment and importance of women in the political process.
 - I will also recommend the Government to conduct a training exercise for all women heads so that they can fulfill their obligations as per the legislation.
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