

2016 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – Honorable Mention]

Education to Build a Better Future
(Original)

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It has always been an enigma, especially to women, as to why men are allowed almost everything, but they aren't. It's funny how women are stereotyped to work only in the kitchen and tend to their families. We see everyday how almost one group or another rises against women participating in politics, or working in the office, and sadly, them being educated. Maybe that's why feminist ideas sprung up in the first place, to gain rights for these oppressed women and girls.

Education, according to the United Nations Charter, is a right of all. Everyone deserves to learn, to prepare for wise leadership and personal achievement, and open their mind to new ideas and to differentiate between the right and wrong. Education provides individuals teaching skills that prepare them physically, mentally and socially for the world to survive in later life. Girls, especially in conservative and rural societies, are discouraged from being educated. Parents don't want their daughters to go to school and learn but stay home and cook.

Now, how exactly is educating a woman educating a nation? In many underdeveloped and even industrialized nations today, we have mothers who weren't even taught how to spell their names while their male siblings and husbands have completed University education. The uneducated wives are the ones who end up looking after the children, that's never a good situation, and it's a vicious cycle.

If women are given an education, they are more likely to send their female children to school; more likely to encourage them to have careers, instead of getting married off at age 12 and having children until they're 40. The mother is the most influential person in the family. She

imparts her knowledge, values, good & bad habits all consciously or unconsciously to her children. If she is educated, her children will be educated and not resort to blind superstitions. If a boy is educated, it is very good for him, it will help him lead a better life, but the benefits may not percolate to his whole family. If a girl is educated, not only will she be better at household work but in cases when her mother might be uneducated, teach her too and impart some useful knowledge since she will be directly in contact with her mother all the time compared to her son.

In countries where women are kept in the dark because of socio and religious factors, the whole country becomes politically, socially and economically unstable. When these women will know their rights, and when the men of the nation are aware of them too, women can ensure that these rights are upheld. This not only creates gender equality but also equilibrium within society. Men don't degrade women, women don't feel oppressed and both work together for the betterment of the nation.

We even have examples of women and their work being important for the nation. Benazir Bhutto, a politician in Pakistan, brought a revolution by working for both human and female rights. Madame Curie won two Nobel Prizes, the only person honored as such in two science categories. In societies where these individuals lived, women today are now treated better compared to the rural and ignorant societies like those in Middle East and Asia. If girls were to be educated then not only would they be politically aware about their country but could also match men in competitive fields.

In conclusion, if girls are educated, it would not only lead the men to appreciate their talent, but also deter them from undermining and degrading girls. Inducing gender equality within the nations would also be one of the feats that will be accomplished. Women would also know how to run their households and be better companions to their men. As Barack Obama said, "If it's educating, its girls, if women have equal rights, the country is going to move forward. But if women are oppressed and abused and illiterate, then they're going to fall behind." Education in any economy forms the basis of development for its human resource and spearheads growth and development in the country.