EDUCATE GIRLS AND BOYS THE SAME WAY

by:
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Gone are the days when women are expected to just “nurture” and “serve,” the days when women are prisoners of their homes, and their husbands engaging with the world. Women have earned their freedom, women now have the choice to be a prisoner or an influencer in today’s world. In education, gone are the days when little girls were taught table manners, sewing, and proper posture, because their predetermined paths are to be “wives.” All the while, little boys were taught combat training, history, and literature, because they are expected to be a nobleman, to provide for their family. As they say, raise girls and boys the same way, but most importantly, educate girls and boys the same way.

Perhaps the most used education quote is Nelson Mandela’s: “Education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world.” However, how can we change the world if inequality in education persists? If only men are given the bountiful amount of weapons? If women have no choice but to recycle weapons used by men? In fact, a 2015 report by the World’s Women (2014) found out that there are 781 million illiterate adults, aged 15 and above. What’s shocking about this report is that 496 million of them ARE WOMEN. No need to use metaphors here, it is a fact that two-thirds of the illiterate population across all regions in the world, ARE WOMEN. Adding more salt to the wound is the fact that of the 123 million youth who are illiterate, 76 million of them ARE WOMEN. This has been backed up by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2014).
Education enables us to withstand the storms of inequality and poverty. When people are educated, they know their rights, people who have a proper education is able to be competitive -- a trait greatly needed by the rigid business world we have. This isn’t just flowery words, this is backed up by the 2011 World Bank Study entitled, “Measuring the Economic Gain of Investing in Girls”. It claims that a fair share of women who enter secondary education, even by just a boost of a single percent, increases the annual per capita growth of the country by 0.3 percent. Small numbers, yet a tremendous impact on our economies. When we talk of people, it does not only pertains to men. Half the population of the world are women, half of our dreams and hopes to change the world lies in the hands of women. Why not give them equal treatment and equal respect?

This battle is not a fight to be left with women alone. This is a collective battle that asks for our rational judgment towards both genders and primarily seeks better educational laws not only for the gain of a few but the general population itself. I will end this article with a powerful quote by Greg Mortenson that I hope you can ponder upon: “You can drop bombs, send in troops, build roads, put in electricity, or hand out condoms, but unless the girls are educated, a society will not change.”

References:

