

Should primary education in ethiopia be compulsory education essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Most children living in main towns and cities in Ethiopia have more access than those living in the rural areas. (Link Ethiopia) These children have a chance to go to primary school, and are now being encouraged by their parents and guardians to attend school throughout.

Ethiopia was at civil war for 16 years. After the war, in 1991, education has shown a massive development. In 1994-1995 three million people were in primary school; and by 2008-2009, 15.3 million children got enrolled in primary schools. (One living proof) This is an increase of over 500% (One living proof). Statistics have also shown that approximately 1 teacher teaches 59 students in primary classes.

Elleni Muluneh, a founder member of the Ethiopian Youth Forum, said that without education, a country cannot develop. (UNICEF) The government and other NGO's have identified this problem. One of the Millennium development goals is to move on and make primary education free and compulsory by 2015. (UNICEF)

However, one of the core problems facing Ethiopia on Education is that most people in Ethiopia think that work is more important than education, so they start at a very early age with little to no education. (Wikipedia) More and more teenage women today drop out from school to go and work in the Arab countries as servants. Men also drop out from school to work in Arab countries. The men usually go there for being janitors, drivers, or guards. I got a chance to talk to Aisha. She quit school at the age of 15 to go to Libya. She went there hoping for a better future. After 3 years of hard labor, she came back. I asked her, “ Why did you quit school at the first place?” She responded by saying “ I wanted to get a better and happier life for me and my family.” I was amazed by this response. This shows us that these children don’t see the need for education. Their parents also don’t encourage them to get the education. In fact, it was Aisha’s Mum that pushed her to go for work. I asked Aisha “ What does education mean to you?” She replied by saying “ For me, education is knowledge. But it is also a waste of time and money, when you could just go to work and help your family survive!” What a discouraging response. Now Aisha is planning to go to Dubai. Her parents are encouraging her to go and work. All they care is for the money their daughter brings. They don’t plan for the future of their daughter.

Now, this type of silliness could be abolished if primary education was compulsory. People like Aisha could be taught about the need for education. If Aisha continued in her 6th grade, she would have had more knowledge about the needs of education.

Does everyone have the right to primary education? This is a really hard question to answer, but I would my answer would be no. This is because the

gender inequality there is in most rural parts of Ethiopia. If a child has no access to primary education, then there is no change for him/her to enter into Secondary school. In the Ethiopian government's development plans, the right to women's education is a big issue that is currently being solved.

If I could change the education system children in rural areas have, I would modify the disciplinary rule. Children get physically abused by the teachers in most government schools around Ethiopia. I went to Summer School this year and experienced the difficulty children in government school face each school day. The students are very quiet, and don't participate in class discussion because they fear the teacher. I asked my friend, Miki to explain to me why they fear the teacher. He said, " We fear the teacher because it is fun for him/her giving us a bruise, even if we talk little." (Miki)

Compulsory schooling in Ethiopia is for 6 years. (State University) These are, the 2 Kindergartens, and primary school up to 4 years. I don't believe this is true because I personally know some children that have never been to school. Most of the little boys you see on the street selling gum have never been to school. They just get taught indirectly on how to sell their sweets. Statistics also show that only 52% complete primary school through 5th grade. (SEEDS OF AFRICA FOUNDATION)

I went to Abebech Gobena on Saturday. This is an orphanage and school in Addis Ababa. There are lots of orphans living there. They get free education 5 days a week. Although the quality of education these children get are poor, they also get free clothing, food, shelter, and some money to spend every month. There are some schools like this in Ethiopia. These schools are funded by worldwide organizations like, Children Aid, UNICEF, and the United Nations.

Some people say, what can I do? I as an individual could help in making primary education in Ethiopia free and compulsory by donating at least an equivalent amount for orphanages and schools. However, we together can make big changes to a lot of orphan's lives. If we donate together, the outcome will mean a lot to those who are in need of it.

In my opinion a major issue that must be solved in primary schools is that few school supplies are available to each student. All the students in government schools are expected to buy books, paper, pens, and any other school utensils themselves. The school doesn't provide these facilities to its students. Another major problem is the sanitation facilities in most schools around Ethiopia. Most schools don't have clean and hygienic toilets. Water, soap, and toilet seats are a major issue in schools. I say that the government and some NGO's have to spend lots of money in order to resolve these two points I mentioned.

Table 1 shows the Primary school enrolment trends in 11 cities in Ethiopia. As we can see, every year, the number of children enrolled in Primary schools has shown a fair rise in number.

Table 1: Regional enrolment trends (Ethiopian Ministry Of Education)

Graph 1 shows the difference between the percent of Male and Female students enrolled in Primary school.

Graph 1: Net Enrollment Ratio and Gender for Primary school (Ethiopian Ministry Of Education)

Graph 2 shows the average annual growth rate of primary enrollment in the year 2010/11. It is shocking to see that Addis Ababa and Harar had a downfall in 2010/11.

Graph 2: Average annual growth rate of primary enrollment (Ethiopian Ministry Of Education)

The local people are also doing their best in order to educate their children. In Amhara Region, communities have contributed a total sum of 57.5 million birr. (Oumer) 17 million birr in cash, 28.7 million birr in form of labor, and 11.8 million birr in local materials. (Oumer) This funding also took place in Oromia, Jimma, and lots of other cities.

There are 31 NGO's working with the government of Ethiopia today. (Dutch coalition on disability and development) All these NGO's help the community by improving the basic aspects that are needed for everyday life. Some of the most important necessities are water, shelter, and improved sanitation. Besides these necessities, education is one of the other important aspects that all of these NGO's are working on. 3 of the main NGO's working with the government to improve education are: UNICEF, UNESCO, and Save The Children.

So, what I want to say by referring to all these NGO's is that primary education should be fully compulsory in all parts of Ethiopia. This is happening slowly by slowly. One of the millennium development goals in Ethiopia is to make primary education free and compulsory. If children do primary school, then they would have a bigger idea on the needs of education. As I mentioned earlier on, one of the core problems of education in Ethiopia is that the people don't see the need to education. Most farmers in rural places think that helping out the family work during the day is better than going to school.

Free primary education could lead to compulsory primary education. The literacy rate of Ethiopia should increase to at least an 87% in the next 5 years. The government of Ethiopia is working hard, with other NGO's to improve the quality of education it is giving to the children. Statistics have proven that, people who earn higher education earn 93 % more than those with a secondary education, who in turn earn 47% more than those with a 5th – 8th grade education. (SEEDS OF AFRICA FOUNDATION) This could be equalized if primary education is compulsory. I, as an individual have learnt that a lot is being done to achieve one of the millennium development goals. Lots of NGO's are working with the government to fulfill their goal for an ' Educated Ethiopia.' But, this could be fully fulfilled with our help. We can make a change. We are lucky that we are learning in one of Ethiopians best schools, but we should also think of those poor little girls wasting those useful weekdays by doing hard work. Most females become mums at the age of 15. We, as educated students know the dangers of having babies at these ages, but these poor little girls don't. This is also getting abolished nowadays. So all in all, all that I can say is that Ethiopia is a developing country in terms of its GDP, and also education. Compulsory primary education could lead for a brighter future! And in the next five years, I hope to see a fully educated Ethiopia.

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