



Impact of Increased Mobility Among Rural Girls on Education

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

The recent research published in the *Journal of Transport Geography* sheds light on a significant rise in cycling levels among rural girls over the past decade.

- This trend, described by researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Delhi as a "**silent revolution**," highlights the impact of government interventions and **changing social norms on the mobility and education of rural girls**.

How has Increased Cycling Among Rural Girls Affected Education?

- **Growth Overview:** The percentage of girls cycling to school in rural areas more than **doubled from 4.5% in 2007 to 11% in 2017**.
 - Nationally, cycling levels among children increased from **6.6% to 11.2%**, with rural areas seeing a twofold rise from 6.3% to 12.3%. Urban areas saw only a slight increase from 7.8% to 8.3%.
- **Factors Contributed to Rise in Cycling:**
 - **Bicycle Distribution Schemes (BDS)** played a crucial role, implemented in 20 out of 35 states and Union Territories (the paper considered the undivided State of Andhra Pradesh), to boost cycling, particularly among girls.
 - States provide bicycles to **school-going children aged 14-17 to improve school enrolment**, especially among girls due to higher dropout rates.
 - **Impact: West Bengal's BDS led to a rise from 15.4% to 27.6% in girls' cycling levels, making it the top state for rural girls' cycling while Bihar saw an eightfold increase.**
- **Implications on Broader Social Changes:**
 - **Education:** BDS have been effective in improving school enrollment and retention rates among girls. By making it easier for girls to commute to school, these schemes **helped reduce dropout rates and encourage continued education**.
 - Increased access to education enhances **long-term outcomes for girls, leading to better job prospects and economic independence**. This fosters a cycle of empowerment and community economic growth.
 - **Breaking Gender Norms:** The increase in cycling among rural girls is a significant step toward **challenging patriarchal norms that traditionally restricted women's mobility**. This growth indicates a shift towards greater gender equality in rural areas.

What are the Other Schemes to Boost School Enrollment Among Girls in India?

- **Mid-Day Meal Scheme**
- **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme**
- **Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana**
- **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme: It was launched in 2004 to set up residential schools at the upper primary level for girls from disadvantaged communities in educationally backward blocks.**
 - The scheme provides 75% reservation for [Scheduled Tribes](#), [Scheduled Castes](#), [Other Backward Class](#) or minority girls, with the remaining 25% for girls from BPL families.
 - It provides a recurring grant of Rs.1.5 lakhs per annum and a one-time grant of Rs.5 Lakhs to set up schools.
- **National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education:** The central government has launched an initiative to **promote secondary education for girls above Class X**, addressing the **high drop out of school by the time they hit puberty**.
 - Under this scheme, a fixed deposit of Rs 3000/- is made in the name of the girl-child . A minimum criterion of passing class X exams and reaching the age of 18 years is required to withdraw the matured amount from the fixed deposit.

Drishti Mains Question:

Q. Discuss the Role of Government Schemes in Enhancing School Enrollment and Retention Among Girls in India.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Mains

Q.1 "Empowering women is the key to control population growth". Discuss. **(2019)**

Q.2 Discuss the positive and negative effects of globalization on women in India? **(2015)**