



# 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)**