

NALCO KI LADLI: Empowering the Girl Child

There has been an increasing concern when it comes to increase in the rate of drop out among the students enrolled for primary and secondary education in India. Section 16 of the RTE Act, 2009 provides that no child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class till the completion of elementary education. According to the data of MHRD, GoI, Annual Average dropout rate of girls is 16.88% in India.

By declaring education as a fundamental right, India ensures constitutional provisions for providing free and compulsory education to all the children between 6 to 14 years of age. Even after declaring education as a fundamental right, there are numerous hurdles that prohibit a girl child from actually getting education. The biggest hurdle is the discrimination that

- i) girls are slow learners;
- ii) they are not rational;
- iii) they are to be confined inside the domestic household;
- iv) and why bother about educating them

Only a handful of people have actually realized the importance of educating a girl. Though not a direct cause, the infamous dowry system is also another barrier in girl child education. Families often think of a girl child as a burden and often want to save the money for their dowry rather than spending it on her education.

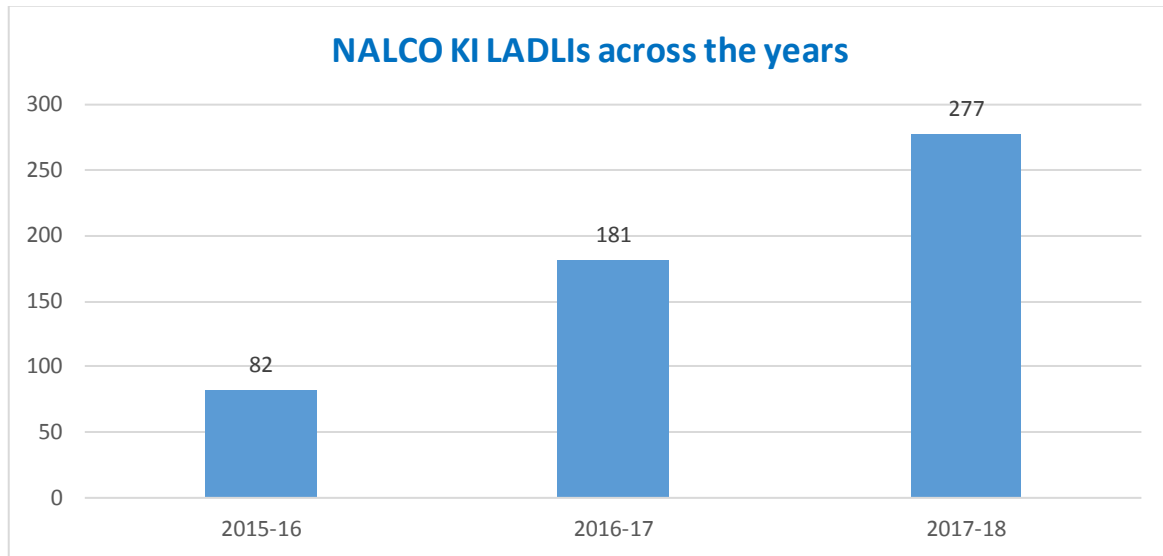
In view of the above and to have equal treatment to both Boys and Girls, a girl should be educated in order to ensure a better life for herself. If she is educated and empowered, she would be in a condition to add on the income of the family, and raising the living condition of her family. Keeping the above in view the Government of India has also introduced the scheme- **“Beti Bachao- Beti Padhao.**

Based on this flagship scheme of GoI, Nalco Foundation has introduced the “NALCO KI LADLI” Project to ensure learning and education opportunities for the meritorious girl students belonging from marginalized section and poor economic background in the districts of Koraput and Angul. The programme was initiated in the FY 2015-16 and successfully completed three years.



Figure 1: NALCO KI LADLIs are being felicitated by dignitaries at S&P Complex, Angul

Following is the graphical presentation with respect to the numbers of NALCO KI LADLIs benefitted under the scheme across the years.



The company has also envisaged a scale up plan to be adopted in order to serve to a greater number of girl students aspiring for better educational opportunities to make themselves empowered. This would also help them to pursue quality education and check their drop out from school owing to poor financial condition.

NALCO believes that education needs to be synonym with the integral development of the child which would contribute towards physical, intellectual and spiritual growth. With this conviction, NALCO, apart from supporting with financial assistance NF is also promoting and encouraging the girl students through events such as sports, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.



Figure 2: NALCO KI LADLIs are being awarded during 39th Foundation Day Celebration at Bhubaneswar



Figure 3: NALCO KI LADLIs participating in a sports event organised by NALCO Foundation

Since 2015-16 NALCO Foundation has been organising sports events for the NALCO KI LADLIs which involves a one day mega event leading towards a scope of interaction with the “LADLIS. Such events have led to a phenomenal increase in self-esteem and self-confidence of the girl students. NALCO is committed towards complementing the mission of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao as the company regards this not only as a scheme, but a massive social movement dedicated towards the overall development of the girl child.

**Success Story: NALCO KI LADLI Anita tops the HSC Exam in
Chhendipada Block in Angul District**

Anita Pradhan, a sincere student of Kankarai High School, Rajjharana of Chhendipada Block. Anita belongs to a poor family and holds a strong desire for academic excellence. Poor financial condition of the family hardly provides her scope to meet the minimum educational expenses. Being a farmer, Makardwaja Pradahan, her father expresses his inability to afford the education of Anita. But, Anita with her strong willpower, performs well in the class and came to notice of teachers and others.



During a visit to the school by the CSR representatives of NALCO, the headmaster talks about her. Anita got enrolled in NALCO ki Ladli programme in the year 2015-16 and was extended financial support of Rs.6000/- per year up to class 10th.

Anita was highly inspired after being enrolled under NALCO ki Ladli programme. Apart from school teachers, CSR personnel of NALCO constantly follow up & counsel her for better education and to retain her academic standard. As a part of the NALCO ki Ladli programme, under CSR, Anita was taken to Corporate office, Bhubaneswar for felicitation with facsimile cheque by hon'ble CMD, NALCO. Anita was also invited to participate in International Women's Day celebration and Annual Sports Meet for NALCO ki Ladlis at S&P Complex wherein she is honoured with many accolades.

In last HSC Examination, Anita has topped in Chhendipada block, securing 90% marks. NALCO expresses immense pleasure by taking her as NALCO ki Ladli and wishes her for bright future.

While speaking on her success, Anita's father expressed his gratitude to NALCO and quoted **'NALCO has helped a lot for education of my child, it has been possible to provide her quality education because of the support of NALCO only'**.