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Title of the PhD Thesis: CHILD RIGHTS AND SCHOOL EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA, 1991-2011

FINDINGS / ABSTRACT

Though there are a large number of studies on education of rural and urban regions of Ethiopia. Most studies have focused on the forms of teaching method, the social and environmental conditions of the children and parents. The studies have a limited focus on the relationship between child rights and education.

Since last three decades the issue has gained relevance in both domestic and international arena and lots of efforts have been done. The right to education is vital because it empowers people to make the rights meaningful. The key purpose of education is to help children in understanding their own perspective groups and to develop admiration for their feelings. Without education no children can understand the world and secure their rights. Education stimulates the realization of the survival rights, development rights, protection rights and participation rights. This study is an attempt in this regard to analyze those initiatives and limitations. Specifically the focus is on child rights and education and involvements made by the African countries in general and Ethiopia in particular.

Most African countries are facing difficulties in their effort to expand the delivery of educational services due to increasing children and limited government budget. In spite of the limitations, Ethiopia government strives to serve the otherwise ignored disadvantage children of Ethiopia through its education sector development program, free compulsory universal basic education and general education quality improvement programmes to promote social justice and gender equality.

Since Ethiopia emerged from 16 years of civil war in 1991, access to education has improved significantly. Primary and Secondary school enrolment also rose more than fivefold during this period. Benefiting from sustained growth, the Ethiopian government, in partnership with donors, has spent heavily in improving access to education. Important measures have included abolishing school fees, increasing expenditure on school construction and maintenance and hiring and training thousands of

new teachers, administrators and officials. This has been complemented by a shift to mother tongue instruction and by the gradual decentralization of the education system to progressively lower administrative levels.

Approximately 3 million pupils were in primary school in 1994/95; by 2008/09, primary enrolment had risen to 15.5 million, an increase of over 500%. With the end of the civil war of 1991, the government of Ethiopia inducted a fresh new education and training policy in 1994.

Ethiopia is now trying to achieve the full cycle of quality primary education to achieve the targets on education for all (EFA) and Millennium Development Goal (MDG). Empowerments of the children with education to secure their rights and to cultivate to their full potential are the primary goal of Ethiopian government. Now 5 to 14 years of schooling for children has become non-negotiable. Gone are the days when people in the more educationally backward regions of Ethiopia, questioned the relevance of child education. Now education in Ethiopia is the primary requisite to enjoy all the rights of the child.

To summarize the finding of the study it can be emphasized that the most African countries including Ethiopia have succeeded to improve the enrolments of the students in the primary schools. A number of schools were constructed and started in different areas of the country. Ethiopia government believes that an education is fundamental to any sustainable human development process. The Ethiopian Government has initiated to pay careful consideration to capacity building at institutional and organizational levels.

The study also reveals that the educational system further require to address the difficulties of low primary school participation ,rural urban disparity , gender gap , poor quality of education, inadequate funding ,weak planning and management and so on.

The thesis concludes by repeating the argument that education is the effective way to secure child rights. If the rights of the children are to be achieved, education must surely play a significant role.