

EMPIRICAL STATUS OF GENDER SENSITIZATION AS A TEACHING CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

Gender-based inequalities in India are much prevalent which lead to hamper the growth of balanced nature of life. In India, demography indicates gender differences include sex ratios at birth, infant and child discrimination by sex, and low ages at marriage for women. The present paper is an attempt to focus on empirical status of gender as a curriculum in the form of towards a world of equals having the twin goals; gender equality and women empowerment today. It also delves into challenges and opportunities that can be harnessed among Indian youth as fact that India and its society has a herculean task of empowering women to provide them the scope and to prepare them for a safe and productive future.

Keywords: *Women in India, Problems and Issues, Gender Inequality, Modern India Problem, Teaching Method*

INTRODUCTION:

‘Gender’ is a socio-cultural term referring socially defined roles and behaviors assigned to ‘males’ and ‘females’ in a given society; whereas, the term ‘sex’ is a biological and physiological phenomenon which defines man and woman. In its social, historical and cultural aspects, gender is a function of power relationship between men and women where men are considered superior to women. Therefore, gender may be understood as a man-made concept, while ‘sex’ is natural or biological characteristics of human beings. The concern for gender sensitization through teaching curriculum, especially graduate classroom is critical because of the disparities with stereotype bias and misgivings. The idea of creating awareness through classroom may ignite a change in thinking beyond cultural manifestation. Gender equality has a conspicuous strategy by and large with great potential to create desired change. It can address both the practical and theoretical approach of discerning societal implications

of nations and the world at large. Gender sensitization increases the sensitivity of people at large towards not only women but also men and especially problems of youth. In achieving positive results, it should create a people responsive mentality at various levels including policy making to grass root level, who are convinced that any form of gender discrepancy may lead to equal consequences.

Sensitization as a curriculum

Education is a powerful tool for the social change with students; particularly adult learners can become important role in the process. Topics relevant in the context of gender sensitization with reference to a bilingual textbook for the undergraduate level students at JNTU¹, Hyderabad win the laurels for its committed and innovative idea of towards a world of equals. The following is a model for an activity based teaching

Lesson: Gender awareness

Duration: 40 Minutes

Objectives:

1. To understand perceptions of men and women.
2. To examine whether perceptions based on culture or nature

Method:

1. Ask participants to list the most important attributes of men and women.
2. Write on the board men and women in two columns and ask the students to write the attributes

For example, this activity may result as follows

Man	Woman
Muscular	Weak
Father	Mother
Bread winner	Home maker
Decision maker	Emotional
Protector	Caring and nurture
Moustaches and Beard	Sari
Financial support	Affectionate

3. Create a platform for the group discussion and elicit attributes for men and women; examine of a given attribute rises from culture or nature or both

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad, Telangana has introduced a new course on gender sensitization for second year students of engineering, technology and pharmacy in 2016

4. The list may look like this

Man		Woman	
Muscular	C/N	Weak	C/N?
Father	N	Mother	N
Bread winner	C	Home maker	C
Decision maker	C/N?	Emotional	C/N?
Protector	C	Caring and nurture	C/N?
Moustaches and Beard		Sari	C
N			
Financial support		Affectionate	C/N?
N			

Discussion further continues by attributing labels based on perception of empirical analysis citing examples impact of culture, nature, sex, and gender attribution.

Evolution: Teacher scrutinizes the outcomes of the discussion of the students to discern gender awareness on the right track.

Conclusion and Summary:

In this regard, teachers are empirically positioned to act as catalyst of change in order to achieve gender equality because they teach what based on real examples and events, through form a firm beliefs and practices in the classroom and beyond. World is likely to have internalized a patriarchal gender ideology through their upbringing and years of socialization in both formal and informal settings. This kind of teaching curriculum will enhance the better understanding of gender differentiated practices in milieu.

Gender and Society

Gender and Society are interconnected view structure and to reform the society is herculean task. Nevertheless, Gender sensitization is the process of changing the stereotype mind set of men and women as it is a mindset that strongly believes that men and women are unequal social and physiological different entities therefore they have to function in different socio-economic, cultural, emotional, and political space. Through empirical study it increases the sensitivity of young students which create responsive individuals of the nation. This type of curriculum also enables learners to understand status of women against discrimination that stereotyped for all these years. Conscious efforts are to be sought to create a favorable climate that allows nurturing and flourishing of women's position and provides more flexibility and freedom to women besides understanding men's emotional and psychological need towards women.



However, there is a need to understand male dominant status from its roots. Now the question arises whether patriarchy is created by nature or culture? Friedrich Engels, who studied the origin of patriarchy, states that patriarchy is about 5000 years old. Patriarchal systems can be traced back to about 3000 BC. By 500 BC it was an established system. According to Engels patriarchy began with the concept of private property.

Today it means a male dominated society/system. Patriarchy is an ideology or a belief system and it is also a social structure. It considers males superior, gives them more privileges and more access to resources and power. Patriarchy differs in different societies, cultures and communities and is manifested in different forms. It changes with time and situation, but the essence and the underlying ideology remain the same.

A Case Study of Reverse Ideology

The Tchambuli now as Chambri, are an ethnic group in the Chambri Lakes region in the East Sepik province in Papua New Guinea. The social structure of the Chambri village has been of interest of empirical study because of the diverse description of gender roles in their society. In 1933, Margaret Mead was the first cultural anthropologist to study the Chambri.

She found a different pattern of male and female behavior pattern. She found among the *Arapesh* a temperament for both males and females that was gentle, responsive, and cooperative which is again different view among the *Mundugumor* (now Biwat), and it is found that both males and females were violent and aggressive, seeking power and position. Chambri male and female temperaments were relatively distinct from each other, the woman being dominant, impersonal, and managerial and the male less responsible and more emotionally dependent. The representation of understating biologically-based sex from socially-constructed gender was groundbreaking perception. In the later stages of the Sepik trip, Mead and Fortune encountered British anthropologist Gregory Bateson who studied the Iatmul people found that they worked to develop a systematic explanation of the relationships between cultures and personality types.

The prevalent of a major difference in gender sensitivity to customize into culture provide continuous separation. It is not suitable for the salubrious growth with mutual respect and responsibility. Regions in southern India which tends to be less patriarchal and feudal, nevertheless, have lower female labor force participation rates than northern regions despite the fact that women have relatively more freedom and more prominence in career success.

Generally women in the upper classes are increasingly free to select their own lifestyles in education and career, especially in urban². This suggests the existence of a cooperative

² In India, not until women receive specialized post-secondary education do they see significant improvements in their



relationship between female in higher education and development as documented in Goldin (1994), who argues that the initial decline in female participation is because of an income effect which is due to the change from home production to manual work market production, against which a social stigma while, as economic, political, et al develop women enter the competitive career through freedom and work, against which no social stigma exists³. Therefore female labor force participation in India is most likely the result of the interaction between social norms enforced by social stigma.

Socially Constructed Differences

Further, there are some influence factors which have a major impact on the young generation to follow dogmatic understating of gender such in the socio-economic and cultural situation of individuals. These factors have dichotomy; Specific influence categories: ethnicity, social class, age group, civil status, type of family organization, demographic situation (birth rate, mortality, migration, etc.) General influence category: economy, politics, environment, culture, religion, etc. These influence factors decide/influence the range of possible or potential changes. In the analysis of the social relations between women and men, in order to plan development actions that are socially acceptable, it is essential to consider all these factors.

State Institute for Urban Development, Mysore reiterates that The Constitution provides for Gender Equity, Opportunity and Empowerment by creating special provisions to overcome the gaps. The success is patchy and still the large percentages of women are suffering poverty, poor health, oppression and violence. Governance cannot ignore this alarming situation. It is time to re-look our Policies, Programs and the societal structure.

Access to and control of resources the social and sexual division of domestic and professional labour discrimination attributes subordinate roles to women so it infringes their access to and benefits of resources and prosperity. It often discerned that women have access to limited resources, and at the same time they do not have any power over it. Often women benefit from having access to domestic issues. In fact, the control does not avail in taking decisions on the professional matters and to have the opportunity to impose the choice on others is limited. The achievement of equal work load to labour is one of the most important objectives in the gender sensitization, because the power in taking decisions will guarantee the access to the equality as well as its effects. That is why it is essential to focus on women's strategic interests in order to guarantee their empowerment.

employment rates (Dunlop and Velkoff (1999))

³ "The social stigma against wives working in paid manual labor outside the home is apparently widespread and strong. (Goldin (1994))

Conclusion

Sexual exploitation exists in women as well as in men; it has no respect for individual aspirations, potential or abilities. In obvious and subtle ways, it influences the outcomes of a myriad of life situations the world over. The concept of gender sensitization has been developed as a way to reduce barriers to all round development created by gender discrimination. Gender sensitization need to help in generating respect for the individual regardless of sex.

Gender sensitivity is not about placing women against men in all aspect. On the contrary, education and development that are gender sensitive benefits members of both sexes. It helps them determine which assumptions in matters of gender are valid and which are stereotyped generalizations. Gender awareness requires not only intellectual effort but also sensitivity and open-mindedness. It opens up the widest possible range of life options for both women and men

Teaching through activity-based classroom would enable quickly to comprehend and grow towards world of equals. The curriculum moves quickly toward an exploration of gender issues and identification of gender-biased attitudes and behaviour. Learners are facilitated into discovering some of their own stereotyped assumptions about men and women, then guided through various activities in which they define and challenge the roles, responsibilities, rights and rewards that societies assign to men and women purely on the basis of their knowledge and skills.

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