# Block - 1: Gender Issues and Socialisation Process in India

## Unit - 1: Gender Socialisation and Gender Roles

**Unit Structure**

## 1.1.1. Learning Objectives

After completing this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

- Explain the concepts of gender and sex;

- Differentiate between gender and sex;

- Explain the meaning of gender socialisation and gender roles;

- Identify the agents of gender socialisation;

- Specify the nature of gender roles; and

- Identify the determinant factors of gender roles.

## 1.1.2. Introduction

Have you ever observed that the boys and girls in your classrooms behave differently? Have you ever thought that their needs might be different? Our classrooms comprise of students belonging to different genders. Although we have classified our students into boys and girls, we cannot ignore the fact that there is a third gender. In order to cater to the needs of students in relation to their gender, we as teachers need to be aware of the sociological and psychological aspects of gender, so that we can equip ourselves with the necessary knowledge and techniques to lead our students towards progress.

The students coming to our classrooms hail from a variety of sociological backgrounds. They come from different families, different religions, and from different regions, which give them a variety of experiences to build their gender outlook. Their biological base too determines who they are as well as their gender perception. We as teachers have a responsibility to guide our students into the right gender framework, which is progressive, ethical, and sustainable.

## 1.1.3. Learning Points and Learning Activities

## 1.1.3.1. Meaning of Sex and Gender

Now let us look into the meaning of sex and gender and understand the terms in detail.

### Exercise I

Below are given a set of terms and ideas. Classify them and write them in the space provided, based on where you think they belong.

1. Biological
2. Sociological
3. Chromosomes
4. Hormones
5. Culture
6. Physiological
7. Psychological
8. Society

| Sex | Gender |
|---|---|
|  |  |

The terms 'biological', 'chromosomes', 'hormones', and 'physiological' point to the internal human body, while the terms 'sociological', 'culture', 'psychological', and 'society' are related to the external aspects. We are clearly able to identify the differences in these terms. The terms which describe the aspects of human body come to mean as sex, while the rest of the terms describe gender.

Sex and gender are like the two faces of the same coin. While sex refers to the biological and physiological aspects, gender refers to the sociological and cultural aspects.

The following points clarify the concepts of sex and gender.

## Sex

- The word 'sex' comes from Latin word 'Sexus', which is determined by a person's reproductive organs.

- It is a biological term; people are termed either male or female depending on their sex organs, i.e., reproductive organs and genes.

- It refers to the genetic and physiological characteristics that indicate whether one is male or female.

- Sex refers to the biological difference between males and females.

- It relates to the observable differences between their genitals and to their psychological functions in procreation.

- "There are two sexes, male and female. To determine sex, one must assay the following physical conditions: chromosomes, external genitalia, internal genitalia, gonads, hormonal states and secondary sex characteristics.

One's sex is determined by an algebraic sum of all these qualities and as is obvious, most people fall under one of two separate bell curves, the one of which is called 'male' and other 'female'." – Robert Stoller

## Gender

- The word 'gender' comes from Latin word 'genus', which means kind or race.

- Gender is a psychological and cultural term referring to one's subjective feelings of maleness and femaleness.

- Gender may also refer to society's evaluation of behaviour as masculine or feminine.

- The social and cultural definitions of men and women are called gender. For example, it is society that makes rules that a girl will stay in the house, while a boy can go out or that a girl be given less food to eat and less time to play than a boy. A boy should be sent to a better school, so that when he grows up, he can look after the family business or get a good job, while not much attention is paid to a girl's education. Due to these social definitions, the differences between girls and boys creates two different worlds.

By now I am sure that you have understood that sex and gender are two different concepts, although they appear to be the same. Sex refers to all those aspects, which are biological and is inherent in a person. Gender is made up by society and culture, and hence, is left to human perception.

## Check Your Progress 1

Identify the differences between sex and gender.

## 1.1.3.2. Gender Socialisation

Having learnt that gender is a sociologically constructed concept, we need to understand how this process works in society. If we keenly observe our students, we will realise that they have different beliefs and understanding about what is expected of a girl or a boy. And if we further probe into their gender related behaviour, we will observe that students reflect the beliefs and practices of their families, community, neighbourhood, and the society at large. This process of acquiring gender related behaviours and attitudes through the intervention of society is called gender socialisation.

## Exercise II

Reflect on the events in your life and answer the following questions

1. Do the girls and boys / men and women in your family/surrounding behave in the same manner? If yes / no, explain how.

As you answer the above question, you must have noticed that in most aspects of life, men and women behave differently. You must have also noticed that the major reason for this is societal expectation. Society has assigned roles to individuals based on their gender and each individual is bound by this social norm. This process is called gender socialization.

Now let us look into some definitions, which will give us a better idea about gender socialisation.

## Definitions

Gender socialisation is the process through which children learn about social expectations, attitudes, and behaviours typically associated with boys and girls (Encyclopedia of Early Childhood Development).

According to Henslin (1999), "Gender Socialization refers to the learning of behavior and attitudes considered appropriate for a given sex".

Cynthia Vinney (2019) defines it as "Gender Socialization is the process by which we learn our culture's gender related rules, norms and expectations".

As we summarise these definitions, we realise that gender socialisation is a process in which one learns the behaviours, attitudes, and norms, and understand the social and cultural expectations in relation to one's gender.

Let us see from where we inherit or learn the so-called right attitudes and behaviours in relation to our gender.

## Exercise III

How did you realise to what gender you belong?

Who were the first people who told you how you should dress?

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Have you ever felt that you should behave in a particular way because of your gender? If so, from where did that realization come from?

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As you answer the above questions, I am sure that you realise that this awareness of gender comes from our interaction with the surrounding, which includes our family, community, and the society at large. The behaviour that is expected of us in relation to our gender is by far determined by the societal, cultural, and economic values of our society and it varies from society- to- society. The different units of the society such as the community, family, friends, peers, etc. are the major agents of gender socialization. In addition, mass media play an important role in this process. Now let us see some of the common agents of gender socialisation.

## Exercise IV

## Episode I

Sania and Harsha are siblings. Their grandmother is on a visit. She brought a doll for Sania and a toy gun for Harsha. As Harsha was shooting with the gun, Sania threw a tantrum asking for a toy gun. Her mother pacified her saying "Sania, you are a girl and girls don't play with guns, they play only with dolls". Hearing this Sania stopped crying and went back to play with her doll.

**Episode II**

Arun and Maria are classmates and friends. They work and play together daily. Their teacher asked Arun to shift a chair from the last row to the first. Maria decided to help him. The teacher said to Arun, "Arun, why are you making a girl work for you? Are you not capable of lifting chair by yourself being a boy?" Maria refrained from helping further and Arun carried the chair by himself.

**Episode III**

Rakesh sees his father washing utensils and asks, "Dad, what are you doing? My friends are outside and none of their fathers wash utensils in their homes. My friends will make fun of me if they see you. So please ask mummy to wash the vessels".

Read the above episodes and answer the following questions:

1. From where did Sania learn that girls should play with dolls?
2. What message did the teacher give Arun and Maria?
3. Why did Rakesh ask his father to stop washing the utensils?

From the above episodes, we can gather that people around us make us realise that we belong to a particular gender and that we are supposed to perform only those tasks, which are socially acceptable to the gender we belong to. The sources which disseminate this message are called the agents of socialisation. Now let us see some of the important agents of socialisation.

## Agents of Gender Socialisation

**Parents:** Parents are typically a child's first source of information about gender. From birth, parents communicate different expectations to their children depending on their sex. For example, a son may engage in more roughhousing with his father, while a mother takes her daughter shopping. The child may learn from their parents that certain activities or toys correspond with a particular gender.  Even parents, who emphasise gender equality, may inadvertently reinforce some stereotypes due to their own gender socialisation.

**Teachers :** Teachers and school administration model roles sometimes demonstrate gender stereotypes by responding to male and female students in different ways. For example, separating students by gender for activities or disciplining students differently depending on their gender may reinforce children's developing beliefs and assumptions.

**Peers:** Peer interaction also contributes to gender socialisation. Children tend to play with same gender peers. Through these interactions, they learn what their peers expect of them as boys and girls. These lessons may be direct, such as when a peer tells the child that a certain behaviour is or is not appropriate for their gender. They can also be indirect as the child observes same and other gender peers' behaviour over time. These comments and comparisons may become less overt over time, but adults continue to turn to same gendered peers for information on how they are supposed to look and act as a man or a woman.

**Media:** Media including movies, television, and books teach children about what it means to be a boy or a girl. The media conveys information about the role of gender in people's lives and can reinforce gender stereotypes. For example, consider an animated film that depicts two female characters, a beautiful but passive heroine, and an ugly but active villain. This and countless other examples reinforces ideas about which behaviour is acceptable and valued (and which are not) for a particular gender.

Now that you have understood, what gender socialisation is and which are the agents which stimulate gender socialisation, go through the following questions and check your progress.

## Check Your Progress 2

## Complete the sentences using appropriate answers

1. Gender socialisation is _____

   a) An inert quality of an individual

   b) A process that takes place in isolation

   c) A process of learning the behaviour and attitudes considered appropriate for a given gender

   d) All of the above

2. Gender norms are set by _____

   a) Government authorities

   b) Society

   c) The individual himself

   d) All of the above

3.    Agents of gender socialisation _____

   a)    Teach us to treat both genders as equals

   b)    Teach us that each gender has its own particular behaviours and attitudes

   c)    Has nothing to teach us

   d)    None of the above

## 1.1.3.3.  Gender Roles

As you try to understand what is gender socialisation,  I am sure you must have recalled a number of roles you were assigned in your life just because you are a male/female.

## Exercise V

Classify the following activities/jobs based on your life-experiences as to whom you have seen doing these activities often (Ignore the exceptions).

1.    Cooking

2.    Sweeping the house

3.    Washing utensils

4.    Carrying heavy loads

5.    Riding a motor bike

6.    Heading a community

7.    Paying bills

8.    Watchman

9.    Baby-sitter

10.    Plumbing work

| Woman | Man |
|---|---|
|  |  |

As you went through this exercise, I am sure you were able to recall many more similar activities specifically expected of men and women, which are gender specific. Does that mean a person belonging to the other gender cannot perform those activities? Not really. It is the perception of the society and people around us that certain activities should be completed only by a particular gender for the reasons that they consider are best. These roles assigned to persons based on their gender are called gender roles.

Now let us see in detail the meaning, nature, and factors determining gender roles.

## Meaning

A gender role, also known as sex role, is a social role encompassing a range of behaviours and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex. Gender roles are usually centred on conceptions of feminity and masculinity although there are exceptions and variations. The specifics regarding these gendered exceptions may vary substantially among cultures, while other characteristics may be common throughout a range of cultures.

## Definitions

The World Health Organisation describes gender roles as "Socially constructed roles, behaviors and activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women".

Block (1973) stated, "Gender role is a constellation of qualities an individual understands to characterize males and females in his or her culture. These qualities include activities, role relations, social position, personality characteristics and a host of abilities and behaviors".

Gender roles in society means how we are expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex. For example, girls and women are generally expected to dress in typically feminine ways and be polite, accommodating, and nurturing. Men are generally expected to be strong, aggressive, and bold. This is generally the set of roles, activities, expectations, and behaviours assigned to females and males by society.

Our culture recognises two basic gender roles:

- Masculine (having the qualities attributed to males); and

- Feminine (having the qualities attributed to females).

## Nature of Gender Roles

- Gender roles are learned behaviour.

- These roles vary in their social, economic, and political dimension across cultures. Values and norms differ widely from culture- to- culture.

- Gender roles have certain universality, but are largely culturally determined.

- Gender roles are affected by a number of factors such as age, class, race, ethnicity, religion and ideologies, in addition to geographical, economic, and political environment.

- Roles may be complementary or conflicting.

## Factors Determining Gender Roles/Stereotypes

- **Personality Traits** –Women are often expected to be accommodating and emotional, while men are expected to be self-confident and aggressive.

- **Domestic Behaviours** –Some people expect that women will take care of the children, cook, and clean the home, while men take care of finances, work on the car, and do the home repairs.

- **Occupations** – Some people are quick to assume that teachers and nurses are women, and that pilots, doctors, and engineers are men.

- **Physical Appearance** –Women are expected to be thin and graceful, while men are expected to be tall and muscular. Men and women are also expected to dress and groom in ways that are stereotypical to their gender (men wearing pants and short hairstyles, women wearing dresses and makeup).

## Check your progress 3

## Identify if the following statements as true or false:

1) Gender roles are roles decided by an individual for his/her own self.

2) All gender roles are universal.

3) Age, class, race, ethnicity, religion affect gender roles.

4) According to the gender role assigned to women, they are expected to be emotionally sensitive.

## 11.4   Let us Summarise

- Sex refers to the biological and physiological differences between males and females.

- Gender is a psychological and cultural term referring to one's subjective feelings of maleness and femaleness.

- Gender socialisation is a process in which one learns the behaviours, attitudes, and norms, and understands the social and cultural expectations in relation to one's gender.

- The common agents of gender socialisation are parents, teachers, peers, and media.

- A gender role is a social role encompassing a range of behaviours and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex.

- Factors determining gender roles are personality traits, domestic behaviours, occupations, and physical appearance.

## 1.1.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress 1, 2, and 3'

## Check your progress 1

Refer section  1.1.3.1 of  Self Learning Material.

## Check your progress 2

1)     c   2) b   3) b

## Check your progress 3

1)     False   2) False   3) True   4) True

## 1.1.6. Unit-end Exercises

1. Differentiate between sex and gender.

2. Clarify the meaning of gender socialisation.

3. What is gender role? Elucidate with examples.

4. Explain the factors that determine the gender role.

## 1.1.7. References

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# Block - 1 : Gender Issues and Socialisation Process in India

## Unit - 2 : Gender Discrimination at Different Levels of Institutions

### Unit Structure

### 1.2.1. Learning Objectives

After completing this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

- Explain the meaning of Gender Discrimination;

- Explain the types of Gender Discrimination;

- Identify the causes for Gender Discrimination; and

- Explain Gender Discrimination at different levels of Institutions – Social, Cultural, Economic, Political, and Educational.

### 1.2.2. Introduction

India is culturally a rich country. Its culture and tradition centre on practices related mostly to regions and religions. But one thing commonly noticed in relation to gender

14

among these practices is the inequality. India being a largely patriarchal society, gives more privileges to boys than girls. And we are seeing this inequality expanding to other walks of life such as social, political, economic, and educational.   It is observed that India has some of the highest levels of sex discrimination at birth. The 2011 census records 918 girls for 1000 boys. This implies that women suffer inequality from birth, which continues in every stage of their life. Hence, there is a need to understand the intensity of gender discrimination and its consequences on human welfare and the progress of the country at large.

## 1.2.3.1. Meaning and Causes of Gender Discrimination

Let us go through the Exercise and try to understand the meaning of gender discrimination, and thereby its causes.

**Exercise I**

Imagine that you have a son and a daughter. If your family income is sufficient educate only one child, whom would you educate? Give reasons for your choice.

I am sure that as you tried to answer the above question, several thoughts must have crossed your mind and you must have your own reasons for the choice you have made. But if you consider a common Indian family, the answer would be the son. The common reasons for this could be that the son is considered to be the future earning member of the family or a daughter is meant to be given away in marriage to another family, and so on. This prejudice that a son is superior and more productive and useful than a daughter forms the basis for gender discrimination. Now let us try to understand the meaning and causes of gender discrimination.

**Gender Discrimination**

Gender discrimination is discrimination  based on the gender of the person. Usually women are treated differently and unequal than men in their education, career, economic advancement, and political influence. It is a common type of discrimination that happens throughout the world, even in developed countries. Women are not only considered to be

physically weak, but are also considered to be weak in many aspects compared to men. These are reflected in society's treatment of the two genders.

In a broader sense, we can define gender discrimination as, ''any action that specifically denies opportunities, privileges, or rewards to a person (or a group) because of gender''.

## Areas of Gender Discrimination

**Denial of Birth:**Discrimination against girls actually starts in the womb. Many parents abort the female foetus because society places a high emphasis on male children. Even in this modern age, this practice continues.

**Denial of Fundamental Needs:** The girl child often faces discrimination from the earliest stages of life, through childhood, and into adulthood. Her low status is reflected in the denial of fundamental needs and rights and in such harmful attitudes and practices as preference for sons, early marriage, female genital mutilation, domestic abuse, incest, sexual exploitation, discrimination, less food, and less access to education.

**Discrimination in Education***:* Girls are denied education owing to the family's economic condition. In many cases, even well to do families deny education to girls because they consider a girl to be a temporary member of the family, who will leave the house after marriage. Hence, it is a waste of money investing in her education.

**Discrimination in Employment:** Gender inequality can also be seen in case of employment. Women in India are primarily responsible for childcare and household. A majority of women are found in the vast rural and urban unorganised sector. According to an estimate by the National Commission on Self-Employed women, 94% of the total female workforce operates within this highly exploited sector. Employment in this sector is characterised by low pay and long hours of work. This is all due to varied nature of occupation in this sector, inadequate legislation, and ineffective enforcement of legal safeguards to protect these workers, particularly in regulating their work conditions. Due to various prevailing social conditions, women lack the opportunity to acquire skills and training, which could facilitate occupational shifts. Since women have to bear the major burden of domestic chores, which in poor household is time-consuming and labour intensive, they do not have the time and opportunity to acquire skills and training for better jobs. The organised sector accounts for approximately 10% of the female labour force.

**Wage Discrimination***:*There is wage disparity between male and female workers in many of the employment starting from daily wage workers at construction sites or agriculture

related jobs to actors in the film industry. Male workers enjoy higher pay in comparison to their female counterparts.

**Causes of Gender Discrimination**

If we observe the history of India, we see that gender inequality is characteristic in most areas of administration. Very rarely women enjoy equal position with men in social, economic, and religious affairs. The causes are many. Let us discuss some of the main causes of gender discrimination

**Poverty:** In India, of the total 30 per cent people who are below the poverty line, 70 per cent are women. Women's poverty in India is directly related to the absence of economic opportunities and autonomy, lack of access to economic resources including credit, land ownership, and inheritance, lack of access to education and support services, and their minimal participation in the decision-making process. Thus, poverty is the root of gender discrimination in our patriarchal society, and economic dependence on the male counterpart is itself a cause of gender disparity.

**Illiteracy:** Educational backwardness of the girls has been the resultant cause of gender discrimination. Women are not able to realise their full identity and power in all spheres of life due to illiteracy.

**Lack of Employment Facilities:** Women are not able to resolve the conflicts between new economic and old domestic roles. They are not able to respond to new opportunities and to shift to new occupations because their mobility tends to be low due to intra-household allocation of responsibilities. The rights and obligations within a household are not distributed evenly. Male ownership of assets and conventional division of labour reduce the incentives for women to undertake new activities. Time spent in bearing and rearing of children often results in de-skilling and termination of long-term labour contacts. Thus, women are not able to be economically self-sufficient due to unemployment.

**Customs and Traditions:** Women are not free from social customs, beliefs, and practices. The traditional patrilineal joint family system confines women's roles mostly to the domestic sphere, allocating them to a subordinate status, authority, and power compared with men. A male child receives a ceremonial welcome on his birth, whereas the same does not hold true for a female child. The preference for a male child is due to lower female labour participation, prevalence of social evils like dowry, and many others causes. The typical orthodox mentality present even in this modern era leads to sex determination tests and abortion in illegal ways. Parents often think that teaching a girl child to manage the kitchen

is more important than sending her to school. Many feel that it is an unnecessary financial burden to send a girl child to school as subsequently she will be married and move away to another family. This orthodox belief of parents is responsible for gender disparity.

**Social Attitude:** Though many social activists and reformers carried their crusade to restore honour and dignity to women, attitudinal disparities still haunt our rural masses. Despite pronounced social development and technological advancement, women in our society still continue to be victims of exploitation, superstition, illiteracy, and social atrocities. The social stigma that women are housekeepers and should be confined to the four walls of the house is perhaps a viable cause of gender disparity. They are not allowed to raise their voice regarding their fortune for the prestige of the family. In a patriarchal society, a lot of weightage is given to men.

**Lack of Awareness Regarding Rights among Women:**Most of the women are unaware of their basic rights. They do not have the understanding as to how the socio-economic and political forces affect them. They accept all types of discriminatory practices that persist in the family and society largely due to their ignorance.

## Check Your Progress 1

**Answer the following questions:**

1.      What is gender discrimination?

2.      Name the different forms of gender discrimination.

3.      Mention the causes of gender discrimination.

## 1.2.3.2. Gender Discrimination at Different Levels of Institutions

Having understood the meaning and causes of gender discrimination, let us now see how gender discrimination occurs at different levels of institutions.

## Exercise II

Recall your life and list five things that you were deprived/not allowed because of your gender.

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As you answer this question, you will surely remember many incidents where you were deprived of something or not allowed to do something just because you are a boy or a girl. For example, girls may not have been allowed to choose a course of their choice, or may not have been allowed to study further and needed to get married immediately and boys may not have been allowed to do household chores.

We have already understood the meaning of gender discrimination its causes. Now and let us understand how it exists in different levels of institutions.

## Gender Discrimination at Different Levels of Institutions

## Social Institutions

The Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) is a cross-country measure of discrimination against women in social institutions. The SIGI covers five dimensions of discriminatory social institutions such as:

## Family code

The family code captures institutions that directly influence the decision-making power of women in the household. In a family, women are deprived of the decision-making power, while the men are termed the head of the family. A woman is restricted to being the caretaker of the family with little or no rights whatsoever. Early marriages and marriage of minor girls is common among many families in India. While polygamy is accepted by many societies, a woman is expected to stay loyal to a single spouse.

## Civil liberties

Civil liberties include the freedom of social participation of women. In Indian society, women are not allowed to move freely as per her wish. She is expected to follow a protocol

in front of the male and elders of the family and society. Many communities follow the purdah and the burqa system, where a woman is expected to cover her head and face in public.

## Physical integrity

Violence against women is the most prevalent social evil in India. This includes domestic violence, sexual violence, female genital mutilation, etc.

## Son preference

The preference for male children among Indian families has resulted in about 63 million women statistically missing from the country's population. This obsession with sons has led Indians to resort to female foeticide on a massive scale. They also provide better nutrition and medical care for boys than girls, and indulge in a host of other practices that discriminate against girls.

## Ownership Rights

Women have equal rights under the law to property and inheritance rights, but in practice, women are at a disadvantage. This is evidenced in the fact that 70% of rural land is owned by men.Laws, such as the Married Women Property Rights Act of 1974 protect women, but few seek legal redress.

## Cultural Institutions

From ancient times, Indian women have been seen as the responsibility of others, whether as daughters, wives, or mothers. Manu, the law-giver, writing around the beginning of the Christian era says, "She should do nothing independently even in her own house. In childhood subject to her father, in youth to her husband, and when her husband is dead to her sons. She should never enjoy independence" (Basham, 1967: 182).

## Religious Institutions

In most cultures and religions, protocols regarding faith are applied more strictly to women than men, especially when it comes to places of worship or of religious importance.

## Prohibition into Places of Worship

Women are segregated in mosques. Some temples prohibit women from entering the sanctum sanctorum and other temples prohibit women from entering certain specific parts of the temple. These decrees are all about regulating women and are issued by religious bodies that are male hegemonies.

## Denial of Religious Rights

In India, women are now pushing the boundaries by demanding religious rights and equality, and are taking the fight to male-dominated religious boards that govern the shrines in the country. Menstruating women are often kept out of kitchens and temples, as they are considered "impure" for that duration. Important Muslim and Hindu places of devotion such as the shrine of Haji Ali in Mumbai, the Trimbakeshwar Temple and the Shani Shinganapur in Maharashtra, do not allow women into the sanctum for varying reasons. The Sabarimala Temple in Kerala (a state that incidentally scores high on the women welfare index) does not allow entry to women belonging to the menstruating demography.

## Denial of priesthood

In most religions, the priests are male. In some societies, women take a leading role in specific religious rituals; nevertheless, a heavily male-dominated society does not advocate female domination. Even in Christianity, the Catholic Church allows women to serve as nuns, but bans their ordination. As per Quran, a woman can never be a man's hakim (ruler/ judge). Hence, a woman can never be a Qazi. In Islamic history, there is no evidence to say that a woman can be a Qazi. And if anyone deserved to be a Qazi, it was Prophet Muhammad's daughter Fatima, who is considered a role model, but even she was not a Qazi.

## Economic Institutions
## Labour participation and wages

The participation rate of women in the labour force is lower than that of men. Over 50% of the Indian labour is employed in agriculture. A majority of rural men work as cultivators, while a majority of women work in livestock maintenance, and egg and milk production. About 78 per cent of rural women are engaged in agriculture, compared with 63 per cent of men. There is wage inequality between men and women in India. In most of the labour setups, the women are paid half the wage paid to men.

## Access to credit

Although the laws are supportive of lending to women and microcredit programmes targeted for women are prolific, women often lack collateral support for bank loans due to low levels of property ownership, and microcredit schemes have come under scrutiny for coercive lending practices. Although many microcredit programmes have been successful and prompted community-based women's self-help groups, a 2012 review of microcredit practices found that women are contacted by multiple lenders and as a result, take on too

many loans and overextend their credit. The report found that financial incentives for the recruiters of these programmes were not in the best interest of the women they purported to serve. The result was a spate of suicides by women, who were unable to pay their debts.

## Property Rights

Women have equal rights under the law to own property and inheritance rights, but in practice, women are at a disadvantage.

## Corporate Sectors

Only five per cent of working women in India make it to senior leadership in the corporate sector, compared with the global average of 20 per cent, said a study released by NDTV. From being the lowest in the list of overall women's participation in the workforce, India ranks at the top in the dropout rate as well. The primary reasons for high dropout rate in India are childcare and family responsibilities, including care for the elderly. Women often succumb to the 'daughterly guilt', where they take upon themselves the responsibility for the care of elders in the family and are thus forced to push their careers behind as 'secondary'.

## Political Institutions

## Political decision making

This measure of gender inequality considers the gap between men and women in political decision making at the highest levels.

On this measure, India has ranked in the top 20 countries worldwide for many years, with 9th best in 2013, a score reflecting less gender inequality in India's political empowerment than Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, France, and Britain / England. From the prime minister to chief ministers of various states, Indian voters have elected women to its state legislative assemblies and national parliament in large numbers for many decades.

## Voting

Women turnout during India's 2014 parliamentary general elections was 65.63%, compared to 67.09% turnout for men. In 16 states of India, more women voted than men. A total of 260.6 million women exercised their right to vote in the April–May 2014 elections for India's parliament.India passed the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments in 1993, which provides for 33 per cent quotas for women's representation in the local self-government institutions. These Amendments were implemented in 1993.

**Educational Institutions**

**Schooling**

In India, especially girls in rural areas, continue to be less educated than boys. According to studies, as the family size increased by each additional child after the first, there was a decrease in overall years of schooling, with this statistics disfavouring female children in the family compared with male children.

**Secondary Education**

Greater percentage of females compared to males drop out from their educational journey after the age of twelve. Studies indicate that among the 20% of students who stopped schooling after primary education, near 70% of these students were females. The common reasons for girls to stop attending school were the distance of travel and social reasons. In terms of distance of travel, families express fear for the safety and security of girls travelling unaccompanied to school every day. In rural areas, the social reasons also consist of how families viewed their daughter's role of belonging in her husband's house after marriage, with plans for the daughter's marriage during the secondary school age in some cases.

**Post-secondary Education**

Although the female enrolment in higher education has improved with time, yet there are persisting disparities in terms of spread across disciplines. While boys tend to be better represented in all educational disciplines, girls tend to have concentration in selective disciplines, while lacking representation in other educational realms.

**Literacy**

Though it is gradually rising, the female literacy rate in India is lower than the male literacy rate. According to Census of India 2011, literacy rate of females is 65.46% compared with males, which is 82.14%. Compared with boys, far fewer girls are enrolled in the schools, and many of them drop out. From 2006-2010, the percentage of females who completed at least a secondary education was almost half that of men, 26.6% compared with 50.4%. In the current generation of youth, the gap seems to be closing at the primary level and increasing in the secondary level. Although this gap has reduced significantly, problems still remain in the quality of education for girls where boys in the same family will be sent to higher quality private schools and girls sent to the government school in the village.

**Check Your Progress 2**

**Answer the following questions.**

1.    How is gender discrimination prevalent in cultural institutions?

2.    Elucidate gender discrimination in educational institutions.

## 1.2.4. Let us Summarise

- Gender discrimination, also known as sexual discrimination, is any action that specifically denies opportunities, privileges, or rewards to a person (or a group) because of gender.

- Important Areas of Gender Discrimination
  - ✓ Denial of Birth
  - ✓ Denial of Fundamental Needs
  - ✓ Discrimination in Education
  - ✓ Discrimination in Employment
  - ✓ Wage Discrimination

- Causes of Gender Discrimination
  - ✓ Poverty
  - ✓ Illiteracy
  - ✓ Lack of Employment Facilities
  - ✓ Customs and Traditions
  - ✓ Social Attitude
  - ✓ Lack of Awareness of Rights among Women

- Gender discrimination in social institutions include discrimination in the family, denial of civil liberties, preference for son, violation of physical integrity, and ownership rights.

- Women are prohibited from places of worship, denied priesthood, and religious rights.

- Culturally, gender discrimination has been taking place since historic times with patriarchy playing an important role.

- In economic sectors, women are not treated on par with men in giving wages or owning land.

- In the educational sector, we can see disparity in the admission and retention of girls compared to boys.

## 1.2.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress 1 and 2'

**Check your progress 1**

Refer section 1.2.3.1. of Self Learning Material

**Check your progress 2**

Refer section 1.2.3.2. of Self Learning Material.

## 1.2.6. Unit-end Exercises

1. What is gender discrimination? Explain the different areas in which gender discrimination occurs.

2. Explain the types of gender discrimination

3. Discuss the causes for gender discrimination.

4. Explain gender discrimination in relation to the following - Social, Cultural, Economic, Political, and Educational Settings.

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# Block - 1 : Gender Issues and Socialisation Process in India

## Unit - 3 : Gender Identities and Socialisation Practices in Different Types of Families in India

**Unit Structure**

## 1.3.1. Learning Objectives

After completing this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

• Explain the meaning of Gender Identity;

• Describe the formation of Gender Identity;

• Explain the factors influencing Gender Identity;

• Name the types of Gender Identity;

• Explain the types of families in India; and

• Explain the Socialisation Practices in the Families in India.

## 1.3.2. Introduction

It is a known fact that each one of us is unique and our likes, dislikes, and inclinations are our very own and need not be like anyone else. Our self-making is influenced and guided by the physical and psychological aspects of our life. As we look around, we observe that each person is unique including his choice of gender too. At birth, we are assigned a gender based on the sex we are born with. But as we grow up and realize our preferences, inclinations, and needs related to our sex, we have the right to choose our gender. As we have already understood that biological factors such as the chromosomes and the hormones influence the formation of an individual's sex, the sociological factors along with biological factors influence the person's gender choice. In this Unit, we shall discuss what is gender identity, how it is formed, and what is the role of family in the formation of gender identity.

## 1.3.3.1. Meaning Formation and Factors of Gender Identity

Now let us understand the meaning of gender identity.

## Exercise I

Recall your childhood and list all those activities you liked doing as a girl/boy and write the reasons as to why you chose to do those particular activities. Were those activities internally driven or did you try to copy any elders? Follow the examples.

| Activities | Reason | Internally driven or copied from elders |
|---|---|---|
| Example 1: I draped a saree | I felt like wearing it | It was internally driven. |
| Example 2: I draped a saree | I liked how my mother dressed up. | Copied from elders. |

As you went through the above exercise, I am sure that you must have come across plenty of activities which you did in relation to your gender, irrespective of whether you are a boy or a girl. Many girls must have felt like doing many girlie things, while some might have felt like doing things that boys do. I am sure it has been the same with the boys. If you try to analyse the causes, some causes could be internal (i.e., that is you just felt like doing something because you were internally driven), while some causes could be external. Now let us try to understand in detail the reasons for this.

## Gender Identity

Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender. Gender identity can correlate with assigned sex at birth or can differ from it. All societies have a set of gender categories that can serve as the basis of the formation of a person's social identity in relation to other members of society.

Gender identity is a person's private sense and subjective experience of their own gender. This is generally described as one's private sense of being a man or a woman, consisting primarily of the acceptance of membership into a category of people as male or female. This concept is intimately related to the concept of gender role, which is defined as the outward manifestations of personality that reflect the gender identity. Gender identity in nearly all instances is self- identified as result of a combination of inherent and extrinsic or environmental factors. Gender role on the other hand, is manifested within society by observable factors such as behaviour and appearance. For example, if a person considers himself a male and is most comfortable referring to his personal gender in masculine terms, then his gender identity is male. However, his gender role is male only if he demonstrates typical male characteristics in behaviour, dress, and/or mannerisms.

## Formation of Gender Identity

There are several theories about how and when gender identity forms and studying the subject is difficult because children's lack of language requires researchers to make assumptions from indirect evidence. John Money suggested that children might have awareness of, and attach some significance to gender, as early as 18 months to two years. Lawrence Kohlberg argues that gender identity does not form until age three. It is widely agreed that core gender identity is firmly formed by age three. At this point, children can make firm statements about their gender and tend to choose activities and toys, which are considered appropriate for their gender (such as dolls and painting for girls, and tools and rough-housing for boys), although they do not yet fully understand the implications of gender. After age three, core gender identity is extremely difficult to change, and attempts to reassign it can result in gender dysphoria. Gender identity refinement extends into the fourth to sixth years of age, and continues into young adulthood.

Martin and Ruble conceptualise this process of development in three stages:

1. As toddlers and pre-schoolers, children learn about defined characteristics, which are socialised aspects of gender.

2. Around the ages of 5–7 years, identity is consolidated and becomes rigid.

3. After this "peak of rigidity", fluidity returns and socially defined gender roles relax somewhat.

The stages of gender identity formation can be broken down into four stages as suggested by Barbara Newman -

1. Understanding the concept of gender;

2. Learning gender role standards and stereotypes;

3. Identifying with parents; and

4. Forming gender preference.

## Typical Expression of Gender Identity by Children

Children express their gender identity in the following ways -

- Choice of toys and games;

- Clothing or hairstyle;

- Preferred name or nickname;

- Social behaviour that reflects varying degrees of aggression, dominance, dependency and gentleness;

- Manner and style of behaviour and physical gestures and other non- verbal actions identified as masculine or feminine; and

- Social relationships including gender of friends and the people he or she decides to imitate.

## Factors Influencing Formation of Gender Identity

The factors influencing the formation of gender identity can be classified as follows

## Biological Factors

Biological factors play a huge role in shaping children's physical development. For instance, boys and girls are born with distinctive sexual organs, and become further differentiated when secondary sexual characteristics emerge upon puberty. Naturally occurring chemical messenger compounds in the body known as hormones are responsible for coordinating the appearance of these physical differences.

Some research suggests that the same sex hormones that enable sexual organ differentiation in uterus, and which later trigger puberty, also plays an important role in

shaping gender identity. Boys tend to have more androgens (male sex hormones) than girls. However, some boys and girls are born with a condition called congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH), which causes them to have significantly higher levels of androgens than their non-affected peers. Scientists have studied children with CAH in order to understand how their extra androgen levels affect behaviour. Boys with excess androgens play and behave much like normal male peers. However, girls with high androgen levels tend to display more gender-stereotypic male traits and behaviours than do their same-age hormonally-normal peers. In addition, girls with CAH are born with external genitalia that look like male genitalia. Though these girls appear to have penises, they are still female. Girls' true gender is determined genetically rather than anatomically. Females possess two "X" chromosomes, while males possess a single "X" chromosome and a "Y" chromosome.

Even after girls with CAH have surgeries to make their genitalia look more characteristically female, they continue to show heightened masculine traits. For instance, they prefer to play with male peers; tend to choose traditionally masculine toys and activities (e.g., blocks, cars, models, sports) over more "feminine" toys and games; and are physically active and aggressive. In addition, girls with CAH tend to avoid having girl playmates; do not play games revolving around stereotypical feminine events such as playing at being a mother or bride; and tend to care less about their physical appearance than do girls of their age who do not have CAH. In other words, higher levels of male hormones strongly influence girls to behave as though they were boys.

## Social and Environmental Factors

Studies have shown that children's upbringing and social environments also impacts their developing gender identities. This can be summarised by stating that children's interests, preferences, behaviours, and overall self-concept are strongly influenced by parental and authority figure teachings regarding sexual stereotypes occurring in or before the early portion of middle childhood. Children who are taught that certain traits or activities are appropriate or inappropriate for them to engage because they are a girl or a boy do tend to internalise and be influenced by these teachings in later life. For instance, girls who are informed that boys are innately better at math than they are may report that they dislike math and disclaim their interest in that subject. They may go on to believe that they are not good at this academic subject, and perform poorly on math tests and homework assignments.

Children learn vicariously, in part, through their observation and imitation of what they see their primary caregivers are doing. They tend to imitate and internalise what they see and then repeat those patterns in their own lives as though they had come up with them independently. Children raised watching their parents adhering to strict gender-stereotyped

roles are, in general, more likely to take on those roles themselves as adults than are peers whose parents provided less stereotyped, more androgynous models for behaving.

## Types of Gender Identity

Gender identity is how a person feels and who they know them self to be when it comes to their gender. There are more than two genders, even though in our society the genders that are most recognised are male and female (called the gender binary) and usually are based on someone's anatomy (the genitals they were born with). This is gender assignment and it is based on the assumption that someone's genitals match their gender. However, gender is not about someone's anatomy, it is about who they know them self to be. There are many different gender identities. The following terminology helps us understand the diversity of gender identity.

1. **Binary Gendered:** Individuals who self-identify as either male or female, including trans men and women.

2. **Cis-gendered:** Individuals who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.

3. **Gender Fluid:** An individual's experience of their gender, which may be outwardly expressed or not. A dynamic experience of gender where at one time a person may feel more toward one binary, but at another time feel more toward the other

4. **Genderqueer:** An identity most often adopted when a person does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions and may identify with neither, both or a combination of male and female genders.

5. **Intersex:** People who have variations of sex characteristics that do not fit with typical male or female bodies.

6. **Non-Binary Gendered:** Individuals who define their gender identity as not male or female. This group includes those who, for example, describe themselves as 'Genderqueer'.

7. **Transgender / Trans:** Individuals who describe their gender identity differently to that assigned at birth.

8. **'X' / Other:** These are used as options to enable people to declare a gender identity that is different to the traditional female and male. In some contexts, 'X' is used by intersex and some trans-identifying people who regard their identity as a third sex.

## Check Your Progress 1

1. What is gender identity?

2. What are the factors that influence the formation of gender identity?

3. Name different types of gender identities.

## 1.3.3.2. Socialisation Practices in Different Types of Families in India

## Exercise II

1. Look around and observe at-least five families and fill in the columns provided in the table below.

| Family No. | Number of family members | Head of the family | Relationship of the members in the family with the head of the family |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

2. Comment on the differences you observed in the number of members and different types of relationships you find in these families.

After going through the exercise you must have realised that different families have different patterns and these patterns can be classified. Now let us see how the families in India are classified based on different aspects of social concern.

## Types of Families in India

The family is the most important primary group in a society. It is the simplest and the most elementary form of society. The family as an institution is universal. It is the most permanent and the most pervasive of all social institutions. In case of the West, family is defined as an economic and social unit. In case of India, China, and Japan, family is a cultural religious unit. The families are classified into different types as follows -

## Basis of Size or Structure

1. **Nuclear family:** It is a unit generally composed of a married couple (in the status of husband and wife) in the role of 'mother' and 'father' or 'parent' and their unmarried dependent children, either natural or adopted, living together. It is called nuclear as it serves as the core or nucleus upon which larger family groups are built. It is also sometimes referred to as 'conjugal family'.

2. **Extended family:** When the nucleus of the conjugal family is extended with the addition of other closely related kin (grandparents, aunts, uncles, nephews, brothers and their wives, cousins, sisters, etc.), it is called an extended family.

## Basis of Marriage

1. **Monogamous family:** This type of family consists of one husband and one wife. In other words, a single husband and a single wife living together form a monogamous family. Under this family system, neither husband nor wife can have more than one life partner at a time. Similarly, they are not allowed any extramarital relations. Therefore, nowadays this type of family is regarded as the ideal form of family.

2. **Polygynous family:** When a man has more than one wife and lives along with their children, the family is known as a polygynous family. This type of family is found among the Muslims and in many tribes of America, Africa, Asia, and Australia.

3. **Polyandrous family:** It is a kind of family, which allows a woman to marry more than one man. The woman lives with her husbands and is shared by them or she lives with each of them by turns. This type of family is seen among the Tibetans, North Indian Tribes, the Singhalese, and the Munda Tribes.

## Basis of Succession

a) **Patriarchal:** The patriarchal family is also known as father centred or father dominated family. The father is the head of the family and exercises authority. He is the administrator of the family property. The descent, inheritance, and succession are recognised through the male line. Patriarchal families are patrilineal in character because the descent is traced through the male line. Only male children inherit the property. Patriarchal family is patrilocal in residence. Sons continue to live with the father in his own house even after their marriage. Their wives join them. Women have secondary position in these families. Children are brought up in their father's family.

b) **Matriarchal:** The matriarchal family is known as mother centred or mother dominated family. The mother or the woman is the head of the family. She exercises authority and manages the property. The descent is traced through the mother, and hence, it is matrilineal in descent. Daughters inherit the property of the mother. The status of the children is decided by the status of the mother. Matriarchal family is matrilocal in residence. After the marriage, the wife stays back in her mother's home. The husband pays occasional visits to the wife's home.

## Gender Socialisation within Indian Families

In Indian families, gender roles are well differentiated, which influence the socialisation process from birth onwards. From early in life, children begin to experience gender- based differentiation in their relationship with others, in distribution of family resources, and in entitlement to family membership like nutrition, healthcare, and education. Both, boys and girls, grow up with the knowledge of the special value attached to the male child. Very often the blatant expressions of son preference through parental reactions, behaviour, family rituals, practices, and celebrations, all give rise to the definition of gender-based relationship between boys and girls, male and female within the Indian system.

The social practices among Indian families related to gender can be seen in light of the following -

a) **Male-female differentiation :** The male and female differentiation predominantly begins in the family. A girl is considered to be unwanted in many families and is even eliminated before birth. Differentiation and discrimination are seen even in the distribution

of nutrition, healthcare, and education. Distribution of family resource too is made on the basis of gender in many families, where women are not entitled to the family's possessions.

**b) Role allocation:** Within the Indian patriarchal family system, dominating and controlling social functions are prescribed for the males, whereas supportive functions are prescribed for the females. Thus, by birth, males are caretakers of resources, performing the functions of earners, and females are family caretakers performing the functions of child nurturing, caring of the aged, and running the household. The women are expected to be obedient daughters, faithful wives, nurturing mother, all powerful mothers-in-law, and benevolent grandmother.

**c) Gender-based hierarchal placement**: Along with role allocations, certain norms and values, along with practices and beliefs, further promote the husband-wife superior/inferior hierarchy within a family. Higher incidence of widowhood in women is observed as compared with men because of the cultural practice of men marrying women who are considerably younger to them. This demonstrates how gender and age can be the sources of disadvantages. Woman's role in society, her limited rights, considerable duties, and the shabby treatment meted out to her in all walks of life originate from the fact that she is basically considered a liability and a burden on the family right from birth itself.

**d) Gender- based attitude development:** Gender relationship is learnt within family from early days through the recognition of the special value accorded to male children in the traditional Indian family. Elders bless young girls and women by wishing them a large number of sons. Girls are made to believe that her stay at her natal home is temporary. Marriage is regarded as the ultimate goal of a girls' life. A large percentage of the parents expect all types of domestic work to be performed by girls, while boys are expected to do more of outside work.

## Check Your Progress 2

1. List the different types of families that exist in India.

2. Explain the socialization practices that is followed in Indian families related to gender.

### 1.3.4. Let us summarise

1    Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender.

2    The stages of gender identity formation includes understanding the concept of gender, learning gender role standards and stereotypes, identifying with parents, and forming gender preference.

3        The factors influencing gender formation can be classified as biological and sociological.

4        Gender identity are of different types - Binary Gendered, Cis-gendered, Gender Fluid, Genderqueer, Intersex, Non-Binary Gendered, Transgender / Trans, and 'X' / Other.

## 1.3.5.  Answers to 'Check Your Progress 1 and2'

## Check your progress 1

Refer Section 1.3.3.1. self leaning material

## Check your progress 2

Refer Section 1.3.3.2. of self learning material

## 1.3.6. Unit-end Exercises

1.    Explain the concept, types and factors affecting formation of gender identity.

2.    Explain how the socialisation practices in families affect gender identity.

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# Block - 1 : Gender Issues and Socialisation Process in India

## Unit - 4 : Gender Concerns Related to Access, Enrolment, Retention, Participation, and Overall Achievement

### Unit Structure

### 1.4.1. Learning Objectives

After completing this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

• Explain the Gender Concerns related to access and enrolment;

• Explain the Gender Concerns related to Retention;

• Explain the Gender Concerns related to Participation;

• Explain the Gender Concerns related to Achievement;

• Explain the role of Schools in reinforcing safety of Female Students; and

• Explain the role of School in reinforcing Gender Equality.

## 1.4.2. Introduction

School is the ultimate institution, which can address the gender issue and ensure gender equality. Education can bring about a change in the mind-set of both boys and girls, which is necessary for the betterment of humankind in relation to gender. As schools are the extension of society, there are concerns which still bother the equality agenda related to gender. We have been witnessing that inspite of the best efforts of the school; it has not been possible to bring about much needed equality in terms of access, enrolment, retention, participation, and achievement. There is a great need to understand the related underlying problems, which have not allowed the schools to achieve the goal of educating the children to their utmost capabilities.

## 1.4.3. Learning Points and Learning Activities

## 1.4.3.1. Gender Concerns Related to Access, Enrolment, Retention, Participation, and Achievement

### Exercise I

As a teacher, recall those situations where your female students dropped out from school. List out the reasons why your students stopped attending school?

As you try to answer this question, I am sure you recalled a few episodes where your female students stopped attending school. And I am sure you must have remembered the efforts you put in to bring them back to school. As you listed the reasons, many seemed related to safety or the student's economical background. Now let us discuss in detail the gender concerns related to access, enrolment, retention, and participation.

## A) Gender Concerns Related to Access and Enrolment

It is a widely observed fact, especially in rural area many girls are deprived of the opportunity to attend school for various reasons. As a result, the percentage of female literacy is always lower compared with boys. It is necessary to analyse the underlying causes so that intervention can be done in bringing the girls back to school.

**a) Poverty :** Poverty is the important cause of distress in society. Only when one's basic needs of food, water, and clothing are fulfilled, will a person think of other achievements. Most families coming under poor or below the poverty line have greater

need for earning their livelihood. And if there is a situation of choosing between a girl child and boy child, the girl child is sent to work, while the boy child is sent to school. Girl children are being used as labourers to generate income in many households where they are sent as domestic help or look after children in wealthy homes.

**b) Family responsibility:** In cases, where parents have to work to support their families, girl children care for their younger siblings and to do the household chores. In families relying on farming, the girl children are kept at home to cook for the farming labourers, while the rest of the family works in the farm. Girl children are also detained at home to look after sick member in the family.

**c) Safety:** In today's age,where crime against women and girls is increasing at an alarming rate, parents of girl children think about their safety. As a result, many girl children are deprived of education. When the route to the school is disrupted or when there is any danger enroute to school, families prioritise their girls' safety over education.

**d) Insecurity:** The school environment too requires to ensure security for girls. Inadequate and inappropriate sanitary facilities can be a cause of concern for the families to send their girls to school. The society's mindset and the security level also affect a girl's education. Insecure environments usually have elevated levels of early marriage and pregnancy, which directly affect the girls' ability to complete or re-enter education.

**e) Hidden costs of education:** Increased upfront and hidden costs of education can also disadvantage girls. Although girl's education is provided free by the government, there are certain costs in the form of items required for their education. Unlike boys, education is not generally seen as an investment for girls and they are therefore, the first to miss out in times of economic strain.

**f) Social exclusion and discriminatory norm**s: Disadvantaged women and girls often become pronounced in crisis of social exclusion and discriminatory norms. Certain villages follow stringent caste system and related practices, which deprive women of their educational rights.

**g) War prone areas:** The use of schools for military purposes, as recruitment grounds for armed groups, the presence of soldiers, incidences of abduction and direct attacks or crossfire affect all children. However, girls' attendance tends to be more affected.

## B) Gender Concerns Related to Retention

Due to the persistent interest shown by the government and the educational department, girls are admitted to school. But one observes that many girls, owing to various reasons, dropout from schools at different points of time. There are again several causes for their dropout, which pose a challenge to schools in bringing them back. Some of the reasons are discussed below.

**a) Safety**: Female students who get enrolled into school dropout owing to safety reasons, which could be related to their journey to school or the environment in the school. Fear of molestation, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment stops the girls from coming to school.

**b) Sanitation Facilities:** School buildings can also lack adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities, which pose a major barrier for menstruating girls. In co-education schools, the girls are embarrassed by the common toilet facilities or lack of privacy.

**c) Discriminatory norms:** Caste or gender related discriminatory norms affect the education of girls. Some villages have practices where menstruating girls cannot use a particular road where the village deity is kept. Girls have to travel using the far away roads to reach school, which compromises their safety and also discourages them from coming to school.

**d) School related gender- based violence:** Safety and learning are also compromised by increased levels of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), where institutions may lack the infrastructure to create or support gender-specific policies around child protection.

**e) School infrastructure:** The general destruction of school infrastructure, limited availability of trained teachers, and inappropriate teaching materials common to conflict and crisis settings can undermine the quality of education for all children.

**f) Teacher availability and attitude:** The available teachers are less likely to be trained in gender-sensitive approaches and the existing teaching practices and learning materials can reinforce gender stereotypes that significantly disadvantage girls. Furthermore, a limited number of either female or male teachers can result in a lack of role models, and students may become less motivated to participate in class.

**g) Migration :** The dropout rate of girls from marginalised and rural sections, especially from upper primary level onwards is extremely high. A sizeable proportion of school dropouts, chiefly migrant, poor, and working children are girls, as school continuation rates of rural girls are twice as high as that of boys.

**h) Poor teaching-learning environment:** One of the major reasons why children, both boys and girls, in rural and urban areas drop out is lack of interest in studies due to hostile environment, poor teaching, non-comprehension, and difficulties of coping. About 26 per cent children in one study cited school and teaching curricula related factors such as unfriendly atmosphere in school, doubts about the usefulness of schooling, and inability to cope with studies as reasons for their dropping out. Among girls in rural areas, these factors accounted for over 75 per cent of the dropouts.

**i)      Domestic responsibilities:** Domestic responsibilities and the widespread perception of girls merely as future homemakers contribute to the problem and girls get short shrift when the cost of education magnifies.

**j) Child marriage:** Child marriage, although a crime, is still prevalent in some of the villages in India. Parents in order to shed their responsibilities marry off their minor girls. This curtails their education.

## C) Gender Concerns Related to Participation

**a) Difference in their willingness to ask questions:** Girls are shyer and more self-conscious in the presence of boys and as a result, their willingness in participation is affected.

**b) Restlessness of boys attracts more attention than that of girls:** More attention is paid to boys by the teacher due to their restless nature. As a result, female students are ignored, thus reducing their interest in participating in classroom discussions and activities.

**c) Boys are more vocal:**   When working in a group, boys can be more vocal while girls will share information more intimately, hence, girls are less visible. Boys also tend to dominate due to their vivacious and loud nature.

**d) Girl's opinion ignored:** Most often the opinions expressed by girls are overlooked or ignored in a group activity consisting of boys and girls. This lowers their self –confidence and consequently silences them.

**e) Biased teacher interaction:** Teachers pay more attention to boys because of their assertiveness and because they speak up more frequently than girls.

**f) Public versus private talk**: Girls prefer private talks than public discussions and hence, may not participate in classroom interactions.

**g) Distribution of praise and criticism:** Distribution of praise and criticism alsoaffects the participation of students in a class. It is a fact that the smallest of achievement

by the boys gets attention than the many achievements of girls. Similarly, a small mistake by a girl gets magnified as she is expected to be good in every sense.

## D) Gender Concerns Related to Achievement

Although the achievement percentage of girls is on par with the boys when we see the results of various board examinations, yet the national-level surveys and data also show that 9 out of every 10 girls enrolled in school is unable to complete schooling. Only 1 out of every 100 girls enrolled in Class I reaches Class XII in rural areas and 14 out of every 100 girls enrolled in Class I reach Class XII in urban areas. The reasons for this are similar to what we have discussed in the gender concerns related to enrolment, participation, and retention.

## Check Your Progress 1

1.  Mention the causes for poor enrolment of girls in schools.

2.  What are the reasons for poor participation of girls in the classroom?

## 1.4.3.2. Issues Related to Gender that Need to be addressed in School

One of the challenges that girls face is of safety, while gender inequality is another reason why many girls discontinue their education.  It is very necessary for schools to ensure the safety of girls and also create an environment of gender equality. The following measures can be ensured by schools for safety at schools, while making sure that there is gender equality.

## Ensuring Safety at School

Schools are at the frontline of child protection since they have the potential to both teach protective behaviors' effectively to a greater number of children than any other system, including parental instructions. This is because a large part of the truly "awake" time of a child is spent at school. Besides, educators have a special role in combating child sexual abuse as they possess the knowledge, training, and opportunity to observe and respond to children's behaviour and physical conditions over a period of time. Additionally, because of the close daily contact, they are in a unique position to identify children who need help and protection.

The schools can prevent child abuse in the following ways -

*   Ensure teachers, volunteers, and persons with access to children are properly screened and trained.

- Implement and enforce a policy for reporting child sexual abuse and handling disclosures from children.

- Establish protocols and screening for school computer use. Provide training to students and teachers on acceptable use of computers.

- Assess your environmental structure and take every possible step to make it safer for the children.

- Make certain that campus security is in place so that all visitors are screened through the office and unusual incidents/visitors are handled carefully.

- Provide programmes on role for parents to make them a part of their children's safety and security at school and while going to and from school.

- Choose or develop child-safety programmes for the school that are based on accepted educational theories, are appropriate for the child's age and level of education and development, and are designed to offer concepts that will help children build self- confidence in order to better handle and protect themselves in all types of situations. Use multiple programme components that are repeated several years and use qualified presenters who include role-playing, behavioral rehearsal, feedback, and active participation in presentations.

- Safety planning and design for women and girls is important because it creates public spaces where women and all users have equal opportunity to be healthy, secure, and happy. This kind of planning is based on the fact that the physical design of urban spaces affects women's use and enjoyment of the public realm.

- For girls around the world, exercising their right to education can be full of risks. They are at risk from violence to and from school and in the classroom itself. This violence may take the form of aggressive sexual behavior, intimidation, and physical assault by boys, sexual advances by male students and teachers, corporal punishment, and verbal abuse.

## Role of Schools in Reinforcing Gender Equality

The gender inequities prevailing in society are carried into the school environment. This is evidenced in school processes such as teaching, teacher–student interaction, school management, and the plan and design of the physical infrastructure. Teaching and learning materials, for example, may contain gender stereotypes. Teachers are not always aware of the gender specific needs of both girls and boys. School management systems may not sufficiently address gender constraints such as sexual harassment, and many schools do not have adequate or separate toilets for girls and boys. As a result, the schools do not

provide a gender responsive environment for effective teaching and learning to take place. In order to arrive at such a school, a holistic approach involving various interventions is required.

The holistic intervention package can include the following elements -

- Undertaking gender sensitisation of parents, community leaders and members, teachers, and girls and boys in order to raise their awareness and understanding of the need to support girls' education.

- Training teachers in the skills for making the teaching and learning processes responsive to the specific needs of girls and boys.

- Empowering girls with skills for self-confidence, assertiveness, speaking out, decision making, and negotiation to help them overcome gender-based constraints to their education.

- Empowering boys with skills to de-link from gender oppressive attitudes and practices such as machoism, bullying, and sexual affronts, and to develop the self- confidence needed to accept gender equality positively.

- Training the school community to manage sexual maturation issues of both girls and boys with particular emphasis on menstruation management.

- Training teachers and students in guidance and counseling skills.

- Establishing guidance and counseling desks in order to provide services for the social and psychological development of girls and boys.

## Check Your Progress 2

List the measures that schools should take to ensure the safety of female students.

## 1.4.4. Let us Summarise

- **Gender Concerns Related to Access and Enrolment are**
  - ➢ Poverty,
  - ➢ Family responsibility,
  - ➢ Safety
  - ➢ Insecurity,
  - ➢ Hidden costs of education,

- ➢ Social exclusion and discriminatory norms, and

- ➢ War prone areas.

- • **Gender Concerns Related to Retention are**

  - ➢ Safety,

  - ➢ Sanitation facilities,

  - ➢ Discriminatory norms,

  - ➢ School related gender -based violence,

  - ➢ School infrastructure,

  - ➢ Teacher availability and attitude,

  - ➢ Migration,

  - ➢ Poor teaching-learning environment,

  - ➢ Domestic responsibilities, and

  - ➢ Child marriage.

- • **Gender Concerns Related to Participation are**

  - ➢ Difference in willingness to ask questions,

  - ➢ Restlessness of boys attracts more attention,

  - ➢ Boys are more vocal,

  - ➢ Girls' opinions ignored,

  - ➢ Biased teacher interaction,

  - ➢ Public versus private talk, and

  - ➢ Distribution of praise and criticism.

- • **Gender Concerns Related to Achievement are**

All the reasons discussed under gender concerns related to enrolment, retention, and participation.

## 1.4.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress 1 and 2'

## Check Your Progress 1

Refer Section 1.4.3.1 of Self Learning Material

**Check Your Progress 2**

Refer Section 1.4.3.2 of Self Learning Material

## 1.4.6. Unit-end Exercises

1    Explain the gender concerns related to access and enrolment.

2    Discuss the gender concerns related to retention.

3    Explain the gender concerns related to participation.

4    Elucidate the gender concerns related to achievement.

5    Explain the role of schools in reinforcing gender equality.

6    What measures should a school take to ensure the safety of female children?

7    How can gender equality be reinforced in schools?

## 1.4.7. References

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# Block - 1 : Gender Issues and Socialisation Process in India

## Unit - 5 : Gender Issues in Curriculum

### Unit Structure

## 1.5.1. Learning Objectives

After completing this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

- Explain the meaning of curriculum;

- Explain gender issues in different aspects of curriculum;

- Discuss the history of education in relation to gender; and

- Explain the means of developing gender equal curriculum.

## 1.5.2 Introduction

Now that we have understood what gender is and how society has been influencing individuals of different genders, we need to understand its influence in the classroom. We are all a part of the educational set-up and are very familiar with the different aspects of the educational system. The content, methodology, teachers, and the teaching-learning materials all make a huge part of the educational process. And this as a whole is called curriculum. It is very necessary for all the aspects in the curriculum to be in balance in relation to life situations. Gender forms a huge part of our living, and as observed many times, different aspects of the educational system fail to maintain equality between various genders. To build a healthy society, it is very necessary that each gender gets its due importance. A curriculum should be so built as to bring about progressive changes in the mind-set of the people and as a result, the progress of the society. Gender has been the most discriminated subject where the curriculum has been directly reflecting the inequality the society has been meting out to men and women. Although, attempts have been made to fill this gap, more efforts are needed to bring in perfect equality. Let us now go through the various aspects of curriculum and understand the issues related to gender.

## 1.5.3. Learning Points and Learning Activities

## 1.5.3.1. Curriculum and Gender Issues

### Exercise I

This is a paragraph from the 8th standard Geography textbook under ICSE syllabus. Read the paragraph and answer the following questions -

"Urban life is characterized by stress which may even strain family relations. In cities most of the women are working, to meet the increasing cost of living. Changing role of women in the family is creating stress in the family which may strain family relations".

What is the reason for stress, as mentioned in the paragraph?

What message does the paragraph give about woman?

As you read through the paragraph, you must have realized that it gives out the message that women should not go out and work. And if they do, it will cause stress in the family. This is a stereotypical message that is seen in one of the present textbooks. In this way, there are several other aspects included in the curriculum, which propagate gender bias, and more often it is the woman who is seen in a poor light. Now let us see what is meant by curriculum and what gender issues need to be addressed in it.

## Meaning of Curriculum

Curriculum is broadly defined as the totality of a student's experiences that occur in the educational process. Now let us go through some definitions to understand what exactly is meant by the word 'curriculum'.

According to **D. K. Wheeler (1978),** curriculum is "the planned experiences offered to the learner under the guidance of the school".

**Kerr (1968)** defines curriculum as "all the learning, which is planned and guided by school whether it is carried on in groups or individually".

**Oluoch (1982)** observes that a curriculum is "all that is planned to enable the students acquire and develop the desired knowledge, skills and attitudes".

**A. Glatthorn (1987)** gives the definition as "plans made for guiding learning in schools usually represented in retrievable documents of several levels of generality and the actualization of those plans in the classroom as experienced by the learners and as recorded by an observer; those experiences take place in a learning environment which also influences what is learned".

As per **J. Wiles & J. Bondi (1989)**, it is "a goal or set of values, which are activated through a development process culminating in classroom experiences for student".

From the above definitions, we can conclude that curriculum is the planned experiences that an educational institution sets forth in order to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes among learners. The concept of curriculum goes much deeper than the formal official documents set by the government. It is taught in classes and brings with it the interpretations, beliefs, assumptions, and values of teachers, thus changing it into an 'as taught' curriculum. A deeper understanding lies in how the students in the class, who have their own underlying beliefs and values, learn the curriculum.

## Gender Issues in the Aspects of a Curriculum

## Language and Gender

Some curricular objectives show that the language used is gender- biased. Language communicates the status of being male or female, and the status of being assertive or submissive. It is very often seen that 'he' is used as the universal pronoun. There are several terms used, which are masculine in nature. Some of the common terms used are mankind, policeman, fireman, chairman, waiter, businessman, steward, first batsman , brotherhood ,

manning, manpower, security man, mailman/postman, brotherly, the story of man, manmade, etc. These terms can be replaced with neutral terms which do not specify any gender.

## Curriculum Structure and Gender

It is more often seen that a curriculum is designed to cater to the cultural beliefs when it comes to gender. The activities and programmes are so structured as to fit into the perceptions of the society. Girls are believed to be delicate and aesthetic, while the boys are considered to be strong and powerful. Hence, activities like singing and dancing are planned for girls, while physically stimulating activities like sports and games are planned for boys. Certain forms of dances are considered to be feminine, while certain forms of sports are considered to be masculine. Although not much difference is made in choice of subjects among boys and girls, yet in their execution there is difference.

## Classroom Processes and Gender

Teachers' and students' perception find a big place in the teaching- learning process. Girls are considered to be more responsible and hardworking, while boys are considered to be indifferent and aggressive. As a result, school and classroom activities are organised in such a manner to cater to these perceptions. Boys are seen as leaders, while expectations in terms of academic performance are higher from girls. Teachers give more attention to boys to respond and participate in the classroom, while timid and shy girls are not paid equal attention. International researches suggest that boys have disproportionate share of contributions in the whole class interaction partly due to their being selected by the teacher more frequently than girls, and also due to their ability to create both positive and negative conditions, which attracts the teacher's attention and facilitates their participation and dominant position in classroom interaction.

## Content of Instructional Material and Gender

In the Indian context, textbooks are important repository of knowledge. Since textbooks try to reflect the culture and traditions of a place, any gender inequality prevalent in the society makes its way into the textbooks too. The visibility of women is low in textbooks compared with men. Underrepresentation of women is clearly evident in almost all textbooks, be it the freedom struggle or history, more men appear than women. Visuals and exercises in the textbooks portray gender stereotypes. Women and men are identified with stereotypical attributes such as brave, heroic, honest, and strong are portrayed as male, while caring, self- sacrificing, love, and kindness as female attributes. Some shift is seen lately, where efforts are being made by the NCERT to bring about equality in relation to gender in textbooks.

Several studies have shown that textbooks reinforce traditional views of masculinity and femininity and encourage children to accept a traditional gender order. For example, a recent study conducted by Kostas (2019) found that female characters in textbooks of primary education were portrayed mainly as mothers and housewives, whilst male characters were identified as breadwinners. Additionally, teachers often use materials, including texts, images or examples that reinforce stereotyped roles. Typical examples given include roles of the father (reading the newspaper) and the mother (serving dinner); the doctor (male) and the nurse (female); playing ball (boy) and combing doll's hair (girl). By doing this, teachers also promote gender bias, which favors girls as well. Bullying and noise-making for boys and politeness and gentleness for girls is another example. Gender bias does not only favor males over females; it can also go the other way around. They are both negative when considering a healthy relationship between the teacher and the learner.

## Check Your Progress 1

1. Define curriculum.

2. Discuss the gender issues in different aspects of a curriculum.

## 1.5.3.2. Gender Equal Curriculum

Several ideas must have crossed your mind in formulating a gender equal curriculum. Now let us further discuss more strategies in having a gender equal curriculum. In order to create a gender equal curriculum, one has topay attention to the important aspects of education, which can ensure equality. Before suggesting the strategies, let us study the opinions put forward by different experts in different historic educational documents about the relevance of curriculum for girls in education and schools.

### University Education Commission

After India became independent, the first Governmental Act to organise the education system in the light of independence was the setting- up of the University Education Commission, headed by Prof. S. Radhakrishnan to suggest improvements and extensions that may be desirable to suit the requirements of the country. Widely acclaimed, the report of the Commission on the issue of women's education referred that,

"Women's present education is entirely irrelevant to the life they have to lead. It is not only a waste but often a definite disability."

"The present system of women's education, based as it is upon men's needs, does not in any way make them fit for coping with the problems of daily life."

"The modern educated Indian women are neither happy nor contented nor socially useful. She is misfit in life. She is highly suppressed, and needs opportunities for self-expression. The new education must provide this opportunity".

The most important development in the field of women's education during the post-independence period was the setting up of a National Committee for women's education under the Chairmanship of Durgabai Deshmukh in 1959 which examined comprehensively the problems of women's education. As a result of the recommendations of this committee a National Council for the education of women was set up in 1959 with'Durgabai Deshmukh as its first chairman.

A major break-through in this area was achieved with the setting up of Hansa Mehta Committee in 1961 by the National Council for Women's Education. This committee examined in detail, the present curricula of school education and its relevance to individual and social needs of women in the prevailing circumstances of the country. The most salient feature of Hansa Mehta Committee was that it felt that a woman can pursue a career of her own choice without disturbing her role as a mother or house-wife. The committee observed that: "We, therefore, recommend that the education of women should be so planned as to enable them to follow a career of their choice without, in any way, neglecting their responsibilities for child-rearing and home-making."

The committee further observed that in a democratic society like ours, education should be related to individual capacities, attitudes and interests and not to gender.

The following are the Major Recommendations of Hansa Mehta Committee:

a. No differentiation should be made in the curricula for boys and girls at the primary stage;

b. Simple needle-craft, cooking, music and dance should be introduced in primary schools, both for boys and girls alike, to remove gender stereo type from the tender minds of children and to build up new and healthy attitudes;

c. Home-science should be included as a part of common core curriculum for boys and girls upto the middle stage;

d. Courses should be bifurcated after the middle stage of one to three years of duration to prepare boys and girls for different vocations in life;

e. At the end of the secondary stage there should be a bifurcation of courses into various streams;

f.      Universities should explore the possibilities of developing a variety of courses suited to the specific needs of girls and women.

The recommendations of Hansa Mehta Committee regarding the contents were timely and worthwhile. Yet one of the major weaknesses of the committee was that it could not break away from the earlier trend of thinking which emphasized the traditional social roles of women as a mother and house-wife with the result that the committee identified certain subjects as 'feminine' and specifically suited for girls.

## Bhaktavalsalam Committee

The national council for women education at its meeting held in April 1963 appointed a small committee under the chairmanship Bhaktavalsalam Chief Minister of Madras to look into the causes of lack of public support particularly in areas for girls education and to enlist public cooperation. The committee presented a detailed report with recommendations to improve the status of women's education.

## Kothari Education Commission (1964-66)

Another break-through in the direction of gender equality in curriculum was achieved by the recommendations of Indian Education Commission popularly known as Kothari Commission (1964-66). The commission agreed with the recommendations made by the National Council on Women's Education(1958-59) and Hansa Mehta Committee(1961) regarding: (a) educating the public to overcome the traditional prejudices against the education of girls; (b) popularization of mixed primary schools and, wherever possible, opening of separate schools for girls at the higher primary stage, etc.

The Kothari Commission (1964-66) also recognized the significance and importance of girl's education in nation-building. According to the commission: "For the full development of our human resources, for the improvement of homes, and for moulding the character of children during the most impressionable years of infancy, the education of woman is of even greater importance than that of man..." The commission fully endorsed the recommendations of Hansa Mehta Committee on the issue of differentiation of curriculum for boys and girls.

According to the commission, while courses on home science, music and fine arts should be provided at the secondary stage on a large scale, they should not be made compulsory for girls. Special efforts should be made to encourage girls to study mathematics or science at the secondary stage.

At the higher secondary stage female students should have free access to courses in arts, humanities, science and technology. However, technical and vocational courses need to be emphasized.

The commission was also of the view that the education of women should be regarded as a major programme in education in the years to come and a bold and determined effort should be made to face the difficulties involved and bridge the existing gap between the education of men and women in as short a time as possible.

However, irrespective of the provisions and recommendations of various commissions and committees the gender gap in education continued to exist in the years that followed. Certain subjects and areas were still considered to be masculine and exclusively male-dominated. Girls continued to be satisfied with home-science, arts and music, etc, while boys had a whole range of diversified courses in the area of science, technology, medicine, engineering, etc.

## Committee on the Status of Women in India

Another pioneer effort in the direction of gender equality in curriculum was made in 1971 with the appointment of a Committee on the Status of Women in India by a resolution of the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, dated September 02, 1971. The committee submitted its report in December 1974. This committee observed: the traditional view regarding women's status had resulted in an emphasis on differentiated curricula for girls, with accent on subjects which are considered especially suitable for them such as domestic science, needle-work, or fine arts. This also resulted in the failure to provide subjects such as sciences and mathematics in most of the girls' institutions. This practice was challenged by the committee on differentiation of curricula for boys and girls (1964) which recommended a common course at all levels to counteract the influence of traditional attitudes which regard certain tasks as 'manly' and others as 'womanly'. The Education Commission (1966) endorsed these recommendations. The Committee said "We found wide acceptance of this new trend of thought, but some states continue to describe different curricula for boys and girls" The following are the salient recommendations of this committee:

i)    There should be a common course of general education till the end of class X with all optional courses open to boys and girls;

ii)   Simple needle craft, music and dancing should be taught to all children at the primary stage;

iii)  From the middle stage, variations may be permitted under work experience with no compulsion or exclusion for students of either sex;

iv)  Vocational and technical courses in class XI and XII should be open to girls;

v)  At the university stage more relevant and useful courses should be introduced for all students. The Committee entrusted educational institutions with the responsibility to respond to the deep-rooted attitude of inequality between the sexes that are built in the minds of men and women through socialization process. The educational institutions should make a deliberate, planned, and sustained effort to replace the traditional values and dogmas based on inequality, by a new value system which accepts equality of the sexes.

However, unfortunately the educational system did not witness any major change so far as the question of gender equality in education was concerned. Rather many institutions have helped to perpetuate the traditional prejudices through their curricula, classification of subjects on the basis of gender and the unwritten code of conduct enforced on the pupils.

The year 1975 witnessed a renewed interest and general awareness world wide on various issues relating to women. In a significant development the United Nations declared 1975 as the International Women's year in order to concentrate attention on the advancement of women all over the world. The year provided various governments an opportunity to assess their present achievements and plan future actions for women's equality. In India also a strong need was felt to wage a war against social inequalities and traditional attitudes which affect women not only in the education and employment but in the whole range of opportunities in life. As a result of the sustained efforts of the government and various non-government agencies and the mixing of the cultures of the East and the West and due to technological advances, a visible change was seen in people's attitude towards the fairer sex. As a result, girls stepped out of the confines of their homes and joined various educational institutions. Hardly any area of knowledge was left untouched by girls during the decade which followed. The literacy rate of women improved to a considerable extent, and women started opting for courses which were predominantly male-dominated. A renewed need was felt to restructure the existing system of education to meet the challenges of a high-tech future society. This resulted in the National Policy on Education (1986) and its subsequent Programme of Action which was revised in 1991.

## National Policy on Education (1986) and Programme of Action (1991)

The most remarkable feature of this policy is its emphasis on a 'positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women' and its emphasis on the need to gear the entire system.

Accordingly, the 'equality of the sexes' was included as one of the components among ten identified components of national core curriculum. The new education policy observed that serious thought needs to be given to the restructuring of the curriculum so that the objective of women's equality in education is facilitated. The POA recommends that the Women's cell of NCERT be given the responsibility for preparing the component of the core curriculum relating to 'women's equality'. The POA also mentions that this cell should accelerate its work of eliminating sexist bias and sex stereo types from school text books. The POA emphasizes that the policy of 'non-discrimination' will be pursued vigorously to eliminate sex stereotype in vocational and professional courses and to promote women's participation in non-traditional occupations as well as in the existing and emerging technologies.

It endorses non-differentiated curricula for boys and girls that will provide equal opportunity to women in all courses and open more and more technical and vocational institutes and polytechnics for women.

As a result of the sustained efforts of various government and nongovernment agencies the 'home science syndrome' is slowly fading away. The tag of masculine and feminine subjects is breaking fast as there is hardly any discipline of knowledge where women have not set their foot.

The connotation that women are lower in intelligence is no more valid as research in the area of intelligence reveals that women are in no way inferior to men, and the differences in their academic and professional achievements are due, mainly, to lack of adequate opportunity or to the influence of traditional cultural patterns. This has been supported by various examples where women proved themselves as good as, if not better than, their male counterparts in various fields of academic, professional, social and political life. Though there is no visible curriculum differentiation on the basis of gender, yet discrimination persists in several subtle ways. Certain subjects and sub-areas of a discipline are considered better for women than others even today. Gender stereotype in text books, in the transaction of teaching-learning, in class room management, etc. is still prevalent. Therefore, a conscious and sustained effort is needed to create awareness not only among the general public, parents and children but also among the planners, administrators, educationists, teachers, etc., on these issues. In-service and pre-service training programmes need to include such topics which help the teachers not only to identify and remove gender bias from text-books but also to play the role of agents of change for the empowerment of women. In sum, there is a need for sincere and sustained efforts from all quarters and agencies.

## 1.5.3.2. Developing School Curriculum for Gender Equality

Development of the curriculum to address gender inequality cannot happen in isolation from other aspects of schooling, particularly of teaching, learning and interaction within the classroom. Whatever the content of the curriculum, equity will not be achieved if girls are discouraged from speaking, if boys absorb a disproportionate amount of the teachers energy, nor if the physical environment does not support equal access to education.

## Developing Gender Equality through important Aspects of Curriculum

Gender Equal Curriculum can be realized through number of strategies. Let us analyse each one of them.

## Developing Gender Equality through Important Aspects of Curriculum

## A) Instructional Material

Since textual materials are pivotal sources of knowledge, it is important that they include issues of equity and equality, as children both boys and girls from all segments of society access them. Therefore, portrayal of gender relation and their contributions are important in the thematic selection pertaining to all disciplines and their portrayal in the visual depiction. Textual materials world over and in the Indian context have been analysed from different perspectives, including gender.

- Textual materials related to all disciplines should address contributions and achievement of men and women in an adequate manner.
- Textbooks should bridge all segments of society related to gender.
- Textbooks should assist in initiating attitudinal changes among learners in relation to gender.
- Textbooks should address different forms of conflicts related to gender.
- Text books should promote critical thinking among children for questioning stereotypes, myths and misconceptions, and customary practices derogatory to the status of women.

## B) Teacher Involvement

Teachers can create the appearance of gender bias through unintentional, non-verbal actions. The first step to correcting this problem is to create an environment in which there is equality.

- Have equal academic and behaviour expectations for all students;

- The teacher should address students equally;

- The teacher should give equal opportunities to boys as well as girls to participate in the class;

- The teacher should use gender neutral language;

- The teacher should maintain the body language in such a manner, not differentiating between boys and girls;

- The teacher should ensure discipline in class and avoid any situations, which may insult or disturb the pupils based on their gender;

- The teacher must also ensure equal participation of boys and girls in activities like drawing, painting, music, and dance; and

- The teacher must also entrust the responsibility of organising classroom activities equally to both the sexes.

## C) Classroom Organisation and Management

A gender friendly classroom environment and its overall management can build harmonious relations between boys and girls at different stages of education. This can be done by adopting some of the following suggestive measures:

- As a facilitator, the teacher should ensure that the physical and social environment of the classroom promotes healthy relationships between boys and girls. Sitting arrangements and all activities should as far as possible be done in mix group in co-educational schools. Classroom seating should be so organised that supports equal participation.

- Avoid use of adjectives like beautiful, pretty, obedient, submissive for girls and brave, courageous, strong, handsome for boys.

- Encouraging remarks like excellent, good, and well done should be used for both boys and girls.

- Boys and girls should participate equally in maintaining cleanliness, observing classroom decorum, decorating the class, and conducting routine classroom chores.

- The use of visual aids like pictures and puppets, depicting women working in fields along with men, in hospitals as doctors and nurses, sharing household chores with men, etc. can also help to create gender inclusion and parity.

- In the transaction of subjects like mathematics, sciences, social science, and languages, care should be taken to include examples of both boys and girls and of men and women drawn from different walks of life so that the message of equal capability gets highlighted.

- The classroom culture should be built in a manner that interactions between boys and girls reflect mutual respect. The classroom ethos should be made open and supportive, so that both boys and girls feel free to share their personal experiences without apprehension.

- The concept of equality of sexes may be explained by elaborating on the intelligence and capabilities of girls and women.

## Check Your Progress 2

Identify appropriate answers to complete the sentences.

1. Textbooks should include information related to gender
   a) As it is prevalent in the society
   b) In a manner to propagate gender equality.
   c) Does not include any gender related information
   d) None of the above

2. Teachers should
   a) Address students equally.
   b) Give equal opportunities to boys and girls to participate in the class
   c) Use gender neutral language.
   d) All of the above

3. In a gender friendly classroom
   a) Boys and girls should be seated separately
   b) Boys should be given more opportunity than girls
   c) Boys and girls should participate equally in maintaining cleanliness.
   d) Examples given in classroom should not include women.

## 1.5.4. Let us Summarise

- Curriculum is broadly defined as the totality of student's experiences that occur in the educational process.

- Gender Issues in the Aspects of Curriculum

- ➢ Language and Gender : Language communicates the status of being male or female, and the status of being assertive or submissive. It is very often seen that 'he' is used as the universal pronoun. There are several terms used, which are masculine in nature.

- ➢ Textbooks and Gender: Visibility of women is low in the textbooks as compared with men. Visuals and exercises covered in the textbooks portray gender stereotypes.

- ➢ Curriculum Structure and Gender: Activities like singing and dancing are planned for girls, while physically stimulating activities like sports and games are planned for boys. Certain forms of dances are considered to be feminine, while certain forms of sports are considered to be masculine.

- ➢ Classroom Processes and Gender: Boys are seen as leaders, while expectations in terms of academic performance are higher from girls.

- ➢ Content of Instructional Material and Gender: Several studies have shown that textbooks reinforce traditional views of masculinity and femininity and encourage children to accept a traditional gender order.

- Development of the curriculum to address gender inequality cannot happen in isolation from other aspects of schooling, particularly of teaching, learning, and interaction within the classroom. Important aspects that need to be looked into are instructional materials, teacher involvement, and classroom organisation and management.

## 1.5.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress 1 and 2'

## Check Your Progress 1

1. Refer section 1.3.3.1. of the Self Learning Material.

2. Refer section 1.3.3.1. of the Self Learning Material.

**Check Your Progress 2**

1. a) In a manner to propagate gender equality.

2. d) All of the above

3. c) Boys and girls should participate equally in maintaining cleanliness.

## 1.5.6. Unit-end Exercises

1. Explain different gender issues in a curriculum.

2. Explain the history of education in relation to gender.

3. Explain how gender equality can be developed through important aspects of a curriculum.

4. Explain how teacher involvement contributes to develop gender equality.

5. How should a classroom be organized to develop gender equality.

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# Block - 1 : Gender Issues and Socialisation Process in India

## Unit - 6 : Gender Jurisprudence

## Unit Structure

## 1.6.1. Learning Objectives

After completing this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

- Describe the Laws related to Women;

- Explain Women's Reservation Bill Act;

- Explain Human Rights and Women's rights;

- Explain the provisions accorded to Women as per the Indian Constitution

- Explain the Legal Aspects related to Women.

## 1.6.2. Introduction

As we have discussed in the previous units, girls and women as a gender have been on the receiving end in terms of violence and discrimination. Indian society being predominantly patriarchal, the role of women is mostly confined to the four walls of the

house and their functions are limited to tending the family. From ancient times, women have been the victims of the most heinous crimes like rape, eve teasing, female infanticide, dowry, domestic violence, etc.  In order to safeguard the dignity and interests of women, laws have been formed and constitutional provisions have been formulated. Let us now go through the various laws, reservation bills, and constitutional provisions related to women.

## 1.6.3. Learning Points and Learning Activities

## 1.6.3.1. Laws Related to Women

Let us look into how the different laws in India protect women against discrimination and violence.

## Laws Related to Rape

Rape means an unlawful intercourse by a man with a woman without her valid consent (Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860). As per Section 375 of the IPC, a man is said to commit the offence of rape with a women under the following six circumstances -

- Sexual intercourse against the victims will;

- Without victims' consent;

- With her consent, when her consent has been obtained by putting her or any person in whom she is interested, in fear of death or of hurt;

- With her consent, when the man knows that he is not her husband, and that her consent is given because she believes that he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married;

- With her consent, when, at the time of giving such consent, by reason of unsoundness of mind or intoxication or the administration by him personally or through another of any stupefying or unwholesome substance, she is unable to understand the nature and consequences of that to which she gives consent; and

- With or without her consent, when she is under sixteen years of age.

Rape is a stigma, which exists in society from a long time. Rape in India is a cognisable offence. There are many provisions in various Acts. It defines rape and also prescribes its punishment. Whenever a man penetrates or does sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent or will, it amounts to rape.

The rape law under the Indian Penal Code has undergone several amendments.

- In 1983, amendment was made and S. 376(2) Custodial Rape, S.376 (A), i.e., marital rape, and S.376 (B to D), i.e., Sexual Intercourse not Amounting to Rape were added.

- U/S 228A of the Indian Penal Code, no person can disclose the name of the rape victim and if anybody discloses the name, he shall be punished with either description for a term, which may extend to two years and shall also be liable for fine.

- U/S 114A of the Indian Evidence Act, presumption can be made as to the absence of consent in certain prosecutions for rape.

- U/S 164A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, provisions for medical examination of rape victim are given.

- U/S 327(2) of Code of Criminal Procedure, there should be in camera trial for all rape victims.

## Laws Related to Dowry

Section 2 of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, as amended by the Dowry (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 1984 and 1986, defines dowry.

"Dowry" means any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly by,

- One party to a marriage to the other party to the marriage; or

- The parents of either party to a marriage; or

- Any other person at or before, or any time after the marriage, in connection with the marriage of the said parties.

## Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

The punishment for giving and taking dowry or abetting the give and take of dowry was earlier punishable by imprisonment up to 6 months, or a fine up to Rs. 5000. This punishment was later enhanced by the Amendment Act and now these offences are punishable with a minimum of six months and maximum ten years of imprisonment. The fine limit has been enhanced to Rs. 15, 000 or an amount equivalent to the dowry given,

taken or demanded, whichever is more. Amendments have been brought about in the Dowry Prohibition Act to remove the defects, which existed in the main legislation.

## Laws Related to Remarriage

Remarriage is allowing women to remarry after the death of the spouse or after divorcing the spouse on proper legal grounds. The Hindu Widows Remarriage Act, 1856, also Act XV, 1856, enacted on July 1856 legalised the marriage of Hindu widows in all jurisdictions of India under the East India Company Rule. To protect what is considered family honour and family property, upper caste Hindu society had long disallowed the remarriage of widows, even of children and adolescents all of whom were expected to live a life of austerity and abnegation. The Hindu Widows Remarriage Act, 1856, enacted to the campaign of Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, provided legal safeguards against loss of certain forms of inheritance for a remarrying Hindu widow, though, under the Act, the widow forsook any inheritance due to her from her deceased husband. Especially targeted in the Act were Hindu child widows whose husbands had died before consummation of marriage.

The Hindu Widow Re-marriage Act of 1856 validated widow's remarriage. Given below are the features of this Act -

- Widow re-marriage and the children born of such a marriage have been declared valid.

- After remarriage, the widow loses right over the property of her deceased husband.

- There are two views in regard to the rights of widow over the property of her deceased husband, if she changes her religion before her remarriage. The views of the various high courts are conflicting in this regard.

- In case a widow is a minor, she will have to obtain permission from her parents or guardians for remarriage.

- In addition to these provisions, The Hindu Succession Act, 1956, and the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, also contain provisions relating to widow remarriage.

## Laws Related to Divorce

Divorce (or dissolution of marriage) is the termination of a marriage or marital union, the cancelling and/or reorganising of the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage,

thus dissolving the bonds of matrimony between married couple under the rule of law of the particular country and/or state. A wife can file for divorce on the following grounds -

- The husband has been guilty of rape, sodomy or bestiality

- In a suit under Section 18 of the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956, or in proceeding under Section 125 of the Cr. P.C. 1973, a decree or order has been passed against the husband awarding separate residence and maintenance to her and after the passing of such a decree or order there is no resumption on cohabitation for one year upwards.

Under this Act, there is a provision for divorce by mutual consent of both parties as in under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 (Section 28, Special Marriage Act, 1954) With the passing of the Hindu Marriage Act in 1955 dissolution of marriage was provided on all-India scale. A wife can seek divorce on the following grounds –

**Adultery :** Where the husband "has after the solemnization of the marriage had voluntary sexual intercourse with any person other than his spouse".

**Cruelty:** Where the husband "has after the solemnization of the marriage, treated the petitioner with cruelty".

- Continually used abusive and insulting words, which bring shame and mental agony to her.

- Indulged in excessive sexual intercourse or in unnatural sexual behaviour against her wishes.

- Indulged in drunkenness or intoxicating drugs

- Forced her to have intercourse with a stranger.

- Brought into the house another woman for his carnal satisfaction and indulged in sexual orgy with her.

- Deliberately ill-treated the children in her presence with a view to give her mental pain.

*Desertion:* Where the husband "has deserted the petitioner for a continuous period of not less than two years immediately presentation of the petition".

*Conversion:* Where the husband "has ceased to be a Hindu by conversion to another religion"

*Unsound Mind:* Where the husband "has been incurably of unsound mind or has been suffering continuously or intermittently from mental disorder of such a kind and to such an extent that petitioner cannot reasonably be expected to live with the respondent".

*Leprosy:* Where the husband "has been suffering from a virulent and incurable form of leprosy".

*Venereal Disease:* Where the husband "has been suffering from venereal disease in a communicable form".

*Presumed Death:* Where the husband "has not been heard of as being alive for a period of seven years or more by those persons who would naturally have heard of it".

*Judicial Separation:* Where there "has been no resumption of cohabitation as between the parties to the marriage for a period of one year or upwards after passing of a decree for judicial separation in proceeding to which they were parties".

*Bigamy:* If the husband had married again before the commencement of this Act.

*Rape and unnatural offence:* If the husband has since solemnization of the marriage been guilty or rape, sodomy or bestiality.

*Marriage while being a Minor:* Where "her marriage was solemnized before she has repudiated the marriage after attaining that age but before attaining the age of 18 years".

## Laws Related to Property Inheritance

The general law relating to inheritance and succession can easily be referred to as The Indian Succession Act, 1925. Under this Act, every Indian is entitled to equal share on inheriting the property on the death of a person. In India, women's access and rights of ownership over family property (both moveable and immoveable), in the absence of a will, is governed by succession laws based on religion. Under Hindu Law, prior to 1937, a woman did not have the right to own any property at all, except what she received from her parents at the time of her wedding. The Succession Act, 1956 was a breakthrough in terms of giving Hindu women a full and equal share of their husband's property as the children; yet, the male bias persisted. An amendment to this Act in 2005 took the progressive step of making daughters coparceners at par with sons, such that they receive an equal birthright to a share in the natal family's ancestral property, i.e., parent's property. Laws are giving

importance to woman's rights, but still women do not get equal property rights because of certain social beliefs and attitude of people.

## Laws Related to Trafficking

Human trafficking is the most heinous of crimes involving elements of abduction, kidnapping, illegal detainment, illegal confinement, criminal intimidation, hurt, grievous hurt, sexual assault, outraging modesty, rape, unnatural offences, selling and buying of human beings, servitude, criminal conspiracy, abetment, etc. Therefore, multiple abuse and abusers located at different points of time and place together constitute the organised crime of trafficking. A host of human rights violation like denial of privacy, denial of justice, denial of access to justice, deprivation of basis rights and dignity, etc. constitutes other parts of the exploitation. Therefore, there is no doubt that trafficking is an organized crime.

## Check Your Progress 1

Match the Types of Offences in Column A with the Penal Sections in Column B

| Column A - Types of Offence | Column B - Penal Section |
|---|---|
| 1. Dowry death | a)  S 354 IPC |
| 2. Wrongfully confined | b)  S.376(B to D) |
| 3. Outraged modesty | c)  304-B/34 IPC |
| 4. Custodial rape | d)  S 340 IPC |
| 5. Marital rape | e)  S.376 (A) |

## 1.6.3.2 Constitutional and Legal Aspects related to Women

Now let us familiarise ourselves with the constitutional and legal aspects related to women.

Let us see the different constitutional and legal rights that exist in India related to women.

## Constitutional Rights and Legal Rights

The rights available to woman (ladies) in India can be classified into two categories as constitutional rights and legal rights. Constitutional rights are those which are provided in the various provisions of the Constitution. Legal rights, on the other hand, are those

which are provided in the various laws (Acts) of the Parliament and the State Legislatures. The following section deals with the Indian Constitution and legal rights of women.

## Women's Reservation Bill –History and Current Status

In India, women are to be kept inside the house in the service of their in-laws, children, and husband. Their rights are not secure and they are not given equal opportunity in any aspect, be it social, economic, political or cultural. Reservation for women provided them exposure that they are not less than any man in any aspect. In 1993, the constitutional amendment called for random one- third village council leader or pradhan position in gram panchayat to be reserved for women. Recent researches on the quota system has revealed that it has changed the perception on women's abilities, improved women electoral chances, and raised aspirations and educational attainment for adolescent girls. There is a long- term plan to extend this reservation to the parliament as well as legislative assemblies. For instance, some 80 law schools in India have 30% reservation for females. Progressive political opinion in India is strongly in favour of providing preferential treatment to women to create a level playing field for all citizens. The Women's Reservation Bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 9 March 2010 by a majority vote of 186 members in favour and 1 against. As of March 2013, the Lok Sabha has not voted on the bill. Critics say gender cannot be held as a basis for reservation, other factors should also be considered, e.g., economic and social conditions of woman candidates, especially when applying reservation for educated women.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee Report on the Constitutional (108th Amendment) Bill stated "Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision making will provide a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved".

## The Indian Constitutional Provisions Related to Women

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, and the Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. It not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralising the cumulative socio- economic, education, and political disadvantages faced by them.

Fundamental Rights, among others, ensure equality before the law and equal protection of the law; prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and guarantees equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment. Articles 14, 15, 15(3), 16, 39(a), 39(b), 39(c), and 42 of the Constitution are of specific importance in this regard.

## Constitutional Privileges

- Equality before law for women (Article 14).

- The State will not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them [Article 15 (i)].

- The State will make any special provision in favour of women and children [Article 15 (3)].

- Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State (Article 16).

- The State will direct its policy towards securing for men and women equally the right to an adequate means of livelihood [Article 39(a)]; and equal pay for equal work for both men and women [Article 39(d)].

- To promote justice, on a basis of equal opportunity and to provide free legal aid by suitable legislation or scheme or in any other way to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities (Article 39 A).

- The State will make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief (Article 42).

- The State will promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46).

- The State will raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people (Article 47).

- To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India and to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women [Article 51(A) (e)].

- Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat to be reserved for women and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat [Article 243 D(3)].

- Not less than one-third of the total number of offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level to be reserved for women [Article 243 D (4)].

- Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality to be reserved for women and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality [Article 243 T (3)].

## Legal Provisions

To uphold the Constitutional mandate, the State has enacted various legislative measures intended to ensure equal rights, to counter social discrimination and various forms of violence and atrocities, and to provide support services, especially to working women. Although women may be victims of crimes such as 'Murder', 'Robbery', 'Cheating', etc. the crimes, which are directed specifically against women, are characterised as 'Crimes against Women'. These are broadly classified under two categories.

## A) Crimes Identified Under the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

- Rape (Sec. 376 IPC)

- Kidnapping & Abduction for different purposes ( Sec. 363-373)

- Homicide for Dowry, Dowry Deaths or their attempts (Sec. 302/304-B IPC)

- Torture, both mental and physical (Sec. 498-A IPC)

- Molestation (Sec. 354 IPC)

- Sexual Harassment (Sec. 509 IPC)

- Importation of girls (up to 21 years of age).

### B) Crimes identified Under Special Laws (SLL)

Although all laws are not gender specific, the provisions of law affecting women significantly have been reviewed periodically and amendments carried out to keep pace with the emerging requirements. Some Acts, which have special provisions to safeguard women and their interests, are -

- The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948

- The Plantation Labour Act, 1951

- The Family Courts Act, 1954

- The Special Marriage Act, 1954

- The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955

- The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 with amendment in 2005

- Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956

- The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (Amended in 1995)

- Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

- The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971

- The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1976

- The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

- The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

- The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1983

- The Factories (Amendment) Act, 1986

- Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986

- Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987

- The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

## Human Rights and Women's Right

India's Constitution makers and our founding fathers were very determined to provide equal rights to both women and men. The Constitution of India is one of the finest equality documents in the world. It provides provisions to secure equality in general and gender equality in particular. Various articles in the Constitution safeguard women's rights by putting them at par with men socially, politically, and economically. The Preamble, the Fundamental Rights, DPSPs, and other constitutional provisions provide several general and special safeguards to secure women's human rights.

**Preamble :** The Preamble to the Constitution of India assures justice, social, economic, and political; equality of status and opportunity and dignity to the individual. Thus, it treats both men and women equal.

**Fundamental Rights:** The policy of women empowerment is well- entrenched in the Fundamental Rights enshrined in our Constitution. For instance,

- Article 14 ensures women the right to equality.

- Article 15(1) specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.

- Article 15(3) empowers the State to take affirmative actions in favour of women.

- Article 16 provides for equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office.

These rights being fundamental rights are justifiable in court and the Government is obliged to follow the same.

## Legal Aspects related to women

Women in India have faced significant violations of their human rights for centuries. From rape and domestic violence to forced labour and denial of educational opportunities, the struggle for rights and empowerment is a daunting one for Indian women. In the world's second-largest country, hundreds of millions of women are still affected by some of these issues. The following are the essential legal rights every Indian woman should know.

- **Right to equal pay:** According to the provisions under the Equal Remuneration Act, one cannot be discriminated on the basis of sex when it comes to salary or wages.

- **Right against harassment at work:** The enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act gives you the right to file a complaint against sexual harassment.

- **Right to anonymity:** Victims of sexual assault have a right to anonymity. To ensure that her privacy is protected, a woman who has been sexually assaulted may record her statement alone before the district magistrate when the case is under trial, or in the presence of a female police officer.

- **Right against domestic violence:** The Act primarily looks to protect a wife, a female live-in partner or a woman living in a household like a mother or a sister from domestic violence at the hands of a husband, male live-in partner or relatives.

- **Right to maternity-related benefits:** Maternity benefits are not merely a privilege of the working woman; they are a right. The Maternity Benefit Act

74

ensures that the new mother does not suffer any loss of earnings following a period of twelve weeks after her delivery, allowing her to rejoin the workforce.

- **Right against female foeticide:** It is a duty imposed on every citizen of India to allow a woman to experience the most basic of all rights - the right to life. The Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act (PCPNDT) ensures her right against female foeticide.

- **Right to free legal aid:** All female rape victims have the right to free legal aid under the Legal Services Authorities Act. It is mandatory for the Station House Officer (SHO) to inform the Legal Services Authority, who arranges for the lawyer.

- **Right to dignity and decency:** In the event that an accused is a woman, any medical examination must be performed by or in the presence of another woman.

- **Right to property:** The Hindu Succession Act allows women and men equal share in inheritance, thereby setting new rules and regulations.

- **Right not to be arrested at night:** A woman cannot be arrested after sunset and before sunrise, except in exceptional cases on the orders of a first-class magistrate.

## Check Your Progress 2

1.      List the constitutional rights related to women.

2.      What legal rights can women claim in India?

## 1.6.4. Let us Summarise

1.      There are specific laws for women related to dowry, remarriage, rape, divorce, property inheritance, and trafficking.

2.      There are also constitutional and legal aspects related to women.

3.      The knowledge of these laws and provisions will help women in the process of empowerment.

## 1.6.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress 1 and 2'

## Check Your Progress 1

1.     – c

2.     – d

3.     – a

4.     – e

5.     – b

## Check Your Progress 2

1. Refer Section 1.6.3.2. of Self Learning Material

2. Refer Section 1.3.3.2. of Self Learning Material

## 1.6.6. Unit-end Exercises

1.    Explain the different laws related to women

2.    Explain the history of the Women's Reservation Bill.

3.    Which are the different constitutional provisions related to women?

4.    Explain the legal aspects related to women.

5.    List the various crimes against women that come under special law. Discuss how does special law help in safeguarding women.

## 1.6.7. References

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# Block - 2 : Gender Issues and Education

## Unit - 1 : Developing Positive Self-Concept and Self-Esteem among Students

## Unit Structure

## 2.1.1. Learning Objectives

After going through this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

• Explain the meaning of Self Concept.

• Explain how and when Self Concept develops.

• Explain the meaning of Physical and Academic Self Concept

• Suggest measures to develop positive Self Concept.

• Explain the meaning of Self Esteem

• Describe the characteristics of High and Low Self Esteem.

• Generate strategies to develop positive Self Esteem.

## 2.1.2. Introduction

Now that we have understood what Gender is and how it affects the equality in the society, it is also necessary for us to understand how Gender affects the individual's

personality in terms of their Self Concept and Self Esteem. Self Concept and Self Esteem forms an important part of a person's existence in the society. His actions and behaviors are guided by what he or she thinks about herself/himself. As we have already understood that there is Gender Discrimination prevalent in the society, it, on a big way affects the Self Concept and Self Esteem of Individuals because of their Gender. As a teacher it is an added responsibility to cater of this need of students and help them develop a positive and constructive outlook to life. Negative concept about self leads to low self-esteem and as a result the individual may suffer from inferiority complex which is harmful for the wellbeing of the individual and society at large. Hence, as a teacher one must understand the importance of building positive self-concept and Self Esteem of students.

## 2.1.3. Learning Points and Learning Activities

## 2.1.3.1. Developing Positive Self Concept and Self Esteem among Students

### Exercise I

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow

*Sofia was a brilliant and vivacious student throughout her primary school. As she entered the high-school her friends and teachers observed that she had a strange change in her behaviour, where she preferred to stay aloof from others and her academic grades too started dropping. When the teachers tried to consult her parents, they did not find anything amiss that happened at home. Finally, when they tried to enquire the girl, they found out that, Sofia felt that she was very ugly because she was fat. She also felt that her friends might dislike her because she does not dress up as richly as them. Hence, she had retrieved into her shell and did not want to meet anyone.*

What did Sofia think about herself?

What does it tell about her perception of self? Was she positive or negative?

What would you as her teacher suggest to change her view about herself?

As you tried answering the questions, you would surely have realized that Sofia had developed a negative self-concept which reflected in her behaviour. Self-concept forms a very important part of our personality and hence it requires to be given equal importance to it so that it grows in a constructive manner and forms into a positive entity of life. Now let us first understand what Self-Concept is and how is it influenced by Gender. Then let us also discuss as to how as teachers we can help our students in developing positive self-concept.

## Meaning of Self Concept

One's self-concept (also called self-construction, self-identity, and self-perspective or self-structure) is a collection of beliefs about oneself. Generally, self-concept embodies the answer to "Who am I?".

- Self-concept is distinguishable from self-awareness, which refers to the extent to which self-knowledge is defined, consistent, and currently applicable to one's attitudes and dispositions.

- Self-concept also differs from self-esteem: self-concept is a cognitive or descriptive component of one's self (e.g. "I am a fast runner"), while self-esteem is evaluative and opinionated (e.g. "I feel good about being a fast runner").

- Self-concept is made up of one's self-schemas, and interacts with self-esteem, self-knowledge, and the social self to form the self as whole.

- It includes the past, present, and future selves, where future selves (or possible selves) represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, or what they are afraid of becoming. Possible selves may function as incentives for certain behaviour.

- The perception people have about their past or future selves relates to their perception of their current selves.

- The temporal self-appraisal theory argues that people have a tendency to maintain a positive self-evaluation by distancing themselves from their negative self and paying more attention to their positive one. In addition, people have a tendency to perceive the past self less favourably (e.g. "I'm better than I used to be") and the future self more positively (e.g. "I will be better than I am now").

## Development of Self Concept

Researchers debate over when self-concept development begins. Some assert that gender stereotypes and expectations set by parents for their children affect children's understanding of themselves by approximate age of 3. However, at this developmental stage, children have a very broad sense of self; typically, they use words such as big or nice to describe themselves to others. While this represents the beginnings of self-concept, others

suggest that self-concept develops later, around age 7 or 8. At this point, children are developmentally prepared to interpret their own feelings and abilities, as well as receive and consider feedback from peers, teachers, and family. In adolescence, the self-concept undergoes a significant time of change. Generally, self-concept changes more gradually, and instead, existing concepts are refined and solidified. However, the development of self-concept during adolescence shows a "U"-shaped curve, in which general self-concept decreases in early adolescence, followed by an increase in later adolescence. Additionally, teens begin to evaluate their abilities on a continuum, as opposed to the "yes/no" evaluation of children. For example, while children might evaluate themselves "smart", teens might evaluate themselves as "not the smartest, but smarter than average." Despite differing opinions about the onset of self-concept development, researchers agree on the importance of one's self-concept, which influences people's behavior and cognitive and emotional outcomes including (but not limited to) academic achievement, levels of happiness, anxiety, social integration, self-esteem, and life-satisfaction.

## Understanding Academic and Physical Self Concept
## Academic Self Concept

Academic self-concept refers to the personal beliefs about their academic abilities or skills. Some research suggests that it begins developing from ages 3 to 5 due to influence from parents and early educators. By age 10 or 11, children assess their academic abilities by comparing themselves to their peers. These social comparisons are also referred to as *self-estimates*. Self-estimates of cognitive ability are most accurate when evaluating subjects that deal with numbers, such as math.

## Physical Self Concept

Physical self-concept is the individual's perception of themselves in areas of physical ability and appearance. Physical ability includes concepts such as physical strength and endurance, while appearance refers to attractiveness. Adolescents experience significant changes in general physical self-concept at the on-set of puberty, about 11 years old for girls and about 15 years old for boys. The bodily changes during puberty, in conjunction with the various psychological changes of this period, makes adolescence especially significant for the development of physical self-concept. An important factor of physical self-concept development is participation in physical activities. It has even been suggested that adolescent involvement in competitive sports increases physical self-concept.

## Self-Concept and Gender Difference

Research from 1997, inspired by the differences in self-concept across cultures, suggested that men tend to be more independent, while women tend to be more

interdependent. A study from 1999 showed that, while men and women do not differ in terms of independence or interdependence, they differ in their types of interdependence. Women utilize relational interdependence (identifying more with one-to-one relationships or small cliques), while men utilize collective interdependence (defining themselves within the contexts of large groups). In addition to their view of interdependence, men and women also view themselves differently in regards to several other traits that have to do with self-concept. For instance, in a study conducted in 1987, men were found to consider themselves more achievement and financially oriented as well as more competitive than their female counterparts. In contrast to this, the women were more likely to view themselves as sociable, moral, dependent and less assertive than the men. These differences potentially affect the individual's subjective well-being.

Gender differences in interdependent environments appear in early childhood: by age 3, boys and girls choose same-sex play partners, maintaining their preferences until late elementary school. Boys and girls become involved in different social interactions and relationships. Girls tend to prefer one-on-one (dyadic) interaction, forming tight, intimate bonds, while boys prefer group activities. One study in particular found that boys performed almost twice as well in groups than in pairs, whereas girls did not show such a difference. In early adolescence, males are more likely to have a positive physical self-concept. During this developmental stage, boys who develop early tend to have a more positive view of themselves as opposed to early developing females who view themselves more negatively.

The largest difference during this developmental stage between males and females is the way they view their appearance. It is assumed at this age that a more attractive person has more social power. By the time they reach college-age, females continue to have lower physical self-concepts than males. Girls are more likely to wait their turn to speak, agree with others, and acknowledge the contributions of others. Boys, on the other hand, build larger group relationships based on shared interests and activities. Boys are more likely to threaten, boast, and call names, suggesting the importance of dominance and hierarchy in groups of male friends. In mixed-sex pairs of children aged 33 months, girls were more likely to passively watch a male partner play, and boys were more likely to be unresponsive to what their female partners were saying. The social characteristics of boys and girls as they develop throughout childhood tend to carry over later in life as they become men and women, although characteristics displayed as younger children are not necessarily entirely reflective of later behavior. Several studies have shown a difference between men and women based upon their academic self-concept. In general, men are more likely to view their overall academic self-concept higher, especially in the areas of math, science and technology. Women tend to have higher perceived abilities in their language related skills**.**

**Developing positive self-concept**

- Focus on the individual. Treat each student with respect and help them treat others with respect.

- Make each student feel special.

- Point out to the strengths of pupils

- Facilitate Self Praise

- Help students set realistic goals and have realistic expectations.

- Emphasize warm and comfortable environment.

- Praise the efforts and not the outcome.

- Provide children with specific feedback that focuses on their particular skills or abilities.

- learning opportunities should be conducted in groups (both mixed-ability and like-ability) that downplay social comparison, as too much of either type of grouping can have adverse effects on children's academic self-concept and the way they view themselves in relation to their peers.

## Check Your Progress 1

1. What strategies will you take up to develop positive self-concept among your students?

## 2.1.3.2. Developing Self Esteem among Students

**Exercise II**

Given below is the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Go through the instructions and do as directed.

## Instruction

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by tick marking in the appropriate cell.

| S.No. | Statements | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. | | | | |
| 2. | At times I think I am no good at all. | | | | |
| 3. | I feel that I have a number of good qualities. | | | | |
| 4. | I am able to do things as well as most other people. | | | | |
| 5. | I feel I do not have much to be proud of. | | | | |
| 6. | I certainly feel useless at times. | | | | |
| 7. | I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. | | | | |
| 8. | I wish I could have more respect for myself. | | | | |
| 9. | All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. | | | | |
| 10. | I take a positive attitude toward myself. | | | | |

**In order to score your test follow the instructions given below.**

**Scoring :**

Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored. Give "Strongly Disagree" 1 point, "Disagree" 2 points, "Agree" 3 points, and "Strongly Agree" 4 points. Sum scores for all ten items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.

On answering the above test and scoring it, you must have realized where you stand on your Self Esteem Scale. Higher your score higher is your self esteem. Let us now further understand what Self Esteem really is and how to develop it among our students.

**Meaning of Self Esteem**

Self-esteem reflects an individual's overall subjective emotional evaluation of their own worth. It is the decision made by an individual as an attitude towards the self. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs about oneself, (for example, "I am competent", "I am worthy"), as well as emotional states, such as triumph, despair, pride, and shame.

Smith and Mackie (2007) defined it by saying "The self-concept is what we think about the self; self-esteem is the positive or negative evaluations of the self, as in how we feel about it."

## Characteristics of People with High Self Esteem

- Firmly believe in certain values and principles, and are ready to defend them even when finding opposition, feeling secure enough to modify them in light of experience.

- Are able to act according to what they think to be the best choice, trusting their own judgment, and not feeling guilty when others do not like their choice.

- Do not lose time worrying excessively about what happened in the past, nor about what could happen in the future. They learn from the past and plan for the future, but live in the present intensely.

- Fully trust in their capacity to solve problems, not hesitating after failures and difficulties. They ask others for help when they need it.

- Consider themselves equal in dignity to others, rather than inferior or superior, while accepting differences in certain talents, personal prestige or financial standing.

- Understand how they are an interesting and valuable person for others, at least for those with whom they have a friendship.

- Resist manipulation, collaborate with others only if it seems appropriate and convenient.

- Admit and accept different internal feelings and drives, either positive or negative, revealing those drives to others only when they choose.

- Are able to enjoy a great variety of activities.

- Are sensitive to feelings and needs of others; respect generally accepted social rules, and claim no right or desire to prosper at others' expense.

- Can work toward finding solutions and voice discontent without belittling themselves or others when challenges arise.

## Characteristics of People with Low Self Esteem

- Low self-esteem can result from various factors, including genetic factors, physical appearance or weight, mental health issues, socioeconomic status, significant emotional experiences, peer pressure or bullying.

- A person with low self-esteem may show heavy self-criticism and dissatisfaction.

- Hypersensitivity to criticism with resentment against critics and feelings of being attacked.

- Chronic indecision and an exaggerated fear of mistake

- Excessive will to please and unwillingness to displease any petitioner.

- Perfectionism, which can lead to frustration when perfection is not achieved.

- Neurotic guilt, dwelling on or exaggerating the magnitude of past mistakes.

- Floating hostility and general defensiveness and irritability without any proximate cause.

- Pessimism and a general negative outlook

- Envy, invidiousness, or general resentment.

- Sees temporary setbacks as permanent, intolerable conditions.

- Individuals with low self-esteem tend to be critical of themselves.

- Some depend on the approval and praise of others when evaluating self-worth.

- Others may measure their likability in terms of successes: others will accept themselves if they succeed but will not if they fail.

## Developing positive Self-Esteem among students

- Accept students for who they are

- Help students develop sense of responsibility

- Increase students sense of ownership

- Help students develop self-discipline

- Provide positive feedback and encouragement

- Teach students to cope with mistakes and failures.

- Always accentuate the positive

- Avoid criticism

- Expectations must always be realistic.

**Check Your Progress 2**

1.   What measures will you take to develop positive Self-Esteem among your students?

## 2.1.4. Let us Summarise

- One's self-concept (also called self-construction, self-identity, and self-perspective or self-structure) is a collection of beliefs about oneself.

- Some researchers say that self-concept develops at the age of three and some others at later, around age 7 or 8 since children are developmentally prepared to interpret their own feelings and abilities, as well as receive and consider feedback from peers, teachers, and family.

- Academic self-concept refers to the personal beliefs about their academic abilities or skills.

- Physical self-concept is the individual's perception of themselves in areas of physical ability and appearance.

- Men are more likely to view their overall academic self-concept higher, especially in the areas of math, science and technology. Women tend to have higher perceived abilities in their language related skills**.**

- **Developing positive self-concept**

  - Focus on the individual. Treat each student with respect and help them treat others with respect.

  - Make each student feel special.

  - Point out to the strengths of pupils

  - Facilitate Self Praise

  - Help students set realistic goals and have realistic expectations.

  - Emphasize warm and comfortable environment.

  - Praise the efforts and not the outcome.

- Self-esteem reflects an individual's overall subjective emotional evaluation of their own worth.  It is the decision made by an individual as an attitude towards the self.

- Developing positive self-esteem among students

  ➢ Accept students for who they are

  ➢ Help students develop sense of responsibility

  ➢ Increase students sense of ownership

  ➢ Help students develop self discipline

  ➢ Provide positive feedback and encouragement

  ➢ Teach students to cope with mistakes and failures.

  ➢ Always accentuate the positive

  ➢ Avoid criticism

  ➢ Expectations must always be realistic

## 2.1.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress 1 and 2'

**Check Your Progress – 1**

Refer Section 2.1.3.1 of Self-Learning Material

**Check Your Progress – 2**

Refer Section 2.1.3.2 of Self-Learning Material

## 2.1.6. Unit-end Exercises

1. Explain the meaning of Self Concept?

2. Elucidate Academic and Physical Self Concept.

3. Discuss the development of Self Concept.

4. What measures will you take to develop positive Self-Concept among your students?

5. What is Self Esteem?

6. What are the characteristics of a person with high and low Self Esteem?

7. How will you develop positive Self Esteem among your students?

## 2.1.7. References

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-concept

2. Rosenberg, M. (1965). Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

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# Block - 2 : Gender Issues and Education

## Unit - 2 : Teaching Learning Materials to teach Gender Issues

## Unit Structure

## 2.2.1. Learning Objectives

After going through this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

1.    Explain different teaching strategies to teach Gender Issues

2.    Explain different instructional aids to teach Gender Issues

## 2.2.2. Introduction

We have already gone through the Gender Issues and are aware of the status of Gender Equality in India. There is much efforts required to break the societal stereotypes and look at all the Genders in the same light. School is an important medium which can disseminate the message of Gender equity and equality through its practices. By internalizing Gender sensitivity into the curriculum, pupils will grow in a manner where they are Gender Sensitive and hence Gender Equality can be achieved in a systematic manner. Teaching Learning Materials form the major instruments in reaching out to students the necessary knowledge and practices that are required to bring about this Gender Sensitivity and as a result attain the much needed goal of mutual respect, progressive collaboration and a constructive

environment related to Gender. In this Unit let us discuss the various teaching-learning materials that can be utilized to teach Gender Issues.

An analysis of teaching learning strategies that can be used to teach gender issues will make clear the materials that could be used in the process of teaching and learning gender issues. Therefore, let us analyse the teaching learning strategies that could be used in this context, and deduct the teaching learning materials that could be used for the purpose of teaching gender issues.

## 2.2.3. Learning Points and Learning Activities

## 2.2.3.1. Gender Perspective through different Teaching Strategies

**EXERCISE I**

Imagine that you are given to teach a lesson on the topic "Family". How will you teach this lesson in order to propagate Gender Equality? What teaching strategies will you follow in your lesson to address the Gender issues?

As you tried answering the above questions several strategies must have crossed your mind. As a teacher it is very necessary to consciously and meticulously choose and plan teaching-learning strategies which could be effective in reaching our goals. Hence let us see some teaching strategies which can be used effectively to teach Gender Issues.

## Teaching Strategies to teach Gender Issues

Some specific strategies can be employed to make students conscious of gender issues which would result in developing an attitude of gender equality. Let us understand these strategies specific for gender studies**.**

## 1. Film Analysis :

Films being a part of the social mass media have the responsibility of promoting and accelerating the values and culture in the society. Films have good scope to do this task as it involves both audio and visual channels to convince the masses. Normally, films play a major role in socializing the people of a community, but many a times this major role is not taken care of. Multiple interests work in the process of the production of films, because of

which certain compromises are made with the standards and ethics they need to be abide with. Popularity being one of the goals of film making, they have to be woven according to the mindset of the viewers. This mindset may not be always the way it is ideally expected in a society. In such cases, the film has the responsibility to put the masses into a proper mindset. This is true in terms of portraying girls and women also. Most films perpetuate the gender stereotypes conveying people that it is accepted. Women are portrayed many time in negative ways. Therefore, the students at early ages should be trained in the ways they are supposed to watch and read a film especially in relation to gender issues. They need to anlyse the films from the perspective of women, and highlight if it comes in the way of the dignity of women or men. They need to be trained to develop a perspective by being clear about the way the films should present society.

## 2. Advertisement Analysis:

Advertisements mostly go by the liking of the people and seldom by the value that would contribute to the growth of the society. They are product oreiented and commercial. They try to convince people of their product through the existing socio-cultural patterns. There is always a threat for the product if it deviates from the mental set-up of the people. But while publicizing any advertisement, the media agency should take care of a very serious responsibility, to direct the society with desired patterns of values. There is no harm in perpetuating the existing social patterns, but it has an obligation to set right the social pattern if it is adverse to the community. But, some advertisements are projected to the public at the cost of protected and expected values of society. This is normally seen while projecting women as part of advertisements. By making students aware of these, would help to develop proper attitude towards gender.

## 3. Analysis of Biographies

A biography presents a subject's life story. A biography is normally written because the person who writes it sees something significant, special, and extraordinary in the peron who is the focus. Directly or indirectly, biographies reflect the values of the contemporary society. Today, biographies are written with different perspectives in different contexts and used for different purposes in different disciplines. The students can be asked to write a biography of a person whom she/he thinks has played a significant role in their life. A template needs to be provided for this purpose and this template will be different from that of a general biography. The template to write a biography of man and women also differ in the context of gender studies.

An extract from a biography written by a student about her 'mother'

My Mother

"… She begins her day by cleaning the house, cooking food, fetching water, and getting her husband and children ready for office and school, respectively. She then spends the rest of the day in washing the clothes of all members of the family, arranging things in the house, marketing etc. I wish my mother had a 'Sunday' as all of us have.

## 4. Analysis of Autobiography

Autobiography is a type of narration in which the author tells the story of his or her life. It is a process of reviewing one's own life. It gives the readers an inner view of the person in different occasions involving their struggles and success. These help in a great way in the context of teaching gender issues. It gives an opportunity for the students to evaluate themselves from gender perspective and to accept or reject the desired and undesired ideas and practices. The type of autobiographies to be written by students in the context of teaching gender issues is a simple one. It is not bound by the characteristics of a biography in the literary style, but a simple narration of experiences and events in one's life. A template needs to be provided to students to write the autobiography and this should lead students to contemplate on some of the issues related to gender aspects in their life.

An extract from the autobiography written by a student

"…There are no restrictions placed against me in my family. My parents have complete faith in me. Many of my relatives are against this sort of freedom given to me because I am a girl. According to them, the investment made by my parents on my education is a waste, because I have to be given in marriage soon."

## 5. Role playing

Role playing is a learning strategy that emphasizes the social nature of learning. It is an experience based technique which can be used by teachers and students in the exploration of wide variety of social issues. Here students can be made to enact a social problem followed by discussion. In the context of teaching gender issues, the students can be asked to enact a situation, where gender disparity is involved. The students can be made to discuss about the same, and teacher can lead the students to take appropriate decisions to follow in their life, related to the gender issue discussed.

## 6. Analysis of data collected from Interviews

Interview as a strategy has wide scope to deal with gender issues. The students can interview men and women from the perspective of gender issues, bring the data to the class and discuss to take proper decisions about gender issues which lead to nullify gender disparities. Here also students should be provided with a template, different for men and women, to interview the individuals selected. The deductions should lead to develop the attitude of gendered free society.

## Other Strategies:

1.  **Lecture Strategy :** Although Lecture Strategy is teacher dominant, yet through careful and meticulous planning can be used to develop Gender Equality among students. Teacher should use examples and information in her lecture which imposes Gender related values

2.  **Narration Strategy :** Narration Strategy could be used effectively among students to generate right Gender notions. Teacher can narrate a story, anecdote or an incident in class and focus on Gender, such that students are able to pick up morals and qualities from them which propose Gender equality.

3.  **Review Strategy :** Review could be usefully used when you have to change a stereotyped thought process or when you want to plant new thoughts related to Gender among students. Students could be asked to review a particular incident in school, or a particular lesson in the text or any particular current issue with a Gender Perspective. This will bring out a change in how pupils approach Gender issues.

4.  **Group Discussion :** Group Discussion is a very important strategy of teaching in promoting Gender Equality. Pupils could be asked to discuss on a current topic of Gender Issue and come out with valuable outcomes where they promote Gender Equality. Group Discussion also allows communication between boys and girls and gives them an equal platform to express their views and come to consensual agreements which can build mutual respect among them.

5.  **Problem Solving :** This is another important strategy which can be used to give a thought towards Gender Issues. Teacher should give such problems to students where students discover a solution to the problem through systematic

steps where they encounter Gender related realities. This can develop a progressive attitude among pupils towards Gender.

6.  **Project Strategy:** Small projects can be given to pupils where they collect data about men and women in different fields and analyze it to understand their role and contribution in various fields. This can help the students in breaking the Gender Stereotypes through understanding that both men and women are equally necessary for the smooth running of the society.

## Check Your Progress – 1

Select a topic which has scope to teach gender issues, from the lessons you need to teach and plan a lesson for the topic using a combination of strategies mentioned above. Execute the plan.

## 2.2.3.2. Instructional Aids for teaching Gender Issues

After understanding different strategies for teaching gender issues, you are in a position to understand the instructional materials required for teaching gender issues. Let us consolidate them.

1.  **Films:** Films are very useful in teaching gender related issues. Such films which directly or indirectly depict gender issues should be selected. Progressive films are better than commercial films.

2.  **Advertisements :** Advertisements also help us to teach gender related issues. A judicious selection of advertisements which have scope to teach gender related issues is important.

3.  **Biographies :** These are the biographies written by students especially in the gender contexts. The students should be trained to write biographies in a very simple way with the help of a template provided by the teacher. Literary biographies also can be selected provided there is scope to teach gender related issues.

4.  **Autobiographies :** These are also written by the students from the perspective of gender issues, with the help of a template provided by the teacher. The content related to gender issues in the autobiography can be discussed to lead student towards appropriate attitudes and concepts.

5. **Role plays:** Readymade videos depicting gender related situations and which have scope to teach gender issues can be selected, or students can be asked to enact a problem related to gender. The problem can be suggested either by the teacher or students can be allowed to select the problem.

6. **Videos:** Number of videos depicting contemporary issues related to gender issues can be made use of.

7. **Books:** Number of books depict the problems related to gender in a very effective way. Students can be exposed to these books.

8. **Text books:** Text books can be very well used to teach gender issues. Students should be guided to analyse texts from gender perspective.

9. **Print media:** Teacher can use news very effectively to teach gender related issues. The news depicting gender disparity, or a direct article on gender issue can be used to develop desired objectives.

10. **Bulletin Boards/Information Boards:** Bulletin boards could be best used to create Gender Equal attitude among students. Asking students to display information which can build a positive Gender related mindset can develop the value of Gender Equality among students. Conversations, dialogues depicting gender neutrality can be presented on these boards.

11. **Pictures and Photographs:** Pictures from newspapers and other print media depicting disparity between men and women can be exhibited to have discussions on the same.While displaying pictures and photographs related to any topic teachers have to be careful to create the right impression among students related to Gender. The posters and photographs should not carry any stereotyped images. Even if there are images which promote Gender stereotypes the teacher should interpret the images correctly to develop mutual Gender respect.

12. **Charts:** Charts could be very effectively used to teach Gender issues to students. Teacher can customize the chart with necessary information which can build a positive and conducive attitude related to Gender among students.

13. **Cartoons:** Cartoons too can be utilized created to create an impact on students. Many social issues related to Gender can be effectively represented to create powerful impact on the pupils. It can effectively disseminate the message of

the consequences of violence against women, the impact of female feticide in a more effective manner.

14.  **Posters:** Posters can be used to teach Gender Issues too. They can reach to large number of students and can produce the necessary outcome on each of them. There is also a huge scope to accurately design the message we want to disseminate among the pupils.

15.  **Flash Cards:** The roles of men and women to build a Gender Equal Society can be very effectively highlighted using flashcard. This will ensure that the students focus on those practices which can promote Gender Equality.

16.  **Filmstrips and Transparencies:** Filmstrips and Transparencies are another very useful instructional aids in teaching Gender Issues. Facts and Issues related to gender can be visually shown to students to have a better impact and develop mutual respect.

17.  **Computer Assisted Learning Programmes:** In the present day computer assisted learning is the most effective and impactful aid in teaching and learning. It can give you the real experience in a virtual mode. Every Gender related issue can be presented to students in its original form which can have greater effect. Discussions can be initiated, facts can be provide and solutions can be stated very effectively using this medium.

## Check Your Progress - 2

Select a topic which has scope to teach gender issues, from the lessons you need to teach and plan a lesson for the topic using at least three learning aids mentioned above. Teach the lesson according to the plan and document your experiences

## 2.2.4. Let us Summarise

- Number of strategies can be used in the teaching and learning of gender related issues and they are Analysis of films, advertisements, making students write biographies and autobiographies and analysis of the same, Interview data analysis.

- Other strategies to teach gender issues are Lecture Strategy, Narration Strategy, Role-Play Strategy, Review Strategy, Group Discussion, Problem Solving and Project Strategy.

- Number of instructional aids can be used for teaching gender issues like films, advertisements, role plays, videos, literary books, text books, print media, Bulletin Boards/Information Boards, Pictures and Photographs, Charts, Cartoons. Posters, Flash Cards, Filmstrips and Transparencies, and Computer Assisted Learning Programmes

## 2.2.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress'

**Check Your Progress – 1**

Document your experiences and share the same with your colleagues.

## Check Your Progress - 2

Document your experiences and share the same with your colleagues.

## 2.2.6. Unit-end Exercises

1. Explain some of the important teaching strategies that could be used to teach Gender Issues.

2. Explain the different teaching learning aids that can be used to teach Gender Issues.

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# Block - 2 : Gender Issues and Education

## Unit - 3 : Classroom Transaction in relation to Gender Issues

## Unit Structure

## 2.3.1. Learning Objectives

After learning this Unit, the student-teachers will be able to

• Explain the Gender Issues in Classroom Transactions.

• Explain the Strategies to develop a Gender friendly classroom.

• Explain the Subject Transaction in the Classroom for Gender Equality

## 2.3.2. Introduction

Classroom transaction and interaction forms an important part of education. Every student and teacher comes face to face in a classroom set-up. The students get influenced by the teacher in more than one way inside the classroom. Hence it is very important for a teacher to choose her words and actions which have a positive effect on his/her students. We already have understood that Gender inequalities prevail in our society and influence the classroom activities as well. It becomes a huge responsibility of the teacher to take care in maintaining Gender Equality and also promote it among the students. There are many

97

aspects which are included in the classroom transaction beginning from the communication to the seating arrangement. There are ample opportunities where the student can experience equality or inequality related to their Gender. Hence the classroom transaction should be carefully planned and executed by the teacher. In this Unit let us discuss the various aspects related to classroom transaction that need to be taken care of.

## 2.3.3. Learning Points and Learning Activities

## 2.3.3.1. Classroom Transaction in relation to Gender Issues

### Exercise I

Recall your classroom encounters and list in the space below the activities which supported Gender Equality and activities which were Gender Biased.

| Gender Equal Activities | Gender Biased Activities |
|---|---|
|  |  |

## A. Gender Issues in Classroom Transaction

1. **Stereotyping :** Most often students in the classroom are stereotyped based on their Gender. The girls are considered calm and well-mannered while the boys are thought of as noisy and hyperactive. The jobs assigned to the girls and boys too reflect this stereotyping. The girls are assigned jobs like sweeping and cleaning while boys are asked to carry things.

2. **Gender Bias in Classroom Language :** The words used in any language are predominantly masculine in nature. For e.g. mankind, brotherhood etc. This also carries into the classroom knowingly or unknowingly. Gender specific terms get used even when they could be replaced by gender neutral terms.

3. **Gender bias through Body Language:** Teacher in the classroom has more of her attention towards boys because of the pre-notion that boys get distracted easily while girls remain well behaved.

4. **Gender unfriendly seating arrangement:** Boys and girls are made to sit separately which reduces their mutual interaction. This could also divide the

98

teacher attention as the teacher could be inclined towards one gender and rest might be devoid of opportunities.

5. **Stereotype in transaction of subjects:** There is a myth that boys are good in mathematics and science while the girls are good in languages. This belief leads to stereotyping in the transaction of subjects. Boys get more opportunities in mathematics and science subjects while the girls are given more opportunities in languages.

6. **Gender Stereotypes in addressing students:** Adjectives like beautiful, pretty, obedient, and submissive for girls and brave, courageous, strong, handsome for boys are used which lay a burden of Gender expectations on students.

## B. Gender Friendly Classroom Transaction

1. **Establish Gender Friendly Rules:** It is important for a teacher to establish a set of rules from the very beginning that promote equality. An effective way to do this is to create class rules with students. Ask students to suggest ideas for how to keep an equal and respectful classroom. This permits the teacher to point to the rules as something that the whole class has agreed on. It is very important to include rules of respecting the students, respecting the teachers and participating in class.

2. **Have a classroom seating plan that supports equal participation:** If you find that certain students regardless of their gender are not participating in class try to change your class seating plan. Teachers tend to interact the most with students sitting closest to them. For this reason, it is important to change the seating order to give all students to sit near the teacher.

3. **Using Group Work:** Often there will be some students, male or female who are not comfortable speaking in front of the class. But they may feel more comfortable speaking in small groups. In order to give all students an opportunity to take part in class, try doing some activities in small groups of three to four students.

4. **Addressing Students Equally:** One of the main opportunities students have to participate in class is when they are answering teacher's questions. Teachers need to call on or talk to both female and male students in a balanced way. Research shows that both male and female teachers often call on male students to speak in class more often than female students.

5. **Provide enough wait time to answer questions:** Some students male or female may need time to think about the answer to a question when called on by a teacher. When calling on students who seem to wait longer to answer a question

make sure to give students at least five seconds. Research shows that giving students more time to answer will increase the number of students who participate.

6. **Use Gender Neutral Language:** Sometimes in English people use male pronouns when referring to a group. But, this can make female students feel left out. Teachers should use gender neutral pronouns whenever possible. One example is, instead of saying "guys" when referring to a class or group say 'everybody' or 'everyone'.

7. **Body Language:** Teachers may not realize that their body language with female students might be different from what it is with male students. Whenever male or female students are talking, use respectful, listening body language. Face the listener, do not walk away, and do not interrupt students. Also move to different areas of the classroom while speaking. This is important because students sitting farther from the teacher tend to participate less.

8. **Discipline:** Be aware when male students insult female students, or female students insult male students. If the insults appear to be gender-based, students may be discouraged from participating in class in the future. Be quick to intervene and discipline the students making insults. This shows students of either gender that they will be supported. However it is important that both male and female students are given the same disciplinary reaction for the same actions.

## Check Your Progress – 1

1. You will find a tool measuring the ability of the teacher to promote gender equality in classroom. Observe at least two classes of a teacher using this tool.

| Sl no | Behaviours of Teacher | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Girls and boys are assigned different tasks | | |
| 2 | Gives more attention to boys/ or girls | | |
| 3 | Boys and girls are made to sit separately | | |
| 4 | Some myths are propogated(because boys they are talkative, because girls they are silent) | | |
| 5 | Asks students to suggest ideas/opinions | | |
| 6 | Class rules are formed by students | | |
| 7 | Rules promote respect for all students and teachers | | |
| 8 | Both boys and girls get involved together in group work | | |
| 9 | Teacher uses gender neutral language | | |
| 10 | Teacher appreciates both boys and girls | | |
| 11 | Teacher focuses on both boys and girls | | |

For items 1 to 4, i**f there is** 'd' mark in the first column, assign '0', if there is 'd' mark in the second column assign '1' mark.

For items 5 to 11, i**f there is** 'd' mark in the first column, assign '1', if there is 'd' mark in the second column assign '0' mark.

Total marks for the tool is 11.

2.     Identify the status of the teacher as far as promoting gender friendly classroom. Give her/him constructive feedback to improve the classroom based on your observation.

## 2.3.3.2 Subject Transaction in the Classroom for Gender Equality

**Science**

Science is based on hands – on – and inquiry-based approach. It is hoped that after going through the content of Science at the secondary stage, children's spirit of inquiry would be ignited. They would become curious to know the natural phenomena existing around them and continue their journey of exploration, invention and application.

**Gender Equality in the transaction of science content**

- Give example of women scientist wherever relevant in themes where women have contributed

-  In all experiment involve boys and girls

- In all project work engage boys and girls

- Gender inclusive activities can be highlighted in the discussion on themes such as – The Fundamental Unit of Life, Natural Resources, Improvement in Food Resources, Life Processes, Heredity and Evolution and Our Environment etc.

-  In discussion on Food Resources you may mention the role of both men and women in production of different types of crops.

-  Themes related to Animal Husbandry may include the role of women in feeding, breeding and in disease control.

- Themes related to chemical reactions and equation may include home based example such as preparation of pickles, jams etc.

**Mathematics**

Mathematics at the secondary stage should give learners the opportunity for exploring mathematical concepts through reasoning and logical thinking. Attempt should be made to link children with their lived realities in the teaching and learning of mathematics.

**Gender Equality in the transaction of Mathematics content**

- Mention names of Women mathematicians

- Involve Boys and Girls in conduction of different activities and projects.

- In themes related to Statistics you may present gender disaggregated data on Enrolment, Dropout, and Declining Sex Ratio of India and States

**Social Studies**

Social science forms an integral component of general education up to the secondary stage. It helps adolescent learners to understand contemporary society from the perspective of continuity and change. It enables them to get an in-depth understanding of their immediate environment and the world in which they live. It includes subjects like History, Geography, Political Science and Economics. This domain of knowledge provides information on diversity, difference, issues that impact the lives of all sections of society that encompass gender, class, caste, religion and location. The subject also includes strategies to address conflicting issues of developing societies of the world including India.

**Gender Equality in the transaction of Social Studies content**

- Discuss the role of women in Indian freedom movement.

- Discuss to what extent the contribution of women is portrayed in text books.

- Write a brief biography on the lives of revolutionary women in our country like SalumaradaTimmkka, Indira Gandhi etc

- Encourage children to think of social issues from holistic point of view.

- Organize a discussion on activities done by men and women in agricultural, industrial, and service sectors of our economy.

- Present data related to demographic composition of Indian population, literacy rate, sex ratio, enrolment, and dropout rates and discuss about each of these issues.

- Project work can be given on analyzing government of India's budget and its sectoral allocation for the last five years from gender perspective.

- Discuss about the contribution of men and women for art, architecture and fine arts and make them understand that the society has grown with the contribution of both ment and women.

- Discuss the role of men and women in Indian families

- Make students collect data about women achievers in recent years and also the siutatios which contributed for their achievement.

- Encourage students to interview men and women achievers and findout if there are any differences in the path of their development

- Biographies of women environmentalists can be prepared.

- Encourage students to prepare data sheets on the involvement of men and women in Indian politics.

- Have quiz and debates on the hurdles of gender equality in Indian context.

## Gender Equality in the Transaction of Language Classes

Language is not only a means of communication but is a medium through which most of our knowledge of disciplines is acquired. Language structures reality and is a marker of identity.

Human society depends on language as a means of communication, formation of thought and accumulation and transmission of expressions. The goals of a language curriculum are two fold: attainment of a basic proficiency, and the development of language as an instrument for basic interpersonal communication and later for abstract thought and knowledge acquisition. Language learning is essentially acquiring skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in an integrated manner for learners from diverse context.

## Gender Equality Activities in the Context of  Language Teaching

- You can prepare a project on eminent women in the field of language and literature.

- Thoughts of eminent Indian thinkers on women can be collected and translated in different languages.

- Poems of great poets of India on gender equality can be compiled and translated.

- In language classes you should attempt to use gender inclusive words such as them, us, you, instead of him / her.

- You may ask children to write essay on gender equality.

## Check Your Progress 2

1. Prepare a tool to measure the ability of the teacher in developing gender equality in classrooms according to different subjects. Evaluate any two classes of a teacher and document your deductions.

## 2.3.4. Let us summarize

- Gender Issues in Classroom Transaction are

  1. Stereotyping

  2. Gender Bias in Classroom Language

  3. Gender bias through Body Language

  4. Gender unfriendly seating arrangement

  5. Stereotype in transaction of subjects

  6. Gender Stereotypes in addressing students

- Gender Friendly Classroom Transaction includes

  1. Establish Gender Friendly Rules

  2. Have a classroom seating plan that supports equal participation

  3. Using Group Work

  4. Addressing Students Equally

  5. Provide enough wait time to answer questions

  6. Use Gender Neutral Language

  7. Body Language

  8. Discipline

- Subject Transaction in the Classroom for Gender Equality: The subjects taught in the classroom must cater to Gender Equality. One must choose activities which are support gender equality along with subject mastery.

## 2.3.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress'

**Check Your Progress -1**

Refer section 2.3.3.1 of Self Instruction material

**Check Your Progress 2**

Refer section 2.3.3.2 of Self Instruction material

## 2.3.6. Unit-end Exercises

1. Explain the Gender issues in Classroom Transaction

2. Explain the measures to be taken in creating a Gender Equal Classroom .

3. How will you transact different subjects to ensure Gender Equality?

## 2.3.7. References

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# Block - 2 : Gender Issues and Education

## Unit - 4 : Teacher as an Agent of Change in the Context of Gender and Society

## Unit Structure

## 2.4.1. Learning Objectives

After completing this Unit, the student teachers will be able to

• Explain the importance of Teachers being the Agents of Change;

• Explain the strategies of bringing change among students related to gender;

• Identify the challenges in bringing required changes related to gender; and

• Apply the strategies to develop gender free environment in their schools.

## 2.4.2. Introduction

"We must not forget that one sex is conditioned for power and the other for powerlessness; that one sex derives advantage from the arrangement and the other, disadvantage" (1983: 98) Dale Spender.

"Gender relations are historical, they can be remade in new patterns and the new patterns will advantage and disadvantage particular groups" (Connell, 1987: 138).

It is typical for a teacher to say, "Santhosh, are you crying! Are you aware that you are a boy! Wear a skirt and come to school from tomorrow". This type of expressions leave an impression on the children that can be extremely damaging. Do we say "what if he cries, he is also a human being!" Gender stereotypes are perpetuated in every social institution and schools are no exceptions. I think that it is important for teachers to consciously treat their boy and girl students alike and not make remarks or use gender stereotypical illustrations.

This illustration makes us understand that schools are still not free from gender stereotypes. There are number of situations where gender discrimination is made very obvious and stereotypes are passed on to the next generation. Some times this discrimination is not deliberate, but still children consciously or unconsciously perceive this bias. Whether it is deliberate or unconscious, it is going to make a big damage not only in the lives of the people, but also in the functions of society. Therefore, we need to understand that the teachers need to be agents of change in this situation and direct the society towards progress. Hence, in this Unit, we are going to learn the status of schools, in relation to gender issues and understand why and how teachers need to be agents of change to form gender neutral society.

## 2.4.3. Learning Points and Learning Activities

## 2.4.3.1. Need and Importance of teachers being the agents of change

Though, in our system of education, we keep propagating that gender-free education should be overcome, that has not been realised so far. This can be said definitely because our system of education is not 'gender-free'. "Gender-free" education means, no "attention is paid to decide who should get education, who should be admitted to schools, allowed to study certain subjects, and have access to particular educational activities". In our system we talk about all these issues. Education, supposed to be gender free is still gender blind, as it still leads to perpetuate gender stereotypes within the education system. This needs to be taken care of on priority basis and only then we can witness a healthy society.

Why is it important that teachers need to play a crucial role in relation to gender issues? They are the actors who shape the success or failure of their students. Their interpretation of the curriculum, interaction with learners, and way they assign duties and homework, are important factors in developing proper perceptions and attitudes among students. Developing apt perceptions in relation to gender aspects are of utmost importance,

because, our society is already polluted with gender bias. A teacher can prepare students, either to promote or to destroy gender equal society. Among all others who influence children in the society, teachers are the most influential since students accept them to be the model to be followed. Therefore, they are in the top position to act as agents of change.

Teachers are influential in every level of education from the practice in the classroom to the top levels of administration. Although the government in power makes the high-level decisions, the teachers still have the power to make a difference in the way they apply those decisions. For a social transformation teachers are the starting point and key agents of change.

Education acts as one of the basic tools to achieve mobility in a class society. Equality can only be achieved through constant mobilization between classes. That is, equality is possible only when the adult life of the students is determined by their own success, abilities and efforts rather than the external conditions such as class, gender, and race. The teachers can develop and demonstrate this understanding.

Children should be made to understand that women deserve to be educated not because of the sake of following generations or the good of the nations they belong to. They deserve to be educated merely because they are human and education is a basic human right and need, which is also strategically important as it determines chances of access to the practice of other rights.

Classroom teachers have an ideal opportunity to encourage gender equality and respectful relationships in classroom through very simple but effective practices. Research tells us that in order to reduce gender-based violence we need to teach these skills to children from the earliest of years. Our differences make us unique but it is our 'sameness' that makes us human. Teachers have the opportunity to promote the message that "no matter what gender we are, we all have hopes and dreams, and we all need to treat each other with respect and dignity". No gender is 'better' than the other or more 'powerful'. Every person has the right to meet their full potential. By setting up a more 'gender-neutral' classroom teachers are at the forefront of breaking down social norms that promote gender inequality and gender-based violence.

Institutionalization of patriarchy in the various agencies of socialization such as family, school, media, religious, legal, and political institutions allow individuals to become transmitters of gender biases. The school is one place where such institutionalization takes place in a very subtle way. Only teachers can confront patriarchy by consciously helping

children to become good citizens of the world. The first step is to make an equal world in the classroom.

The existing situation in schools related to gender issues are not only unsatisfactory, but also damage the personality of students as a whole. Many of the personnel involved in the system of education, still are not aware that they are reproducing gender bias. Since teachers themselves are not aware of their own gender biased beliefs and attitudes, it is difficult to expect the system they are promoting to be gender free.

Most teachers claim to believe in gender equality but the classroom observations indicate that their attitudes are not in line with this claim. Their gender biased or gender-blind attitudes in the classroom are a result of their gender perceptions. In other words, they do not follow a pre-planned sexist agenda but act in line with their own beliefs. They are blind to the gender climate at school, which works to the disadvantage of girls.

Much before in 1982, some experts in the field of school education, describe the school environment from gender perspective. They have coined the term 'chilly climate' and documented the various subtle ways males and females are taken care at school. Yet, after so many decades, their findings are still worth bearing in mind to understand the condition of girls at school today. The characteristics of the chilly climate are listed as follows.

- Girls and women get typically less attention, less eye contact and less encouragement.

- Females are more likely to be praised for their attractiveness or neatness, whereas males are more likely to be praised for their work and creativity.

- When males speak, teachers often engage in a dialogue with them, whereas girls and women are more likely to receive the ubiquitous "uh-huh".

- Female students may be interrupted more often and be called on less often in many classes.

- Teachers are more likely to call on males, even when females raise their hands.

- Men and boys are more likely to be called by their name than females.

- Teachers are more likely to ask males the harder, higher order "thinking" questions, such as "Why do we like democracy?" By contrast, females are more likely to be asked factual, lower-order questions, such as "What is democracy?"

- It is possible to cite countless studies conducted in many different countries since those times that have reached the same results. Unfortunately, these findings have become common sense knowledge among the people who have the slightest interest in the field.

Teachers can certainly change themselves as well as others by being aware of this situation and consciously work against it. The gender bias is generally perpetuated in an unconscious and unintentional manner. Therefore, despite the universal nature of bias, because it is usually not intentionally done, attitudes and behaviours can be changed".

History has demonstrated that once individuals gain a critical awareness, they can challenge the hegemony. Paradoxically, institutions of education are the places where pupils are supposed to internalize the values of democracy through socializing into relationships based on equality. As long as half of the group is labelled as secondary, the aim of democracy will never be achieved.

## Check Your Progress -1

Do you think teachers have better chances than others, to develop gender equality issues in schools. Recall your experiences and document them.

## 2.4.3.2. Ways and Strategies for teachers to be agents of change in relation to gender issues:

When referring to primary and secondary schooling, empowerment should enable girls (children and adolescents) to develop the knowledge and skills to nullify and counter sexual stereotypes and conceptions of masculinity and femininity that limit the social potential of women. This demands some preparation on the part of teachers.

**Ensure that you have a positive attitude towards gender free society:** To change attitudes implies changing perceptions, understanding, expectations, beliefs and language, all of which are deeply rooted in one's experience, inherited socio-cultural value system(s), and prevalent modes of thinking.

**Check your awareness of gender issues:** The first step of creating a gender equitable atmosphere is raising the gender awareness of the teachers. Studies show that once they are aware of their own attitudes, they hold better chances to modify them and improve the gender climate of the school. The place to address all the teachers is their education period. Thus, the starting point for a gender equitable education needs to be changing gender perceptions of the prospective teachers.

**Understand that gender is a social construct:** The first thing that teachers need to consciously understand is that sex is a biological fact and gender is a social construct. Boys and girls do not have any natural psychological or social differences, but it is society that makes them learn gender roles. Therefore, as teachers we must not ask boys to solve the sums because they are "naturally" good at math or the girls to help with the cleaning up of the classroom as they are expected to be more inclined to do housework.

Apart from these preparations the teacher has to deliberately focus on some issues and follow some strategies. They are as follows:

**Transform Curriculum:** The teacher who decide to transmit the values of gender and class equality, need to address both the curriculum and the hidden curriculum. The curriculum refers to the actual branches of study covered in the classroom and it has written and clear objectives and assessment techniques. The hidden curriculum, on the other hand, is not written down and, as the name suggests, it is not explicit. Curriculum is comprised of knowledge that a society wants to transfer to its following generations. The selection of this knowledge is political. Curriculum should no longer be viewed as a sacred text and teachers should be able to make some adaptations on it in such a way that it does not perpetuate gender bias.

**Transform the Hidden Curriculum:** According to specialists, there are three characteristics of schools; that children are there for a long time, that the settings are uniform and that it is compulsory. The students are expected to learn and obey some basic rules within the first years. So they must develop some strategies to deal with these rules. At school students learn patience and "to accept the plans and policies of higher authorities, even when their rationale is unexplained and their meaning unclear". In other words, there are unwritten rules in school that the students are expected to obey. The messages that can be inferred from the way the school is run and the ways the teacher exercises power in the classroom form the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum is mentioned as one of the barriers to gender equity, because most of the time there are different and discriminatory set of rules for girls and boys. This needs to be taken care of by teachers.

Assigning tasks in line with household division of labour to boys and girls or establishing different dressing codes or creating groups based on sex and thus segregating boys and girls all give messages to students. Physical education classes, in which the sexes are separated can set an example to such kind of practice. Most of the time these are also the expectations from schools of different genders. The hidden curriculum is seen as "shaped by the invisible hand of the social system".

The students can also infer messages by simply looking at the division of labour among teachers at school. If the members of the same sex fill all the administrative positions, this will lead to an association of power and authority to that sex in students' minds. Other than their sex, the ideology of the teachers and administrators are also important. The ideology of the teachers and principal are translated into an atmosphere in which the students are expected to behave in certain ways. This way the students are exposed to a certain gender ideology for years.

**Focus on text books:** One important area of concern is sex role stereotyping in course-books. Research reveals that the gender roles are set in text books. This might be because it is easy to receive attention by using stereotypes. Although it is not written directly that men are breadwinners while the women are prone to secondary jobs (like teaching) or homemaking, gender stereotypes are transmitted. The household division of labour is clearly distributed between the sexes. Males initiate nearly all mixed dialogues and family photographs are presented with the name of the man in the center. Teachers need to be careful about these and channelise thinking of students to develop proper attitudes in relation to gender.

**Focus on use of language:** Teachers should see that sexist use of language is avoided. Feminists have been working to reveal the sexist uses of language and to enhance gender-neutral language since 1970s. In 1980 Dale Spencer argued in "Man Made Language" that the subordination of women was structured in he/man language. Research shows that gender-neutral language is not taught in the classrooms. It is essential that the students are taught a language which does not discriminate against individuals or groups based on sex, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability.

**Avoid General misleading vocabulary:** Experts through research in different age groups have revealed the use of man as generic brings to mind adult males only, not females or males and females together. This attitude suggests that all people are male unless it is told otherwise and present males as the only subjects in life. Besides, it leads to confusion in some contexts, as the words do not make it clear whether, they refer to humanity or males only. Thus, the use of words like human or people are encouraged.

**Be aware of the limitations of using some vocabulary:** You might have noticed the use of titles 'Miss and Mrs' only for women. This reveals the marital status of women and describe them through their relations to men. The teachers need to be aware of this.

**Plan Co-curricular Activities:** The points that are left blank by curriculum can be filled by supplying it with co-curricular activities to address sexism or gender typing. These

activities can empower girls. Both boys and girls need encouragement equally in all sports and co-curricular activities. Girls must not be told that they should not swim or exercise when they have their periods. They should not be asked to eat less than the boys or go home early because the roads are unsafe. Instead, they should be taught how to take care of themselves and develop confidence.

**Select gender free instructional materials:** From the time of fairy tales, it is always the handsome and brave prince coming to the rescue of the pitiful princess from the demons or witches. To counter such examples, teachers need to pick stories and fables that do not perpetuate hierarchies that will eventually get transmitted from one generation to another.

**Develop gender neutral attitude:** Gender socialization is the process of learning where little children are told to behave and articulate gender specific norms. For example, girls are encouraged to be soft spoken and home bound playing with dolls and kitchen toys while boys are encouraged to be aggressive by playing outside with cars and guns. Typically, schools continue to reinforce such gender stereotypes by offering home science to girls and sports to boys. There are ways in which teachers can consciously develop gender neutral teaching material and encourage girls and boys to become high achievers.

**Use neutral language:** The first step for teachers is to develop gender neutral language. I know teachers with the best of intentions continuing to use "he" and "him" to describe an individual. It is terrible that in a school full of female teachers, one can hardly hear them use her or she when they are teaching. Teachers must consciously use he or she, her or him, and alternate between male and female examples. Gender stereotypes can be perpetuated and strengthened both by men and women. One cannot think that as women we are all practicing gender equality. All learning material has to be scrutinized in a way that supports gender neutral language.

Be conscious in some situations, especially when you use language to give instructions. When referring to children, e.g. instead of saying, 'Choose a boy to go with you'; say, 'Choose a friend to go with you'. Similarly, avoid organizing children according to gender, e.g. 'Boys line up here and girls here.' This only reinforces gender segregation.

**Use materials promoting gender equality**

It is also important to use the new books that have been conceptualized by the NCERT and other publishers using positive examples for men and women. Both textbook and audio-visual material must be checked for gender to see that stereotypes of male doctors and female nurses are not reproduced. We do not want children to ask whether women can

indeed drive buses; we have to create a normal atmosphere that does not build on those stereotypes that we have ourselves grown up with.

**Have gender equal practices:** Teachers should not call only the mother of the child for discussions on the children. They must make efforts to involve both fathers and mothers and not request to speak to the mother alone.

**Plan engendered patterns of classroom organisation and interaction:** In the classroom an effort must be made to integrate boys and girls and not separate them in the seating arrangements. The boys and girls should be allowed to play together on the play field.

**Involve both in learning process equally:** Studies in classroom behaviour have shown that boys are far more active in the classroom than girls and they usually have no hesitation in initiating a discussion. Girls on the other hand, are shyer and more hesitant. Teachers may have to call on the girls consciously to participate and take leadership roles in classroom discussions. In the organization of group discussions, there must be a mix of the genders rather than segregating them.

**Impart sex education at proper time:** As the children grow into the pubescent age, teachers must make a conscious effort to impart sex education to both boys and girls. Sexual harassment of girls begins extremely early and any attempt to blame the girls for being harassed must be curtailed. Girls should have the courage to complain and teachers must have the sense to intervene early enough and create an atmosphere which is sensitive to the needs of both growing boys and girls. While doing anatomy and biology, it is always useful to treat the human body clinically and remove any embarrassment for either sex by using relevant and humorous illustrations.

**Present yourself as a real role model:** The most influential role models are teachers and it is imperative for teachers to give examples of role models that are not gender stereotypes. For example, a girl who expresses an interest in becoming a pilot must be encouraged with stories of those who have been successful. Similarly, if a boy shows inclination toward music or art he should not be labelled a sissy either by his teachers or peers. Peer pressure can be both good and bad and it is the teachers who can try to nurture that influence in a positive direction.

**Plan gender free Career Counselling:** Career counselling begins in schools, and teachers often do not realize that the confidence they install in children shapes future leaders. Girls are often taught to excel alongside boys but ultimately, they are told that family must take precedence over career. Girls are always told that they must become good wives and mothers but boys are almost never told to be good husbands and fathers. All children must be told to

be good partners and parents in the future. It is the responsibility of teachers to show how achieving success in one's career is as important as taking care of the family for both boys and girls.

**Be careful not to reverse stereotypes:** It is crucial to realize that we are not trying to merely reverse stereotypes and further perpetuate patriarchy in another form. Boys are completely forced to be strong and sometimes they are quite happy to be playing and sitting inside the house. Therefore, there is a continuum of masculinity and femininity and one cannot expect to change traditional gender stereotypes overnight. However, in the classroom a teacher needs to be there for both boys and girls to evolve as good thinking and feeling individuals.

**Avoid stereotyping children:** sometimes we, teachers use some weird expressions.  e.g. boys are noisy and loud; girls are calm and sweet; boys show less emotion and girls cry more readily. Note that these often-subconscious assumptions will affect your behaviour and expectations towards the children.

**Self-regulate your own interaction with the children.** We tend to comfort girls more and send boys on their way earlier. Encourage all children to share feelings and emotions equally.

**Change the vocabulary to suit the need:** Provide a wide range of diverse stories about the genders in non-stereotyped roles. If such books are limited, change 'he' to 'she' in some books so the girls have a leadership role.When reading books where typically the tiger or bear is a 'him' and the butterfly or bird is a 'she', change the gender around. Alternatively, use the gender-neutral term.

**Avoid assigning tasks in traditional style:** Try not to assign classroom task**s** that traditionally relate to a specific gender, e.g. boys moving desks or taking out the bins, while girls are asked to tidy up the dress-up corner.

**Change the stereotypes that enter school**: Some children will come to school with preconceived ideas about gender. If a child does say, for example, 'Sheela can't play because it's a boy's game.' Use that as a 'teachable moment' and unpack how the comment made Sheela feel, and why you don't have any gender-specific tasks in the classroom.

**Try to change stereotypes perceptions :**Ask children to draw their idea of a police officer, cricketer  and nurse. Then invite a female police officer, female cricket player and a male nurse into the classroom. Invite them to talk about their jobs and unpack the children's drawings and expectations about the visitors. Always use non-gender specific terms when referring to occupations, e.g. chairperson, flight attendant.

**Device a gender-equality policy:** Encourage the school staff to devise a gender-equality policy that promotes gender-neutral language and encourages non-traditional gender roles and activities.

**Be reflective and objective**: while doing the above tasks you may feel doubtful and want to know whether you are on the right path. Record a video of your practices to take a closer look and reflect upon.

**Challenges**

Working to evolve a gender free school environment is not an easy task. It involves number of challenges. Following are some of the challenges a teacher needs to face in the process of achieving a gender free environment.

- One obstacle can be the unwillingness of colleagues to adopt such a standing.

- The anti-sexist initiatives might not be appealing to teachers;

- Characteristics of the teachers might be a barrier;

- Teachers might not accept them because of their ideologies about gender or education like child centered learning, environmental determinism, neutrality;

- The conditions of teachers, such as micro-politics at the school, classrooms, colleagues and their expanding role, might not be encouraging a change in their attitudes

- Another obstacle on the way to social transformation for gender equality is the hegemonic nature of patriarchy. The patriarchal hegemonic ideology continually requires the consent of women. The women themselves might have adopted patriarchal ideology and might be reproducing it. Therefore, a woman teacher does not mean that the class is gender equal or a woman principal does not mean that the school climate is not sexist any more. On the other hand, profeminist male teachers or female teachers who do not call themselves feminist might as well work for gender equality at school.

- Efforts of the teachers to create an equal environment in the class arouse resistance of the male students since they are used to being privileged, having the advantage. They resist talking about women's experiences. Girls on the other hand are used to being marginalized and even engage in the conversation about male experiences. Such instances prove that feminist teachers need to be

backed up by the prevailing culture and the administration at schools. Otherwise, their ideas may easily be marginalized. The resistance by boys needs to be addressed by policies that target them.

- There are specific gender rules at schools, which are subject to change over time or in case of intervention. Furthermore, masculine and feminine roles are multiple and according to the gender climate some forms become hegemonic or emphasized. Achieving a non-sexist education means taking the gender climate at that school into consideration.

## Check Your Progress -2

Have you come across any problems while dealing with gender equality issues in schools? Reflect on them and identify how you dealt with those problems. Based on these experiences prepare a note on 'challenges while dealing with gender issues in schools.

## 2.4.4. Let us Summarise

- Though, in our system of education, we keep propagating that gender-free education should be overcome, that has not been realised so far. Education, supposed to be gender free is still gender blind.

- Teachers need to play a crucial role in relation to gender issues because they are influential, have an ideal opportunity to encourage gender equality.

- The existing situation in schools related to gender issues are not only not satisfactory, but also damaging the personality of students as a whole. Many of the personnel involved in the system of education, still are not aware that they are reproducing gender bias. Most teachers claim to believe in gender equality but the classroom observations indicate that their attitudes are not in line with this claim.

- History has demonstrated that once individuals gain a critical awareness, they can challenge the hegemony. So, it is possible to bring the desirable change.

- Experts have suggested number of ways and strategies through which teachers can act as agents of change in relation to gender issues. Developing a positive attitude towards the need of change in the present perception of gender, having a deep understanding of gender situation, transforming the curriculum as well as hidden curriculum, using neutral language, having gender free text books etc are some of the aspects teachers need to focus upon to be real agents of change.

## 2.4.5. Answers to 'Check Your Progress -1 and 2'

**Check Your Progress -1**

Share those experiences with your colleagues and listen to their reactions. Prepare a note on your experiences at the time of sharing.

**Check Your Progress -2**

Share your writing with teachers and listen to their parallel experiences.

## 2.4.6. Unit end Exercises

1. Explain the importance of teacher being an agent of change.

2. Explain the ways and strategies a teacher needs to follow as an agent of change.

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# Block - 2 : Gender Issues and Education

## Unit - 5 : Theories and Identity of Gender & Education (Indian context) : Socialisation Theory and Structural Theory

### Unit Structure

### 2.5.1. Learning Objectives

After completing this Unit, the student-teachers will be able to

- Explain the tenets of the Socialisation Theory of Gender Identity;

- Explain the tenets of the Structural Theory of Gender Identity;

- Identify the educational implications of the Socialisation Theory and the Structural Theory; and

- Analyse the tenets and implications of Socialisation and Structural Theories.

## 2.5.2. Introduction

You have already understood the concept of gender identity in the previous units. As teachers we need to know more about this concept to guide our students. It is not enough if we are just aware of what it means, but should be thorough about the 'why' and 'how' of this concept. A number of experts have contemplated on this phenomenon and put forward many theories related to gender identity. You may be asked 'What are the theories?' A theory is a statement of how and why the processes work or the world operates. It is important for social sciences like education to follow theoretical perspectives as a framework for understanding phenomena such as the ways people identify themselves. These theories provide proper grounds to understand the phenomenon of gender identity and help us draw appropriate conclusions. Hence, in the present Unit, we are going to elaborate on a few theories on gender identity and discuss their educational implications.

Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender. Gender identity can correlate with assigned sex at birth or can differ from it. All societies have a set of gender categories that serve as the basis of the formation of a person's social identity in relation to the other members of the society.

In most societies, there is a basic division between gender attributes assigned to males and females. This is known as gender binary, which most people follow. This includes expectations of masculinity and femininity in all aspects of sex and gender like biological sex, gender identity, and gender expression. Some people do not identify with some, or all, of the aspects of the gender assigned to their biological sex. Some of these people are transgender, non-binary or genderqueer. Some societies have third gender categories.

A number of theories have been put forward explaining how, when, and why to the formation of gender identity. Studying this is challenging because children cannot express these aspects, and therefore, researchers have to conjecture or hypothesise. Some researchers suggest that children might have awareness of, and attach some significance to gender, as early as 18 months to two years. Lawrence Kohlberg, a famous psychologist, argues that gender identity does not form until age three. It is widely agreed that core gender identity is firmly formed by age three. At this age, children can make steady statements about their gender. They select play activities and use toys considered appropriate for their gender. This may be dolls and painting for girls and mechanical gadgets, and bat and ball for boys. However, they are not clear about the implications of gender at this time. It is difficult to change this gender identity after age three and any attempts towards this may lead to a

conflict between what the child perceives and how people perceive the child. This is called gender dysphoria.

Some experts explain this process of development as three stages. First, as toddlers and preschoolers children learn about defined characteristics, which are socialised aspects of gender. Second, around the ages of 5–7 years, identity is consolidated and becomes rigid; at the third stage, after this "peak of rigidity", fluidity returns and socially defined gender roles relax somewhat. There are other experts who perceive the development of gender identity in four phases like understanding the concept of gender, learning gender role standards and stereotypes, identifying with parents, and forming gender preference.

Though the process of the formation of gender identity is not completely understood yet, people attribute this phenomenon for both biological and environmental factors. Most of the theories on gender identity fall into the second aspect, emphasising that it is the result of environmental aspects.

Social factors which may influence gender identity include ideas regarding gender roles conveyed by family, authority figures, mass media, and other influential people in a child's life. When children are raised by individuals who adhere to strict gender roles, they are more likely to behave similarly, matching their gender identity with the corresponding stereotypical gender patterns. Language also plays a role. Children, while learning a language, learn to separate masculine and feminine characteristics and subconsciously adjust their own behaviour to these predetermined roles.

We know that gender is socially learned, but we need to know specifically just what that process looks like. Socialisation occurs through our interactions, but that is not as simple as it may seem. Below we will describe a few theories of gender development.

## 2.5.3. Learning Points and Activities

## 2.5.3.1. Socialisation Theories of Gender Identity

People at a particular point of time believed that because girls tend to perform poorly in "masculine" subjects such as math and science, they are incapable of meeting high intellectual standards. This was discredited by a number of feminist thinkers and they strongly concluded that this is only because of unfair treatment and missocialisation of girls because of which they could not do well in a few subjects. This is the starting point of the socialisation theory. Socialisation theorists argue that girls can meet the same academic standards as boys, provided they face no negative intervention from different socialising agents. The major ideas of socialisation theorists are as follows:

- Gendered behaviours are products of socialisation.

- Children learn to be male or female by observing and imitating parents and other adults.

- Children learn their identity by internalising societal gender norms.

- Conformity to gender stereotypes and role expectations develops through gender-based chores in families.

- Childhood gendered behaviours follow through life course.

- Childhood gendered behaviours are the result of relatively stable social and cultural forces.

- By providing all children with gender-neutral education and eliminating other obstacles to female success, schools would not only ensure fairness, but would increase the pool of skilled workers, thereby benefiting society as a whole.

- Apart from a few compensatory gestures (such as inviting female role models to visit the classroom or staging occasional math and science workshops for girls), the pedagogical interventions called for by socialisation theory are fairly straightforward: if girls are to flourish, teachers, parents, and administrators need to treat girls in the same ways that they treat boys. Of course, the difficulty lies in the implementation.

- Not only do teachers have to want to treat boys and girls equally, but they have to overcome their own socialised perceptions of how they treat girls and boys.

The problem is not easy to solve. Despite a teacher succeeding in being gender neutral, she is dependent on a larger support system for her efforts to have any positive effect. The textbooks and other media also need to treat women and girls in interesting and significant ways. Otherwise, a teacher's efforts to provide a representative and even-handed curriculum will appear biased and "subjective". Unless parents and other teachers support feminist teachers' initiatives to treat boys and girls equally, the corrective efforts of the gender-neutral teacher may be undermined by lack of correspondence between the feminist classroom and the world that the students see around them. In spite of the many obstacles to progress, socialisation theorists are confident that incremental improvements will eventually lead to a more equitable society. Although the actual results of efforts at equal treatment often seem disappointing, socialisation of feminists point out that we have centuries' worth of sexist socialisation to overcome. Sustained and vigilant efforts to give girls the same education as boys will "transform our educational institutions into the most powerful levers for equity, where girls are valued as much as boys, and tomorrow's women

are prepared to be full partners in all activities". Socialisation theorists understand girls' differences from boys as a problem-something to be eliminated.

**Social Learning Theory**

Social learning theory is one of the theories classified under socialisation theories. It is most closely associated with the work of psychologist Albert Bandura. It is an outgrowth of the behaviourist tradition, which defines learning in terms of stimulus and response. Social learning theory is based on outward motivational factors that argue that if children receive positive reinforcement, they are motivated to continue a particular behaviour. If they receive punishment or other indicators of disapproval, they are more motivated to stop that behaviour. In terms of gender development, children receive praise if they engage in culturally appropriate gender displays, and punishment if they do not. When aggressiveness in boys is met with acceptance, or a "boys will be boys" attitude, but a girl's aggressiveness earns them little attention, the two children learn different meanings for aggressiveness as it relates to their gender development. Thus, boys may continue being aggressive, while girls may drop it from their repertoire.

According to this perspective, children are reinforced, both positively and negatively, for gender appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. This model supposes that parents and others map out gender roles for the child, who is differentially reinforced for sex-typed behaviours. As the boy or girl is repeatedly rewarded for sex-typed behaviours, it becomes rewarding to think of oneself as a boy or a girl. Sex-typing (the conformity to gender identity adoption of a socially prescribed gender-role) precedes and forms the basis for the development of gender identity. A young boy doing some art work, for example, might be ignored by his father; the lack of attention serves as a negative reinforcement, so that the boy eventually stops his art work altogether. Or, parents might encourage a girl child to play with dolls and this motivation serves as a positive reinforcement, thereby increasing the likelihood the girl will develop a liking for playing with dolls. In this way, the theory suggests, boys and girls learn those behaviours that are expected of them. Boys learn that doing art work is 'inappropriate'; girls learn that playing with doll is consistent with being a girl. Social learning theory also suggests that children learn by observing and imitating the behaviour of same-sex adults. A young girl learns what it means to be female by observing her mother, whereas a boy learns what it means to be male by observing his father. First proposed in the 1950s and 1960s, social learning theory has not withstood the test of time. Research has shown, that children, and especially boys, display gender appropriate behaviours even in the absence of reinforcement. Finally, evidence is mixed with regard to the extent to which parents reinforce male and female children differently. Critics argue, that children are more actively engaged in their socialisation than the theory acknowledges.

**Psychodynamic Theory**

Psychodynamic theory has its roots in the work of the Viennese psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud. This theory sees the role of the family, the mother in particular, as crucial in shaping one's gender identity. Boys and girls shape their identity in relation to that of their mother. Since girls are like their mothers biologically, they see themselves as connected to her. Meanwhile boys are biologically different or separate from their mother. They construct their gender identity in contrast to their mother. When asked about his gender identity development, one of the male students in a class explained, "I remember learning that I was a boy while showering with my mom one day. I noticed that I had something that she didn't". This student's experience exemplifies the use of psychodynamic theory in understanding gender development.

**Symbolic Interactionism**

Symbolic interactionism (George Herbert Mead) is based specifically on communication. Although not developed specifically for use in understanding gender development, it has particular applicability here. Since gender is learnt through communication in cultural contexts, communication is vital for the transformation of such messages. When young girls are told to "sit up straight like a lady" or boys are told "gentlemen open doors for others", girls and boys learn how to be gendered (as masculine and feminine) through the words (symbols) told to them by others (interaction).

**Check Your Progress 1**

Identify the statements that are correct according to the socialisation theory using '✓' mark.

1.   All gendered behaviours are not products of socialisation.

2.   Children learn to be male or female by observing and imitating parents and other adults.

3.   Children learn their identity by imitating peers.

4.   Conformity to gender stereotypes and role expectations develops through gender-based chores in families.

5.   Childhood gendered behaviours are seen at different stages of life.

6.   Childhood gendered behaviours are the result of relatively stable social and cultural forces.

7.  By providing all children with gender-neutral education and eliminating other obstacles to female success, schools would achieve quality in education.

## 2.5.3.2. Structural Theory of Gender Identity

Social structural theories (e.g., Lips, 1991) examine the way in which society creates and supports gender roles, rather than the way in which individuals come to develop individual gender identity. These theories focus on the socio-cultural context; how relations between women and men are linked to gender roles and sex stereotypes, and the social structures which support these roles and stereotypes. Power and status differences are seen as crucial factors in developing and maintaining differences between men and women.

Structural theories focus on the systematic consolidation of power and privilege in the hands of a minority. According to such theories, power is something one group exercises over another; it is a kind of possession or property legitimated by laws, standards, hegemonic practices, and institutional relations. Both gendered and other forms of inequity are organised and sustained by more or less stable (albeit flexible) power arrangements. India being a male dominated society, male group always enjoys higher status and privileges over females. Socially and culturally one can experience the power domination of male in Indian society. Hence, the role assignment comes from a patriarchal society.  In many Western countries for example, heterosexual unions are materially privileged over gay and lesbian unions in terms of insurance coverage for partners, adoption and fostering policies, the right to marriage, and representation in anti-discrimination laws. In many sectors in India, women are paid lesser than men for the same amount of work. Some jobs are meant for women based on their gender. Policies or systems of law that hold women responsible for pregnancy deny them the right to abortion. Structural inequity also may characterise systems of knowledge. Socialisation and structural theorists alike argue that marginalised groups are underrepresented in recognised history, literature, science, and art because they have been denied access to education and positions of leadership.  In India, common women are not given the opportunity for education. These are the results of patriarchal power in Indian society.

Women are hardly seen in history as contributors to the development of humanity. Since mainstream history focuses on military and political leaders, celebrated artists, and other individuals in the public eye, work associated with the private sphere, with servants or slaves, or with groups usually does not count as the kind of achievement documented as "history". Disciplinary standards thus prevent women from seeing most members of the working class as having made significant contributions to politics, knowledge, or art. Since women learn to view gender/sex, race, and class patterns of exclusion as natural and

appropriate, they are difficult to recognise. Their exclusionary character becomes apparent only through careful, systematic study guided by theories that enable us to question the adequacy of common-sense explanations. From most structural perspectives, we have to understand oppression before we can attempt to alter it. The primary forms that structural feminist educational intervention takes, therefore, are a liberationist pedagogy and a counter-hegemonic curriculum, both intended to provide students with critical influence on their own and others' situations.

## Check Your Progress 2

Identify the statements that are correct according to structuralists, using '✓' mark.

1. Disciplinary standards prevent women from seeing most members of the working class as having made significant contributions

2. Systematic consolidation of power and privilege in the hands of a minority lead to low gender identity of women.

3. Women have learnt to view gender/sex, race, and class patterns of exclusion as natural.

4. We have to understand oppression before we can attempt to alter it.

5. Gender inequity is organised and sustained by more or less stable power arrangements.

6. If children receive positive reinforcement, they are motivated to continue a particular behaviour.

7. Both gender identity and gender role are learned through a process including observation, imitation, punishment, and reinforcement.

## 2.5.3.3. Educational Implications of Identity Theories

## Educational Implications of Socialisation Theories

The validity of this theory is questionable. Hence, the teacher needs to discuss the validity of the present theory of socialisation with the help of personal experiences as well as students' experiences and decide the extent of the validity of this theory. If they feel that it is true that most of them learn their gender identity in the way the present theory explains, then they can think of the following implications -

- Organise awareness camps for parents. Orient them with the knowledge that developing gender identity as they do is not correct and the consequences of the same will be bad. It narrows down the personality of young girls and boys since it does not allow them to grow with the maximum ability and talents they possess.

- Try to have maximum involvement of parents in education. They can realise the truths with such involvement. They realise that there is no talent or skill that is restricted to boys or girls.

- Try to alter the socialisation process. Change the differential attitudes of parents towards girls and boys.

- Disregard this theory by demonstrating that parents can encourage their children with gender free life pattern.

- Educate parents. Most of the parents exhibit gender-based attitude because they are not exposed to education. Education automatically makes parents think critically and think with common sense.

- Involve parents in formal and informal programmes by assigning some projects so that they get involved in the society, and this involvement will broaden their outlook.

- Disseminate the findings of gender related research both to students and parents during appropriate situations.

- Expose students to recent theories and information that are more significant to change the behaviour of parents.

- Involve parents in discussion about gender issues and orient them about bringing up children in gender free environments. They should also be careful to see that their children do not pick up gender- based ideas from any sources.

**Educational Implications of Structural Theories**

According to structuralism, human knowledge and understanding is derived from linguistic signs that operate socially and unconsciously in binary oppositions such as man/woman.

- Feminist critiques of structuralism have challenged the male domination of such theories, in which women are always depicted as being wrong, lacking, or absent.

- Feminist poststructuralist critiques have argued that any form of biological determinism ultimately reinforces that which it seeks to challenge. As such, it is argued that gender should be seen as an effect of culture and not the grounds on which culture is built. Hence, gender is the result of culture. Disseminating this knowledge is important.

- Provide enough literature for students to question existing power relations as natural or meritocratic in relation to gender behaviour.

- Expose students to situations of unequal gender roles and document the oppression of particular social groups and demonstrate how that oppression has served the interests of those in power.

- While teaching materialist disciplines such as history, sociology, economics, or political theory, call attention to objective patterns of gender inequity. Expose students to the world of work and the related contributions of women in different fields, which are deliberately hidden.

- Problematising the explanatory power of meritocratic and essentialised standards connected to the dominant ideology, they show how and when subordinated groups outperform the dominant group, and the standards are revised. Thus, when women score higher than men on tests or earn more academic honours, constraints may be adopted to limit women's access to education and the legitimacy of the tests or pedagogy in question may be challenged. If, on the other hand, society benefits from a change in the status of women, the ideology will shift to encompass the change. The idea that woman's natural place is in the home, for example, is a historically and culturally specific notion-one that is easily abandoned when there is a shortage of workers. The instance of women involvement during the freedom movement in India is one of the best examples. They were invited and motivated to take part in freedom struggle wholeheartedly, but after gaining independence, there was complete silence about women involvement in out of home activities. This was not the response of the common man, but the response of the 'great' personalities of the time.

- By exposing students to critical theories and tools, explicitly structural educational interventions enable students to analyse gender, sex, race, and class patterns in light of the interests they serve.

- Direct students to women- centred texts and provide them with a richly developed alternative perspective on mainstream power relations. This approach allows students to set aside the ideological tools that maintain the dominant order and work toward understanding women's different situations by means of tools and texts generated from women's own experience. Insofar as students form an acquaintance with outside perspectives and alternative theories, which might include Marxist feminist, womanist, radical feminist, critical race theorist, they gain  tools that they can use to demystify and challenge relations based on power. Students should be exposed to tools and techniques to evaluate the status of girls and women in society and motivated to identify the causes for the present status.

- They can then examine the contradictions in their own experience and confront the falsifying relation that the dominant ideology bears to actual experience. Since it is through alternative and/or critical analysis, texts, and syllabi that students gain an awareness of the distorting power of the dominant ideology, texts and theories carry the burden of critique in structural feminist approaches to education.

- The students should be motivated to identify the contribution made by women in different fields, and highlight the same through multiple ways.

- The students being part of the structure of the society, proper attitude towards the other sex should be developed.

## Check Your Progress 3

Classify the following implications as the implications of the socialisation theory by indicating them as 'SO' and implications of structural theory by indicating them as 'ST'.

1. Organise awareness camps for parents. Orient them with the knowledge that developing gender identity as they do is not correct and the consequences of the same will be bad. It narrows down the personality of young girls and boys since it does not allow them to grow with the maximum ability and talents they possess.

2. Provide enough literature for students to question existing power relations as natural or meritocratic in relation to gender behaviour.

3.  Try to alter the socialisation process. Change the differential attitudes of parents towards girls and boys.

4.  Expose students to situations of unequal gender roles and document the oppression of particular social groups and demonstrate how that oppression has served the interests of those in power.

5.  Disregard this theory by demonstrating that parents can encourage their children with gender free life pattern.

6.  While teaching materialist disciplines such as history, sociology, economics, or political theory, call attention to objective patterns of gender inequity. Expose students to the world of work and the related contributions of women in different fields which are deliberately hidden.

7.  Try to have maximum involvement of parents in education. They can realise the truths with such involvement. They realise that there is no talent or skill that is restricted to boys or girls.

## 2.5.4. Let Us Summarise

- Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender. Gender identity can correlate with assigned sex at birth or can differ from it.

- A number of theories have been put forward explaining how, when, and why gender identity forms. Studying this is challenging because children cannot express these aspects, and therefore, researchers have to conjecture or hypothesise.

- Some researchers suggest that children might have awareness of, and attach some significance to gender, as early as 18 months to two years.

- Experts explain this process of development through ~~with~~ different three stages.

- Though the process of the formation of gender identity is not completely understood yet, people attribute this phenomenon to ~~for~~ both biological and environmental factors.

- Social factors which may influence gender identity include ideas regarding gender roles conveyed by family, authority figures, mass media, and other influential people in a child's life.

- Socialisation theorists argue that girls can meet the same academic standards as boys, provided that they face no negative intervention ~~is faced by girls~~ from different socialising agents.

- According to the social learning theory, children are reinforced, both positively and negatively, for gender appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. It proposes that both gender identity and gender role are learned through ~~a~~ processes including observation, imitation, punishment, and reinforcement.

- Psychodynamic theory has its roots in the work of the Viennese psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud. This theory sees the role of the family, the mother in particular, as crucial in shaping one's gender identity. Boys and girls shape their identity in relation to that of their mother.

- Symbolic interactionism, though not proposed from gender point of view has application for the gender identity process. According to this, social gender is learned through communication in cultural contexts.

- Social structural theories state that power is something that one group exercises over another. It is a kind of possession or property legitimated by laws, standards, hegemonic practices, and institutional relations. Both gendered and other forms of inequity are organised and sustained by more or less stable power arrangements.

## 2.5.5. Answers to Check Your Progress 1, 2, and 3'

### Check Your Progress 1

2, 4, and 6 are correct

### Check Your Progress 2

1 to 5 are correct

### Check Your Progress 3

1, 3, 5, and 7: SO

2,4,6 : ST

## 2.5.6. Unit end Exercises

Explain the major tenets and educational implications of the socialisation theory and the structural theory of gender identity.

## 2.5.7. References

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# Block-2 : Gender Issues and Education

## Unit – 6 : Culture, Gender and Institution, Girls as Learners, Curriculum, Gender Culture and Hidden Curriculum

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### Unit Structure

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## 2.6.1. Learning Objectives

After studying this Unit, the student-teachers will be able to

- Explain the concept of culture and its relation to gender and curriculum

- Analyse the importance of gender issues in curriculum

- Differentiate between formal and hidden curriculum

- List out topics in their field that help in overcoming gender issues

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## 2.6.2. Introduction

In the history of mankind, one of the main factors that determine the status or position of a society is its culture. Culture is an expression of its ideas, customs, values and social behaviour. This culture has a great role to play in controlling the gender behaviour of its

people. As the gender behaviour and culture are closely related, they are to be shaped by suitable, responsible institutions such as family, religion, politics etc. Another important institution that works towards shaping the culture of the society is education. This is done through its various facets and curriculum is one of them. Socialisation and education go hand in hand in shaping the culture of a society. In this unit we will understand the relation between gender, culture and institution with a special focus on the issues related to gender in the school curriculum.

## 2.6.3. Learning Points and Activities

## 2.6.3.1. Concept of Culture, Gender and Institution

Culture is a very broad term which encompasses the social behaviour and norms found in human societies. It also includes as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities and habits of the individuals in these groups. It is important for shaping social relationships, maintaining and challenging social order, determining how we make sense of the world and our place in it. It is responsible for shaping our everyday actions and experiences in society. It is composed of both non-material and material things. It is instilled early on in life but is constantly evolving. It defines who we are and how we should behave and must be understood before effective communication can occur.

Gender, as we have understood is a social construct. It has its impact on attitudes, roles, responsibilities and behavioural patterns of every individual. Gender issues vary from society to society. It is a women's and people's issues shaped by power relations in multicultural societies like India. It deals with human concerns encompassing diversities and differences. It has been the most endemic form of discrimination operating across cultures in developed and developing societies.

An institution on the other hand is a social structure in which people cooperate and which influences the behaviour of people and the way they live. They are social organisations which govern the behaviour of a set of individuals in a given society. They have a definite role to play in the society. There are integrated systems of rules that structure social interactions. Family, religion, peer groups education etc. are all institutions, each with their own responsibility. These institutions in-turn also need to take care of the culture and gender concerns of the society especially in developing and maintaining the culture. Hence, institution, gender and culture need to work in coordination for the development of the society at large.

Culture forms the basis for the social system and has a great influence on gender roles of the society. In many cultures around the world and more so in India, women have

traditionally been the caregivers of children as well as homemakers. Historically, they have done more housework, including laundry, washing dishes, cleaning and cooking. Movies, TV and other forms of media reinforce these traditional roles through characters but are becoming more reflective of balanced roles in the household. Women also often report spending more time with childcare and elderly parents resulting in what is known as the "sandwich generation" - households with young children and aging parents. Studies show that women are still completing more household tasks than men. Narrowing in that gap can often be attributed to outsourcing of tasks that once took more time at home: hiring housekeepers or landscapers or dry cleaning services. Even with more women working outside of the home, equity in amount of and type of household tasks hasn't changed significantly.

With family as an institution, from an early age, children have learned societal expectations regarding gender-appropriate occupations from different places: in their homes, in businesses, restaurants, from the media, and from their peers. For younger children, girls often have been defined as playing "house" or "teacher" while boys are expected to play "war" or "firefighter." With changing social media and community messaging, those traditional occupational roles are also becoming less set as cultural norms. Children are exposed to occupational options that are not as based on gender through children's books, television programming, social media, news reporting and their own parents choosing less gender-defined roles. Their early introductions to careers set the groundwork for a way of thinking about future jobs. Traditional occupations for women once were perceived to include secretaries, housewives, teachers, waitresses and nurses while men were defined as police officers, construction workers, truck drivers, CEOs or factory workers. With changes in family makeup and media portrayal of traditional occupational choices, children are exposed to many different career choices that are less defined by gender. When children see their mothers completing more household chores than their fathers or household tasks gender-designated as female, that observation can form future gender role ideas.

Women are traditionally considered to be more "gentle," "passive," "emotional," "dependent," "patient" and "communicative" than their male counterparts. Adjectives such as "tough," "independent," "powerful," "inexpressive" and "straightforward" are used to describe men. With these cultural labels tied to gender expectations, cultural expectations then influence how people react to each other and how they view themselves based on those labels. If the gender labels are used in a positive way, the gender bias associated with them can be lessened or even removed.

## Girls as Learners

With girls as learners in mind, several studies have been conducted with the requirement of girls as learners and suggest that

- girls need stronger conviction than boys about their ability before continuing to higher education particularly in mathematics and the physical sciences;

- some girls exhibit "fear of success" as they experience conflict between images of femininity and intellectuality. They should be helped to overcome such fears.

- girls may see future family responsibilities and lack of mobility as incompatible with more prestigious careers in the fields of science and technology;

- fewer girls than boys rate themselves as "good" in mathematics and science despite equally good marks as boys; a higher proportion of boys who do not rate themselves as "good" in mathematics still continue in higher level mathematics in Year 11 while girls who doubt their ability are more easily discouraged;

- learned helplessness is a characteristic exhibited by girls far more frequently than of boys;

- at the end of Year 10, girls are more likely than boys to choose subjects based on interest than subjects related to particular careers (or their careers are not in areas which require a study of the physical sciences);

- physical science qualifications are seen by girls as relevant to traditionally male-orientated careers.

- The cultural emphasis on women's role as wife, mother and as primary care-giver leads many girls to conclude that science, as it is currently presented, is not relevant for their future.

With advances in science and technology gender stereotyping is reduced to a great extent in the urban areas but continues to be prominent in the rural areas. But, still, educational institutions have a great role to play in overcoming this gender issues. This can be done through different facets of education and one of them is the curriculum. We will study about this in the following pages.

**Check Your Progress -1**

Mark the following as 'True' or 'False'

1.      Boys are often better in mathematics and science than girls are.

2.      Girls are less confident than boys about their abilities.

3.      Women cannot succeed in male-dominated professions such as engineering.

4.      It is women's responsibility to care for children.

## 2.6.3.2. Curriculum, Gender Culture and Hidden Curriculum

Gender issues in education have been analysed by great men in the field and is reflected in curriculum frameworks developed by apex national organization like National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). In this regard curriculum frameworks of 1975, 1988, 2000 and 2005 have made specific efforts to focus attention on gender issues in education. The journey has been from concern to substantial inclusion.

You have already studied about the concept of curriculum in the context of different topics under different courses. The Oxford Dictionary of English defines the curriculum as the subjects that are included in a course of study or taught in a school or college. It reflects the knowledge that society considers valuable and appropriate to be taught in schools. As society changes, the curriculum will also change, as well as the way in which it is viewed and what is considered valuable. This means that the curriculum, and teaching practices, can express ideas and practices marked by gender inequality. Teaching and learning materials, evaluation and assessment procedures, and language policy are also components of the curriculum.

A classic definition of curriculum comes from Lawton (1975) who argued that, rather than it being "that which is taught in classrooms"  curriculum is "essentially a selection from the culture of society …certain aspects of our way of life, certain kinds of knowledge, certain attitudes and values are regarded as so important that their transmission to the next generation is not left to chance" . Thus, across many settings and societies, curriculum is formed, and informed, by social and cultural values, knowledge and skills that are deemed necessary for young people to know to prepare them for future work and life. Curriculum then is not a fixed "'thing' but a 'dynamic identity'  that is continuously influenced by the ideological positions of politicians and policymakers, the changes in economies and societies as well as the beliefs, traditions and values of those who teach and of those who learn.

The curriculum is the strongest tool to transmit and transform the culture, values and beliefs of society to the learner. The curriculum is implemented through the textbooks

and learning material and through the environment of the school, known as the hidden curriculum. Since every society has its gender belief system and gender stereotypes i.e. the prevailing images of what men and women are supposed to be like, the same are reflected and portrayed in the curriculum. When children enter the school environment, the images of male and female portrayed in books, crystallise their concept about gender and consequently their own self image, their behaviour, their aspirations and their expectations. If any change in the gender stereotypes is planned, serious and concerted efforts are required, firstly to analyse the learning material and secondly, to present those desired modified images.

The importance of gender sensitive curriculum has been highlighted by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as " a gender-sensitive curriculum promotes equal treatment between men and women and between girls and boys, and it encourages them to achieve their full potential. This includes how they interact with learners in and outside the classroom, and how boys and girls are depicted in textbooks. Gender-sensitive attitudes and learning materials promote non-stereotyped images of men and women".

A gender equal curriculum shows the diversity of society when increasing examples that highlight successful female characters in texts as well as in the examples used during classes. Instructional materials, including textbooks, handouts or workbooks, should be studied to determine whether they are gender biased, gender neutral or gender-sensitive/ responsive. In Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs), curricula need to include elements that recognize gender equality-related issues in learning materials, and how those issues can be faced by teachers once they take up the profession and start to use these materials in their classes

In order to have a gender equitable curriculum, it is desirable to have a common curriculum for topics that directly affect students' life including gender, sexuality, human rights, and life skills education. This should be able to use participatory teaching approaches from the primary school level itself. Such a curriculum which is region specific and cultural specific should empower both girls and boys with unique tools for making informed decisions across several areas of living such as career and vocational choices, marriage, health, nutrition safety and leadership.

Educational systems that adopt gender equality in curriculum aspects are able to:

- Revise its curriculum framework to explicitly state commitment to gender equality.

- Emphasize attitudes and values that promote gender equality.

- Ensure that the content of the course syllabus includes values and attitudes of gender equality.

- Revise textbooks and learning materials to become gender-sensitive.

- Remove gender-based stereotypes that contribute towards perpetuating gender inequalities.

## Gender issues in hidden curriculum

You already know about the meaning of the term 'hidden curriculum'. Let us recall the same.The hidden curriculum refers to the unspoken and unofficial norms, behaviors, and values that kids learn at school in addition to the official curriculum of math, reading, science, and so on. The hidden-curriculum concept is based on the recognition that students absorb lessons in school that may or may not be part of the formal course of study.  It  is related to the transmission of norms, values, beliefs and behavior that either reinforces existing social and cultural ethos of the society or attempts to question and critique them. In the context of gender, it either perpetuate unequal power relations operating among gender, or help in evolving methods of questioning it and thereby becoming an important equalizing agency for addressing paradoxes between policies on gender equality in education and practices. Different aspects of learning that contribute to the success of hidden curriculum are practices, procedures, rules, relationship and structure operating in different types of schools. Unintended learning can result from interactions with educational administrators, teachers, peers and other functionaries that play a crucial role in overall personality development. Hidden curriculum can include for example, how they should interact with peers, teachers, and other adults; how they should perceive different races, groups, or classes of people; or what ideas and behaviors are considered acceptable or unacceptable. The hidden curriculum is described as "hidden" because it is usually unacknowledged or unexamined by students, educators, and the wider community.  Gender is an important element of the hidden curriculum. Schools reinforce larger cultural messages about gender, including the idea that gender is an essential characteristic for organizing social life.

Boys and girls are often susceptible to psychological and physical violence in different ways and adolescents in particular can find themselves especially vulnerable to violations of their safety.  Along with making sure that children are secure inside and outside schools, self defence taught from an early stage for all children particularly girls will build confidence in them.

## Check Your Progress 2

1.    What are the benefits of resorting to gender sensitive curriculum?

2.    What is hidden curriculum?  Explain any two cases of hidden curriculum observed in your classroom

## 2.6.4. Let us Summarise

- Culture is the sum total of knowledge, behaviour, arts, laws, customs, beliefs, norms etc.

- It includes both material and non-material things

- Gender is a social construct and has its impact on roles, attitudes, responsibilities, behaviour etc.

- Institution is a social structure in which people cooperate and work together.

- Family, religion, peer group, education are all examples of institutions

- Broadly, curriculum is the subjects that are include for study in a course of study.

- It is based on the culture of that society and  is a tool to transmit and transform culture

- Gender sensitive curriculum gives due recognition to all

- Gender issues in curriculum arise mainly due to

- Different subjects are associated with masculinity and femininity.

- Teachers teach different material, or treat it differently, according to whether they are teaching girls or boys.

- Gender issues are to be considered both for formal and hidden curriculum

- Hidden curriculum refers to unspoken or unofficial norms, values and behaviour

## 2.6.5. Answers to Check Your Progress 1 and 2

## Check Your Progress 1

Refer Section 2.6.3.1of Self Learning Material

## Check Your Progress 2

Refer Section 2.6.3.2 of Self Learning Material

## 2.6.6. Unit –end Exercises

Explain how gender and culture are related and bring out their educational implications for gender issues.

## 2.6.7. References

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