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“Gender sensitization: Gender, School and Society”

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Abstract

Abstract Gender encompasses socially constructed and culturally based roles of women and men with a view to understand how unequal power relations between them are shaped and operate. Gender and its accompanying power relations are built in all institutions of society be it family, educational institutions, work place, religious systems, beliefs, norms etc. Gender relations do not operate in a social vacuum but are products of the ways in which institutions are organized and reconstituted. This paper explains the need of gender sensitization in educational institution and following the process of gender sensitization programs we will be able to bring social change relating to women. Educational institutions like school colleges where teachers are the active players in classroom and has to deal with various gender related issues. This paper also explains what pedagogic strategies teachers should follow to promote gender sensitive classroom.

Keywords: Gender, Gender sensitization

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Introduction: The men are always placed in a more advantageous position than women in South and South East Asian region especially in India. Gender, as a determinant of a social relation that legitimizes and sustains men’s power over women, is inheritantly about relations between women and men, as well as relations among groups of women and among groups of men. Across differences of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, age and religion, one of the few commonalities that men share, as a ‘distinct group’, is their gender privilege. Achieving gender equality is not possible without changes in men’s lives as well as in women’s. The most painful devaluation of women is the physical and psychological violence that stalks them cradle to grave. The devaluation of women begins even before life begins. Starting from the stage of birth, women are discriminated in areas like access to nutrition, childcare, education and work etc.

Meaning of gender and gender sensitization

Gender refers to the socio cultural differences between the males and females in terms of their strength, ability, performance, wage earning capacity and social acceptability etc. In fact

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the biological process does not discriminate between man and woman, but socially, women are regarded as weak, need protection and hence become subordinate to men. Gender sensitization refers to theories which claim that modification of the behavior of teachers and parents (etc.) towards children can have a causal effect on gender equality. Gender sensitizing "is about changing behavior and instilling empathy into the views that we hold about our own and the other sex." It helps people in "examining their personal attitudes and beliefs and questioning the 'realities' they thought they know.

Gender sensitization

Objectives of the Gender sensitization:

- To Sensitization the need of gender equality along with transgender.
- To explore the parameters of gender equality along with transgender.
- To identify the respectful terminology or no-men-clature for ‘transgender’ word.
- To highlight the gap areas among all the three genders.
- To develop a practicable harmonious working plan/ flow chart to provide equality to transgender at the level of providing education providing job opportunities and the behavioural level in the society.

GENDER SENSITIVITY

- By gender sensitivity we mean the level of awareness appreciation of the need to maintain at reasonable levels the gender differentiation between the male and female. To remain gender sensitive we have to keep the gender peculiarities. In focus to a reasonable limit.

GENDER AND SEX

- Sex refers to the natural distinguishing variable based on biological characteristic of being a woman or a man. It refer to physical attributes pertaining to a person’s body contours, features, genitals , hormones, genes, chromosomes and reproductive organs.
- Gender refers to rolls, attributes and values assigned by culture and society to woman and man. These rolls attitudes and values define the behaviours of woman and man. And the relationship between them.

IMPORTANCE OF GENDER SENSITIVITY

- Gender sensitization is one basic requirement for the normal development of an individual. The need for this sensitivity has been felt and realized through times immemorial and in almost all kinds of human existence, across the globe.
- The TG policy supports the attainment of: a just society where men, women, TGS have equal rights to access development opportunities, resources and the benefits the right to live with dignity and enjoy a life free from all forms of violence, the right to freedom of expressions in all matters that effect them; and right to equal voice and participation in key development decisions that shape their lives, communities and the state.

To overcome the various disparities existing in lieu of gender equality the following aspects have to be developed.

- Individuals need to be more open minded , rational and unbiased in their thoughts and actions
- There is an urgent need to shatter the load of orthodox believes biased values to actuate the progressive existence of these genders.
- Better reconciliation of work and private life for the gender of woman and man and transgender is essential to gender equality.

MEASURES

- There is a need to provide steps to safeguard women's safety and for men to be assured that such measures are not an indication of discrimination against the male population.
- Training and awareness-raising in educational setup, at workplace and in society can be eliminate gender-based prejudice and thereby change stereotyped working cultures as regards to the roles and abilities of women and men, including attitude towards women in leadership positions.

REMEDIES

- Better knowledge and understanding of gender issues at all levels of society, including communication activities, role plays, dramas, documentaries, various other audio visual aids will raise awareness among both stakeholders and the general public.
- Both the genders need to take stand at their own level, to support and promote the upliftment and wellness of their own and the opposite gender, so as to overcome any sort of differentiation or harassment.

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Accept third gender in schools, society

- Families ostracise their children when they know they belong to a third gender, transgenders have to encounter verbal abuse, psychological and sometimes physical violence too in their homes first and later in society. In school students and teachers treat them differently and children are forced to or give up studies.
- The number of gender based violence in India is on the rise and in the case of transgenders, it is a matter of grave concern.

Inclusive policy needed

- The government should come out with awareness programs in education institutes, says Subramaniam, “But first the educators must be educated. In the curriculum for teacher training a module on transgenders should be included. Teachers and administrative bodies in school and universities need to be sensitized about the third gender. The government should make provisions that enables education for transgenders.”
- We need education first. The literacy rate of transgenders is very low in the country. We face a lot of harassment from the police. There are no awareness programs for police academics on how to treat transgenders. When all sections of society are sensitized to transgenders, the violence against the third community will be reduced greatly.

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