

Gender Concerns in Education

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Short Review

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ABSTRACT

Gender differences in educational outcomes, it is important to distinguish between three sets of outcomes educational participation and attainment, that is, how far young women and men go within the educational system educational achievement, that is, how well young men and women perform (for example, in terms of grades) at a given level of the educational system and field of study, that is, the type of course taken within the educational system.

INTRODUCTION

Gender is a social construct that impacts attitudes, roles, responsibilities and behavior patterns of boys and girls, men and women in all societies. Gender relations 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 [1]. When one analyses the present context of gender discourses, the prime concern is how gender functions as a determinant of politics of knowledge production. Education has the inbuilt potential of initiating social change in the context of gender relations. Therefore, conscious and pluralistic interventions have been put forward by the Government of India to address gender equality in education at the centre and state level. A landmark initiative was undertaken in 1986, with the enactment of the National Policy on Education (NPE) and its revised POA [2].

This philosophy has also been reflected in the National Policy on Empowerment of Women 2001. The policy focuses on promoting gender sensitive curriculum for addressing gender discrimination at all levels of education. The new draft of National Policy lays emphasizes on "Encourage, Educate and Employ", all irrespective of their socio-economic background. Gender concerns in education have also been 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 disparities in education. The journey has been from concern to substantial inclusion. While a lot of efforts have been made on integrating gender concerns in education globalization, liberalization and expansion in information technology have once again made it mandatory for revisiting gender concerns in education in a proactive manner as an important developmental agenda [3].

There is now an emerging need to reflect and focus in a proactive manner on transforming attitudes, beliefs and behavioral patterns that impact gender relation in family, community, school and work place and so on. Gender debates and discourses have to be operationalised within the overarching concern for democratizing education [4]. In this context, constitutional commitments, policy initiatives, schemes and programmes have been conceptualized by Centre and State Governments at different points of time to address gender barriers in education. This stage of education encompasses critical mass of children between the age group of 14-18 years. This stage of education serves as a bridge between elementary and higher education. It is the twilight years of adolescence. In India, adolescence constitute about one fifth of the population. This large and increasing share of adolescent and

youth in India need to be provided with quality education that promotes empowerment, skills and employability. To address this concern, RMSA programmes envisage an enrolment rate of 75% from 52.26% in 2005-06 at secondary stage [5].

Teaching and Learning Process:

Textual materials at the secondary stage have sharper contours related to science, social science, languages and mathematics. It is important that at this stage, children are able to acquire knowledge embedded in different subjects, apply the knowledge to understand their lived realities, and are skilled enough to communicate, negotiate and critically understand their surroundings from a gender lens. While teaching subjects at the secondary stage, the pedagogical processes have to be well designed for making classrooms, in multiple settings, genders sensitive. Classroom transactions have an important bearing on the personality of children [6]. The methodology followed in delivering the content, related to various domains of knowledge, not only promotes learning and understanding but also overall personality of children. In the context of gender, engaging children in discussions, problem solving, multifarious activities and voicing their doubts and experiences are ways of breaking gender barriers related to caste, class, region and location. In the teaching and learning of different subjects offered to student at the secondary stage of education you may consider some suggested gender inclusive activities. In the teaching and learning of different subjects offered to student at the secondary stage of education you may consider some suggested gender inclusive activities [7].

Developing and implementing strategic and school improvement plans

When the schools are required to put into practice the school improvement plans, as in most school districts in the present existence, school leaders are required to develop the skills associated with productive planning and the implementation of such plans [6]. Almost all district leaders need to be capable in large scale strategic planning processes. Supporting, evaluating and developing teacher quality Educational leaders have to be capable enough to adapt the teaching programme to the local requirements of the teachers. The leaders have to implement measures to promote teamwork amongst the teachers and get engaged in teacher monitoring, evaluation and professional development. The teachers should be effectively trained and should possess the knowledge about how to meet the needs of the students, hence, important goal of the educational leaders is to support, evaluate and contribute in the development of teacher quality. Application of teaching and learning principles [7].

Classroom Organization and Management:

In India school and classrooms vary in many contexts. There are large and small size classrooms in the urban, semi-urban, and rural contexts. The classroom organization and management goes a long way in shaping gender relations. Several research studies over the years have clearly shown how the classroom environment can facilitate students learning and remove gender bias and stereotype [8]. In fact, a gender friendly environment can easily be created by a teacher in any context. It just requires sensitivity and positive intent. A gender friendly classroom environment and its overall management can build harmonious relations between boys and girls at different stages of education [9]. This can be done by adopting some of the suggestive measures To begin with teachers must define their roles as mentors and facilitators and not as instructors and knowledge experts aiming to disseminate information. As a facilitator, the teacher should ensure that 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 and in single sex, it should cut across class, caste, region and faith. Equal participation of boys and girls in teaching learning process must be ensured For ensuring greater participation of girls, participatory activities like role play, problem solving, and quiz etc must be adopted in the teaching of languages, social science and science. Allocation of classroom duties should reflect gender neutrality. Boys and girls should participate equally in maintaining cleanliness, observing classroom decorum, decorating the class and conducting routine classroom chores [10].

CONCLUSION

Educational leadership is primarily associated with enhancement of student learning and their growth and development. The other areas that educational leaders have to take into consideration are, mission, vision, values and standards of the educational institutions, ethics and professional norms, equity and cultural responsiveness, curriculum and the instructional systems, teaching-learning methods, usage of technology, performance appraisal systems, creation of the community that may work in co-operation towards the care and support of the students, building up of the professional capacity and skills of the school personnel, building up of the professional community of the teachers and the staff members, promoting meaningful engagement of the families and the community, supervising the administrative, technical, clerical, and managerial functions in an effective manner with the support and assistance from the other people and formulation of measures that would lead to improvement of the school.

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