

Women's Equality and Empowerment Through Curriculum/Text Books/ Training Modules (GENDER PERSPECTIVE)

Formal education plays an important role in inculcating permanent value system in the children. Gender biases in society are to be addressed through education. Efforts are being made under SSA through development of curriculum, text books, and teachers training modules in gender perspective.

In the training module or gender sensitization following topics are included to give a deeper insight into gender perspective:

- What is gender?
- Gender is a dynamic concept.
- Why gender education?
- Gender awareness
- Some Key Concepts
- SEX, GENDER, GENDER-BLIND, GENDER-AWARE, Gender roles
- School and Classroom culture in gender perspective
- Girls are empowered in schools through following activities :
 - ✓ Challenging tasks, academic competitions.
 - ✓ Freedom in expression.
 - ✓ Independent decision making.
 - ✓ Disobedience ,violations of rules (which is vise versa for boys) in class room
 - ✓ to meet any role and expectation

Module for Training of teachers for “Bias free Classroom culture”

As far as classroom setting is concerned teacher's role is of paramount importance to set a bias free atmosphere in the classroom. Teacher can minimize negative effect of the 'Gender Bias' by adopting following ways:

1. By identifying gender bias and accepting its effect on the work of an individual and society.

2. To recognize the physical and mental pain created because of Gender-Bias.
3. To analyze the cultural, social, economical and political matters affecting it.
4. To integrate such activities in classroom interactions which counter the gender biases.
5. To discuss with the students regarding gender bias and get their views for it.
6. Teachers are also sensitized to have a very clear understanding of why gender bias should be eliminated so that they can have positive attitude regarding gender issues. They are made aware that the society in which such type of biases are observed no individual or society can progress. The society in which both man and women think independently grows as an individual and such society progress. Any statement or attitude showing gender bias except (natural differentiation) is called to be gender bias'. It is essential to recognize this 'bias' and 'differentiation'. This needs neutral attitude. It is very important to cultivate this neutral attitude in teachers so that during class room transactions they do not show gender bias in any way and helps the children to cultivate healthy mental attitudes.
7. Recognizing the negative attitude, statement, behavior and proverbs and activities towards females and try to counter it. Some examples are: Why are you crying like a girl? It indicates and supports that girls are always crying and boys never do. Girls can not / should not speak in loud tone.
8. Teachers are being oriented not to think that particular work can be done by boys only e.g. carry /remove the heavy stones, purchase the things etc. Some of the work can be assigned to girls only, as cleaning the floors, serve the water, welcome guests etc.
9. Ensure equal participation in sports is taken / given e.g. Kabbadi, Cricket. Hockey etc. both of them can play together or else a separate team for girls and boys are be made. It should not be the case that girls are not participating in this games at all.

10. Grouping of boys and girls or boys- girls together for school, class-room and other activities and assign the work to the team in rotation e.g. cleaning, fetch drinking water clean and decorate the classroom, prayers ,welcome / serve the guests etc.
11. It is emphasized that the teacher also understands the effect of above mentioned attitude, behavior, dialogues etc. on the child, people and the society. As child has tender mind, whatever teacher says he believes it eternally, teachers is an idol for child hence a Gender Bias and negative attitude/ approach should be completely avoided in all respect and all spheres.
12. Discussion and analysis of various cultural, social, economical and political factors responsible for gender bias. Teachers should be well aware with the cultural, social, economical and political factors of village where the school is situated. Teachers should be able to tackle the situation on his own and tactfully with personal dialogue, home visit and SMC meeting etc. Teacher should always keep in mind the economical condition of the girl child in the class room while commenting about any issue , so that her feeling are not hurt.

Following suggestive activities are undertaken in the Class room for gender sensitivity:

1. Ask the students of upper standard to write the biography of their mother. Let them compare, how their generation differs from her. What is the paradox between their past, present and future tense? Whether girls are mentioning any different activities than boys?
2. Ask the children to draw the picture of their family and then ask them to draw the picture of each member separately. Ask them to study the difference in the right, costumes and activities they do.
3. Ask the children to draw the 'Age graph' of and draw the graph of the peculiar incident that have occurred in their life of particular age and ask the children to imagine what can happen in their life at this age ? By this you will be able to know the difference in

your generation, and what is your necessity? To overcome this necessity do they have any skills or has to learn it? Discuss this in the classroom.

4. Make the groups of children and ask them to identify the gender role differences in the textbooks and write it separately. Assign definite responsibility to each group / child. Ask some of them to count pronouns, count names of male and female used, mention of boys and girls, examine the role assigned as politicians, farmers, businessmen, scientists etc.
5. Discuss about the traditional role of male and female in their society. Whether do they agree with it? Is there any person in their society is not following the traditions? How is he showing his opposition and due to what circumstances?
6. Do the class wise- subject wise analysis of text books. Does the pictures and description is shown according to the present and future-condition of women in context to society and the national outlook.

Avoid the use of biased example where ever possible. Use of the examples, which counters this and makes the women's role more positive.

Curriculum and Text Books

Effective curriculum and proper text books provide a solid base for the development of bias free personality of the child. Bias has to be tackled at each and every level right from development of attitudes and habit formation. Accordingly initiatives have been taken by **SSA** in this direction.

Elementary level is the most important bar in the educational ladder. Children at this age are very sharp and attentive. They are keen observer. They carry hidden messages into their self. So the total environment of the elementary school right from books, teaching learning material, teacher and their activities should not only be bias free but also seen to be so.

Guide line for writers and illustrators

While developing the material for these modules and text books the instances and examples which focus on following areas are being included :

- Recognition of the Stereotypical Roles.
 - Nearly matching percentage of women as Human Resource
 - Mainstreaming Gender in Development Activities
 - The Value of Equality
 - Hidden Talents in women
 - Do not invert the Roles
 - Reduce Stereotyping
 - Covert Contribution of Development to be recognized.
 - Indicators of Empowerment –Healthy , Aware, Intelligent, Decision Making to be reflected
 - Message according to Age to the Children
- Also one should try to avoid:
- Including too many images of women not sufficient attentions to their appropriateness.
 - Overcompensating, by only depicting women or men in situations which challenge gender stereotypes.
 - Portraying women's progress as moving into traditional male only fields: women as soldiers, as pilot, as doctor, working in field, banker, engineer etc.

In school text books where ever the mention of earning is there it is always men which should be avoided, e.g.

(I) Cooking - In house it is women while for any big function in which the cooking is done and money is involved it is mentioned as men's work.

(2)Tailoring- Is male, carpenter, Black Smith, postman etc. at this time keeping in view the gender bias teacher should ask to prepare

the list of work through which money is earned and explain that each person can earn the money. He should give example of women who is the only earning member of

the family. Another woman is doing some special work for her family. So that children feels that not only man but women can also earn money and work outside the work

- **Politics** -Where ever politics is discussed mention the contribution of women in it.

1. Bravery - Rana Pratap - Jhansi Ki Rani, Kalpna Chawla, Kiran Bedi
2. Politics - Jawaharlal Nehru -, Indira Gandhi, Smt.Bhandar Nayike, UNO Members-
Vijaya Laxmi Pandit
3. Science - Madam Kury
4. Statesmanship - Goldamayer, Margaret Thatcher
5. Social work - Helen Keller , Kasturba Gandhi, Mother Teresa.

Never try to show that this Work can only be done by man which one women has done. Never praise the women by comparing her work with man as an ideal e.g. "Indira Gandhi was a HE prime minister of India". Instead it can be " Indira Gandhi was empowered Prime Minister of India". Political factors also play important role Which should be understood properly and the problems should be tackled accordingly.

It is essential to analyze all these problems then only Gender bias will be recognized. It is very difficult to recognize gender bias, even in our own life, it has been so much weaved that we do not feel or think unusual in it. We are not willing to change the trend. We have become typified. We have never tried to find out reasons for physical, mental, social, economical condition of women and even if we have tried we have blamed other's for it. ***We have never tried to cultivate that will power and self confidence in women.*** If our roots are biased then will be same hence it is .essential that the place from which child is going to have his basic culture (school) from there itself the efforts should be made to remove the bias. Which can be minimize as the child develops. This will avoid the problems arising due to Gender bias and will lead to progressive society.

Do the supportive activities in the classroom which counters the Gender bias. Ask the boys and girls to discuss their views regarding the bias us which you will be able to know their attitude towards bias.

A boy and a girl both are equally intelligent in the class. If a girl wants to understand more about the subject, many - times' teacher instead of encouraging the girl he will say leave all these things why are you bothering so much you are not going to study ahead or going to do job and thus discouraging 'her 'and at the same time he will encourage the boy and take interest in explaining him .It is usually seen that teachers has an attitude / opinion that girls should -not-talk –much with boys or discuss with them in classroom. If the discussion takes place teacher will blame girls for it leaves it does not suit you.' You should not argue with him you would not be able to reach him. Even if she asks more questions or asks to explain more teachers will comment that she is more talkative!

- Dependence of girls and women as a traditional value must be rejected, from which it follows that emphasis has to be laid on equal commitment for work at home and outside, by both the sexes.
- Equality of opportunity in all walks of life must lead to the realization of the responsibility to equal participation in the development of the nation.
- Women should be able to attain their fulfillment by getting conscious of their rights and abilities
- Decision-making process at all level from family to society being shared by both the sexes must be emphasized.
- Systematic understanding and campaigns against all practices degrading sexes in matrimony e.g. dowry and bride price must be organised.
- The concept of consumerism leading to women becoming prosperity symbol must be reacted and need-based consumption must be emphasized
- Women should not be projected as sex symbols and dignity of persons is to be promoted so that women become self-reliant, self-propelled and self-directed instead of being continuously protected.

In the light of above, the literature at the school level must be scanned and new literature must emerge with these values being reflected.

Political Science

1. Awareness of citizenship rights duties and abilities, that women effectively participate in public life.
2. Adequate projection of women's role in the freedom movement
3. Awareness of legal rights of women.

Economics

Concept of work he redefined so that domestic work is also considered a productive economic activity, there by discouraging sex disparity in gainful employment

Demography

Keeping in view the decline of females in the sex ratio in the country's population which reflects neglect of the female population, it need adequate projection that womenfolk is as important as menfolk

Geography

Role diversification should be taken care of in area studies in the light of geo-ecological conditions

History

1. True status of women in historical development must be projected.
2. Women's contribution towards the growth of civilization is to be highlighted.
3. Distorted versions of facts of history relating to women have to be avoided.

Sociology

1. Family should be treated in such a way as to bring out its functioning as a corporate system with joint responsibility.
2. Family as an institution should not be underplayed in respect of the changing status of women.
3. As marriage is the foundation of a healthy family life, variety of different marriage systems should be understood so that the mutual understanding and spirit of partnership is developed between the couple
4. All rituals including dowry and bride price degrading the status of

women should be avoided.

Science

- 1 Science education should be environment based.
- 2 Science and technology do not degrade status of women as it has been proved that genetically or ability-wise women are not the weaker sex.
- 3 The teaching of science be made imperative for girls.
- 4 Scientific knowledge of human physiology is a must for boys and girls.
- 5 Age of marriage must be carefully planned
- 6 Science education should be supported by parent education so that the congruence between school teaching and its application at home is reduced.
- 7 Obscurantism with regard to sex, food, etc.. should be removed
- 8 Those women who take professional training should see that their talents are not wasted

Mathematics

1. Work at the domestic level is equally productive and should be projected as a responsibility to be shared by all members of the family
- 2 Dignity of work in any walk of life should be reflected through exercises projecting computation of time, labour and energy consumed at each job
- 3 Growing participatory role of women in all walks of life must be reinforced and failure in participation must reflect on loss of labour force
4. Indications of social, economic and cultural changes to be knit in mathematical exercises so as to imprint change indicators for raising aspiration level.
- 5 Mathematics teaching must emphasize logical thinking so as to discover evils of dowry system and bride price and bring out the importance of small family norm from the point of view of family welfare.
- 6 Decision-making competence in both boys and girls should be equally developed through mathematics teaching.
7. In the context of equality of opportunities, to highlight through mathematical data that women can shoulder responsibilities equally

- 8 To help in the eradication of social evils such as dowry, death ceremonies, etc., by highlighting their arithmetical aspects.
- 9 To minimise the allurements for gold, silver and other valuables and to increase the national resources by depositing in the saving banks
10. The biographies of women mathematicians and their contributions should be highlighted.

Humanities

- 1 Textbooks and supplementary readers in English. Hindi and regional languages at the school stage should be scrutinized from the point of view of the status of women so as to delete all references that denigrate their status.
- 2 In the supplementary readers as well as in language readers biographies of women in different walks of life, such as freedom fighters, sports women.
- 3 The various myths about the subordination of Indian women drawn from images of middle class should be exploded. The reality about the bulk of the women about the Indian countryside should be brought in the light.
4. The legal rights of women in different spheres should be emphasized
5. The contributions of women writers, poets and novelists should be highlighted.
13. All corporate efforts made for raising women status suffrage movements and the work of the AIWC should be highlighted
14. Care must be taken to see that the main objective of the new status of women is to generate a spirit of cooperation with the other sex and not of confrontation. While cooperation, competition and conflict occur in all societies the conflict between sexes or between the generations should not be highlighted These books should also contain a corrective description of all broken homes resulting from hasty divorce, if it has to take place.
15. Women should be viewed not in isolation but as part of the total situation.

Fine Arts

1. Any disabilities suffered by women in the domain of music either in learning or practising it should be done away with. In painting, sculpture and dance women should

not be projected as sex symbols The purpose of these arts should be to enable women to realise themselves

2. The fact that men also have a share in performing arts like dance (both folk and classical) should be highlighted.
3. A better image of an artist should be projected as, nowadays, many unviable stereotypes are associated with artists such as painters, dancers, poets or film stars.
4. Efforts should be made to inculcate love for fine arts among both men and women .Such children's literature as magazines boys and girls should also be scanned after eliminating references denigrating the status of women.