

Gender Concerns in Education

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1.1 Overview

I am uncompromising in the matter of Women's rights. In my opinion she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by men. I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality.

Mahatma Gandhi, Young India, 17-10'29

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. 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 1992. 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.

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. 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. The recent promising initiative is the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) that attempts to universalize education at the secondary level. This programme began in 2009.

RMSA focuses on secondary 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 envisages an enrolment rate of 75% from 52.26% in 2005-06 at secondary stage. The other objectives include improving quality of

education imparted at secondary level through making all secondary school conform to prescribed norms, remove gender, socio-economic and disability barriers.

Important equity interventions provided in the scheme are special focus on micro planning, preference to areas with concentration of SC/ ST/ Minority for opening of schools, special enrolment drive for weaker section, more female teachers in schools and separate toilet blocks for girls.

In the present module, an attempt has been made for sensitizing, RMSA functionaries, teacher-educators and teachers on making textbooks and pedagogical processes gender inclusive.

1.2 Introduction

The genesis of RMSA can be traced to the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) that focuses on development of democratic citizenship, improvement of vocational efficiency, promotion of leadership and development of personality. The significance of this stage of education was touched upon by the National Policy on Education 1986. The policy mentions “Secondary education begins to expose students to the differentiated roles of science, the humanities and social sciences. This is also an appropriate stage to provide children with a sense of history and national perspective and give them opportunities to understand their constitutional duties and rights as citizens. Conscious internalization of a healthy work ethos and of the values of a humane and composite culture will be brought about through appropriately formulates curricula” (Experts from National Policy on Education (1986). In the context of gender, this policy mentions that sex stereotyping in vocational and professional courses will be eliminated and women’s participation in non-traditional occupations, and emergent technologies would be encouraged.

The CABE Committee on Universalisation of Secondary Education (2005) stated that high quality secondary education would be provided to all adolescent girls and boys up to the age of 16 by 2015 and up to the age of 18 by 2020. The National Curriculum Framework 2005 also mentions that secondary school is period of intense physical change and formations of identity. It is also the period of intense vibrancy and energy. The ability for abstract reasoning and logical thinking emerges, allowing children the possibility of deep engagement with both understanding and generating knowledge beyond here and now. A critical understanding of the self in relation to society also emerges during this period.

In order to translate the policy statement into practice, the RMSA Scheme not only lays thrust on universalization of secondary education for Classes IX and X, but makes a specific mention of addressing gender disparities in education and promoting education of girls from varying socio-economic backgrounds.

The focus of RMSA is also gear towards making specific reforms in teaching and learning process and in all those related activities that would make the schooling ethos inclusive in all aspects.

1.3 Objectives:

- To familiarize RMSA functionaries on equity interventions provided in the Scheme with a focus on girls
- To identify gender bias and stereotypes in textual materials
- To encourage teachers to adopt participatory approaches in the teaching and learning process
- To make classroom environment gender inclusive

1.4 Strategies for Enhancing Girls' Participation at Secondary Level:

The enrolment scenario of girls at secondary stage of education is mentioned in Table 1.

Table1: Gross Enrolment Ratios

All Categories						
Years	Class VI-VIII (11-13 Years)		Class IX-X (14-15 Years)		Class XI-XII (16-17 Years)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
2006-07	77.59	69.64	58.57	47.44	31.53	26.09
2007-08	81.48	74.36	62.62	53.23	36.26	30.40
2008-09	82.7	76.6	64.8	55.5	37.2	31.6
2009-10	84.53	78.30	66.65	58.45	38.31	33.31
2010-11	87.7	83.1	69.0	60.8	42.2	36.1
Scheduled Castes						
2006-07	83.14	67.33	58.30	44.57	29.18	21.84
2007-08	82.07	78.08	55.81	48.99	30.12	25.31
2008-09	86.8	83.3	66.2	58.7	35.6	30.7
2009-10	90.51	86.59	71.19	63.50	37.42	33.48
2010-11	93.8	90.6	74.0	67.5	40.3	36.1
Scheduled Tribes						
2006-07	80.22	68.22	47.48	35.49	23.39	14.72
2007-08	81.09	70.16	48.84	37.22	24.25	16.20
2008-09	85.7	76.4	51.7	40.7	27.7	19.4
2009-10	87.81	78.81	54.24	44.22	31.36	22.32
2010-11	90.7	87.0	57.1	49.1	32.7	24.8

Source: Statistics of School Education, MHRD, GOI, New Delhi. Various years reports

The above table depicts that the participation of girls at the secondary stage of education in comparison to elementary stage has witnessed a decline. Further in comparison to boys in all succeeding years, the participation of girls is less as compared to boys at the secondary level. However, the participation of girls since 2006 has been growing every year but the gender disparities continue to exist. This phenomenon has also been visible among girls belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Activities

- Collect information regarding enrolment of girl's education at secondary stage in your block/district/state.
- Identify reasons for lack of participation of girls at secondary stage.
- Suggest strategies for enhancing participation.

In order to give effect to universalization of secondary education and bridge gender gaps, special provisions have been made for girls to enhance their participation at this stage of education. A National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education was launched in 2008. It covers all SC/ST girls who pass Class VIII and girls who pass Class VIII examination from Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (irrespective of whether they belong to Scheduled Castes or Tribes) and enroll for Class IX in State/ UT Government, Government-aided or local body schools in the academic year 2008-09 onwards. Beneficiaries of the scheme should be below 16 years of age (as on 31st March) on joining Class IX. A sum of Rs.3,000/- is deposited in the name of eligible girls as fixed deposit. The girls are entitled to withdraw the sum along with interest thereon on reaching 18 years of age and on passing 10th Class examination.

The other initiative is related to construction and management of Girl's Hostel for students of secondary and higher secondary schools. This scheme was launched in 2008-09 and implemented in 2009-10. 100 bedded girl's hostel to be set-up in each of 3479 Educationally Backward Blocks (EGGs). The girl students in the age group of 14-18 years studying in Classes IX and XII belonging to SC, ST, OBC, Minority communities and BPL families will form the target group of the scheme. 50% of seats would be reserved for them. Students passing out of KGBV will be given preference in admission in hostels. Further, more female teachers in schools and separate toilet blocks for girls have been envisaged.

Activities

A. Prepare a small table of your State on the following:

Year	Girls Beneficiaries of RMSA Incentives	Community composition				Total (%)
	(No.)	SC	ST	OBC	General	
2012-13						
2014-15						

B. Collect information on number of girls enrolled under the Girls Hostel in the secondary and higher secondary schools in the last three year in your state.

In the context of quality and equity related concerns, teaching learning reforms have been stated under the RMSA scheme that include textual materials, pedagogical processes, transmission of hidden messages, classroom and outside classroom activities and overall assessment that include self, peer and group assessment.

1.5 Textbooks and Gender

In the Indian context textbooks are important repository of knowledge. It is an important teaching and learning material that teachers and students rely upon across the country. Implicit and explicit knowledge woven in textual materials pertain to the domain of social science, science, mathematics, languages and other emerging & applied fields of knowledge. The content of all disciplines are determined by experts, who de-limit it as per age, ability and level of understanding of children. In addition, books are part of the social milieu and they attempt to mirror social realities. Therefore, some very crucial questions that arise in minds of all stakeholders are:

- Do textbooks reflect social realities?
- How do they address issues and concerns of different segments of society?
- How are Gender relations portrayed in the content, visuals and exercises?
- Are Human values woven in textbooks?
- Do textbooks depict sensitivity towards the habitat?
- Do they inculcate reading habits among children?

In contemporary times globalization has led to expansion in information technology. Children can now have access to different disciplines through the usage of internet, by browsing e-books and accessing different websites. However in small town and in the rural areas printed textual materials continues to be an important aid underlying the contours of disciplinary knowledge.

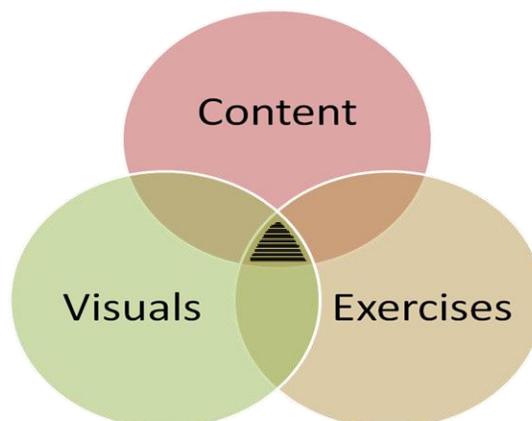
Since textual materials are pivotal sources of knowledge it is important that they include issues of equity and equality, as children both boys and girls from all segments of society access them. Therefore, portrayal of Gender relation and their contributions are important in the thematic selection pertaining to all disciplines and their portrayal in the visual depiction.

Textual materials world over and in the Indian context have been analyzed from different perspectives including gender. A gender audit of textual material would help in knowing:

- Whether textual materials relates to all disciplines address contributions and achievement of men and women in an adequate manner.
- Whether textbooks reflect heterogeneous identities of all groups in an inclusive manner
- Whether textbooks bridge all segments of society related to gender, caste, class and religion and location.
- Whether they assist in initiating transformatory attitudinal changes among learners
- Whether they help in addressing different forms of conflicts
- Whether they sensitize on promoting critical thinking among children for questioning stereotypes, myths and misconceptions and customary practices derogatory to the status of women.

In the construction of knowledge in different subjects' domains, it is important to analyze the content, visuals and exercises of the textbooks from a gender perspective. Given below is a diagram to know whether themes in books represent gender in all the three parameter of analysis.

Textbooks Windows of Knowledge Construction



 **Ideal Gender portrayal in the Content, Visuals and Exercises.**

For analyzing textbooks an evaluation tool is given below. You may use it for analyzing any books at the secondary stage.

Activities

Take any textbook taught to children at the secondary stage. Analyze the textbook from the perspective of gender sensitivity in the content, visuals and exercises. A tool is given for helping you to examine the book from a gender lens.

EVALUATION TOOL FOR TEXTBOOKS ANALYSIS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

A. IDENTIFICATION DATA

1. Title of the text book –
2. Class –
3. Subject –
4. Language –
5. Authors/writing team –
 - No. of females -
 - No. of males -
6. Editors –
 - No. of females -
 - No. of males -
7. Month and Year of Publication –
8. Total no. of pages –
9. Total no. of lessons -
10. Publisher's Full Address –
11. Cover page/back page from the perspective of gender bias and stereotyping –
 - Description of visuals (Masculinity/Feminity/Gender Neutral/Any other)
 - Description of content
12. Inside of cover page/back page from the perspective of gender bias and stereotyping -
 - Description of visuals
 - Description of content
13. Any other information
14. Suggestions

B. CONTENT AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

1. Lesson/chapter/unit –
2. Title/theme –
3. Total no. of Pages

Content	Visuals	Comments	Suggestions	Exercises/ Projects/ Activities

While analyzing the content and visuals, there is a need to look into the following parameters -

(a) Content analysis should clearly reflect whether there is any form of gender bias, gender stereotyping or is it gender neutral or gender inclusive.

- I. Content allocation

- II. Adjectives used for boys and girls, men and women in the theme
- III. Diversity in men and women reflected in the text
- IV. Gender representation of occupations
- V. Roles assigned – boys/men/girls/women /both
- VI. Human values in relation to men/boys and women/girls
- VII. Reference to customary practices
- VIII. Weight-age given to the contributions/achievements of boys/girls, men/women or both.
- IX. Are marginalized groups and their cultures and lifestyles represented?
- X. Are prejudices mentioned?
- XI. Does the narrative speak only of a particular caste and class?
- XII. How is power relations reflected?
- XIII. Who takes the decision in the area of food, education, all money matters, health, occupation and any other?
- XIV. Does the theme reflect diverse areas of contributions of women substantially or in a tokenistic manner?
- XV. How are women reflected in different domains of society in relation to Family
 - School
 - Workplace
 - Society
- XVI. Distribution of workload by gender in a framework of fairness.
- XVII. Who performs productive activities related to production of goods and services for income generation?
- XVIII. Who performs activities related to collection of water, nursing, child care, fetching fuel wood and all activities related to household chores?
- XIX. Who performs community activities – welfare related, organizing meetings, marriage, funeral, religious activities, neighbourhood meetings, any other?
 - Who takes the initiative in such activities – Men/Women/Both
- XX. Who are shown as agents of change :
 1. struggle
 2. dissent
 3. movements
 4. scientific attitude/temper
 5. scientific achievements

(b) Visuals

- I. Representation of men and women
 - Active role –
 - Passive role –

C. TOTAL NUMBER OF CHARACTERS IN CONTENT AND VISUALS

- Male -
- Female –
- Both—(such as humans, them, them, those, people, us, you, us, him/her, etc.)

D. EXERCISES/PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

- Does the exercise explore issues related to gender, class, and caste?
- Do exercises attempt to question power relations?
- Do they help children to connect with their lived realities?
- Does it promote critical thinking and problem solving skills?
- Does it promote imagination and creativity among children?
- Does it encourage team spirit and cooperation among them?

E. OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE TEXTBOOKS RELATED TO CONTENT AND VISUAL PORTRAYAL

Perception of the book from the view point of –

- Gender Bias
- Gender Stereotyping
- Gender Inclusive
- Gender Neutral
- Power Structure
- Thematic consistency, coherence and contextualization
- Reference to Technology and its use by men/women, boys/girls, both
- Progression of the discipline and its positioning at various class levels (Thematic)

*** This tool is suggestive in nature. It can be adopted, adapted as per the requirement of the context.**

1.6 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. 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.

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Activities

While delivering the content related to different disciplines at this stage, you may adopt the following methods with a focus on gender concerns:

- Explain different concepts with clarity and give examples from the children's lived realities?
- Use teaching aids as readily as possible
- Use thoughts of eminent thinkers on gender sensitivity.
- Make your teaching dialogical
- Use project methods
- Encourage team work
- Use quiz, debates and other techniques for better participation and understanding
- Give opportunities to children for voicing their opinions
- Discuss their doubts and difficulties
- Address social issues through theatre, folk songs and drama.

Curriculum and Gender

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. The boundary or discipline in Sciences gets carved at secondary stage like Physics, Chemistry, and Biology under the broader rubric of Science.

Activities

- 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 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 at secondary stage should give learners the opportunity for exploring mathematical 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 math's.

Activities

- 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
- In the inside of front and back of cover pages of textbooks you can include messages on promoting girl's education

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.

Activities

- Discuss the impact of French revolution, Russian revolution on the lives and conditions of women.
- Collect photographs, important sayings, messages related to these revolutions. See how women are portrayed.
- Write a brief biography on the lives of revolutionary women for example Olympe de Gouges.
- Encourage children to use oral and visual material to reconstruct revolutions.
- You may organize a discussion on activities done by men and women in agricultural, industrial, and service sectors of our economy in the last five years.
- Teaching aid can be developed on various indicators related to demographic composition of Indian population, literacy rate, sex ratio, enrolment, and dropout rates.
- Project work can be given on analyzing government of India's budget and its sectoral allocation for the last five years with the gender lens.
- For understanding the diverse landscape of India you may design activities on identifying songs, food consumed, dance, festivals, and dresses across different regions of India.
- Posters and modules can be prepared on the role of women as conservers and preservers of our habitat.
- Biographies of women environmentalists can be prepared.
- Quiz can be designed on participation of women in different structures of governance.
- Graphical representation on elected women in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha can be prepared.

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.

Activities

- 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 saint poets of India can be compiled and translated.
- In language classes you should attempt to use gender inclusive words such as they, them, us, we, you, he/ she, him/ her.
- You may ask children to write essay on gender equality.

Gender inclusive terms that can be used -

Gender-Bias Terms	Gender-Inclusive Terms
Mankind	Human kind
Policeman	Police Officer
Fireman	Firefighter
Chairman	Chairperson
Waiter	Server
Businessman	Business executive
Steward	Stewardess Flight attendant
First basemen	First base player
Brotherhood	Kinship
Manning	Staffing
Manpower	Workforce
Security man	Security Officer
Mailman/Postman	Mail/letter carrier
He	He/She, they/ them, himself/herself
Craftsman	Craftsperson
Brotherly	Friendly, co-operative
Miss, Mrs	Ms
The story of man	The story of humans
Man made	Human constructed

1.7 Hidden Curriculum:

Hidden curriculum is an important component of diverse schooling process operating across our country. It is an integral part of all activities that take place within and outside classrooms that are learned but not openly intended. Hidden curriculum 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.

The important visible sites that reflect hidden curriculum are pedagogical processes, classroom management and all curricular activities that take place in schools.

Activities

In all activities conducted in schools, you may reflect on the following. Does it promote gender sensitivity?

- Use of Language to address children
- Your body language
- Touch
- Eye contact
- Adjectives used in addressing boys and girls
- Gestures
- Movement while teaching and conducting different curricular activities.
- Addressing physical and emotional conflicts during and after school hours.
- Address issues of growing up and all forms of abuse in adolescence.
- Use theatre, drama and audio video for sensitizing students on learning to live together.

Activities

- You can avoid use of adjectives like beautiful, pretty, obedient, submissive for girls and brave, courageous, strong, handsome for boys.
- Use your eye contact for all children in your class. Try and find out children who look isolated and uninterested.
- Encouraging remarks like excellent, good, well done, should be used for both boys and girls.
- Try to avoid abusive and stigmatic language.
- You can start movement in class to know if there is any conflict among peers
- Discuss with students and let them share their viewpoints
- Involve students in all the activities
- Find out about reasons for lack of participations among girls

1.8 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. 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. 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.
- The teacher must also entrust the responsibility of organizing classroom activities equally to both the sexes.
- To develop effective oral communications skills, reading and recitation should be jointly assigned to boys and girls with correct pronunciation, voice modulation and expressions.
- The teacher should be able to identify slow learners and organize appropriate remedial classes for them.
- In the teaching learning process, special emphasis must be given to sharing of examples of women achievers who have contributed to different fields. This will help in attitudinal reconstruction.
- 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, 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 apprehensions.
- The concept of equality of sexes may be explained by elaborating on the intelligence and capabilities of girls and women. The teacher must also ensure equal participation of boys and girls in activities like drawing, painting, music and dance.

Activities

You may use this checklist for classroom management for gender sensitivity

Classroom Management	Boys	Girls	Both
1. Sitting Arrangements -Random -Mixed -Separate			
2. Teaching Learning Materials available -Textbooks -Supplementary/ Resource materials -Stationery items -Any other			
3. Bulletin Boards -User friendly -Not user friendly			
4. Roles assigned -Boys -Girls -Both			
5. Monitors -Boys -Girls -Both			
6. Assignment of Responsibility			
7. Cleaning Classrooms, Blackboards, Bulletin Board, any other			
8. Getting water, chalk, duster, copies, books, registers, any other			
9. Leaders of different groups Academic groups such as – Debates and quiz, reading, writing, essay, any other			
10. Cultural group such as – Music, dance, any other			
11. Any other activities			
12. Participation in classrooms			
13. Questioning			

- 14. Answering
 - Frequently
 - Sometimes
 - Not responding

- 15. Providing Additional Information
 - Frequently
 - Sometimes
 - Not responding

- 16. Any other

1.9 Assessment

Studies have shown that there are gender differences among learners. They are mainly due to physical, intellectual, social, emotional and linguistic factors. Diversity among learners makes it imperative for teacher educators and teachers to evolve inclusive assessment strategies which are free from all biases. A lot of intervention strategies have been specified in the NCERT Training Material for Teacher Educators on Gender Equality and Empowerment: Gender and Schooling Processes Volume II. During assessment, students can be provided with items of critical analysis so that they are able to recognize and challenge the construction of gender relations in their life experiences.

There is a need to focus on verbal expressions as girls lack self-esteem and self-confidence due to socialization. Real life experiences related to exclusion of different forms, faced by children and other stake holders can be discussed and analyzed in class and outside classroom activities for purposes of making assessment gender sensitive. Gender sensitivity on the part of all stake holders is required, particularly teachers for understanding that there are many contributing factors in students' life such as family and culture, health and peer pressure which effects performance and influence the quality and nature of assessment.

Critical analysis of films, videos, television shows, news, current affairs, radio, music, video clippings can be used to link assessment with real life situations. By using different forms of print and audio visual Medias as an assessment strategy, children will be able to understand the meaning of equality, equity, diversity and differences operating in different contexts related to family, school, work places and society at large. Further, children will also be able to construct how caste, class, gender and location affect the personality of the children particularly the girl child. In this context, empowering images of girlhood and womanhood can be reiterated as an inclusive strategy

for building the self-esteem and self-worth of girls. Currently, a lot of television shows are focusing on women centric themes and issues such as the women’s assertion of creative space, voice, agency and exaltation of domesticity/domestic spaces which enable women to forge deep emotional bonds with significant others. All these reinforce positive self-image of girls and women. This positive portrayal of women/girls can be adopted by teachers as examples for assessment.

Group assessment exercises may be given to all children for promoting human values related to learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together for addressing and solving varieties of gender based problems and issues. This may be facilitated by forming groups of diverse learners in multiple schooling contexts. Review of items of assessment need to be undertaken on a regular basis to make questions of different forms free of biases and stereotypes.

Thus, teachers need to be trained on above mentioned parameters; in addition they need to analyze their own perceptions on assessment procedures to make it inclusive for all. For assessing students from the perspective of gender sensitivity, you may use the checklist given below.

Activities					
You can assess children in different domain of knowledge by following self-assessment chart, peer assessment chart and group assessment chart.					
Self-Assessment Chart for Secondary Class Students:					
Skills	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Below average
I can ask questions					
I can understand cause and effect relation					
I can link with my immediate environment					
I can reflect critically					
I can express my ideas in my own words orally and through writing					
I can add to the body of knowledge					
I can select relevant readings					
I can serve the internet to acquaint myself with the latest development					
I can begin to draw linkages with other subjects of Science, Social Science, language and mathematics					

I can collect information on contribution made by men and women in different fields related to my subject					
I can understand the phenomenon of continuity and change in all subjects at the secondary stage					
I am able to recognize gender bias in visuals and content					
Group skills					
I can discuss my ideas with group					
I can work as a team member without confronting other's opinions					
I respect others' views					
I am receptive to others' viewpoints					
I am not gender biased					
I am able to convince gender bias and stereotypes in textbooks in visuals/content					
Attitudes					
I appreciate others' viewpoint					
I value the beliefs held by others					
I try to understand differences					
I can contribute and work in a caring and sharing mode					
I respect diversity and difference					
I am able to value the contributions made by girls and women in family, school, workplace and in the community					

Activities					
Peer-Assessment Chart:					
Skills	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Below average
Learning skills – My peers, partners					
Can ask questions					
Can understand cause and effect relation					
Can link with my immediate environment					

Can reflect critically					
Can express orally and through writing					
Can add to the body of knowledge					
Can select relevant readings					
Can serve the internet to acquaint with the latest development					
Can begin to draw linkages with other subjects of Science, Social Science, Language and Mathematics					
Can collect information on contributions made by men and women in different fields					
Can understand the phenomenon of continuity and change in subjects offered at this stage of education					
Can understand gender bias and stereotype in content and visuals					
Group skills					
Can discuss ideas with group					
Can work as a team members without confronting other's opinions					
Respect others' views					
Receptive to others' viewpoints					
Can avoid being gender biased					
Attitudes					
Appreciate others' viewpoint					
Valuing the beliefs held by others					
Trying to understand differences					
Work in a caring and sharing mode					
Understanding diversity and difference					
Valuing contributions made by girls and women in family, school, workplace and in the community					

Activities					
Group-Assessment Chart:					
Skills	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Below average
Learning skills – My group					

Ask questions					
Understand cause and effect relation					
Link with my immediate environment					
Reflect critically					
Express orally and through writing					
Add to the body of knowledge					
Select relevant readings					
Serve the internet to acquaint with the latest development					
Begin to draw linkages with other subjects of science, social Science, language and mathematics					
Collect information on contribution made by men and women in different fields					
Understand the phenomenon of continuity and change in subjects offered at this stage of education					
Group skills					
Discuss ideas with group					
Work as a team members without confronting other's opinions					
Respect other's views					
Receptive to others' viewpoints					
Locate gender bias and stereotypes					
Attitudes					
Appreciate others' viewpoint					
Valuing the beliefs held by others					
Trying to understand differences					
Work in a caring and sharing mode					
Understanding diversity and difference					

1.10 Concluding Remark:

Gender concerns in education need to be addressed seriously in the context of globalization, liberalization and explosion in the field of information technology. These changes have impacted the lives and conditions of people from all sections of society. In the context of gender, women and girls continue to occupy a secondary status in society, despite their participation in different

capacities in all sectors of the economy. Further, they face the brunt of physical and emotional violence and their bodies get commodified in print and audio-visual media. Also, demographic indicators, like the phenomena of declining sex ratio, gender disparities at secondary and senior secondary stages of education, has made gender an important area of concern for policy makers, educationists, planners and all members of the civil society. While the previous Focus Group Paper has focused on these issues, yet there is a need to relook at these emerging contemporary challenges faced by girls and women from all walks of life. Attempts should be made to integrate gender concerns with all the mainstream disciplines. Lot of research in the arena of gender studies suggest an interdisciplinary approach needs to be encouraged wherein gender issues can be looked in from a holistic lens by adopting different research methodologies from the field of Social Science, Sciences and Education.

Therefore, all capacity building programmes designed for RMSA should once again mainstream gender concerns by emphasizing on four C's – i.e. Concern, Consciousness, Capacity building and Capabilities among all children particularly girls from the most marginalized groups for empowerment and their overall participation.

“We sing of our pain and suffering’

We have bad dreams-

No one understands

One day our life will be different

A new sun is about to rise

A new future awaits us”

Folk song from Madhya Pradesh

SOURCE: Annual report 2002- 2003, Department of Women and Child, MHRD

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