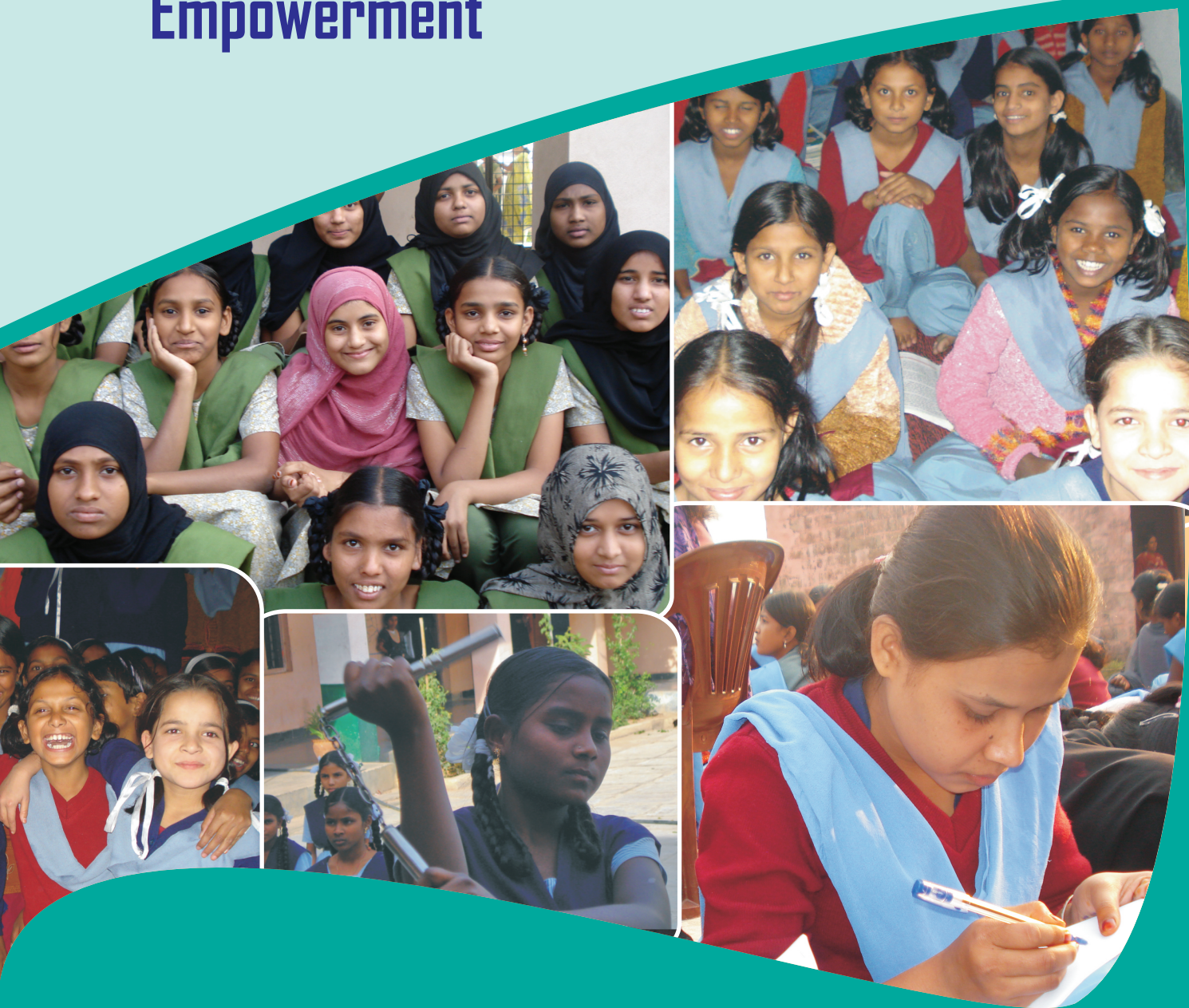


# Training Material for Teacher Educators on Gender Equality and Empowerment



Perspectives on Gender and Society

Vol. I



राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

# Training Material for Teacher Educators on Gender Equality and Empowerment

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## Perspectives on Gender and Society

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### Volume I



जेंडर अध्ययन विभाग

Department of Gender Studies

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्

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## FOREWORD

As we know, children are the chief agents of their learning, and teachers are a major resource for this. As professionals, the teachers contribute in imparting quality education and bringing about a qualitative change in the learning environment. The role of teacher educators is equally crucial, as they can motivate the teachers to adopt inclusive pedagogical process that keeps the learner perspective in mind in planning curricular activities.

The National Policy of Education (1986) viewed education as an instrument of social transformation that would eliminate curriculum biases and enable professionals such as teachers, decision makers, administrators and planners to 'play' a positive interventionist role for gender equality. The Programme of Action (POA), 1992, clearly emphasizes training all teachers and instructors as agents of women's empowerment, developing gender sensitization programmes for teacher educators and administrators, developing gender-sensitive curriculum and removal of sex bias from textbooks.

The National Curriculum Framework, 2005, propagates the need for the teachers' role shifting from being a source of knowledge to being a facilitator of learning. In the training required for this, adequate efforts should be made to bring about attitudinal changes. The best way to bring about this is to stress the criticality of being able to recognize one's own biases and act upon them to maintain a 'gender bias free' approach in one's work. This is expected to make teachers aware of the prevalent attitudinal problems and at the same time gear them up to make conscious efforts to avoid/minimise discriminatory practices that can impact the growing up of boys and girls.

The Focus Group on Gender Issues in Education (2006) has also emphasized on teacher training to be more self reflective, participatory and research oriented. It states that resource material need to be developed to provide inputs to teacher and teacher educators as to how the gender issues can be woven into the teaching learning process.

The training of teacher educators has always been a priority of the Department of Women's Studies, NCERT. These training programmes have been instrumental in generating awareness on gender issues in education. States and NGOs and other organisations working in the area of gender issues can utilize this training material to train their own educational personnel or use it as a resource material.

The approach followed in the material is based on the position paper on 'Gender Issues in Education' wherein it is stated that gender should not be treated as a add on approach but as a cross cutting edge in all disciplinary areas. The present material is gender inclusive and will also enable the teachers to understand key concepts related to gender and how they operate in reality through various institutions. This material will provide an opportunity for self introspection and self

reflection of their own socialization processes and will encourage them to question and critique existing power relations and customary practices. It will enable them to integrate their experiences with the content of different disciplines for weaving issues related to boys and girls.

While the authors have made each module participatory and focus upon building imagination and creativity in school settings, all modules are based upon an evolving and developing approach. The readers can adopt and adapt according to their needs and context. A range of sample activity has been incorporated. Additions to this material are welcome and users can utilize their own context specific knowledge and experience while transacting the modules. The training material is divided into three volumes according to the focus of the various themes. These volumes are:

Volume 1: Perspectives on Gender and Society

Volume 2: Gender and Schooling Processes

Volume 3: Gender and Women's Empowerment

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of the authors, editors and coordinators towards the creation and finalization of the three volumes.

As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions on this material, and its utilization.

New Delhi  
*June 2013*

*Director*  
National Council of Educational  
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# Introduction

Volume I : 'Perspectives on Gender and Society' comprises of a set of six modules which build our perspective about gender and society from a multiple lens. Each of these modules are interdisciplinary in nature and give an insight into how gender is perceived, constructed and translated into different disciplines and domains such as the personal, social, public and economic. This volume aims at building awareness and understanding among different stakeholder groups like teachers, teacher educators, researchers, policy planners, administrators, legal experts about the interface of gender issues with different facets of society.

The first module, *Sex and Gender* makes a subtle distinction between these two terms through the incorporation of activities. While sex is biological, gender is a social construct. The chapter also delineates the stereotypical attitudes and notions allied with specific gender roles. The activities incorporated as a part of this chapter would enable practitioners to generate awareness about gender complementarity among the participant groups.

The second module, *Indicators of Gender Equality and Empowerment* flags the idea of bringing about equality and empowerment through transformation in the processes of schooling and education (which includes adult education facilitating social and

community awareness). A life stage approach, suggested in this module can be effectively implemented as a part of Life Skills Education. This author dwells on the practical aspects of fostering empowerment amongst girls and women and gives an insight into curriculum planning, formulation and implementation. It weaves together the gender aspects by charting out the various subject specific indicators, which can be incorporated and analysed as a part of gender friendly approach (especially in subjects such as Literature and Social Science). This module also aims at building awareness not only among teacher educators and policy makers but also those workers who work in the rural/backward areas. The information about the variety of schemes introduced by the Government might dispel the ignorance of rural/backward women and propel them to work for their betterment, thereby facilitating greater participation of women in the legal, social, economic and political spheres. This module could be a part of the adult/rural education project and is of great relevance to teacher educators, policy planners, administrators, researchers and academicians working in the field of gender.

The third module, *Gender Budgeting* as a cross cutting point emphasises the need for equal allocation of budget for the holistic development of both boys and girls.

The author proposes that only if there is such an allocation can the constitutional goals of equity and equality be achieved. The concept of gender budgeting would be extremely significant in training policy planners and practitioners to analyze the budget from a gender lens so that the benefits of development are shared by all and sustainable development is gender enclosing. This module also lays stress on the importance of a gender inclusive budget, which aims at allocating the budgetary provisions according to the needs and requirements of both men and women.

The fourth module, *Gender, Media and Education* juxtaposes the role of media in perpetuating stereotypical gender roles and attitudes as well as their potent role in critiquing and subverting these gendered notions. The author emphasizes on the role of new media and its inaccessibility to certain sections of society, especially women. She questions the conspicuous invisibility of women in media, especially the print and the television media, covering news as well as the commodification of women in films and advertisements. The module emphasises that an all inclusive media can play a pivotal role in changing age old attitudes by projecting and depicting women in empowered roles and positions. Media studies as such can efficaciously be integrated as a part of the school curriculum by the teachers who can sensitise the

learners towards objectionable content by invoking their critical thinking abilities.

The fifth module, *Gender and Violence* spells out the laws which exist for the redressal of crimes against women. It succeeds in building awareness about these laws. It not only highlights the kinds of violence that women face, but also carries a citation of real life incidents. It ends by presenting a set of suggestions on the pedagogical measures which could be taken at the level of school, community and society to curb violence and masochism against women.

The sixth module, *Gender, Science and Technology* highlights the gender bias in the area of science education with specific reference to the conspicuous invisibility of women in such arenas due to the socio-cultural biases and prejudices and unfriendly working environment. It suggests some practical interventions which could be undertaken by the teachers and teacher educators to remove the bias, thereby encouraging the girls and women to undertake further research and studies in the area of science education.

Apart from the theoretical enrichment, this module also aims at gender sensitization and suggests certain practical interventions and strategies which could be incorporated in varied arenas such as education, schooling, media and economy at large to foster gender equality, equity and women's empowerment.

# Module 1

## Sex and Gender

### Structure of the Module

- 1.1 Overview
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Objectives
- 1.4 What are Stereotypes?
- 1.5 Common Gender Stereotypes
- 1.6 Gender Relations and Roles
- 1.7 References

### 1.1 OVERVIEW

In this module, we will reflect upon the differences between the concepts of 'Sex' and 'Gender'. We will also examine the ways in which gender roles and stereotypes are socially constructed and the role that education can play in bringing about a change.

### 1.2 INTRODUCTION

**Sex** refers to the biological difference between men and women, while **Gender**

refers to the socially constructed differences between them. These socially constructed differences can change over time and are also likely to vary within a given society and from one culture to the other. Our Gender Identity determines how we are perceived and how we are expected to behave as men and women. The main differences between the two terms are presented in the box below:

Sex	Gender
Sex is natural.	Gender is a socio-cultural construct.
Sex is biological and it refers to visible differences in genitalia and related differences in procreative functions.	It refers to the masculine and feminine qualities, behaviour, roles and responsibilities that society upholds.
Sex is constant, it remains the same everywhere.	Gender is variable; it changes from time to time, culture to culture, even family to family.
Sex cannot be changed without complex medical intervention.	Gender can be changed/ re-oriented.

### 1.3 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the concepts of sex, gender and transgender
- To analyze the role of culture in creating gender stereotypes
- To appreciate the ways in which education can help women to question and deal with gender stereotypes.

### 1.4 WHAT ARE STEREOTYPES?

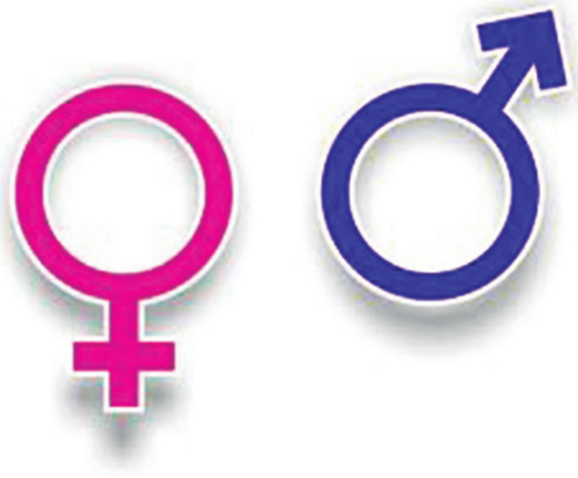
As we grow up, the socialisation processes shape our self concept and our expectations from ourselves and others around us. In this process certain patterns and mindsets also get transmitted from one generation to the other.

**Stereotypes** are “Unduly fixed mental impressions” or reducing a person to a mere instance of a characteristic (Oxford English Dictionary). Gender stereotypes are socially constructed beliefs about men and women. They are usually manifested in sayings, songs, proverbs, media, religion, culture, customs, educational practices etc

They vary substantially overtime and among cultures. The fact that individuals are likely to think of a ‘man’ when they hear the word surgeon illustrates how we all hold beliefs, attitudes and stereotypes about the occupations of men and women. These greatly influence our perception of the world around us.

Think about an elementary school teacher. Which sex do you associate with an elementary school teacher? Now think about a fashion model. Which sex do you associate with a fashion model? Now think about an engineer. Which sex do you associate with being an engineer?

Most individuals still indicate that elementary school teachers are female, models are female, and engineers are males. Stereotypes refer to individuals’ pre-determined cognitions that may not correspond with social reality.



*Pink equals to girl and blue equals to boy*

A stereotype is a picture that we carry in our minds and not necessarily an accurate mirror of the real world. The mass media act as important agents of socialisation, together with the family and peers, contributing to the shaping and perpetuation of gender roles and gender stereotypes.

What we see in our environment particularly in our homes, school and place of work and on television, on radio, in the newspapers and magazines influence our thoughts. Our imagination of, who is capable of doing what, is in relation to what we see happening most often. Parents communicate their stereotypes to children in numerous ways. Indian girls grow up with a deep-rooted sense of fear and insecurity, which not only restricts their social mobility in every day life but also often psychologically cripples them to face the hardships of life in general and resist gender based discrimination in particular. This division of gender roles flows almost directly from the popular notions and beliefs that are fostered in society. These images can be noticed in most Indian families in varying degrees. It is important to recognise

### Activity

1. Relate the following characteristics with male or female:

Characteristics	Female	Male
Dependent		
Powerful		
Competent		
Emotional		
Decision-makers		
Housekeepers		
Leaders		
Fickle		
Consistent		
Fearful		
Brave		

The list is not exhaustive and you can add more examples.  
 What do you find? Observe your responses. Do you agree? Do you think your opinion will change?

.....  
 .....

that these images leave a deep imprint upon women’s self-perception.

#### 1.5 COMMON GENDER STEREOTYPES

Some of you may and some may not. It is our interpretation of what we think males and females are. Others may challenge these stereotypes. It is also because these stereotypes are created by the society we live in. They are not guided by nature. Since childhood, as an individual develops a self-concept, these stereotypes get reinforced through socialization. The process may start with the kind of toys given to the children to play with and continue with the type of clothes and colours that parents use for daughters and sons. Gradually, family, peers, school, books and media play a very important role in building them up, irrespective of our age, sex, place of residence and occupation.

**Gender identity** is our psychological awareness or sense of being male or being female and one of the most obvious and important aspects of our self-concept. There are several factors which determine gender identity. It is generally consistent with chromosomal sex. This does not necessarily mean that gender identity is determined biologically. People tend to be reared as either males or females. Gender identity is said to be influenced by both biological and psychosocial factors. Gender is thus, the psychological sense of being female or being male and internalizing the roles that society ascribes to gender. It is a complex concept that is based partly on anatomy, partly on the psychology of the individual, and partly on culture and tradition. It is a social construct. Is the society only divided between male and female or there is a third sex.

### Activity

Tick whether the following functions are associated with sex or gender.

Function	Sex	Gender
Breastfeeding		
Cooking		
Menstruation		
Growing a beard		
Boxing		
Breaking of Voice		

**Social Construction of Gender:** In regard to different phenomena, objects and events that exist in the world in which we live, we develop or construct an image. We develop our own understanding about them. This “every day sense of things” forms the foundation of the social construction of reality. Social construction is a continuous process in which both the individual and the wider social processes play a part. Social processes like socialization and education also help to make these constructions. Gender is an example of such social construction. The above exercise is intended to test whether or not we understand the difference between sex and gender. Breastfeeding, menstruation, growing a beard and the breaking of voice are biological processes associated with sex. Cooking and boxing are activities traditionally associated with men or women that have no biological basis: they are therefore a function of gender.

### 1.6 GENDER RELATIONS AND ROLES

**Gender Relations:** These are socially constituted and are not derived from biology. Biological differences are permanent with the rare exception of those who undergo sex changes. Gender relations and roles are dynamic. They are shaped through the

history of social relations and interactions. They vary over time and place and between different groups of people. They may also be impacted by other factors, such as race, class, ethnicity and disability.

**Gender Roles:** These are the social norms that dictate socially appropriate male and female behaviour. Earlier, it was common for a woman to be a submissive homemaker in contrast to the male’s breadwinner role. However, over the last few decades this perception has undergone a considerable change especially in urban areas. In fact, the efforts made by the Indian Constitution and later by academia, policy makers and NGOs have been able to invalidate gender roles, in the sense that





women are not considered secondary to men anymore. At the same time, the fact that gender roles exist is indisputable.

Gender roles influence women and men and even transgender in virtually every area of life including family and occupation. Early in their childhood, girls and boys are treated differently in families, schools and other institutions. Girls are encouraged to play with dolls, kitchen sets and playhouse type of toys, while boys with trucks, construction games and army toys. Boys are played with in a rough manner and told to “rough it out” when they get hurt. Girls are taught to be more passive and expressive with their feelings. Whether

these gender roles are fair or not, is where the argument begins. Does the fact that we are treated differently based on our sex prevent us from reaching equality or are we treated differently because we are different by nature?

Some of the situations in which we see gender differences are as follows:

**Social:** Different perceptions of women’s and men’s social roles. The man is seen as head of the household and chief breadwinner; the woman is seen as a nurturer and care-giver.

**Political:** Differences in the ways in which women and men assume and share power and authority. Men may be more involved in national and higher level politics; women are more involved at the local level in activities linked to their domestic roles.

**Educational:** Differences in educational opportunities and expectations from girls and boys are seen. Families may invest more resources in boys’ education rather than girls’ education. Girls may be streamed into less challenging academic tracks.

**Economic:** Differences in women’s and men’s access to lucrative careers and control

### Activity

1. Fill out the following table of the biologically and socially determined roles of men and women.

	Biologically determined roles	Socially constructed roles
Home		
Work place		
Community		

2. Identify gender roles from the following-

- Women give birth to babies, men don’t.
- Little girls are gentle and timid; boys are tough and adventurous.
- In many countries, women earn 70 per cent of what men earn.
- Women can breast-feed babies.
- Women are in charge of raising children.
- Men are decision makers.
- Boys’ voices break at puberty.
- Women are forbidden from working in dangerous jobs such as underground mining.

of financial and other productive resources like credit and loans; land ownership.

The reproductive role is the only one that is biologically determined. The roles in the home, community and work place are “grafted” onto these biological roles. Thus it is assumed that because women give birth to children, therefore, they must care for them and for the home and offer voluntary “care” services in the community. Gender stereotypes are carried into the work place, where women predominate in the “care” professions like being teachers, doctors, secretaries, nurses, domestic workers etc. Men on the other hand are assumed to provide and protect and they take on “control” work in the community and work place — they are the politicians, managers and decision makers; working in industry, army, business etc.

Reproductive work comprises the child bearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks undertaken by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. It includes not only biological reproduction, but also the maintenance of the work force for the family i.e. husband, elders in joint

families and working children and the future workforce i.e. infants and school going children.

Productive work comprises of work done by both women and men for payment in cash or kind. It includes both market place production with an exchange value, and subsistence/home production with an actual use value. It also subsumes a potential exchange value i.e. home based workers, artisans and crafts women. For women in agricultural production this includes work as independent farmers, peasant’s wives and waged workers.

Community management consists of activities undertaken by women primarily at the community level, as an extension of their reproductive role. It aims at ensuring the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption, such as water, health care and education. It is voluntary unpaid work, undertaken in one’s free time.

We have understood the concepts of sex and gender. Let us now understand, who is a transgender?

A ‘transgender’ person means a person, who is—

### Activity

1. What are gender stereotypes?

.....  
 .....

2. What are the ways by which gender roles get established?

.....  
 .....

3. What role can a teacher play in making class rooms gender neutral? Elaborate your answer with two appropriate examples.

.....  
 .....

- (a) Neither wholly female nor wholly male; or
- (b) A combination of female or male; or
- (c) Neither female or male; and whose sense of gender does not match with the assigned to that person at the time of birth. [source: The transgender persons protection of rights bill, 2016]

Our gender is recorded in every document of identity, including birth certificate, mark sheet and ration card etc. Similarly even the public utilities like toilets are gender specific. Therefore, transgenders get deprived of many of the rights and privileges which other persons enjoy as citizens of India. They are deprived of social and cultural participation as they may get shunned by their family and society and as a result have only restricted access to education, health services and public spaces. Not surprisingly, these communities perceive that they have been excluded from participating in social and cultural life; economy; and politics and decision-making processes.

Transgender people in India face a variety of issues. Their exclusion from society and family is one of the main hindrances in access to education. The isolation and indifference towards transgender

persons, starts with their family. Therefore, sensitization of the parents and teachers is needed to make it clear that transgenders are also part of society and have equal rights as are available to other persons.

Now, the most important learning is that when our mind starts questioning the relevance of socially dictated roles, it is the first step towards change. The teacher, the books, the school curriculum and the school environment are the potent catalysts who can initiate this change through their thoughts and actions. Therefore, a sensitive teacher would try to provide a gender neutral environment to the students and would also try to generate gender sensitivity among boys and girls so that a better future which is more equitable and relatively free of stereotypes can be built.

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# Indicators of Gender Equality and Empowerment

## Structure of the Module

- 2.1 Overview
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Objectives
- 2.4 What the Indicator should Try and Encompass
- 2.5 Types of Qualitative Indicators for Understanding Gender Issues
- 2.6 The Indian Context
- 2.7 Quantitative Indicators on Empowerment of Girls and Women: A Life Stage Approach
- 2.8 Enhancing the Self-esteem and Self-confidence of Girls and Women
- 2.9 Building a Positive Image of Girls and Women by Recognizing their Contribution to Society, Polity and Economy
- 2.10 Developing the Ability to Think Critically
- 2.11 Fostering Decision-making and Action through Collective Processes
- 2.12 Enabling Girls and Women to make Informed Choices in Areas like Education, Employment and Health, Specially Reproductive Health
- 2.13 Ensuring Equal Participation in Developmental Processes
- 2.14 Providing Information, Knowledge and Skills for Economic Independence
- 2.15 References

## 2.1 OVERVIEW

The mapping of gender equality and empowerment is crucial to know the holistic development of girls' and women from infancy to adulthood. Discourses on education have highlighted that post independence, many policies, programmes

and schemes for strengthening the forces of inclusion that emphasise on equality of opportunities for all children irrespective of their caste, class, gender and location have been developed. Many such programmes in the area of education have been designed to strengthen the retention and achievement of children in school. Primary education

has been made accessible to 98% children within one kilometer of the habitation where they reside and likewise the figure is almost 92% for an upper primary school within three kilometers of their habitation. Gross enrolment ratios have increased significantly across all social categories, drop out rates at primary level have declined, and the transition from primary to upper primary stage has improved. (Report of the Committee on Implementation of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, p.1). However, studies on classroom processes have highlighted that hidden curriculum practices by teachers while transacting different disciplines overtly and covertly discriminate children, particularly girls from marginalized groups. This affects their overall personality development.

The proposed module is designed to focus on qualitative issues related to gender equality and empowerment. It is based on the recommendations in the National Policy on Education (1986) and the Programme of Action (1992). Each parameter related to the empowerment of women has been identified, conceptualized and listed as an indicator for which information can be qualitatively assessed. The list of indicators can be used and tried in different field situations and modified as a function of the context.

## 2.2 INTRODUCTION

The dawn of the present millennium witnessed several countries of the world struggling to achieve equity and equality in education and in other related fields. The millennium development goals have already set the agenda in motion by highlighting that achieving universal elementary education and promoting gender equality and empowerment is what needs to be prioritized by all signatory countries of the world. In the context of gender issues in education, there has been

a constant realization by policy framers and educationists that though women contribute to 2/3 of the world's work-hours, they earn only 1/3 of the total income and own less than 1/10 of the world resources. Further, they are excluded from socio-economic, political and knowledge power. Therefore, to address the forces of exclusion and to bridge gender gaps in all development initiatives for making the process of economic growth more gender inclusive, most developing countries of the world have adopted a gender sensitive mainstream approach.

In the realm of education, efforts are being made to address gender and class disparities at all levels. In this regard, steps have been initiated by many countries of the developing world since the Beijing Platform for Action, where special emphasis was given to developing gender sensitive indicators. These indicators it was felt would help in the identification of factors that impede the attainment of Education for All. The focus of the indicators was to be on eliciting all information that would minutely map social realities.

Currently, in the domain of education, some of the gender disaggregated indicators used for eliciting information on equity and empowerment are related to sex ratio, population, mean age of marriage, infant mortality rates, work participation rates, literacy, enrollment, dropout, gender parity and transitional rates. Besides these there are some international indicators on Women's Empowerment and Human Development that attempt to depict the global scenario and also assist in promoting comparisons between different countries of the world.

Gender sensitive indicators aim to capture social processes, particularly with reference to gender-related social changes. In addition, they explain why a situation that has been measured or assessed has occurred and also point to how it might be corrected, enhanced or changed. Further,

the indicators also help in examining different paradoxes that exist in society and also throw light on whether they have been adequately addressed or not. Thus, they can help to explain the gap between equity and equality, policy rhetoric and field reality, demand and supply of educational provisions, practical and strategic gender needs and transformatory and existing socialization practices.

Both quantitative and qualitative indicators have their own merits and are useful in understanding a scenario, process or phenomenon. It is essential to understand that both quantitative and qualitative indicators are complementary to each other. Researchers, policy framers and professionals can choose any set of indicators to study a given social phenomenon. The indicators can be quantitative and qualitative. They are not mutually exclusive.

### 2.3 OBJECTIVES

- To acquaint the participants/learners with different types of qualitative indicators
- To enable them to understand the difference and complementarity between qualitative and quantitative indicators
- To help them to analyze the qualitative indicators related to their context
- To build in them the ability to develop and use indicators relevant to their field situation.

### 2.4 WHAT THE INDICATOR SHOULD TRY TO ENCOMPASS

Every indicator should be realistic, meaningful, quantifiable and provide insights on qualitative issues as well. While formulating indicators, the following aspects may be looked into:

- Do the indicators measure results or outcomes in terms of women's rights such as achievement of gender equality or facilitation of women's empowerment?

- Do the indicators measure processes through which gender equality and women's empowerment are being promoted or hindered?
- Do the indicators track obstacles and opportunities? For example, economic facilities/schemes, social opportunities and technical aspects of interventions.
- Do the indicators take into account socio-cultural and political realities?
- What type of data ought to be relied upon?

### 2.5 TYPES OF QUALITATIVE INDICATORS FOR UNDERSTANDING GENDER ISSUES

- **Condition focused** indicators can point specifically to women's life and work conditions and identify areas where specific interventions can take place by the government and civil society.
- **Capabilities focused** indicators are those that reveal information on how women perceive and actualize their opportunities and strategize to deal with constraints. They help to identify spaces for planning interventions that are not only guided by actual experiences but also allow for women's participation in formulating the interventions. Capability focused indicators are derived from an examination of the rights that are addressed through the interventions.
- **Practical gender needs focused indicators** are those which address the immediate and short-term needs and constraints that girls and women face in their everyday lives.
- **Strategic change focused indicators** refer to more long term, transformative changes such as those that address structural issues of inequalities like caste, class and gender.

Given in the box below are a set of questions and activities that will help you to apply what you have just read in actual situations.

### Activities

1. Prepare an indicator to access the impact of NPE on the teachers of your school and on yourself.  
.....  
.....
2. Organize a debate on the topic: Education as a Tool for the Empowerment of Women.  
.....  
.....
3. Complete the following table by placing the items mentioned in the list keeping in mind practical and strategic gender needs (After placing these items as per your understanding, initiate a discussion).

S. No.	Items	Practical gender needs	Strategic gender needs
1.	Pay		
2.	Working conditions		
3.	Infrastructure facilities		
4.	Leave rules		
5.	Recruitment		
6.	Posting		
7.	Roles		
8.	Duties		
9.	Maternity leave		
10.	Deputing for training programme		
11.	Any other		

## 2.6 THE INDIAN CONTEXT

The **Constitutional Provisions, National Policy on Education (1986)** and the **Programme of Action (1992)**, have been the guiding forces influencing both the qualitative and quantitative indicators regarding gender equality and empowerment. Some important policy excerpts in this regard are presented in the box below:

**4.2** Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge in favour of women.

The National Education System will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, training and orientation of teachers, decision-makers and administrators, and the active involvement of educational institutions. This will be an act of faith and social engineering. Women's Studies will be promoted as a part of various courses and educational institutions will be encouraged to take up active programmes to further women's development.

**4.3** The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to,

and retention in, elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provision of special support services, setting of time targets, and effective monitoring. Major emphasis will be laid on women's participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels. The policy of non-discrimination will be pursued vigorously to eliminate sex stereotyping in vocational and professional courses and to promote women's participation in non-traditional occupations, as well as in existing and emergent technologies.

*(Source: National Policy on Education 1986, pg. 6.)*

The **Programme of Action (1992)** has actually provided the different parameters of women's empowerment. They are as follows:

- Enhancing the self-esteem and self-confidence of women.
- Building a positive image of women by recognizing their contribution to the society, polity and the economy.
- Developing the ability to think critically.
- Fostering decision-making and action through collective processes.
- Enabling women to make informed choices in areas like education, employment and health, especially reproductive health.
- Ensuring equal participation in developmental processes.
- Providing information, knowledge and skill for economic independence.
- Enhancing access to legal literacy and information relating to their rights and entitlements in society, with a view to enhance their participation on an equal footing in all areas.(p2)

Empowerment of girls/women has once again been reiterated in the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women 2001. The policy states that:

Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured. Special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination,

universalise education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender sensitive educational system, increase enrollment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning, as well as development of vocational/technical skills by women. Reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education would be a focus area. Sectoral time targets in existing policies will be achieved, with special focus on girls and women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections including the ST/SC/OBC/Minorities. Gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of the educational system in order to address sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination.

*(Source: National Policy for the Empowerment of Women-2001, pg. 11.)*

In the present module, an attempt has been made to examine various indicators that could perhaps map some qualitative changes related to the overall personality development of girls/women. In this regard, a life stage approach has been adopted that takes into account the entire span of the mortal existence of women. Indicators focusing on societal issues that impact personality development, coupled with those related to textual and contextual situations have been discussed. They may be adapted, applied and modified according to contextual needs.

## **2.7 QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS OF EMPOWERMENT OF GIRLS AND WOMEN: A LIFE STAGE APPROACH**

In the life stage approach, childhood, adolescence and adulthood are seen as developmentally contiguous stages. Childhood is the first stage after infancy which typically commences at the end of the first year of life and merges with adolescence as the growing child strikes puberty. Since it spans over several years, it is often divided into early, middle and late childhood. Each of these sub stages are defined by a set of characteristics and capabilities that a

child is capable of. These in turn determine what the child can be taught and trained to do. The curriculum in schools is also based on these. Interventions that facilitate children's development are also based on the developmental profile of the child.

Adolescence is the transitional stage of development that occurs between childhood and adulthood. This transition involves biological (i.e.; pubertal), social, cognitive and psychological changes. Biological or the physiological changes are the easiest to measure objectively, but social and psychological changes are difficult to measure quantitatively. The teenage years span from age 13 and go on till 19 years. However, the end of adolescence and beginning of adulthood vary across regions and countries. Adulthood is a long and extensive phase which subsumes young, adult and late sub stages. Each sub-stage has its specific characteristics and challenges.

The life stage approach is important since it recognizes the developmental continuity between childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Thus, the girl child, the adolescent girl and the woman are all equally important and the indicators would apply to all of them.

The indicators discussed in the sections that follow have been drawn from the **Programme of Action** (1992). They take into account the qualities that need to be developed in girls- with the larger goal being overall personality development.

## **2.8 ENHANCING THE SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF-CONFIDENCE OF GIRLS AND WOMEN**

Self-esteem is a term used in psychology to reflect a person's overall evaluation or appraisal of his or her own worth. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs about oneself such as "I am competent" or "I am incompetent" and emotions such as triumph, despair, pride and shame, success

and failures. A person's self-esteem may be reflected in her behaviour. So the girl may be bold and assertive or shy, diffident etc.

Often because of the gendered division of work and expected behaviour, girls do not get ample opportunities to develop their self esteem. For self esteem to grow, a girl needs to have self-worth. Self worth comes when girls feel they are valued and have experiences of success. The psychosocial environment in which a girl lives and grows which include her family, friends, school experiences and society play a major role in building or breaking her self esteem. They can provide her the experiences of being valued, nurtured and success which in turn will help her to develop positive self esteem. When they work in a negative direction, the result will be low self esteem.

Self-confidence is the realistic confidence in one's own judgement, ability and power, etc. If a person is self-confident, it will show in the way she holds herself and interacts with others. People with self-confidence tend to be decisive, able to make decisions despite uncertainties and pressures, believe in themselves and don't care about what others say or think.

Some of the ways in which self esteem and self confidence get reflected are given in the box below. A discussion on each of the listed points may be taken up.

### **How Self Esteem/Self Confidence are reflected?**

- (1) Appearance
  - Way of dressing
  - Cleanliness of body (nails, hair, teeth, eye)
- (2) Posture
  - Sitting
  - Standing
  - Bending
  - Walking
- (3) Communication
  - (a) Use of language
    - Mother-tongue
    - English
    - Multilingual

- (b) Ability to express ones ideas in
  - Family
  - Among peers
  - Other social gatherings
- (c) Classroom processes
- (d) Participate in question/answering
  - Convey own ideas
  - Additional information
  - Ability to correct teachers when not convinced
- (e) Outside classroom activities
  - Music
  - Drama
  - Debate
  - Essay competition
  - Sports
  - Yoga
  - Any other
- (f) Expressing own ideas in
  - School magazines
  - Newspapers
  - Other publications
  - Any other forums
- (4) Behavioural patterns
  - Emotional
  - Assertive
  - Fatalistic
  - Initiator
  - Dreamer
  - Insecure
  - Dependent
  - Independent
  - Childish
  - Reliance on others
  - Can't stand up for herself
  - Doesn't know what to say
  - Tolerant
  - Intolerant
  - Accepting instructions without questioning
  - Afraid of voicing out one's opinion
  - Scared
  - Bold
- (5) Voice
  - Articulate
  - Pronunciation
  - High pitch
  - Low pitch
  - Takes few minutes to speak
  - Problem in speaking
  - Any other

## 2.9 BUILDING A POSITIVE IMAGE OF GIRLS AND WOMEN BY RECOGNIZING THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIETY, POLITY AND ECONOMY

Women's studies were pioneered in the US in the late 60's. In India, this term gained cognizance since 1975. The concern for incorporating women's issues in the syllabi and textual material was given emphasis at the first National Conference on Women's Studies (NCWS) in 1981. Review of curricula in different disciplines undertaken by the NCWS highlighted the absence of women/girls in curricula. Since then there has been serious concern for incorporating women's issues, experiences and contributions visibly in the curriculum. Textual materials prepared in the Indian contexts attempt to depict girls and women through visuals and content, aimed at building a positive image of women's contribution in different spheres. However, studies conducted by the Department of Women's Studies in the 90's showed that a partial approach of inclusion of women in different disciplines was adopted. Stereotypes were very visible in depicting women's contributions.

In the context of some SAARC countries too this phenomena was observed (see Srivastava 2007 and 2008). To make the contribution of women an integral part of all development processes the 'add women and stir' approach should be negated. The NCF-2005 and position paper on Gender Issues in Education very aptly emphasize highlighting women's contribution in all disciplines as an integral part of knowledge construction. Textbooks based on NCF integrate girls' and women's experiences in all spheres such as agriculture, livestock and other service sectors of the economy. Visuals show them in active roles. Personalities who have contributed throughout history have also been given spaces.

Literature on women role models can also be used extensively in preparation of textual materials and their experiences can be depicted in classroom transactions through innovative pedagogical approaches.

### Indicators for Textual Materials

#### (a) Identification Data

1. Title of the Textbook
2. Class
3. Subject
4. Language
5. Authors
6. Editors
7. Month and year of publication
8. Total number of pages

#### (b) Cover/back pages: Visuals

S. No.	Visuals portraying the following:	Women/girls	Men/boys	Both	None
1.	Students				
2.	Educationists				
3.	Professionals				
4.	Producers				
5.	Roles in which characters are depicted				
6.	Artist/theatre persons				
7.	Eminent contributors to society				
8.	Animal/birds species depicted as				
9.	Any other				

#### (c) Cover/back pages: Content

Content	Women/girls	Men/boys	Both	none
Sayings and quotations relating to				
Themes depicting				
Visuals				

#### (d) Symbolic representation of colours

#### (e) Any other features related to identities: such as

1. National
2. Religious
3. Linguistic
4. Neutral

#### (f) Whether contextualization has been taken care of

#### (g) Organisation of the content

**Content analysis chapter wise**

Chapter/Lesson No:

Theme:

Total number of pages:

S. No.	Criteria	Male/ boys	Female/ girls	Both	No. of times
1.	Adjectives used for both sexes				
2.	Pronoun/common words used/ names				
3.	Occupations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Tertiary</li> <li>• Service sector</li> </ul>				
4.	Roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Decision makers</li> <li>• Leaders</li> <li>• Producers</li> <li>• Social reformers</li> <li>• Educationalists</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>				
5.	Values associated with both the sexes				
6.	Derogatory remarks used				
7.	Men and women depicted in relational terms (father of, mother of, sister of, wife of, daughter of)				
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing customary practices mentioned-</li> <li>• <i>Purdah</i></li> <li>• Child marriage</li> <li>• Female foeticide</li> <li>• Dowry</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>				
9.	Any other localised practices mentioned				

10.	Mention of violence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Emotional</li> </ul>				
-----	--	--	--	--	--

**(h) Does the chapter mention conflicting situations in:**

1. The family
2. School
3. Classroom
4. Community
5. Work place
6. National level
7. International level
8. Any other

**(i) Who takes initiatives in resolving conflicts?**

1. Men in different capacities
2. Women in different capacities
3. Both
4. State
5. Non-Government Agencies
6. Any other

**(j) What methods are adopted for conflict resolution?**

1. Power assertion \_\_\_\_\_
2. Consensus \_\_\_\_\_
3. Delay/Postponement \_\_\_\_\_
4. Suggest Constructive solution \_\_\_\_\_
5. Laws \_\_\_\_\_
6. Any other \_\_\_\_\_

**(k) Is there a mention of Human Rights? What rights are mentioned?**

1. Rights pertaining to Men/Boys
2. Right pertaining to Women/Girls
3. Duties pertaining to Men/Boys
4. Duties pertaining to Women/Girls

**(l) Visuals in the lesson**

Criteria	Male/Boys	Female/Girls	Both	None
Role models				
Professionals				
Fine arts				
Any other				

**(m) Evaluation exercises based on gender and peace**

Criteria	Male	Female	Both	None
Knowledge				
Understanding of gender and peace				
Skills related to communication, negotiation and critical thinking				
Ethics and values				

**(n) Perception of Lesson/Chapter from the view point of**

1. Gender bias
2. Gender stereotyping
3. Conflict management/Peaceful co-existence

**(o) Points of discussion with students on**

1. Visuals
2. Contents
3. Illustrations
4. Exercises
5. Gender portrayal
6. Adequate
7. Inadequate
8. Totally lacking

**(p) Valuing girls/women's contributions: Family/society (Perceptions)**

The activities in the box below should be discussed in detail with reference to how the columns are filled up by respondents

Work (House hold related chores)	Unpaid (having no economic value)	Paid (income saved – income earned)	Essential for human resource development	Stereo- typical	Having no impact on the status of women
Cooking					
Cleaning					
Washing					
Sweeping					
Looking after the sick					
Stitching/ knitting					
Fetching food					

Fetching drinking water					
Care of siblings					
Teaching children (Boys/Girls)					
Transmitting values and beliefs					
Maintenance of household items					
Involved in remunerative and employment oriented work					
Role in Agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sowing</li> <li>• Transplanting</li> <li>• Weeding</li> <li>• Winnowing</li> <li>• Harvesting</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>					
Participation in Live stock related activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cottage industry/ Handicraft</li> <li>• Small Scale Industry</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making and participation in family matters</li> <li>• <i>Panchayat</i></li> <li>• Other governing bodies at the :               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Local Levels</li> <li>– State Level</li> <li>– National Level</li> <li>– International Level</li> </ul> </li> </ul>					

## 2.10 DEVELOPING THE ABILITY TO THINK CRITICALLY

Earlier studies on feminism concentrated on finding a voice. Women's silence has been attributed to their oppression and marginalisation in history. The silencing of women was understood in terms of their oppression and hence their marginalisation. Patriarchal families were and continue to be sites where silencing of women through the use of hegemonic male language, values, and structures is done. Women's silence therefore represents psychological repression.

Researches conducted in the Indian context such as Srivastava (2008) and

Yadav (2010) have highlighted that schemes like Mahila Samakhya (1987) and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV, 2004), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) have the potential to bring about attitudinal changes in girls and develop in them a critical perspective to introspect on their lived realities and existing customary traditions. Some of them relate to ceremonies performed at child birth, child marriage, child widowhood, purdah, segregation at the onset of puberty, dowry and traditions associated with enforced widowhood and practices like witch hunting. This may be discussed more contextually by using the activity built into the box below.

Criteria	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Both
Participating in undoing customary practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purdah</li> <li>• Dowry</li> <li>• Child marriage</li> <li>• Female foeticide</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>					
Steps taken to address emotional violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal abuse</li> <li>• Sign language</li> <li>• Eye contact</li> <li>• Derogatory remarks</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>					
Physical violence					
Participation in monitoring and evaluation of:					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schemes and programmes meant for:</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Adolescent</li> <li>• Children</li> <li>• Infant</li> </ul>					
<p>Voicing opinion for better implementation</p>					

### 2.11 FOSTERING DECISION MAKING AND ACTION THROUGH COLLECTIVE PROCESSES

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) focuses on removal of women’s illiteracy. Obstacles inhibiting their access to and retention in elementary education continue to receive overriding priority. The Programme of Action (POA, 1992) mentions empowerment of women as the critical pre-condition for their participation in the educational process.

This aspect has been reiterated in the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001), wherein some of the objectives mention that women will have equal access to participation and decision-making in the social, political and economic life of the nation. There is also a mention of building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women’s organisations. Efforts would also be made to bring about attitudinal changes in society through the active participation and involvement of both men and women. One of the programmes that attempts to translate the former and even latter into practice is the Mahila Samakhya Programme (1987).

The critical focus in Mahila Samakhya is that it recognizes that the centrality

of education lies in empowering women to achieve equality. It has adopted an innovative approach that emphasizes on processes rather than mechanical fulfillment of targets. Education is understood not merely as acquiring basic literacy skills, but as a process of learning to question, critically analyse issues and problems and seek solutions. It endeavours to create an environment for women to learn at their own pace, set their own priorities and seek knowledge and information to make informed choices. Mahila Samakhya brings women together to collectively solve their problems and empower them to address a wide variety of issues themselves. Mahila Sanghas (Women’s Collectives) are committed to collective actions impacting the overall status of women. In this context, the enactment of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments constitutes a landmark in giving women a centre stage role in decision making at the grassroots level. They ensure that one third of the total elected seats and positions of Chairpersons in rural and urban local elected bodies be reserved for women.

The following box presents an activity which may be conducted or used for building up understanding through discussion.

**(a) Children**

Decision making in different social institutions	Family elder <sup>1</sup>		Male		Female		Both
	Male	Female					
<b>Family</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Ownership of property (moveable/ immovable)</li> <li>• Income</li> <li>• Expenditure</li> </ul>							
School	Management		Principal		Head Teacher		Any other
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of teachers</li> <li>• Posting of teachers</li> <li>• Job assignment</li> <li>• Participation in service training</li> <li>• Assignment of different tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Teaching</li> <li>➢ Non-teaching</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Participation in seminars, workshops, conferences</li> <li>• Space given to innovative teaching</li> </ul>							
<b>Strategies adopted for motivation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewards</li> <li>• Certification</li> <li>• Remuneration</li> <li>• Promotion</li> </ul>							
<b>Attitude towards formation of organisation/union</b>							

<sup>1</sup>Family elder would include elderly grandparents, uncle-aunt, and mother-father as per the family consideration.

**(b) Contextual situations in schooling processes**

<b>Classroom activities</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Both</b>
Teaching and learning process			
Asking questions			
Giving answers			
Clearing of doubts			
Adding information			
<b>Classroom management</b>			
Appointment of monitors			
Cleaning of the class			
Getting duster, water and other miscellaneous items			
<b>Roles/duties</b>			
Collecting copies			
Maintaining discipline			
Looking into dress code			
Peer group interactions			
Formation of groups for different activities such as music, dance, debates etc.			
Promoting group activities			
<b>Outside classroom activities</b>			
Participation in sports			
Indoor games			
Outdoor games			
<b>Promotion of leadership and decision making qualities<sup>2</sup></b>			
Sports			
Hobbies			
Excursion			
Debates			
Drama			
Any other			

<sup>2</sup>Decisions taken by boys and girls independently or any other which would include parents and peers.

## 2.12 ENABLING GIRLS AND WOMEN TO MAKE INFORMED CHOICES IN AREAS LIKE EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH, SPECIALLY REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001) looks into the overall empowerment of women in terms of education, health and employment. It mentions that special measures would be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase the enrollment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as the development of vocational/technical skills by women. Gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of the education system in order to address sex stereotyping, which is regarded as one of the causes of gender discrimination. In the context of health, a holistic approach to women's health is stated in the above mentioned policy.

The reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality, which are sensitive indicators of human development, is a matter of priority and concern. There is a commitment to taking up measures that take into account the reproductive

rights of women, their vulnerability to sexual and health problems together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases such as malaria, TB, and water borne diseases as well as hypertension and cardio-pulmonary diseases. The social, developmental and health consequences of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases are also to be tackled from a gender perspective. In the context of employment, efforts are being made to empower women in all sectors of the economy by providing opportunities, training in conventional and un-conventional professions. The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women and the strategy of Women's Component Plan adopted in the Ninth Plan ensures that not less than 30 percent of benefits/funds flow to women from all Ministries and Departments. This will be implemented effectively so that the needs and interests of women and girls are addressed by all concerned sectors. The Department of Women and Child Development being the nodal Ministry will monitor and review the progress of the implementation of the Component Plan from time to time, in terms of both quality and quantity in collaboration with the Planning Commission.

The box below presents an activity on decision making. It may be used to initiate discussion and build perspective.

Education	Grand parents	Father	Mother	Both
<b>Who decides the levels of education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys</li> <li>• Girls</li> </ul>				
<b>Choice of professions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys</li> <li>• Girls</li> </ul>				
<b>Health</b>				

<b>Choice of food</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys</li> <li>• Girls</li> </ul>				
<b>Preventive measures, during sickness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys</li> <li>• Girls</li> </ul>				
<b>Diet – Decision about intake of different food items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protein</li> <li>• Vitamins</li> <li>• Iron</li> <li>• Carbohydrates</li> <li>• Fats</li> <li>• All the above</li> <li>• Not aware</li> </ul>				
<b>Size of the Family</b>				
<b>Health related issues</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting vaccinated</li> <li>• Knowledge about one's own body</li> <li>• Puberty</li> <li>• Age of marriage</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>				
<b>Physical freedom of movement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to local market</li> <li>• Fairs</li> <li>• Health centre</li> <li>• Visit to maternal home and relatives</li> <li>• Fields</li> <li>• Educational Institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- School</li> <li>- College/Vocational Institutions</li> <li>- University</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				

### 2.13 ENSURING EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES

Since the inception of the Eighth Five year plan (1992-97) efforts have been made to see that the benefits of development from different sectors like education, health and employment do not by pass women. In fact, the approach adopted regards women as equal partners in the development process.

To encourage women's participation in development processes, the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women laid stress on the important role played by women in agriculture, industry and the service sectors. To ensure the participation of women, the policy mentions that special programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. would be

expanded to benefit women workers in the agricultural sector.

The important role played by women in electronics, information technology, food processing, agro-industry and textiles has been acknowledged as crucial for development. In this regard, women are to be given comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security and other support services to participate in various industrial sectors.

Further, provision of support services for women like child care facilities, including crèches at work-places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled are to be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment. The activity in the box below may be used to build perspective on ways of empowering women through supportive state policies.

Criteria	Yes	No	Not aware	Comments
Existence of women's organizations				
Awareness among women about the existence of organizations working for their development and empowerment				
Awareness about roles and functions of organizations				
Are women represented in decision-making?				
Awareness among women regarding allocation of funds and resources				

Knowledge about utilisation of funds under different heads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recurring</li> <li>• Non-recurring</li> <li>• Miscellaneous</li> </ul>				
Participation of women in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional occupations</li> <li>• Non-traditional occupations</li> </ul>				

## 2.14 PROVIDING INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Since the eighth plan, the nodal Department of Women and Children has reset its priorities to accord special emphasis on employment and income generation activities for women. The ultimate objective in all these efforts is to make women economically independent and self-reliant. Some of the important programmes initiated by the Department in this direction are listed below:

**(a) Support to Training and Employment Projects (STEP), 1987:** Condensed Courses of Education and Vocational Training for Adult Women (CCE and VT), 1993 for self-reliance. The Central Social Welfare Board started the programmes of Condensed Courses of Education in 1958 and the Vocational Training Programme during the year 1975, to help women complete their schooling and also upgrade their skills in order to meet the demands of the changing work environment.

Under the scheme of Condensed Courses, voluntary organisations are given grants to conduct courses of two years duration to enable women of the age of 15 plus to pass secondary/matric, middle and primary level examinations. The scheme also contains provisions

for engaging teachers for conducting the course.

**(b) Swayamsidha** is an integrated scheme for women's empowerment. It is based on the formation of women into self-help groups (SHGs) and aims at the holistic empowerment of women through mobilisation, awareness generation and convergence of various schemes.

**(c) Swa-Shakti Project** also known as Rural Women's Development and Empowerment Project was sanctioned on 16 October 1998 as a centrally sponsored project to be implemented in seven states over a period of five years with an estimated outlay of Rs. 186.21 crore. In addition, an amount of Rs. five crore was provided for facilitating the setting up of revolving funds for giving interest bearing loans to beneficiary groups primarily during their initial formative stage.

The project is implemented through women's development corporations (WDCs), other state government undertakings and NGOs in the states of Bihar, Haryana, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttaranchal, covering 57 districts, 323 blocks and 7,288 villages.

The project aims at enhancing women's access to resources for better quality of life through use of drudgery and time reduction devices, health, literacy and confidence enhancement and increasing their control over income through their involvement in skill development and income generating activities.

**(d) Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) (1993)** facilitates credit support to poor women. RMK mainly channellises its support through non-government organizations, women's development corporations and women's cooperative societies.

**(e) National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015:** The objective of the National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015 will be to meet the challenge of skilling at scale with speed and standard (quality). It will aim to provide an umbrella framework to all skilling activities being carried out within the country, to align them to common standards and link the skilling with demand centres. In addition to laying down the objectives and expected outcomes, the effort will also be to identify the various institutional frameworks which can act as the vehicle to reach the expected outcomes. The national policy will also provide clarity and coherence on how skill development efforts across the country can be aligned within the existing institutional arrangements. This policy will link skills development to improved employability and productivity.

**(f) Recent Initiatives of Government on Gender Equality 2015 in connection with Skill Development:** Equal access to skill development is essential for all social groups particularly women and disadvantaged section of society, to help them in securing decent employment and moving out of poverty. Removing barriers to access and addressing their specific needs are key elements in achieving inclusive growth.

Vocational Training for Women Skill

development for employability will be used as an agent of change in promoting womens' employment.

- A policy of nondiscrimination will be pursued vigorously to provide equal access for women to skill development and employment.
- This policy will aim to raise womens' participation to at least 30% by the end of the 11th Plan.
- Proactive measures that overcome barriers and facilitate participation, such as hostels for women, scholarships, transport, training materials and loans, will be made available on a large scale.
- The Womens' Vocational Training Programme will be expanded and the institutional network providing training facilities exclusively for women, so that they can obtain skills with high wage and self-employment potential, will be greatly expanded.
- In order to promote skills and employability of women, the sectors which employ a large number of women will be identified. These may include construction, home-page 17 based traditional crafts or piece rate work, financial and health service as well as agricultural sectors.
- Gender stereotyping in vocational courses will be eliminated to encourage womens' technological fields.

The outreach and quality of skill development in rural areas will be improved so as to enable rural workers to acquire and upgrade technologies; improve linkages to value chains; increase agricultural production; expand access to market and engage in off-farm activities which can generate supplemental income.

The convergence with national employment programmes, such as National Rural Employment Guaranteed

Scheme (NREGS), will be promoted as an opportunity for imparting skills training in rural areas.

Training facilities need to be updated regularly so as to meet changing demands multi-skilling, multi-entry and exit, and linkages to skill up-gradation opportunities in the future, will characterize such programmes. The scheme of Modular Employable Skills (i.e. short-term employable skills) will be expanded greatly to cater to large size of the group.

Accessing information about the laws governing girls/women are crucial for initiating social change. Legal literacy has become an important component of schemes like Mahila Samakhya and in academic discourses. It has been positively seen as an important tool for

bringing about qualitative changes at the grassroot level. Awareness about laws and implementing agencies helps people understand that literacy can aid women's empowerment.

The failure of execution of many laws has been attributed to the beneficiaries' lack of awareness. Therefore, sensitising people on legal issues is important in removing the paradox between rights and their realisation.

In this regard, the Right to Information Act, 2005 mandates timely response to citizens' requests for government information. It is an initiative taken by the state. The list in the box below may be used to gauge awareness levels and initiate discussion on some important Articles and areas of women's participation.

<b>Constitutional provisions</b>	<b>Aware</b>	<b>Somewhat aware</b>	<b>Not aware</b>	<b>No response</b>
Article 14				
Article 15				
Article 15 (3)				
Article 16				
Article 21				
Article 23				
Article 24				
Article 29				
Article 30				
<b>Directive Principles of State Policy</b>				
Article 39 (a)				
Article 39 (d)				

Article 39 (e)				
Article 39 (f)				
Article 41				
Article 42				
Article 44				
Article 45				
Article 47				
<b>Fundamental Duties (Part IV A)</b>				
<b>Legal provisions related to</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inheritance</li> <li>• Adoption</li> <li>• Dowry</li> <li>• Child marriage</li> <li>• Age of Marriage</li> <li>• Divorce</li> <li>• Child labour</li> <li>• Prostitution</li> <li>• Ragging</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>				
<b>Knowledge about participation of women in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision- making bodies</li> <li>• <i>Panchayats</i></li> <li>• Urban bodies</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>				

**Has participation of women in your neighbourhood, village, town, district and state brought about a change in empowering women?**

(a) Aware about their rights/entitlements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family</li> <li>• Society</li> </ul>
(b) Encourage them to participate in voting
(c) Motivate them to participate in local/urban bodies
(d) Enable them to form organizations taking up social and educational programmes for self-reliance
(e) Steps to curb customary practices derogatory to the status of women
(f) Access to legal authorities

The above mentioned indicators would help in acquiring information regarding the qualitative dimensions in the domain of gender equality and empowerment. The list given is not an exhaustive one. It is suggestive in nature and seeks to provide information on issues of equity

and equality. They would further help in unraveling important parameters in the context of empowerment i.e., whether educational processes help in bringing about transformatory structural changes or they merely reinforce existing socialization practices in the society.

**Activities**

1. You can ask teachers and students of your school to use the tool for textbook evaluation.  
 .....  
 .....
2. Discuss among them steps to undo gender biases and stereotyping.  
 .....  
 .....
3. You can ask students to prepare a short write-up on girl/women achievers of their village, district, state and nation and the journey of achievement.  
 .....  
 .....
4. A debate can be organized on issues related to equity, equality and empowerment.  
 .....  
 .....

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# Gender Budgeting

## Structure of the Module

- 3.1 Overview
- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 Objectives
- 3.4 Gender Responsive Budget: The Indian Experience
- 3.5 Planning Processes
- 3.6 Policy Initiatives
- 3.7 Past Experiences
- 3.8 Budget Making Process from a Gender Lens
- 3.9 Suggestive Steps for Gender Budgeting
- 3.10 Guidelines for the Formulation of a Budget
- 3.11 Monitoring
- 3.12 Evaluation of the Budget
- 3.13 Tools for Gender Budgeting
- 3.14 Outcome Budget
- 3.15 References

### 3.1 OVERVIEW

Budget is a technical term that reflects government policy and priorities that get translated into monetary terms. It is a document which encompasses the government's expenditure and revenue proposals. Consequently, budget overtly and covertly reflects the government's philosophy, values and commitment to the constitutional goals of equity and

equality. Gender budget initiatives aim at disaggregating data to see the impact of budgetary allocation and performance on holistic development of boys and girls, men and women. The gender budgeting initiative in India started in July, 2000 when a Workshop on 'Engendering National Budgets in the South Asia Region' was held in New Delhi in collaboration with UNIFEM, in which Government representatives,

UN agencies, media, NGOs, research institutions, civil society and members of the Planning Commission in the South Asia region participated. The process of gender budgeting continued in India, led by multiple actors at different stages who pressed for its popularization and dissemination. The Department of Women and Children is the nodal agency that currently organizes workshops for officials of different ministries for popularizing this concept.

The purpose of gender budgeting is to train policy planners and practitioners for analyzing and preparing budgets from a gender lens so that the benefits of development are shared by all and sustainable development is gender inclusive.

### 3.2 INTRODUCTION

Nations all over the world have committed themselves to achieve gender equality and equity, a cherished goal that ensures the human face of development. This commitment has once again been reiterated by 192 signatory countries for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. Goal three of MDGs has stressed upon gender equality and women's empowerment, an agenda that needs to be prioritised by all the countries. It is in this context that emphasis is placed on making our budget statements gender responsive.

Gendering the budget making process is crucial as it is the most effective tool for empowering girls and women in a substantial way. It weaves together the needs and aspirations of men and women so that the outcomes address the practical and strategic needs of both genders. Conceptually, gender budget does not mean budgeting for men and women separately. Rather, within the budgetary provision of different sectors, allocations for men and women are built in, in an inclusive manner based on their needs and requirements. An inclusive budget in

turn, would contribute towards equality, accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness.

### 3.3 OBJECTIVES

- To acquaint the readers with gender budgeting
- To analyze the Indian budget from a gender lens
- To apply tools of gender budgeting for evaluating schemes and programmes.

### 3.4 GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGET: THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE

The gender budget initiative draws its philosophy from the Constitution, the five year plans, policy initiatives and past experiences, particularly in the domains of economy, polity, social and cultural milieu, employment scenario and education. The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but empowers the state to adopt affirmative measures in favour of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages faced by them throughout their mortal existence. The Preamble to the Constitution resolves to secure to all its citizens, justice, equality and liberty of thought and expression. The Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in the Constitution focus on gender equity as a core principle. Several Articles of the Constitution, such as Article 14, confer equal rights and opportunities to both the genders in polity, economy and the social sphere. Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity in public employment. Along with rights, the state also imposes fundamental duties on every citizen to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

### 3.5 PLANNING PROCESSES

The five year plans wield an important influence in the preparation of a gender inclusive budget statement. Planning in

the Indian context has taken cognizance of women's issues in a very substantial way. There has been a shift in focus of viewing women not only as a welfare category but as equal participants in all development initiatives. From the tenth plan onwards the approach adopted has been to mainstream gender concerns by assessing the implications for women and men, in any planned action, including legislation policies and programmes across areas and at levels. Gender mainstreaming underscores the principle that there can be no sustainable development as long as discrimination between the two sexes exists.

### **3.6 POLICY INITIATIVES**

The National Policy on Education (1986) analysed from the context of women's equality, stressed on the removal of disparities and equalizing of educational opportunities through attending to the specific needs of those who had been denied equality so far. It further stated that education would be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women, for neutralizing the accumulated distortions of the past and playing a positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women. It would foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks and the training and orientation of teachers. The Programme of Action (1992) elaborated on the parameters of women's empowerment. Some of them were: enhancing the self-esteem and self-confidence of women; building a positive image of women by recognizing their contributions to society, polity and economy; developing the ability to think critically; enabling women to make informed choices in different fields and providing access to women to legal literacy.

The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women committed to the advancement, development and empowerment of women in a holistic manner. The emphasis was on

creating equality of opportunity in all fields, eliminating gender bias and stereotypes by bringing about an attitudinal change among all stakeholders and encouraging active participation of men and women in all sectors of the economy.

### **3.7 PAST EXPERIENCES**

The Government of India has been adopting Gender Budgeting since 2005-06 to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for women. In 2001, the National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD) undertook a study on Gender Budget Analysis of twenty-two states of India. The findings of the study highlighted that allocation to women's programmes (target and pro-women) varied between 2 per cent to 11 per cent across ten states for the year 2000-01. Further, the share of women in women targeted schemes in the state budget was less than 1 per cent in six states. Pro-women schemes received a larger portion of the state budget as compared to the women specific schemes (6%-11%) during 2000-2001 in five states. Combined allocations were as low as 2% and 5% of the state budget in some states. In fact, it was far below the desired and recommended levels of 30% as per the guidelines of the Planning Commission under the Women Component Plan.

Based on these experiences, a realistic and context specific budgetary allocation for gender can be planned at the district, state and national levels.

### **3.8 BUDGET MAKING PROCESS FROM A GENDER LENS**

Initially, the budget making process was formulated to address the needs of everyone in an apparently uniform way. As a result of traditional macroeconomic theories already mentioned, policy makers tend to assume that all individuals are equal, with shared needs and interests. This approach however failed to recognise the distinctions

that stem from class, caste, gender and location. It also ignored an important hypothesis that policies, programmes and budget have different outcomes for different groups. Further, it helped to demystify the proposition that enhanced outlay may or may not lead to gender justice, harmony among sexes, or facilitate the capacity building and empowerment of women.

Inclusive budget making processes have to primarily carry out a detailed survey of the existing situation related to socio-economic factors and education in the political domain of a district, based on quantitative and qualitative parameters. Data collected from different fields have to be disaggregated in terms of gender, demography, education, employment, etc. either annually or five yearly, depending on the need and requirement.

The approach adopted in the budget making process should move from macro to micro analysis following a bottom up strategy. It should be context based so that it holistically addresses the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders. Issues related to equity and equality have to be accorded priority as this is linked to improving the quality of life of all people belonging to the different sections of society.

### 3.9 SUGGESTIVE STEPS FOR GENDER BUDGETING

Prior to the formulation of the budget at the central and at the state levels, a working group is constituted. This group consists of representatives of different ministries, experts drawn from different disciplines and representatives from different non-governmental organizations. In some cases sub-groups can also be constituted as per need and requirement. For making the budget statement gender sensitive, there is a need to examine past budgets from a critical perspective and also see how these impact in addressing gender issues. Some of the analytical questions that need to be asked are:

- Does the budget have provisions for looking into conflict management issues?
- Was there any bottleneck in the implementation of schemes addressing both genders?
- Did there exist a gap between demand and supply of schemes that are pro-women or for both genders?
- Are there any suggested innovations?
- Are the budgetary provisions sufficient? Have they taken the cost of living index into account?

#### Activities

1. Analyze the annual budget statement from a gender lens. Discuss the trends in allocation of budget in dealing with gender issues.

.....  
 .....

2. Discuss direct and indirect taxes and their impact on both genders.

.....  
 .....

3. Organize a debate on the advantages and disadvantages of gender budgeting.

.....  
 .....

The strength of the past budget also needs to be examined and, if possible, it could be adopted, adapted and replicated in the current budget statement. The box

below is an activity aimed at building up sensitivity and awareness on the division of labour by gender.

### Activities

- Given below is an exercise on the budget making process at the household level. You can give this table to the participants and get their responses.

S. No.	Items	Budget decision taken by		
		Male	Female	Both
1.	Investment			
2.	Education			
3.	Food			
4.	Medical aid			
5.	Clothing			
6.	Luxury items			
7.	Transport			
8.	Any other			

- Work done by men and women in a day.

S. No.	Work done (24 hrs)	Male	Female	Both	Any other
1.	Agriculture- sowing, manuring, weeding, harvesting, winnowing, threshing, marketing				
2.	Caring for the live stock				
3.	Household chores				
4.	Looking after the sick, aged				
5.	Sibling care				
6.	Engagement in remunerative work				
7.	Fetching drinking water				
8.	Gathering Fuel				
9.	Attending literacy classes				
10.	Any other				

After giving this exercise ask the students to reflect on the saying- *income saved is income earned*

- Hold a discussion on the theme: 'Public expenditure affects women and men differently.'

.....  
 .....

**3.10 GUIDELINES FOR THE FORMULATION OF A BUDGET**

Any budget that is formulated needs to have a vision and mission statement. It should address issues of equity and equality in all the items, proposed across schemes and programmes. The cost of living index should be a yardstick in budgeting each item under recurring and non-recurring items and plan and non-plan funds. Strategies for achieving equality of outcomes need to be clearly reflected with reference to achievement of short term, medium-term and long-term objectives. There is a need to make the budget flexible so that it addresses unforeseen exigencies and takes district variations into account, especially at the state level.

**3.11 MONITORING**

Monitoring is an important step in making the budget statement responsive to gender needs. Monitoring or mid-course correction of the budget can help in answering some pertinent questions as follows:

- Are the objectives/activities being met?
- Is the approach participatory?
- Are gender issues being addressed?

- Have the steps taken been successful or are some modifications needed for mid-course corrections?
- Are budget heads appropriate or are some changes required?
- Do proposed budget heads help in meeting conceived targets?
- Has the approach initiated a process of skill development?
- Has it encouraged voices and participation of women in making the budget?
- Are issues of allocation of funds in different sectors need based in terms of time management?
- Is it leading to empowerment of (women/men)?
- Has it helped in addressing conflict management?

**3.12 EVALUATION OF THE BUDGET**

The criteria of evaluation have to be based on the indicators of the budget. The targets set for meeting practical and long term needs, sector wise need to be looked into. The successful initiatives have to be identified. Finally suggestions for moving

**Activities**

1. Collect the budget statement of your school/organisation in the last five years and analyse how the budget reflects gender concerns.

.....  
 .....

2. Procure the budget statement of different ministries. Analyze and evaluate the same from a gender perspective.

.....  
 .....

3. Organize a debate on the theme: 'Union Budget: Concerns and Prospects in the context of Gender'.

.....  
 .....

ahead have to be envisaged and placed as recommendations.

To facilitate understanding of this process, the activities proposed in the box below may be used.

### 3.13 TOOLS FOR GENDER BUDGETING

A Gender budgeting tool is a method/ technique for assessing the impact of budgetary allocation of resources of different schemes and programmes in meeting the practical and strategic needs of:

- Men/Women belonging to different classes and communities.
- Analysing whether public expenditures is allocated in an equitable manner for the development of both genders.
- Examine how the budget addresses the

needs and aspirations of both genders (men/women) in a substantial way.

A gender Budgeting Tool can be prepared to gather the relevant information. A sample has been provided in the box.

### 3.14 OUTCOME BUDGET

As part of the monitoring process, each Ministry and Department of GOI is required to prepare a performance and output budget by the middle of the year. Government of India introduced this concept in 1969. The purpose of the outcome budget was to analyse the impact of money allocated to both genders, to examine whether it has led to overall improvement in the socio-economic status of men and women and whether it has met the objectives that it had

#### Sample of a Gender Budgeting Tool

1. Schemes/Programmes:.....
2. Year of Initiation:.....
3. Objectives:
  - Short term
  - Medium term
  - Long term
4. Target Group:
5. Allocation of Budget – Annual/Gap of 2 to 5 Years:
  - Recurring
  - Non-recurring
  - Plan
  - Non Plan
6. Miscellaneous provisions:
7. District variations:
8. Allocation for unforeseen situations:
9. How it addresses:
  - Practical gender needs
  - Transformatory changes
10. Vision and Mission: .....

envisioned. Presently most of the Central Ministries have come out with a Result Framework Document (RFD) that focuses on output slated for each programme and the time frame allocated for its completion. Under this framework emphasis is on objectives, weightage, action, success indicators, units, targets and criteria values. RFD is a self monitoring performance that sets guidelines to achieve objectives within a stipulated time, keeping in mind the quality aspect.

Thus, outcome budget is reflective of the health of the economy and also its sustainability in moving from policy rhetoric to community acceptance in terms of answering their felt needs by weaving their hopes and aspirations.

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### Activities

1. Discuss the budget tools with your students and elicit their responses.

.....  
 .....

2. With the help of the tools students can be asked to examine the budget of their household, school, state and centre.

.....  
 .....

3. Students can be asked to prepare tools on gender budgeting based on the above mentioned tools.

.....  
 .....

# Gender, Media and Education

## Structure of the Module

- 4.1 Overview
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 Objectives
- 4.4 Gender and Advertising : Reinforcing Stereotypes
- 4.5 Gender and Entertainment Media
- 4.6 Gender, Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the New Media
- 4.7 Gender Sensitive Code of Ethics for Media
- 4.8 Beijing's Legacy for Gender and Media
- 4.9 Potential for Positive Interventions
- 4.10 Media and Education
- 4.11 Objectives of Media Education
- 4.12 Concept/Activities
- 4.13 References

## 4.1 OVERVIEW

Some thought this was 'cute' – a photograph in an English daily of the future mayor of Mumbai shown cooking in her kitchen. (The Telegraph, Calcutta, 2006). But why, one wonders, should a person who wishes to hold an important public post, be placed in the kitchen? Who has ever seen a picture of a male politician doing the same? Is it because media decides the context in which a woman is placed, and reinforces it constantly? In this section, we will examine the media scenario in India.

## 4.2 INTRODUCTION

*“The product of the media — what appears, what does not appear, the way it is slanted, will reflect the interest of the buyers and sellers, the institutions and the power systems that are around them. If that wouldn't happen, it would be kind of a miracle”*

— Noam Chomsky, 1997

Media has played a significant role in gender stereotyping for decades. Every day, we are exposed to numerous images from

the media. These images suggest what we should be like. The suggestions of media invade our thoughts.

Gender role biases in all forms of entertainment media have served to reinforce and even enhance the degradation of women in society. Several content analysis studies have reported that women are portrayed as victims, caretakers, and sex objects while men are presented as masters, doers, and intellectuals. Fiction based dramas reinforce the sex role stereotypes of men as decisive, assertive, dominant, and career oriented, and those of women as emotionally dependent, eager to please, sentimental, and primarily concerned with family relationships. Female characters in these series are most often house-wives, secretaries, teachers, or nurses. Though women are featured more often than men in Indian commercials, yet they are shown performing stereotyped female activities such as shopping, preparing meals, and

dress to obtain the approval of men. This sex role stereotyping in the media is not only derogatory, but is seriously impeding the struggles of women to achieve economic and political autonomy.

The changes that have occurred in women's roles in society have been nothing short of phenomenal. Yet media representations of women remain worryingly constant. Representations of women across all media tend to highlight the following:

- beauty (within narrow conventions)
- size/physique (again, within narrow conventions)
- sexuality (as expressed by the above)
- emotional (as opposed to intellectual) dealings
- relationships (as opposed to independence/ freedom)
- dependence (economically and socially)
- marginalized and deprived

Sexuality laden images of women occupy not only magazines but newspapers and

### Activity

Look at the pictures below. These are two typical examples of the most often seen images of women. The so called urban and young women are shown in western outfits with fashion as the only statement they make and the other from a rural or a small town in a conservative family set up. Do you agree with these images?

Think and talk about the reasons for such depiction of women in television.



*Beauty and brains are seldom shown to exist together*



*Always dependent and deprived\**

*\*Source : A still from Balika Vadhu*

television too. While the physical/ sexual aspects of womanhood are highlighted, their abilities are undermined. Although the stereotypes of women as caregivers have some positive connotations, they are nevertheless stereotypes. These images do not highlight their multitasking abilities and competence. The fact that needs to be reinforced is that women work outside and inside the home; are responsible, progressive and thinking beings; and have the ability to take up leadership roles in family, community and at the national level too.

Thus, we find that media contents are influenced by what the media makers perceive to be the commonly accepted ways of viewing and defining the reality of gender roles. The failure to propagate and disseminate a more rational and balanced view of society is derived from the patriarchal nature of the political and economic system that perpetuates stereotypes.

On the other hand, when we look at the images of men portrayed by the media, we find another rigid stereotype. Representations of men across all media tend to focus on the following:

- Strength - physical and intellectual
- Economically independent and resourceful
- Wielding Power
- Sexual attractiveness (which may be based on the above)

- Physique
- Independence of thought and action – Prime decision maker

**Activity:** The group may debate on – Do all men behave like this only or is there a changing trend?

There may be some men who do not conform to such depictions and some who feel pressurized to maintain such a disposition. An interesting observation is that the way in which a man and a woman are portrayed has been more or less similar over the years. Though the looks, clothes and careers may have undergone a change, their roles remain primarily the same. It is only very recently that some androgynous images are being depicted. Some men are macho and bold but equally soft and empathetic. Likewise women in addition to being kind and gentle are also shown as capable, courageous and outgoing in some serials, films and advertisements. This is however a recent trend and not as widespread as depictions of the traditional division of labour and responsibilities and the traits associated with being male or female.

#### **Consequences of Negative Stereotypes**

The socialization process forces males and females into behavioural modes, personality characteristics, and occupational roles deemed appropriate by society. More importantly, these constraints create a system that is biased in favour of males.



*EYES speak ..... POWER!!!*

As a consequence, men get abundant opportunities to develop their talents while women get restricted to functioning in limited arenas and spaces. What gets highlighted is:

- The relative powerlessness of women,
- Limited range of occupations for women,
- Loss of academic opportunities for women,
- Lack of respect for women's abilities and,
- Low self-esteem among women

Although media plays a vital role in perpetuating gender stereotypes, yet it is difficult to undermine the changing face of media, which also succeeds in subverting those stereotypes. Thus, while on the one hand, media is accused of sensationalizing crimes against women, on the other hand, it has also played an important role in bringing such issues to light. We can for instance cite several examples wherein media has played a positive role. The Jessica Lal murder case was actually unraveled by media and the Nirbhaya gang rape case has triggered mass protests and succeeded in bringing about judicial reforms and amendments with respect to the formulation of anti-rape laws. These are two examples of national magnitude which have got etched in the annals of national history. What emerges clearly from this is that media can act as a powerful agent of social change by reinforcing images of gender complementarity.



### 4.3 OBJECTIVES

- To understand how the media reinforce gender stereotypes
- To analyze some of the positive and negative images reinforced by media
- To examine some of the popular media genres for their gender portrayals
- To understand how low level of women's participation in media affects the projection of content within it
- To identify factors that prevent women from taking up media as a profession
- To explore media laws, ethics and values.

### 4.4 GENDER AND ADVERTISING: REINFORCING STEREOTYPES

Today, advertising is a multi-cultural and transnational industry. Advertisements are developed to appeal to the vast majority. Advertisers exploit stereotypical gender notions to have the widest appeal. Men are more likely to be shown advertising cars or business products; women are mostly seen advertising domestic and decorative products. Men are also more likely to be shown outdoors or in business settings. Also, with age men seem to gain authority, whilst women seem to disappear.

The basic explanation for the critical focus on sex role portrayals in advertising lies in the close relationship, which exists between advertising, the consumer goods industry and the crucial economic role of women as



Popular Ads: Depicting Stereotypes

consumers. Women in advertisements are usually restricted to home and isolated from other women outside home with men as their favourite companions, although now a somewhat changing trend is beginning to unfold. It is this changing trend that requires pursuit.

In most of the advertisements as is visible in the visuals above, a woman is washing clothes or utensils, cooking, serving food to family members or trying to make her husband feel better, who at that time may be reading a newspaper or suffering from cold. A woman does all this even when she has headache or backache. Such depictions reinforce the old belief that a woman is supposed to forgo her own comfort and keep on doing household chores without getting tired. Even a contemporary TV advertisement, like that of "MOOV" is based on the same philosophy. The woman in this advertisement is shown as the single person doing all the housework, and attending to the whims and fancies of all her family members, from her husband to kids, to mother and father-in-law. She is allowed a break from her work only when she cries out in pain from a backache. Finally, the family decides to recognize her presence by passing a tube of an ointment around, and the husband offering to apply the ointment for her.

It is not unusual to see clothing detergent advertisements always have a homemaker washing clothes. Similarly, a car commercial mostly has a man in the driver's seat. Regardless of the intentions of the advertisers, this gender-based advertising gives viewers the impression

that certain products only appeal to a certain sex. However, even this 'intention' is culture driven. Big car launch functions are female celebrity endorsed. Celebrities with international appeal and sexuality are invited for glamour and attention. The same is true for car and bike shows and trade fairs too.

An illustrative example of this trend beginning early can be seen in the *Daag Achae Hain!* Campaign for Surf Excel, a detergent brand from Hindustan Unilever. The advertisement features a little boy as a protector brother beating up a mud puddle to make his sister laugh. Majority of such advertisements feature boys as dirty, naughty, rowdy, intelligent and cute. When we do see two children in ads, it is usually a boy and girl or two boys and rarely is a family with two girls spotted, thus reinforcing the idea that an ideal family has one son at least. No wonder the sex ratio has shown a declining trend against girl children with families going in for a small family but choosing the sex of the children to be born with the help of easily available sex determination techniques and aborting female foetuses.

Women are generally not depicted as politicians, newsmakers, experts, social workers or businesswomen and entrepreneurs etc. in which men regularly feature. The representations of women that do make it to such depictions on the screen also show compatibility with home duties. If there is dire professionalism or ambition, familial and societal resistance is highlighted. So those who do not fit into the mould tend to be seen as dangerous and

### Activity

The group members can think and present two advertisements reinforcing stereotypes and two which have tried to create positive imagery for women in advertisements.

.....  
 .....



Source : A still from *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi*

deviant. A powerful woman in business is shown in more negative overtones. Recently, some of the programmes have tried to convey that traditional images have given way gracefully to a new culture. As part of this, the contemporary image being portrayed is that of a new role model for the Indian woman who has the best of both the worlds, is economically independent, progressive and ambitious, but very feminine.

The 'good' women are presented as submissive, sensitive and domesticated and 'bad' women as rebellious, independent and selfish. The 'dream-girl' stereotype is gentle, demure, sensitive, submissive, non-competitive, sweet-natured and dependent. The male hero tends to be physically strong, aggressive, assertive, takes the initiative, is independent, competitive and ambitious. Television and film heroes represent goodness, power, control, confidence, competence and success. They are geared to succeed in a competitive economic system. This aggression permeates into men being shown in films and drama as the warlords perpetuating crime and violence. Many young boys tend to emulate such characteristics through action and aggression.

### **Women as Consumers**

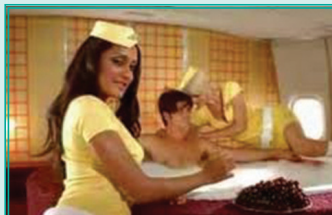
The media is more interested in women as consumers. They are stereotyped and used to market, sell and consume products. Stereotypical images of women

### **Activity**

Following are some pictures from media. Interpret and discuss them in three groups.

The groups may take themes for presentation of their comments as-

- Reinforcing stereotypes
- Breaking stereotypes
- Creating new images



in the media are enhanced by the extended commercialization. The woman is the one who buys without end and her hair, dress, shoes, each bear the stamp of the latest, the most expensive products. None of the women characters in any of the serials repeats a dress. She makes sure that her house is decorated with the latest gadgets. The media is more interested in women as consumers.

*The women's movement has criticized the local mainstream media for stereotyping women's images, commodification of women's bodies, and appallingly portraying violence against women in the media, through advertisements, soap operas and dramas.*

So far we have discussed about what kinds of images are portrayed by media. Another important point of discussion is to understand the underlying reasons for each depiction.

#### 4.5 GENDER AND ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA

Common female stereotypes found in the media have a powerful influence over how society views women and how women view themselves. The world of make believe as is presented on television and in the movies. Ranging from thriller films to soap operas, this make believe world has a very significant effect on the viewer. Even though the plot and characters are fictitious, the underlying attitudes and messages are

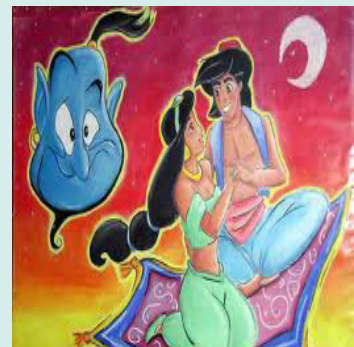
not. They communicate cultural values, which shape the way viewers think and interact. It is important to understand such typifications in order to unmask the double standards that are pervasive in our culture and society. The dichotomy is that we internalise such stereotypes that reinforce abuse, while trying to “root out” violence in our community. Let us now examine the specific modes through which these operate.

##### Television

Popular actors and women from the fashion industry are seen endorsing beauty and home products. Women in careers and professions which are off beat may make a story, but they are too few and far apart. In fact, there is a big industry thriving on looking good from weight management to grooming and wellness products that are being promoted. While many business establishments target women consumers, they often seem to be aimed solely at selling products to women and do not provide the information that they need. The same has remained true for the soap operas. Moreover, those women who wear modern clothes and appear very confident are depicted as having bad intentions or being non conformists as against their conservative and not-so-modern counterparts.

Sports programmes define men in relation to competition, strength and discipline. Most war films promote violence

The gender stereotyping is engrained into our culture from the initial stages of a child's exposure to watch television and read children stories. Numerous kid movies have strong male protagonists. Even though the producers may not be intentionally making gender insensitive statements, but what they create is watched by millions of boys and girls. Seeing that the man must be the hero in the end and the woman should be a thin, fair, pure hearted girl who needs to be saved, does create these stereotypes at a young impressionable age. *A popular children's programme: Alladin*



as 'natural' and heroic for males. The soldiers are men of few words, heroic deeds and strong and independent. Similarly, detective stories give the masculine ego the pleasure of mastery and certainty. Women in such programmes play a second fiddle, performing desk jobs, looking good and sadly sometimes even fickle minded to add a hint of humour.

### **Films**

Most women in Bollywood films are portrayed as hysterical and irrational. Screaming, yelling, and crying is a part and parcel of their reaction to a stressful situation. Also, there are any number of movies where women who assert themselves are considered 'bad' while men, even if they tease and hit women are considered 'heroes'. Even in those movies where a woman exercises her decision making power, she is almost always portrayed in a bad light or as a non conformist radical.

### **Print**

Generally, women's problems never figure on the front page of a newspaper unless it is a gruesome murder or a case of rape. Newspapers do not usually address relevant issues of women's empowerment such as decision making abilities, multitasking skills or their achievements in the political, social and economic sphere. It requires a special day to highlight their strengths such as a Mother's Day, Women's Day. One can however, find the representation of women related issues through beauty tips, recipes, fashion, jewellery etc.

*A study conducted by a Delhi based Media Advocacy group highlighted instances of stereotyping and of discrimination. According to the study, interviews of men in newspapers hardly ever mention their marital status or their dress sense. The focus is on their work. By contrast, women achievers are subject to irrelevant, even distasteful queries. The amount of coverage women get overall is also much lesser.*

*Men are provided with large number of opportunities to present their viewpoints. They are shown in diverse roles like administration, law, business, science and technology. Representation of women varies from negligible presence to total exclusion and women in certain accepted professions are interviewed and talked about. For example, women educationists or women doctors may be more visible. If women are interviewed for achieving success in a 'male' profession, then the article often goes to great pains to point out her 'femininity'.*

Newspapers sometimes cover women's problems drawing the attention of policymakers to issues requiring immediate attention such as the adverse sex ratio, infant and maternal mortality, crime against women and the effects of poverty on women and their families. But this coverage is very limited with the rest of the space occupied by cinema actresses, models, video jockeys (VJs) and the rich women and their hobbies. Many of the women's magazines are devoted to fashion, glamour, beauty aids, weight reduction, cookery and how to sharpen 'feminine instincts' to keep men and their in-laws happy. There are comparatively fewer articles on career opportunities, health awareness, entrepreneurship, legal aid, counselling services, childcare services and financial management. A study in this regard was conducted in Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. Two regional newspapers and two English newspapers were selected for the study. Prominent newspapers only publish 5% of women related issues and 8% are published on main page and remaining are placed inside. This study revealed that no importance is given to development issues of women.

### **Magazines**

The usage of the term magazine itself first came about with the publication of 'The Gentlemen's Magazine' and 'The Lady's Magazine' in the 1730s by Edward Cave (1691-1754)

(Connor, G 2001). Different types of magazines exist for just about every age and social group, for any interest, hobby and lifestyle. The pressure put on women through advertisements and articles in magazines, to be sexually attractive is profound. Provocative images of women's partly clothed or naked bodies are especially prevalent in print advertising in order to grab the viewers' attention.

Laurie Abraham, executive editor of *Elle* magazine, warns that the biggest problem with women's magazines is "how much we lie about sex." Those "lies" continue to perpetuate the idea that women's sexuality is subservient to men's pleasure. In her study of *Cosmopolitan* and *Playboy* magazines, for example, Nicole Krassas found that both men and women's magazines contain a single vision of female sexuality that "women should primarily concern themselves with attracting and sexually satisfying men." The presence of misinformation and media stereotypes is disturbing, given that research indicates young people often turn to media for information about sex and sexuality" (Singh, S. Anand, S. and Capila, A. 1998).

#### **Pornography in Internet Cafés**

Many commercial public Internet access points are appearing in developing countries like India. However, in small towns and rural areas, these Internet facilities are typically entertainment joints, which men frequent for accessing pornographic content. Most often, the Internet café manager, usually a young male, is himself into surfing pornographic content, and the place serves as a hangout for his male friends. This is even true of some community telecentres set-up by non-profit organizations in India. Women and girls are obviously wary of going to such places for accessing the Internet. Additionally, gender insensitive management of many commercial Internet access points poses the threat that personal email addresses of women and girls are accessed and used by boys and men to harass them.

Another vital point of discussion is that young students must begin to ask questions, rather than passively accepting whatever they see and hear. Recognizing media myths for what they are is a good first step. The objective here is to differentiate between the stereotypical behaviour of television, film, and video heroes, on the one hand, and our own lives, on the other.

#### **Activity**

##### **Messages from Magazine Advertisements**

Divide the learners into smaller groups. Ask a participant from each group to read answers to questions and record their responses on a board or flip chart for comparisons.

What common themes are present in most advertisements these days?

What are the advertisements saying about roles of men and women?

How do you think the advertisements affect our attitudes and our expectations for gender roles?

Now, Let us examine, if the newer forms of media offer a better scope for inclusion of women and better gender sensitivity.

#### **4.6 GENDER, INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICTs) AND THE NEW MEDIA**

First, let us understand what is new media. New Media is the advanced means of communication like internet, mobile phones, community radio interactive video, etc. New media have made the process of receiving information interactive, which means that everyone involved and participating makes a difference in defining the content of messages or even benefitting from the process of message creation and broadcasting. There exists a lot of potential in such media to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women.

However, there are contradictory views about the scope of women's participation. Some believe that there are substantial

inequalities in women and men's access to their use and production, which do not allow women to take fair advantage of new opportunities and fully contribute to development. Low income, time constraints, lack of education, including knowledge about computers, lack of leadership skills, and cultural barriers affect access to new media and ICT related facilities. On the other hand, some are of the view that new technologies in the information and communications arena, especially the Internet, have ushered in a new age. There is also a view that such technologies have only technical rather than social implications.

However, it cannot be denied that existing power relations in society determine the enjoyment of benefits from ICTs. Hence, these technologies are not gender neutral. The access to ICT is still a faraway reality for the vast majority of people especially rural population groups. They have generally been left out of the information revolution, given the absence of basic infrastructure, high costs of ICT deployment, unfamiliarity with ICT and dominance of the English language in the internet content. In addition to this, women are more likely to

be illiterate; not know English; and lack training in computer skills.

Using new ICTs as **knowledge and networking tools** provides important economic and development opportunities. In Gujarat, women dairy producers use the Dairy Information System Kiosk (DISK), which manages a database of all milk cattle, provides information about veterinary services, and other practical information about the dairy sector. This information helps women producers maximize productivity and earnings. The use of ICT devices like PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) and financial software applications in micro-credit activity is also being explored by development agencies and NGOs, to enhance women's economic opportunities.

Domestic responsibilities, cultural restrictions on mobility, lesser economic power, as well as lack of relevance of content to their lives further marginalize them from the information sector.

Similarly, women may not be visible in the news stories. They are neither interviewed nor asked for an opinion. The situation is even worse for those belonging to poor households or rural areas. Further,

### Activity

Now let us look at the picture below (a young girl as Radio Jockey). Just think, how many times do you get to see such an image in the newspaper? This picture depicts a young girl, as a popular Radio Jockey in Kashmir. Think about it!

We repeatedly hear from media about the conservative and conflict-ridden society of Kashmir. The whole picture looks gloomy, but if media portrays such stories more often in the Press, Radio and TV, it will create a more positive image. It will create positive role models too for so many other young girls in Kashmir in specific and all other places in general.



*Stepping out!!!  
Radio Station in Kashmir*

women from the north east and Muslim women appear far lesser number of times than those from Hindi or English speaking backgrounds and from well to do urban family backgrounds.

New alternate media like community radio wherein programmes are broadcast for a small geographical area, in local dialect about community needs, offers a great scope for women to participate in local decision making. However, we find very few women are able to participate due to the cultural barriers. Young “daughters” and “daughters-in-law” are not allowed to be seen in “public spaces” like these and the talented and young girls are hesitant to join. However, there are some inspiring examples.



*Inauguration of Community Radio at Banasthali Vidhyapeeth*

Banasthali Vidhyapeeth is in Tonk, a backward district of Rajasthan. This women’s educational institute operates an all women’s community radio. Similarly Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) operates an all women community radio called “Rudi no radio” in Ahemdabad, Gujarat.

Women listening to radio in Bundelkhand, Madhya Pradesh — a place where regular electricity supply is not available. An NGO has mobilised women to participate in programme production and feedback for Community Radio.

Similarly, ‘Khabar Lahariya’ is a local newspaper. A group of eight women belonging to the backward class brings out this paper from the Bundelkhand region. This paper is being funded by an NGO and was started with the aim to encourage women to fight for their own rights. Such initiatives are required in every nook and corner of our country so as to empower women at the grassroot level. Thus, increasingly more and more opportunities are available for women to participate in media and create more positive images and for women to be the role models. In a developing country like ours, media offers tremendous potential to be used for bringing women into the mainstream by giving information for their larger participation in development activities and to augment their family resources. The new generation of girls and their gender sensitive teachers can make a huge difference in what future girls will aspire for.

### ***The Mass Media and Women’s Participation***

Most often, media is owned and controlled by men. Despite the fact that a large number of women are participating in the media industry, it is hardly acknowledged. Further, although women have been contributing significantly to development



*Empower Me!!!*

and economic growth, patriarchy is seen to hinder the equal treatment of women. Let us try to understand the specificities of what the real scenario is.

### **News Media**

In news calling for opinions/quotations from consumers/public/expert authorities, the views of women need to be reflected along with their male counterparts. The voices of women need to be particularly reflected in news pertaining to a variety of issues and not just in women-specific issues.

News stories about women are treated differently. Here are some of the observations:

- **Women's views and voices are marginalized** — Women constitute 52 per cent of the world's population, yet make up only 21 per cent of people featured in the news.
- **Men's voices dominate in hard news** — Men are the majority of news subjects in all story topics. Even when women do feature in the news, they are more likely to be found in 'soft' stories such as celebrity and arts and less likely in 'hard' news stories about politics, government and the economy.
- **Men dominate as spokespersons and experts** — Most of the people featured in news stories as spokespeople and experts are men. Women are less likely to be considered experts in media coverage. Instead, they are more often present as voices expressing personal experience or popular opinion. It is significant to note however that some of the most successful characters in Hindi serials are women.
- **Women are more likely to be portrayed as victims than men** — Females and male victims are common subjects in news programmes. However, women are represented disproportionately much more as victims as compared to men.
- **News is mainly reported by men** — The only exception is among television presenters, where some news stories are

presented by women. This imbalance is most evident in newspapers, where very few newspaper items are written by the female reporters. However, gradually one can evince news stories by women reporters. Some of them are getting wider coverage and visibility in national newspapers.

- **Female reporters are more likely to cover 'soft' news** — Men tend to cover the 'hard' or 'serious' news. Female journalists generally cover stories on social issues such as education or fashion, emotions etc. Although here too we have an exception like Barkha Dutt, who covered the news from the Kargil war front.

A significant number of women journalists are very successful in magazines dealing with the problems of women and children. They write with sensitivity and skill and analyse events in depth on women's abuse and exploitation, harassment of women at the workplace, the trauma of HIV infected women and female foeticide. The magazines deal with the issues more in depth as compared to newspapers and women are considered competent to handle such stories.

### **News Content**

- **Women are not the central focus of a story** — Very few news stories have women as the central focus. The proportion of these stories varies across different topics. Women are central to the news story in 'soft' topics such as celebrity news, or social issues.
- **News stories reinforce gender stereotypes** — News content reinforces gender stereotypes by depicting a world in which women are relatively invisible. Gender inequality is not considered newsworthy by almost all the news channels and print, with the exception sometimes of Doordarshan. Majority of news stories do not highlight issues of gender equality or inequality.

### Activity

Think of two examples each from print and television where you feel women have been shown or have broken the stereotypes

- Print
  - 1.
  - 2.
- Television
  - 1.
  - 2.

#### 4.7 GENDER SENSITIVE CODE OF ETHICS FOR MEDIA

Every country has laws and regulatory authorities that place some obligations or restrictions on the way media operates. In addition, the way media works is influenced by the society in which it operates.

**Codes of Ethics** may be regional, national, or specific to the institution. Gender has hardly featured as a consideration in these codes of ethics. Since the gender perceptions and stereotypes are deeply ingrained in the socialization of every media practitioner, ethical codes are mechanisms to put this in order. The study conducted by the Media Advocacy Group also mentions that media needs to take an extended, broader view of crimes against women. It has to be instrumental in conducting a social audit on factors responsible for increasing crimes against women and children, including indifferent investigative procedures, miscarriage of justice, and help to bring the perpetrators of crime under the legal ambit. It has to be instrumental in creating awareness among civil society about the causes and nature of the crime itself, and of the preventive measures. It further suggested that when treating these issues, media has to be extremely factual and empirical.

However, the portrayal of women in media has led the National Commission for Women

to recommend amendment in the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition Act), 1986. The NCW wants to include new technologies like MMS and the electronic media and some which were left outside the ambit of the Act, like posters and TV serials which perpetuate stereotypes of women. Explaining the reason for including soaps in the proposed amendment in the Act, National Commission for Women has stated that “women are either being portrayed as Sita (Ramayana) or as Kaikayee (Ramayana) and there seems to be nothing in between the two extreme characters being shown in soaps. Divorce and adultery are highlighted frequently in daily soaps where characters break the law without repercussions.” Negative images or just portraying reality is not enough. In fact, it can often be harmful. This can be avoided by depicting positive images or success stories of women in whatever sphere they happen. There is a need to produce programmes that talk about income generating schemes for women. Unfortunately, in these kinds of ventures typical “womanly jobs” like papad-making, sewing, embroidery, pickle making etc. are propagated. Stress should be given to non-traditional skills which can break the myth that women are suited for certain kinds of jobs only. A systematic survey of the existing schemes (Government/ Non- Government) and presentation of the

analysis and changes are needed to upgrade those schemes which would in turn make them more purposeful.

#### 4.8 BEIJING'S LEGACY FOR GENDER AND MEDIA

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, approved in September 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women is a global commitment to achieving equality, development and peace for women worldwide. As defined in the Mission Statement of the 123-page document:

The Platform for Action is an agenda for women's empowerment. It aims at... removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all sphere of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making....at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities. Equality...is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice....

To achieve equality, the Platform for Action emphasizes the need for women to work together and in partnership with men towards the common goal of gender equity worldwide.

The Beijing Platform focuses on twelve "critical areas of concern" that must be addressed to achieve gender quality and women's empowerment:

- Women and poverty
- Education and training of women
- Women and health
- Violence against women
- Women and armed conflict
- Women and the economy
- Women in power and decision-making
- Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- Human rights of women
- Women and media
- Women and environment
- The girl child

To address each of the above concerns, specific strategic objectives were identified along with actions to be implemented by governments, financial and development institutions such as the World Bank, national and international NGOs (non-governmental groups), women's groups and the private sector. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were approved unanimously by representatives from 189 countries attending the Fourth World Conference on Women, held during the 50th anniversary year of the founding of the United Nations. While the Beijing Platform for Action steers clear of being prescriptive to the media, the document:

- Notes that media has the potential to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women by impacting on public policy, private attitudes and behaviour;
- Calls for the elimination of negative and degrading images of women in media communications in order to provide a balanced picture of women's diverse lives and contributions to society in a changing world;
- Notes that pornographic, degrading and other violent media projections negatively affect women's participation in society, and that programmes reinforcing women's traditional roles should not be tolerated;
- Calls for empowerment of women through the enhancement of their "skills, knowledge and access to information technology" in order to strengthen their ability to combat negative portrayals of women internationally and to challenge instances of abuse of power by an increasingly important industry;
- Calls for the "creation and development of self-regulatory mechanisms for the media and the development of approaches to eliminate gender-biased programming."

#### 4.9 POTENTIAL FOR POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS

Edutainment, which consists of weaving educational messages with entertainment has shown a way to place a strong position in people's hearts. Commercial media has established a well defined niche for itself, and hence creates a lot of scope for positive interventions. Media in its various forms seems to be experimenting or "taking risk". Be it print or electronic, there are a few examples, which have certainly tried to break stereotypes and have been successful in their own ways.

**Alternative Media Portrayals:** Although a majority of advertisements represent stereotypical images, yet there have been alternative portrayals as well. These portrayals also signify the fact that media too has been initiating changes through such portrayals. Some examples are as follows. The examples can be drawn from contextual factors.

- The ad for TVS Scooty, shows two sisters in small town India, enjoying the freedom and independence that mobility, brings them.
- The ad for ICICI Prudential Life Insurance shows a wife urging her husband to get life insurance as it would secure their future as well as provide for their daughter's education.
- The advertisement in which a daughter presents a car to her parents with her savings, thereby asserting her financial autonomy.
- The advertisement of a kitchen cleaning liquid, in which the husband has already kept the kitchen intact before his doctor wife returns home.
- The refrigerator advertisement in which the husband keeps the food ready before his wife returns from office.
- The advertisement of a mosquito repellent, portraying an aged wife challenging her husband to find a mosquito, which shows her as a decision maker.
- The laptop advertisement depicting the homemaker as technologically savvy and guiding her son's tuition teacher and her husband's clients about the job opportunities available abroad.
- Majority of the television serials and soaps are gradually making a departure from the presentation of stereotypical images of a demure or passive wife or daughter. The projection of adolescence as a life stage is also one imbued with responsibility. It is being depicted not only as a phase of storm and stress, but also of creativity, challenge and potential. Daughters are projected as problem solvers. They solve the problems of their parents. Wives are shown as active decision makers, husbands as companionate seeking their wives approval and taking pride in their abilities.
- Even the animation movies no longer revive the story of the maid in distress, waiting for her knight/prince in armour. The girl/women protagonists are depicted as adventurous, explorative, stoutly built and having the prowess to physically overpower the boys.
- Popular directors such as Deepa Mehta, Zoya Akhtar, Shoojit Sircar and few others have been experimenting with novel themes such as lesbianism, identity crisis with respect to sex role identification and homosexuality. They build upon the strength of their women characters and project them as ones who celebrate their sexuality and womanhood and are staunchly independent and courageous.

Experts believe that advertising could influence society and big brands can take this initiative to break stereotypes. Maximum restraint should be exercised regarding the publication of vulgar and provocative advertisements. There is a growing need for advertising agencies to project healthy gender roles, that is, to show men engaged in

domestic activities and involved with children. It should also discourage the commodification of women’s images like in advertisements of shaving creams, cigarettes etc.



The picture illustrates the new emerging identity of a young Indian woman. It suggests that she is rational, assertive, intelligent, fun-loving and professional. Such images are required to be created more often.

**Women Journalists in Media**

With women holding responsible position in newspapers or electronic media, their competency should extend to a wider range of issues. More significantly, a woman journalist is expected to show more sensitivity to women-centric issues and lend meaningful insights and perspectives.

In general, women have been latecomers in media related professions owing to social and religious taboos which operated as social sanctions. Besides Doordarshan and All India Radio, the increasing number of private channels have brought a boom in employment thereby increasing the number of women media professionals. However, their ratio as compared to men is more or less static. A deliberate policy for ensuring adequate representation of women both in the public and private sectors of the media is therefore a must, not only for giving women a source of livelihood, but also to ensure their adequate and effective representation, and to make the media truly national and representative in character.

As per a study in the NCR, there are around 900 women journalists. However, it is important to consider risks faced by them, both in the urban and rural areas. As we move down, from the metropolitan towns and the state capitals, the risks increase. The cases of sexual assault and harassment of women reporters are very often brought to light. Women in such cases

**Self-Reflection**

1. How does media create gender stereotypes? Explain your answer with examples from television.

.....  
 .....

2. Is it possible to challenge stereotypes? If yes, in what ways?

.....  
 .....

3. New Media offer a better scope for women to participate. Justify your answer with at least two examples.

.....  
 .....

4. ‘Code of Ethics for media is necessary’. Why?

.....  
 .....

have to take a risk in joining the profession. Odd hours of jobs, make the women journalists vulnerable. The recent murder of Ms. Soumya Vishwanathan, producer of TV news channel in Delhi shows that women journalists are more exposed to risk. It is noticed that more and more young women graduates are joining the field of journalism with an ambition to make a mark in the profession. Society, therefore, must make arrangements to provide adequate security to women in the media, to promote their participation at all levels.

#### 4.10 MEDIA AND EDUCATION

While in the previous section, the role of media in perpetuating stereotypes as well as fostering change has been highlighted, the focus will now be on defining the role of teacher educators who can effectively enhance rational thinking among students, by enabling them to critically analyse media projections and the information that is disseminated. Students should be particularly enabled to identify the stereotypical representations and be sensitized towards the regressive trends which hinder the progress and growth of girls and women. Likewise their attention should be drawn towards the changing trends.

#### 4.11 OBJECTIVES OF MEDIA EDUCATION

- To build the capacity of teacher educators on issues related to girls' and women's education and empowerment
- To enable them to recognise the potential of media in achieving the goals of girls' education and empowerment
- To analyse the nature of representation of women's issues as projected in media
- To sensitize teacher educators to gender issues presented through media images
- To focus on the importance of media education.

## 4.12 CONCEPT/ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1

**Facilitator's Note:** Make the participants read and analyse the following:

- The **sex ratio of girls is steadily declining in most states.** At the National level, the figure was recorded as 945 in the 1991 census which has come down to 927 in 2001.
- There is **growing sexual abuse of girls and women at the hands of both family members and strangers.** As per NGOs working in the field of child abuse while most cases of incest go unreported, 6 out of 10 rape victims are minors.
- A Survey by the National Commission for Women reveals that **up to 60% of working women including those in police and judiciary have faced sexual harassment and gender bias.** Up to 55% of female students in college and universities are sexually harassed or receive unwanted attention from an employer, manager or any man with power.
- Despite an increase in the percentage of literacy and job opportunities, only 22% of women are employed. **Mere 6% of women in the work force have regular jobs in the formal sector and approximately 90% of them are concentrated in rural areas, mainly in agriculture.** At both ends, women workers are crowded at the bottom end with low levels of pay, job insecurity and fear of sexual harassment.

### Question for Discussion

- What are your views regarding the above data and facts? Do you agree/disagree with what has been reported?
- What does the above data indicate?
- In which direction is women's empowerment heading?

- Mention the major issues of concern mentioned in the report.
- Do the reports hint at the gender bias prevalent in society?
- What is the participants' view regarding biases present in the police, judiciary and administrative services?

## Activity 2

**Facilitator's Note:** Bring the attention of the participants to the school environment and the girl students. Make them discuss the attitude of parents towards girl students and boy students.

- Does the situation create any kind of fear/apprehension in the minds?
- What are their views regarding the safety and security of girls and women present in our family?

**Facilitator's Note:** At this point ask the participants if such a kind of fear or apprehension can result in sex selective abortions or parents not sending their daughters to school in rural areas.

- What kind of toll (mental, physical, emotional) would it have had on the sufferers?
- Why is this happening? ((hint: focus on social, cultural/economic issues)
- Is there a connection between education and empowerment?

**Facilitator's Note:** Focus more on points 2 and 3. What as teachers and teacher educators should you do to ensure the safety and security aspect? Would sensitizing teachers/family members/students towards such issues help? How?

## Discuss Rupen Deol Bajaj's case as outlined in the newspaper extract below:

- Do you think that by fighting for so long, in order to get justice, she set an example?
- Do you empathize with her?

**Facilitator's note –** Ask the participants whether they or any one they know have experienced any kind of bias or sexual harassment.

## Self-Reflection 1

Discussion- 'If I were a man' for women participants and 'If I were a woman' for male participants.

- What are the participants view regarding media as a positive intervention to make the situation better? Can media help in making the situation better?
- How is media playing its role?

# 'It took me more than 17 years to get justice'

## FIRST PERSON



**RUPEN DEOL BAJAJ**  
Information Commissioner (Punjab)

HOW I wish the 'Guidelines against sexual harassment' issued by the Supreme Court in the Visakha judgment had been available in 1988 instead of 1998! How much less convoluted my path for justice would have been. For then, the onus of quick executive action would have been squarely on the employer (the Chief Secretary). Because I was Secretary to the Government

Review Petition before the SC, which failed. Perhaps all this would have not happened if mine had been a post-guidelines case.

I was forced to file an FIR, followed by a judicial complaint because my employer purposely did not take any action to punish the culprit. The IPC was framed in 1860, but Sections 354 and 509 that deal with outraging and in-

when the then DGP misbehaved with me, the employer in my case was the Governor. Let not all those smug officials and social worthies, who in such cases state "let the law takes its own course", imagine that they are being very just and even-handed in their approach, for they are actually condemning the victim to a lifetime of judicial struggle at her own financial, social, psy-

chological, mental and physical cost. A lifetime goes by when one has to fight single-handedly against a system and societal mindset on gender-based issues, deeply ingrained in the minds of not only the Executive but also the Judiciary, who all suffer from age-old attitudes adopted by society towards women.

In my case, the struggle lasted for over 17 years, from 1988 to 2005. The last 10 years were entirely avoidable. The trial court had convicted KPS Gill in 1996 (upon directions from the Supreme Court). The convicted DGP filed an appeal before the District & Sessions Judge, then before the High Court and then before the SC. Even after being squarely rebuffed by all the courts, which upheld the conviction, he did not stop, but filed a further

Review Petition before the SC, which failed. Perhaps all this would have not happened if mine had been a post-guidelines case.

I was forced to file an FIR, followed by a judicial complaint because my employer purposely did not take any action to punish the culprit. The IPC was framed in 1860, but Sections 354 and 509 that deal with outraging and in-

when the then DGP misbehaved with me, the employer in my case was the Governor. Let not all those smug officials and social worthies, who in such cases state "let the law takes its own course", imagine that they are being very just and even-handed in their approach, for they are actually condemning the victim to a lifetime of judicial struggle at her own financial, social, psy-

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In my case, the struggle lasted for over 17 years, from 1988 to

**Facilitator's Note:** Here the facilitator will emphasize on the impact of media on people's senses and the power it has on formation/moulding of our views, thoughts and subsequent action (Refer to the report mentioned in the next objective)

### Activity 3

Media plays the most important role in building public opinion on issues related to women and has power to encourage and motivate people to raise their voice against atrocities and injustice meted out to them. It is a platform which can immediately beget the attention of all those who matter- be they in government, police, judiciary etc, and compel them to take concrete action. However, when analyzed, the present scenario visible in media, especially on television and in newspapers points towards two disturbing trends. The first focuses on cultural representations of woman as 'sex symbol'. The second pertains to the decreasing coverage and under-reporting of important developmental and governmental issues concerning women, and the crimes against them.

Discuss the above with respect to the following:

- the role of media in empowering women
- the two disturbing trends described above

Introspect, analyze and answer the following:

- What according to you should be the role of media?
- How do media represent the girls and women centric issues ?
- How should women's issues be presented/highlighted?

### Activity 4

**Facilitator's Note:** Draw participants' attention towards the scenario before the advent of satellite TV and globalization to the representation of women through media. Discuss India's socio economic and socio cultural ethos to create an appropriate context for discussion.

### Activity 5

Take up a discussion on all the emerging issues. Focus mainly on the appropriateness of such projections and their impact.

**Facilitator's Note:** Read the clippings below and study the photographs.



## Question for Discussion

- Do such presentations hinder the prospects of girls getting empowered?
- What kind of impression do we form after watching them?
- What are your views on how women should be depicted on television?

## Activity 6

### Divorced Muslim women lose out in race for jobs

**Aabshar H Quazi**  
Kota, August 22

**DIVORCED** MUSLIM women in Kota division are in a dilemma as legal requirements laid down for job vacancies, announced recently by a few government departments, appear to deny them a fair opportunity to earn a livelihood.

Recently, education, health and other departments invited applications for the direct recruitment of divorced women.

The advertisements specify that a divorced woman should attach a copy of the judicial decree granting her divorce.

This makes it difficult for Muslim women to apply for the jobs as their divorce takes place under the procedures of the Muslim Personal Law (MPL) and there is no

court intervention. Asma Rehman, a divorced Muslim woman, who has applied for a teacher's post said that she had attached her talaknama with her application. But she was unsure about the status of her application because the fine print in the advertisement says a court decree needs to be in place for the application to be processed.

Asma's fears are not misplaced. A top-ranking government official in Jaipur told the *Hindustan Times* that "a judicial decree in divorce cases is needed to establish the authenticity of the applicant's candidature for the vacancy."

On whether a talaknama under the Muslim Personal Law was not conclusive enough, the official said he was in no position to comment on the matter. On

whether the divorced Muslim women without a court decree were entitled to selection, the government official said, "We would see. Nothing can be said this moment."

There are many women like Asma in Kota who fear the clerk at the counter. Akhtar Khan, secretary of Human Relief Society (HRS), a human rights organisation, said that as per the Muslim Law, a contract of marriage can be dissolved by a husband at his will through talak, which may be effected orally or by a written document called talaknama, and it is a sufficient proof of divorce.

"However, marriages under the MPL can also be dissolved by judicial decree but it is not a popular practice among Muslims," added Khan.

### Close encounter



**D**o you want to get up, close and personal with India's most sought-after fashion designer Manish Malhotra? Catch his close friend Kareena Kapoor telling it all. In her first show ever on the boob tube, *The Manish Malhotra Magic in Dubai*, the actor brings Manish live in your drawing room. The half-an-hour show will also feature three other important people in his life — Urmila Matondkar, who modelled for his catalogue, Sumita Menon, his guide and confidante and Tusshar Kapoor, his best friend. Together they will expose the hidden shades of Manish's professional and personal life. Catch the Friendship Day special episode today on Zee Music.

—HTC

- Which report fetches more attention? Why?
- Does it harm the prospects and interests of common girls/women? How?

## Activity 7

**Facilitator's Note:** Present a de-glamorized report focusing on a female film star and then pose the following questions.

### Raped 12-yr-old gives birth to boy

#### Father knew of crime but didn't report to Faridabad police

**AVISHK G. Dashtar**  
New Delhi, June 6

A TWELVE-YEAR-OLD girl from a village near Faridabad gave birth to a boy at Safdarjung Hospital in the wee hours of Tuesday. The girl became pregnant after she was apparently raped by a 35-year-old man in her village.

The girl, a student of Class V in Palwal district of Haryana, was brought by her sisters to the Delhi Children's Rights Forum, and Nava Srishiti, two NGOs supported by Child Relief and Yun (Cr) on Monday evening. NGO officials took her to the hospital, where doctors gave her medicines and advised to go home. She started suffering from acute pain after acquiring a Medico-Legal Case register at the police station at the emergency, where she went into labour pain.

Soon after, a team of Faridabad police visited the girl and recorded a statement at around 3 a.m. The statement says Subhash, who runs a photo studio in the village and is married with three kids, had allegedly taken her to an inconspicuous spot and raped her. "He had threatened to kill my family if I spilled the beans. So I kept shut," the girl said in the statement.

A few weeks after the alleged rape, the girl's unwarranted pregnancy began to show. Her father, a daily-wage labourer, took her to a local hakim who maintained that it was a case of "water-logging" in the stomach. A few months ago, when she was examined at a local dispensary, the whole thing became clear. Says Dr Indu, a senior resident at the maternity ward of the hospital: "The delivery was normal but she was admitted after a lot of confusion because from her account it was clear that the police needed to be involved."

"It is a classic case of how minor girls fall pray to such predators in villages," said Rinti Banerjee, an official of the NGO.

The father of the victim, Daulat Ram, says the accused comes from a rich and influential family in the village, so speaking up against him was always a tough job. "Even elders in our village had advised me against reporting the incident," he said.

Palwal police station in Faridabad has filed a case against Subhash under three relevant sections of the IPC. But Subhash has apparently fled the village, they said, and added that a search was on.

Meanwhile, the girl's family has decided to adopt the newborn. Her brother-in-law, Amritlal said, "My wife and I will raise the kid. It's not his (daddy's) fault, so he shouldn't be punished," he said.

### नाबालिग ने किया दो से बलात्कार

वई दिल्ली( का.सं. )। यमुनाघर के त्रिलोकपुरी इलाके में दो बच्चियों के साथ बलात्कार करने वाले एक नाबालिग को पुलिस ने गिरफ्तार किया है। वह पड़ोस में रहने वाली दोनों बच्चियों को बहला-फुसलाकर अपने घर ले गया था। बलात्कार के बाद उसने बच्चियों को किसी से कुछ कहने पर जान से मारने की धमकी भी दी थी। डरों-सहमी बच्चियों ने बीस दिन बाद मामले का खुलासा किया।

गिरफ्तार चौदह वर्षीय अभियुक्त इलाके के सरकारी स्कूल में नौवीं कक्षा का छात्र बताया गया है। जानकारी के मुताबिक पड़ोस में रहने वाली दो परिवारों की सात व आठ वर्षीय बच्चियों को अभियुक्त बहला-फुसलाकर अपने साथ ले गया। घर में लेकर जाकर अभियुक्त ने दोनों बच्चियों के साथ गुरे काला किया। बच्चियों को उसने यह कहकर धमकाया कि किसी से बताया से बताया तो उन्हें जान से मारकर शव को बोरे में नाले में फेंक देगा।

21/06/10

- What is the message conveyed via the reports?
- Does such kind of a shocking and startling presentation create any kind of sympathy or empathy towards the victims?
- Do the reports compel the readers to think about making the conditions better?
- How are these crimes related to girls' education?

### Activity 8

**Facilitator's Note:** Present the two clippings related to female foeticide. One talks of Haryana where the bias against the girl child is evident and the other talks of a Punjab village where the ratio of girls is more. Highlight the important points of the reports and the impact each has on our thoughts and mind. Pose the following questions.

## Haryana parents give girl child a bad name

By Sukhbir Swach/TNN

**Chandigarh:** Think of the worst possible name, dirty and disgusting. Then give it to your daughter. Sounds mean? That's exactly what miffed parents in Haryana do when a daughter is born to them. Of course, it hardly matters to them that a rapidly dwindling sex ratio — an amazing 861 girls per 1,000 boys — is forcing many of the state's men to look for brides outside. They still hate their daughters.

Check out these names that daughters are saddled with, almost as a curse: *Bhateri*, which means 'enough'; *Mariya*, meaning 'deathly'; *Maro*, which translates into 'kill'; *Eadhoo*, which is 'too much' and *Maffi*, which would be a ridiculous 'please, no more'. The most pathetic of the lot is *Bharpai*, which roughly means 'paying the penalty'.

In the rough terrains of Haryana, there are thousands of girls who continue to be addressed in such a de-meaning way, as a reminder that they have come into this world as a bane, as something to be ashamed of and angry about. Across large swathes of anti-women Haryana, nothing much has changed for the fairer sex in the 21st century.

Teka Ram, a resident of Karamgarh in Jind, has named his daughter *Bhateri*. His neighbour *Hawa Singh* has

also thought it fit to follow suit and call his daughter *Bhateri*. It really doesn't matter if couples have just one daughter, they will still think of the most obnoxious name for her.

Boys have it much better. They have grand names *Lakha*, who will be a *lakhpati*, and *Una*, one who will live forever.

Jagmat Sangwan, president of Haryana chapter of All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), said, "It reflects the negative mindset and negligent attitude towards girls. This is when the sex ratio is already falling so seriously."

"Such practices should be discouraged and, in fact, it should become the central agenda of a regionwide debate. Not just AIDWA, even government should talk about this from every possible platform," Sangwan said.

Rajbir Singh, a lecturer at Kurukshetra University, said such trends must be dealt with a heavy hand. However, women and child development commissioner and acting chairman of Haryana Women's Commission Dalip Singh sees some hope. "Earlier, there were lot of 'Bhateris' in my village *Pahladgarh*, in *Bhiwani*. But now people have some good and modern names for their daughters. Haryana has launched many schemes for advancement of girls and we are open to ideas that improve their status."

## More girls, Punjab village sets new sex trend

JALAHMAJRA, June 26

EIGHT-MONTH-OLD NANDINI is one of the few lucky ones. In this remote village of northern Punjab, where girls are killed before birth or considered a curse, *Nandini's* parents chose "life" for her.

Punjab has the country's lowest sex ratio with 786 girls for every thousand boys. A study by the British medical journal *Lancet* this year said India may have lost 10 million "unborn" girls over the past 20 years, though experts at home put it at 5 million.

But *Jalahmajra* is an aberration. It has reversed the gender imbalance. With an average of 1,020 girls every 1,000, the village is at the forefront of the campaign against 'girl child slaughter'. The Punjab government, which had announced a cash

award to any village, which reported more girls than boys last year, awarded the village Rs 3 crore (6,542 US dollars) last week.

Residents attribute the turnaround to a sustained campaign by *Krishan Kumar*, a senior administrative official, in-charge of *Nawanshar* district, where the village is located. It took a long time to change the popular mindset. Says head teacher of a local school *Devender Singh*, "Earlier when a girl was born, people on the streets would ask the mother: Didn't you undergo a gender test? That has stopped."

The Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act bans tests to determine the sex of an unborn child, but the practice is a multi-million dollar business countrywide. "There is a girl in every house in our village," says *Nandini's* beaming 24-year-old mother *Sangeeta Sidhu*. She and her mason husband *Surdeep* now have a "complete" pair of a son and a daughter. The couple wants to educate *Nandini* and is not worried about her dowry — the primary reason behind infanticide. Village head *Hari Singh* said he would use the money to build a "guesthouse" for weddings so that costs could be cut. Parents often have to borrow heavily to marry off their daughters.

Another 70 villages in *Nawanshar* are also close to achieving the national average of 927, says district magistrate *Kumar*, who launched an anti-abortion, crusade last year. *Kumar* maintains computerised records of all pregnant women in his district of 600,000 people. Next on his agenda are sting operations on doctors carrying out illegal abortions.

AFP



TURNAROUND: *Sangeeta Sidhu* and her husband with their daughter *Nandini*. Though Punjab has the lowest sex ratio in the country, *Jalahmajra* village has an average of 1,020 girls every 1,000 boys.

- What does the Haryana report reflect?
- Does the report send any positive signals to our mind about taking immediate steps to ensure that the ratio of girls does not fall further?
- Does the Punjab report kindle any kind of hope in the present dismal scenario of declining sex ratio?
- Do you think that more such villages would be existing in the country where girls and their education are taken care of? Should media highlight them more and in what ways?

Many more activities can be developed as per the context and participant group.

Thus, by tapping the media resources the teacher educators can generate sensitivity and awareness amongst the learners. Media analysis would enable the learners to capture the gender bias harboured in the society by critically examining the girls and women situation at the family, society and institutional level.

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# Gender and Violence

## Structure of the Module

- 5.1 Overview
- 5.2 Introduction
- 5.3 Objectives
- 5.4 Policy Initiatives
- 5.5 Laws for Addressing Violence against Girls and Women
- 5.6 Evolving Educational Strategies to Address Violence against Women
- 5.7 References

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

The growth of consumerism and the expansion of the market economy in contemporary times have led to commodification of women and girls. Advertising agencies and the soap operas use women and girls to sell their products and influence young minds. Showcasing of women in the role of continuity and change, with a focus on physical appearance has escalated the demand for products related to cosmetics, jewellery and clothes in a big way. It has also however led to escalation of violence against women in different ways. Female foeticide, infanticide, rape, dowry deaths, murder, sexual harassment and many more crimes against girls and women cut across caste, class and location. That the site of occurrence of such crimes could be anywhere in the family, school, workplace or in the community has also

been seen. Developing societies like India are grappling with this problem, in their quest to protect girls and women. The various crimes against women and the violence that they are subjected to are given wide coverage in both the print and the audio-visual media on a daily basis. It is ironical however that only those that are reported are brought to the public domain. The other kinds of violence, especially emotional violence remains unreported. Mechanisms to redress against this form of violence do exist in the form of laws and law enforcing agencies like the Crime Against Women Cell and Family Courts, but many a times, the victims fail to get justice due to a variety of reasons like personal inhibitions, fear of social stigma, systemic delays, etc. A lot of initiatives are being undertaken by the government and civil society in this regard, but the phenomenon continues to

exist both in the rural and urban contexts. The intensity of its occurrence may vary from time to time, but it exists as a human cast rope. The present module attempts to sensitize the readers to address this issue from a humane perspective so that gender harmony becomes an achievable goal.

## 5.2 INTRODUCTION

The present millennium is marked by an explosion in the arena of information technology. In this digital age, accessing the plethora of information available in search engines has made it possible for children of all age-groups to acquire the information they are looking for. Google earth has made it possible to locate the remotest of habitations on the world map. It is truly an era that has brought closer connectivity between people and societies the world over. In the domain of education, this techno-savvy revolution has resulted in loosening the straight jacketed boundaries between disciplines and has facilitated the evolution of application based subjects. In fact, the current century is an era of multi-disciplines or inter-disciplines.

These changes have also challenged the print world and textual materials are gradually being digitized, especially in the developed world. The impact is also being felt in the Asian subcontinent. With the onset of these important changes a significant question that plagues policy planners and educationists as well as people at large is: Have these changes addressed human issues such as *learning to do, learning to know, learning to be and learning to live together*. Further, in this global and technical age there is an escalation of gender based, emotional, sexual and physical crimes that have acquired different contours. Coupled with these phenomena are environmental degradation, global warming, drug peddling, cross border terrorism and the spread of killer diseases such as HIV and AIDS. These natural and man made catastrophes have impacted all sections of society very

significantly and have brought the issue of quality education to the centre stage.

Quality concerns in education have been a major theme of discussion in all education discourses and at various forums — at the national and international level. The effort of policy framers, implementing agencies and pedagogues is to remove all kinds of paradoxes between policy rhetoric and field realities, so that challenges of contemporary education are addressed. In the present module, an attempt has been made to analyze in details the efforts made by the government and civil society in India to meet the growing challenges of endemic violence faced by humanity, particularly women, and the role of contemporary education in addressing this phenomenon.

## 5.3 OBJECTIVES

- To understand different types of violence against women
- To acquire knowledge about legal steps to address violence against women.

## 5.4 POLICY INITIATIVES

The National Policy on Education (1986) is a landmark initiative as it attempts to make education an important vehicle for ushering in social change. The policy lays special emphasis on removal of all kinds of socio-economic and educational disparities by playing an important interventionist role in the empowerment of girls and women. It further reiterates that education will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, and the training and orientation of teachers, decision makers and administrators for undoing all kinds of biases and stereotypes.

The philosophy reflected in NPE (1986), especially in the context of women's empowerment, has also been further spelt out in the Programme of Action (1992). The goals envisaged for women's empowerment include: enhancing the self-esteem and self-confidence of women, building a positive image of women by recognising

their contributions to society, polity and economy, developing the ability to think critically, fostering decision making and action through collective processes, enabling women to make informed choices in areas like education, employment and health (especially reproductive health), ensuring equal participation in developmental processes, providing information, knowledge and skill for economic independence and enhancing access to legal literacy and information relating to their rights and entitlements in society with a view to enhance their participation on an equal footing in all areas.

The National Policy on the Empowerment of Women (NPEW, 2001) is also a step in this direction. The policy once again reiterates that equal access to education for girls and women at all levels would be ensured. Emphasis has been given to the development of gender sensitive curricula which would, in the long run, empower girls and women to meet the different challenges of life. It was felt that this thrust in education would help in meeting the goals of equity and equality and address quality issues in education.

In the context of violence, the policy states that all types of crimes against women in the family and at the societal level would be addressed effectively. Institutional mechanisms coupled with the strengthening of redressal measures would be focused upon. Legal literacy would be promoted so that awareness about preventive laws regarding crime against the girl child and women is disseminated to all. The policy lays a special emphasis on removal of trafficking of girls and women.

The National Policy for Women 2016: Articulating a Vision for Empowerment of Women focuses on preventing all kinds of violence against women through rules and laws, to make effective rules and to review them, improve child sex ratio, strictly enforce guidelines, prevention of human trafficking, etc. are included.

It also talks of protection of women for which their should be one stop centers, women helpline, women police self service, reservation for women in police forces, providing protection to women through panic buttons in mobile phones, establishment of traffic and monitoring systems at common locations.

Policy initiatives have also tried to address the onslaught of globalization and consumerism by making education a means for empowerment of women, but situational analysis based on indicators related to education and crime against women have highlighted that there is a missing link between policy rhetoric and the existing status of women in the present globalised age, especially in the Indian context. This is also true about existing laws.

**Activities**

1. Initiate a discussion with students on existing policy and practice.  
.....  
.....
2. Organize a debate on policy and the role of concerned agencies in implementing them.  
.....  
.....
3. A comparative analysis of the existing policy and growing violence against women in developed and developing countries can be taken up by you in classroom or any other period available.  
.....  
.....
4. Students can be asked to list out the kind(s) of violence that they experience in different spaces such as family, school and community.  
.....  
.....

Recently, the Government of India has enacted the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education in the age group of

6-14 years. This Act extends to the whole of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Some of the main parameters of this Act are as follows:

### Activities

1. Initiate activities through play way method for finding out reasons for non-enrollment of children in neighbourhood schools.  
.....  
.....
2. You can prepare a check list on the availability of infrastructure and its quality.  
.....  
.....
3. You can initiate an activity among teachers for identifying training needs and resources in schools.  
.....  
.....
4. Examine and review the safeguards provided under this Act to ensure that all children complete the elementary cycle of education with substantial quality.  
.....  
.....

- Every child between the age group of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education.
- No child shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education.
- A child above six years of age who has not been admitted in any school or though admitted, could not complete his or her elementary education, then, he or she shall be admitted in a class appropriate to his or her age.
- Ensure that the children belonging to weaker sections and the children

belonging to disadvantaged groups are not discriminated against and prevented from pursuing and completing elementary education on any grounds.

- Ensure good quality elementary education conforming to the standards and norms specified in the Schedule.
- Provision of training facilities to teachers.

To know what the status actually is, the issues listed in the box below may be investigated and discussed

### 5.5 LAWS FOR ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS AND WOMEN

Preventive laws have been enacted since independence for dealing with the growing crime against girls and women. Some of them are: The Special Marriage Act (1954), The Hindu Marriage Act (1955), The Hindu Succession Act (1956), The Family Courts Act (1954), the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act (1986), the Dowry Prohibition Act (1961) (amended in 1984 and 1986), The Equal Remuneration Act (1976), The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act (1986), The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act (1971), The Prenatal Diagnostic Technique Regulation and Prevention Act (1994) and many more. With the passage of time some of the laws have been modified or clauses added to them and newer ones enacted to meet the changes taking place in the social and economic milieu of Indian society.

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 is related to any act or behavior of sexual harassment which includes implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in her employment; or Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in her employment; or Implied or explicit threat about her present or future employment status; or Interference with her work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment for her; or Humiliating treatment likely to affect her health or safety.

However, existing laws have not prevented the occurrence of growing violence against girls and women. The media, either print or electronic provides on a daily basis the coverage on incidences of growing crimes against women. Several reasons are cited for their occurrence. Some of documented ones include lack of awareness about laws, poverty, fear of being stigmatized by the family and society, lack of confidence, psychological fear of being victimized by the perpetrator of the crime and false notions of honour. In cases where the matter is reported, very often the delay in getting justice makes the victim lose confidence in institutions implementing law and order. Thus, enactment of laws in itself does not address issues of social justice unless they are accompanied by effective machinery for implementation.

India is also a signatory to several international conventions that work towards creating an environment that promotes gender justice, harmony and peace. Some of the well known ones are: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC) which calls for the protection of children under the age of 18 from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse as stated in Article 19. Further, Article 34, calls for protection of children from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

It is a known reality that gaps exist between laws and their implementation. However, as stated earlier, the efforts of civil society in this regard cannot be under estimated. Many non-governmental organizations and civil society initiatives do take recourse to public interest litigations in providing justice to victims affected by different types of crimes. In this regard the role of *Mahila Samakhya* established in 1989, is a welcome initiative in providing speedy and cost free assistance to rural

women in matters related to property rights, marital discord, physical and emotional violence faced by girls and women in the family, workplace and society. The structure that addresses judicial issues under this programme is the *Nari Adalat*. In all the states where the programme is being implemented there are several success stories where this structure has helped women in getting justice on several issues pertaining to their family and society. In Assam, *Nari Adalats* have played a proactive role in the settlement of family disputes, dowry harassment, second marriage, rape, domestic violence, child custody, child marriage, witch hunting and alcoholism. In 2006-2007, the total number of *Nari Adalats* in Assam were 10, located in the districts of Darrang, Dhubri, Morigaon Goalpara, Sonitpur and Nagaon.

To build perspective on this and take the discussion further, the box below has a set of activities that may be followed.

**Activities**

1. Organise a legal literacy workshop to acquaint students, teachers and parents on laws enacted for prevention of crime against children, particularly girls.  
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.....
2. Show film clippings and initiate a discussion among students on growing violence in Indian society.  
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.....
3. Arrange a talk by a legal expert/NGO working on prevention of physical and emotional violence.  
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4. Arrange a field visit to institutions dealing with crimes.  
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5. On bulletin boards and other spaces in school you can display important parameters related to Right to Education.  
 .....  
 .....

While policy initiatives and existing laws have attempted to provide a conducive environment for the overall development of girls and women in contemporary India, indicators related to education as well as violence have highlighted that systemic factors in relation to socialization and customary practices, notional beliefs and growing consumerism have negatively impacted the status of women. In the realm of education, even though the participation of girls at the national level has increased at all levels, it is still below 50 per cent.

(Selected Educational Statistics (2005-06)). The literacy rate as per the 2001 census indicates that a gap exists between men and women. For men, it was 75.85 per cent and for women it was 54.16 per cent.

The phenomenon of growing crimes against women also indicates that growth in literacy and education is not always positively linked to the status of women in society. The National Crime Record Bureau provides information about different types of crimes that are committed annually. In the year 2007, a total of 1,85,312 incidents of crimes against women (both under IPC and other laws) were reported in the country as compared to 1,64,765 during 2006, recording an increase of 12.5 per cent during 2007. The different cases of crime that recorded an increase were – kidnapping and abduction, dowry deaths, torture molestation and rape.

In 35 metropolitan cities having a population of over 10 lakh as per 2001

census, a total of 24,709 cases of crimes against women were reported. Among these 35 cities, Delhi recorded 4,331 cases, followed by Hyderabad 1,931. The crime rate was significantly higher in Vijaywada and Vishakhapatnam at 96.2 and 56.7 respectively, as compared to the national average of mega cities at 16.3. A comparative data set on different forms of violence committed against women in Delhi was reported in *The Times of India*, March 14, 2011 which is shown in the following table.

Crimes	2008	2009	2010
Murder	554	552	565
Rape	466	469	507
Attempt to Murder	389	369	311
Robbery	541	515	599
Total IPC	49,350	50,251	51,292
IPC Crime/per lakh Population	286	283	281

(Source: *The Times of India*, March 14, 2011)

**Activities**

1. You can prepare a database of crimes committed in your locality and find out how they have been redressed.  
 .....  
 .....
2. Organize a role play in your school on different methods for prevention of crimes.  
 .....  
 .....
3. You can ask students to prepare a story line on any kind of discrimination that they have seen/experienced and how would they address it.  
 .....  
 .....
4. You can show websites on different forms of violence existing the world over and methods adopted in combating them.  
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- Initiate a discussion on the given newspaper clipping and ask the students if they are aware about agencies that help in rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances.

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Acts of violence against women also include forced sterilisation,



abortion, use of contraception and prenatal sex selection. Further, globalization has ushered in the existence and perpetuation of new types of violence through internet. Having a wider audience appeal and out reach, they very often use images of women by depicting them in an obscene manner. This kind of imagery is also perpetuated through mobiles-(Gurumurthy, Menon (2009)).

In addition, the print and audio-visual media on a daily basis portray the incidences of growing crimes against women which cut across all segments of society like caste, class and region. Instances of domestic violence, honour killing, witch hunting, dowry deaths, female foeticide, rape, sexual abuse and many more have all highlighted the vulnerability and insecurity that girls and women face in the private and public domain.

While physical violence against women has been recorded in several government documents and by private agencies, emotional violence faced by women in the family, school and work-places has not been recorded. Both physical and emotional violence lead to lower self-esteem, low confidence and negatively impact the overall personality development of women. These very often become major impediments in empowering women.

Several studies such as Hayward, Finney Ruth (2000), have in detail given case studies of India and some South Asian countries about instances of different types of crimes that girls and women face from the womb to the tomb.

**Reflection of Gender Violence throughout the Mortal Life Cycle of Women**

**Prenatal** – Sex-selective abortion, battering during pregnancy, coerced pregnancy, neglect of health during pregnancy.

**Infancy** – Female infanticide, emotional and physical abuse, discrimination in the area of food and medical care.

**Childhood** – Malnutrition, child marriage, child abuse, discrimination in the area of food, medical care and education, emotional violence perpetuated due to caste, class and faith.

**Adolescence** – Rape, sexual abuse in society, school, work-place, eve teasing, emotional violence perpetuated due to caste, class and faith and cyber crimes.

**Adulthood** – Abuse of women by intimate male partners; marital rape, dowry abuse and murder; partner homicide; psychological abuse; sexual abuse in the family and workplace; sexual harassment, rape, abuse of women with disabilities and cyber crimes.

**Old age** – Abuse of widows, emotional violence and physical annihilation, abuse of the elderly (affects women more than men).

While different agencies and machineries exist for addressing the growing crimes against women, a meaningful and substantial approach needs to be adopted for

holistically addressing this social menace. A multi-pronged strategy that includes all agents of social change including education needs to be geared up for bringing about gender justice, harmony and peace in both public and private spaces.

**Activities**

1. You can ask students to collect paper cuttings on reported crimes and analyze them.  
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2. Organize a poster competition to elicit perceptions of students on reasons for growing crimes against humanity.  
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3. Counsellors can be invited to have a discussion with children on issues related to conflict management and social tensions.  
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**5.6 EVOLVING EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

In this era of globalization, the content and process of education at all levels can integrate peace building strategies so that valuing women’s contributions, caring and sharing, equality between sexes, tolerance and dignity of labour can be internalised by children from their primary years. Conflict management and social tension need to be the cross cutting edge, informing all disciplines, curricula and activities so that skills of consensus and negotiations become internalized qualities for the personality development of both boys and girls.

Agencies such as Parent Teacher Associations, Mother Teacher Association, Peer Association and other similar ones can be made proactive in providing a platform for resolving conflicts that children face in

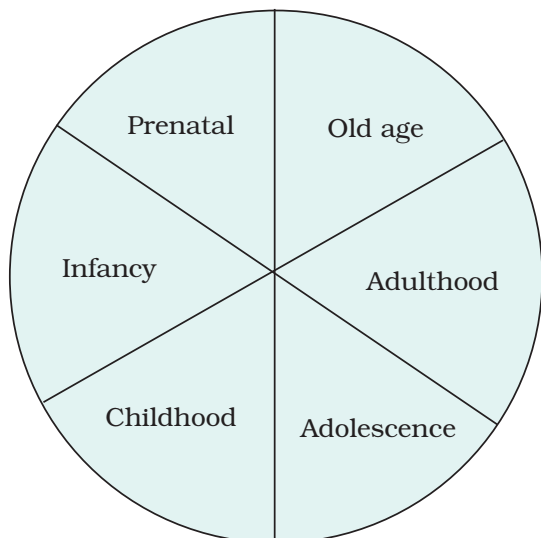


Figure 1

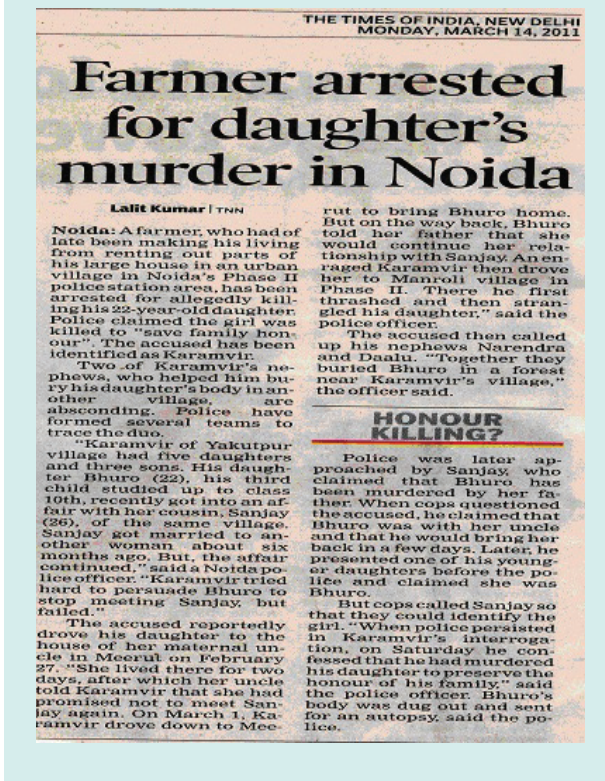
schools, family and in society. Efforts should be made for undoing emotional and physical violence that children of all age groups face at different places by strengthening confidence building measures. This will ensure that children have an outlet to discuss stress and conflicts that they face in their journey of growing up.

Pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes need to consciously train teachers as problem solvers, counsellors and as mental health workers for dealing with all sorts of emotional and physical conflicts that children face due to multifarious reasons. Legal literacy should become an integral part of all training programmes.

### Activities

1. Organize gender sensitization programmes for reflecting critically on processes of socialization for boys and girls.  
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2. Activities for self defense such as Karate can be organized.  
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3. Street plays and Natakas can be organized for propagating strategies to combat violence.  
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4. Organize workshops for evaluation of textbooks from the view point of gender sensitivity, conflict management and social tensions.  
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5. Appointing a committee in schools consisting of representatives from parents, community members, teachers, administrators, members from non-governmental organizations to

deliberate upon diagnostic, curative and reformative measures for confidence building and rehabilitation of victims of different forms of violence.



Different pedagogical approaches using varied mediums such as folklore, films, videos, theatres, songs, dramas and many more can be innovatively used for promoting messages that generate harmony between sexes. In addition, resources of non-governmental organizations working for preventing violence against women should also utilize research studies on boyhood and girlhood in order to understand the complexities of growing up, identity formation and conflicts that adolescent children face in terms of their inner and outer self within the overarching impact of globalization and socialisation taking place in different family settings of our plural Indian societies.

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# Gender, Science and Technology

## Structure of the Module

- 6.1 Overview
- 6.2 Introduction
- 6.3 Objectives
- 6.4 Description
- 6.5 Root of the Problem
- 6.6 Methodology
- 6.7 How Teacher Educators can Promote Gender Equality in Science and Technology
- 6.8 Recommendations for Teacher Educators
- 6.9 References

## 6.1 OVERVIEW

Science (from the Latin *scientia* meaning knowledge) refers to a system of acquiring knowledge which uses observation and experimentation to describe and explain natural phenomena. Technology (from the Greek *technologia* – *techne*, an art, skill or craft and *logia*, the study of something, or the branch of knowledge of a discipline) is the usage and knowledge of tools, techniques, crafts, systems or methods of organization in order to solve a problem or serve some purpose. Technologies have to satisfy requirements such as utility, usability and safety.

Basically, science and technology deal with different techniques and methods aimed at enhancing the welfare of mankind.

Both science and technology have been integral to Indian culture. The history of philosophy, scientific discoveries and development in India date back to the Vedic era. It was India which gave the world the concept of zero in mathematics, distillation and perfumery in chemistry and yoga and Ayurveda in health care.

In fact, India was ranked fifteenth in Science and Technology systems output in the year 2003, but later it managed to make it to the top ten list of Science and Technology systems in the world. It rose to the ninth position in the world's Science and Technology map in the year 2010. The Indian government has declared 2010-20 as the "Decade of Innovations" with the hope of increasing wealth and employment for

the country using scientific research and innovation. At present, the government is taking major steps to make India a major global science power.

There is no denying that Science and technology education can be the gateway to national development and to poverty alleviation. All sectors of society must be seen to participate optimally in it, including girls. This module targets serving teachers whose roles and work have a direct influence on learners of school-going age and thus on the future of society as well.

It will address gender issues in science and mathematics classes and in schools in general with a view to removing personal and cultural obstacles placed in the way of girls that inhibit them from choosing science subjects, from performing well in them and ultimately from choosing science related careers.

The gender disparity is palpably evident in the education sector which hits inclusive growth very adversely. Recognising this, the present module aims to address the factors accounting for gender disparity prevailing in our education sector, with special focus on science. The underlying assumption is that although science and technology bring economic growth, enhancement in these fields is possible through women's empowerment and maximum participation of women.

## 6.2 INTRODUCTION

There is need for fostering gender equality and empowerment in science and technology. Gender is not just a women's issue, but rather a people's issue. Femininity does not exist in isolation from masculinity. The capabilities of a nation comprise the skills and knowledge of all sections of its people. Therefore, any society cannot reach its true potential and a nation cannot develop when half of its population is kept out of activities and professions that are constructive,

just as a chariot cannot travel on a single wheel alone. The scientific contributions of any community or nation reflect its level of development. The present module is thus also designed to enhance sensitivity and awareness about gender equality and empowerment in science and technology. An attempt has been made to describe various ways in which teacher educators, in particular, can foster gender equality and empowerment in science and technology.

It is well established that science and technology can bring in knowledge gain, attitudinal reconstruction, behavioural change and build capacity in a manner that facilitates the empowerment of women. Women can become informed decision makers and change agents.

## 6.3 OBJECTIVES

- To create awareness among women about the support that science and technology can provide them
- To provide a platform for both urban and rural girls for a successful science career
- To improve the institutional climate for women in science so that they are considered at par with men
- To encourage women to assume leadership roles nationally and internationally in science
- To promote standards of learning and teaching for schools as well as colleges by making laboratory work more interesting and by introducing life skill activities

## 6.4 DESCRIPTION

The profusion of resourceful and passionate scientific talent of women makes one optimistic about the future of India. Such prodigious talent can catapult India not only to the forefront of scientifically advanced nations but also enhance its image as a country that advocates women's advancement.

The important issues which affect the current status of science in the country include:

- (a) Poor enrolment of devoted young people in science education,
- (b) Declining trend of Indian scientists' contributions at international academic level
- (c) Scale of investment in science in State and Central Universities
- (d) Lack of growth of institutions of excellence
- (e) Lack of freedom of operation in scientific and higher educational institutions.

The Scientific Research publications clearly show considerable improvement in the (c and d factors mentioned above) over the last twenty five years. The absolute number of research publications has gone up from 14983 in 1980 to 19448 in 2005. However, India's contribution in terms of a percentage in the larger stead of world publications has declined from 2.9% in 1980 to 1.9% in 2005.

It is seen that despite unfavourable socio-economic conditions that prevail, women's education in India has progressed and its effect is manifested in the overall progress of education in India. An educated mother is always the foremost motivation for her ward's educational upliftment. But even beyond the realm of general education, achievement of Indian women in science has been significant. The glaring reality is that women's contributions in the domestic and career front have always been obliterated. The very fact that they take on the double or triple burden of home making, work outside home and fighting male chauvinism often goes unnoticed and unrecognised. Among the various professional spheres, women seem to miss out more in science and technology, particularly physical sciences and engineering fields. Those who do study science often end up in what are considered as less challenging teaching jobs.

The present statistics indicate that a large number of women in India are involved

in scientific study and research competing on equal terms with their male counterparts. Women now constitute about 40% of all science and technology students in higher education. In educational and research institutions, they share about one-third of the positions in science and technology. In medicine and information technology too, they are present in large numbers. Despite the heart-warming statistics, it is well known that a lot more potential yet remains to be tapped. Several factors contribute to the decreased participation of girls and women in science and technology education. Girls are seen to be unwilling to participate in science based activities primarily due to lack of motivation. It seems to serve no instrumental purpose for them. Other factors include lack of relevant policies, inadequate curriculum content and delivery, biased teaching materials and negative socio-cultural attitudes and practices. It is therefore appropriate that the goal of gender parity in science and technology should rely on a mix of strategies drawn from lessons learned from the best practices and experiences at national, regional and international levels.

As per the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001), there is a commitment to strengthening programmes that bring about a greater involvement of women in science and technology. These include measures to motivate girls to take up science and technology for higher education and also ensure that development projects with scientific and technical inputs involve women fully. Efforts to develop a scientific temper and awareness will also be stepped up. Special measures have been taken for their training in areas of special skills like communication and information technology. Efforts to develop appropriate technologies suited to women's needs as well as to reduce drudgery are also being given special focus.

The major initiatives taken by the government to encourage women in science

and technology may be summed up as follows:

- Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political, economic and development activities
- Equal access of women to health-care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, remuneration, occupational safety, social security etc.
- Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.
- Changing societal attitudes and community practices by encouraging active participation and involvement of both men and women.
- Adopting suitable measures to enable women to work during night shifts in factories
- Drawing up women friendly personnel policies to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process
- Provision of support services for women like child care facilities including day care facilities at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged, the disabled, etc.

These measures need to be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their optimal contribution to social, political and economic life. Several initiatives have been taken to attract girls and women to science and technology education. They include promoting gender mainstreaming in policy and programmes for science and technology, instituting incentives such as scholarships, award systems in specific clusters of science and technology, offering special internships for female students, strengthening career guidance at institutions of learning, establishment of mentoring programmes, curriculum restructuring and addressing the role of teachers and parents. Despite

these initiatives, sustained efforts are still needed in order to improve the participation of girls and women and their performance in science and technology education and science-based activities.

That gender disparity exists at all levels and impacts women's development is an undeniable fact. This is partly due to the biological roles and responsibilities of women as mothers, but mostly due to the traditional mindset, which visualizes women as child bearers and home-makers, and men as breadwinners. There is a growing realization that by hindering the creative talent, expression and active involvement of women, in research and development, we are depriving society of its intellectual capital. Therefore, efforts have to be made to make scientific research more gender friendly.

## 6.5 ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

Although girls seem to consistently outshine boys in the board examinations, the enrollment of women in higher education, particularly in science has not kept pace with what the board examination results reflect. Since 1951 there has been a steady growth in Universities and other higher education institutions in India. The participation of girls at all stages of education has also been increasing steadily over the years. Yet the wide gap between women and men entering the University persists. Let us analyse some of the problems and issues which explain this.

### Attrition

Relatively more women tend to persist with studies after graduation though some attrition occurs at the level of Ph.D. This interesting finding differentiates India from many other developed countries. (At Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA a survey found continuous attrition as one moved from undergraduate to graduate to post-doctorate and faculty positions.) This has led to some speculation that in

India, if the “leaky pipeline” is plugged at the school level (stopping school dropouts), the presence of women in higher education, including science may increase.

Gender difference in enrollment of boys and girls also varies regionally. Urban women are more likely to gain access to higher education as compared to their rural counterparts. So while their caliber may be the same, timely motivation and grooming makes a lot of difference. There is vast evidence to show that the attitudes of parents/teachers influence academic decisions. The Indian National Science Academy (INSA) Report of 2004 found that in states such as Goa, Kerala, Punjab and Pondicherry, more than 50 % women enrolled in colleges (2000-2001), but in states such as Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and Rajasthan less than 35 per cent women did. The enrolments in the other states were between these two extremes.

It is not just motivation and grooming, but lack of facilities and availability of colleges and universities in the vicinity that cause lesser enrolment of girls from rural areas. Other lacunae are the lack of women’s hostels and commuting facilities, among others.

### **Gender Stereotyping of Subjects in Science and Technology**

Another problem similar to the trend in western countries relates to the disciplines in which women enroll. The highest representation of women is in education. Education, to a large extent, is considered to be most apt subject for women as it is compatible with other responsibilities of women as mother and wife. This is followed by disciplines like arts and medicine. It is only in the past 15 years that their enrolment has shown an increased trend. Though medicine has been a favourite discipline among females, it is seen that the rate of growth of male-access to it is larger and faster. Even in Medicine, women

tend to take up radiology, pathology and anesthesiology much more as compared to neurosurgery. The INSA (Indian National Science Academy) report says that there is clustering in obstetrics/gynaecology, pediatrics and pathology for women doctors. Few enter the more lucrative male dominated specializations like orthopedics, cardiology, psychiatry etc.

The participation of women in engineering remained almost negligible till the early 1980s. The INSA report quotes a 2002 finding that there is 32 % enrolment in Physics in India. In a report published by NISTADS (National Institute of Science Technology and Development Studies), it appears that there are 61,050 women employed in R&D ( Research and Development) establishments, which is 15.6% of the total manpower employed in the country (Department of Science and Technology, 2008). Globally, women tend to go in for the natural sciences more as compared to the perceived to be “harder” disciplines such as Mathematics. So deeply entrenched is this supposed aversion that even the Barbie doll was once made to utter the words that the mathematics class was tough. This is an example of how gender stereotypes are reinforced from an early age...even while a girl child is at play. Today of course there is a lap-top carrying Barbie in pink, which hopefully will carry a subliminal message of equality and empowering technology.

### **Post Education Scenario**

Paradoxically, even after having obtained higher education, societal pressures and family obligations affect a woman’s chances of getting a job of her choice. Interestingly, professional women’s attitude towards education, employment and family situations have revealed that most women retain traditional values. This means that economic empowerment does not necessarily translate into independence in other spheres of life. And when they do

find employment, most women scientists struggle in a male-dominated workplace that often marginalizes them.

### **The Struggles of the Pioneers**

Many pioneers in the field of science and technology had to face gender discrimination in their journey to success. Marie Curie was denied a place at Kraków University merely because she was a woman. In 1911, the French Academy of Sciences refused to abandon its prejudice against women, and Marie Curie was denied admission as Member by two votes. Then it was Marguerite Perey, a doctoral student of Curie, who became the first woman elected to membership in the Academy over half a century later.

Kamala Sohonie (1912-1998) was the first Indian woman to get a PhD in a scientific discipline. She carried out detailed biochemical studies on three major groups of food items consumed by the rural poor and established their nutritive value. When Kamala Sohonie applied for postgraduation at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), after completing her graduation from Bombay University in 1933, the institution dismissed her application despite her having topped the university merit list that year. The reason for this was that Sohonie happened to be a woman! After much hesitation, she got admission. Kamala's sincerity led her to do regular research in biochemistry. This was a landmark victory for her. Her struggles made life considerably easier for other aspiring women scientists.

Anna Mani (1918-2001) distinguished Indian meteorologist, former Deputy Director General of the Indian Meteorological Department made significant contributions in the field of meteorological instrumentation and pioneered research in the areas of solar radiation, ozone and wind energy measurements. Anna Mani is a success story to which few women (or men) could aspire. She transcended the delimited cultural and physical spaces available to her

although the University of Madras denied her a formal PhD degree.

#### **Follow up Exercise**

Discuss with students any 2 success stories of women in the area of science and technology from your area or state. Ask them to share any such success stories which they have come across in their life.

What are the kind(s) of discrimination experienced by women pursuing the field of science?

### **Social Barriers**

There are also several social and institutional barriers to the continuing education of women, especially when it comes to science, technology and engineering. Gender discrimination is much higher in the scientific and technical fields in India than among social sciences and other fields. Women in all professions are seen to perform the double role of managing a job and domestic responsibilities, which has been commonly referred to as a 'dual burden'. In science, the dual burden is combined with various problems that are specific to the scientific profession. In fact, the prevailing socio-cultural systems in India result in a 'triple burden' for women in academic and scientific careers.

### **Social Role and Prevailing Mindsets**

A woman is still seen primarily as a home maker. Marriage, not career is perceived to be the primary goal of women. Although women's employment is becoming increasingly more accepted in society, there is yet the expectation from them that they should shoulder the household/domestic responsibilities, particularly the care of children. This impinges on a woman's career in different ways depending on the nature of her profession, as well as the stage at which her career is poised.

Some women scientists, but not all, incur breaks in career for child bearing and rearing. Age-related, re-entry difficulties

exist for those who take such breaks, so most of them try to rejoin as soon as possible. Paradoxically once again, there is an overt and covert societal assumption that this is actually leading to neglect of the child and places extra burden on the woman's shoulders. The responsibilities of parents, in India at least do not get over when the children grow up. Older children, particularly girls are considered just as a serious responsibility as are very young children. The dual responsibilities faced by professional women are thus quite heavy. Some problems are chronic while others become acute at different career points. Science calls for long and uncertain hours and this often discourages women from taking it up as a profession. Research seeks dedication and a lot of attention which women find difficult to give as they are burdened with other responsibilities.

Women scientists with children are often not eager to conduct field work for extended periods. They may find it difficult to live under field conditions, particularly if the areas do not have basic facilities. They may find it difficult to go on tours except for a limited period of time. Often they are unable to attend conferences or workshops for special trainings. Many women are not comfortable travelling on their own and thus senior administrative/management positions that entail travelling may pass them. In one Indian survey it was found that on an average, a male scientist travelled four times as much as his female counterpart.

Most women also do not socialize with their male colleagues with ease, partly because of gender socialization and social restrictions. Personal interactions of women scientists with male colleagues are deeply constrained by standard patriarchal cultural barriers of so-called morality. Women scientists are therefore unable to meet and establish personal camaraderie or networks or jockey for positions. This inability often leads to them getting overlooked. Perhaps the evolution of

e-networking can compensate for this to a certain extent. Again, many older women scientists admit that they have self-imposed certain restrictions upon themselves and are therefore willing to take a backseat in their career. Interestingly however, the younger scientists are comparatively more ambitious and have definite career plans.

### **Institutional Barriers**

Institutional barriers include paucity of financial aid, a male-oriented curriculum and lack of in-campus residences. Gender insensitivity further compounds the problems that women face. Scientific institutions in India carry an essentially masculine ethos and exhibit vertical as well as hierarchical segregation in terms of gender. Women's participation has been limited and confined to comparatively junior positions.

Unequal treatment and subtle discrimination against women scientists and engineers in the behavioural and interpersonal relations also prevail. Nature (2010) has reported common incivilities that reflect subtle sexism. At scientific meetings, women scientists do not get the microphone to speak and when they do, they are interrupted sooner than loquacious male colleagues.

Also, in Science and Technology women tend to be engaged in "pure research" as compared to administration and management. This actually means that women have less involvement in the decision making process of the institution. In many cases the "pure research" is mostly compilation, collection and review as opposed to being more analytical and creative. However, while this may not mean much difference in terms of books or papers written; it does mean a sizable difference in the numbers of patents and inventions that men and women file.

### **Employment of Women Scientists**

Gender has figured in important ways in shaping the careers of scientists for centuries.

Statistics/data availed from major Research and Development institutions showed that gender disparity in the male/ female staff selection process was continuing, and females were marginalized in recruitments. The INSA report 2004 has shown that the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) followed by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), are the best employers of women. DBT had almost 32% and ICMR 27% women scientists.

In most cases, institutions included less than 15% women in their Advisory Committees. The Inter Press Service News Agency report points out that though many women have reached top positions in the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), under the Department of Space, the overall percentage of women scientists is still very low. Women's representation in government constituted research advisory bodies is also very low. Data shows a range between 0-21 percent.

### **Unanswered Important Issues**

In western countries, gender related questions in science have been extensively raised. They range from discussions about women in science to philosophical analysis of the gendered nature of science itself. In India, the status of women in science has still not drawn adequate attention. There are only a few reports and studies on gender and science in India. Empirical research specifically on women scientists is scarce and their research productivity has not been dealt with in particular. The scattered information about the participation of women in science in the developing countries focuses more on their access to education and career. Very little is known about the contribution of female researchers to scientific production.

We may thus conclude that gender plays an important role in the shaping of scientific careers in India. Major attitudinal and institutional changes in the structure and procedures of Indian science are probably

required. In recent years, however, the Government of India (the Department of Science and Technology and University Grants Commission) is giving enormous attention to the importance of women's education and is making serious attempts at imparting high level skills to women. Special scholarships and awards have been instituted to attract students in general and women in particular to the science and technology stream.

Nature (2010) has highlighted that countries wherein the salaries of scientists are rising rapidly (for example, Brazil, China and India) are those where job satisfaction is also rising. These nations are also stemming the brain drain and increasing their publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals. More importantly, these countries have made enormous economic progress over the past two decades, showing a correlation between science, salaries and sustainable development. The gender disaggregated statistics confirm that women researchers earn significantly less than their male colleagues. These gaps are particularly alarming for leading industrial nations such as Japan and Germany. What remains to be seen is whether with rising salary levels for researchers in China and India, the same gender gap will open or not. Hopefully, more balanced conditions will emerge in the 'Asian century' ahead.

### **6.6 METHODOLOGY**

Active and interactive methods of participatory learning will enable both teachers and students to gain a deeper level of understanding of the issues involved and to internalize them, so as to bring about a change in thinking, attitudes and behavior patterns. Catching them young when their minds are not yet set into stereotyped thinking and behavior patterns is a key element. These transformed young Indians will then become the citizens and builders of the emerging new India.

Basic education is a catalyst of social change. Education provides the critical key to open many doors of opportunity to life and living, for gaining life skills leading to jobs and to become empowered to avail of and participate in the larger dimensions of life. Beyond literacy, it is the quality of education that enables the women to become aware of and participate in the many affairs of life.

Gender responsive teaching of Science and technology should thus attempt to:

- identify and prioritize the elements of teaching that should be addressed;
- identify existing gender biases;
- develop training programmes aimed at eradicating biases.

### 6.7 HOW TEACHER EDUCATORS CAN PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ?

Gender biases starts at an early age, much before a child enters school. Teacher educators play an important role in the life and education of teachers, as they are responsible for their capacity building and shaping their careers. Teachers and teacher educators can both play a major role in eradicating gender differences in science and technology at the school level which in turn can help to create a relatively unbiased society. The following steps should be followed by teacher educators to make science teaching interesting, to attract young minds and to inculcate scientific temper in them to help them choose a career in science and technology.

#### Examples and Pictures

Use of examples of women scientists as compared to male scientists. When the word scientist is said aloud, a picture of a male scientist like Newton or Einstein comes to the mind of the students rather than female scientists like Madam Curie. Examples of women scientists can motivate the minds of young girls. In our laboratories the pictures of male scientists are more prominent. The

pictures of female scientists, especially Indian women scientists like Kalpana Chawla can be introduced as subliminal and suggestive images.

#### Illustrations and Colorful Diagrams

Use of illustrations and colorful diagrams to explain scientific phenomena and experiments and including certain life-skill activities, etc. can attract young minds. Making them aware of how science is related to day-to-day activities develops scientific temper in them.

#### Science Activities

Certain science activities could be included to build the interest of students towards science. Few examples of science activities are given below:

- Making paper or polystyrene models of simple molecules
- Caring for a laboratory fish tank.
- Making a long poster display showing the main periods of the geological timescale
- Demonstrating Ohm's Law for a fixed resistor.
- Making a periscope
- Talking in groups about how to mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS.
- Setting up and using a pulley system to lift a heavy load
- Drawing the image of a cell seen under a microscope.
- Discussing how global warming might influence the climate of southern Africa.
- Separating salt from a mixture of sand and salt
- Growing a large copper sulphate crystal

#### Contextualizing Science Topics

Contextualization of science means, 'teaching science through its applications'. Some contextual ideas are as follows:

- Use the context of *what makes clothes comfortable* in cold weather via the insulating properties of different fabrics to the concept of conduction of heat.

- Use the context of *water* to illustrate a variety of different concepts according to phase. These could include solubility, energy, changes of state, pollution, density, pressure, etc.
- Use the context of the *refrigerator* to study phase changes, particle theory and latent heat.
- Use the context of *growing crops* as a starting point for a variety of biological concepts such as photosynthesis, plant growth, soil structure and types, energy flow in living systems, food chains, environmental conservation, etc.

### **Biographies of Women Scientists**

Students should be made to work on projects such as the biographies of women scientists, their journey from being a student to a scientist and the hurdles they faced and how they dealt with them to attain that position. Such assignments will motivate them to take up a career in science and technology.

- Science text books show gender biases in the content and pictorial representation that should be addressed in the class. Describe a girl student performing an experiment rather than a boy student.
- Leadership qualities in girls should be developed to enhance their confidence level. Make them speak on certain topics related to science. Encourage them to share any scientific experiences in their life or any innovative ideas.
- Science exhibitions should be conducted annually. Girls should be encouraged to participate. Students should be allowed to bring about innovative ideas. Their ideas should be encouraged
- Awareness programmes should be conducted both for parents and students to help them realize the importance of science. Parents should be motivated to allow their girl children to pursue science for further studies.
- Exposure to teacher educators in schools and colleges is necessary to motivate their students. School teachers must work in coordination with college teachers who should in turn have collaborations with universities and research centers. This will help them to become aware of the current status and trends of research and development in our country and abroad.
- The publication of research findings are very important. The students should be made aware of such publications and they should be encouraged to go through them. They will become aware of what has been done in particular areas of research, their limitations and what more needs to be done.
- Women scientists should be identified and they should be publicized as role models. They should be invited as guest speakers for programmes in schools.
- Students should be encouraged to give examples on how science helps in earning a livelihood.
- Choice and role of appropriate technology in relation to women and development become crucial in building up local capacity, to devise solutions to tackle the identified problems to improve their quality of life. The emphasis should be to improve their skills, provide managerial capabilities and to understand the scientific theories behind the processes/products. This will make women more open to emerging technologies for improving production efficiency and reducing drudgery in their day-to-day work. Since rural women have special understanding of natural resource management they can play a crucial role in re-nurturing and re-greening rural India.
- There is an urgent need to use Science and Technology (S &T) to ease women's work. They should be involved as equal partners, their knowledge, experience and skills must be recognized, for only then they can play a significant

role in sustainable development. The systems approach adopted with proper networking to involve rural women as para-technologists in processing and preservation of horticulture produce for value addition and income generation at the village level must be worked upon.

- Students should be made aware of the different awards and schemes of government available at different stages.
- Every educational and research institution must provide a friendly family environment, which will facilitate girls to show quality output.

### Activities

#### ***Interviewing two women***

- (i) Give students the task of interviewing two women:
  - One woman who wanted to pursue a career in science and technology and succeeded in pursuing it.
  - One woman who wanted to pursue a career in science and technology but could not do so.
- (ii) Conduct an open discussion in which students are asked to give feedback on the interview.
- (iii) Observe the feedback from each student. Try to find the possible reasons as to how the first woman could pursue the career in science and technology, while the other woman couldn't make it.

One reason could be lack of voluntary social support that women require to pursue a career in science and technology which is often very time demanding.

### Activities

#### ***Human resources in organizations***

- (i) Ask students of your class to think about a science/technology related organisation or company or laboratory with which they are familiar (it could be a science department of a school, college or university, or a science council). Ask them to focus on the

human resources of this particular organization or department.

- (ii) Then ask them to give their feedback on the following questions: What categories of workers are there in this organization? What is the dominant gender in each category?
- (iii) Teachers should go through each feedback and then conduct an open discussion to discuss the given questions for few or all organizations mentioned in the feedback
- (iv) Through a discussion, the teacher should try to answer the questions: Where are women and men primarily located? What are the differences between the different categories and levels of work and the work that women largely do and the work that is mainly conducted by men? Are there similarities between the different kinds of organizations?

This exercise will help to know about the gender segregated division of labour and gender bias in the hierarchy of organizations as well as the types of activities that men and women are involved in.

### Activities

#### ***A practical approach for contextualizing science topics***

- (i) Select a topic from the syllabus.
- (ii) Develop a concept map showing how the topic can be taught around a central interesting context, that is, part of the daily experience of the learner.
- (iii) Develop the concept map into an outline scheme of work that shows in more detail how you would use the context to teach the basic scientific principles.
- (iv) Display selected ideas to the whole class and allow discussion.
- (v) This concept map will be helpful in developing an outline scheme of work to teach the basic scientific principles and other topics too.

Contextualizing the topic makes it very interesting and easy to understand.

### Activities

#### **Famous Scientists**

- (i) In the class, ask students to list the names of famous scientists that they know.
- (ii) Make a composite list while the names are being given by them. Identify all the famous Indian scientists and inventors. How many of these are women?
- (iii) If none of them are women, ask them specifically if they know about any famous women scientists? See how many women are then mentioned?
- (iv) Discuss these lists with the students and try to find out the reason why this is the case.

It is likely that very few women will be mentioned, as even women scientists who have made substantial contributions to scientific knowledge are relatively unknown.

### Activities

#### **Women and Science**

- (i) In the class, ask students the following questions: What is science? Is domestic science a science? Are the kinds of domestic jobs that women have traditionally carried out, science? Ask the group to discuss this.
- (ii) Try to get the students to explore both the issues of what counts as science as well as the reasons why women scientists have not been visible.
- (iii) Summarize the conclusions of the class on a flip chart.

## 6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

- (i) Teachers should explicitly teach students that academic abilities are expandable and improvable in order to enhance girls' beliefs about their abilities. Students who view their cognitive abilities as

fixed from birth or unchangeable are more likely to experience decreased confidence and performance when faced with difficulties or setbacks. Students who are more confident about their abilities in math and science are more likely to choose elective math and science courses in high school and more likely to select math and science-related college majors and careers.

- (ii) Teachers should provide students with prescriptive, informational feedback regarding their performance. Prescriptive, informational feedback focuses on strategies, effort, and the process of learning (e.g., identifying gains in children's use of particular strategies or specific errors in problem solving). Such feedback enhances students' beliefs about their abilities, typically improves persistence, and improves performance on tasks.
- (iii) Teachers should expose girls to female role models who have achieved in math or science in order to promote positive beliefs regarding women's abilities in math and science. Even in elementary school, girls are aware of the stereotype that men are better in math and science than women are. Exposing girls to female role models (e.g., through biographies, guest speakers, or tutoring by older female students) along with male role models can invalidate these stereotypes.
- (iv) Teachers can foster girls' long-term interest in math and science by choosing activities connecting mathematics and science activities to careers in ways that do not reinforce existing gender stereotypes and choosing activities that spark initial curiosity about math and science content. Teachers can provide ongoing access to resources for students who continue to express interest in a topic after the class has moved on to other areas.
- (v) Teachers should provide opportunities for students to engage in spatial

skills training. Spatial skills training is associated with performance in mathematics and science.

### Self-Reflection

The progress check can be classroom assessment.

- (i) Ask the students in your class to give feedback on the following questions:
  - What do they feel about science teaching in the classroom? Whether they find it interesting or not?
  - Would they opt for a career in science and technology?
- (ii) On the basis of their feedback, the teacher educator can assess themselves on whether they are successful in inculcating scientific temper in students and shaping their minds to opt for careers in science and technology.

This activity will help the teacher educator to know whether girls are encouraged to participate in science and technology subjects. If not, the teacher educator can share the measures taken by him/her to promote girls in science and technology fields and try to adopt their implementations if found new and successful among the students there.

### Activities

A teacher educator can visit any nearby school and check into the following details:

- (i) Do teachers encourage girls to opt for science subjects? What specific approaches have been used? Give specific examples
- (ii) What specific activities do teachers organize to promote science learning for girls and for boys?
- (iii) What techniques do teachers use to ensure that girls and boys participate equally in Science and Technology subjects including practicals?
- (iv) What techniques do teachers use to help students to overcome their fears, inhibitions, and lack of confidence in these subjects?

### Assignment 1

Search for the scholarships given to students, especially girls by the State

Council of Science and Technology in your state. Share it with your students.

### Assignment 2

Organize a one-day visit to any Science Centre or Science Museum or Scientific Laboratories of CSIR/State Council. Ask the students to give a report of what they have learnt from the visit.

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## *Do You Know*

According to the 86<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002, free and compulsory education for all children in 6-14 year age group is now a Fundamental Right under Article 21-A of the Constitution.

**EDUCATION IS NEITHER A  
PRIVILEGE NOR FAVOUR BUT A  
BASIC HUMAN RIGHT TO  
WHICH ALL GIRLS AND WOMEN  
ARE ENTITLED**

*Give Girls  
Their Chance !*





*“I am uncompromising in the matter of woman’s rights. In my opinion, she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by man. I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality.”*

— Mahatma Gandhi  
*Young India*, 1929

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