

NEED OF GENDER SENSITIZATION

Vinit Dinesh Pareek, Affiliated Institute, TMV's Lokmanya Tilak College of Law,
Kharghar, vinitpareek95@gmail.com

Abstract

The gender inequalities in the society are the issue which has been prevalent since a long time. The discrimination of gender issues is still persisting. No doubt, there is an improvement in the scenario since last two decade but still the problem persists in many areas. In many areas women are treated unequal to men and the advantage of being more superior is given to male. There are many places where male are given more rights as compared to female. This problem definitely has to be addressed for the betterment of future development of country. The researcher has through this research paper has explained the need and importance of gender sensitization, the role of gender sensitization with reference to education and also work place. Also, the steps which is taken by government for addressing the issue. Further, Researcher has pointed out the goal of gender sensitization can be achieved through media as media is considered as one of the most strongest connection at today's time. Through media, there can be awareness which can be created among the people with regards to gender sensitization. The best way to communicate the information can be by way of radio and social networking sites such as Facebook, twitter and Instagram.etc.

Key words: *Gender Sensitization, Importance, Media, Need, Role,*

Introduction

Gender Sensitization is the teaching of gender sensitivity and encouragement of behavior modification through raising awareness of gender equality concerns. One of the major lacuna in our social organization of the prevalence of gender-based discrimination in different walks of life, be it social, economic or political. Gender discrimination refers to biased treatment of women or girls as well as men and boys which in turn is a consequence of deep-rooted normative beliefs about usual traits, behavior and roles of women and men. Such belief are learned since childhood and passed down through generations such that people come to recognize these as given and obvious facets of gender identity.

For instance- the fact that women have typically performed the task of rearing children have resulted in the stereotype that women are by nature, nurturing and caring and hence the only appropriate role for them is care work. In similar manner people tend to develop inflexible ideas about what is feminine and what is masculine. Eventually such stereotype get implicated in all forms of social institutions and organizations like family, community and state. Indeed such stereotype can be observed anywhere i.e. in educational Institutions, Work place, religious institutions, sports and cultural events.

Legal analysis

The following questions will help the researcher to understand the need of gender sensitization and how such need can be tackled with the help of media.

- 1-Is there a Need for Gender Sensitization?
- 2-Is there any importance of Gender Sensitization?
- 3-Is there any role of Gender Sensitization in Education?
- 4- Is there any steps which has been taken up by the Government of India for Gender sensitization?
- 5-Is there any role of Media in Gender Sensitization?

1-Is there a Need for gender Sensitization?

A major concern in the context of gender stereotype are that these often operate in a subtle manner because these are considered as obvious truths to the extent that it becomes extremely difficult if not impossible to even reckon and decode these stereotype. Most often, these are practiced unconsciously and unknowingly. For example- Unequal wages are given to women for doing equal and similar work

as done by men is a common practice in labor markets. The justification over such unequal wages are given on the ground that women lacks, the required skill, they prioritize family over work. They are more suited for soft jobs as compared to men. Their earnings are considered as secondary source of Income for the household so on and so forth. Such Stereotyped are underlined by the assumption that women are home makers and men are the bread winners for the family which actually plays women in a secondary position in the labor market. Although women are mostly victims, individuals of any gender stand disadvantaged in the face of such overwhelming stereotype. In order to address this stereotype, one needs to be gender sensitive which basically means being informed about the gender equality concern and act accordingly to this end. The Gender Sensitization is a very important tool which helps in raising awareness about such a stereotype and inequalities and also cultivates a disposition to behave in a gender sensitive manner. This, Sensitization of gender is about changing behavior and installing empathy into the view that we hold about our own and the other gender. It assists people in analyzing their personal point of view and opinions and questioning the actualities they believed they know. Needless to mention that, gender sensitization is an imperative not only for the development of sensitive individuals but also of a society that is devoid of sexist biases. It is however important to mention here that gender sensitivity does not put women against men. Rather it inculcates an open-mindedness which allows an individual to unpack the unseen nuance of gender constructions and to determine the validity of such ender construction and it widens the horizon life choices for both women and men.

2-What is the importance of Gender sensitization.?

By enabling us to decipher the gender stereotype that are subtly entwined into all forms of social organizations. Gender Sensitization helps us to critically view what is otherwise considered as natural and obvious. Thus leading to the pathway towards development of informed individuals, it helps us to generate respect for all individuals irrespective of sex. It enables us to see human rights to the attainment of gender justice and appreciates the worth of the women and other genders as human beings. It helps to address the hurdles that thwart any attempt to reduce gender gaps in family, community, education, employments and all other spheres of life. Gender Sensitization enables people to critically review their personal beliefs and opinions they have been socialized into which is very important to flag few gender issues which one should be conscious about for being an informed and gender sensitive individual.

These are as follows.

- 1-Sex and gender
- 2-Gender ideals and stereotypes
- 3-Gender Roles
- 4-Role of family.

A progressive society must be built on the edifice of social justice, gender being an important parameter. This basically means that there must not be any denial of equality, opportunity and rights in the basis of gender. Family being the primary unit of social organization, any effort to inculcate gender sensitivity must begin here i.e. in the third world countries in general and India In Particular. Gender discrimination within the families is rampant and is manifested through such preferences, denying the girls of the right to proper food, nutrition, education, health, unequal access to economic resources. Based on gender and inflexible gender rules whereby men are seen as the primary breadwinners and women as mothers, homemakers and care givers, such forms of discrimination operate at different scale and at different level across the societies. The world over the socialization process of children begins from their families first and the gender ideals and messages they pick up from their immediate surroundings environment which contributes towards shaping their personal approach towards gender ideologies.

Girls/Women come to accept their positions as inferior to that of the boys or men while the latter being considered themselves as superior to the former. The persuasion experienced at home along

with the previously existing social disparity between men and women lead to re-entrenchment of patriarchal ideologies in the society. Several Studies on violence point out that children who had experienced gender based violence being committed in the home in their childhood are more likely to consider violence against women as normal. Thus, men absorb to use brutality and women learn to tolerate it. Intimate companion violence therefore is learned social behaviour. Hence, The familiar context is the most important site for gender sensitization for the children learn, whatever is practiced at home.

3-Is there any role of Gender Sensitization in Education?

Gender stereotypes are mostly learned through socializations processes and perpetrated by the education received since childhood. Schools, colleges and institutions of higher education play an important role in reproducing the gender stereotypes which boys and girls have already imbibed from their familiar environment. The learning materials, text books etc often underscore subtle biases in favour of asymmetric gender roles and characteristics. Often in most disciplines knowledge is produced by man and sometimes for male readers. Male writers tend to select examples from the everyday experiences, illustrations, examples, case studies, presentation of role models etc which is used to substantiate the study content which are frequently rooted in cultural stereotype of gender. As pointed out before, the content of curriculum and the manner in which it is produced is of extreme relevance in the context. Several Studies analyzing the context of school text books point out that gender stereotypes are perpetuated by the portrayal of women in school books as only low status workers, mothers and wives which do not reflect the contemporary social realities. The nurse and teachers in the text books are consistently depicted as women while drivers, carpenters, postman, doctors, farmers, Pilots, soldiers etc are shown as men. These textbooks does reinforce the stereotypical notion that men have much wider access to public sphere while women's access is limited and this merely is a reflection of their caregiving rules also. It has been highlighted that the language in which the contents are written sometimes, does not cater to the call for gender inclusivity. In fact such language frequently hinders on perpetuating gender stereotypes. Some eco feminists while exploring the symbolic association between women and nature which is rampantly visible in art, literature, religion etc observe that there are subtle linguistic connections between the two. In fact many literary critics claim that patrilineal concepts of women and nature warrant a two-pronged rape and domination of the earth and the women who live on it. Some eco feminist have highlighted the characteristics connection between naturist and sexist articulation that is language that inferiorizes women and non-human disposition by accustoming women and feminizing nature.

For instance-There are anxieties about if sex gendered speech used to narrate mother nature is potentially liberating or simply a rationale for the continued subordination of women. The claim is that language that so feminizes nature and naturalizes women describes, reflects and perpetuates the domination and inferiorization of both. It has been argued that the education curriculum must be extricated from all forms of sexist biases.

The school curriculum should include lessons on psychological and physiological changes of adolescents such that the boys and girls become aware of their bodies. They should also be educated about the difference between sex as biological and gender as social construct.

Education must enable them to understand the various facets of gender discrimination in our societies and Question the stereotypical construction of masculinity as well as femininity and refrain from engaging in any form of sexual conquests. Fortunately many business publishers now include instruction writing on gender sensitive lines into their common guidelines.

In some countries, guidelines for authors in producing gender sensitive learning materials have also been issued by concerned public bodies. The South African Institute for Distance Education issued certain instructions which is to be applied while creating anti-sexists teaching materials.

Firstly, three important points were considered.

1-Language content and use and lay-out of graphics and pictures endorsing powerful role models so that women specifically black working class women can relate positively.

2-Women should be highlighted as the able decision makers involving in the important matters that hamper their drives.

3-Instruction also stated upon the use of language that should not degrade or totally ignore women such as words like

chick, Mankind etc and the matter to be presented in a manner as to increase women's self image particularly the black women. It also emphasized upon the material which should not extend the sexist traditions that have been evolved about women like women's love to nag or they cannot think clearly for being too emotional etc. And also highlighted that the looksh should not be the most significant characteristic of women in stories or fairy tales. It highlights that the efforts given by women in order to secure their personal freedom should not be termed as hostile and feminine conduct instead we accepted as sound and lawful struggles and presentations should be done in a way that ends destructive feelings of supremacy on the basis of patrilineal values in a man. It stressed upon the women's role in a developing society and their influence on history must be sufficiently presented from the perspective of women and the illustrations used must issue non stereotype end and tippet women in authoritative and active roles.

The guidelines also focus that the material is free of terms considering offending and humiliating by women themselves and the authors or editors should develop an apprehension and responsiveness to gender.

4-Is there any steps which has been taken up by the Government of India for Gender sensitization?

The Ministry of Education has recommended the Government of the state to advocate the gender sensitization.

Some of the steps suggested include the following.

1-Re-Examination of text books and curriculum in the light of gender sensitivity, conducting a minimum of 2-3 days of gender module where all the teachers shall be present at the training programs of yearly in service.

2-Adding of an account of gender sensitivity criterions go advanced gender sensitivity in classroom as well as co-curricular activities.

3-Self defence training for girls in physical education classes from upper primary onwards as the major revisions are in the process in the curricula of all levels and boards.

Foe eg-The present physical and health education syllabus for class one to class 10 refined by NCERT, based on NCF 2005 Contains chaptered relating to human anatomy, safety and security, protecting others, health and safety and self-defense.

Introduction of gender studies and value based education has also been proposed under the school syllabus

The CBSE (Central Board of secondary education) is also undergoing for the introduction of modules based on gender sensitization. To equip teachers and assist students accord with stereotype concerning women from an early age program of master trainer for analyzed and stimulated model teachers and stimulated counselors, gender sensitive trainers or teachers copy and student activity card from class 1 to class 12. Apart from this, A task force was also constituted by UGC i.e. University Grants Commission in January 2013 to analyze the standards for confirming women safety on various campuses and programs on the topic of gender sensitization. Courses on women's studies gave also been mandated in all universities and colleges across the country with the assumption that such courses would help in instilling gender sensitivity among the young minds through regular academics programs, workshops, discussions and other such activities. The NCERT also has a Department of Gender Studies (DGS) under its wing which worked towards addressing power relations and gender inclusivity in the Indian society and also advises the centre and the states in executing policies and programs in the area of gender studies.

Earlier the department was named as the department of women's studies and was renamed as the department of gender studies after the landmark judgment of the supreme court of India in 2014, which ruled for treating transgender as third gender.

Gender Sensitization in workplace.

Economic liberalization has opened up different kinds of employment opportunities not only for men but also for women in both Blue and white collar jobs. According to census of India 2011, Women account for only 25.6% of total workers. Increasing participation of women in paid labour force necessitates the creation of an enabling working Environment imbued with gender sensitive work culture. It must be remembered that both men and women enter their work places carrying the baggage of stereotypes pertaining to appropriate gender roles implanted in them by their families and perpetuated by the education system. A man's place is in the work place or public sphere and a women's place is in the home or private sphere. Such stereotype eventually renders women as secondary workers in the labour market, the last to be hired but the first to be dispensed away within the face of austerity measures and lay off's. Several studies have pointed out that even in the modern technology driven information and communication technology driven information and communication technology, sectors which employ professionally trained high skilled women, subtle biases operate in matters of appraisals, Promotions etc whereby, Women's contributions, however significant, is rendered inconsequential based on the assumption that women priorities families over career. Thus gender sensitization in the workplace has emerged as a key imperative implies a need to understand and be sensitive to the needs and concerns of their colleagues including women. This would help to develop good interpersonal relationships among colleagues and facilitate a productive work environment loaded down with shared respect and assurance among the sexes devoid of sexual allusions and chauvinist biases. Official statistics indicate that increased participation of women in public sphere is accompanied by an increase crimes committed against women, especially rape committed in all the major Indian cities. In such cases, the moral integrity of the victim is often questioned by politicians, religious and social leader etc. They argue that a women who does not stay within her limits in terms of dress, code of conduct or special location, Appropriate time, etc crosses the Laxman Rekha, is ought to be punished. Intricately associated with such a mindset is the notion of shame and honor which has been operationalized as a moral sanction by the patriarchal society to limit women's mobility and life choices. Thus Notions of ideal femineity and respectability are constructed as a way to control and confine women. However given the altered everyday realities of the present times where women no longer remain confined to the four walls of the home and shoulder the financial responsibilities at par with their male counterparts by engaging in paid work, be it in white-collar high end service sector or in the blue-collar informal work addressing such patriarchal mindset becomes a matter of utmost priority. Fortunately some positive steps have been initiated by the Government of India in this direction in its landmark judgement in 1997 with respect to the case of Vishakha Vs. State of Rajasthan. It was acknowledged by the Supreme court for the first time that sexual molestation against women is a violation of human rights and mandated that employers must provide for affectionate and non avenging mechanisms to dictate the gender equality rights for women in work places as per the Vishakha guidelines sexual violence and harassment in the workplace is criminally culpable. Another major breakthrough in this regard came in 2012 with the setting up of the Justice Verma Committee following the tragic rape incident that took place in Delhi in December 2012. The committee released a report on 23rd January 2014 by putting forward a burning report of General arrangements of criminal lawfulness delivery in reach of an abundantly patrilineal society and advocate that women's equality, being elemental to the constitution, its rejection is a disrespect and violation of the constitution. The enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal Act, 2013), Sexual Harassment Act in April 2013 is the utmost important step which provides lawful sacrosanctity to the concept of physical integrity as explained in the Verma committee's Bill of Rights for women. After the enactment was followed and the act enforced sexual harassment is presently accepted as not just a defilement of a woman's fundamental right to equality as approved as per Article 14 and Article 15 of the Indian constitution and a women's right to live and life with self respect as mentioned in Article 21 of the Indian constitution, but it is also observed as a right violation to run or practice or

conduct any business or profession under Article 19(1)(g) of the constitution which also mentions a right to live in a safe surroundings devoid from provocation.

5-Is there any Role of media in Gender sensitization?

Women at today's time still have to face a lot of problems with regards to the gender equality. There is definitely a huge need to curb the problem. The best way this issue can be resolved is with the help of media. The media can be very useful. At today's time media is the only platform which provides information to public at anytime and at any place. The best channels can be internet, Social media sites such as facebook, instagram, Twitter. The young generation mainly spends a lot of their time in the social networking sites. Hence if the information is shared with the audience through these platform, then it can be very effective. Also the movies play a very important role too. There is always some or other movies which makes the message very clear for the audience. For example, Movie like Dangal also had a strong message of gender sensitization. Hence, Media does play a very important Role In gender Sensitization.

Conclusion

From the above analysis concluding that increased presence of women in public sphere gender sensitization has become very important. Families bring up girls and boys in distinctly different ways which go on a long way in socializing them into gendered stereotypes. However we must be able to introspect critically and question our belief that we accept as given. Schools facilitate the correct atmosphere to prepare children against such firm social customs. School curriculums should include gender education so that boys and girls can absorb gender sensitive values. Only then we build up a progressive society which is unyielding to all forms of gender discrimination and injustice.

References

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