



RELEVANCE OF GENDER DIMENSIONS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESSES

DGS, NCERT, New Delhi



*We must accept that the social and educational profile of the classroom is multi-class, multi-caste, multi-religious and gendered with disability as a significant dimension of the profile of children in classrooms. Thus classroom consists of learners who belong to diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds including children with special needs. **And Gender cuts across all these categories at varied levels.***

This module will :

- Help in addressing gender concerns through text books and pedagogy. This will enable to recognize the factors of gender bias in textual material and curriculum transaction;
- Identify the biases with regard to the content or role allocation to male and female characters and explore linguistic bias,
- Recognize the participation of women in political, social and economic processes;
- Help to promote respect for the roles that all genders play in their families, communities and the nation at large.

Learning Objectives

- Identify existing gender biased attitudes and behavior among teachers and students
- Develop gender sensitive pedagogical processes in transaction of various disciplines
- Use and adopt learning activities that foster gender sensitive classroom environment

Activity

Stereotypes are Created by Socialization

Three exclusive male characteristics	Three exclusive female characteristics	Three characteristics common to both

Discussion points

- Do you think men and women have different characteristics?
- How are these characteristics developed in an individual?
- How are they reinforced in schools (textbooks, curriculum etc.)

Note for facilitator: Encourage students to discuss how they feel being a boy or girl. Elicit their responses whether they feel restricted by these characteristics. Other than the family what are the other agencies responsible for nurturing these characteristics.

What is Gender

- Gender refers to a socially determined and culturally specific difference between women, men and transgender.
- Gender relations and functions are dynamic and may vary over time and place and between different groups of people.
- Our gender identities determine how we are perceived and how we are expected to behave as men, women and transgender persons.

The Role of the Teacher

- Teachers generally inculcate gender biased attitudes as a result of their own socialization formally and informally.
- They must leave their own baggage of prejudices/biases behind when they enter the classroom.
- The teacher should first identify the gender differences in all schooling activities and then plan and implement the activities in the classroom and outside classroom accordingly.

- Create an enabling environment in the classroom where all students including girls can share their experiences, question existing prejudices and stereotypes and work out suitable solutions based on discussion and debate.

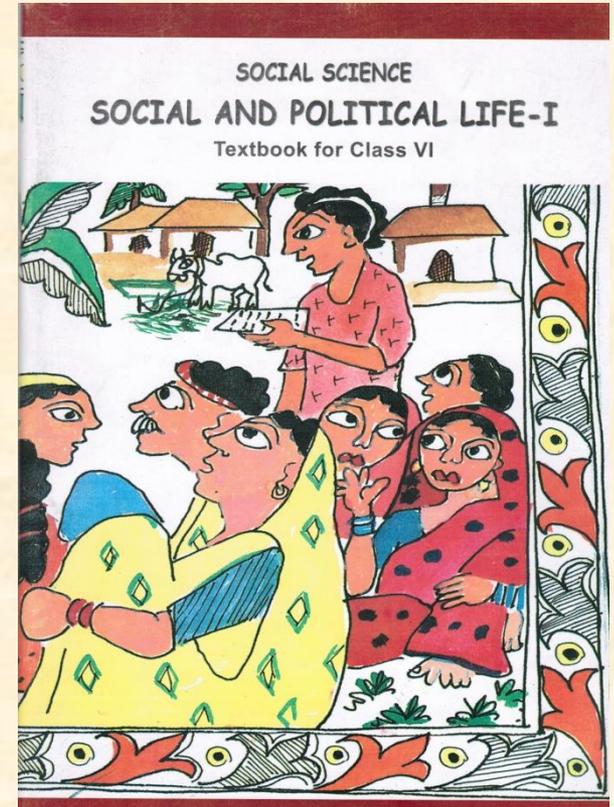
Hidden Curriculum

- Hidden Curriculum includes behaviours, perspectives and attitudes that students pickup in the schooling process within and outside classroom in an unintended manner.



- Gender inevitably becomes an element of hidden curriculum.
- It gets transacted through the organizational arrangements, including the division of physical spaces, assignment of different tasks to boys and girls, routines, rituals and practices in everyday school activities, teacher-student and student-student interactions.
- Even the play space boundaries used by boys and girls in the school and the formal games offered to them are different.

Integrating Gender Concerns in Transaction of Disciplines



Teaching of Languages

- Language cuts across all disciplines and is basic to the construction of knowledge; as a result it has wide ranging implications for gender relations.
- Large number of elements such as words and expressions perpetuate gender stereotypes.
- It should be *gender inclusive, gender sensitive* and *gender neutral*. Use of visuals, illustrations, noun and pronoun etc. should be gender inclusive.

Activity

A few words have been given below. Write their gender neutral forms in the space provided below.

Policeman

Chairman

Spokesman

Mankind

Manpower

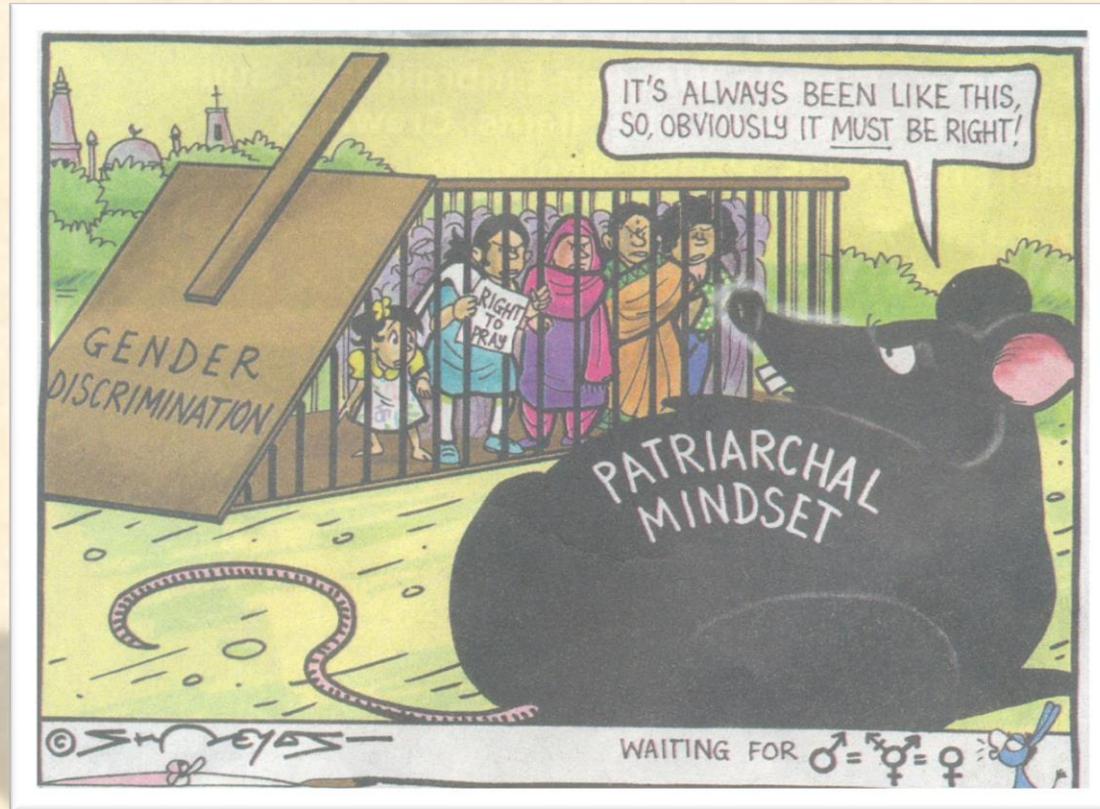
Salesman

Housewife

Teaching of Social Sciences

- Acknowledge and respect diversity in terms of gender, religion, region, class and disability and look at all persons as equal
- Critically examine social, political, economic institutions/issues and various dimensions of inequality that affect the status of women
- Question and examine received ideas, institutions, and practices

Questioning and Examining Received Ideas, Institutions and Practices



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- The teacher needs to navigate discussion of themes in such a way that students begin to deliberate and question existing institutions, ideas and practices and their linkages with the past.

Social and Political life- Class VII



Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossein, a noted educationist and literary figure started schools for Muslim girls in Patna and Calcutta. She was a fearless critic of conservative ideas, arguing that religious leaders of every faith accorded an inferior place to women. She wrote a remarkable story titled *Sultana's Dream* in 1905 in which Sultana who reaches a place called *Ladyland*. *Ladyland* is a place where women had the freedom to study, work, and create inventions like controlling rain from the clouds and flying air cars.



Laxmi Lakra is the first woman engine driver for Northern Railways. Hailing from a poor family Laxmi studied hard and then went on to complete her diploma in electronics. She then took the railway board exam and passed it in her first attempt. Laxmi says, “I love challenges and the moment somebody says it is not for girls, I make sure I go ahead and do it.”

Social and Political life- Class VII

Activity- Write the following on the board and ask students to read each statement

- Early Marriage of Girls
- Men are caregivers/ nurturers
- Practice of Dowry
- Menstrual Taboos
- Seclusion of widows
- Adventure sports is ideal for girls
- Sons are legal heirs of family property
- Preference of sons over daughters
- Restrictions on Physical Mobility of Girls
- Girls are not permanent members of the family

Ask students to pick a statement from above and place in a relevant box.

Practices/Traditions /Norms
that are still
Prevalent

Practices
/traditions/Norms
that are not
prevalent

Practices/
Traditions/ Norms
that I would like
to change

This activity will help teachers to ascertain the level of awareness amongst students regarding certain socio-cultural practices/traditions and norms that they face in their lived realities. It is likely to also generate a discussion amongst both boys and girls on why certain institutions/ideas and practices require change.

Teaching of Mathematics

- It is a **common myth** that **Mathematics subject is not for girls** and its teaching does not have scope of gender discrimination and stereotyping.
- It is important to **break this myth through our curriculum** and its transaction by the teachers.
- It should be highlighted through mathematics that **work at home is equally important and productive and should be projected (through mathematical problems) as a responsibility to be shared by all members of the family**

Teaching of Science

- Women have historically had limited access and contribution to science and technology.
- The image of science is perceived as masculine and due to various socio-cultural factors girls and women hesitate to enter fields that are essentially related to technology.
- Through science students can be taught that physical attributes and difference does not reflect superiority or inferiority.
- Differential abilities of all sexes should be recognized, rather than categorize one as stronger than other
- Women's role in preserving the environment and its impact on their life should also be highlighted.

Role of Principals in Making School Gender Sensitive

- Identify and critically examine gender stereotypes in behaviours and actions of all stake holders including self.
- Support teachers to make classroom teaching learning process more gender sensitive and use relevant examples during transaction of subjects.
- Girls should be encouraged to express themselves freely and confidently within and outside school

- Girls and boys should equally participate in all sports and other activities.
- Develop a zero tolerance policy and an effective mechanism to address all forms of violence
- Organise regular self defence training for both boys and girls
- Gender sensitization of all the staff members including supporting staff
- Establishing a gender sensitive school management system that encourage gender equality in its governance and operations

- Gender sensitive physical facilities like separate functional toilets, water, sanitation and sanitary pads to be made available.
- Involve more students to share their ideas on how to improve the school environment through gender clubs
- Guidance and counselling services for students to be made available



Thank You